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**Third party mediation and domestic political constraints:
US initiatives on Middle East peace and Israeli responses,
1982–1990**

Flamhaft, Ziva, Ph.D.

City University of New York, 1992

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THIRD PARTY MEDIATION AND DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS:
US INITIATIVES ON MIDDLE EAST PEACE AND ISRAELI RESPONSES,
1982-1990.

by

Ziva Flamhaft

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in
Political Science in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
the City University of New York

1992

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To Steve and Odellia with much love

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"Given the persisting gap between the positions of the Palestinian Arabs and Zionists, and given their determination to stick to irreconcilable aims, the only real hope for a breakthrough prior to 1948 seemed (as it does now) to lie with third-parties."

Neil Caplan,
Futile Diplomacy

INTRODUCTION:
AMERICA'S INABILITY TO INFLUENCE ISRAEL TO CONTINUE THE
CAMP DAVID PROCESS, 1982-1990.

The decade of the 1980s witnessed repeated diplomatic attempts by the United States to continue the Camp David peace process. These attempts involved efforts to influence Israel to begin peace negotiations with Jordan and the Palestinians.

Negotiation means a reciprocal exchange of propositions for the purpose of solving a dispute by obtaining, through peaceful means, an explicit agreement. This definition presupposes the existence of (1) mutual, but not necessary equal, interests among the contentious parties; (2) the willingness to make the necessary concessions for an agreement to be obtained. Thus, negotiations means here a bona fide attempt at peace, and not a tactical time-gaining maneuver or a substitute for violence.¹

On the surface a number of diplomatic and international relations factors made the 1980s a good opportunity for the United States to try to mediate an Arab-Israeli peace. First, the Lebanon war demonstrated the limitation of war as a vehicle to attain political aims: The Lebanon invasion revealed that Israeli military victories create more problems than solutions for Israel. In addition, the PLO was weakened and driven further away from Palestine (Amman, Lebanon, Tunis) than ever.

Second, the Arab League began to deviate from the famous

¹Fred C. Ikle, How Nations Negotiate (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), pp.45-54.

"three nos" of the Khartoum Arab summit of 1967--no recognition of Israel, no negotiations with Israel, no peace with Israel. This became apparent when the League initiated the Fez plan in September 1982, in which it implicitly accepted the existence of Israel.²

Third, by 1984--when Egypt began her reentry into the Arab world--the Arabs' boycott to punish Egypt for the Camp David agreements and the peace treaty with Israel failed. Notably, by May 1989, ten years after its expulsion, Egypt was allowed to rejoin the Arab League without abrogating the peace treaty with Israel.

Finally, the Iran-Iraq war proved that Israel was not the only threat to the Arab world.

But for Israel it turned out that the 1980s was not a good opportunity for an Arab-Israeli peace. This was so because of profound political changes that have occurred in Israel since the Yishuv period (the pre-state Jewish settlement in Palestine) and the establishment of the state in 1948: the replacement in 1977 of the Labor Party by the Likud as the leading--if not dominant--party in Israel, and the emergence thereafter of a number of new right-wing parties.

Thus, it is not only the diplomatic and international settings that have to be right if mediation is to succeed, but

²For the text of the Fez plan see Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin (eds.), The Israeli-Arab Reader (New York: Penguin Books, 1984), pp. 663-65.

also the domestic political constellation, particularly when one of the parties to the conflict is a democracy.

A better understanding of the restraints that the domestic scene can impose on the diplomatic intervention of a third party can assist the intervenor in deciding whether to pursue dubious foreign policies, or whether to wait for more suitable conditions. It can also widen the scope of negotiation theory, by focusing on the pre-negotiation stage, that being a stage in which the parties directly involved in a conflict decide to end conflict through compromise. More than just a token demonstration, this decision involves the undertaking of a long-term strategy of cooperation.

Extensive research in the field of negotiations shows that it is only recently that scholars and theorists began to concentrate on the pre-negotiation phase. Indeed, most of the literature, rich as it is, deals primarily with the process of bargaining itself, which replaces the pre-negotiation stage.³

³Few exceptions exist: Paul Pillar does devote a whole chapter to the opening of peace negotiations. But he views warfare as a process of bargaining, and focuses on the conclusion of war as the beginning of a peace process. However, as the Arab-Israeli case shows, negotiations do not always follow armistice agreements. See Paul Pillar, Negotiating Peace (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983); Harold Saunders pays due attention to the period that precedes actual negotiations. He divides the peace process into five phases: (1) defining the problem; (2) developing a commitment to negotiate; (3) arranging a negotiation; (4) negotiation; (5) implementation. See Harold Saunders, The Other Wall (Washington D.C: American Enterprise Institute, 1985), and "We need a Larger Theory of Negotiations: The Importance of Pre-Negotiation Phases", in Negotiation Journal (July 1985), pp. 249-62). William Zartman assigned the role of trust-building to third parties in order to induce negotiations, in Ripe for Resolution (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985),

For example, a rich body of theoretical literature deals with the conditions that are necessary for successful negotiations rather than the conditions that are required for serious negotiations to begin. It shows patterns, methods, and procedures for conflict resolutions; and strategies and tactics for productive negotiation and mediation. Certainly, most works assume that negotiations have already begun.⁴

The Hypotheses.

In this dissertation I shall deal with the limitations on third parties' peace initiatives in regional conflicts. These limitations are related to the domestic landscapes that exist in the target countries.

p. 238. More recently, greater attention was given to the conditions and processes that encourage leaders to negotiate. For these recent efforts see Janice Gross Stein (ed.), Getting to the Table (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), especially the contributions made by I. William Zartman and Janice Gross Stein; and the March 1991 issue of The Jerusalem Journal of International Relations (Vol. 13, no. 1), which was devoted in its entirety to the issue of pre-negotiation.

⁴See for example Kenneth Boulding, Conflict and Defense (New York: Harper and Row, 1969); John Burton, Conflict and Communication (New York: Free Press, 1969), Conflict Resolution as a Political System (Center for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, Working Paper 1, George Mason University, Feb. 1988) Resolving deep-rooted Conflict (Lanham: University Press of America, 1987); Fred Ikle, How Nations Negotiate (New York: Harper and Row, 1964); Louis Kriesberg, Social Conflict (Englewood Cliffs: 1982); Arthur Lall, Modern International Negotiation (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); Howard Raiffa, The Art and Science of Negotiation (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982); Jeffery Rubin and Bert Brown, The Social Psychology of Bargaining and Negotiation (New York: Academic Press, 1975). Saadia Touval, The Peace Brokers (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982); I. William Zartman, Ripe for Resolution (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), The Negotiation Process (Newbury Park: Sage, 1977), The Practical Negotiator (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).

As a case study I shall examine the inability of the United States to influence Israel to continue the Camp David process, during the years from 1982 to 1990--a period which from an international relation perspective seemed ripe for mediation attempts to induce Arab-Israeli negotiations.

My hypothesis is: third parties' attempts to mediate in regional conflicts are limited by the domestic landscape in the parties directly involved. More precisely, third parties' attempts to mediate in regional conflict cannot be effective when negotiations are not supported by domestically important groups.

That foreign policy behavior is closely linked to domestic considerations is well established in the theoretical literature of international relations. To cite only some examples, James Rosenau--one of the first theorists to link the domestic and international systems--focused on the concept of linkage, defined as "any recurrent sequence of behavior that originated in one system and is reacted to in another".⁵

Karl Deutsch inferred that all politicians must tie international issues to the satisfaction of domestic needs;⁶ and Robert Putnam showed that international bargaining and

⁵James N. Rosenau, "Toward the Study of National-International Linkages", in James N. Rosenau (ed.), Linkage Politics (New York: The Free Press, 1969), pp. 44-63, and "Theorizing Across Systems: Linkage Politics Revisited", in Jonathan Wilkenfeld (ed.), Conflict Behavior and Linkage Politics (New York: David McKay, 1973), pp. 25-56.

⁶Karl W. Deutsch, Political Community and the North Atlantic Area (New York, Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1957), p. 173-74.

negotiations are actually a two-level game, played on the national and the international levels, as international co-operation may be fostered by domestic pressures or blocked by domestic opposition.⁷

Glenn Snyder and Paul Diesing showed how internal divisions affect the bargaining maneuverability of diplomats;⁸ while Henry Kissinger and Kenneth Waltz revealed the connection between the domestic structure and the foreign policy of states.⁹ Kissinger distinctively noticed the constraints which domestic interests impose on foreign policy decision-making.¹⁰

Indeed, the linkage between domestic factors and foreign policy is well established in the theoretical literature of international relations. But not enough attention to domestic considerations is given in the theoretical literature on negotiations and mediation.

Thus, this hypothesis directs special attention to the domestic forces that influence the effectiveness of third party

⁷Robert D. Putnam and Nicholas Bayne, Hanging Together (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), in their Introduction; Robert D. Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: the Logic of two-level games", International Organization (Vol. 42, no.3, Summer 1988), pp. 427-60.

⁸Glenn H. Snyder and Paul Diesing, Conflict among Nations (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 517-19.

⁹Kissinger, American Foreign Policy (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977), pp. 11-43, Kenneth Waltz, Man, the State and War (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959) pp. 80-123, and "Electoral Punishment and Foreign Policy Crises", in Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy, James N. Rosenau (ed.) (New York: The Free Press, 1967) pp. 263-93.

¹⁰Ibid, p. 18.

mediation.

This is not to deny any potential role of third parties in conflict resolution. As the Camp David process showed, third party mediation can be important when the domestic scene in the parties directly involved does support negotiation, but the direct players cannot on their own realize their desire to negotiate once they have decided to do so. Indeed, faced with enormous difficulties during the first stages of negotiations, President Anwar el-Sadat and Prime Minister Menachem Begin would not have continued to negotiate without the involvement of the United States.

Still, the Camp David agreements and the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty did not enhance Washington's ability to bring peace to the region, at least during the 1980s.

Consideration of the Camp David agreements directs attention to the success the American diplomacy had scored in the Camp David negotiations in comparison to Washington's attempts during the ensuing decade. But after examining a substantial amount of literature on the Camp David agreements, it became evident that without the initial decision of Begin and Sadat to negotiate with one another and the wide domestic support they enjoyed, the United States could not have been successful in mediating the Camp David agreements or the Egyptian-Israeli peace.¹¹

¹¹Among the works examined were: Jimmy Carter, Keeping Faith (Toronto: Bantam, 1982), and The Blood of Abraham (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985); Moshe Dayan, Breakthrough (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981); Ismail Fahmy, Negotiating Peace in the Middle East (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1983);

Sadat's motivation to negotiate with Israel--and to do so under American auspices--has been explained in numerous ways. For example, Ismail Fahmy emphasizes Sadat's capricious and erratic decision-making mentality, while others stressed the harsh political and economic conditions that existed in Egypt at the time. In order to solve his economic problems Sadat decided to become part of the family of nations, a goal which was achievable only by leaning toward the Americans instead of the Soviets.¹²

Other explanations include Sadat's need to modernize his army and airforce on one hand, and his uncertainty about the results of another prospective war with Israel, on the other hand. His decision can also be traced to the 1973 Yom Kippur war, which gave Sadat the freedom--as far as his own people were concerned--to talk to the Israelis and to sign a number of

Eitan Haber (et. al.), The Year of the Dove (New York: Bantham, 1979); Yoel Marcus, Camp David the Key to Peace (Hebrew) (Jerusalem: Shoken, 1979); William Quandt, Camp David: Peace Making and Politics (Washington D.C: The Brookings Institution, 1986); Avraham Tamir, A Soldier in Search of Peace (New York: Harper and Row, 1988); Saadia Touval, The Peacebrokers (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982); Ezer Weizman, The Battle for Peace (New York: Bantham, 1981); Natan Yanai (ed.) On the Peace Process and Israel's Future (Hebrew), Tel Aviv: Ministry of Defense Publication, 1988).

¹²This summary is based on Fahmy, Negotiating Peace in the Middle East, pp. 279-82; Mohamed Heikal, Autumn of Fury (New York: Random House, 1983), passim; William Youssef Kosman, Sadat's Realistic Peace Initiative (New York: Vantage Press, 1981), passim; Weizman's, The Battle for Peace, pp. 67-68; and partly on private conversations with Ambassador Samuel Lewis, Washington D.C., April 26, 1991; and MK Ezer Weizman, Caesaria, July 5, 1991.

disengagement agreements with Israel.¹³

In addition, Sadat wanted to regain the Sinai peacefully; he wanted to reallocate resources from the military to the economy; he did not have faith in the upcoming Geneva conference.¹⁴

He might have been motivated also by the US-USSR Joint Declaration signed by Secretary Vance and Foreign Minister Gromyko, issued on October 1, 1977. In the declaration the two superpowers pledged to co-chair the upcoming Geneva Peace Conference; outlined the conditions which both believed were necessary for a comprehensive peace in the Middle East; and agreed on key issues to be negotiated.¹⁵ Sadat, who in 1972 ousted all Soviet advisers from Egypt, feared that a joint US-USSR venture in the Middle East would let the Soviets reenter Egypt through a back door.¹⁶

As for Begin, once Sadat had taken his courageous step, the Israeli Prime Minister had little choice but to acquiesce, especially after the Labor-led government had negotiated with

¹³Weizman, ibid, Yanai (ed.) Moshe Dayan On the Peace Process and the Future of Israel, p. 71.

¹⁴Jihan Sadat, "Pathway to World Peace"; lecture on October 30, 1988, Great Neck, N.Y.

¹⁵For the text of the joint statement see Yehuda Lukacs, (ed.), Documents on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 1967-1983 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 10-11.

¹⁶Eitan Haber (et. al.), The Year of the Dove (New York: Bantam, 1979), pp. 20-21.

Sadat a number of disengagement agreements in 1974-5, laying the ground for future negotiations. In addition, Begin might have been driven by his own ambition to be inscribed in the history books as a peace maker.

Other explanations for Begin's incentives include the following: (1) The heavy cost of the 1973 war and the power demonstrated by the Arab oil-producing countries raised fear in Israel of more costly wars and increased isolation. (2) That strengthened Israeli dependence on the United States, along with the need of appearing reasonable and flexible to the American government as-well-as the American public. (3) Begin was able to make concessions in view of his traditional hard line, concessions that the opposition was not likely to denounce if peace seemed attainable. (4) Welcoming Sadat and making concessions to him promised to divide the Arab coalition and ensure Israeli security from a major war. (5) Last but not least, Begin and his coalition partners were willing to give up the Sinai in order to secure the West Bank.¹⁷ Indeed, it has been pointed out that, in practice, the Camp David autonomy agreement left the strategic control of the area in Israel's hands, did not set restrictions on the establishment of Jewish settlements, did not mention Jerusalem, and left open the option of extending the

¹⁷Louis Kriesber, Social Conflicts (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1982), p. 257.

autonomy arrangement beyond the transitional period.¹⁸

The choice of this case study was made amid Washington's decade-long frustrated attempts to induce Israel to begin a dialogue with a Jordanian-Palestinian representation: by 1990, despite some dramatic regional developments, Israel refrained from utilizing America's diplomatic attempts at opening an Arab-Israeli dialogue. Such regional developments included the intifada, King Hussein's dissociation from the West Bank; the Palestine National Council's (PNC) recognition of United Nations resolutions 242 and 338; and the opening of a US-PLO dialogue.

In the Israeli case a number of "territorial parties"--parties which are committed to keeping all of the occupied territories--together with other territorial bodies, managed to frustrate any peace effort that might have involved territorial concessions. They were able to do so because in Israel territorial compromise has been delegitimized to the point where it would destabilize the political conditions which are necessary for the orderly function of the government. The orderly functioning of a government is the government's ability to pursue various internal and foreign policy goals without domestic disruptions.

The period under investigation here begins with the announcement of the Reagan peace plan on September 1, 1982, and

¹⁸ Shimon Shamir, "Israeli View of Egypt and the Peace Process: The Duality of Vision", in Quandt (ed.), The Middle East Ten Years after Camp David (Washington D.C., The Brookings Institution, 1988), p. 198.

ends with the collapse of the Israeli National Unity Government over the peace process, on March 15, 1990.

The choice of these dates is no accident. Prompted by the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the Reagan plan was the first serious attempt by the United States since Camp David to continue the Arab-Israeli peace process under its auspices. The collapse of the Israeli government over the peace process is not only a natural cut-off date, but it also marks the end of a decade-long period of successive attempts by the United States to maintain its status as the leading peace broker in the region. It was not until the victory of the American-led coalition forces over Iraq in the Gulf War that Washington resumed its diplomatic role in the Middle East. Whatever the outcome of these post-war attempts will be, they do mark a new period in Middle East diplomacy.

The choice of the US as the third party and Israel as the target country, too, is not arbitrary. First, during the period under investigation, no power other than the United States dominated the Arab-Israeli peace process. True, during that period actors other than the United States tried to influence the process. They included the European Community; the Arab League; King Hassan of Morocco; the Soviet Union; and Rumania. But only the United States was vigorously and systematically involved in diplomatic efforts to induce negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

As for Israel, the fact that that nation--the only stable democracy in the region--was split almost in half between those

who supported territorial compromise in the name of peace, and those who opposed any territorial compromise even for peace, makes the study of internal constraints all the more intriguing. Additionally, there are other reasons why Israel is a fascinating case study.

On the systemic level Israel is a modest power, greatly dependent on the economic, military, and political support of the United States. Yet it exercised a great degree of independence in foreign policy. Moreover, Israel's potential ability to destabilize the international system is completely disproportionate to her small size.

On the regional level, aside from being the only lasting functioning democracy in the region, Israel is the only non-Arab, non-Muslin state there. The country is surrounded by four Arab states, of whom all but one are hostile towards it, but it nonetheless sees no urgency in ending the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Internally, Israel is divided between hawks and doves, religious and secularists, Sephardim (the descendants of Middle Eastern and North African-born Jews) and Ashkenazim (the descendants of European and North American-born Jews), not to mention the fact that eighteen per-cent of the Israeli population is Arab. Yet, Israel is a coherent functional society.

Methodology and Research Design.

As indicated above, the aim of this research is to illustrate that (a) third parties' peace initiatives--

reasonable and timely as they might be--cannot in themselves induce warring parties to negotiate; and (b) domestic restraints limit the ability of third parties to succeed in their diplomatic attempts.

I shall introduce the concept of third party mediation, and familiarize the reader with the reasons for the American quest for an Arab-Israeli peace. I shall also present the factual outline relating to the American diplomatic attempts to resume the Arab-Israeli peace process during the decade under investigation, including the Reagan peace plan, the Shultz initiative, and the Baker plan. In addition, I shall present the empirical data relating to the opposition in Israel to each of the initiatives, showing how it effectively undermined the peace process.

In order to reach a conclusion as to Israel's inability to enter negotiations, I shall examine the changes that have occurred in the Israeli polity since 1967, and try to relate them to the general hypothesis presented in this dissertation.

Finally, I shall draw some general conclusions about the conditions under which third party peace initiatives can be effective.

I assume this to be an excellent subject for a case study in the field of conflict resolution: it involves a persistent diplomatic attempt by a superpower to persuade much weaker regional players to resolve their conflict; and it involves the resistance to resolving one of the most protracted regional

conflicts since World War II, in itself a source of potential global instability. A few clarifications are in order. I begin with the omission from this study of the American-sponsored Israeli-Lebanese agreement of May 17, 1983. Although the abrogation of the agreement by Bashir Jemayyil on March 5, 1984, might, at first, confirm the futility of peace initiatives in regional conflicts, in reality the decision to abrogate the agreement was that of a party other than the Lebanese government. That party was the Syrian government of Hafez al-Assad. Indeed, the Lebanese "government" was not by any means functioning, and on its own it could not make any decision.¹⁹y

A second clarification is the distinction between the regulation or management of regional conflict, and its resolution. The first occurs only when the containment of violence is sought, and is therefore identified with control mechanism--such as ceasefire agreements or the introduction of peace keeping forces. Conflict resolution, on the other hand, means the permanent termination of conflict, which is conditioned upon the direct participation of the belligerent parties, and their consent.²⁰

¹⁹The implementation of the agreement was effectively undermined by Syria, when Damascus refused to withdraw its forces from Lebanon, and by President Amin Jemayyil's inability to create the conditions that made it possible for Israel to feel it could withdraw its forces from Lebanon. See Mordechai Gazit, "The Middle East Peace Process", in Middle East Contemporary Survey 1982-83 (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1985), p. 152.

²⁰Burton, Conflict and Communication, p. 178; Conflict Resolution as a Political System, p. 2; World Society (London: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 150.

Third, the application of psychological concepts such as the role of personality, or perception and misperception, will be purposely restricted here. Certainly, the importance of individuals' dispositions, or the interpretation by individual leaders of the environment in which they operate cannot be denied. For example, a legitimate question to raise is whether a non-charismatic leader, or a leader not as perceptive or powerful as President Sadat was, would have been able to travel to Jerusalem and address the Israeli Knesset, as Sadat did in 1977. Still, the body of literature dealing with behavioral predispositions, perceptions, or images is a category in itself; one that is perhaps more appropriately applicable to the decision-making paradigm.²¹

Fourth, an understanding of the term "peace process" is necessary. Often scholars and commentators object to the usage of this term when applied to the Arab-Israeli conflict because of the lack of real progress in peace negotiations. But since no better term exists to describe the painstaking American efforts to continue the Camp Davis process, the term peace process is being used in this dissertation.

The primary data sources used for this research project are

²¹One example is Robert Jervis' inclusive work on perception and misperception as a level of foreign policy analysis. Jervis theorizes that preexisting beliefs and biases interfere in the processing of information. See Robert Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

daily news reports; public statements, interviews with newspapers and magazines, television and radio; reports and documents; and private interviews. The reader should note that because the period under investigation is a recent one, no classified material is available for research.

Secondary sources consist of books, articles (English and Hebrew) and biographies.

PART I: THIRD PARTIES' INITIATIVES IN REGIONAL CONFLICTS

II. THE ROLE OF THIRD PARTIES IN THE RESOLUTION
OF REGIONAL CONFLICTS.

A third party is an actor who is not involved directly in a dispute between two parties, and who intervenes diplomatically between the two sides in order to help them solve their dispute.

Diplomatic intervention is non-coercive action taken by the third party in order to regulate or to terminate a conflict situation. Although the intervening party can use pressure to persuade the conflicting parties to solve their conflict, the role of the third party is still persuasive rather than coercive.¹

In sum, third party diplomatic intervention is geared to help the parties arrive at a compromise solution, that being a mid-way solution between the total victory of one side and the total surrender of the other side.

Important as this may sound, as Jeffrey Rubin notes, the role and involvement of a third party is typically peripheral to the primary relationship--that is, the relationship between the contestants. Accordingly, even when the third party becomes intrinsically involved in the relationship between the two principals, that involvement must by definition be different from that of the disputants.²

¹Oran Young. The Intermediaries (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), pp. 34-5.

²Jeffrey Z. Rubin (ed.), Dynamics of Third Party Intervention (New York: Praeger, 1981), p. 5.

Still, it is entirely possible that the third party becomes so intensely involved in mediation, that the primary parties can no longer maintain their relationship without the continued involvement of the third party. But even then the third party's relationship to the contestants is essentially different from the relationship between the contestants themselves.³

Rubin distinguishes between the formal and informal roles of third parties. Formal roles are those roles that are legally defined or roles that are based on some formal understanding among the principal actors. They include: (1) mediator--an actor who attempts to help the disputants reach a voluntary agreement; (2) fact finder--an actor who listens to arguments from the principal actors in order to establish the facts surrounding the dispute in question, and who subsequently makes recommendations for settlement; (3) arbitrator--an actor who is empowered to make binding recommendations for the settlement of a dispute.⁴

In contrast, the informal roles tend to arise out of some need to execute rather narrowly defined, short-lived, and informal functions. In such roles one of the disputants may unilaterally appoint a go-between to convey a particular message to the other disputant. Or, a go-between may volunteer his services in order to help the disputants communicate indirectly.⁵

Formal third party roles are often considered authoritative

³ Ibid, pp. 5-6.

⁴ Ibid, p. 8.

⁵ Ibid, pp. 8-9.

and legitimate, whereas informal roles have little or no legitimacy.⁶ That, however, does not necessarily diminish the effectiveness of informal roles. It is important to note that in either case the consent of the disputants is essential for the success of the third party.

Another distinction between intervening third parties is that between invited versus noninvited third parties. The first is a third party that is invited by the disputants to enter the conflict in order to assist the disputants to achieve an agreement. Two assumptions are implicit in the invited role: (1) the disputants are willing to solve their differences, and agree to utilize the assistance of a third party; (2) the invited third party is preferred over other potential third parties.

Noninvited third parties are parties that introduce their own initiatives in order to induce the contestants to negotiate. Although the noninvited third party intervenes in the conflict on its own incentive, it is likely to carry the same power and legitimacy of the invited third party.⁷

Occasionally, the unilateral initiative of a non-invited third party may turn into becoming an invited third party. On the other hand, an invited third party may jeopardize its attempts to intervene diplomatically if it seeks to involve non-invited third parties.

Research suggests that various third parties intervene

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 11-12.

diplomatically in about two-thirds of all inter-state conflicts, and that their intervention can produce some positive effect.⁸ In support of the latter assertion, evidence shows that third party involvement has "some" or "great" influence in settling 25% of those cases in which they do become involved. Often these conflicts are of a serious nature.⁹

That the direct parties to inter-state conflicts may not be able to resolve their differences on their own, and that external intervention may be instrumental in helping them to do so, was recognized by the authors of the covenant of the League of Nations.

Indeed, a few of the dominant principles of the League's covenant were the obligation of the international community to intervene in international conflicts, and the corresponding responsibility of the belligerent parties to submit the conflict to some means for peaceful settlement. These means ranged from direct negotiations to the involvement of the Permanent Court of International Justice. The League Council had the primary responsibility for recommending solutions to the conflict.¹⁰

The principle of third party intervention was carried into

⁸Raimo Vayrynen, "Third Parties in the Resolution of Regional Conflict", Bulletin of Peace Proposals (Vol. 18, no. 3, 1987) p. 295.

⁹Robert Lyle Butterworth, "Do Conflict Managers Matter?", International Studies Quarterly (Vol. 22, no. 2, June 1978), p. 208.

¹⁰K. J. Holsti, International Politics (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1988) p. 413.

the United Nations Charter: Article 33 (1) orders the parties to a dispute which is likely to endanger international peace and security to seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlements, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice. If the parties fail to settle their dispute by these means, article 37 (1) requires that they refer it to the Security Council.

Of these provisions, when seeking external intervention to solve their dispute, the parties would be least likely to turn to arbitration and judicial settlement. First, these legalistic means enter the scene when mediation has not been successful.¹¹ Second, since the parties have to agree to submit to arbitration, a preliminary bargain between them is necessary--an unlikely gesture, given the nature of their relationship.¹² Third, as Hans Morgenthau pointed out, political disputes--disputes in which the distribution of power between two nations is at stake--cannot be settled by judicial methods.¹³

These difficulties leave the parties with three principal option of mediation, mediation being the action third parties

¹¹ Kenneth Boulding, Conflict and Defense (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), p. 319.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Hans Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), p. 469.

take in an attempt to facilitate a settlement of the issues at stake among the original players.¹⁴: (1) mediation with the involvement of private individuals; (2) mediation involving a third party, or third parties involving governments outside the United Nations; (3) mediation within or under the auspices of the United Nations. In the Arab-Israeli conflict, mediation attempts included all three patterns. While the first pattern was most commonly used during the British Mandate, it is the second pattern that has dominated mediation efforts throughout the conflict. Still, during the latter half of the decade under investigation here, the demand evolved to assign the United Nations a greater role in the peace process--in the form of an international Middle East peace conference, to be convened under the auspices of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

Typically, a third party is engaged in a conciliation process by helping the belligerent parties to reach a compromise; compromise being a situation under which the parties make mutual concessions in order to terminate the conflict.¹⁵ Here, although the parties hold different positions, they are willing to settle for something less than their ideal position, rather than continue the conflict. A settlement can then be reached by a

¹⁴Oran Young, "Intermediaries: Additional Thoughts on Third Parties", Journal of Conflict Resolution (Vol. XVI, no. 1), p. 52.

¹⁵.Kriesberg, Social Conflict, p. 217.

process of bargaining.¹⁶

According to John Burton, compromise rests on the premise that the continuation of conflict has a negative outcome for both sides; or its resolution has a positive outcome for both.¹⁷

This proposition challenges the traditional view which holds that while subjective elements may be present in all conflicts, a dominating 'objective' conflict of interest exists in every confrontation¹⁸. According to this traditional view, in the resolution of conflict, a fixed amount of gratification is to be shared between the adversaries. Hence, the conclusion of conflict must be, by nature, a zero-sum-game in which any gain by one side results in an equal loss to the other.

But, according to the non-traditional view, a conflict that appears to be over 'objective' disagreements could be transformed into a 'subjective' conflict providing that the parties 'reperceive' each others' motives. It is the third party that helps the protagonists to reperceive each other motives, by accurately informing each side of the perception of the other, of the alternative values and goals, or of the alternative means and costs of attaining them.¹⁹

¹⁶ Boulding, Conflict and Defense, pp. 309-10.

¹⁷ Burton, "Resolution of Conflict", International Studies Quarterly (no. 16, March 1972), pp. 9-10; Conflict and Communication, pp. 205-6.

¹⁸ Idem, "Resolution of Conflict", pp.9-10.

¹⁹ Ibid. For further discussion on the objective/subjective side of conflict see Ronald Fisher, "Prenegotiation Problem-solving Discussions: Enhancing the Potential for Successful

The notion that misperception and misunderstanding between the parties is a key ingredient in the life of a conflict, and that helping the parties to re-perceive each other's motives is crucial to the termination of conflict is prevalent in the theoretical literature of conflict resolution. But, more than just a matter of perception or re-perception, the evaluation of the continuation of conflict as a negative-sum game, and the termination of conflict as a positive-sum game is surely a matter of sober calculation. Loss of territory, as a clear example of zero-sum; avoiding casualties and war expenses as examples of positive-sum, are parts of such sober evaluation.

Hence, the decision to agree to negotiation involves an understanding that negotiations are a positive-sum game, if non-symmetrical, as both parties are to benefit from it, even though they may not get everything they want. Still, they concede to the fact that an imperfect solution is better than no solution.

The first step in the conciliation process is helping the parties, through mediation or consultation, to build mutual trust; thereby helping to shape the conditions which could permit the beginning of negotiations.²⁰

Negotiation", Janice Gross Stein (ed.), Getting to the Table (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

²⁰For a distinction between mediation and consultation see Fisher, "Prenegotiation Problem-solving Discussions: Enhancing the Potential for Successful Negotiation", in Janice Gross Stein (ed.), Getting to the Table (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), pp. 210-11. He also elaborates on third party consultation in "Third Party Consultation", Journal of Conflict Resolution (Vol. XVI, no. 1, March 1972), pp. 65-77.

Trust-building among enemies is difficult, but not impossible: Morton Deutsch lists nine types of situations in which suspicion can turn into trust; Paul Pillar prescribes some methods to overcome distrust; and I. William Zartman assigns the role of trust-building almost exclusively to third parties.²¹

Deutsch noted that "the existence of trust is in itself a source of cooperation, and without it the benefit that can be derived from organized cooperative activity is drastically curtailed".²²

To help build mutual trust the mediator can act as a go-between the two sides by communicating each side's position to the other. This is usually done before any serious negotiations can actually begin. Usually the mediator exercises a substantial amount of authority, often utilizing his position by introducing a new option, previously not contemplated by the parties. Thus mediation could be associated with pressure-imposing behavior upon the parties, frequently when other methods produce no result²³.

Similarly, mediation could be associated with rewarding the protagonists in return for positive results in mediation. The attractive pay-offs which the United States granted both Egypt

²¹Morton Deutsch, The Resolution of Conflict (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), pp. 145-48; Paul Pillar, Negotiating Peace (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), pp. 80-88; I. William Zartman, Ripe for Resolution (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 238.

²²Deutsch, The Resolution of Conflict, pp. 55-56.

²³Boulding, Conflict and Defense, p. 319.

and Israel in return for the American-sponsored peace treaty they concluded is a case in point.²⁴ Nevertheless, compensation, however attractive, in itself is rarely a determining factor in the decision to negotiate.

In either case, the function of intervention or mediation is to generate a change for the better in the behavior of the parties, and to provide a means for justifying compromise and rationalizing flexibility.²⁵

The basis for mediation is the uncommonness of pure conflict. As Thomas Schelling explains,

... in international affairs, there is mutual dependence as well as opposition. Pure conflict, in which the interest of two antagonists are completely opposed, is a special case; it would arise in a war of complete extermination, otherwise not even in war.²⁶

Indeed, in spite of the antagonistic nature of the protagonists' relations, they do share some mutual interests, most commonly--a desire to keep the conflict under control, or even the renunciation of mutual annihilation. In the Arab-Israeli conflict that translates into the basic fact that the conflict itself has proved to be militarily unwinnable for either side, thus providing the basis for mediation.

Jeffrey Rubin and Bert Brown describe this mutuality of

²⁴For example, on April 2, 1979, President Carter asked Congress for \$4.8 billion in military-economic aid for Israel and Egypt over the ensuing three years. The Senate endorsed the aid on May 14, and the House on May 30.

²⁵Young, The Intermediaries, pp. 36-43.

²⁶Thomas C. Schelling, The Strategy of Conflict (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 4.

interests as a relationship of mixed motives toward one another. While their interests are partly in conflict, there must exist some degree of commonality of interest for negotiation to occur. This means that the parties' interest must be at once similar and different to assure interaction. If the interests are totally compatible, there is nothing to bargain for; if they are totally opposed, there is no basis for negotiation.²⁷

In this connection, Fred Ikle distinguishes between two kinds of common interests: an identical common interest and a complementary interest. In the identical common interest, the parties not only want the same object, but they also want to benefit from the same arrangement. This situation can only occur by joining together. Ceasefire agreements are but one example of agreements which are based on identical common interests.²⁸

When parties are interested in an exchange, they want different things. They then have complementary interests. These they cannot secure by themselves but can only award to each other. The most common example here are trade exchanges and sales.²⁹

The extent to which the adversaries share an identical interest directly affect the degree to which they will cooperate. Certainly, the highest degree of cooperation between them is

²⁷Jeffrey Rubin and Bert Brown, The Social Psychology of Bargaining and Negotiation (New York: Academic Press, 1975), p. 10.

²⁸Ikle, How Nations Negotiate, pp.2-3.

²⁹Ibid.

demonstrated when both sides believe that the timing for negotiations is right. But even at that stage the involvement of a third party can be essential to negotiations, especially in a long standing conflict.

Usually timing is related to the question whether the conflict is ripe for resolution. Ultimately, ripeness requires (1) the belief by the parties that a peaceful conclusion of the conflict to which they are part is necessary or desirable; (2) the desire by the parties for the same kind of agreement at the same time.³⁰ But as will be shown in this dissertation, timing has an added element: (3) the domestic disposition that exist to support negotiations, so that the third party could be able to exert enough influence on the target country to accept its initiative, at least in principle.

Indeed, before trying to intermediate, a third party must find out the prevailing conditions of timing--timing in the sense of being able to pressure the parties and convince them that the time for negotiations is right. For example, in 1974 Secretary Kissinger seized a particular moment when he was able to persuade the parties from a position of authority which he uniquely enjoyed in Israel, and which he developed with the Arabs. He was able to keep the pressure going, and to convince the parties that

³⁰ Howard Raffia, The Art and Science of Negotiation (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), p. 78; Louis Kriesberg, "Strategies of Negotiating Agreements: Arab-Israeli and American-Soviet Cases". Negotiation Journal (vol. 4, no. 1, January 1988).

stalemate was not in their interest.³¹

Any successful attempt by a third party to effect negotiations must follow a pre-negotiation stage. The pre-negotiation stage is the stage in which leaders decide to negotiate, and during which the parties involved can determine--however generally--what kind of an agreement is acceptable. It is distinct from the negotiating phase in that in this phase leaders are not yet concerned with the bargaining process--although their decision to negotiate may involve consideration on the feasibility of a positive outcome--but with the need to arrive at a peaceful solution.

Some view the pre-negotiation stage as a separate process in itself.³² It begins when one or more parties consider negotiation as a policy option and communicates this intention to other parties. It ends when the parties agree to formal negotiations or when one party abandons the consideration of negotiations as a policy option.³³ Or, to use William Zartman's clarification, pre-negotiation is the span of time and activity in which the parties

³¹This conclusion was made after a private conversation with Professor I. William Zartman, New York, March 27, 1991.

³²For example, Brian Tomlin divides the pre-negotiation process into five stages: Problem identification, search for options, commitment to negotiation, agreement to negotiate, and setting the parameters. See Brian Tomlin, "The Stages of Prenegotiation: The Decision to Negotiate North American Free Trade", Janice Gross Stein (ed.). Getting to the Table (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

³³Stein, in her introduction to Getting to the Table, p. x.

move from conflicting unilateral solutions for a mutual problem to a joint search for co-operative multilateral or joint solution.³⁴ Indeed, Harold Saunders describes it as a process that is more complicated, time-consuming, and difficult than the process of reaching an agreement once negotiations have begun.³⁵

The importance of the pre-negotiation stage for successful negotiations was evident in the Camp David agreements. Indeed, by 1977, the basic nature of the potential peace between Israel and Egypt had been secretly discussed for some years between Moshe Dayan (Israel's Foreign Minister at the time), and Hassan Tuhami (President Sadat's advisor). During these informal explorations the Egyptian learned that Israel was ready to give up the Sinai for peace, while the Israelis learned that if Sadat could get the Sinai back, he could make substantial concessions for peace. At that point negotiations were centered upon the depth of concession the leaders were prepared to make for peace.³⁶

In accord with the mediation paradigm, third parties have been trying--quite persistently--to mediate a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict from the conflict's very beginning. But at

³⁴I. William Zartman, "Prenegotiation: Phases and Functions", Janice Gross Stein (ed.), Getting to the Table (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p. 4.

³⁵Saunders, "We Need a Larger Theory of Negotiation: The Importance of Pre-Negotiation Phases", Negotiation Journal (July 1985), p. 249

³⁶Tamir, A Soldier for Peace, Ch.2, Private conversation with Ambassador Lewis, Washington D.C., April 26, 1991.

least until the Madrid conference of November 1991, these efforts had not been successful in bringing the parties to the negotiating table. As for the Madrid conference, by the time of this writing no signs exist to indicate that the ceremonial opening of Arab-Israeli talks would continue to a fruitful conclusion.

Noticeably one general pattern in mediation attempts in the Arab-Israeli conflict can unmistakably be identified: earnest mediation attempts always emerged at time of or immediately following crisis situations. But these attempts involved both private individuals and officials from various governments and the United Nations who tried to intervene diplomatically in the conflict, occasionally all at the same time. In addition, the line between efforts to mediate a solution to the conflict and efforts to manage the conflict was seldom clear. Finally, the Camp David negotiations were the first to take into consideration the transformation of the Arab-Israeli conflict from an international dispute to an intercommunal strife, by trying to find a formula that dealt with the Palestinians as a separate entity.³⁷

Notwithstanding, three primary interveners can be identified: (1) Britain, which during the mandate period had made several attempts to impose a solution on the parties, but never

³⁷For a study of the intercommunalization of the conflict, see Kelman, "The Palestinianization of the Arab-Israeli Conflict", in Yehuda Lukacs and Abdallah Battah (eds.), The Arab-Israeli Conflict (Boulder, Westview, 1988).

succeeded; (2) The United Nations, which between 1947 and 1949 especially, and in 1967 was making attempts to mediate a solution to the conflict, but the best the organization could achieve was ceasefire agreements; (3) the United States, which from the mid 1970s on assumed the role of a near-exclusive mediator.

These three main interveners are surveyed in two impressive studies. The first is Neil Caplan's study of Arab-Zionist diplomacy from 1913 until the end of the British mandate in 1948. Caplan shows the inability of third-parties to reconcile through negotiations the mounting differences between Palestinian Arabs and Zionists. Indeed, neither the Turks, nor the British, the Americans or the United Nations, to whom both the Arabs and the Zionists frequently turned to help determine the future of Palestine, could bring the parties together, even at the time when the alternative was war. Not different than at the time of writing, often this was the outcome of the need of Arab and Zionist leaders to consider public opinion in their own communities.³⁸

These failures included one of the most serious mediation attempts (1939-43), involving such figures as the prominent Zionist leader, Chaim Weizman; the Saudi King, Ibn Sa'ud; Prime Minister Churchill and the British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden; President Roosevelt and officials in the United States

³⁸ Neil Caplan, Futile Diplomacy, Volume One: Early Arab-Zionist Negotiation Attempts 1913-1931 (London: Frank Cass, 1983); Volume Two: Arab-Zionist Negotiations and the End of the Mandate (London: Frank Cass, 1986).

Department of State. Despite the involvement of these important figures the initiative fell through, partly because of the failure of some Zionist leaders to promote it; partly because King Ibn Saud's fear of being exposed as a "traitor."³⁹

Another thorough study is that of Saadia Touval, who examines mediation efforts in the Arab-Israeli conflict from the termination of the British mandate and the establishment of Israel in 1948, to the Camp David agreements in 1979.⁴⁰ Touval, who puts great emphasis on the mediator's capabilities and its motivation, shows that the failure of mediation was often the result of the discrepancy between the Arab and Israeli positions and the tenacity with which both adhered to these positions.

The fact remains that the only successful case of mediation in the Arab Israeli conflict was the Camp David accords. But as Touval himself shows, this rare achievement cannot be attributed to the unique features of the Camp David mediation process, such as President Carter's personal involvement; his use of pressure and threats on one hand, and attractive incentives on the other; and the guarantees he offered. Rather, the concessions which Egypt and Israel both made, momentous as they were (for Israel the return of Sinai, for Egypt the recognition of Israel and a separate peace), had been agreed upon before mediation began, and were brought about by other factors. They also did not involve

³⁹ Ibid, pp. 133-38

⁴⁰ Saadia Touval, The Peace Brokers, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982).

basic policy changes.⁴¹

Because they were not different from previous mediation attempts--with the exception of the Camp David agreements--subsequent attempts were similarly unsuccessful. The following is an account of these attempts.

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 319.

PART II: THE AMERICAN PREOCCUPATION WITH A STABILIZED
MIDDLE EAST.

III: INTRODUCTION: THE ROLE OF THE MIDDLE EAST
IN AMERICA'S POWER POLITICS.

Power politics, by definition, are pursued to gain or maintain influence.¹ They are the result of the inherent insecurity each nation-state experiences in an international system that is characterized by anarchy.

America's foreign policy was not always preoccupied with global power. Rather, as John Spanier maintained, America entered the twentieth century with relative unawareness of the role that power plays in the relations among nations. Even its forced entry into the first World War did not change that naivete: as the balance of power in Europe was about to collapse due to the Western allies' military exhaustion, the United States allied itself with Britain and France to protect its own security. But after the war the United States returned to its isolationist policy, only to be forced to enter World War II, twenty years later.²

The emergence of a bi-polar world at end of World War II, coupled with the Soviet Union's nuclear capability, changed the American foreign policy outlook: America's foreign policy was

¹Perhaps the most widely accepted definition of power is that of Hans Morgenthau: power is "man's control over the mind and actions of other men." Hans Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), p. 32.

²John Spanier, American Foreign Policy Since World War II (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1977), pp. 14-15.

now guided by increased insecurity in relation to the Soviet Union.

Determined, America assumed the global role of policing the world against Soviet expansionism and against the spread of communism. For that purpose, the US, among other things, Proclaimed the Truman Doctrine (1947); formed the NATO Alliance (1950); fought in Korea (1950-53); intervened militarily in Lebanon (1958); promoted an invasion in Cuba (1961); interfered militarily in the Dominican Republic and got involved in a long and bloody war in Indochina (1965); and intervened militarily in Grenada (1983). Throughout much of the 1980s it supported a rightist dictatorships in El Salvador, and attempted to overthrow the leftist regime in Nicaragua.

One of the regions in which the United States could not have permitted Soviet expansionism has been the Middle East: in geopolitical terms the Middle East connects the three continents of Asia, Africa, and Europe, and it contains the largest amount of the world's oil reserves. It is also a major market for arms and heavy military equipment.³

What enabled the United States--and the Soviet Union for that matter--to intervene in the Middle East, as part of their global balancing activity, is the Arab-Israeli conflict. The

³No agreement exists as to what constitute the Middle East. Thus, the "Middle East" means here the Arab countries, including Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the United Arab Emirates and the United Yemen; and Israel. The "region" means here the area stretching from the south-eastern border of the USSR to the Indian Ocean, and from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean.

long duration of that conflict, with its cyclical crises, made intervention all the more accessible.

It was through political, military, and economic support to local states that both super-powers intervened in the region. Ironically, the supply of sophisticated weapons by the super-powers to both sides helped to make the Arab-Israeli conflict militarily unwinnable, turning the search for peace to become a more effective instrument of intervention. Indeed, it was through diplomacy in the Arab-Israeli conflict that the United States gained the upper hand over the Soviet Union in the quest for influence in the region.

Until World War II America cared little about the Middle East. But with increased Soviet pressure in the region, combined with the declining power of Britain and France and the importance of oil, the United States began to establish its influence in the region in order to counter Soviet intrusion and to restore the local balance of power.

In 1946 Washington took the lead in helping Iran and Turkey defeat Soviet expansionist aims; and in 1955, under American leadership, Britain, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, and Turkey sought to establish the Middle East Treaty Organization (METO), more commonly known as the Baghdad Pact, in effect extending the NATO line from Turkey to the borders of India.

In 1956, following the Suez Campaign, increasing American pressure forced Britain, France, and Israel to withdraw their forces from Sinai; and in early 1957 Washington inaugurated the

Eisenhower Doctrine. It stated that the United States viewed the preservation of the independence and integrity of the Middle Eastern countries vital to American security, and that America was willing to use armed force to assist any nation or nations requesting assistance against armed aggression from any country controlled by international communism.

Not only did the doctrine indicate that the US involvement in the Middle East was part of the American global approach to the threat of Soviet aggression and Communist subversion, but it invited increased American involvement in the region.

Thus, in 1958, upon the request of the Lebanese government after the breakout of the Lebanon civil war, American Marines landed in Lebanon. Also that year, after the withdrawal of Iraq from the Baghdad Pact (now named Central Treaty Organization, or CENTO) as a result of the Iraqi coup, the United States became almost a full-fledged member of the pact. Washington was bound to each of the Muslim states remaining in the pact (Iran, Pakistan and Turkey) by bi-lateral defense agreement. By the end of the decade Washington was committed with foreign aid to Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia; and Israel.

With increased Arab antagonism toward Israel and mounting Soviet support to the Arabs, the United States stepped up its support to Israel. This support increased when the United States committed itself to the security of Israel and assumed the role of Israel's principal supplier of arms, after France relinquished that role following the 1967 Arab-Israel war.

But in the 1970s Washington began to maintain firmer ties with moderate Arab states, and to normalize relations with radical Arab states. That policy paid off when after the 1973 Yom Kippur war the United States, under the direction of Secretary Kissinger, became the exclusive intermediary between Arabs and Israelis.

Washington's direct involvement in the promotion of an Arab-Israeli peace actually began in 1953, when it sent Eric Johnston to the Middle East to negotiate an agreement on the development of the Jordan River water resources.⁴ America was hoping that an agreement would reduce tension resulting from Arab objections to Israel's development plans, and that such an agreement would lead to further negotiations. The mission, which lasted for two-and-a-half years, ended inconclusively.⁵

The second mission was that of Robert B. Anderson, President Eisenhower's special envoy. The goal of this mission was directed toward reaching an Egyptian-Israeli agreement during a period of escalating Arab-Israeli tension and increased Soviet involvement in the region, and was part of an attempt to arrive at a more comprehensive settlement. This mission, also unsuccessful, lasted from December 1955 to March 1956.⁶

The next direct American diplomatic involvement in the Arab-

⁴In contrast to direct efforts, non-direct efforts include behind the scene efforts under the pretense of membership in various United Nations organs and/or commissions.

⁵Touval, The Peace Brokers, p. 107.

⁶Ibid, pp. 107-135.

Israeli conflict was the Rogers Initiative, which emerged in the aftermath of the 1967 Six-Day War.⁷ This initiative, which took place between June 19 and July 31, 1970, attempted to achieve two aims: (1) a cease fire agreement in the War of Attrition which Egypt launched against Israel; and (2) the resumption of the Jarring Mission. The Rogers mission also came at a time of worsening Arab-Israeli relations, and was directed at weakening Soviet influence in the area and improving the American position in the Arab world. Although it failed as an attempt to reach a more comprehensive agreement, it nonetheless succeeded in achieving its two immediate aims. Moreover, from an American standpoint, the fact that Egypt accepted the United States as an intermediary despite the absence at the time of diplomatic relations between the two countries, and despite the negative Egyptian attitude towards the United States, was in itself an

⁷Not to be confused with the Rogers initiative, the Rogers Plan of December 9, 1969, called upon the four great powers (the U.S., the U.S.S.R., the U.K. and France) to assist Dr. Gunar Jarring--a Swedish Diplomat and special representative of the United Nations Secretary General--in working out a settlement. Dr. Jarring, held a series of talks with Arabs and Israelis between 1967 and 1972. His mission lead to no progress in Arab-Israeli negotiation. The Rogers plan's basic principles were: Israeli withdrawal from territories it occupies after the 1967 war; a just settlement of the issue of Palestinian refugees from the 1948 and 1967 wars; a settlement on the final status of Jerusalem. Rogers' remark that the boundaries established in the 1949 armistice agreement were not final political borders, and his call for "insubstantial alterations" of the preexisting lines, clearly indicated the difference between the Israeli and American positions. For the full text of the Rogers address before the 1969 Galaxy Conference on Adult Education (Washington D.C., Dec. 9, 1969) confer Lukacs (ed.), Documents on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 1967-1983, pp. 18-23.

achievement.⁸

The Interim Agreement negotiations, also under American sponsorship, lasted from January 1971 to April 1972. This time Washington's involvement was the result of separate invitations extended to the United States by Egypt and Israel to help the two countries to achieve an agreement. Directly related to the Rogers Initiative, the interim Agreement negotiations sought the extension of the cease fire agreement and the disengagement of Egyptian and Israeli forces along the Suez Canal, including the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Canal Zone, and the reopening of the Suez Canal to all nations, including Israel. Although the negotiations ended in failure, the United States became the principal intermediary between Egypt and Israel.⁹

The 1973 Yom Kippur war gave the United States still another opportunity to intervene directly in Arab-Israeli negotiations. In fact negotiations during and after that war prepared the ground for the Camp David negotiations.

Under the direction of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, the Nixon Administration intervened in the war from its onset. The main purpose of American diplomacy at that time was to replace the Soviet Union as the Arabs' ally and thereby to control postwar diplomacy.¹⁰ As Kissinger himself disclosed, from

⁸ Touval, The Peace Brokers, pp. 165-177.

⁹ Ibid, pp. 177-194.

¹⁰ Henry Kissinger, Years of Upheaval (New York: Little, Brown, and Co., 1982), pp. 468.

the beginning he was determined to use the war to start a peace process.¹¹

The fact that on the second day of the war Cairo virtually invited Washington to participate in the peace process made it easier for Washington to achieve its aim.¹² When President Sadat appealed to the Americans to help the entrapped Egyptian Third Army, the United States in effect assumed a key role as a go-between Egypt and Israel. And when, at the end of October, both the Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir and the Egyptian Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmy visited Washington at the same time, that role became finalized.¹³ By mid-November, 1973, with the instrumental help of the United States, Egypt and Israel worked out a detailed accord on the disengagement of forces at kilometer 101.

On December 21-22, the Geneva Conference convened, but it failed to provide the setting for meaningful negotiations. Instead, Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy between the Egyptians, Israelis, and Syrians became the setting for negotiations.

For a short period, under the Carter Administration, the United States entertained the idea of co-brokering an Arab-Israeli peace with the Soviet Union, under the auspices of an international peace conference. The conference, intended for 1978, was to replace the "small steps" approach. As Brzezinski

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid, p. 481.

¹³ Touval, The Peace Brokers, pp. 225-238.

put it,

There were simply no more "small steps" to be taken; one now had to deal somehow with the complicated issues of the Sinai, the West Bank, the Golan Heights, Jerusalem, and more generally of peace and security for Israel.¹⁴

But President Sadat's decision to visit Jerusalem on November 19-21, 1977, forced the Carter administration to rethink the idea. When negotiations between Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat were on the verge of collapse--over problems such as the Palestinian issue, Israeli withdrawal from occupied territory, Israeli security, or the definition of peace¹⁵--Sadat invited the Carter Administration to resume the American role in the Middle East peace process.¹⁶ This involvement helped to produce the 1978 Camp David accords and the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, shifting the balance of power in Washington's favor.

The 1982 Lebanon crisis provided the Reagan Administration with the opportunity to preserve the American influence in the region when Washington arranged for a cease-fire in the war; the withdrawal of PLO forces from Beirut; and the formation of a multinational peacekeeping forces. The crisis also provided Washington with the opportunity to revive the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Although the Reagan Administration was unsuccessful in

¹⁴Brzezinski, Power and Principle (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1983), p. 86.

¹⁵Carter, The Blood of Abraham, p. 298.

¹⁶Touval, The Peace Brokers, pp. 292-302.

doing so, it provided the Bush Administration with a solid base from which it could continue to build its Middle East policy.

During its first eighteen months in office--the time to which this investigation is limited-- the Bush Administration, under the leadership of Secretary Baker, became directly involved in the peace process by trying to influence the Israelis and the Palestinians to participate in a new round of the autonomy talks. But frustrated by the parties' inability to break the deadlock, Baker decided to abandon the peace process until a more suitable time. That time came in the aftermath of the Gulf War.

It is not because Americans regard peace as a supreme value that the United States has intervened diplomatically in the Middle East. True, Washington's foreign policy is not completely free of moral value. As Abba Eban has observed, American foreign policy has been partly influenced by its claim to a higher purpose, inspired by moralism and missionary fervor.¹⁷ But Washington would not involve itself in the pursuit of an Arab-Israeli peace as stubbornly as it did, unless this involvement served some important interests and foreign policy goals.

Generally speaking, the reason why the US has hardly been able to leave the region alone for very long periods--especially since 1967--has to do with the peculiar nature of the Middle East. Basically the region remains an area which is very volatile; an area in which the US has many different interests,

¹⁷Abba Eban, The New Diplomacy (New York: Random House, 1983), p. 19.

one of which is the access to the energy sources.¹⁸

In reality, there has been a long standing conviction among many Middle East experts that because of the character of the region, the nature of the conflict, and the emotional and psychologically complicated makeup of the Arabs, as hope for a settlement evaporates for a substantial period of time, desperation builds up and the danger of war increases steadily. There is strong evidence to support such thinking: during the years 1970 to 1973, when after the war of attrition the US did not attempt to realize resolution 242, the Egyptians were convinced that there really was no diplomatic option, and that they had no alternative but to force a diplomatic option by going to war. That period demonstrates more clearly than any other period the conviction that the Middle East remains in a state of flux--it either moves in the direction of war and belligerency, or peace. It is a conviction that is very deep seated within the community of experts--in the government and out of the government--and this is what moves the United States in the Middle East, unlike Latin America, Africa, or Asia. Often there are enough pressures to be active even if one is pessimistic about one's prospects.¹⁹

As for the specific American foreign policy goals in its

¹⁸ These conclusions are based on private conversations with former Assistant Secretary Richard Murphy, New York, April 9, 1991; and Ambassador Samuel Lewis, Washington D.C., April 26, 1991.

¹⁹ This information is based on a private conversation with Ambassador Lewis, Washington D.C., April 26, 1991.

quest for an Arab-Israeli peace, they consist of: (1) prevent a super-power confrontation which could result from an Arab-Israeli war; (2) diminish the influence of the Soviet Union in the Middle East; (3) insure the uninterrupted flow of oil supplies to the Western allies and Japan; (4) protect the existence of Israel; (5) prevent strain in American relations with its Western allies and Japan; and (6) promote human rights for the Palestinians through Palestinian self-determination.²⁰ These will be taken up in the next Chapter.

²⁰ Carter, The Blood of Abraham, p. 56; Henry Kissinger, American Foreign Policy (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977), p. 286.

IV. US INTERESTS AND GOALS BEHIND MIDDLE EAST PEACE NEGOTIATIONS.

a. The Prevention of Super-Power Confrontation¹.

The existence of ultra-sophisticated nuclear weapons in the hands of the super powers surely reduced the likelihood of an uncontrolled escalation of tension between the Soviet Union and the United States. However, the Arab-Israeli conflict has carried the potential for an American-Soviet confrontation, especially during crises. This was best displayed at the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war, which developed from a regional conventional crisis involving three states, into a potentially non-conventional global crisis involving the two super powers.

That near-confrontation was a result of the American and Soviet intervention during the crisis, each on behalf of its client state(s), as Washington intervened on behalf of Israel, and Moscow on behalf of Egypt and Syria.

The war, which began on October 6, lasted 38 days. On the third day of the war it became apparent to Washington that the Israeli losses were far greater than previously estimated. Since Washington' could not permit the Soviet-equipped Arab armies to win the war, President Nixon decided to approve arms shipments to Israel in accordance with an earlier Israeli request. In reaction, Moscow enticed Jordan and Algeria to enter the war,

¹Much of the description given here of the American-Soviet encounter during the 1973 war is based on Henry Kissinger's account as it appeared in Years of Upheaval, chs. 11-13.

promising them full diplomatic support.

On October 10, Moscow started a massive airlift to Syria, and at the same time proposed a cease-fire in place. Washington could not accept such a proposition: since Israel had not yet recapture territory it had lost, a ceasefire would have meant a clear victory for the Soviet-supplied Arab forces and a severely impaired American position in the post war diplomacy. Washington therefore refused to endorse a ceasefire resolution.

The Nixon Administration soon learned that in addition to the Soviet airlift, seven Soviet airborne divisions were on military alert. It thus voiced a clear warning to Moscow that any Soviet military intervention would be resisted by the United States.

When Israel expressed willingness to proceed with a ceasefire agreement because of shortage of military equipment, President Nixon decided on an immediate airlift to Israel--a move which meant to countermeasure the Soviet airlift to its Arab client-state. Indeed, the astounding magnitude of the airlift was geared to outdo Soviet supply efforts.

The tide began to turn on October 14, when the Egyptian suffered a heavy setback in the Sinai. This shift was followed by the crossing of the Israeli forces to the West Bank of the Suez-Canal and the destruction of the Soviet-equipped surface-to-air missiles there. On October 16, the Soviets attempted to arrange for a ceasefire, while the Israeli forces on the Suez canal made substantial progress, threatening the Egyptian Third Army.

On October 20, upon the invitation of the Soviet leadership, Secretary of State Kissinger arrived in Moscow for "urgent consultations on the Middle East". During the visit Kissinger proposed a plan, to which the Soviets agreed. That plan became the basis for United Nations Resolution 338, which called for an immediate ceasefire, an implementation of Resolution 242, and direct negotiations between the concerned parties under "appropriate auspices". The ceasefire, to which Israel and the Arabs agreed, went into effect on October 22.

But a day later the Israeli forces made further advances, partly surrounding the Egyptian Third Army. On October 23, the Security Council passed Resolution 339, calling on the parties to return to the October 22 lines. United Nations observers were to be sent immediately to supervise the ceasefire, which was to go into effect on October 24. On October 25 the Israeli forces encircled the Egyptian Third Army, cutting it off from any supply lines.

On October 24, President Sadat requested that American and Soviet forces be sent to the Middle East. While the Soviets favored this proposal, the United States refused to admit Soviet troops to the region. American-Soviet confrontation over Sadat's proposal escalated, when the Soviet leader, Leonid Brezhnev, threatened to send troops to the area unilaterally if the United States refused Sadat's proposal. He also placed his air-mobile forces in Europe on alert. Moreover, reports circulated that a Soviet vessel carrying nuclear material arrived at Alexandria on

October 22.

In reply, Washington issued a military alert of American forces (the state of alert reached DefCon III--increased readiness without the conviction that war is likely). In addition, Sadat was warned that the appearance of Soviet troops on Egyptian soil would have to be resisted.

When Washington estimated that the Soviets were capable of lifting 5,000 troops daily into Egypt, it bolstered the American forces in the eastern Mediterranean, and reinforced the alert. Moreover, the United States armed forces around the world were placed on nuclear alert, while Kissinger publicly warned the Soviet Union that a nuclear war might result from a Middle East confrontation.

A few hours later Egypt withdrew the request for a joint Soviet-American force, asking instead that the Security Council dispatch to the area an international force. Such a force customarily excluded troops from the five permanent members of the Council. It was created that same day through Resolution 340.²

The 1973 Arab-Israeli war was the second crisis in which the United States and the Soviet Union reached a near-brink situation. The only other comparable situation occurred during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. Although the Cuban Missile Crisis

²For a detailed account of the alert see Shlomo Aronson, Conflict and Bargaining in the Middle East (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), pp. 180-196; and Henry A. Kissinger, Years of Upheaval (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1982), pp. 545-599.

was more serious than the 1973 Middle East crisis, the latter certainly demonstrated the risk that the Arab-Israeli conflict imposed on the super powers when they pursued analogous interests in the area.

b. The Reduction Soviet Influence of in the Middle East.

Analysts of Soviet policy in the Middle East during the Cold War years are usually divided into two schools of thought. One school viewed Soviet Middle East policy as primarily defensive in nature. That means that the Soviets were mainly interested in safeguarding the region from being used as a base for attack on the Soviet Union. The second school viewed Soviet policy as being essentially aggressive in nature, aiming at the removal of Western influence from the strategically important oil-rich region.⁴

Wherever the truth lies, it is unquestionable that the Middle East was of great strategic value to the Soviets. First, it protected their southern border--a strategic concern that became significant with the creation of NATO and METO (CENTO). Second, the area contains the only "warm water" route for the Soviet Union. Third, as an oil rich region the Middle East could free the Soviet Union from the burden of supplying oil to East European countries, in addition to being able to profit from Arab

⁴Robert O. Freedman, "The Soviet Union and the Arab-Israeli Conflict", in Robert O. Freedman (ed.), World Politics and the Arab-Israeli Conflict (New York: Pergamon Press, 1979), pp. 53-54.

oil boycotts against the West.⁵

There is little wonder then that Moscow used the Arab-Israeli conflict as the most important channel to exert its influence in the Middle East.

Although Soviet aspirations in the eastern Mediterranean intensified after World War II, Moscow's intervention in the region started much earlier, as part of its attempts to combat British imperialism.

In 1920, at the Baku Congress of the People of the East the Soviet Union became the ally of oppressed colonial and semi-colonial Arab people, and in 1921 it concluded treaties of friendship with Turkey and Iran.⁶

In 1946 the Soviets were trying to establish a foothold in Greece through wide scale communist-backed guerilla warfare, and refused to withdraw their forces from Iran.⁷ Ultimately they withdrew from Iran in 1946, and exercised much less influence in the area until 1955.

Not unlike the United States, Soviet aspiration in the

⁵Galia Golan, Yom Kippur and After (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 7-8.

⁶In 1945 the Soviet Union made a number of demands of Turkey, which included: the cession of several Turkish districts lying on the Russian-Turkish border; the revision of the Montreux Convention (governing the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles Straits) in favor of a joint Russo-Turkish administration of the straits; Turkey's severance of ties with Britain; and the conclusion of a Soviet-Turkish treaty by which Moscow would acquire naval and land bases in the Dardanelles, for "joint defense".

⁷Spanier, American Foreign Policy Since World War II, pp. 30-32.

region were part of Moscow's global objectives. Not unlike the United States, the Soviet Union's foreign policy towards the Middle East was primarily focused on and channeled through the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Until 1948 Moscow tried to influence the Middle East through diplomatic and military aid to Israel. But toward the end of that year a shift in Moscow's attitude toward Israel was evident after Golda Meir, First Minister to Moscow, raised the question of the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel.

The years between 1949 and 1967 marked a progressive deterioration in Soviet-Israeli relations and the culmination of a Soviet-Arab coalition. That process started at the beginning of 1949, when David Ben-Gurion, the first Israeli Prime Minister, outlined Israel's foreign policy, indicating the line of neutrality Israel had adopted vis-a-vis the Cold War. Another landmark in that process occurred in 1950, when Israel sided with the United States on the invasion of South Korea.

When Nikita Khrushchev replaced Joseph Stalin in 1953, the Kremlin started to use its split from Israel as a channel to enhance Soviet-Arab relations, with particular attention directed at Egypt. The rise of Gamal Abdul Nasser to power two years earlier played a significant role in that shift.

Khrushchev realized better than Stalin the potential of revolutionary regimes in the Middle East. After all, Nasser not only emerged the winner of the internal power struggle in Egypt, but he also continued to play a progressive role in the struggle

against imperialism: he challenged the British in the Suez Canal, openly supported the National Liberation Front (FLN) in Algeria against the French, and in 1955 he surfaced as a charismatic leader at the first conference of the non-aligned countries at Bandung. And as Nasser prospered as the Pan-Arab leader, the Soviets could extend their friendship to the rest of the Arab world through him.

The year 1955 constituted an important milestone in Soviet relations with the Middle East, as Moscow managed to balance the gains the West had made in the area by befriending the Arabs and their allies in the non-aligned movement.

It was also in 1955 that the Soviet Union and its satellites began a massive military and economic aid policy in the Middle East, extending low-interest loans and technical assistance to Egypt, Syria, and Yemen. Of particular importance was the Soviet-Czech arms deal with Egypt, the magnitude of which was unprecedented in the history of arms sales.⁸

The Suez Campaign of 1956 enabled the Soviets to further intensify their ties with Egypt and Syria, and the Soviet undertaking to build the Aswan High Dam in 1960 marked still another turning point in Soviet-Egyptian relations.

In the years preceding the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, Soviet support for the Arabs reached an unprecedented level, playing a significant role in provoking the Six-Day War. It was during that

⁸George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1980), p. 781.

period that Moscow intensified its ties with Syria, and encouraged the Syrians to carry out anti-Israeli military activity, under Russian protection.

When Nasser ousted the United Nations peace keeping forces from the Sinai and proclaimed a blockade of the Straits of Tiran, Moscow used United Nations debates as an arena from where to voice its "anti-imperialist" propaganda.

Humiliated by the poor performance of the Soviet-built Arab armies during the Six-Day War, Moscow broke off diplomatic relations with Israel, and stepped up its support of its Arab clients. Egypt, by now completely dependent on the Soviets for the resupply of arms, became more vulnerable to Soviet penetration, and began to play an increasing role as a vehicle for Russian infiltration to Yemen, South Arabia, and Africa; and for Moscow's increased influence on socialist movements in various Muslim countries. By the late 1960s the Soviet Union completely identified itself with Arab nationalism and with the Arab struggle against Zionism and Western imperialism.

In 1972, however, the Soviets suffered a humiliating defeat in the Middle East when President Sadat expelled all Soviet advisers from Egypt. Ironically, that defeat helped Russia to penetrate deeper in the Middle East: Moscow now sought to maintain its influence in the region through increased political, military, and economic aid to Syria, and, for the first time, through direct military aid to the PLO.

In the 1973 Yom Kippur War Egypt was still a recipient of

massive military aid from Moscow. As a result of the impressive performance of the Egyptian and Syrian Soviet-trained forces the influence of the Soviet Union increased during that war. But Sadat's desire for American economic aide, and the American mediation in the Arab-Israeli conflict after the 1973 war--in itself the birth of the peace process--shifted the political balance of power in the region in favor of the United States.

Notably, since Gorbachev's rise to power the Soviet Union had steadily improved its relations with the West, including Israel. But this does not mean that the new Commonwealth of Independent States would not try to regain its influence by supporting the Arabs in the event of another Arab-Israeli war. It is not at all inconceivable that in the event that the former Soviet republics will fail to address their internal problems, their frustrations would turn outward again, in the form of a new cold war. One cannot forget that the Soviet foreign policy was long typified by aggression and expansionism.

c. The Protection of Oil Supplies to the Western Allies and Japan.

Oil has been widely considered to be the lifeblood of the industrial countries since the mid 1950, when it began to replace coal as the most important source of energy.

Between 1955 and 1971 the world's consumption of oil tripled and the international trade of oil increased nearly

fivefold.⁹ The commodity has been especially vital for the nations of Western Europe and Japan, and to a lesser degree the United States. In fact, from 1960--the year the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) was founded¹⁰--to 1975, Western Europe and Japan's dependence on imported oil was nearly total. During this period the importance of oil to the United States rose sharply, resulting in the country's inability to meet its energy requirements from indigenous resources, not to mention the inability to be the emergency oil supplier to the NATO allies and Japan.¹¹

Thus, one of the more important American interests in the area is the access to this source of energy. For that the United States wants as broad a based network of friendly ties in the area as possible.¹²

Because of the large amount of oil found in the Middle East--the region contains almost 75 per cent of the oil in world trade, and there is no prospect of any lessened importance for

⁹Dankwart A. Rustow, Oil and Turmoil (New York: W. W. Norton, 1982), p. 107.

¹⁰OPEC is an association of 13 oil-producing states, including Algeria, Ecuador, Gabon, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirate, and Venezuela. It was founded for the purpose of restoring and stabilizing the price of oil, which in 1969 was reduced by Standard Oil. Since its foundation the organization's aim is to provide a common oil policy for its members.

¹¹Melvin A. Conant and Fern Racine Gold, The Geopolitics of Energy (Boulder: Westview Press, 1978) p. 12.

¹²This conclusion is partly based on a conversation with former Assistant Secretary of State Murphy, April 9, 1991.

this oil in the near future¹³--it is there that the price of oil is set.¹⁴ This, coupled with the unique dependency of the industrial countries on oil, had enabled the oil-exporting countries to use petroleum as a political and economic weapon by restricting exports to oil-dependent countries, and by manipulating the price of oil.

The first incident to indicate the effect the Arab-Israeli conflict can have on the access of oil from the Middle East to the Western countries occurred between November 1956 and March 1957, when the Suez Canal-- the route by which nearly half of all the oil from the Persian Gulf reached its markets--was closed as a result of the 1956 Sinai Campaign.¹⁵

But it was the aftermath of the 1967 Six-Day War which provided the oil-producing countries in the Middle East with the opportunity to turn oil into a purely political weapon, when in August that year Arab finance and oil ministers met in Baghdad and agreed to create a special Arab organization that would transform oil into an international political tool.

As a result of this meeting, the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) was formally established in

¹³ Contant, The Geopolitics of Energy, pp. 14, 26.

¹⁴ Oil in the Middle East was discovered in the twentieth century: in Egypt in 1909, in Iran in 1913, in Iraq in 1927, in Saudi Arabia in 1936, in Kuwait in 1946, and in Libya in 1961. Rustow, Oil and Turmoil, pp. 18; 92.

¹⁵ The campaign itself began as a corollary of President Nasser's nationalization of the canal, which invited the retaliation of Britain, France and Israel. Ibid, pp. 101-102.

January 1968, in Beirut, by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Libya. In 1970, Abu Dhabi, Algeria, Bahrain, Dubai and Qatar joined the organization; and Egypt, Iraq, and Syria joined in 1972.¹⁶

This did not yet create the oil crises of 1973.

The crisis occurred in 1973-74, as a result of the Yom Kippur War.¹⁷ On October 16, 1973, six Gulf states unilaterally agreed on a 70 per cent price increase. The next day the Arab members of OPEC agreed to cut their oil production by 5 per cent and to continue to reduce it by 5 additional per cent every month until Israel withdrew from all occupied Arab territories. On October 18, Saudi Arabia announced a deeper production cut until Arab demands were answered. On October 19, President Nixon asked the Congress for a \$2.2 billion package of assistance to Israel to pay for the military equipment sent by the American airlift. The following day Saudi Arabia declared a total embargo on oil shipments to the United States. Subsequently the Arab members of

¹⁶The Arab states recognized the political importance of oil in 1952, when the Political Committee of the Arab League established a committee of oil experts, to discuss the political use of oil, including refusal to sell oil to Israel. In 1954 the League established a permanent Petroleum Bureau, which in 1959 was renamed Department of Oil Affairs. Since then the Department of Oil Affairs has regularly sponsored Arab Oil Congresses to discuss petroleum development and its political uses. See Don Peretz, "Energy: Israelis, Arabs, and Iranians", in Joseph S. Szyliowicz and Bard E. O'Neill (eds.), The Energy Crisis and U.S. Foreign Policy (New York: Praeger, 1975), pp. 91-93.

¹⁷The origin of this crisis is traceable to 1970, when the Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Qaddafi--a Muslim fundamentalist and devout anti-Western ideologue, who assumed power in 1969--decided raise taxes and to increasing the "posted price" by which taxes and royalties were determined. Ibid, pp. 91-93; Rustow, Oil and Turmoil, pp. 136-38.

OPEC extended the embargo to the Netherlands and Portugal--the two European countries who supported the American policy in the Middle East. On December 24-25, the Arab oil ministers decided to continue the embargo against the United States, the Netherlands, and Japan. The embargo was lifted on March 18, 1974, but in June, Saudi Arabia announced a 35 per cent increase in its rate of share in the Aramco oil concession, retroactive to January.¹⁸

Although the embargo had a limited practical impact, its psychological effect was significant: the fear that the embargo might be extended and that Arab oil-production might be reduced even more, prompted a wave of panic buying by Europe and Japan, which in turn constrained supplies and drove prices up even further.¹⁹ It also caused a strain in the relationship between the United States and its Western allies and Japan.

The next oil crisis did not occur because of a war in the Middle East, but because of the 1979 revolution in Iran.²⁰ That crisis caused enough fear so that the world oil industry built up unequaled surplus for future crisis situations. Still, as the Carter Doctrine indicated, the area remained vital to the

¹⁸Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 872-91. Two days earlier, on December 22-23 the Persian Gulf members of OPEC--including the Arab oil-producers with the exception of Saudi Arabia and Algeria--gathered in Teheran and announced a price increase of 128 per cent. That totaled 387 per cent increase of oil price in two months. See Rustow, Ibid, pp. 146-47.

¹⁹Kissinger, Ibid, pp. 873-74.

²⁰For the effect the revolution had on the price of oil see Rustow, Oil and Turmoil, pp. 182-85.

industrial democracies.²¹

The next threat to the supply of oil from the region was another local conflict: the Iran-Iraq war. The war, which began in September 1980, did not create a serious oil shortage because of the huge stockpiles that were accumulated in the West. However, the escalation of hostilities and the rise of the tanker war at the beginning of 1987, enticed the involvement of the United States in securing the transport of oil from the Persian Gulf. When Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990 the safety of the supply of Middle Eastern oil to the industrialized world was an important reason for the Gulf War. This crisis however extends beyond the period examined in this dissertation.

d. The Protection of Israel.

Concern over the survival of Israel among the American public has always been strong, especially since the 1967 Six-Day

²¹On January 23, 1980, President Carter declared before a joint session of Congress on the State of the Union: "Any attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force". Cited in Brzezinski's Power and Principle, p. 443.

The Carter Doctrine meant to warn the Soviet Union to stay out of Iran, after the invasion of Afghanistan. The danger that the Soviets would invade Iran, thereby endangering the free flow of oil from the region to the West, was not inconceivable. Not only was Iran exceedingly vulnerable at the time of the revolution, but Ayatollah Khomeini was committed to the spread of Islamic fundamentalism outside Iran. To the Soviet Union the spread of Islamic passion was indeed a threat: not only does the Soviet leadership fear the insurrection of its national minorities, but the Muslim is the fastest growing minority in the Soviet state.

War. In fact, this concern remained firm even in the post-Vietnam era, when many Americans questioned the wisdom of their country's commitment to the security of other countries. As Holsti and Rosenau show, in comparison to other foreign policy issues in the post-Vietnam era, the American commitment to the survival of Israel remained the only issue which received wide public support.²²

As pointed out by Nadav Safran, the American commitment to Israel is a result of the strategic and economic interests the United States has had in the Middle East; the character of Israel as a democratic, Jewish, immigrant, beleaguered state; and the deep attachment of six million American Jews to Israel.²³

Of these, the strategic and economic interests of the US in the region are the most significant factor. After all, aside from its close relations with Turkey since 1947, it is through the support of Israel that the US penetrated the region to balance the Soviet influence there. As a strategic asset, Israel supplied to the United States valuable intelligence services and some useful technical advice on weapons remodeling.²⁴

As for the character of Israel, its pioneering spirit prior

²²Ole R. Holsti and James N. Rosenau, American Leadership in World Affairs (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1984), passim.

²³Nadav Safran, Israel The Embattled Ally (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1982), pp. 332-33.

²⁴Duncan L. Clarke, "Entanglement: The Commitment to Israel", Yehuda Lukacs and Abdalla M. Battah (eds.), The Arab-Israeli Conflict (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988), p. 230.

to and following the establishment of the state, its creation on the ashes of the Holocaust, its democratic institutions, and its survivability against huge hostile Arab armies, have surely aroused the idealistic sentiments of many Americans.

A third reason for the American commitment to Israel is the influence of the Jewish lobby on US policy in the Middle East. While the degree of that influence is often overstated, the American Jewish community does have an impact on specific issues concerning Washington's policy in the Middle East. For example, it succeeded in pressuring successive administrations to reaffirm Kissinger's 1975 commitment not to negotiate with the PLO until a number of preconditions were met; and it had noticeable influence affecting arms sales to moderate Arab countries or aid to Israel.²⁵

The most forceful body to promote such pro-Israeli policies is the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), which was formed in 1953, as an alternative to the American Zionist Council--a pro-Israeli lobby with whom the Eisenhower Administration did not get along.

Other pro-Israeli lobbies include about 80 political action committees (PACs), which make contributions to candidates running for Federal elections, and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations--a lobby which represents AIPAC and 44 other organizations in dealing directly with the White House

²⁵ Shai Feldman, U.S. Middle East Policy: The Domestic Setting (Boulder, Westview Press, 1988), p. 59.

and the State Department.²⁶

With the exception of the Eisenhower and the Bush Administrations, the United States governments have been an enthusiastic supporter of Israel since her establishment in 1948. But it was not until the early 1960s, when it became apparent that the American courtship of the Arabs had not reduced Soviet influence in the region, that Washington committed itself to balance the Israeli military power against that of the Arabs. This commitment was marked by the Kennedy Administration's agreement in 1962 to sell Israel anti-aircraft Hawk missiles to counter Soviet arms sales to Egypt, Syria, and Iraq.

President Johnson deepened the American commitment to Israel after the creation of an Egyptian-Syrian mutual defense treaty, after the rise to power of a pro-Soviet and pro-Egyptian Ba'athist regime in Damascus (1966), and the continuous arms supply to radical Arab states by the Soviets. These developments caused his Administration to accept Israel's request for additional military stockpiles. Thus, in Fiscal Year 1966 the United States awarded Israel \$92 million in military assistance, a sum that exceeded the total US military aid given to Israel since its establishment.²⁷

²⁶Andrea Barron, "Jewish and Arab Diasporas in the United States and Their Impact on U.S. Middle East Policy", Lukacs Yehuda and Abdalla M. Battah (eds.), The Arab-Israeli Conflict (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988), pp. 239-47.

²⁷Clarke, "Entanglement: The Commitment to Israel", p. 218. in February 1966, Washington agreed to sell Israel forty-eight Skyhawk bombers in addition to 210 tanks that were sold to Israel the previous year. See Steven Spiegel, The Other Arab-Israeli

But it was the Six-Day War that finally committed the United States to become Israel's ultimate ally. The intriguing Soviet behavior which helped to provoke the war is well documented. This, together with the increased political and military dependence of Egypt and Syria on Moscow during and after the war, and the French embargo on arms sales to Israel, altered dramatically the American commitment to Israel. This manifested itself in increased political, military, and economic aid.²⁸

Political support was most evident in the United Nations, where the United States opposed any efforts to force Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories unconditionally. In terms of military aid, when the rearmament of the Soviets' Arab clients reached the levels that threatened Israel's military superiority, the US pledged to "keep Israel's military defense capability under active and sympathetic examination".²⁹

This decision, according to Nadav Safran, represented the first American move to support by military means--not just diplomatic action--the premise that Israel should hold on to the territories it won in 1967 until the Arabs were prepared to make

Conflict, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985). p. 134.

²⁸ During the war itself Washington frustrated Soviet efforts to force a cease-fire so Israel would stop devastating the Soviet-built Arab armies; and ordered the Sixth Fleet to the Mediterranean to challenge Moscow's military threats against Israel. Safran, Israel the Embattled Ally, pp. 425-26.

²⁹ President Johnson agreed at the beginning of 1968 to sell Israel fifty Phantom fighter-bombers and other equipment. Clarke, "Entanglement: The Commitment to Israel", p. 218.

peace.³⁰

When President Nixon entered the White House he intended to follow an even-handed policy in the Middle East.³¹ But when the Egyptians and the Soviets violated an American-sponsored ceasefire agreement during the war of attrition,³² Nixon assured Israel of a speedy delivery of military equipment.³³ This was followed by a Senate concession, giving the President almost unlimited authority to provide Israel with arms to counter Soviet supply of weapons to Egypt.³⁴

After the Soviets concluded a treaty of friendship and cooperation with the Egyptians in May 1971, and after intelligence reports indicated that the Soviets had reinforced

³⁰ Safran, Israel the Embattled Ally, p. 431.

³¹ First the Nixon Administration refused an Israeli request, made in January 1970, for the purchase of military equipment, which included forty-five Phantom and eighty Skyhawk fighter-bombers. These meant to counter new Soviet arms shipments to Egypt, which included large numbers of MIG-21 fighters and new SAM-3 antiaircraft missiles, along with thousands of Soviet advisers. Ibid, pp. 436-37.

³² In April, it became evident that Soviet pilots were flying Soviet planes in combat missions over Egypt, intercepting Israeli missions. In July, with the help of the Soviets advisers, the Egyptians installed several anti-aircraft missiles sites in the battle zone closer to the Suez Canal, resulting in the loss of some Israeli Phantom planes. Ultimately, Soviet-piloted fighters confronted Israeli planes over the combat zone, resulting in the downing of five Soviet planes.

³³ That included a small number of Phantom planes, equipped with Shrike anti-missile missiles. When serious violations of the cease-fire continued, Nixon ordered the sale of additional Phantom jets. Still, the US threatened not to resupply Israel if its forces marched on toward Cairo.

³⁴ Spiegel, The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict, p. 195.

their own troops in Egypt, and were flying reconnaissance over the Sinai and the Sixth Fleet from bases in Egypt, Nixon pledged to help Israel in a long-term program to modernize her defense forces.³⁵

Between December 1971 and March 1973 the Nixon Administration agreed to sell additional Phantom jets and Skyhawk missiles to Israel, concluded a memorandum of understanding to transfer US technical information to Israel, and assured Israel of assistance in modernizing its armed forces, as well as the flow of financial assistance and military supply.³⁶

The Yom Kippur War of 1973, was another occasion for the US government to deepen its commitment to Israel's security. This time two important differences emerged. The first was that the decision to resupply the Israelis with military equipment lost during the first week of the war marked the first time during an Arab-Israeli war that the United States did not impose an arms embargo on all of the belligerent parties. The second was Nixon's request for an appropriation of \$2.2 billion to cover the cost of the airlift--an unprecedented move in size and scope, and a unique Presidential request for aid to Israeli.³⁷

In 1974 Nixon promised future economic assistance and assured Israel of the long-term American commitment of military

³⁵ Safran, Israel the Embattled Ally, p. 461.

³⁶ Clarke, "Entanglement: The Commitment to Israel;", p. 219.

³⁷ Spiegel, The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict, pp. 248, 257.

supply.³⁸

Israel's agreement to pull back from parts of the Sinai in 1975 resulted in a new level of US aid to Israel, in the form of a new foreign aid package, which mounted to nearly \$13 billion over a five-year period.³⁹ The Ford Administration also agreed to consult regularly on Israel's long-term economic and military assistance needs, and to request such assistance in Congress annually. Notably, the agreement constituted the first formal written American security commitment to Israel.⁴⁰

The Camp David negotiations provided for still a greater American pledge to Israel. Immediately after the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty was signed in 1979, the United States and Israel signed an agreement reaffirming their 1975 agreement and all previous agreements and assurances. In addition the United States pledged to take diplomatic, economic, and military measures to remedy any violation or threat of violation of the treaty, including emergency supplies to Israel. Finally, Washington pledged to support Israel's right to navigation and airspace through the Strait of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba.⁴¹

³⁸ Clarke, "Entanglement: The Commitment to Israel", p. 219.

³⁹ Secretary Kissinger, who mediated the disengagement agreements had informally promised Israel 50 F-15s and formally promised to study the sale of F-16s and Pershing ground-to ground missiles with conventional warheads. Amid opposition from Congress to the Pershing sale, these were substituted for the short-range Lance missiles. Spiegel, The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict, pp. 301-04, 346.

⁴⁰ Clarke, "Entanglement: The Commitment to Israel", p. 219.

⁴¹ Ibid, pp. 223-4.

When President Reagan entered the White House in 1981, his administration inherited all these guarantees. But his exaggerated concerns over the Soviet threat in the region compelled him to expand them.

Thus, in November 1981 the administration signed the Strategic Cooperation Agreement with Israel, directed against the Soviet threat in the Middle East. When in December Israel annexed the Golan Heights, Washington canceled the agreement to demonstrate its irritation with the Israeli move, but reinstated it in November 1983. Although the agreement meant to counter increased Soviet involvement in Middle East, in actuality it deepened the American commitment toward Israel: it provided for a joint American-Israeli military cooperation, the repositioning of US military supplies in Israel, and for new military assistance grants and related privileges.⁴²

In March 1984 the two countries agreed to the exchange of scientists and engineers in research, development, procurement and logistics support for designated defense equipment; in March 1985 the US and Israel signed a new free trade accord to eliminate all tariffs between the two countries before 1955; in 1986 the Congress named Israel "a major non-NATO ally", and in December 1987, the two countries agreed to expand the March 1984 agreement.⁴³

The one particular American guarantee to Israel which

⁴² Ibid, pp. 226-7.

⁴³ Ibid, pp. 228-9.

carries the most serious implications for the US is the guarantee to take military measures to rectify any violation or threat of violation of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.⁴⁴

Indeed, even in a worst case scenario, if a successful coup in Egypt would replace President Mubarak with a radical regime which would abrogate the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, and cause Egypt to join an Arab war coalition against Israel, it is questionable whether, after fighting one Arab country, it would serve America's interest to exercise its guarantee to Israel against Egypt. Such an exercise would serve America's interest only if the Cold War would be resumed and Egypt would become a Soviet proxy in the Middle East.

e. The Prevention of Strain in America's Relations with its Western Allies and Japan.

Disagreements between the United States and its allies over conflicting interests should be expected. As Abba Eban has pointed out, the United States and Western Europe never entered into a contractual undertaking to help or support each other out in every crisis or confrontation. Rather, the only engagement they ever undertook toward each other was to protect one another only in matters relating to the security of the North Atlantic

⁴⁴Alan Dowty concluded that whereas an American guarantee to secure Israel against the Soviet Union could be credible, an American guarantee against Egypt may not be so. See Alan Dowty, The Role of Great Powers Guarantees in International Peace Agreements (Jerusalem: The Leonard Davis Institute for International Relations, 1974), pp. 22-24.

area.⁴⁵

Still, in its pursuit of a globalist foreign policy, the United States cannot be indifferent to its allies' sentiments. For, as the Gulf war showed, without the support of the Western democracies and Japan, Washington may find it difficult to realize some of its global aims.

The Western Europeans and Japan had often differed with Washington on a number of economic and political issues, including interest rates, and relations with the Soviet Union, Central America, or the Middle East.

Regarding the Middle East, the West European countries are involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict to a far lesser degree than the United States. First, unlike the United States, they lack the power base from which to conduct an influential Middle East diplomacy. Second, their interest in the Middle East is based on economic factors only, not on geopolitical considerations.⁴⁶

Because of their reliance on Middle Eastern oil, the Western European states have been willing to appease the Arabs, especially regarding the PLO. Indeed, Since 1980 the European Economic Community (EEC) has recognized the PLO as a legitimate and instrumental partner in any Middle East diplomacy, and had urged its inclusion in peace negotiations even before the PLO accepted U.N. resolutions 242 and 338. Furthermore, most

⁴⁵ Eban, The New Diplomacy, p. 148.

⁴⁶ Adam Carfinkle, "West European Peace Diplomacy in the Levant. But Will they Come?" in Willard Belling (ed.), Middle East Peace Plans (New York: St. Martin Press, 1986), pp.118-120.

European states interpreted resolution 242 to mean total Israeli withdrawal from the 1967 boundaries, and most favor the creation of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. In return, the Arab oil-producing states kept from intentionally injuring the economies of the European states.⁴⁷

The first Western alliance crisis over the Middle East occurred in 1956 when Britain and France mounted an attack on Egypt, in order to liberate the Suez Canal, after the Israeli army had entered the Sinai.

In addition to a sense of resentment for not being consulted by his allies on the plans to invade Egypt, President Eisenhower felt that the invasion would drive the Arab world closer to the Soviet side. He thus pressured the invading countries to stop the fighting and withdraw their forces from Egypt.

The embarrassment of being defeated by Nasser--with the help of their American ally--only added to the animosity Britain and France felt toward the United States. Ironically, it was the Soviet Union and not the United States that reaped the benefits from America's opposition to the invasion.⁴⁸

The Suez affair, as pointed out by Richard Barnet, was a signal that the bonds of alliance between the Europeans and the United States were loosening. The event that kept the Western

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Spanier, American Foreign Policy Since World War II, pp. 115-27.

alliance from falling apart altogether was the Soviet invasion of Hungary precisely at the time of the Suez crisis. Although humiliated by Eisenhower, the invasion of Hungary reminded the British and French that the security of Western Europe still depended on American protection.⁴⁹

The Six-Day War, too, strained relations between the allies. President de Gaulle, who had an inherent contempt toward the US, blamed the war on the United States, turned against Israel, and presented himself to the world as the champion of Third World independence against American imperialism.⁵⁰

Unlike the United States, the Europeans have not viewed the Middle East in terms of Cold War competition. Led by France and the Federal Republic of Germany, they thus sought a more neutral and independent position on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Indeed, by 1973 the United States was the only western supporter of Israel. During the 1973 Yom Kippur War the NATO alliance experienced its most severe crisis over the Arab-Israeli conflict. Because of their heavy reliance on Arab oil, the European allies believed that the failure of the United States to press a settlement on Israel--a failure they believed was the result of domestic political considerations in the US--produced the war, thereby putting at risk vital European interests. They displayed their irritation with Washington when they refused to

⁴⁹Richard J. Barnet, The Alliance (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), p. 170.

⁵⁰Ibid, p. 249.

cooperate in the American efforts to turn the tide to US advantage.

First, when the war broke out, Britain and France refused to go along with the American suggestion for a ceasefire resolution that would urge the warring parties to return to the status quo ante. Later France refused to participate in any diplomatic efforts to end the war.⁵¹

On the sixth day of the war Turkey refused the United States any use of American air bases and other military facilities in Turkey for the war's objectives. Greece soon followed suit. Spain, which was bound to the United States by a treaty of friendship and cooperation, also refused to permit the United States to utilize Spanish bases in connection to the war. So did Britain (in an informal move).

The Soviets on the other hand, were freer than the United States to use NATO airspace for their airlift.⁵²

When the October 22 ceasefire deteriorated, the West Germans, who had permitted the US to use German ports, refused to do so any longer. When Washington issued the military alert, the allies protested the fact that there had been no prior consultation over a situation that involved American troops stationed in Europe. It was then that Bonn refused to let the US

⁵¹ Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, pp. 708-9.

⁵² Eventually, Portugal, which sought to obtain American military aid for its war in Mozambique and Angola, was the only European ally to provide the US with transit rights. Ibid; pp. 520, 708-9.

to use any part of West German territory or air space--including American bases there--for weapons delivery to Israel.⁵³

After the war, the Europeans insisted on a post war diplomacy which contradicted that of the US Whereas Washington concentrated on a strategy of disengagement, the Europeans demanded an immediate Israeli pullback to the October 22 ceasefire line, to be followed by a withdrawal to the 1967 borders.⁵⁴

The discrepancy between the American and European positions on the conflict was the result of the different degree to which the two sides of the alliance depended on Arab oil. In 1973 Britain imported about 59 per cent of its oil from the Arab world, France 72 per cent, and Germany 75 per cent, while the United States imported only 16 per cent of its total energy needs. Indeed, twice before the 1973 crisis--in 1948 and again in 1967--the Arabs had tried to use the oil weapon against any nation that aided Israel. But in those two instances the oil weapon was ineffective: in 1948 Western Europe depended on oil for only 10 per cent of its energy needs, and it was only during the late 1960 that Western Europe converted to a petroleum economy.⁵⁵

As in similar situations in the past, the alliance survived this crisis too. First, security was still a mutual primary

⁵³ Ibid, p. 714.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 718.

⁵⁵ Barnet, The Alliance, pp. 326-7.

concern of its members. Second, they made a deliberate effort to remedy the damage. Third, by the fall of 1974 the leaders of France, Germany, Britain, Japan, and the United States were swept from office, each for different reasons.⁵⁶

Since 1973, the Europeans have maintained a policy toward the Middle East independent of that of the United States. Although that changed with the 1991 Gulf crisis, no one can predict whether the new mood of cooperation will survive another Arab-Israeli crisis.

Japan's involvement in the Middle East has been smaller than that of the Europeans. But like the Western European countries, Japan's concerns with a stable Middle East has centered around a steady oil supply from the region: Japan depends on foreign oil for 90 per cent of its energy requirements. Indeed, the 1973 oil crisis hurt Japan more than it hurt the West Europeans.

While Japan's foreign policy had usually been compatible with that of the United States, by November 1973 Japan began to feel that its national interest might be jeopardized if it continued to identify with Washington's Middle East policy.⁵⁷

Thus, the 1973 war was the first time since the end of World War II that Japan openly broke with US policy on any important global issue, when in November Tokyo issued a declaration similar to that of the Europeans.

⁵⁶Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, p. 723; Barnet, The Alliance, p. 333.

⁵⁷Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, p. 740.

By January 1974 the Japanese government announced a new pro-Arab policy. In addition, Tokyo concluded numerous bilateral deals with Arab states, and offered them technical assistance and economic aid.⁵⁰ Japan still maintains firm relations with the Arab states, as well as with the PLO.

In sum, while in the past relations between the United States and its Western allies and Japan survived the Arab-Israeli conflict, a future Arab-Israeli war may cause the total collapse of the alliance's unity. This is especially true if East-West relations will continue to improve, thereby eliminating the Soviet threat altogether.

f. The Promotion of Human Rights for the Palestinians through Self-Determination.

The idea of promoting human rights through self-determination is not new: both the American and French revolutions gave birth to the principle of national self-determination as a basis for peace. In 1856 the Peace of Paris, following the Crimean War, confirmed that principle; and in 1918 the same principle was recognized by President Woodrow Wilson in his Fourteen Points. Finally, in 1945 the framers of the United Nations Charter formally incorporated the principle of self-determination in the organization's Charter.

Article 1 of the United Nations Charter binds the organization to respect the self-determination of peoples, and

⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 328.

Article 55 recognizes the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples as a key ingredient for peaceful and friendly relations among nations.

In 1952 the General Assembly resolved to support economic self-determination, and in 1955 the Third Committee of the General Assembly adopted a draft article, as part of the Human Rights Covenants, on the right of self-determination. In 1960 the General Assembly reaffirmed self-determination as a fundamental human right when it adopted the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. In 1966, also as part of the International Covenants on Human Rights, the assembly reaffirmed the right to self-determination to all peoples. In 1970 the General Assembly reconfirmed in the Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States, the principle of self-determination as a cause for peace.

In the United States the issue of the promotion of human rights as an elementary foreign policy goal has been quite controversial.⁵⁹ That was particularly true during the first Carter years, when President Carter--himself a born-again Christian and a true moralist--centered his foreign policy around the human rights theme, often--his opponents asserted--neglecting more important foreign policy goals.

⁵⁹For an overview of human rights in U.S. foreign policy see David P. Forsyth, "Human Rights in U.S. Foreign Policy: Retrospect and Prospect", Political Science Quarterly (Vol. 105, no. 3, Fall 1990), pp. 435-54.

While few would argue that America's foreign policy should avoid the promotion of human rights, many would question whether this should be done by means of open diplomacy.⁶⁰

Generally speaking, the promotion of human rights in American foreign policy serves two related purposes: it reflects America's own democratic standards in her global conduct, and at the same time it secures democracy at home. The promotion of self-determination in particular, reflects the American ethical as well as its pragmatic thinking.

⁶⁰Dozens of articles had been written during the Carter presidency and after over that controversy. To cite only few: William F. Buckley, Jr. "Human Rights and Foreign Policy: a Proposal", Foreign Affairs (Vol. 58, no. 4, Spring 1980), pp. 775-796; William P. Bundy, "Who Lost Patagonia? Foreign Policy in the 1980 Campaign", Foreign Affairs (Vol. 58, no. 1, Fall 1979), pp. 2-27; James Chace, "How Moral Can We Get?" New York Times Magazine (May 22, 1977), pp. 38-48; Elizabeth Drew, "A Reporter at Large", New Yorker (July 17 1977), pp. 36-62; Donald Fraser, "Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Policy", International Studies Quarterly (Vol. 23, no. 2, June 1979), pp. 174-185; Stanley Hoffman, "The Hell of Good Intentions", Foreign Policy (No. 29, Winter 1977-8), pp. 3-26; Walter Laqueur "The Issue of Human Rights", Commentary (Vol. 63, no. 5, May 1977), pp. 29-35; Daniel P. Moynihan, "The Politics of Human Rights", Commentary (Vol. 64, no. 2, August 1977), pp. 19-26; Michael Reisman, "The Pragmatism of Human Rights", The Nation (Vol. 224, May 7, 1977), pp. 554-8; Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., "Human Rights and the American Tradition", Foreign Affairs (Vol. 57, no. 3, America and the World, 1978), pp. 503-26; Marshall D. Shulman, "On Learning to Live with Authoritarian Regimes", Foreign Affairs (Vol. 55, no. 4, Spring 1977), pp. 325-38; Ted Szulc, "The Limits of Linkage", New Republic (Vol. 176, no. 10, March 5, 1977), pp. 17-19; Kenneth Thompson, "New Reflections on Ethics and Foreign Policy: the Problem of Human Rights", The Journal of Politics (Vol. 40, 1978), pp. 984-1010; Alan Tonelson, "Human Rights: the Bias We Need", Foreign Policy (No. 49, Winter 1982-3), pp. 52-74; Richard Ullman, "Human Rights and Economic Power: the United States Versus Idi Amin", Foreign Affairs (Vol. 56, no. 3, April 1978), pp. 529-42; Sandra Vogelgesang, "What Price Principle? U.S. Policy on Human Rights", Foreign Affairs (Vol. 56. no. 4, July 1978), pp. 819-41.

As an ethical precept, the principle of self-determination mirrors the traditional American anti-colonial sentiment. As a pragmatic premise, self-determination is believed by many Americans to contain international conflict and promote international peace.⁶¹ This indeed was the United Nations' conviction when it first endorsed the advancement of the self-determination of peoples.

The only unambivalent endorsement of self-determination for the Palestinian people by an American president was voiced by President Carter: in March 1977, at a town meeting at Clinton, Massachusetts, he stated: "there has to be a homeland provided for the Palestinian refugees who have suffered for many, many years". In May, in a press conference he repeated this proposal:

I don't think that there can be any reasonable hope for a settlement of the Middle Eastern question, which has been extended now on a continued basis now for more than twenty-nine years, without a homeland for the Palestinians.⁶²

Carter formalized his personal ethical belief into policy during preparation for the proposed Geneva Conference, when he despatched Secretary Vance to the Middle East in order to secure an agreement on five principles that he considered essential to any settlement. One of these principles was the creation of a nonmilitarized Palestinian entity with self-determination.⁶³

Although Carter might have been preoccupied with human

⁶¹Tillman, The United States in the Middle East: Interests and Obstacles (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), p. 58.

⁶²Quoted in Brzezinski, Power and Principle, pp. 83, 91.

⁶³Ibid, p. 102.

rights, his concern for the rights of the Palestinian people reflected both the ethical and pragmatic aspects of America's foreign policy. As a moralist it was impossible for him to ignore the continued deprivation of Palestinian rights. As a pragmatist Carter viewed the Palestinian question as one of the underlying problems of the Arab-Israeli conflict, in itself a potential global threat.⁶⁴

In reality however, bound by Washington's special relationship with Israel, neither President Carter, nor his successors were able or willing to promote for the Palestinians anything beyond self-rule, preferably under Jordanian administration.

This was certainly the case with President Reagan: a major area in which he was determined to alter the previous administration's political approach was the priority President Carter gave to human rights at the expense of security considerations.

As indicated previously, Reagan's preoccupation with security matters resulted in strategic co-operation with Israel, which, by its very nature, had to bar any thought of Palestinian-self-determination. More than that, with the unequivocal rejection of his peace initiative by both the Israelis and the Palestinians, he was unable to obtain an agreement on Palestinian autonomy.

The same is true for President Bush, whose attempts to

⁶⁴ Crater, Keeping Faith, p. 277.

promote a more balanced policy toward the Arabs and Israelis were undermined by Israeli and Arab hard-liners. It is important to note that despite Bush's evenhanded policy, his Administration has not offered the Palestinians anything beyond self-rule.

PART III: THE PEACE PROCESS, 1982-1990.

V. THE REAGAN PEACE PLAN.

a. The Political Background.

On March 27, 1980, Egypt, Israel, and the United States agreed to extend the target date for the completion of the Camp David autonomy talks, from May 1979 to April 1982.

As part of the Camp David agreement, the autonomy talks--to be conducted between Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and Palestinian representatives--were geared to determine the modalities by which a self-governing Palestinian authority would be elected, and to define its powers and responsibilities. This Palestinian authority (Administrative Council) was to control civilian matters in the West Bank and Gaza for a five-year transitional period, during which time the final status of the West Bank and Gaza would be determined. Originally, the talks--which began between Egypt, Israel, and the United States in May 1979--had a twelve months deadline.

But in early 1980 it became clear that the target date was unattainable, because of the opposing conceptions of autonomy held by the Egyptians and the Israelis on one hand, and on the other hand, because of the differences between the United States and Israel over the issue of settlement activity in the occupied territories.¹

¹The terms "occupied land", "occupied territories", the West Bank and Gaza, or simply "the territories" often denote international usage; whereas the names Judea, Samaria, and the

Begin's concept of autonomy was shaped by his fervent opposition to the idea of an independent Palestinian state. To safeguard the prevention of the creation of such a state any time in the future, his initial autonomy plan (December 27, 1977) limited Palestinian self-rule to administrative functions in social and educational affairs, leaving matters of security and public order under Israeli military control. This was in addition to Israel's insistence on the control of water resources, and the right to acquire land and to establish Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza.²

Egypt on the other hand interpreted Palestinian self-rule to mean full autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza, as a first step toward independence, and a transitional stage before full Palestinian self determination.³

Disagreement between Israel and the United States over the issue of settlements activities derived from the Americans' belief that an increase in Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza would jeopardize any progress in negotiations, if not the prospect of negotiations altogether. The Begin government on the other hand held that the entire West Bank and Gaza were integral parts of Israel's sovereignty, and that a sound Jewish

Gaza district, or simply Gaza; denote Israeli usage. All these terms are used in this work interchangeably.

² Tillman, "The United States in the Middle East", p. 34.

³ Ibid.

presence should be established in these areas.

In view of these disparities, rather than upholding a non-attainable fixed deadline, the negotiating parties agreed to relabel the original target date as a "positive incentive" for the conclusion of negotiations and to extend negotiations to a later date. The new target date was April 1982--the time designated in the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty for the Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai.

However a number of events made the realization of a breakthrough by the new target date as unrealistic as the original date. They were: the July 1980 Israeli new legislation by which East Jerusalem became part of the "indivisible" capital of Israel; the Reagan Administration's decision in April-March 1981 to close a huge arms deal to Saudi Arabia, and the endorsement by President Reagan of a Saudi peace plan which was rejected by Israel; the assassination of President Sadat in October, the Israeli annexation of the Golan Heights in December; and the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982.

Inheriting the Camp David agreements--in itself a meaningful matter since they culminated Washington's influence in the Middle East--the Reagan Administration sought to continue the autonomy talks. But, the refusal of the Arab states, other than Egypt, to endorse the Camp David accords raised some difficulties for the new administration, especially since it looked for the cooperation of the moderate Arab states in its attempt to launch a regional defense strategy against Soviet expansionism.

Among the tactics the Administration was to employ in its regional strategy was the sale of arms on an unprecedented scale. Hence, almost immediately upon entering office the new administration decided to sell Saudi Arabia five Airborne Warning and Command System (AWACS) aircraft; in addition to 1,177 advanced Sidewinder air-to-air missiles, six K-135 aerial refuelling aircraft and conformal fuel tanks to enhance the range of the 60 f-15 fighters sold to the Saudis in 1978. The deal--totaling \$8.5 billion--was by far the largest arms deal in history.⁴

Not unexpectedly, the decision invited fierce opposition from Israel and from the Israeli lobby in Washington. In fact, the sale became the most controversial arms deal in American history, requiring the forceful intervention of President Reagan himself.⁵

The controversy also required some reciprocal action from the Saudis. Thus, on August 8, 1981, the Saudi government--while adhering to the Arab League boycott of the Camp David peace process--made public its own peace initiative. The plan was put forward by the Saudi Crown-Prince Fahd and thus became to be known as the Fahd proposal.

Notably, the Fahd plan deviated from the three famous "nos" adopted by the 1967 Khartoum summit--no recognition, no

⁴Andrew J. Pierre, "Arms Sales: The New Diplomacy", Foreign Affairs Winter 1981/82, Vol. 60, No. 2), p. 278.

⁵Steven L. Spiegel, The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict, pp. 398-411.

negotiation, no peace--in its implicit recognition of Israel's right to exist. But at the same time it contained elements totally unacceptable to Israel.⁶

Nevertheless, the hard-line Arab position which opposed to the implicit "recognition" of Israel, effectively nullified the possibility of the plan ever becoming a unified Arab policy, when on January 4, 1982, the Saudis practically withdrew the proposal by repudiating their implicit preparedness to recognize Israel's right to exist. An important factor in the Saudi's decision was the internationally condemned Israeli annexation of the Golan Heights, on December 14, 1981.⁷

For a while the annexation of the Golan Heights damaged US-Israeli relations. While Prime Minister Begin, rebutting criticism, emphasized that "no one will dictate our lives for us, not even the United States," Washington announced, on Dec. 18, its decision to suspend discussions with Israel on the implementation of a strategic co-operation agreement which was

⁶The reaction of the Arabs to the Fahd plan was mixed. The PLO Chairman, Yassir Arafat, welcomed the plan as a basis for future negotiations, but was opposed by hard-line Palestinian factions and Libya. Syria and Iraq, both recipients of Saudi aid, accepted the plan initially but rejected it later. Egypt, on her part, insisted that the Camp David accords were the only basis for negotiations. See David E. Long, "Saudi Foreign Policy and the Arab-Israeli Peace Process: The Fahd (Arab) Peace Plan", in Willard A. Belling (ed.), Middle East Peace Plans (New York: St. Martin Press, 1986), p. 63.

⁷Keesing's Contemporary Archives (Vol. XXIX, 1983) pp. 31911-12.

signed by the two countries a month earlier.⁸

In the meantime the assassination of President Sadat on October 6, 1981, froze the American-Egyptian-Israeli autonomy talks until their renewal in January 1982. Despite the vigorous diplomatic steps taken by the administration as Secretary Haig and Ambassador Fairbanks took a number of trips to Egypt and Israel, no progress in negotiations was made by April 1982.

On April 6, 1982, during a conference of the non-aligned countries held in Kuwait, a new Egyptian Middle East peace plan was made public.⁹ The plan carried strong similarities to the Saudi proposal, but unlike the Saudi plan, this one explicitly recognized Israel's right to exist within secure and recognized borders. Still, the Egyptians deliberately excluded from the plan any reference to the Camp David agreements, regarded by Israel as the only legitimate basis for further negotiations.¹⁰

As a result both Prime Minister Begin and Defense Minister Ariel Sharon declared that on the completion of the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai on April 25, Israel would make no more territorial concession to the Arabs in quest for peace. And, on May 3, Begin announced to the Israeli Knesset that at the end of the five-year transitional period designated under the Camp David

⁸ Ibid, p. 31913.

⁹ Noticeably, since the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty the Kuwaiti invitation was the first important invitation extended to Egypt by an Arab country.

¹⁰ Keessing's Contemporary Archives (Vol. XXIX, 1983) pp. 31911-12.

accords, Israel would affirm its sovereignty over the West Bank.¹¹

On June 6, Israel launched the "peace for Galilee" military operation in Lebanon, a move that gave the already impaired autonomy talks--the only remnant of the negotiation process--their deathblow.

b. The Reagan Administration's Motivation for a New Peace Initiative.

While the Reagan initiative can be seen as part of President Reagan's own anxiety about the Soviet threat in the region--the invasion of Afghanistan coupled with the Iran-Iraq war, and his concerns over the American global decline of the 1970s only intensified this anxiety--it was the Lebanon war and the impact that war had on the peace process that provided the dramatic setting for the Reagan peace plan.

Within this context, four main reasons inspired the plan.¹² First, President Mubarak and King Hussein, along with other moderate Arab leaders such as King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and King Hassan of Morocco, have been urging the United States to resume

¹¹ Ibid, p. 31911.

¹² The following conclusions are based on Mordechai Gazit, "The Middle East Peace Process", in Middle East Contemporary Survey 1982-83 (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1985), p. 156; Quandt, "U.S. Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict", William Quandt (ed.) The Middle East Ten Years after Camp David (Washington D.C: The Brookings Institution, 1988), p. 382; and on information received during private conversations with Ambassador Lewis, Washington D.C., April 26, 1991; and with former Assistant Secretary Murphy, New York, April 9, 1991.

leadership in the Arab-Israeli peace process. The Administration was persuaded by the Arabs to demonstrate that it not only disapproved of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, but that Washington remained serious about the peace process.

In fact, three years after the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty was concluded, and during the second year of the first Reagan term, the Arab side questioned Washington's intent to advance and broaden the peace, and to deal with the Palestinian issues.

The Egyptians in particular were very anxious to see the Camp David arrangement extended, and encouraged the Administration to do so. King Hussein too was very encouraging, urging the Administration and showing a lot of receptivity. This was particularly important in view of his failure to join the Camp David process, which, along with the Palestinians' refusal to join, made the autonomy negotiations fall.

The Administration felt that if it could persuade King Hussein to join the peace process--as it believed it could--preferably together with the Palestinians, the United States could conceivably force the Begin government to soften its position. Moreover, despite the collapse of the autonomy talks, Washington still felt that it made some progress, and that the Reagan plan provided an opening for a new start under a different guise.

Second, unlike other Arab-Israeli wars, the Lebanon war aroused among many Americans distinct anti-Israeli feelings. Indeed, the Reagan plan was initiated at a moment when the US

government was under enormous internal political pressure for seeming to be associated with Israel in a very unpopular aggression against Lebanon. It was perceived that unless the US could regain the image quickly that it was in favor of peace--not just in favor of tacitly opposing the bombing of innocent Lebanese and Palestinian civilians--it was going to harm the US a great deal in the region.

Third, there was the view that the PLO was badly damaged, therefore a moment of opportunity existed in which the PLO was not in a position to torpedo Camp David-type negotiations, as it had effectively done in 1978 after Camp David, with regard to the West Bank.¹³

Moreover, at the time the plan was initiated, the expectation was that Bashir Jamayyil was about to take office in Lebanon, that a friendly relationship of peace was going to evolve between Lebanon and Israel, and the PLO was out of the game.

Certainly the announcement of the Reagan plan alongside the

¹³ Israel's willingness to negotiate with a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, connected with the PLO's fear that King Hussein's rejection of the Camp Davis agreement may not be permanent, and with the fact that local Palestinian leaders viewed autonomy as a favorite step towards the creation of an independent Palestinian state, intensified the PLO's concerns that local Palestinian leaders in the territories might join the peace process without the participation of the PLO. The PLO thus concluded that the best way to impede the peace process was to become more involved in West Bank politics and to exercise greater control over the action of the local leadership. For a discussion on the PLO and the West Bank see Shaul Mishal, The PLO Under Arafat (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), Ch. 6.

completion of the forced evacuation of the PLO forces from Beirut was no coincidence. As one observer has pointed out, the United States felt the need to present its proposal as close as possible to the PLO's defeat in Lebanon, because of the fear that some members of the Israeli Cabinet would downplay the urgency of the Palestinian problem.¹⁴ Moreover, the losses the PLO suffered, combined with the fact that it had to wage the war in Lebanon with virtually no aid from its Arab brethren convinced Washington that the PLO was more inclined to compromise.¹⁵

Other motivations, according to William Quandt, included local events which heightened Washington's apprehension regarding the Middle East: in the spring of 1981 the Syrians transferred antiaircraft missiles into Lebanon, a move that resulted in growing tension between Israel and Syria; in the summer of that year the Israelis destroyed the Iraqi nuclear reactor, bombed PLO headquarters in Beirut, fought intensely with PLO forces in southern Lebanon, and annexed the Golan Heights; in October 1981 Egypt's President Sadat was assassinated, and in December the Israelis annexed the Golan Heights; and in the West bank a vicious terrorist attack against a number of Arab mayors was carried out by Israelis in 1982.¹⁶

¹⁴ Gazit, "The Middle East Peace Process", Middle East Contemporary Survey 1982-83, p. 156.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Quandt, "American Proposals for Arab-Israeli Peace", in Willard (ed.), Middle East Peace Plans (New York: St. Martin Press, 1986), p. 70.

In addition, the Reagan Administration was encouraged by an enduring bureaucratic tendency--usually centered in the Near East Bureau of the State Department--to do something about Arab-Israeli peace, because of the assumptions that the conflict could not be contained indefinitely; that it could have regional or even global implications if it continued to escalate; and that the advent of diplomatic activity was needed to give moderate forces in the region the reassurance they needed.¹⁷

Further, the Administration anticipated that the Western allies would demand that Washington should get involved in the peace process. Washington's ability to orchestrate the election of a pro-Western president in Lebanon, to engineer a cease fire agreement in the Lebanon war, and to arrange for the evacuation of PLO forces from Beirut were added encouragements.¹⁸

Finally, to use Secretary Shultz's own words, the plan was an "opening position", to be followed by "quiet diplomacy to pursue the President's initiative and bring it to fruition."¹⁹ According to Shultz, in view of the events that preceded the announcement of the plan, the Administration felt that it had a special responsibility in its efforts to bring peace to the area,

¹⁷ Idem, "U.S. Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict", William Quandt (ed.) The Middle East Ten Years after Camp David (Washington D.C: The Brookings Institution, 1988).

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ The Quest for Peace: Principal U.S. Public Statements and Related Documents on the Arab-Israeli Peace Process 1967-83, U.S. Department of State, 1984. pp. 115-121.

and that no other country but the United States had the credibility--and therefore the ability--to provide the crucial link to all sides.²⁰

c. The Reagan Plan.

Against this background, on September 1, 1982, President Reagan made public his new Middle East peace initiative. Calling for a "fresh start" in the Middle East peace process, the president invited "all those directly concerned to get involved--or lend their support--to a workable basis for peace".²¹

The bases for the Reagan initiative were Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, and the Camp David agreement. Thus, as a framework for an Arab-Israeli peace, it contained no new principles. It followed the "land for peace" formula, and upheld previous American commitments to Israel's security.

But in order to reignite a process that had deteriorated with the breakup of the autonomy talks, and one that had died during the Lebanon war, President Reagan introduced what he thought to be some procedural changes, going a little beyond the Camp David accords.²² These changes included his objection to a permanent Israeli control over the West Bank and Gaza; his call for a freeze on Jewish settlements in these areas; his call for

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ The New York Times, September 2, 1982, p. 11.

²² This conclusion is partly based on a conversation with Ambassador Lewis, Washington D.C., April 26, 1991.

the realization of Security Council Resolution 242 to be applied on all fronts; and his declaration that while Jerusalem must remain undivided, its final status should be decided through negotiations.²³

Calling upon Israel to negotiate with Jordan and the Palestinians, in line with the Camp David autonomy talks, the plan shifted the role of representation of the Palestinians from Egypt to Jordan, a shift that, one should note, was not unacceptable to Israel.²⁴

But the question of Palestinian representation was a major obstacle to negotiations. The key issue regarding Palestinian representation in peace talks is threefold: who in the Palestinian camp has the authority to negotiate; who in the Palestinian camp will be accepted by Israel and by the mediator--i.e., the United States--as a party to negotiation; and who in the Palestinian camp has the power to carry through a negotiated agreement.

Through the 1980s, for the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular, no legitimate Palestinian representative other than the PLO existed. Indeed, as pointed out

²³ Still, in a statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, on September 10, 1982, Secretary Shultz reaffirmed the Administration's opposition to the dismantlement of existing settlements. The Quest for Peace: Principal U.S. Public Statements and Related Documents on the Arab-Israeli Peace Process 1967-83, U.S. Department of State, 1984 (doc.no. S1. 2:P31/25/984) pp. 115-121.

²⁴ Herman Fredrick Eilts, "The United States and Egypt", in William B. Quandt (ed.), The Middle East, p. 120.

by Herbert Kelman, the function of the PLO was not different for the Palestinians than the function of any legitimate government of a sovereign state. Certainly, for the Palestinians in the territories as well as those in the diaspora, the PLO was not just an organization, but the symbol and embodiment of Palestinian nationhood. This was true even for those Palestinians who were less enthusiastic than others about the PLO leadership.²⁵

But Israel refused to talk with the PLO or any Palestinian representative connected, however loosely, to the organization. In fact, with some exceptions, a general consensus still exists in Israel to the effect that no dialogue should take place with the PLO. This is because the PLO is considered by many Israelis as a terrorist organization whose true aim is the destruction of Israel; an organization that is incapable of any meaningful transformation.

This conviction does not ban negotiations with Palestinian Arabs who are not connected to the PLO. In fact, the preferred formula in Israel for Palestinian representation in any Arab-Israeli peace talks has been the inclusion of a Palestinian representation within a Jordanian delegation, in accordance with the Camp David agreements.

As for the United States, it refused to recognize the PLO as a legitimate party for negotiation until the organization

²⁵Herbert C. Kelman, "Creating the Conditions for Israeli-Palestinian negotiations", The Journal of Conflict Resolution (Vol. 26, no. 1, March 1982), pp. 39-79.

accepted Israel's right to exist and renounced terrorism. The concept of an American recognition of the PLO in return for the PLO's recognition of Israel goes back to 1975, when as part of Secretary Kissinger's interim agreements, the United States made a promise to Israel that Washington will not recognize the PLO or negotiate with it until the organization recognized Israel and accepted Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.²⁶

Yet the Reagan plan confirmed the Palestinian question to be more than a question of refugees. Yet the realization of the Palestinian's rights was to remain within the framework of the Camp David accords, thereby rejecting the idea of the creation of an independent Palestinian state; endorsing instead the principle of full autonomy under some form of Jordanian administration--preferably that of a federation.

Accordingly, the Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza, including East Jerusalem,²⁷ were to be granted full autonomy over their own affairs over a five-year transitional period, beginning with free elections for a self governing

²⁶Memorandum of Agreement Between the Governments of Israel and the United States, September 1975, Lukacs (ed.), Documents on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, pp. 23-4.

²⁷The plan emphasized that Jerusalem must remain undivided, but it left room for further negotiations regarding the city's final status. In this regard, in his statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee of September 10, 1982, Secretary Shultz reaffirmed the Administration's full support of the position that Jerusalem must be undivided and that its status must be determined through negotiations. The Quest for Peace: Principal U.S. Public Statements and Related Documents on the Arab-Israeli Peace Process 1967-83, U.S. Department of State, 1984. pp. 115-121.

authority in association with Jordan. The purpose of the transitional period was a peaceful and orderly transfer of authority from Israeli hands to the hands of the Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza, providing that it would not interfere with Israel's security needs.²⁰

Within the Arab world reaction to the Reagan plan was unusually optimistic. While most of the Arab states did acknowledge some of the plans' positive aspects, the lack of Arab consensus prevented any Arab state from endorsing the plan.

d. The Israeli Reaction.

The Likud government reacted to the Reagan plan with apprehension and outrage, not only because the Reagan Administration did not consult with Begin prior to the announcement of the plan, but also because the plan challenged Begin's commitment to the permanent control of the West Bank--including East Jerusalem--and Gaza.

First, the Israelis thought the initiative was forced on them, despite the fact that the Administration tried to convince them that the initiative was not a set American plan. Second, the plan linked Israel's departure from Lebanon to its withdrawal

²⁰ Some additional points which were not covered under the Reagan speech were dealt with in a text called 'talking points', which accompanied the speech. For the text of the 'talking points' see The New York Times, September 9, 1982.

from the West Bank.²⁸

Officially however the Israeli government--in an emergency session of September 2--unanimously rejected the Reagan proposal on the ground that it seriously deviated from the Camp David agreement.²⁹

The most sensitive points for the Begin government were President Reagan's call to apply Resolution 242 on all fronts; and his declaration that the final status of Jerusalem should be decided through negotiations.

Begin, like many other Likud members, felt that Resolution 242--and 338 for that matter--did not exist in an abstract way, but were relevant only within the context of the Camp David agreements. Fearing that any deviation from Camp David would permit their reinterpretation, Begin was always apprehensive about these two resolutions. He believed that he had finalized the interpretation of these resolutions in the Camp David agreement, with constraints which he would not allow to crumble.

When President Reagan introduced a new plan based on these resolutions, and in addition included in the plan a number of changes--which the Administration viewed procedural in nature, but Begin viewed them as a dangerous breach of the Camp David

²⁸ These conclusions are partly based on information gathered during private conversations with former Assistant Secretary Richard Murphy, New York, April 9, 1991, and with professor I. William Zartman, New York, March 27, 1991.

²⁹ Foreign Broadcast Information Service/Daily Report (Middle East and Africa, Near East and South Asia) (FBIS/DR thereon) (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Commerce/Technical Information Service), 2 September, 1982.

agreements--Begin was convinced that his fears were realized in the most sinister terms, causing him to reject the plan outright.³⁰

As for East Jerusalem, fearing that any reference to the area could eventually lead to the repartition of the city, the Israeli Cabinet claimed that Jerusalem was not at all mentioned in the Camp David agreements, but that its status had been declared in a letter Prime Minister Begin sent to President Carter, whereby it was stated that "Jerusalem is the capital of Israel, a single, undivided city, and so it shall remain for eternity".³¹ In addition the government strongly objected to the participation of Arabs from East Jerusalem in the elections for the autonomy council of Judea, Samaria and Gaza, claiming that there was no mention in the Camp David agreements of such voting rights. Such rights, according a formal cabinet statement, meant the redivision of Jerusalem into two authorities, one being the state of Israel, the other, the administrative council of the autonomy. This was unacceptable to the Israeli government.³²

President Reagan's call for the total freeze on the establishment of Jewish settlements in the West bank and Gaza was equally disturbing to the Begin government. On this issue the cabinet argued once again that there was no mention of such a

³⁰This conclusion is based on a private Conversation with Health Minister Ehud Olmert, Jerusalem, June 28, 1991.

³¹FBIS/DR, 3 September, 1982.

³²Ibid, 2 September, 1982.

freeze in the Camp Davis accords. Rather, at Camp David the Prime Minister agreed that while no new settlements would be established, inhabitants would be added to the existing settlements during the three-months negotiation period for the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. This commitment was fully met, as the three-months period ended on December 7, 1978. Moreover, the government claimed, in addition to Israel's national security concerns, settlement in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza was an legitimate Jewish right.³³

Correspondingly, immediately after the plan was made public the government and its hawkish supporters in the Knesset used the occasion to justify and bolster settlement activity in the occupied territories. It was no accident that Deputy Prime Minister David Levi, at the inauguration ceremony of Ma'ale Adumim--a new settlement near Jerusalem--vowed to continue to resettle Judea and Samaria, and never to allow the creation of a Palestinian state there.³⁴ Deputy Foreign Minister, Yehuda Ben-Meir, added that the inauguration of Ma'ale Adumim was the answer "not only to the [Reagan] message, but the best proof to the world that no force and no one will be able to uproot us from our homeland".³⁵ On September 5, a ministerial committee approved the establishment of five new settlements in Judea and Samaria,

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., 2 September, 1982.

³⁵ Ibid.

and one settlement in Gaza for the Yamit evacuees.³⁶ Yamit was one of the few Sinai settlements demolished with the return of the Sinai to Egypt. In addition the cabinet decided to continue a vigorous program of Jewish settlements in the territories.³⁷ This became a clear pattern that followed every peace initiative.

Other sensitive issues included the control of local security in the territories; the definition of autonomy; ties with Jordan; Israeli sovereignty over Judea, Samaria, and Gaza; and the notion of a Palestinian state.

On Palestinian participation in domestic security, the cabinet claimed that the Camp David accords did not include any distinction between domestic and external security. The government argued that if domestic security would not remain in the hands of the Israelis, the PLO would cause continual bloodshed among Jews and Arabs alike.³⁸

On the issue of autonomy the government opposed granting the Palestinians territorial autonomy, because in Camp David it was made clear that autonomy did not concern territory but inhabitants only.³⁹

On ties with Jordan, the Cabinet statement insisted that no mention of the economic, commercial, and social and cultural ties which President Reagan called for was made in the Camp David

³⁶ Ibid, 7 September, 1982.

³⁷ Ibid, 10 September 1982.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

agreements.

On sovereignty, the government maintained that nothing in the Camp David agreements prevented the application of Israeli sovereignty over Judea, Samaria, and Gaza at the end of the transitional period.

On a Palestinian state, the statement said that despite American rejection of the creation of a Palestinian state in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, the implementation of the Reagan plan could help the PLO to establish a state in these territories and create a united front with Jordan. This concern was repeated in a strong-worded letter sent by Prime Minister Begin to President Reagan, in which the Israeli Prime Minister warned that the Reagan proposal would lead to a Palestinian state and a Soviet base in the heart of the Middle East, endangering Israel's very existence.⁴⁰

In the Knesset debate, the Prime Minister uncovered his deep resentment of outside influence, especially on the issue of peace and security,

...I state that they (the Americans) will have to permit it (the Reagan plan) to drop out of sight, vanish. Nobody will negotiate it. They made one mistake when they thought they could formulate a "plan" and submit it to Israel and that we would then conduct negotiations on it. ...This the United States must realize: With all its power,

⁴⁰Begin also reprimanded President Reagan for his reference in his plan to the "West Bank" instead of Judea and Samaria--the official Israeli names for the territories. He also resented the fact that Washington did not consult with Israel before forwarding the proposal to Jordan and Saudi Arabia, "the former an outspoken opponent of the Camp David accords, the latter a complete stranger to and an adversary of these accords" "The New York Times", September 6, 1982, p. 4.

it does not lay down the rules. It will not dictate to us whether the border will be the Jordan River or the Qishon. ...They can now shuttle between Riyadh and Amman--we will not budge from our position.⁴¹

He accused the United States of "gross intervention in Israel's domestic affairs, reminding Washington that " Israel is not Chile and I am not Allende".⁴²

Defense Minister Sharon termed the American proposal as one which constituted a threat to Israel's existence, and accused Washington not only of attempting to drive a wedge between American Jewry and Israel, but also of seeking to drive a wedge inside Israel, aiming at creating a rift within the Israeli government.⁴³

Statements by Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir added to Israel's anti-American campaign. In an interview with the German Badisches Tagblatt, Shamir said he no longer viewed the United States as an honest mediator and no longer regarded the United States as a representative of Israel's interest.⁴⁴ Including Israel in the club of countries which were forsaken by their American ally, later that month Shamir said,

The Americans are trying every way to show the Arabs how cut off they are from us: therefore they hasten at every opportunity to teach Israel a lesson while showing maximum consideration for the Arabs. The United States' attitude toward us is turning into a question mark. I would not want to enter the club of

⁴¹ FBIS/DR, 10 September, 1982.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., September 22, 1982.

⁴⁴ Ibid., September 9, 1982.

Korea-Taiwan, South Africa-Vietnam.⁴⁵

Asked whether it would not have been preferable to reject only the negative clauses of the plan, in an interview published by Ha'aretz on September 17, the Foreign Minister answered that

...It is true that some of the points in the plan sound nice to the ear, but we had to adopt a drastic measure since the plan's principles are dangerous to our security. We must uncover the gap between the nice words and the practical conclusion laid before us...⁴⁶

Many of the right-wing Knesset members echoed similar sentiments, accusing Washington of violating the Camp David accords, and calling for the application of the Israeli law to the territories.

On the opposite side of the political spectrum--the reaction to the Reagan plan symbolized the internal disparity between the Likud and the Labor Alignment--the Alignment's position on the Reagan plan was that of approval. Indeed, a number of Alignment MKs identified some similarities between the Reagan and the 1968 Allon plan.

Although not an official plan for the West Bank, the Allon Plan, formulated in July 1967, represented the Labor government idea of defensible borders. The central principle of that plan was the preservation of both the Jewish and democratic characters of the state, promoting a limit on Israel's territorial jurisdiction and a reduction of the number of Palestinian Arabs under Israeli control.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 22 September, 1982.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 5 September, 1982.

But believing that settlements in the Jordan Rift Valley and in the border areas were essential for Israel's security,⁴⁷ the Alignment leader Shimon Peres, was at odds with President Reagan's call on a total freeze on Israeli settlement in the occupied territories.⁴⁸

Few others in the party also objected to total freeze on settlements, as well as to the inclusion of East Jerusalem Arabs in the elections for an autonomy council--because they were not part of the Camp David autonomy plan. Still, they did not think that the plan should have been rejected outright.⁴⁹

Thus, viewing the plan as an opportunity to open a door for a possible agreement to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Alignment condemned the cabinet's outright rejection of the Reagan plan. A formal statement issued by the party's reaction team accused the government of "rash and hysterical" behavior.⁵⁰

On his part, Begin used the Likud-Alignment disagreement over the Reagan plan as an opportunity to delegitimize the Alignment as a suitable potential leader. In his concluding address to the Knesset's session on the Reagan plan (September 8,

⁴⁷ Still, the Alignment was opposed to the settlement of densely populated Arab areas within 20-30 kilometers of the Jordan River. Ibid, 8 September, 1982

⁴⁸ A decade later, the Labor Alignment leader Shimon Peres still believes that the Reagan plan should have been accepted by Israel. This conclusion is based on a private conversation with MK Peres, Tel Aviv, July 3, 1991.

⁴⁹ FBIS/DR, 8 September, 1982.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

1982) Begin, in his familiar theatrical style, asked:

Why is it that since 1 September, since bits and pieces of information on the new US administration reports were leaked, has there been glee in the Alignment, frenzy in the opposition's domain? ...Apparently they ought to have been worried... (because) there will be participation of the Palestinian inhabitants of east Jerusalem in the elections to the authority of Judea, Samaria and Gaza.... After all anyone in his right mind would understand that this means the repartitioning of Jerusalem....This is the division of Israel. Is this good timing? Should it lead to joy or even to rejoicing in your adversary's fall?⁵¹

Begin accused the Alignment--although not in so many words--of betraying the security of the state of Israel, and orchestrating his own downfall.⁵²

Continuing to cultivate the notion of disparity between the two political camps over the future of Eretz Israel, from the Knesset podium he warned the Israeli public against the political realism of his adversaries, which dissociated the future of Israel from its historical past; for it was the past that gave Israel its right to territory in Eretz Israel.⁵³

His campaign paid off: on October 19, Begin won a parliamentary approval of his tough stand on limited autonomy for the Palestinians and his commitment not to surrender control over the West Bank and Gaza.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Ibid, 9 September, 1982.

⁵² Begin also proposed early elections--to be held in June 1983--to enable the public to determine the future of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza. Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid, 21 October 1982.

⁵⁴ The New York Times, October 20, 1982, p. 8.

VI. THE SHULTZ INITIATIVE AND THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CONCEPT.

a. The Political Background: from the Reagan Plan to the Intifada.

Between October 1982 and April 1983 King Hussein and PLO Chairman Yassir Arafat held a series of talks in order to arrive at a consolidated position on the Reagan plan. On April 2-4 1983, they agreed on a negotiating position based on a compromise between the Reagan and the Fez plans.¹

In their agreement, King Hussein and Chairman Arafat decided in principle that King Hussein would lead a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation in negotiations with Egypt, Israel, and the United States, on Palestinian self-rule as outlined in the Reagan plan. The Palestinian part of the delegation was to include non-PLO Palestinians, approved by the PLO.²

But the more militant factions of the PLO rejected the Palestinian-Jordanian federation idea, on the ground that it dissented from the PLO's commitment to a fully independent Palestinian state, and reflected Washington's partial Middle East policy. Ultimately, Arafat backed away from his agreement with Hussein at the last minute, and the King terminated negotiations with the PLO Chairman.

As a result, President Reagan took a few steps to

¹The Fez plan was formulated by the Arab League Summit, at Fez, Morocco, which convened in September 1982.

²Keesings, Volume XXIX, June 1983, p. 32232; The New York Times, March 25, 1983, p. 12, and April 11, p. 1.

demonstrate his continued commitment to his plan: (1) he immediately announced his disappointment at the "impediment" in the search for Middle East peace caused by Hussein's decision, but added that he remained "very hopeful" that progress could still be made in search for an Arab-Israeli peace; (2) he revealed that he had consulted King Hussein and King Fahd, and that all three agreed not to abandon the peace efforts; (3) he confirmed that other moderate Arab leaders, including King Hassan and President Mubarak, encouraged him to preserve his position; (4) he called upon the Palestinian leadership to make a "bold and courageous move" to break the deadlock; and (5) he declared that he would not abandon his initiative despite the setback.³

But soon after, the Reagan Administration formulated a new Middle East strategy, seeking closer ties with Israel and Jordan, and closer Israeli-Jordan ties. This was part of a broader concept according to which the Arab moderate countries would join in a coalition against Syria and Iran, and move toward accepting United Nations resolutions that acknowledge the existence of Israel.

Since King Hussein was more vulnerable than Israel to Syrian threats, the new strategy banked on his consent more than on Israel's. Thus, the administration promised Jordan to urge Israel to freeze settlements in the West Bank. It also tried to convince Hussein that once he came to the negotiating table, pressure for

³ The New York Times, April 11, 1983, p. 1.

compromise would develop within Israel.⁴

Thus, between February 1984 and April 1985 King Hussein and Chairman Arafat held another round of talks, still attempting to form a joint approach to negotiations. But, in mid-March 1984 Hussein rejected the Reagan plan altogether. In an interview which was recorded by the New York Times, the King criticized Washington's Middle East policy for being one-sided and unreliable. He ruled out negotiations with Israel any time soon, and insisted on a Soviet role in a Middle East peace process.⁵

Perhaps Hussein's disenchantment with the United States' Middle East policy was in part a result of the disclosure that for a period of nine months the Reagan Administration had conducted secret talks with the PLO, despite its announced policy of non-recognition of the PLO. According to participants, the purpose of the talks was compatible with the Carter Administration's attempts to persuade the PLO to recognize Israel in return for an American recognition of the organization.⁶

Encouraged by Hussein's invitation, at the end of July, the Soviet Union initiated a peace plan of its own which endorsed a confederation between the Palestinian state with a neighboring

⁴Ibid, March 8, 1984, p. 1.

⁵Ibid, March 15, 1984, p, 1.

⁶The talks which lasted from August 1981 to May 1982, were authorized by Secretary Haig, after Washington received a suggestion from Arafat to conduct such talks, and were later approved by President Reagan himself. See The New York Times, February 23, 1984, p. 10.

country.⁷

Robert Freedman suggested that the plan was a gesture to Hussein, who, the Soviets feared, could be persuaded to embrace the Reagan plan as a result of the Alignment's victory in the Israeli elections of July 23. The Soviets believed that satisfied with the confederation idea, Hussein--who desired a link between any Palestinian entity on the West Bank and Jordan--would not endorse the Reagan plan. Freedman also suggested that the endorsement of the confederation idea might have been a gesture to Arafat, who at the time was engaged in a political battle to win over the Marxist elements of the PLO.⁸ Israel quickly rejected the Soviet initiative, as did the United States.

In September, in his speech at the United Nations General Assembly, President Reagan reaffirmed that his plan would remain the American policy in the Middle East. At the same time, Israel--now under the leadership of the National Unity Government headed by Shimon Peres--called on Jordan and other Arab states to join negotiations.⁹

At the end of November, the 17th Palestine National Council

⁷Robert O. Freedman, "Moscow and the Middle East in 1984", Middle East Contemporary Survey 1983-84 (Tel Aviv: Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies/The Shiloah Institute, Tel Aviv University, 1986), p. 44

⁸Ibid.

⁹In reply, in his speech before the Jordanian Parliament new session in October, King Hussein denounced Israel's invitation as "an exercise in subterfuge and deception". The New York Times, October 2, 1984, p. 14.

session convened in Amman. The choice of the session's location was not insignificant: it symbolized Arafat's willingness to join Hussein in a future diplomatic drive, and to defeat the veto power of dissenting PLO factions.¹⁰

Indeed, on February 11 1985, the Jordanian government disclosed that King Hussein and Chairman Arafat had reached an agreement on a framework for a joint peace initiative, the so called "Amman Accord." The initiative was based on the principle of "territory for peace" formulated by United Nations resolutions, and on the establishment of a confederal affiliation between Jordan and an autonomous Palestinian entity.¹¹

The Hussein-Arafat agreement gave the United States an incentive to rejuvenate the peace process under its leadership, especially since Secretary Shultz interpreted the agreement to indicate a change in Hussein's position after his rejection of the Reagan plan.¹²

Hence, on February 19, in a move that resembled the American-Soviet collaboration of 1977, the United States and the Soviet Union held exploratory talks on the Middle East, in

¹⁰Dankwart A. Rustow, "Realignment in the Middle East", in Foreign Affairs (America and the World 1984, Vol. 63, No. 3), p. 592.

¹¹During a visit to Washington in May, Jordanian officials stated that the confederation concept was actually much closer to the federation concept, since the responsibility for defense and foreign affairs was vested in Amman. See Quandt, "U.S. Policy", p. 369.

¹²Gazit, "The Middle East Peace Process", Middle East Contemporary Survey 1984-85, p. 60.

Vienna. The talks, more important for their symbolism than for their substance, were the first attempt by the super powers to find a common ground on the Arab-Israeli conflict since their joint October 1977 statement on the Middle East.

Be that as it may, on February 24, 1985, President Mubarak offered his services as a host to a preliminary meeting between the United States and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, so they could lay the groundwork for direct peace talks between Israel and the delegation. Stressing the importance of direct talks between Israel and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, Mubarak called upon the Reagan Administration to convene such a meeting. He also alleged that the delegation could be composed of West Bank residents that were pro-PLO, rather than known members of the PLO.¹³ This later became the basis for Secretary Baker's peace plan, and the issue over which the Israeli government fell in March 1990.

Encouraged, the Reagan Administration began a fresh diplomatic endeavor in the Middle East.¹⁴ On April 14, it dispatched Richard Murphy to the area for a two-week tour which included discussions with the leaders of Jordan, Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq, and the deposed mayors of

¹³ The New York Times, February 25, 1985. p. 1.

¹⁴ On April 10, King Hussein and Chairman Arafat held a meeting--their first since their accord--to discuss joint proposals. Mubarak's idea was approved by King Hussein, and apparently by Arafat himself. See The New York Times' April 11, 1985, p. 3; Keesing's (Vol. XXXI, December 1985), p. 34075.

Hebron and Gaza, and the Mayor of Bethlehem. During his meetings Murphy discussed the possibility of talks between the United States and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.¹⁵ This was followed by discussions between President Reagan and King Hassan of Morocco on the various proposals for bringing the Palestinians into future Middle East peace talks.¹⁶ Indeed, it seemed as if the Reagan plan--perfected by the Hussein-Arafat agreement and Mubarak's ideas--did come to life.

But Murphy could not secure an agreement for direct talks between Israel and Jordan.¹⁷ In addition, the PLO rejected all the proposals made by Murphy together with the entire American approach to the conflict, including the Reagan plan.¹⁸ On May 8, the PLO announced that only declared PLO members chosen by the organization's leadership would be permitted to meet with American officials to explore the possibility of peace talks with Israel.¹⁹

Despite this setback, the United States continued with its

¹⁵ The basic American approach on the question of Palestinian representation was that Arafat could either indicate somehow his willingness to recognize Israel or designate pro-Arafat but non-PLO Palestinians to represent his interests in a preliminary dialogue. See Barry Rubin, "The United States' Middle East Policy in 1987", Middle East Contemporary Survey 1987 (Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies/The Shiloah Institute, Tel Aviv University), pp. 36-37.

¹⁶ The New York Times, April 18, 1985, p. 4.

¹⁷ The New York Times, April 27, 1985, p. 1.

¹⁸ Ibid, May 5, 1985, p. 12.

¹⁹ Ibid, May 9, 1985, p. 14.

efforts to encourage the parties to negotiate. On May 10-13, Secretary Shultz visited Israel, Jordan, and Egypt to discuss the problem of an acceptable Palestinian component of the joint delegation. Reportedly, the United States was ready at that time to accept members of the PNC as part of the delegation, provided that they were not declared members of the PLO.²⁰

On May 29-31, King Hussein held talks with President Reagan in Washington. During these talks the King indicated for the first time his willingness to hold direct talks with Israel. He proposed a four-stage process by which the PLO would recognize Israel's right to exist in return for an American recognition of the right of the Palestinians to self determination. This was to be followed by preparatory talks between a joint Jordanian-PLO delegation and US officials, leading to the convening of an international conference, which was to pave the way for direct talks between Israel and the Jordanian-PLO delegation.²¹ Initially, the idea of convening an international Middle East

²⁰ Keesing's (Vol. XXXI, December 1985), p. 34075. In the beginning of June Secretary Shultz sent a message to Prime Minister Peres to seek the Israel backing for the projected American talks with a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation as a step toward direct talks with Israel. Reports said that in return Mr. Peres gave Mr. Shultz implicit Israel backing for such talks, provided that the delegation did not include PLO members. See The New York Times, June 3, 1985, p. 1.

²¹ Hussein affirmed that Jordan and the PLO were in agreement on holding peace talks with Israel under the "umbrella" of an international conference. Moreover, the king attested that the PLO, after persistent refusal to do so, agreed that the talks would be held on the basis of "the pertinent United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 and 338". The New York Times, May 30, 1985, p. 1.

peace conference was introduced by the Soviets in July 1984.

While Hussein's proposal was praised in Washington, the Israeli government initially rejected the conference idea as "a device to evade direct negotiations;²² but later Prime Minister Peres endorsed it, as an initial step towards direct Israeli-Jordanian talks.

In his speech to the Knesset, on June 10, Peres called for direct negotiations with Jordan within the framework of a five-stage timetable, according to which (i) informal contact in the United States between American, Egyptian, Jordanian, and non-PLO officials would take place; (ii) a joint Jordanian-Palestinian-Israeli preparatory committee would be established; (iii) the five permanent members of the Security Council would confirm their support for direct negotiations; (iv) "authentic" Palestinian representatives from the occupied territories who would represent the stance of the inhabitants and who would be acceptable to all sides would be nominated; (v) an international peace conference, which would include direct talks between Israel and a Jordanian delegation containing Palestinian representatives and Jordanian officials, would be convened within three months.²³

²² Keessing's, (Vol. XXXI, December 1985), pp. 34075-6.

²³ Ibid, p. 34076.

Despite some difficulties, the State Department reacted to Peres' proposal with approval.²⁴ In mid-July the PLO submitted to Jordan a list of 22 Palestinians, to be considered as the Palestinian component of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. The Jordanian government submitted to the United States the names of seven of the proposed delegates. In return the United States submitted that list to the Israeli government. The Israeli government at first rejected all of the names, but later Peres accepted two of the candidates: Hanna Seniora, the editor-in-chief of the Palestinian paper Al Fajr; and Faez Abu Rahme, chairman of the Gaza Chamber of Advocates.²⁵

Meanwhile, in a much-publicized interview with Der Spiegel, Arafat reaffirmed his support for the confederation idea, and implicitly accepted UN resolution 181 of 1947, which endorsed a two-state solution.²⁶

Determined to generate progress, the United States continued its efforts to break the impasse over Palestinian representation by taking the following steps: (1) in reply to the Israeli rejection of the Jordanian list, the administration insisted that

²⁴ Unresolved problems remained to be: the joint delegation; PLO recognition of Israel; and linkage between the steps Hussein endorsed and direct negotiations. See Barry Rubin, "The United States' Middle East Policy in 1987", p. 38.

²⁵ The Israeli government's initial rejection of the list was based on two claims: (1) no Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza were included; (2) all but one individual--who the Israelis claimed was a prominent PLO official--were members of the PNC. Prime Minister Peres said that Israel was not ready to talk to terrorists. See The New York Times, July 18, 1985, p. 1.

²⁶ Ibid.

Israel could not veto American talks with a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegations; (2) prior to the opening of the Arab summit on August 7-9, in Casablanca, Morocco, Washington urged the Arab leaders to endorse Hussein's plan;²⁷ (3) it dispatched Murphy back to the Middle East in mid-August.

On September 14, King Hussein met in Cairo with President Mubarak to discuss ways to renew the peace process. That was followed by a meeting between President Reagan and President Mubarak on September 23, in Washington. A few days later, in a speech before the United Nations General Assembly, the King invited Israel to negotiate under the auspices of an international conference to be sponsored by the United Nations Secretary General.²⁸

On September 30, President Reagan met with King Hussein,²⁹ and on October 17, President Reagan and Prime Minister Peres met in Washington. To accommodate Hussein, the Israeli leader announced his readiness to negotiate with Jordanian officials without preconditions, and to make territorial compromises in the search for peace. He backed this statement in his address before

²⁷The Arab League, in the final communique of its summit welcomed Arafat-Hussein's agreement as one compatible with the Fez plan of 1982, but refused to endorse it because it did not sponsor the creation of an independent Palestinian state. See Keesing's, p. 34076; The New York Times, August 10, 1985, p. 1.

²⁸The New York Times, September 28, 1985. p. 5.

²⁹After the meeting the President declared that Washington's goal was still "direct negotiations, under appropriate auspices, before the end of this year". See Rubin, "Middle East: Search for Peace". p. 595.

the General Assembly when he described Hussein's speech as "a peace speech", and called for negotiations with a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation within the framework of an international conference under the auspices of the Security Council.³⁰

Soon after, reports circulated in Israel and in Western Europe, disclosing that Prime Minister Peres and King Hussein had held secret talks, in which the Israeli prime minister urged the King to agree to direct negotiations on the basis of territorial compromise. On October 29, Ha'aretz reported that King Hussein and the Israeli government had drawn up a secret plans for an Israeli-Jordanian condominium arrangement for the West Bank, pending a final settlement. According to the report, the plan--apparently approved by the United States--provided for Palestinian autonomy and for joint Israeli-Jordanian military patrol in the Jordan Valley to prevent guerrilla infiltration, leaving the responsibility for internal security in the West Bank in the hands of the Israeli Defense Forces.³¹

Following the Achille Lauro incident Hussein and Arafat agreed to establish a permanent joint Jordanian-Palestinian committee to coordinate their peace efforts.³² Paradoxically the incident fastened Arafat's ties with the Jordanian king as the

³⁰ The New York Times, September 28, 1985, p. 5.

³¹ Keesing's (Vol. XXI, December 1985), p. 34079.

³² Ibid, p. 34079.

former tried to pacify the latter.³³

That was followed by Arafat's "Cairo declaration", in which he denounced all forms of terrorism outside of territories occupied by Israel³⁴. Nonetheless, when King Hussein invited the PLO leader to renounce all violence, and to publicly accept resolutions 242 and 338, Arafat was unable to do so because the Fatah central committee and the PLO executive committee still rejected these resolutions as a basis for a settlement.³⁵

Consequently, on February 19, 1986, King Hussein announced that Jordan was "unable to continue to co-ordinate politically with the PLO leadership until their words become bonds, characterized by commitment, credibility and consistency."³⁶

The failure of Hussein and Arafat to agree on a coordinated strategy in the peace process did not stop Washington's attempts to mediate between the parties. Immediately after King Hussein delivered his famous speech, Washington dispatched Richard Murphy to the region again, to discuss the need for direct Israeli-Jordanian-Palestinian talks and the makeup of a Palestinian delegation to such talks.

³³ On October 7, 1985, four Palestinian terrorists hijacked the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro in the Mediterranean Sea. They demanded the release of 50 Palestinians from Israeli jails, murdered an American handicapped tourist, and threw him overboard.

³⁴ Keesing's (Vol. XXI, December 1985), p. 34079.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid (Vol. XXXIII, January 1987), pp. 34898-9.

In late July 1986, then Vice President Bush arrived in the Middle East, where he held talks with regional leaders, including West Bank Palestinians, and King Hassan of Morocco. This trip came after the Moroccan king had held a much publicized meeting with Prime Minister Peres, a meeting which was described by Murphy as bold and historic, and a meeting which, without producing any real hopes still inspired Bush's trip.³⁷

In the fall, Prime Minister Peres and President Mubarak met President Reagan in Washington, where they pressed the Administration to accept the international conference idea.

Ultimately the idea of an international conference became accepted by almost all those absorbed in the peace process. In fact, with the exception of Israel, by mid-1987, the idea had been endorsed by all the major parties involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict. The only disparity that separated the sponsors of the conference centered around the question of what authority should the conference have over the parties. For example, the PLO, who reserved for itself a major role in the deliberations, favored a conference with full powers to impose a solution on the parties. This view was supported by many Arab states, but strongly opposed by the US and some other Western powers.³⁸

³⁷ Development in the Middle East: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the Committee on Foreign Affairs/House of Representatives, August 14, 1986 (Doc. no. Y4.F 76/1:M58/20/986-3).

³⁸ The Council of Ministers of the European Community supported the peace conference idea, and an active PLO role in it--reaffirming the Venice Declaration of 1980, in which the European Community recognized the legitimate rights of the

The conference idea seemed to have ripened even more after Arafat apparently dropped his insistence on direct PLO representation in the conference. In an interview with the British Independent published on March 3, 1987, he had suggested that the PLO participants could be part of a single united Arab delegation, to include representatives from Syria, Egypt, and Jordan, alongside other interested parties.³⁹

On April 11, a secret meeting between King Hussein and Prime Minister Peres in London, produced the "London document of understanding." Subject to the approval of the governments of Israel and Jordan, and the blessing of the United States, the document constituted a procedural agreement on direct-Israeli-Jordanian negotiations under the auspices of an international conference, with the participation of all the parties involved, including Palestinian representation as part of a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, and the five permanent members of the Security Council.

On April 23, while briefing the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Peres pronounced that all sides, including the two superpowers, agreed that the conference would not have the power to force any decision on the parties; that after the opening, negotiations would be held in the framework of bilateral committees; and that the PLO would not be included at

Palestinian people and the PLO as its representative.

³⁹ Keesing's (Vol. XXXIII, September 1987), p. 35411.

the Palestinian representation to the conference.⁴⁰ Moreover, in the beginning of May, Washington agreed that if a conference would be convened and Israel should decide to withdraw from it if the conditions for its convocation had not been met, the US would do the same. Encouragingly, Shamir's office demanded further clarifications on a number of points.⁴¹

On May 8th, Jordanian officials announced that Syria was ready to participate in a conference under terms that would be acceptable to both the US and Israel; and that a detailed understanding on the idea of an international conference had been reached between Jordan and the Soviet Union.⁴²

On May 21, the US ambassador to Israel, Thomas Pickering, announced that Jordan, Egypt, and the US had reached an agreement on the framework of the conference. According to the agreement, the conference would not have the power to impose a solution on the parties involved, nor did it have the power to veto agreements reached bilaterally. The agreement also stated that the conference would include "face to face" negotiations in which Palestinian representatives would participate as part of a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. Participants in the conference were expected to endorse U.N. resolutions 242 and 338 and to

⁴⁰ FBIS/DR, 24 April, 1987.

⁴¹ These included questions such as whether the conference would be an opening only; what would be the Soviet role in it; and whether there were any inclinations to include the PLO in it. Ibid, 6 May, 1987.

⁴² Keessing's, (Vol. XXXIII, September 1987), p.35411.

renounce terrorism.⁴³

Meanwhile, while visiting the US in order to receive the support he needed, Peres held unofficial talks with the Soviet ambassador to the UN, Uri Dobinin, regarding Soviet participation in the conference. In June, Peres held talks with West European leaders, and in July he met in Geneva with President Mubarak, the Secretary General of the United Nations Javier Perez de Cuellar, and Richard Murphy. Further discussion on the international conference took place between the Egyptian Foreign Minister, Dr. Ahmed Esmat Abdel Meguid and the British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and between Thatcher and King Hussein. In addition, PLO officials held talks with the Egyptian Foreign Minister and with the Jordanian Prime Minister.⁴⁴

By July 1987, most barriers to the convening of the conference were removed.

After these promising developments, in mid-August, the Executive Assistant to Secretary Shultz, Charles Hills, visited Israel in order to persuade Shamir to agree to the conference. In mid-October, Secretary Shultz himself advanced the idea of the peace conference in a new peace proposal.

Stressing that improved American-Soviet relations presented new opportunities for Middle East negotiations--and proposing a marginal Soviet participation in the international conference--Shultz suggested that the next phase of negotiations would focus

⁴³ Ibid, pp. 35411-12.

⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 35412.

on interim arrangements. Careful not to mention the PLO by name, Shultz insisted on the participation of the Palestinians in the conference, but he conditioned such participation on a Palestinian consent to end terrorism, and on Palestinian recognition of Israel.

Prime Minister Shamir decided neither to accept nor to reject Shultz's initiative until he learned whether Jordan and the Soviet Union had accepted the proposal. It was soon disclosed, however, that Shamir agreed to a limited superpower involvement in the peace process and to the convening of an international peace conference, but only after a peace agreement between the warring parties had already been achieved, so as to allow international support for such an agreement.⁴⁵

But the international conference never materialized. Pressed by strong opposition within his own party, and strongly opposed by the Tehiya Party and Gush Emunim, Prime Minister Shamir effectively undermined the idea. On its part, with a little more than a year left in its first term in office, and with a heated debate in Israel, the Reagan Administration did not feel pressed to continue the peace process. On the Arab side too, no demands to continue the peace process were heard. Indeed, an emergency Arab League summit, which convened on November 8-11 in Amman, gave low priority to the Arab-Israeli conflict altogether. Instead, discussions centered around Iran and the Islamic revolution. This was the first time since the creation of

⁴⁵ FBIS/DR, 29 October, 1987.

the Arab League in 1944 that the primary focus of such a meeting was not the Arab-Israeli conflict and the plight of the Palestinian.

Such disregard convinced the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza that neither the Arab countries, nor the PLO leadership would deliver an answer to the Palestinian problem. With no prospect for a movement in the peace process the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza launched a violent popular uprising known as the intifada.⁴⁶

b. The Reagan Administration's Motivation for the Initiation of the Shultz Plan.⁴⁷

The primary incentives for the Shultz initiative were developments that had occurred in the region between the Reagan initiative and the intifada. Indeed, in his testimony before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs (April 4, 1985), Richard Murphy affirmed that developments such as the Palestine National Council meeting in

⁴⁶The intifada began in the Gaza Strip on December 9, 1987. The immediate incident that ignited the uprising was the death of four Palestinians a day earlier in a crash with a car driven by an Israeli. Another incident that ignited the Palestinians was an attack, on November 25, by a Palestinian guerrilla who flew a motorized hang glider from Lebanon into Israel, entered an Israeli army camp and killed 6 soldiers before being killed himself. The purchase by Ariel Sharon of an apartment in the heart of East Jerusalem, and the treatment of the building's Arab tenants by Sharon's security guards, were added forces to the Palestinians' frustration.

⁴⁷Many of the following conclusions are based on a private conversation with Under Secretary Murphy, New York, April 9, 1991.

Amman in November 1985, the Hussein-Arafat agreement, Prime Minister Peres' reiteration that he was not placing any preconditions on Jordan's entry to the peace process, and President's Mubarak's efforts to revitalize the peace process were indeed encouraging events.⁴⁸

Moreover, the proposal was launched at a time when leaders of the countries involved in the conflict encouraged the Administration to become more engaged in the peace process, and showed "a clear willingness to consider new ideas and to look afresh at old ones". Indeed, the mood surrounding discussions in the region was "one of seriousness and of an honest desire to find a way to move forward".⁴⁹

Within Israel, the change that had occurred when Peres became Prime Minister, that is, Peres' desire for an agreement, not only encouraged the Administration, but permitted it to begin a period of close consultations between Peres and Shultz about tactics in the peace process.⁵⁰

Nonetheless, the Reagan Administration was initially opposed

⁴⁸ Development in the Middle East: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the Committee on Foreign Affairs/House of Representatives, April 4, 1985 (doc. no. Y4.F 76/1:M58/20/985-2).

⁴⁹ Development in the Middle East: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the Committee on Foreign Affairs/House of Representatives, March 15, 1988 (doc. no. Y4.F76/1:M58/20/988); "An American Vision of Peace in the Middle East" (address by Ambassador Murphy before the Washington Institute on Near East Policy, Washington D.C., April 18, 1988. Current Policy No. 1067).

⁵⁰ This conclusion is partly based on a private conversation with Ambassador Lewis Washington D.C., April 26, 1991.

to the idea of an international conference with the participation of the Soviet Union, because it feared that the Soviets would reenter the Middle East peace process, after they were effectively removed from it by Secretary Kissinger and President Carter. But it was not long before Washington agreed that an international conference was one of the possible ways of getting to direct negotiations.⁵¹

Moreover, in 1987 the United States entertained the idea that the Gorbachev-Reagan summit--planned for the end of the year--might be used somehow as a launching vehicle to bring the parties together as a preliminary step toward direct negotiations. Shultz himself was convinced that bringing the parties together was an essential first step toward negotiations. First, he had great faith in bi-lateral negotiations because he believed that issues that were so critical to survival should be discussed directly. And he might have accepted the view that direct negotiation can be best accomplished by American mediation.

Since the Gorbachev-Reagan summit did not bring the parties together, Shultz saw in the intifada another opportunity to begin direct negotiations. While not very enthusiastic about the idea, he accepted the notion that a conference--while not having the right to dictate or to impose a solution--might be the only

⁵¹ Development in the Middle East: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the Committee on Foreign Affairs/House of Representatives, September 15, 1987 (doc. no. Y4.F76/1:M58/20/987-3).

framework acceptable to the Arab side. Having exhausted all other options, by the end of 1987 the Administration believed that the conference remained the only workable idea.⁵²

The intifada was not the equivalent of a regional war: because it is generally after wars that people are insecure and question their own convictions, and since it is then that they are more open to influence, wars often provide the occasion to introduce new peace initiatives. But the intifada did create uncertainties and self-doubt in Israel. It also revived questions about the future of Israeli-Palestinian relationships with a sense of urgency that had not existed for years. In addition, Shultz was encouraged by Shamir, who was anxious to engage the US in the peace process, and persuaded by Mubarak, Peres, and King Hussein to increase American diplomatic pressure in the area. It is quite certain that had it not been for the intifada and the encouragement he received, Shultz would not have dived into a new initiative (the technicalities of the conference were worked-out in the London Document).⁵³

c. The Shultz Initiative, March 4, 1988: an International Conference.

Unlike the Reagan plan, the Shultz initiative came after a

⁵²This conclusion was made after a private conversation with former Assistant Secretary Murphy, New York, April 9, 1991.

⁵³These conclusions are based on information obtained during private conversations with former Assistant Secretary Murphy, New York, April 9, 1991; and with Ambassador Lewis, Washington D.C., April 26, 1991.

period of quiet diplomacy, carried out by Richard Murphy and Philip Habib. According to Barry Rubin, among the options for the renewal of the peace process which Shultz and other State Department officials discussed with Egyptian, Jordanian, and Israeli leaders prior to Shultz's initiative, were the extension of the Camp David accords; the international conference idea; and interim autonomy for the Palestinians. Of these, the Administration favored the autonomy principle, with a central role allotted for King Hussein.⁵⁴

Basically the plan was a perfected version of Shultz's October 1987 initiative--one more in line with the autonomy plan of the Camp David accords. But to avoid outright Arab opposition to his new proposal, Shultz declined to associate his plan with the Camp David accords and refrained from using the term "autonomy" in his proposal. Instead he used the term "transitional period"--itself a period in which the parties could adjust to the new conditions which would be created under the negotiated agreement.⁵⁵

According to William Quandt--who characterized the initiative as the most important involvement by the United States in Arab-Israeli peace-keeping since the Reagan plan--Shultz hoped for the following: (1) to break the deadlock; (2) to

⁵⁴ Rubin, "The United States' Middle East Policy in 1987", p. 40.

⁵⁵ The Administration's Approach to Middle East Peacemaking. Address by Secretary Shultz before the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Wye Plantation, Queenstown, Maryland, September 16, 1988 (Current Policy No. 1104).

influence Israeli public opinion to vote in a leadership committed to compromise; (3) to provide the next administration with a live proposal on the table.⁵⁶

The plan, based on resolutions 242 and 338, called for a three-stage timetable, beginning with an international conference in mid-April 1988. The conference was meant to ease the entry of the parties into direct negotiations, and was to involve the five permanent members of the Security Council and the parties directly involved in the conflict, including a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.⁵⁷

Starting on May 1, 1988, this stage was to be followed by negotiations between Israel and each of its neighbors, including the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. The purpose of these negotiations was to frame a three-year interim arrangement for the West Bank and Gaza, to be followed--beginning in December 1--by direct negotiations in which a permanent settlement will be negotiated.

The Administration depicted the plan as fair and reasonable, realistic and workable, carefully balanced to address the fundamental concerns of all parties, and able to lead quickly to negotiations. It specifically excluded the kind of authoritative international conference that would threaten the parties participation. Instead it was a properly structured

⁵⁶ Quandt, "U.S. Policy", p. 376-78.

⁵⁷ Shultz, "The Administration's Approach to Middle East Peacemaking."

conference with a carefully designed and limited role. While it did not intend to replace direct negotiations, the international conference, according to the Administration's belief, provided the only channel for direct talks.⁵⁰

The announcement of the plan was followed by shuttle diplomacy carried out by both Shultz and Murphy, who sought the agreement of the Israelis and Arabs. It was during his second trip to the region in March 1988, that Shultz presented the plan as an official American peace initiative.

The reaction in the Arab world to the plan was once again a mixture of guarded optimism and criticism. King Hussein expressed doubt over the United States' ability to deliver an Israeli compliance, but stopped short of rejecting the initiative. After accepting the plan initially, the Jordanian government was unwilling to press the PLO on the issue of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. Instead, the Jordanians, including King Hussein himself, advocated direct participation of the PLO in the planned international conference.⁵¹

Yassir Arafat, who instructed Palestinian leaders from the occupied territories to boycott a mutual meeting planned by Shultz, rejected the plan on the ground that it did not address the most fundamental concerns of the Palestinians and did not involve direct PLO participation in negotiations. He also

⁵⁰ Development in the Middle East, March 15, 1988; "An American Vision of Peace in the Middle East", April 18, 1988.

⁵¹ Ha'aretz, February 4-5 (international edition).

asserted that he would no longer settle for a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

The Syrian government criticized the plan on the ground that it fell short of Arabs objectives as a whole. But isolated as it was, Damascus could hardly afford to reject the plan outright. Instead, the Syrians left room for further contacts with the United States.⁶⁰

Not unexpectedly, the only Arab leader to fully support the plan was the one least affected by it, namely, President Mubarak.

d. The Idea behind International Conferences.

One of the main ideas behind international conferences is to provide an umbrella of international legitimacy to collective peace efforts. As a rule, international conferences are held for specific purposes and are quickly dissolved after the conclusion of their intended purposes.

Archetypal examples of international peace conferences are the two Hague Peace Conferences of 1899 and 1907, where a system of international arbitration was developed; the Paris Peace Conference following World War I, and the San Francisco Conference in 1945, where the United Nations was established.⁶¹

Other international peace conferences included the 1954

⁶⁰ The New York Times, February 29, 1988, p.1; March 1, 1988, p. 8.

⁶¹ William L. Tung, International Law in an Organizing World (New York, Queens College Press, 1977), p. 281.

Geneva Conference, which was convened to consider the problem of restoring peace in Indochina, and at which the four great powers participated; the 1956 Suez Canal Conference, at which 21 nations participated; the 1962 International Conference on the Question on Laos, at which representatives of fourteen nations participated; etc'.⁶²

Conference negotiations fall into two categories. The first includes those conferences at which the parties have maintained their decision-making power. The United Nations Security Council is perhaps the closest and most familiar example to such conferences. The other category include those conferences at which the parties have surrendered considerable decision-making power. The Laos Conference of 1961-62, in which the parties agreed to abide by the conference's decisions, is an example.⁶³

Characteristically, each conference determines its own rules of procedure. For example, each conference decides how decisions shall be reached--either by simple majority, absolute majority, or unanimity.⁶⁴ Since the parties involved in negotiations have to agree also on sponsoring states, location, timing, and agenda, the convening of international conferences in itself requires a great deal of cooperation.⁶⁵

Typically, international conferences bring together the

⁶² Arthur Lall, Modern International Negotiation, pp. 19-35.

⁶³ Ibid, p. 101.

⁶⁴ Tung, International Law, p. 282.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

parties that are directly involved in a conflict along with other parties who have a direct or indirect interest in solving the conflict. Occasionally international organizations are represented in international conferences; usually the latter are held under the auspices of the former.

Naturally, no state can be compelled to participate in international conferences. But because of the increased acceptance in the international community of this framework of negotiation, rival states may voluntarily seek to solve their disputes within the framework of international conferences.

The idea of convening international conferences for the purpose of solving the Arab-Israeli dispute is relatively new. The first Middle East Peace conference met after the Yom-Kippur War in Geneva, in December 1973. The conference assembled under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary General, and the co-chairmanship of the Soviet Union and the United States. But, seeking to become the sole power behind Middle East diplomacy, the United States, under the leadership of Secretary Kissinger, managed to substitute for the conference idea the "step-by-step" American diplomacy.

In 1977 the Carter Administration proposed the convening of another international Middle East peace conference, but Egypt and Israel were both opposed to an increased Soviet role in the area, and to the participation of radical Arabs.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Sadat feared that the participation of the PLO--even if indirect--and other hard-line Arabs, such as Syria, would restrict Egypt's freedom of movement. Israel feared that the

President's Sadat's dramatic trip to Jerusalem effectively killed the convening of that conference. But King Hussein rekindled the conference idea, and discussions about another international Middle East peace conference began with full vig-

e. The Israeli Reaction.

In Israel the idea of an international conference split the country between Peres and Shamir and their followers. While Peres enthusiastically pushed the idea forward, Shamir, who initially welcomed the renewed American involvement in the peace process, was vehemently opposed to it. Like the Americans, Peres viewed the conference as an opening to direct talks between Arabs and Israelis. Shamir on the other hand viewed the conference as an unqualified forum to address the essence of Israel's security, and a dangerous trap for Israel. Indeed, Shamir viewed the idea of an international conference as a Soviet-Arab plot to include the PLO in a dialogue and to force Israel to return to the 1967 borders.

Shamir ultimately objected to the most fundamental elements of the plan: he rejected the concept of an international conference as a framework for negotiation; and the idea of giving up any part of the occupied territories in exchange for peace. He

participation of such groups would isolate her, and even enhance the recognition of the PLO and the possible creation of a Palestinian state. Both Begin and Sadat viewed the core conflict as one between Egypt and Israel rather than between Arabs and Zionists or between communism and the West. See Louis Kriesberg, Social Conflicts 1982, p. 258.

also rejected the new time frame which was proposed by Shultz, because it deviated from the Camp David accords. He insisted on the original five-year autonomy period provided under the Camp David accords. Using the intifada as a pretext to lengthen rather than shorten the interim period, he demanded that negotiations on a permanent settlement would begin no sooner than at the end of the first three years of autonomy.⁶⁷

In mid-March Shamir presented his own alternative to the Shultz plan. His outline, which was based on a three-part plan, included the following principles: (1) Israel was prepared to accept the token presence of the two superpowers in the opening of direct negotiations between the two side, in accordance with Shultz's proposal of October 1987. However, negotiations would be conducted between Israel and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, without outside interference in the content of the negotiations. (2) The Palestinian members of the delegation had to be acceptable to the parties involved in negotiations. Israel would not negotiate with the PLO, either directly or indirectly. (3) The purpose of negotiations would be to reach a peace treaty with Jordan and find a solution to the problem of the Arabs of Eretz Israel. Israel position would be based on the Camp David accords, namely on the agreement to establish autonomy in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza as an interim stage, followed by negotiations on the permanent status of these areas. (4) Israel would submit a proposal for the rehabilitation of the Arab refugees of Judea,

⁶⁷ FBIS/DR, 1 February, 1988.

Samaria, and Gaza, which would be financed by an international fund set up specifically for that purpose.⁶⁸

But President Reagan made it unequivocally clear that Washington grew impatient with the status quo, and that the Administration was serious about the Shultz initiative in its initial form.⁶⁹

The dispute between Shamir and Washington widened when, on March 26, Shultz met with two Palestinian-American members of the PNC--Edward Said and Ibrahim Abu Lughod--to discuss a future Palestinian role in Middle East peace negotiations. It worsened when Shultz returned to the Middle East at the beginning of April, to prepare for the international conference, hoping that the conference would be open on the foreign minister level on April 15, 1988.

During his visit Shultz pledged to give Israel the necessary guarantees, assuring that the international conference would not impose any position on Israel. But Shamir refused to accept such guarantees. Ultimately Shamir accepted the idea of a one-time meeting under the auspices of the super powers.

Still, disillusioned by the US inability to influence Israel, and seeking to force the United States and Israel to negotiate directly with the PLO as the sole legitimate

⁶⁸ Ibid, 28 March, 1988.

⁶⁹ In a much publicized statement Reagan said: "Those who will say 'no' to the U.S plan--and the Prime Minister has not used this word--need not answer to us; they'll need to answer to themselves and their people". Ibid, 18 March, 1988.

representative of the Palestinian people, on July 31, King Hussein announced his decision to sever Jordan's administrative and legal ties to the West Bank.⁷⁰ Hussein, however, made it crystal clear that he was still ready to participate in the peace process.

⁷⁰In addition to the stated reasons, according to the Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Tabs (as cited in Ha'aretz, August 10, 1988), Hussein was influenced, among other things, by Peres' inability to convince the Israeli government to agree to an international conference, and his assumption that Likud would win in the upcoming elections in Israel and would appoint Ariel Sharon as Defense Minister. Hussein was also quoted saying that his decision was a result of the indifferent reaction by the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza to his speech in which he announced the abrogation of his 1985 agreement with Arafat, and Peres' neglect to fulfill his promise to leave the cabinet and call for new elections if Likud undermined the idea on an international conference. Ha'aretz, August 11, 1988.

VII. THE BAKER PEACE PLAN AND ITS PRELUDES:
THE US-PLO DIALOGUE; THE SHAMIR-RABIN PEACE PLAN
AND MUBARAK'S INITIATIVE.

a. The US-PLO Dialogue.

An unprecedented development which could have marked a new chapter in Middle East diplomacy did occur at the Arab summit meeting in Algiers on June 7-9, 1988. During the summit a senior PLO official and a personal aide to Yassir Arafat, Bassam Abu Sharif, submitted a statement entitled "PLO View: Prospect of a Palestinian-Israeli Settlement". The statement called upon the PLO and Israel to attend United Nations-sponsored negotiations for a "two-state solution".¹

Although the statement represented a dramatic shift in the politics of the PLO, a closer look shows that the organization had actually started a process of moderation with the aftermath of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war.

At the 12th Palestine National Council in June 1974, the PLO abandoned the goal of establishing a democratic secular state in all of Palestine, calling instead for the establishment of "a Palestinian national authority in any Palestinian areas liberated from Israeli control". This was the first expression of the two-

¹Abu Sharif repeated the statement in an interview in the Abu Dhabi paper Al-Ittihad, where he also called on Washington to open a dialogue with the PLO; and in the New York Times, where his statement was published.

state idea.²

At the 13th PNC in March 1977, the PLO formally declared its willingness to participate in negotiations for a political settlement, and in July 1981 it accepted a cease-fire agreement mediated by Philip Habib, which it carefully observed until the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982.³

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, in 1985 Arafat himself, in his interview with Der Spiegel, publicly if not formally, accepted the two-state solution.⁴

On September 4, 1986, addressing a summit of the non-aligned movement in Harare, Zimbabwe, Arafat tacitly accepted resolution 242.⁵ And in another shift from Arafat's demand for a "single democratic" Palestinian state, on May 4 1987, Arafat expressed willingness to meet with Shamir or any other Israeli leader under United Nations auspices to discuss the possibility of establishing a dual nationality Israeli-Palestinian state.⁶

²Cheryl A. Rubenberg, "The Structural and political Context of the PLO's Changing Objectives in the Post-1967 Period", in Lukacs and Battah (eds.) The Arab Israeli Conflict, p. 96.

³Ibid.

⁴When asked whether there was enough room on Palestinian territory for a Jewish and a Palestinian state, Arafat replied: "United Nations resolution 181 of 1947 speaks of two states in Palestine--an Arab and a Jewish states". FBIS/DR, 16 July 1985.

⁵Cheryl A. Rubenberg, "The Structural an political Context of the PLO's Changing Objectives", p. 96.

⁶Arafat was reportedly speaking in response to allusions made by Ezer Weizman, a Labor party member and Minister without Portfolio, to the effect that a possible peace settlement might involve the establishing of an Israeli-Palestinian state. See Keesing's, (Vol. XXXIV), March 1988, p. 35411.

On September 7, 1987, in a meeting with left-wing Israeli politicians, Arafat proposed a plan for direct talks between the PLO and Israel on the basis of U.N. resolutions 242 and 338 to be preceded by a cease-fire, a freeze on Israeli settlement activities in the West Bank and Gaza, and by mutual recognition.⁷

Be that as it may, the extraordinary statement made by Abu Sharif was followed by another statement made by Arafat, in a speech before the European Parliament, on September 13, in Strasbourg. In it Arafat publicly declared for the first time that the PLO was ready to negotiate with Israel on the basis of all relevant United Nations resolutions, including resolutions 242 and 338. According to the announcement, the PLO would accept the right to security of all states, including Israel, in return for Israeli recognition of an independent Palestinian state and the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.⁸ That intention was formalized during its 19th session held in Algiers on

⁷Some right-wing Israelis too had contacts with leading Palestinian figures. In mid-September it became public that between June and September two leading members of Herut party (the dominant member of Likud) had held a series of ten meetings with leading pro-PLO figures intending to meet with Arafat. The meeting with Arafat did not materialize however because of an Israeli air raid on Palestinian positions in southern Lebanon on Sept. 5, and the arrest of one of the Palestinians by the Israeli authorities. The two Palestinians were reprimanded by hard-line Palestinians, whereas one of the Israeli figures had to resign his post with Herut because of sharp criticism. Keesing's (Vol. XXXIII, January 1987), p. 34900; (Vol. XXXIV, April 1988), p. 35865.

⁸Until such arrangements could be achieved, Arafat endorsed two options: one was the declaration of Palestinian independence, including the formation of a provisional government; the second was the placement of the occupied territories under a United Nations trusteeship. Ibid.

November 12-15, when the PNC voted to endorse resolution 242, thereby implicitly recognizing Israel.⁹

The PNC also published a "political statement" which repeated the call for the convening of an international conference based on resolutions 242 and 338, under United Nations auspices, with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council, and the parties involved, including the PLO. It also rejected all forms of terrorism.¹⁰

The next climactic development occurred On December 6-7, when Arafat met with an American-Jewish delegation in Stockholm.¹¹ At the conclusion of the meeting Arafat reaffirmed the PNC's Algiers resolution, and announced his acceptance of the Jewish state of Israel, alongside a Palestinian state.

In reply, the American delegation confirmed its satisfaction that the PLO had indeed recognized Israel and renounced terrorism, thereby establishing the conditions for a US-PLO dialogue.

⁹The PNC also proclaimed an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem its capital. To legitimize the proclamation, it cited United Nations resolution 181 of 1947, which recommended the partition of Palestine into two states, one Arab and one Jewish.

¹⁰The statement nonetheless reaffirmed previous resolutions in this regard, including the 1985 Cairo Declaration, which confined terrorist activities to Israel and the occupied territories. For the text of the statement see, Keesing's, ibid, p. 36438.

¹¹The Stockholm discussions lasted two days. The group of American Jewish leaders included Rita Hauser, Chairman of US branch of Tel Aviv-based International center for peace in the Middle East.

In Israel, both Shamir and Peres rejected Arafat's statement. Even so, while addressing the General Assembly on December 13, Arafat called on Israel to open peace negotiations with the PLO. He presented a three-point peace initiative which called for (i) an international conference under United Nations auspices; (ii) a United Nations peacekeeping force to supervise Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories; (iii) a comprehensive settlement based on United Nations Resolutions 242 and 338. This time he denounced terrorism "on all its forms".¹²

While Israel dismissed Arafat's speech, the United States requested that Arafat clarify a number of points as to whether or not he met the American conditions for the opening of a US-PLO dialogue. Thus, on December 14, Arafat acknowledged "the rights of all parties concerned in the Middle East conflict to exist in peace and security and this included the states of Palestine, Israel, and other neighbors, according to resolutions 242 and 338". On terrorism he said: "I repeat for the record that we totally and absolutely renounce all forms of terrorism".¹³

Both President Reagan and President-elect Bush were convinced that the PLO had finally met the American conditions

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid. During his visit to France on May 2-3, Arafat declared that the Palestinian National Charter was null and voided. The Charter, it may be recalled, has been a source of anxiety for Israel, whose officials frequently cited it as evidence of the PLO's intentions to liquidate Israel. And, on May 5, Arafat rejected a suggestion made by the Iranian leader Rafsanjani, by which citizens of Western countries should be killed in revenge for Palestinians casualties of the intifada. Ibid, p. 36670.

for direct US-PLO talks. As a result, President Reagan authorized the State Department to enter into a "substantive dialogue" with the organization.

Coincidental with the White House statement, Secretary Shultz designated the American Ambassador to Tunisia, Robert H. Pelletreau Jr., as a go-between for the dialogue with the PLO.

The first formal meeting between Pelletreau and PLO representatives which took place in Tunis on December 16, was described by both sides as "practical and constructive".¹⁴

b. The Shamir-Rabin Peace Plan.

The reaction in Israel to the American decision was that of shock and alarm. But Washington did not intend to appease Israel. Safeguarding its broader diplomatic capacity in the Middle East due to the opening of a dialogue with the PLO, and concerned less over Soviet intervention in the area--the Soviets were preoccupied with their own defeat in Afghanistan, and with more pressing internal economic problems and problems dealing with national minorities--the US intended to shift its Middle East policy to a more balanced one.¹⁵

¹⁴The New York Times, December 15, 1988, pp. 1,18; Keesings's, ibid.

¹⁵Within the context of the peace process, the new Administration was committed to the following principles: (1) the promotion of a comprehensive peace, based on Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, and involving the principle of territory for peace; (2) direct and face-to-face negotiations between the parties, within the framework of an international conference; (3) obtaining a transitional period to be associated with negotiations on a final settlement; (4) opposition to a

Thus, with a fresh approach to the Middle East, a newly elected administration in Washington, another National Unity Government at home, a changed PLO, and the continuation of the intifada, Shamir faced a dilemma: he could not maintain his intractable position, but he was also aware of the restrictions that were imposed on him by his own hard-liners. He thus came up with the best he could offer: a new version of the autonomy plan.

Careful not to antagonize his critics on the right, Shamir did not disclose his plan instantaneously. Instead, he revealed his peace plan in a piecemeal manner. By adopting a gradual approach he could pacify those at home and abroad who were pressing to revitalize the peace process, and at the same time reconcile those who opposed any changes in Israel's policy. Most of all, he was able to test the reactions in Israel to a potential shift in his policy.

First, immediately after the new National Unity Government was approved by the Knesset on December 22, 1988, Shamir relayed a message to President Mubarak that he was ready to launch a new peace initiative between Israel and a Palestinian representation. Correspondingly, Foreign Minister Arens sent a message to King

permanent Israeli control of the West Bank and Gaza, or the creation of a Palestinian state. It advocated self-government for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza in a manner acceptable to Palestinians, Israel, and Jordan. Principles and Pragmatism: American Policy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict. Address by Secretary Baker before the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), Washington D.C., May 22, 1989 (Current Policy No. 1176).

Hussein, in which he encouraged the king to reenter the peace process.

This was followed by the unfolding of the new peace initiative planned by Shamir: the Prime Minister was preparing to invite the super-powers to provide a joint umbrella for direct talks with a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, with Egyptian assistance. The plan was based on the Camp David accords, and was "very flexible" in terms of the timetable for the establishment of autonomy in the territories, until negotiations were held to determine their final status.¹⁶

On January 7, 1989, while attending an international conference on chemical weapons in Paris, Foreign Minister Arens submitted to Secretary Baker a new Israeli peace plan. According to the new plan, Shamir was ready to reduce the period of Palestinian autonomy from five to three years, and to open negotiations on the permanent status of the territories sooner than the period allowed in Camp David agreements. He was also prepared to accept a limited confederative link (in the economic sphere only) between Jordan and Israel.

The plan included the following points: (i) the super-powers would host a conference on Middle East peace; (ii) Israel would negotiate directly with Palestinians elected in a local poll in the territories; (iii) in the post-autonomy negotiations with Jordan, Israel would accept a confederation with Jordan and the Palestinians; (iii) Jordan and the autonomous Palestinians would

¹⁶ FBIS/DR, 27 December, 1988.

have access to Israeli ports; (iv) the economies of the three entities would be tied together in a Common Market type framework, covering trade, currencies and transportation; (v) a special governing body would be set up to administer water and land rights among the three entities.¹⁷

Shortly after, Shamir agreed to accept some formal U.N. participation in the peace process in order to start direct negotiations with the Arabs, as long as the organization would not be involved in the content of negotiations.

On January 20--the day the new American administration was entering office--Defense Minister Rabin presented to the Israeli public his own four-stage plan for the occupied territories.

The plan, which was based on the Camp David agreements, called for free elections in which the Palestinians in the territories would elect from their own people--currently residing in the West Bank and Gaza--a delegation which would represent them in negotiations with Israel. These negotiations would aim at establishing a transitional period of self-rule, during which the Jewish settlements would continue to exist and security matters would be left in Israel's hand. This period would be followed by negotiations on the final status of the territories. By final status Rabin meant either a confederation with Jordan, or a federation with Israel. Preferably, the elections were to be held under Israeli supervision, but another neutral body--with the exception of the United Nations--would be acceptable by

¹⁷ Ibid, 10 January, 1989.

Israel. Rabin conditioned the election plan on the cessation of the intifada.¹⁸

Within hours, Prime Minister Shamir's office issued a statement which characterized the plan as Rabin's private view. Furthermore, at a session of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Shamir said that the plan was "impractical", and announced that his own plan was being consolidated.¹⁹

On February 17-27, the Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze toured the Middle East, where he met with President Hafez al-Assad, King Hussein, President Mubarak, Moshe Arens (in Cairo at the time, at the request of Shevardnadze) and Yassir Arafat (also in Cairo). Shevardnadze--who could not remain publicly indifferent to Washington's potential gains from the American-PLO dialogue--outlined a Soviet three-point peace plan, based on an international conference and United Nations mediation.

The plan called for: (i) a special session of the United Nations Security Council at the foreign minister level, to establish a framework for discussion of specific peace proposals; (ii) the establishment of a committee representing the five permanent members of the Security Council to prepare for an international peace conference; and (iii) the personal engagement of the United Nations Secretary General, Javier Perez de Cuellar, to explore ways to bring all the parties together within six to

¹⁸ Ibid, 24 January 1989.

¹⁹ Ibid.

nine months. Shevardnadze also urged President Hafez al-Assad to settle his differences with Arafat, and also advocated the rapprochement presumably under way between Syria and Egypt.

While in Cairo, Shevardnadze delivered a major speech, titled "The Middle East: A Chance for a Historic Compromise." In line with his peace plan, the Soviet Foreign Minister declared that the Soviet Union favored the elimination of super-power rivalry in the Middle East and its replacement by constructive co-operation. The main task, according to Shevardnadze, was to insure that the Palestinians realize their right to self-determination; that the Arabs "be given back the land that was taken from them"; and that the Israeli state be guaranteed the right of secure existence within recognized borders. He then outlined three principles which he deemed essential for a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict: (i) the establishment of a dialogue between the parties, arranged by intermediaries; (ii) the withdrawal of troops by one party, to be balanced by contractual political obligations which guaranteed that country's interests; and (iii) the application of a system of guarantees, possibly with United Nations and super-power sponsorship.²⁰

The Soviet plan was received with apathy by the major players in the conflict. But it induced Washington to reveal America's own intentions. Thus, when the Israeli Foreign Minister held talks with Secretary Baker and Brent Scowcroft, the National Security Adviser, in Washington, on March 13-19--talks

²⁰ Keesing's (News Digest for February 1989), p. 36475.

which intended to establish the "foundation for a future peace effort"--the Administration proposed "various reinforcing and reciprocal steps to defuse tension".²¹

According to this scheme Israel was to reduce its troop presence in Palestinian heavily populated areas, free Palestinians detained in the intifada, and reopen schools in the occupied territories. Palestinians were requested to stop violent demonstrations in the territories, stop distributing anti-Israeli literature and end raids into Israel from Lebanon.²²

Later Arens was baffled by remarks Baker made when speaking before the Senate Appropriation Sub-committee. In his remarks Baker stated that Israel might, at some point in the future, be required to negotiate with the PLO if no other Palestinian representatives could be found. Arens promised that his government would study the American proposal, but insisted that Israel would never negotiate with the PLO.²³

In the midst of all these developments some Israeli military and political analysts concluded that a continuous Israeli domination over all of the occupied territories in their inhabitants would not serve Israel's interests. For example, a study conducted by two members of the Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University--former General Aharon Yariv and Yosef Alper--in March 1989, determined that prolonged control

²¹ Ibid, March 1989, p. 36536.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

over all the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza would be an impediment rather than a strategic asset. They also believed that there was no chance of settling the Arab-Israeli conflict without direct talks with the PLO or its authorized representative, and that Israel would have to return the territories to the Palestinians, agree to extensive autonomy, and stop the settlement drive. The study concluded that a Palestinian state should ultimately be established, and that such a state would not constitute a threat to Israel's security.²⁴

Shortly afterwards, an intelligence report which was presented to members of the Israeli Cabinet confirmed some of these conclusions. The report's main findings included the following: First, there was no alternative leadership to the PLO in the territories, and there was no option of negotiations with any Palestinian element without the full consent of the PLO. Second, while not all the factions within the PLO had accepted Israel's existence, the PLO had nonetheless moderated its position. Third, the intifada could be stopped only in conjunction with a major diplomatic accomplishment for the Palestinians. Fourth, the pragmatic camp within the Arab world was willing to reconcile with the existence of Israel. Fifth, the majority of the Arab states prefer the political process over the military option.²⁵

On March 22, the United States held a second round of talks

²⁴ FBIS/DR, 9 March, 1989.

²⁵ Ibid, 21 March, 1989.

with the PLO. But basic procedural and political differences continued to characterize the talks in Tunis. For example, disagreement surfaced over the very framework of negotiations, and over the question as to what constituted terrorist activities against Israel.²⁶

On April 1-5, President Bush met with President Mubarak. At the meeting President Bush acknowledged that Egypt and the United States shared the following goals: security for Israel, the end of occupation, and the achievement of Palestinian political rights. He also said that "a properly structured international conference could play a useful role at an appropriate time".²⁷

Bush's reference to occupation and to an international conference did not escape Prime Minister Shamir, who visited Bush in Washington on April 4-14. On April 6, he presented to the Administration his own four-point Middle East peace plan.

Ironically, the plan--a restricted version of the autonomy plan of the Camp David agreements²⁸--was based on the Rabin

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Keesing's (News Digest for April 1989), p. 36599.

²⁸ Whereas the Camp David agreements contemplated elections for a self-governing body, Shamir's new plan called for elections for the purpose of selecting a Palestinian delegation with whom Israel could hold discussions on autonomy. See William Quandt, "the Middle East in 1990", Foreign Affairs (Vol. 70, No. 1, America and the World 1990/91), pp. 49-69.

plan.²⁹ It called for elections in the West Bank and Gaza to form a non-PLO Palestinian delegation to participate in negotiations on an interim settlement. The interim settlement would provide for a self governing period, to be followed by negotiations on the "final settlement" in which Israel would be prepared to discuss "any option".³⁰

Shamir also proposed that (i) Israel, Egypt, and the United States should reconfirm their commitment to the Camp David Agreements; (ii) that the United States should lead an international effort to solve the "humanitarian problem" of Arab "refugees" in the West Bank and Gaza; and (iii) that the United States and Egypt should call on Arab countries to cease hostilities toward Israel and to "replace belligerency and boycott with negotiation and co-operation."³¹

On May 14, the plan was approved by the Israeli cabinet, but not without another controversy. While the political right claimed that the plan gave too much ground to the Palestinians and that the intifada must be quelled before any negotiations can start, the left claimed that since Shamir's proposal depended on the approval of the PLO, Israel should negotiate with the PLO

²⁹ According to Shimon Peres the initiative was a Labor-election idea, initiated at the end of the 1988 election campaign. Private conversation, Tel Aviv, July 3, 1991.

³⁰ Kessing's, p. 36670.

³¹ Ibid.

directly.³² The Knesset approve the plan on May 18.

Initially, the PLO, leading Palestinians from the occupied territories and Arab leaders, rejected the plan. However, a conditional acceptance of elections was reportedly outlined by the PLO executive committee. It called for elections supervised by the United Nations before an Israeli withdrawal from the territories, provided that elections were part of a comprehensive settlement. The committee also demanded that PNC members be eligible for election, and that those elected would join with PLO leaders in negotiations with Israel at an international conference. That followed with a PLO demand that security detainees held in Israeli prisons be included in the Palestinian delegation to the talks with Israel and Egypt.³³

What's more, at the end of April the Israeli daily Ha'aretz reported that an agreement between the PLO, Jordan, Egypt, and the USSR, had been reached on elections in the territories, on condition that the elections would be part of a political process, rather than a plan aimed at reducing international pressure on Israel and quieting down the situation in the territories.³⁴

Meanwhile, the United Nations Secretary General announced in

³² The government approved the plan with 20 in favor and 6 against. Those who opposed the plan were Sharon, Levi, and Modai from Likud and Shaki from the NRP; and Weizman and Edri from the Alignment. FBIS/DR, May 15, 1989.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid ,28 April, 1989.

Vienna (April 27) that the United Nations would be willing to supervise free and democratic elections that would lead to peace in the occupied territories if the organization would be commissioned to do so.³⁵

On May 4, Le Monde published an article written by Bassam Abu Sharif, titled "The PLO's Aim is to Achieve Peace." In it Abu Sharif declared the PLO's consent to the election idea, on condition that the holding of free elections and respect for their result would be guaranteed by a neutral monitoring mission under an international framework, allowing Israel the right to veto the membership of the monitoring mission. The statement also called for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the territories--to be replaced by a multinational force--under a timetable which would be negotiated under the auspices of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. The document ended with a statement declaring that the PLO's aim was to conclude a peace agreement with Israel (as opposed to truce only); and it expressed the PLO's readiness to allow for international guarantees requested by Israel.³⁶

But Israel rejected unequivocally any PLO involvement in the peace process, or any linkage between an interim and final settlements. Moreover, Israel reaffirmed its opposition to the establishment of a Palestinian state, claiming the purpose of the peace process was to reach an agreement between it and

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

Jordan.³⁷

Hence, the Palestinians dismissed the new Israeli outline as a "warmed-over Camp David." Whether they were ignoring the dynamics that might have been stimulated if they were to respond positively--as Mark Heller suggested,³⁸ or whether they deliberately dismissed the new outline precisely because they were aware of the dynamics that their positive response might have stimulated, is an open question.

c. Mubarak's Peace Initiative.

In an attempt to end the impasse in the peace process, on September 15, 1989, President Mubarak presented his own 10-point peace plan. Mubarak, who embraced a more reserved attitude toward Israel than his predecessor, has been only intermittently involved in the peace process since he succeeded President Sadat. His meeting with Arafat in December 1983--shortly after the second evacuation of PLO forces from Beirut--gave the Egyptian president the green light to get more deeply involved in the peace process. But it was not until this new involvement that he actually came up with an initiative of his own.

For Mubarak, the continuation of the Camp David peace process was not an altruistic matter. First, he was bound to the autonomy talks as part of his commitment to the Camp David

³⁷Mark Heller, "The Middle East: Out of Step with History", Foreign Affairs (America and the World 1989/1990, Vol. 69, No. 1), pp. 153-171.

³⁸Ibid, p. 157.

agreements; second, Egypt has been receiving attractive sums of economic assistance from the United States as part of the Camp David agreements and the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty; third, Egypt has been obligated to the Arab collective defense treaty, and breaking the stalemate meant being able to avoid the dilemma of joining Arab forces in case of another Arab-Israeli war; last, progress in the peace process meant for Mubarak greater stability at home if he wanted to continue to honor the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.

Indeed, after the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the peace treaty with Israel was seriously challenged in Egypt. While many Egyptians demanded that the government freeze the normalization process with Israel and return to the Arab world, the more militant voices called for the total abrogation of the peace treaty and helping the PLO in Lebanon. That was certainly true by the third month of the war, when the Israeli bombing of Beirut reached an all-time high. It was indeed a time of serious challenge to Mubarak's government.

After the October 1985 Israeli bombing of the PLO headquarters in Tunisia, the faith of the Egyptians in the peace treaty further deteriorated, creating more serious difficulties for the government.³⁹

Moreover, the harsh manner with which Israel acted repressing the intifada only added to the Egyptians' doubt about

³⁹Saad Eddin Ibrahim, "Domestic Developments in Egypt", in Quandt (ed.), The Middle East, p. 30-36.

the legitimacy of the peace treaty with Israel.⁴⁰ The survivability of Nasser's legacy and the manifestation of Islamic fundamentalism in Egypt added to Mubarak's desire to see the peace process enhanced.⁴¹

Based in part on Shamir's election plan for the Palestinians, the heart of Mubarak's 10-point plan was elections in the occupied territories of a delegation which would represent the Palestinians in negotiations with Israel. His plan demanded the following: (i) the right of every person in the West Bank--including East Jerusalem--and the Gaza Strip to vote and to stand as a candidate; (ii) freedom to campaign before and during the elections; (iii) the acceptance of international supervision of the election process; (iv) a prior commitment by the Israeli government to accept the election's results; (v) a commitment by the Israeli government that elections would lead not only to an interim phase (of Palestinian self government), but also to a final settlement based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and on the principle of "land for peace"; (vi) the withdrawal of the Israeli Army from voting areas prior to elections; (vii) a ban on Israelis entering territories on election day (except for those who worked or lived there); (viii) preparations for elections by a joint Israeli-Palestinian committee over a period not exceeding two months; (ix) United States guarantee of all the

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 37.

⁴¹ Abdel Monem Said Aly, "Egypt: a Decade after Damp David", in Quandt (ed.) The Middle East, pp. 63-93.

above provisions; and (x) the imposition of a freeze on Israeli settlement activity.⁴²

Not unexpectedly, the Israeli coalition government was divided on the Mubarak plan. The leaders of the Labor Pparty were in favor of the plan, while the hawks in Likud were strongly opposed to it. Shamir himself described the plan as "treif" (not kosher, meaning not legitimate) and insisted that the only relevant peace plan was the one approved by the Israeli government on May 14.⁴³

The points Shamir strongly opposed were: the absence of an interim period after the proposed elections; relinquishing parts of the West Bank and Gaza; imposing a freeze on Jewish settlement activity in the occupied territories; and accepting Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem as part of a Palestinian delegation. The latter point became a sensitive issue, as the inclusion of candidate from East Jerusalem in the delegation was interpreted by Likud as a challenge to Israel's sovereign claims over East Jerusalem. As shown latter, this interpretation was primarily that of Sharon.

Still, Israel was not quite ready to terminate discussion on the peace process. During his stay in New York for the United Nations General Assembly, Arens met with the American and the Egyptian Foreign Ministers, and with Mubarak himself to discuss

⁴² Keesing's (News Digest for September 1989), p. 36904.

⁴³ Ibid; FBIS/DR, 27 September 1989.

the peace process.⁴⁴

The United States viewed Mubarak's proposals as Egypt's acceptance of Shamir's proposal and as a way to start tri-partite negotiations.⁴⁵

Thus, on his return to Egypt on October 4, Mubarak produced a list of 12 Palestinians, including exiled and prominent West Bank residents, to negotiate with an Israeli delegation. But On October 5-6, the Likud ministers in the 12-member inner Cabinet rejected Labor's proposal to accept Mubarak's invitation to attend preliminary talks. Shamir proclaimed that the proposal had been rejected because it would "lead to the participation of the PLO in the peace process."⁴⁶ This in fact was Likud's interpretation of the inclusion of deported Palestinians in the

⁴⁴Arens also held a separate meeting with the Soviet Foreign Minister Sheverdnadze, who found positive aspects in both Shamir's and Mubarak's plans, but insisted on the inclusion of the PLO in the political process. They agreed that joint working committees would meet before the end of the year to discuss the peace process, and to try to close the gap between the two countries' positions on bilateral issues. FBIS/DR, 29 September 1989.

⁴⁵Secretary Baker declared that "the US saw Egypt's 10 points "not as an alternative to the Israeli government's proposal" but as "representing Egypt's acceptance" of the Israeli plan, which enjoyed the administration's "strong support". This was repeated in early October, during Mubarak's visit to Washington, when Baker announced that "Egypt's 10 points do not represent a competing proposal" (with Shamir's plan). Rather, "they represent a means of getting a dialogue established". He also confirmed in part, a report published in the Egyptian Al Akhbar, that the Bush Administration had proposed a joint American-Egyptian-Israeli forum to pave the way for elections in the territories. Ibid.

⁴⁶Keesing's (News Digest for October 1989), pp. 36986-87.

delegation.⁴⁷

d. The Baker Plan.

Unlike the Reagan plan, which was motivated by the aftermath of the Lebanon war; or the Shultz plan, which was motivated by the intifada; the Baker plan was the result of various developments, beginning with the PLO recognition of Israel, and ending with Mubarak's plan.

In spite of the refusal of the Israeli government to accept it, Washington was determined to move ahead with Mubarak's initiative. What the administration really sought at this point was an Israeli commitment to the election idea.

Thus, at the beginning of October, the administration released a series of informal propositions put forward by Secretary Baker. By October 10, the final form of these proposals, which came to be known as Baker's "five-point plan" reached Israel. These propositions, which were built upon the Reagan and Shultz initiatives, were:

(1) "The USA understands that because Egypt and Israel have been working hard on the peace process there is agreement that an Israeli delegation will conduct a dialogue with a Palestinian

⁴⁷As for the PLO, after an initial period of apprehension Arafat announced that he welcomed Mubarak's proposals as an initiative to produce "dialogue without preconditions" between Israelis and Palestinians, only to renounced it later. Keesing's (News Digest for September 1989), p. 36904; FBIS/DR, 11-12 October 1989.

delegation in Cairo.

(2) "The USA understands that Egypt cannot substitute itself for the Palestinians and Egypt will consult with the Palestinians on all aspects of that dialogue. Egypt will also consult with Israel and the USA.

(3) "The USA understands that Israel will attend the dialogue only after a satisfactory list of Palestinians has been worked out. Israel will also consult with Egypt and the US.

(4) "The USA understands that the government of Israel will come to the dialogue on the basis of the Israeli government's May 14 initiative. The USA further understands that the Palestinians will come to the dialogue prepared to discuss elections and negotiations in accordance with the Israeli initiative. The USA understands, therefore, that the Palestinians will be free to raise issues that relate to their opinion on how to make elections and negotiations succeed.

(5) " In order to facilitate the process, the USA proposes that the Foreign Ministers of Israel, Egypt and the USA meet in Washington within two weeks." ⁴⁸

On the Arab side, the PLO rejected the plan on the ground that it failed to meet a basic requirement--namely, the PLO's representation in any peace talks in the region. But by fall, Egypt and the PLO publicly approved Baker's five points. At the end however the PLO insisted on the organization's right to name a delegation and to determine its own policies, causing a

⁴⁸ Keesing's (News Digest for October 1989), p. 36987.

rift between Egypt and the PLO.

e. The Israeli Reaction.

Whereas Labor immediately accepted Baker's proposals, Likud officials demanded from the Administration a modified version of his proposals. In particular they sought assurances that the PLO would not be included in any talks and that elections would not be linked to any future settlement.⁴⁹ In reply Washington offered to conclude a binding bilateral understanding with Israel.

The memorandum of understanding was to include American guarantees pertaining to Shamir's two main concerns: the non-inclusion of the PLO and the possibility that the dialogue would digress to topics other than elections in the territories. It would have fulfilled the same function as the 1975 memorandum concluded by Secretary Kissinger, in which Washington agreed not to negotiate with the PLO until the organization recognized Israel's right to exist and renounce terror.⁵⁰

But Shamir and Arens rejected the American guarantees on the grounds that they must be incorporated into the five-point themselves and not as a separate addendum to the original document.

Nevertheless, to demonstrate interest in the peace process,

⁴⁹ Ibid. Baker reportedly claimed that anything short of acceptance of all five points amounted to a rejection of the plan.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

after their initial rejection of the American guarantees, Shamir and Arens asked Washington for an advance commitment to support Israel if it decided to walk out of any dialogue with the Palestinians, in the event the dialogue strayed from the manner in which the proposed elections were to be carried out.

One might recall that in April 1987 the United States committed itself to join Israel in walking out from an intended international conference if any of the procedural agreements were violated. This time however, Israel was asking for the open-ended support from Washington in case of any break-up of the proposed dialogue.⁵¹

But Secretary Baker was only willing to provide assurances that the PLO would not participate in the dialogue, and to make only "cosmetic changes" in his five-point plan.⁵²

In reply Shamir reiterated Israel's rejection of the American five-point plan in its present form. His objections centered on the composition of the Palestinian delegation and the agenda of the intended meeting. He insisted that until elections to determine negotiating partners could take place, any talks with the Palestinians could only be on procedural matters

⁵¹ Ibid. 23 october 1989.

⁵² Washington also suggested that the dialogue would open with general statements by both Palestinians and Israelis before they proceed to discuss the elections themselves. On that Israel warned that it would walk out of the talks if the Palestinian opening statement expressed identification with the PLO or if the subsequent talks do not focus of elections only. Ibid.

regarding the continuation of the peace process.⁵³

By November 1, Baker limited the scope of discussion to the electoral process only.⁵⁴ In addition, he pledged that the United States would reveal to the Israelis beforehand the composition of the Palestinian delegation; that Israel would not be forced to negotiate with the PLO; and that the US would insist that there would be no deviation from the fixed agenda for negotiations, which would concentrate on the election process itself.⁵⁵

In reply, the forum of four (Shamir, Peres, Arens, and Rabin) approved the Baker plan on condition that it be amended. Two days later the Inner Cabinet endorsed the plan. But the endorsement was accompanied with a request for six American guarantees as follows:

- that Israel will only negotiate with residents of Judea, Samaria and Gaza, and only after it has approved the Palestinian delegation;
- Israel will not negotiate with the PLO;
- the Cairo talks will focus only on the Israeli election proposal;
- the United States will publicly support Israel's position and will stand by Israel in the event that another party deviates from what has been agreed on;
- the United States and Egypt will declare their support for the Camp David accords;
- one meeting will take place in Cairo and its results

⁵³ FBIS/DR, 24 October 1989.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 2 November, 1989.

⁵⁵ Ibid. 3 November 1989.

will determine if the talks will continue.⁵⁶

The Administration refused to provide all the guarantees Israel had sought as condition for the acceptance of Baker's five points for fear of jeopardizing the entire peace process. Shamir was urged instead to demonstrate more flexibility, particularly on the issue of the composition of the Palestinian delegation.⁵⁷

By mid-February, 1990, Washington became increasingly irritable with Israel's superfluous demands that the United States stop its dialogue with the PLO.⁵⁸ Moreover, the administration had become suspicious that Israel was deliberately making it difficult for Arafat to include non-PLO figures in negotiations.⁵⁹

Thus, President Bush and Secretary Baker intimated to the Israeli government that unless it moved forward with its own peace plan, the United States might abandon its efforts to persuade the Palestinians to accept Israel's peace plan. Reports suggested that the Administration indeed believed that Shamir's misgiving on the issue of the agenda for the talks was the only obstacle for progress toward negotiations.⁶⁰

This line of thought was conveyed to Foreign Minister Arens during his meeting with Secretary Baker in Washington on February

⁵⁶ Ibid. 6 November 1989.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ha'aretz, 21 February, 1990.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 1.

23. Baker reportedly stressed that "the time to move is now", and that he expected a "quick--very quick" response from the Israeli government, because the United States felt that the situation was ripe for progress and matters could not be dragged on any longer.⁶¹

That was followed by an announcement, on March 1, in which Baker disclosed that the United States would condition American loan guarantees to Israel for settling Soviet immigrants on a cessation on Israeli settlement activities in the occupied territories. His remark was made in response to Shamir's declaration of January 14, that a "big Israel" was needed to accommodate the new wave immigration by Soviet Jews, a remark that created an uproar in the Arab world.⁶²

In itself, Baker's announcement was not a deviation from Washington's aid policy, since it has always demanded that American aid not be spent in the occupied territories. However, the context within which the announcement was made, made it more difficult for Shamir to face the opposition within his own party to Baker's plan.

Indeed, if Shamir wanted to find a way out of Baker's proposals, the timing of Baker's announcement could not have been better. But if Shamir hoped to convince his Likud colleagues that conditions were indeed ripe for the first step toward negotiations, the timing of Baker's announcement could not

⁶¹New York Times, February 24, 1990. p. 4.

⁶²Ibid. March 3.

have been worse.

Ultimately, after a heated debate over the Baker plan, Shamir and other Likud ministers agreed to participate in talks with Palestinians in Cairo, on two conditions: first, Arabs from East Jerusalem would not be allowed to participate in the Cairo negotiations or in the election that the talks intended to produce; second, Israel would reserve the right to walk out of the meeting if there were any connotation that the PLO was participating even in the background.⁶³

The Israeli Labor Party rejected Shamir's terms for the talks, and gave the Likud one day to change its mind if it expected to prevent the fall of the government. Labor decided to submit the issue to a cabinet vote the next day. If the Cabinet refused to approve the plan, Labor would vote on whether to remain in the government. When the Cabinet failed to reach a decision on the designated day, the vote was postponed for four more days.

During this crucial time, in what seemed to be a breach from Washington's standard policy toward Israel, President Bush rebuffed the creation of new Jewish settlement "in the West Bank or in East Jerusalem." By publicly questioning Israel's claim to sovereignty over East Jerusalem Bush created a furor in Israel, at the time when the country was debating whether or not to enter the American-sponsored peace process. This was a clear deviation from the principle of ambiguity, which the initiator must leave

⁶³ Ibid. March 6, 1990, p. 5; March 7, p. 3.

open. Indeed, such a sensitive question as the status of East Jerusalem must be vague enough to permit the beginning of negotiations.⁶⁴

Although none of the previous administrations officially recognized the Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem after it was captured in the Six-Day War, unofficially they disassociated East Jerusalem from the rest of the occupied territories by their reluctance to criticize Israel for settlement activities there, in contrast to their disapproval over other Israeli settlement activities in the rest of the West Bank and Gaza. Indeed, the typical comment of previous administrations about East Jerusalem had been that Jerusalem "must be a united city, that it must never be divided again, and that the city's final status should be determined through negotiations".⁶⁵

Whereas the Administration denied that the President had intended to question the status of East Jerusalem, the damage his remarks made could not be easily erased.

Unlike Shamir's personal trust for Secretary Shultz, he felt betrayed by Baker--primarily because Shamir believed that Baker distorted the Israeli plan of May 14, 1989.⁶⁶

Although the Israeli plan was made public amid prior

⁶⁴This conclusion was made after a private conversation with Prof. Zartman, New York, March 27, 1991.

⁶⁵Ha'aretz, March 9, 1990, p. 8.

⁶⁶This conclusion is based on information obtained in a private conversation with Minister Olmert, Jerusalem, June 28, 1991.

Americans knowledge, the Baker plan introduced new elements, and followed with American complaints that Shamir was not ready to endorse his own plan. Indeed, Shamir felt that the Americans altered the Israeli plan to such an extent that the plan lost its original content. For example, the American plan demanded that Cairo be included in negotiations, and that Israel should negotiate with representatives of the Palestinian dispersion.

This raised Israeli doubts regarding Washington's integrity or evenhandedness. It was felt that the Americans understood very well the issues that are casus belli to the Arab side, but were less willing to understand the casus belli on the Israeli side, and that they were constantly trying to break through with the points that were most sensitive on the Israeli side. This caused antagonism that destroyed the whole basis for negotiations.⁶⁷

Perhaps the inclusion of residents from East Jerusalem who had dual residencies in the negotiations could have been discussed at a later stage in the process. But during the course of events these issues were too sensitive, and too disturbing to the Shamir government.⁶⁸

In addition, Shamir distrusted Baker because he felt that Baker was manipulative with his responses to the Israelis, that he leaked information against the Israelis, and that he slandered

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ This conclusion was made after private conversations with Prof. Zartman, New York' March 27, 1991; and Minister Olmert, ibid.

Shamir and Arens.⁶⁹

On March 11, the Israeli Cabinet was due to vote on Baker's plan. But after Shamir and his Likud Party refused to put the plan to a vote, Labor ministers stormed out of the meeting. On March 15, the Israeli Knesset dissolved the government by a vote of non-confidence over Shamir's refusal to accept the terms for starting the Cairo peace talks. This was the first time in Israel's history that a government was toppled with a vote of no-confidence.

⁶⁹This conclusion is based on a conversation with Minister Olmert, ibid.

PART IV: THE ISRAELI DOMESTIC CONSTELLATION.

VIII. INTRODUCTION: THE POLITICAL DEBATE IN ISRAEL OVER
PEACE, SECURITY, AND TERRITORIAL RIGHTS.

a. The Israeli System of Government and the Factional Division
over the Issues of Peace, Security, and Territorial Rights
(1967-1990).

Israel is without doubt politically the most stable country in the Middle East. It is a functioning democracy with effective political institutions; it enjoys a high level of popular participation in political affairs, involving a relatively large number of political parties; and its political system is widely accepted by its citizens.

Militarily Israel is a strong regional power, which means that Israel is capable of deterring any enemy and remain in relative security.

These achievements, however, are not taken for granted by the Israelis. For, not only were these achievements hard to obtain; but most Israelis believe that Israel's enemies--who have never accepted Israel's boundaries--are forever trying to destroy them. Suspicion certainly runs deep in the Israeli political culture.¹ Such suspicion is rooted in the Jewish experience of

¹ Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba define political culture as a distinctive political orientation toward the political system and its various parts, and attitudes toward the role of the self in the system. It combines the historical, psychological and sociological background of the members of a given political entity. As such, a political culture is a particular distribution of patterns of orientation toward political objects among the members of the nation. See, Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963).

exile and oppression, isolation and rejection, the Holocaust, and recurring war with the Arabs.

While Israelis instinctively distrust the Arabs, they are also skeptical about the intentions of all others. More importantly, the Israelis believe that only they can be relied upon to guarantee their own security, by maintaining a powerful military and by controlling large territories.

Thus, it is not surprising that the issues of peace, security, and territoriality have consistently been manipulated by all of Israel's political parties, as well as by all of Israel's governments.²

Indeed, the issues of peace, security, and territorial rights not only influence voting behavior in Israel, but often determine the faith the Knesset has in the government. Since the government is accountable to the Knesset, Israel's legislative body, the Knesset's approval is essential for its survival.

To understand this, one must familiarize oneself, however briefly, with the Israeli system of government.

The Israeli government is a party government. That is, the Israeli voters elect parties rather than candidates. The party that wins the national elections controls the government, and the

²Bar-Siman-Tov sums that up when he writes that the very aphorism "peace and security" can become an effective national symbol which, when manipulated, may serve as a means of policy legitimacy. Bar-Siman-Tov, "Peace as a Significant Change in Foreign Policy", pp. 20-21.

party leader becomes the Prime Minister.³

Because no party had ever won a simple majority in any of Israel's elections, coalitions governments have always been formed in order to obtain a majority.⁴ Hence, any important issue--and no issue is more important in Israel than the Arab-Israeli conflict--can determine not only the makeup of a coalition, but also its duration. Because of that, the government's response to the peace process--or to any other important issue--is often determined by consideration of power-position in the Knesset. Noticeably, disagreements about the future of the Arab-Israeli conflict exist not only between political blocs, but within them as well.⁵

The reason for the absence of a winning majority in all Israeli elections can be found in the electoral system itself. In this proportional representation system, any list that receives a

³On March 18, 1992, the Knesset passes a law providing for the direct election of the Prime Minister. The new law will take effect in the 1996 elections. Under the new system the voters will cast two ballots, one for their chosen party and the other for their elected Prime Minister. To win the Prime Minister will need to gain 50 percent of the vote, or face a runoff.

⁴Still, it is important to point out that from 1948 through the mid 1960s Labor status as the leading party was unchallenged. First, the socialist bloc (Mapai, Mapam and Later Achdut Avoda) always had a majority, or came very close to a majority, so that it was one obvious basis for a coalition. Moreover, Mapai by itself was large enough so that no coalition could be formed against it, giving its leaders a choice of coalition partners.

⁵Even under the new election law the Prime Minister's cabinet will have to be endorsed by a majority of the 120 MKs, giving all parties an important role to play in the Israeli political system.

minimum of 1.5 percent of the national vote wins representation in the Knesset, which is composed of 120 seats. This low requirement, coupled with a relatively high number of lists competing in the Israeli elections, has invariably resulted in the absence of simple winning majority.

Table 1: Parties Elected in Israel in the 1980S, with Number of Seats in the Knesset.

Table 1-1: Lists and Parties Elected in June 1981.

<u>Left</u>		<u>Right</u>		<u>Religious</u>	
Hadash	4	Tehiya	3	Agudat Yisrael	4
Citizens Rights	1	Telem	2	National Religious	6
Labor-Mapam	47	Likud	48	Tami	3
Shinui	2				
Combined Seats:	54		53		13

Total Seats: 120

Source*: Asher Arian, Politics In Israel (Chatham: Chatham House, 1989).

*Not including division of parties into the three camps.

Table 1-2: Lists and Parties Elected in July 1984.

<u>Left</u>		<u>Right</u>		<u>Religious</u>	
Hadash	4	Kach	1	Agudat Yisrael	2
Progressive List for Peace	2	Tzomet/ Tehiya	5	Shas	4
Citizens Rights	3			Tami	1
Labor	44	Ometz	1	Morasha	2
Shinui	3	Likud	41	National Religious	4
Yahad	3				
Combined Seats:	59		48		13
Total Seats: 120					

Source: See Table 1-1.

Table 1-3: Lists and Parties Elected in November 1988.

<u>Left</u>		<u>Right</u>		<u>Religious</u>	
Hadash	4	Moledet	2	Agudat Yisrael	5
Progressive List for Peace	1	Tzomet	2	Shas	6
New Democratic	1	Tehiya	3	Degel Hatorah	2
Mapam	3	Likud	40	National Religious	5
Citizens Rights	5				
Labor	39				
Shinui	2				
Combined Seats:	55		47		18
Total Seats: 120					

Source: See Table 1-1.

It is important to note that some of the fringe parties have the power to make or break a government, since they are often the parties with which the winning party makes the coalition agreement. In Israel, the religious parties have traditionally been the "king makers". Naturally, any disagreement by one or more members of a coalition with the government's policies, may result in the collapse of the coalition.

Although this situation has invited public demand for electoral reform--a number of reform proposals did reach the

Knesset--no electoral reforms have ever been enacted yet. Since most parties are quite content with the present system, it is unlikely that any electoral reform will pass in the Knesset.⁶

Until 1977 the Labor Alignment had dominated every Israeli government (with the exception of the wall-to-wall national unity coalition in the 1967 Arab-Israeli crisis). But in 1977 the traditional opposition party--Likud--stunned the nation when it unexpectedly emerged as the largest party. In the 1981 elections Likud remained the largest party; but in 1984 the Labor Alignment won 44 seats, and the Likud won 41 seats, while the balance of the 35 Knesset seats were divided among the remaining parties. In the 1988 elections the Likud won 40 seats, Labor won 39 seats, and the remaining 41 seats were divided between the rest of the parties.

Thus, from September 1984 until the collapse of the government in March 1990 (over the peace process), Labor and Likud co-governed the country under two national unity coalitions.

The way in which the future of the Arab-Israeli conflict determines internal politics in Israel was best articulated by

⁶ This last conclusion was made after a private conversation with MK Shimon Peres. Peres himself believes that the division among the voters is not based on political issues; but on ethnic and religious issues--the North African immigration, or the Russian immigration. For example, the Arab voters could have given the Alignment a majority. Instead they gave half the votes to the Communists, they gave the Alignment two mandates, and the Likud one. Private conversation, Tel Aviv, July 3, 1991.

Asher Arian and Michal Shamir, when they wrote that the Arab-Israeli conflict is more than just an outcome of the hostility between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Since reactions to the conflict are reflected in voting behavior and coalition negotiations, depending on the way it is being manipulated by Israel's major political parties, the Arab-Israeli conflict can be an asset or a drawback.⁷

While the issue of peace and security has always been linked in Israel to the Arab-Israeli conflict, after the 1967 and the 1973 wars, matters of peace and security have been directly linked by almost all of Israel's political parties--the exception being the non-Zionist religious parties--to the future of the occupied territories.

This is hardly surprising since many Israelis connect Israeli control over the occupied territories and its inhabitants with their personal security. Indeed, the future of the occupied territories is the very issue on which the Israeli

⁷Asher Arian and Michal Shamir (eds.) The Elections in Israel-1988 (Boulder: Westview, 1990), p. 1. Perhaps the most cynical view regarding the manipulation of the issue of peace and security in Israel is expressed by Gad Barzilai and Bruce Russett who infer that in Israel (a) the use of military action is a conscious effort by the government to gain voters' support; (b) since the public's attitude is usually hawkish because of recurrent Arab attacks, as elections draw near, the government feels especially vulnerable and is therefore pressured to retaliate with military force; and (c) members of the government tend to exaggerate the degree of external hostility when they are most vulnerable politically, and thus react more vigorously at election time. See Gad Barzilai and Bruce Russett, "The Political Economy of Israeli Military Action", Arian and Shamir (eds.), Ibid, p. 29.

public is nearly evenly divided.⁸ Those who are least compromising are those who feel the most threatened.⁹

Since 1967, a number of options have emerged in Israel concerning the future of the West Bank and Gaza, or the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They are: the territorial compromise, also known as the "Jordanian option"; the non-territorial compromises, also known as the autonomy plan; and expulsion, also known as "transfer." Few Israelis call for a unilateral Israeli withdrawal from the territories.

While the territorial compromise is advocated by the Labor Alignment and the parties on the left, the non-territorial option is favored by Likud and other right-wing parties. Some in Likud and the NRP, along with Tehiya and Tzomet, favor annexation, while other parties, such as Kach and Moledet favor expulsion.

Because the heart of the debate is territory, before turning to the different options concerning the future of the West Bank and Gaza, it is worth discussing, however briefly, the concept of territoriality.

Territoriality is a concept according to which political power should be based on a specific piece of territory and sovereignty should extend only to certain natural frontiers

⁸Asher Arian, Ilan Talmud, and Tamar Hermann, National Security and Public Opinion in Israel (Boulder: Westview, 1988), pp. 38-39.

⁹Asher Arian, "A People Apart: Coping with National Security Problems in Israel", Journal of Conflict Resolution (vol. 44, no. 4, December 1989), pp. 605-631.

corresponding with historical or ethnic divisions.¹⁰

Territorial claims are not a modern phenomenon--they have existed since the development of social communities. But whereas in primitive times territory had been associated primarily with habitation and livelihood, in modern times territory has been closely connected to nation-building. It is not by chance that the institutional framework for the promotion and defense of territoriality is the territorial state.¹¹

Indeed, the very idea of nationalism and self-determination, and the emergence of the nation-state, are based on the premise that the universe is divided into specific groups of human beings; each uniquely distinguished by certain characteristics; and each charged with the duty of cultivating these characteristics within a distinct territorial domain, to which the group has special rights.

Until the French Revolution territorial claims were essentially based on legitimacy. Legitimacy in turn was based on the principle of monarchical heredity. But with the rise of nationalism--prompted in Europe by the French Revolution coupled with the Industrial Revolution--legitimacy had been replaced by other claims, the most important of which were historic and

¹⁰K.J. Holsti, International Politics, p. 45.

¹¹Milton Esman and Itamar Rabinovich, "The Study of Ethnic Politics in the Middle East", in Milton J. Esman and Itamar Rabinovich (eds.), Ethnicity, Pluralism, and the State in the Middle East (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 3-24.

ethnic.¹²

Historic claims are based on earlier ownership, usually incorporating the practice of reciting selected facts of history, showing how these facts point logically to the moral or legal rights of possession. Ethnic claims are a direct outgrowth of nationalism, and are usually related to the principle of self-determination. In fact, the ethnic claim is based on the territorial requirements of the national state, asserting that the boundaries of states should correspond to the actual distribution of national groups.¹³

b. The Concept of a Territorial Compromise.

Central to this option is the notion that to preserve the Jewish character of the state of Israel it is necessary to return to Jordan parts of the West Bank and Gaza, so long as this prevents the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. It differs from the Likud's policy (the autonomy plan) in that it

¹²Some argue that historic and ethnic claims are subordinate to claims, such as: strategic, geographic, and economic. Whereas strategic claims are based on the security of the nation, geographic claims are based on strategic value and on the premise that a given area is naturally fixed, and should therefore not to be altered by mankind. Economic claims were first based on commercial restrictions, but have gradually evolved into claims over raw materials, and the control over transportation routes in land and sea. See Norman Hill, Claims of Territory in International Law and Relations (New York: Oxford University Press, 1945), pp. 35-52.

¹³Ibid, pp. 81-115.

encourages the end of Israeli control over most of the West Bank and Gaza, and allows Jordan and the Palestinians to determine their own affiliation.

Not very different from Likud's philosophy, this theme assumes that any Palestinian entity must be, by nature, hostile to Israel. Thus, the establishment of a future Palestinian state on Israel's border is too risky for Israel's security and must be prevented. It nonetheless conceives an Arab-Israeli settlement as possible, and views Jordan as the most logical partner for a negotiated solution to the Palestinian problem, without the inclusion of the PLO in negotiations.

Labor's policy was outlined and adopted in 1969, and served as a guide to the Labor government until 1977, when the Likud government took over. Since 1977, Labor's policy has been modified to accommodate the changes that had taken place in Israel's domestic and foreign politics, namely, the Likud rise to power, and the Camp David agreements.

In actuality Labor's policy is based on the various proposals that were put forward by Labor leaders after the Six-Day War. Thus, the basis for the Alignment policy was formulated in July 1967 by Yigal Allon--then Deputy Prime Minister. The central principles of the plan were the preservation of both the Jewish and democratic characters of the state through a limited Israeli territorial control over the West Bank and Gaza, and a minimization on the number of Palestinian Arabs under Israeli

rule.¹⁴

The most ardent opponent of the Allon Plan was Moshe Dayan, who was Defense Minister at the time. Dayan, who objected to any partition of the area between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean, engineered the integration of the West Bank economy into the Israeli system. He also insisted that Israel undertake all governmental responsibilities in the occupied territories without formally annexing the area, and without granting any rights to the inhabitants of the territories. In addition, Dayan ordered the creation of "established facts" in the occupied territories through the establishment of Jewish settlements in areas that were vital for Israel's security, a notion that guided Labor's settlement policy ever since.¹⁵

Foreign Minister at the time, Abba Eban, who was mostly concerned with Israel's international status, introduced his own

¹⁴ Basically the Allon Plan envisaged the Jordan River and the line which cuts across the Dead Sea as Israel's eastern border; with Israel retaining the Judean Desert and a narrow strip along the Jordan Valley, containing the mountains west of the valley; and, a corridor would enable the flow of communication between the East and West Banks Arabs. The Gaza Strip was to be attached to Israel at some point, without the Gaza refugees, who were to be absorbed in Judea and Samaria. Lexicon Le'Bitkhon Israel (Lexicon of Israel's Defense), Tel Aviv: Zmora Publication, 1976.

¹⁵ Allon objected to Dayan plan on the ground that political decisions over the territories must be taken before economic integration could take place. Other Labor ministers also objected to Dayan's scheme: Foreign Minister Abba Eban favored cooperation rather than integration, and Pinhas Sapir, the Finance Minister, argued that the implementation of the integration plan would block the road to peace. See Middle East Record (Vol. 4), Jerusalem: Israeli Universities Press) 1968.

plan. Basically it called for an Arab-Israeli peace treaty based on mutual recognition, and secure and recognized borders between Israel and the individual Arab states; and the formation of a five-year plan for the solution of the refugee problem. The plan also suggested that Christian and Muslim inhabitants of the occupied territories be given control over their holy places in Jerusalem.¹⁶

Unlike the Allon plan--which was neither adopted by the government, nor officially rejected by it--Eban's plan was approved by the Labor-controlled Israeli government on October 6, 1968, and became an official government policy.¹⁷

Notwithstanding, the 1969 Labor party outline depicted Israel's security borders in line with the Allon Plan. It stated that a peace settlement ought to be concluded with Jordan--"the Jordanian-Palestinian state", and permitted that "the Jordanian delegation for peace negotiations include Palestinian representatives from Judea and Samaria".¹⁸

As occupation continued, some in the Labor camp became increasingly concerned with economic and other consequences. Fearing Jewish dependency on Arab labor, the more dovish sector

¹⁶Facts on File (Vol. XXVIII, No. 1459, October 10-16, 1968, pp. 425-6.

¹⁷The Allon plan was never approved by the government; neither was it ever officially rejected. One of the main reasons the government did not approve the Allon plan was Begin's threat to resign from the National Unity Government, had the government accepted the plan.

¹⁸Middle East Record (Vol. 4), Jerusalem: Israeli Universities Press) 1968.

of the Labor party called for withdrawal from all or most of the occupied territories as the only safe way to preserve the Zionist nature of the state of Israel. This view was incorporated into the 1973 party platform and remained the party's policy for the 1977 elections.

After Labor lost the elections in 1977 the party revised its platform. In 1981 it perceived a demilitarized "Jordanian-Palestinian state" extending over the territories of Jordan, as well as over defined densely populated areas in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, which would eventually be evacuated by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) with the signing of a peace treaty with the Jordanian government. The platform accepted the Camp David autonomy, as "one possibility in a transitional period." It stressed Labor's growing concern with what became known as the "demographic problem".¹⁹

Demographically speaking, as the tables below show, the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza resulted in a changed balance between Jews and Arabs. Coupled with a birth rate that is much higher among Arabs than it is among Jews, the occupation will slowly decrease the population gap between the two groups. Indeed, population projections for the West Bank and Gaza show a significant increase for the Palestinian population by the year 2002.²⁰

¹⁹ Labor's platform for the 10 Knesset.

²⁰ David Newman, Population, Settlement and Conflict: Israel and the West Bank (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 23.

And while Israel expects close to a million new Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union during the 1990s--a figure that may change the future demographic balance between Jews and Arabs--Israel's lack of preparedness to absorb these immigrants casts doubt as to how many of them would actually remain in Israel, and how many prospective immigrants would move to Israel.

Table 2: Jewish and non-Jewish population ratio in the State of Israel 1967-1990 (in thousands)*

Year	Total	Jews	Moslems	Christians	Druze and Others
1967	2,776.3	2,383.6	289.6	71.0	32.1
1977	3,653.2	3,077.3	446.5	83.8	45.6
1987	4,406.5	3,612.9	614.5	103.0	76.1
1990	4,821.7	3,946.7	677.7	114.7	82.6

*As of 1967, the population includes the residents of East Jerusalem, and as of 1969, potential immigrants. In 1982, the Druze and Moslem population of the Golan was added.

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel 1992 (Jerusalem: Central Bureau of Statistics, 1992).

Table 3: Non-Jewish Population Growth in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza 1976-1990 (in thousands)*

Year	Judea and Samaria	Gaza
1967	595.9	389.7
1977	683.3	437.4
1987	837.7	545.0
1990	916.0	610.4

*Due to the events in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, there were difficulties from the beginning of 1988 in collecting statistical data. As a result, the quality of the tables is poorer in a number of respects than in previous years. In statistical series, in which it was impossible to obtain data of the minimal acceptable standards, data appears only until the end of 1987. In addition, since April 1979, the tables do not include the population of El Arish--about 30,000--and since 1982, the other parts of North Sinai--about 7,000 inhabitants of Rafa.

Source: See table 4.

Be that as it may, the 1984 Labor platform did not change dramatically from that of 1981, except to state that Likud's territorial rigidity over the West Bank and Gaza created the

danger of transforming Israel into a bi-national state, contradicting both Zionism and democratic principles. Thus, the Labor Alignment offered to transfer broad powers and responsibilities over civilian matters to local authorities of the occupied areas, but leaving overall authority in the hands of Israel. It denounced the rise of a Jewish underground terrorist group, and pledged to outlaw their activity.

With some exceptions, Labor, like Likud, has viewed the PLO as a terrorist organization with whom no dialogue can be held. Like Likud, it vowed not to recognize the PLO and rejected the idea of the establishment of another Palestinian state east of the Jordan River, and reaffirmed the framework of a Jordanian-Palestinian solution, based on United Nations resolutions 242 and 338.²¹

The party's 1988 platform adhered to the "Jordanian option". It also supported the Shultz initiative, and advocated the opening of a dialogue with a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation as a first step toward negotiations, possibly within the framework of an international conference. It also validated the London

²¹Peretz, "Israeli Peace Proposals", in Willard A. Belling (ed). Middle East Peace Plans (New York: St. Martin Press, 1986). pp. 30-31. Also, in a speech to the 29th Annual Policy Conference of AIPAC (American-Israeli Public Affair Committee) of May 16, 1988, Shimon Peres repeated Israel's commitment to the solution of the Palestinian problem via the Jordanian option, opposing the creation of an independent Palestinian state on Israel's borders (C-SPAN Broadcasting). Although Peres spoke in his capacity as Israel's Foreign Minister, his speech represented his party's approach to the solution of the Arab-Israeli problem.

Document, and professed its willingness to negotiate with Palestinian representatives who would recognize Israel, denounce terrorism, and would accept resolutions 242 and 338. But it still renounced the PLO as a negotiating partner, and rejected the creation of a separate Palestinian state.²²

Those who criticize the "Jordanian option" anticipate that since such an alternative will not satisfy the Palestinians' national aspirations, most Palestinians will oppose such a solution, most likely by using force not only against Jordan but also against "collaborators" who may support Jordan. Such opposition might diminish only with the weakening of the PLO, either by an inter-Arab offensive, or by the forced termination of the intifada.²³

Moreover, the critics claim, a solution that involves the "Jordanian option" might topple Hashemite rule, a chance that King Hussein is not likely to accept.²⁴ Indeed, one of the reasons for Hussein's 1988 dissociation from the West Bank, was the fear that the intifada would spread to the East Bank; and that the incorporation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip into a Jordanian-Palestinian federation, would add to the weight of the

²²Labor's Platform for the 12 Knesset.

²³Israel, the West Bank and Gaza: Israel's Option for Peace (Hebrew Edition) (The Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University, 1989), pp. 129-30.

²⁴In 1972 King Hussein himself proposed his own plan for the creation of a federation of Jordan and the West Bank. His plan included the whole of the est Bank, including East Jerusalem--an idea that Israel did not accept. Besides, the 1974 Rabat resolution changed Hussein's maneuverability.

Palestinian population in Jordan.²⁵

Others expressed concerns that the "Jordanian option" might Palestinize Jordan. In that case, the probability that Israel would peacefully co-exist with a Palestinian state on its border is low.²⁶

c. The Concept of a Non-territorial Compromise.

Whereas the option of a territorial compromise is based on the premise that an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories is necessary, the non-territorial option is based on the refusal to negotiate any agreement that carries with it the prospect of any withdrawal from the West Bank or Gaza. Thus, the notion of a non-territorial, or a functional compromise, portrays a solution that seeks to avoid any new partition of the area between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River, bypassing completely the question of territorial partition. Instead, it provides for some kind of a functional division of authority between Jews and Arabs.²⁷

Those who advocate such a compromise believe that a territorial compromise--typically designed to meet security needs only--is unfeasible. This is so because in a territorial compromise, one or both sides must give up land. Since land is

²⁵ Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, pp. 129-30.

²⁶ Yehezkel Dror, A Grand Strategy (Hebrew) (Jerusalem: Academon, 1989), pp. 280-81.

²⁷ Heller, A Palestinian State, p. 40.

usually associated with territorial and national aspirations, and since a territorial compromise, by definition, involves an element of finality, a territorial compromise may often be too difficult to realize. But in a functional compromise neither side has to make any territorial concessions or give up its aspirations, making it easier to achieve a compromise within an existing territorial structure.²⁸

Advocates of a functional compromise believe that it can be achieved through an Israeli-Jordanian condominium over the West Bank and Gaza; through a federation between Jordan and the Palestinians; through a confederation between Jordan, Israel, and the Palestinians; or even Israel and Egypt. They assume that a functional compromise is acceptable not only to the Arabs, who view land as sacred, but also to the Israelis.²⁹

Mark Heller groups the non-territorial compromise into four main themes: (1) autonomy, which permits the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza to regulate personal, educational, religious, welfare, judicial, and some economic matters, but permits no separate status for these territories as political entities; (2) federal themes, which would create a political entity (or entities) in these territories separate from Israel, but leave the control of the most critical functional areas in the hand of

²⁸ This summary is based partly on information obtained in a private conversation with Brigadier General (res.) Aharon Levrant, Editor, The Middle East Military Balance 1988, the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies. Tel Aviv, January 16, 1990.

²⁹ Ibid.

the Israeli authority; (3) confederal themes, which would provide still a greater degree of autonomy for the established political entity(ies), but still limiting their division of power; and (4) condominiumal themes, which would formalize the de facto division of authority in these areas, while granting their residents a greater degree of autonomy in local and regional matters than is currently practiced. Since a functional compromise has the potential of freeing the Israelis of the burden of occupation and defusing the Palestinian issue without ending Israel's control of the West Bank and Gaza, such a compromise is not without appeal.³⁰

The most prevalent non-territorial option proposed by Israel is the autonomy plan, as envisioned by the first Likud government.

The autonomy plan is based on the 26-point proposal that was introduced to the Knesset in December 27, 1977, by Prime Minister Begin. It rested on two basic premises: (1) all of the land West of the Jordan River is an integral part of Israel, and is thereby non-negotiable; (2) the Palestinian Arabs do not constitute a separate entity different from all other Arabs, and are therefore not entitled to self determination. Under these restrictions, the best the Palestinians can achieve is autonomy.

Begin's autonomy plan was limited, permitting the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza to run their own internal affairs, but only within the sovereign borders of Eretz Israel.

³⁰ Heller, A Palestinian State, pp. 40-41.

To secure Israel's sovereignty over the West Bank and Gaza, Begin made sure that the issues of final borders and Palestinian sovereignty be left open while Israel remains responsible for the area's security.³¹

Under the plan, the Palestinians would run their own affairs through an eleven-member Administrative Council, elected by Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza for a five-year period. The Council would replace the military government in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, and would be responsible for education, religious affairs, finance, transportation, housing and construction, industry, commerce, agriculture, health, labor, social welfare, refugee rehabilitation, justice and local police.³²

In addition, the plan permitted Arab inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza to be offered either Israeli or Jordanian citizenship. Those becoming Israeli citizens would be entitled to vote for and be elected to the Knesset, whereas Jordanian citizens would enjoy the same rights within Jordan. A joint committee of Israelis, Jordanians, and the Administrative Council would decide which legislation would remain in force and which would be abolished. Israeli residents would be able to acquire land and settle in the West Bank and Gaza, and Arabs in these territories who became Israeli citizens would have rights

³¹ Peretz, "Israeli Peace Proposals", Middle East Peace Plans, pp. 17-18.

³² Ibid.

in Israel. Immigration, including that of Arab refugees, would be regulated in 'reasonable numbers' by a committee representing Israel, Jordan, and the Administrative Council. Residents of the autonomous areas and Israel would have freedom of movement, as well as economic freedom within these areas. Free access to holy shrines would be guaranteed to Christians, Moslems and Jews.³³

The plan excluded East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights, which were formally incorporated into Israel.

The hawkish camp in Israel feared that the modified version of the autonomy plan incorporated in the Camp David agreements, might endanger Israel's permanent control over the future of the West Bank and Gaza. Indeed, concerned that the provision for Palestinian autonomy laid the foundation for a Palestinian state, Begin's hard-line critics sought to force his government into a course of action that guaranteed a permanent Israeli control over the territories. Thus, soon after the Camp David agreements had been signed, Begin moved quickly to ensure that the autonomy plan would not wipe out Israel's right to annex the West Bank and Gaza: in May 1979 he adopted the position of the hawkish group in his cabinet, led by Ariel Sharon, Haim Landau, and Zevulun Hammer. This position safeguarded Israel's claim of sovereignty over the entire territory after the transitional period.³⁴

³³ Ibid, p. 19.

³⁴ Shimon Shamir, "Israeli View of Egypt and the Peace Process: The Duality of Vision", in Quandt (ed.), The Middle East Ten Years after Camp David, pp. 187-216. Opinions about Begin's own understanding of his autonomy plan vary. Ezer Weizman believes that Begin changed his mind about the autonomy plan and

Ultimately, the Likud's principles of autonomy were incorporated into the party's platform.

Although Begin's successor, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, was strongly opposed to the Camp David agreements and the autonomy plan--he boycotted the Knesset session in which the agreements were endorsed--as Prime Minister he had little choice but to recognize the agreements.³⁵ He thus advocated autonomy for the Arab inhabitants of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza district for a five-year interim period, as set forth in the Camp David accords. But he called for the deferment of the final determination of the status of these areas until the end of the transitional period.

Shamir's view on any form of Palestinian self-determination was made clear in an article he has written in 1982, where he stated that

the state known today as the Kingdom of Jordan is an

intentionally undermined the autonomy negotiations after he had realized that through the autonomy clause in the Camp David agreements he actually jeopardized the future of the Whole of Eretz Israel, a realization that eventually caused his resignation (private conversation, Ceasaria, July 4, 1991). Other believe that Begin in fact viewed Palestinian autonomy, as incorporated in the Camp David accords, as a final settlement rather than an interim arrangement. Harold H. Saunders, The Other Wall, p. 44.

³⁵In 1978 Shamir was strongly opposed to the Camp David agreements because of the promise to return the Sinai and destroy Jewish Settlements there, and because he and other far-right members of Likud thought that Palestinian autonomy went too far as far as Palestinian rights were concerned. But when he succeeded Prime Minister Begin, in his inauguration speech before the Knesset, Prime Minister Shamir endorsed the Camp David agreements as the only basis for the continuation of the peace process

integral part of what once was known as Palestine; its inhabitants therefore are Palestinian--not different in their language, culture, or religious and demographic composition from other Palestinians....It is merely an accident of history that this state is called the Kingdom of Jordan and not the Kingdom of Palestine.³⁶

Thus, in its party platform for the 1984 elections, the Likud reaffirmed its claim of sovereignty over Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, and pledged to realize this just claim at the proper time. Moreover, the platform rejected any plan to surrender any parts of "Western Israel" to a "foreign rule". Such a plan, according to Likud, undermined Israel's right to the Land of Israel; fostered the unavoidable creation of a Palestinian state; threatened Israel's civilian population; and endangered the existence of Israel.³⁷

As for the autonomy arrangements, these were reaffirmed to guarantee that no territorial partition would ever again occur in Western Israel, and that under no circumstances will a Palestinian state be established there. It stated that "the autonomy plan under the agreements was not a state, not a sovereignty, nor was it self-determination. Self-determination was provided to the Arab nation through the existence of twenty-one independent Arab states."³⁸

These same principles were reiterated in the party's platform for the 1988 election. That platform also reaffirmed

³⁶ Yitzhak Shamir, "Israel's Role in a Changing Middle East", Foreign Affairs, Spring 1982. pp.

³⁷ Likud Platform for the 11 Knesset.

³⁸ Ibid.

Likud's refusal to conduct peace talks under the auspices of an international conference. Instead, the platform revalidated the government's commitment to direct negotiations with the Arabs.³⁹

The autonomy plan is widely accepted in Israel. Still, there are five controversial subjects regarding autonomy, which the Israelis cannot agree on: who is the owner of the water; who is the owner the land; who controls the entrance-passages; who will be the source of authority; and what would be the nature of the constitutional and administrative institutions. These problems are for lawyers to decide.⁴⁰

Some analysts are not terribly optimistic about the workability of the autonomy concept. For example, a 1989 study done by the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University, concluded that the majority of the Palestinians view the Camp David autonomy proposal as a means for the legitimization of a permanent Israeli control over the West Bank and Gaza, rather than an interim arrangement geared at an imminent Israeli withdrawal from these areas. The only autonomy scheme the Palestinians might accept--especially after the 1988 PLO's declaration of independence--is one close enough to sovereignty; and only as an interim stage toward a guaranteed independence, a scheme not accepted by most Israelis.⁴¹

³⁹The Likud Platform, 1988.

⁴⁰This information was obtained during a private conversation with MK Shimon Peres, Tel-Aviv, July 3, 1991.

⁴¹The West Bank and Gaza, pp. 49-61.

While hypothetically speaking Israel could unilaterally enforce the Camp David autonomy on the Palestinians, such a move could invite unrest, including increased Palestinian terrorist activity; the extremization of the Israeli Arabs; retaliation by the Arab states; and the worsening of American-Israeli relations.⁴²

Of course, this view was expressed prior to the Gulf War. The weakening of the PLO's position among the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza themselves, as well as in the Arab world, couples with the economic hardship these Palestinians suffer as a result of the PLO's backing of Saddam Hussein, might have transformed the autonomy idea into a workable plan. Whether or not a local Palestinian leadership would be able to rise, survive, and negotiate on its own for self-rule is yet to be seen.

Still a different argument against autonomy asserts that Palestinian autonomy would rapidly turn into a semi-sovereign state, quickly recognized by the international community. Since currently no possibility exists to include King Hussein in any autonomy system, the burden of preventing such a development will fall on Israel--a task that will be much more difficult than confronting the intifada.⁴³

d. The Concepts of Annexation and Transfer.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Dror, A Grand Strategy for Israel, pp. 282-83.

In addition to the two major schools, two other options exist in the Israeli polity. They are: annexation and transfer. Because of their impracticality these schemes are not as prevalent as the Jordanian option or autonomy. Nonetheless, since the intifada has begun, the attractiveness of these two options, at least among the Israeli extreme right, is increasing considerably.

Those who favor de jure annexation of the West Bank and Gaza--Ariel Sharon from Likud, some in the National Religious Party, Tehiya, and Tzomet--do not necessarily propose the expulsion of the Arabs from the West Bank and Gaza.⁴⁴ Instead, they recommend the unilateral implementation of Israeli law in all of the occupied territories, the same way the Israeli law had been implemented in East Jerusalem in 1967, and in the Golan Heights in 1981.

The purpose of annexation is to formalize and finalize the Israeli presence in the territories, and thus to fulfill the aspiration for the existence of Greater Israel.

While annexation is technically feasible--Israel can impose such a "solution" unilaterally--its wisdom is seriously challenged by highly respected Israeli strategists.

First, annexation would invite severe responses not only

⁴⁴The Tehiya party was established by two members of Likud (Geula Cohen--an old Irgun member, and Moshe Shamir--member of the Greater Israel Movement), who split from the party over their opposition to the Camp David agreements. The party joined the opposition and became a very vocal member especially on the issue of the occupied territories.

from the Arab states--including Egypt, but also from the rest of the international community, including the United States. This in addition to the creation of a society that will be religiously and nationally divided--a society which, from a demographic point of view, would not be able to sustain the democratic institutions on which Israel was founded. Hence, the cost of annexation would surpass its benefits.⁴⁵

Moreover, the possible reactions of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza to annexation would turn this option unacceptable. Such reactions may include (1) a rebellion more violent than the intifada; or (2) an apparent acceptance of annexation, which would follow by demands for equal political and civil rights, including the right to vote for the Knesset. The purpose of such demands would be the transformation of Israel into a bi-national state, as a stage toward the Palestinian control over the country.⁴⁶

Transfer, or expulsion, is supported by the extreme right: Moledet, some members of Likud, the NRP, Tehiya, Tzomet, and what is left of the Kach movement after the assassination of Rabbi Meir Kahane.

The essence of the transfer idea is to relocate some or all of the Arabs in the occupied territories to neighboring Arab states. By expelling the Arabs, the demographic problem Israel is facing by controlling the West Bank and Gaza would disappear.

⁴⁵ Dror, A Grand Strategy, p. 278.

⁴⁶ Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza, p. 66.

This could be done by convincing the Palestinian Arabs to disperse into the twenty-one existing Arab states, or by force.

Those who advocate transfer, justify their idea on two grounds: first, by absorbing 600,000 or so Jews from Arab countries, Israel was unilaterally involved in a population exchange without a reciprocal exchange by the Arabs; second, the return of the Arabs of Eretz Israel to the lands of their ancestors from where they originally came to Palestine does not constitute an expulsion.

In fact, those who call for transfer believe that it is the best option to guarantee a peaceful co-existence between the two societies. They refer to other "population exchanges" that had occurred in history, such as population exchanges between Turkey and Greece.⁴⁷

Key Israeli strategists believe that no Arab country would agree to accept any Arabs expelled from Israel (Kach advocated the expulsion of all the Arabs of Eretz Israel, including Israeli citizens) or from the Israeli occupied territories. Furthermore, any attempt to transfer the Arabs would be met with harsh criticism from the international community, not to mention the severe reaction that Israel could expect from the Arabs themselves, including those who are subject to deportation. Such a move would undoubtedly radicalize the Arab world, including the more moderate factions of the PLO, resulting in increased

⁴⁷In Eretz Israel (a Likud publication) (no. 180, September-October 1987), p. 29.

terrorist activities against Israel, if not an all-out Arab war against Israel.⁴⁸

In addition to these three schools-of thought, some members of the far left, such as the parties of Rakakh (the Communist Party), the Progressive List for Peace, and some members of Ratz and Mapam--even some in Labor--advocate a total Israeli withdrawal to the pre-1967 borders.

In the four election campaigns, from 1977 to 1988, all major parties used the question of the territorial debate in order to rally popular support, each propagating its own position.

Correspondingly, all parties have used the symbol of Greater Israel to depict their interpretation of security. Likud--which exploited the territory/security issue as the justification for its settlement policy and the expanded territorial control it sought--along with other territorial parties, used the Greater Israel symbol to show that permanent Israeli control over the occupied territories is a matter of national survival. The Labor Alignment on the other hand used the same symbol to show that permanent Israeli control over the territories is a matter of demographic/national peril.⁴⁹

For example, on its election posters in 1977, reiterating the claim to Judea, Samaria, and Gaza; and restating the need for "secure and defensible" borders, the Likud used a map showing

⁴⁸ The West bank And Gaza, p. 67.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

the strategic value of keeping the West Bank. In its 1981 posters the party reassured the voters that the territorial changes in the West Bank and Gaza which had been implemented by the first Begin government--in the form of 144 new settlements--were there to stay. In contrast, the Labor posters showed a map without clear border lines.⁵⁰

The ultra-right party Tehiya, who ran for the first time in 1981, outdid Likud when it blamed that party for withdrawing from the Sinai and destroying Jewish settlements there. Kach, the newly-formed extreme right-wing movement headed by the late Rabbi Meir Kahane, depicted on its poster a Torah-shaped boundary, which included all the areas of the Promised Land mentioned in the Bible.⁵¹

The same pattern repeated in 1984 and again in 1988. Likud, who in 1988 opposed Labor's support for the Shultz peace initiative, used the symbolic threat of the Arabs' intention to throw the Jews into the sea, warning that Labor's option of territorial compromise can facilitate that danger. Labor in turn used a map with the Jordan River as Israel's eastern boundary, conveying that only a territorial compromise was capable of safeguarding the Zionist vision.⁵²

The NRP too used the map of a Greater Israel. It prescribed to adhere to the Land of Israel as a tenet of faith rather than

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

principle. Moledet represented in its posters a clear alternative: the "transfer" of the Israeli Jews to the sea, or the expulsion of the Arabs to the East Bank. Tehiya promised to be the only party capable of securing Greater Israel against the intifada.⁵³

Likud's stable position since 1977--in spite of the setback which it had suffered in the 1984 elections as a result of the Lebanon debacle--points to the fact that of all the existing alternatives regarding the occupied territories, it is the non-territorial option that gained most credibility in Israel. Certainly, the change of regime that shocked the country in 1977 has been proven to be enduring rather than a passing fortune.

In 1977 the Likud won 43 Knesset seats, or 35.8 per cent of the total vote; against 32 seats, or 26.6 per cent of the total vote won by the Labor Alignment. For the Likud this was an increase of four Knesset seats, or 3.5 per cent increase over the number of seats it won in the 1973 elections. Labor lost 19 seats, or 15.8 per cent of the total vote in comparison to the 1973 elections.

In 1981 a record number of thirty-two lists ran for election. Of these only ten won representation in the Knesset. The Likud won 48 Knesset seats, or 37.11 per cent of the total vote; against 47 seats, or 36.57 per cent of the total vote won by the Labor Alignment. As Daniel Elazar noted, while it is true that the Alignment's total was close to that of Likud's, together

⁵³ Ibid.

with the Citizen's Right Movement which joined it, Labor was brought back only to the 1977 combined total of Labor and the Democratic Movement for Change (DMC), in itself a far lower figure than the Labor Alignment had normally won in its heyday.⁵⁴ Likud on the other hand, gained over and above what it and Ariel Sharon's Shlomzion party won in 1977. It did so despite the secession of the Likud's right wing members to form Tehiya and part of its La'am faction to form another new list--Telem. At least four of the five seats won by those two parties must be added to the Likud total to get an authentic picture of the results. Moreover, most of the 13 seats of the religious camp represented people committed to a coalition with Likud. In effect, the Jewish vote went three to two against the Labor camp.⁵⁵ Together, the Likud, the NRP, Tehiya, and the Kach--all in favor of the Israeli annexation of the West bank and Gaza--won 59 seats, or an impressive 45.92 per cent of the total vote.

In 1984 twenty-seven lists ran for election, fifteen of which won Knesset representation. This time both the Likud and Labor--still the two strongest parties--declined in strength. The Labor Alignment won 44 seats, or 35.4 per cent of the total vote, while Likud won 41 seats, or 32 per cent of the total vote. But together, the nationalist front--composed of Likud; the NRP;

⁵⁴ Daniel J. Elazar, "The 1981 Elections: Into the Second Generation of Statehood", in Israel at the Polls, 1981 (Howard R. Penniman and Daniel J. Elazar (eds.), Washington D.C: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research), 1986, p.8.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

Tehiya/Tzomet,⁵⁶; Morasha/Matzad;⁵⁷ and Kach--won 52 seats, or 43.3 per cent of the total vote.

On September 14, Prime Minister Peres presented to the Israeli President the new National Unity Government, formed by the two largest parties. It was a rotation government, appointing Shimon Peres as Prime Minister for the first 24 months of the government's duration, and Yitzhak Shamir as Vice Premier and Foreign Minister. These roles were switched for the second half of the government's duration.

Despite predictions that this National Unity Government would fall soon after its creation, it lasted for a full four-year term, but not without its share of crisis: as shown previously, Peres' call for an international peace conference and his peace initiatives as Foreign Minister nearly toppled the government, as Likud and its supporters feared that these initiatives could end up with territorial compromises they were

⁵⁶Tzomet merged with Tehiya on the eve of the elections. Together the two parties reenforced the ultranationalistic character of the merged list. It attracted the third-largest numbers of votes after Labor and Likud, the same as NRP (4 seats, or 3.7 per cent of the total vote).

⁵⁷This was a new religious nationalist front, composed of two groups that had left existing religious parties. Matzad was led by Rabbi Drukman from the NRP, and Morasha was led by Hanan Porat from Theyiah, both leaders in Gush Emunim. Both sought to capture the votes of the younger, more nationalistic religious people. Matzad demanded the deportation of Arab stonethrowers in Judea and Samaria; and sought the release of Jewish underground prisoners. Morasha advocated mostly the establishment of Jewish settlement in the West bank and Gaza. Ilan Greilsammer, "Campaign Strategies of the Israeli Religious Parties, 1981-1984, The Elections in Israel 1984, Asher Arian and Michal Shamir (eds.) (Tel Aviv: Ramot, 1986), p. 88.

not prepared to make.

Except for a significant gain for the religious front and increased polarization, hardly any change occurred in the 1988 elections. Indeed, the Israeli public was as divided about the peace process as it was in 1984.⁵⁸ This time however the two-year old intifada was an added issue that polarized the Israeli voters, between those who demanded more forceful measures against the uprising and those who advocated a political solution. While Likud tried to maintain its edge by delegitimizing Labor--it accused Labor of secret plans to negotiate with the PLO, and charged Labor with bias toward the parties who advocate a two-state solution⁵⁹--Labor blamed the intifada on Likud's rigidity, and pledged to prevent the establishment of additional Jewish settlements in areas that are heavily populated by Palestinians.⁶⁰

As in 1984, fifteen of the twenty-seven lists that competed

⁵⁸The religious parties won 18 seats, or 15 per cent of the total vote. Of these 13 seats were won by non-Zionist religious parties, in itself a non-precedent occurrence in Israeli elections. For a discussion on the religious votes in the 1988 election, and the coalition bargaining of the two major parties with the religious parties, see Arian's and Shamir's introduction to The Elections in Israel-1988; Robert O. Freedman, "Religion, Politics, and the Israeli Elections of 1988", Middle East Journal (vol. 43, no. 3, Summer 1989), pp. 406-422; and Don Peretz and Sammy Smooha, "Israel's Twelfth Knesset Elections: An All-Loser Game", Middle East Journal (vol. 43, no. 3, Summer 1989), pp. 389-405.

⁵⁹Don Peretz and Sammy Smooha, "Israel's Twelfth Knesset Elections: An All-Loser Game", Middle East Journal (vol. 43, no. 3, Summer 1989), pp. 389-405.

⁶⁰Labor's Platform for the 12 Knesset.

in the 1988 elections won Knesset seats. Likud emerged as the largest party, winning forty seats, or 31 per cent of the total vote; while Labor emerged as the second largest, winning thirty-nine seats or 30 per cent of the total vote (it lost seats to Mapam--Labor's partner for twenty years, which quit the alignment and ran on its own, winning 5 seats).

The ultra-nationalist front lost the Kach party--which was disqualified from running by the Central Election Commission and the Israeli Supreme Court because of its racist stand;⁶¹ but gained the newly formed list Moledet, which won two seats. Together, the nationalist front--Likud, NRP, Tehiya, Tzomet, and Moledet--won 52 seats, or 42 per cent of the total vote.

Although the votes won by the Likud and the Labor Alignment were almost evenly divided, compared to the Labor Alignment Likud was perceived by voters as the party which was better fit to handle the Arab-Israeli conflict.⁶²

Soon after coalition negotiations had begun, it appeared as if the Likud would form a government with the religious bloc. But after prolonged and complex negotiations, Shamir was in a position to set up either a narrow-based government, jointly with the right-wing and religious parties, or a broad coalition

⁶¹As a result of Kach's victory in the 1984 elections, in 1985 the Knesset amended the Election Law to permit the Knesset to disqualify any party that advocates racism, or undermines the democratic or Jewish characters of the state.

⁶²Michal Shamir and Asher Arian, "The Intifada and Israeli Voters: Policy Preference and Performance Evaluation", Arian and Shamir (eds.), The Elections in Israel-1988, p. 84.

together with the Labor Alignment. Eventually, both Shamir and Peres favored the creation of another National Unity Government. The new NUG agreement nominated Shamir as the sole Prime Minister for the full term of the government, and Peres as Vice Premier and Finance Minister. In June 1990, after the fall of the NUG, Shamir succeeded in forming an ultra-nationalist coalition, which sent the Labor Alignment back into the opposition. The new coalition was formed by ultra-nationalist and religious parties, as follows: on the ultra-nationalist front it included Likud, Tehiya, Tzomet, and the Movement to Advance the Zionist idea (formed by Modai); and on the religious front it included the NRP, SHAS, Degel Hatorah, and two independent MKs, formerly of SHAS and NRP. In the midst of the Gulf War, with which most Israelis were preoccupied, Shamir quietly added the super hawkish Moledet to the Cabinet.⁶³

As for the peace process, the new government's Basic Guidelines set the Camp David agreements and the government's initiative of May 14, 1989, as the framework for its continuation; rejected the establishment of an additional Palestinian state in Gaza and in the area between Israel and Jordan; and renounced negotiations with the PLO, directly or indirectly.⁶⁴

The Knesset approved of the new government on June 11, 1990.

⁶³ The Coalition Agreement of Israel's Twenty-Fourth Government, June 8, 1990.

⁶⁴ Basic Guidelines of Israel's Twenty-Fourth Government.

IX. THE GROWTH OF AN INFLUENTIAL ISRAELI RIGHT:
THE EMERGENCE OF GUSH EMUNIM, AND THE
RISE OF LIKUD TO POWER.

a. The Effect of the Six-Day War on the Israeli society:
The Revitalization of Revisionist Zionism.

When Prime Minister Begin explained to the Israeli citizens why he had rejected the 1982 Reagan peace plan he did so with a messianic message:

...I feel that our forefathers stand beside me in this camping--Bar-Kochba and the Maccabee warriors, and all our ancestors who shed their blood for Eretz Israel. Yes, I am waging the war for Eretz Israel. At my side stand Herzl and Jabotinsky and Nordau and also Berl Katznelson and Tabenkin in the war for Eretz Israel...I feel contentment, exaltation, faith, a sense of mission. I am just the prime minister in this campaign, which is a historical campaign.¹

Since Begin has been known as a charismatic torch-bearer this dramatic statement may not have surprised anyone. Still, it reflected on the painful Jewish experience in Palestine,² an experience that undoubtedly has shaped the attitude many Israelis have about the peace process.

Although they were not the only inhabitants of the Land of Canaan, it was there that the Israelites developed spiritually and culturally; it was there that they established their first

¹ FBIS/DR, 10 September, 1982.

² The word Palestine originally denoted the coastal region north of Gaza. In early ages the area was known by a number of names, the earliest of which was Canaan. The ancient Jews called the country Eretz Israel, but with the split of the country after the death of King Solomon they used the names Israel and Judea. The Greek and Romans called it Loudaia and Judea, but later referred to it as Palestine. For the full history of the name "Palestine" see Bernard Lewis, "Palesitne: On the History and Geography of a Name", International History Review (Vol. II, no. 1, January 1980, pp. 1-12.

monarchy; and it was there where they yearned to reestablish their independence after centuries of exile and dispersion.

When the Persian Dynasty conquered Babylon in 539 B.C., exiled Jews were permitted to return to their land to rebuild their national and cultural identity (the Jews were exiled after the destruction of their first monarchy by the Babylonians, in the sixth century B.C.). But in the second century B.C., Eretz Israel fell to the Syrian Seleucids. After a successful revolt by the Maccabees, the Jews regained their independence, until 63 B.C., when Judea became part of the Roman Empire. Between 66 and 73 A.D., those Jews who refused to accept foreign domination--the Zealots--staged the Great Revolt, but were defeated. Rather than being captured alive by the Romans, those who had fled and fortified themselves on Massada chose to commit an act of mass suicide. So ingrained is the Massada legacy in the Israeli political culture that youth groups in Israel still sing a folk song vowing never to let Massada fall again, and soldiers take their oath of allegiance on top of Massada. Between 132 and 135 A.D., under the leadership of Bar Kochba, the Jews rebelled again, with catastrophic results.³ Although defeated and dispersed, for the Jews Eretz Israel remained their homeland, and Jerusalem its spiritual center. It was thus natural that Zionism--the Jewish national movement--envisioned the return of the Jews

³Nearly 600,000 of Bar Kochba soldiers were killed, and thousands more Jews died of starvation and executions. Nine-hundred Judean villages were destroyed, and Judea was turned into wasteland.

to Zion, and the establishment of a Jewish National Home there.

Two millennia after the destruction of Judea, Jewish independence was reestablished in Palestine, when in 1948 the state of Israel was founded, with Jerusalem its capital. That the state was established soon after the Holocaust gave it a special meaning: the existence of an independent Jewish state would safeguard all Jews everywhere.

But since independence, the most intense fear for Jews in Israel has been the Arab commitment to "liberate" Palestine. Indeed, from 1948 to 1982 the Israelis had fought six wars with the Arabs--the 1948 War of Independence; the 1956 Sinai Campaign; the 1967 Six-Day War; the 1970 War of Attrition; the 1973 Yom Kippur War; and the 1982 Lebanon War--not to mention fedayeen wars and wars against terrorism.

Since 1967, it is Palestinian nationalism in particular that has provoked the Israelis, primarily because the resurfacing of the Palestinians' claim to the right of return to the land the Israelis consider their own.

Begin's melodramatic response to the Reagan plan did reflect his own convictions that the Jewish people had always existed and forever will exist in a hostile, anti-Semitic world; that in such a world the Jews can rely on themselves only; that a powerful Israel must always exist to protect the Jews, and that any means are legitimate for the protection of Israel and all Jews.

But it also reflected a new socio-political thinking that began to emerge in Israel after the Six-Day War. Accordingly, the

cession of any part of the territories gained in the Six-Day War would be unacceptable not only to the religious and the right wing Israeli population which has grown dramatically as a result of the Six-Day War, but also to segments of the secular Zionist population.

This new thinking produced a new revisionist Zionist ideology, which conformed both to Revisionist Zionism, founded by Ze'ev Jabotinsky (1880-1940); and to religious Zionism, advocated by the NRP and other religious nationalistic parties.

The revitalization of Revisionist Zionism was less surprising than the renewed process of religionization that overtook a society as secular as the Israeli society was meant to be.⁴ In this process the collectivity reacquaints itself with its religious past to the point where its identification with its spiritual background overshadows other ideals.

b. Religious Awakening and the Rise of Messianic Nationalism.

To be sure, religion has always influenced national identity. Prior to the rise of nationalism almost every ancient religion was a state religion, and long after the establishment of the great world religions, denominationalism helped to determine inter-state relations. Moreover, religion often served as a powerful vehicle for both the nationalization and

⁴The term 'religionization' is used by Yoram Peri, in "From Political Nationalism to Ethno-Nationalism: The Case of Israel", Lucacs and Battah, The Arab-Israeli Conflict, p. 41.

denationalization of societies.⁵

What is unique however in the case of Israel is the rapidity and depth of the process of religionization, and the influence it has had on the Israeli polity.⁶

In Israel until 1967 a secular-socialist brand of nationalism dominated the cultural and political domains. This was replaced almost over night by messianic nationalism that permitted, or better yet, encouraged the rise of a radical right and Jewish fundamentalism.

Religious identification has always been inherent in the Israeli polity: Judaism, which is widely recognized as a religion and a nationality, is central to Zionism and its fulfillment--the state of Israel. But as Charles Liebman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya had argued, this identification agitated the secularist Labor-Zionists, who rejected any association between tradition and national self-redemption. Nonetheless, the secular Zionist leadership--as early as the Yishuv period--still had to draw national symbols from traditional Jewish culture in order to reinforce the historic and contemporary links between Judaism, the Jewish People, and the Israeli polity.⁷

⁵ Salo Wittmayer Baron, Modern Nationalism and Religion (New York: Harper Brothers, 1947), pp. 15-17; Hans Kohn, The Idea of Nationalism (New York: Macmillan, 1944), p. 15.

⁶ Influence is defined as the ability of one's targets to act on its behalf. See David Schnall, "An Impact Assessment", David Newman (ed.), The Impact of Gush Emunim, pp. 14-15.

⁷ Charles S. Liebman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "The Dilemma of Reconciling Traditional Cultural and Political Needs", Comparative Politics (October 1983), pp. 53-66.

Indeed, because of the strong link that exists between the Jewish experience and tradition, the Labor Zionists faced the paradoxical task of developing a civil religion which had to rely on the Jewish experience, while repudiating tradition altogether. A civil religion is a system of symbols which is developed by a government in order to legitimate its view and mobilize the population for its accomplishments. Although a civil religion can be constructed out of new symbols, traditional symbols offer a sense of continuity with the past, which may serve to legitimize the people's right to the land itself, and to a distinct identity. The Labor Zionist civil religion deliberately inverted traditional symbols.⁸

But after the establishment of the state of Israel, the civil religion was modified to integrate the entire Jewish population, religious and secularist alike. While it shifted from the confrontational approach of the Yishuv, it still did not center around the centrality of Judaism in the Israeli polity. Instead it focused on the centrality of the state (statism, or mamlakhtiut).⁹

That changed in the aftermath of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, when a more traditional trend in public opinion emerged. Its influence reached its peak with the Likud's victory in 1977. In fact, Daniel Elazar sees the Likud under Begin's leadership as

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

the party that expressed and represented Israel's new civil religion, and Begin himself as the leader who advanced the Jewish character of the state to an unprecedented extent. In this respect, Begin had personified the official expression of Israel's civil religion and its transformation into one that draws heavily upon Jewish religion expression in its traditional form.¹⁰

The goal of the new civil religion was to unite society around the Jewish tradition and the Jewish people. It no longer sought the creation of a new Jew and a new society which Labor Zionism sought to create, and it no longer sought the unification of society around the symbolism of statehood alone.¹¹ Instead, it reflected the ideological change that occurred in the country.

How did the transformation from a secular-Labor nationalist ideology, to a religious nationalist ideology--or what has become known as New Zionism--come about after the Six-Day War? Why was that war--as Amnon Rubinstein pointed out--such an important turning-point in the history of both Israel and Zionism?¹²

To grasp the effect the Six-Day War has had on the Israeli polity one must first look at the period that immediately anteceded the war. That period brought the Israelis in touch with

¹⁰ Elazar, "Religious Parties and Politics in the Begin Era", pp. 115-16.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Amnon Rubinstein, From Herzl to Gush Emunim and Back (Hebrew) (Jerusalem: Shoken, 1980), p. 89.

the fear of total annihilation, a fear which the Jewish People had experienced throughout history. As Amos Elon has articulated, "for two or three weeks prior to the Six-Day War, Israelis had shared a sense of anguish and dread as deep as only a nation of refugees can feel, down to the marrow of their bones."¹³

Not surprisingly, Alon alluded to the connection in the Israeli psyche between the Holocaust and the Six-Day War, as many Israelis were seized by immense fears that another holocaust was being prepared for them by Egypt.¹⁴ Indeed, Jay Gonen, a psychohistorian, labeled that war "the holocaust that did not happen".¹⁵ The link between the two events was also expressed by young soldiers immediately after the war.¹⁶

More than just anxious, in the trying days immediately preceding the war, the Israelis felt isolated and abandoned. This feeling was captured by Abba Eban in his autobiography. Eban, who in 1967 was the Israeli representative in the United Nations, wrote:

In Greek tragedy the chorus would at least express consternation about events which it was powerless to affect. Here we could not even hope for a mild expression of concern. Israel was being told in the plainest possible

¹³ Amos Elon, The Israelis (New York: Penguin Books, 1981), p. 5.

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 216.

¹⁵ Jay Gonen, A Psychohistory of Zionism (New York: Mason, Charter, 1975), p. 166.

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 167; Alon, The Israelis, p. 216.

terms not to expect any assistance or even moral support from the United Nations...¹⁷

Eban's account may well explain the motto that surfaced in Israel after the 1967 victory: "a people that dwells alone," a motto that explained the Israeli distrust of outside counsel. Needless to say, as the international community repeatedly condemned Israel for its continued occupation of the areas it had conquered in the Six-Day War, the motto took deeper root in the Israeli society. In fact, many Israelis objected to criticism from a world that stood idle at the time when six million Jews were slaughtered by the Nazis.¹⁸ Thus, defiance rather than compliance with international pressure became the norm for the Israeli polity.

The feeling in Israel of isolation and the contempt for international disapproval has been reflected in the government's rigidity over outside peace initiatives. As Asher Arian has shown, the "people that dwells alone" concept, or as he termed it, the People Apart Syndrome, is not only directly related to policy, but is a potent source of political inflexibility.¹⁹

Another effect the war has had on the Israeli polity was the result of the Israelis' encounter with Jewish holy places

¹⁷Abba Eban, An Autobiography (New York: Random House, 1977), p. 379.

¹⁸Rubinstein, From Herzl to Gush Emunim, pp. 93-95.

¹⁹Asher Arian, "A People Apart: Coping with National Security Problems in Israel", Journal of Conflict Resolution (vol. 44, no. 4, December 1989), pp. 605-631.

liberated from Jordan during the war.

In the religious camp, this encounter aroused an atmosphere that ascribed the war a religious-messianic meaning, a sign that redemption was on its way. It inspired a movement to settle Judea and Samaria, and signaled the transformation of the nature and politics of the religious sector in Israel.²⁰

But the movement to settle these territories was not confined to the religious camp only: the Whole Land of Israel Movement that arose after the Six-Day War included not only religious fundamentalists, but also military hard-liners and former Labor members who shared the same politico-ideological traits.²¹

Certainly, secular Israelis did not remain unmoved by their encounter with their ancestry. The famous snapshot of young Israeli soldiers weeping at the Wailing Wall became a national symbol, as many in Israel began to regard that scene as a religious awakening among the secular Israeli-born youth.

The encounter then triggered a spiritual uplift within the secular camp, which in turn stimulated a wide-scale national debate regarding the future purpose of Zionism. Not unexpectedly,

²⁰ Ibid, p. 90.

²¹ Sprinzak, "The Emergence of the Israeli radical Right", Comparative Politics, January 1989, p.173. The Whole Land of Israel Movement is a secular movement that was founded in the aftermath of the Six Day War by hawkish members of the Labor Party. Initially it advocated holding on to the occupied territories for strategic reasons. By the 1973 elections, the movement was no longer associated with Labor, but completely affiliated with Likud. Ultimately it joined forces with Gush Emunim and merged its own ideology with that of the Gush.

the religious sector directly influenced this debate.²²

Indeed, within a short time after the Six-Day War, the religious camp in Israel succeeded in recruiting into its ranks many enthusiastic followers, not only from amongst their own, but also from the old Labor Zionists, gaining unprecedented political and ideological influence.

That influence became even stronger as a result of the 1973 Yom Kippur War. The shock the country suffered over that war and the hard-won Israeli victory in that war elevated the position of the religious camp, as many in Israel believed that victory after a near-defeat was the result of divine intervention. The result was the rise of a Jewish fundamentalist group named Gush Emunim, and the rise to a position of dominance of Likud.

c. The Rise and Influence of Gush Emunim.

Gush Emunim (the Bloc of the Faithful) was established in the spring of 1974 by a group of religious fundamentalist Jews in order to prevent a new partition of Eretz Israel.²³ While its immediate inspiration was the post-Six-Day War movement to settle Judea and Samaria, the shock of the Yom Kippur War and the threat that war posed to the 1967 territorial gains, gave the formation of the movement a special urgency, at least in the eyes of its founders.

²²Rubinstein, From Herzl to Gush Emunim and Back, pp. 91-111.

²³Ehud Sptinzak, "Gush Emunim: The Tip of the Iceberg", The Jerusalem Quarterly, (No. 21, Fall 1981), p. 37.

Aided by its supporters, Gush Emunim has evolved into one of the most influential interest groups in Israel, capable of determining the fate of one of the most important issues shaping the future of Israel, namely peace with the Arabs.

As pointed out by Lilly Weissbrod, one of the main triumphs of Gush Emunim was its ability to successfully delegitimize the Labor regime by advancing an alternative revolutionary ideology to Labor Zionism, an ideology which served as a new basis for national identity.²⁴

Weissbrod explains: a regime is deligitimized when it is considered to exercise power unjustifiedly. That occurs when the regime is perceived to misconstrue the core values which constitute the identity of the society. Thus, successful delegitimation results in the legitimation of the alternative: the ideology which succeeded in delegitimizing the political order must now serve to legitimize the new one, and the group which conceived the new ideology may become the new power center.²⁵ But that group does not necessarily have to become the new power center, since some politicians might adopt the new ideology as their own, while the formulators become the vanguard. The new group in power is then granted legitimacy if it can show

²⁴ The Gush was instrumental in causing a coalition crisis over the future of the territories and bringing about the resignation of the Labor government in 1976. Lilly Weissbrod, "Delegitimation and Legitimation as a Continuous Process: A Case Study of Israel", The Middle East Journal (vol. 35, no. 4, Autumn 1981), pp. 527-543.

²⁵ Ibid.

that it represents that vanguard and realizes the new values.²⁶

The Gush, which has been best described as a religious-Zionist revivalist or revitalization movement,²⁷ is composed mainly of the younger generation of the religious Zionists segment of the Israeli society, particularly the Young Guards of the NRP.

Similar to the old Revisionists who viewed the Zionist leaders of their time as not sufficiently active and formed their own branch of Zionism, so did Gush Emunim's founders view the NRP not activist enough, especially in term of foreign and defense policies, and formed their own branch of religious Zionism. Although the NRP remained faithful to its position that every Jew has the right to settle anywhere in Eretz Israel and greatly encouraged its affiliates to settle in the West Bank, as a member of the Labor coalition the party accepted the rule of the majority, which opposed the settlements of Jews in densely Arab populated areas in the West bank and Gaza.²⁸

This is why the NRP and the Gush benefited from one another: through its support of Gush Emunim the NRP could still sustain an activist settlement policy, while the Gush gained from the party's religious claim to the Promised Land.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Myron J. Aronoff, Israeli Visions and Divisions (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1989), p. 76; Sprinzak, "The Iceberg Model of Political Extremism" David Newman (ed.), The Impact of Gush Emunim (New York: St. Martin, 1985), p. 30.

²⁸ Yitzhak Rabin, Pinkas Sheirut (Hebrew, Tel Aviv: Maariv Library, 1979). p. 549.

That claim goes back to Biblical times, when God promised Abraham the land of Canaan (Genesis 12:1-7), where the Israelites finally arrived after hundreds of years of misery endured under alien rule.

The Gush's primary goal has been the resettlement, by Jews, of Biblical Israel--the area between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea--to where they believe the Jewish people are organically connected.²⁹ This goal is based on the idea that as part of the process of messianic redemption, it is the sacred duty of every Jew to inhabit and possess every part of the Holy Land.

The concept of redemption itself entails the notion of "fused time." In contrast to the secular Zionist notion of linear history, "fused time" is a cyclical concept that explains the Jewish link to the land in the remote past. This cyclical approach to history contributes religious legitimacy to the idea of resettling Biblical Israel by Jews, since redemption and return to the land is also a return in time and is considered a

²⁹ Some non-religious activists and supporters of Gush Emunim aspire a maximalist territorial control, beyond this area. In addition, the interpretations by religious leaders of Gush Emunim regarding the delineation of the Promised Land vary somewhat. Also, after the losses many Yeshivot Hesder (Talmudic institutions whose students do serve in the Israeli military) suffered in the Lebanon War a "dovish" minority emerged within Gush Emunim. This minority accepts a de-facto annexation of the West Bank and Gaza (as opposed to a de-jure annexation), and is even ready to yield certain densely populated Arab areas to Jordan or Egypt, in order to save Jewish lives. See Ian. S Lustick, For the Land and the Lord: Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1988), pp. 104-110.

moral commandment.³⁰

Because in this approach historical occurrences between Biblical time and the present are inapplicable, it reduces the Arab political and moral claim to the land of Palestine to a historical irrelevancy, since the claim is based on a linear approach to history.³¹

The settlement of the land however constitutes only one stage in the pursuit of a "complete spiritual and conceptual revolution", after which the entire Jewish people will ultimately form Gush Emunim. Indeed, the Gush is preparing itself for the control of Zionism and of the state of Israel.³²

Viewing the Zionist enterprise as the initial stage in the process of redemption, the Gush and its followers firmly believe that there is no difference between the Jewish pioneers of the Labor movement who settled Palestine during the Yishuv period and the Jewish settlers of Judea and Samaria. Wherefore, not to settle these areas is unbecoming the Zionist credo, and is therefor illegitimate and should be avoided at all costs.³³ The

³⁰ Stewart Reiser, The Politics of Leverage (Cambridge: Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University, 1984), p. 35.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Giora Goldberg and Efraim Ben-Zadok, "Gush Emunim in the West Bank", Middle East Studies (Vol. 22, No. 1, January 1986), p. 57.

³³ Aronoff, Israeli Visions and Divisions, pp. 72-73.

settlement issue is thus above the law of the state.³⁴

Ironically, the Gush's concept of the state is not very different from the way the state is conceptualized in Islamic thought. According to Gush Emunim, the national entity is supreme over that of the individual, whose existential purpose is to carry out Divine commands. It does not recognize the separation between religious and temporal, and it aspires to a state based on Jewish religious law.³⁵ Similarly, in Islam the religious role of the state stems from the concept of the umma--the Community of Muslims, consisting of the collectivity of individuals, bound to one another in their mission of his Prophet Muhammad. The head of the umma is Allah alone, and his commands embody the law and the constitution of the umma, which is the basis of all Islamic political doctrine. Under such order, the idea of a separation between religion and power is meaningless since these are not concepts that can be separated from one another.³⁶

Can the Palestinian question and a prospective peace with the Arabs be reconciled with Gush Emunim's convictions?

Initially, the idea that any group other than the Jews can have rights to the Land of Israel is completely incompatible with the concept of Jewish chosenness, embraced by Gush leaders.³⁷ The

³⁴Goldberg and Ben-Zadok, "Gush Emunim in the West bank", p. 60.

³⁵Ibid, pp. 59-60.

³⁶James A. Bill and Carl Leiden, The Middle East: Politics and Power (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1974), p. 3.

³⁷Lustick, For the Land and the Lord, pp. 76-79.

movement thus does not view the Arab-Israeli conflict as a normal inter-state conflict about borders and political rights, or a conflict that can be settled through compromise and negotiations. Instead, the Arab-Israeli conflict is seen as a metaphysical struggle, and any notion of resolving it through territorial compromise not only weakens and endangers Israel, but contradicts God's commands upon the Jewish people to inherit the land. This, in turn, delays the eventual redemption not only of Israel, but of the whole world.³⁸

In practical terms, this view translates into two approaches to a peaceful settlement. The first is a temporary peace based on the Arabs' fear of Israel's military strength (it is temporary because the Arabs still do not abandon their desire to destroy Israel); a kind of peace envisioned by Prime Minister Begin during the Lebanon War. The second is "real peace", involving the realization of Israel's inheritance of the whole land; a prelude to the complete messianic redemption of the Jews.³⁹

Sprinzak cited a view that is less fanatical--but fundamentalistic nonetheless. According to Sprinzak, the Palestinians' demand for self determination to be exercised within any part of Eretz Israel is meaningless to Gush Emunim: since the Land of Israel belong to the Jews by Divine order, the universal principle of self-determination does not apply to Eretz

³⁸ Ibid, p. 81.

³⁹ Ibid, pp. 81-82.

Israel.⁴⁰ Instead, Palestinian nationalism must, if at all, be considered as part of Arab nationalism, and its demand for self determination must be assessed throughout the whole of the Middle East.⁴¹

Since the Gush views the Palestinian question not as a problem of a nation but of gerim (non-Jewish residents of Eretz Israel, who according to the teaching of the Torah should be treated by the people of Israel with no more than tolerance and respect), in practical terms this view translates into three alternatives for the Arabs of Eretz Israel: (1) to acknowledge publicly the Gush's version of the legitimacy of the Zionist doctrine, and to receive full civil and political rights which do not include the right to self determination; (2) to obey the laws of the state without formal recognition of Zionism and in return be granted full rights of resident aliens, which do not include political rights; (3) to be offered economic incentives to immigrate to Arab countries.⁴²

Whichever view one might adhere to, the general tenet within Gush Emunim rejects any outside attempt to persuade Israel into negotiating with King Hussein and the Palestinians.⁴³ Indeed, the prospect of successful attempts to move the peace

⁴⁰ Sprinzak, "Gush Emunim: the Tip of the Iceberg", p. 38.

⁴¹ Idem, "The Iceberg Model", p. 32.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Lustick, For the Land and the Lord, pp. 129-131.

process forward is viewed by the Gush as an imminent danger.⁴⁴

As for the Palestinians, because of their desire to eliminate the state of Israel, they can only be recognized by the Jews as the most destructive and dangerous current of Arab hostility; and thus condemned to defeat, which will be, in their case, self-destruction.⁴⁵

With such views, there is little wonder that the movement's major breakthrough had occurred after the rise to power of the Likud Party.

d. The 1977 Elections and the Likud Rise to Power.

In 1977, Likud rose to power after three decades as the most vocal member in the Israeli opposition. The party was formally established in the summer of 1973, as an affiliation of a number of existing nationalistic and right-of-center parties.⁴⁶ The bond holding this alignment together was the desire to incorporate into Israel all of the occupied territories.⁴⁷

Three main factors helped Likud to win the 1977 elections.

⁴⁴Ibid, p. 150.

⁴⁵Lustick, For the Land and the Lord, pp. 76-79.

⁴⁶They included: Herut, Likud's predecessor and the largest faction of the Likud; the Liberal Party, which was Herut's partner in the Gahal bloc, formed in 1965; La'am, which was formed in 1969 by former members of Rafi--a faction led by David Ben Gurion, which split from Mapai in 1963; the Free Center--a faction which split from Herut in 1969; and the Greater Israel Movement. Shlomozion, a faction led by Ariel Sharon, joined Herut after the 1977 elections.

⁴⁷Gershon R. Kieval, Party Politics in Israel and the Occupied Territories (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1983), p. 138.

At the outset, from the early 1970s a process of delegitimation gradually deprived the Labor Alignment of the political domination it had enjoyed since the Yishuv period.⁴⁸ That process involved a growing public perception that the Labor Alignment no longer exercised power rightfully.

Second, a slow process of legitimation--which began in the 1960s when Herut had adopted an effective legitimation strategy--finally awarded Likud legitimacy.⁴⁹ In this process Likud has gradually been perceived by large segments of the Israeli population as the alternative party that is capable of fulfilling the function of the political order.

Last but not least, the composition of the Israeli electorate had undergone two significant transformations, one being a demographic changes--part of Likud's strength was based on the vote of the Sephardic Jews who were expelled from Arab countries after the 1956 Arab-Israel war;⁵⁰ the other being the rise of the Israeli right.⁵¹ It is the latter that enabled Begin

⁴⁸Yonathan Shapiro, "The End of a Dominant Party System", in Asher Arian (ed.) The Elections in Israel-1977 (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Academic Press, 1980), pp. 23-38.

⁴⁹Ariel Levite and Sidney Tarrow, "The Legitimation of Excluded Parties in Dominant Party Systems: A Comparison of Israel and Italy", Comparative Politics (vol. 15, no. 3, April 1983), pp. 295-327.

⁵⁰For the demographic factor in the 1977 elections see Asher Arian, "The Israeli Electorate, 1977", in Arian (ed.), The Elections in Israel-1977, (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Academic Press, 1980).

⁵¹Asher Arian, "The Israeli Electorate, 1977", in Arian (ed.), The Elections in Israel - 1977 (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Academic Press, 1980). pp. 253-276.

and the Likud to safeguard the status quo politics.

How did the rise of an influential Israeli right contribute to the Likud's rise to power and why did Likud keep reinforcing the transformation to the right?

One answer lies in the relationship between the political atmosphere that engulfed Israel after the Six-Day War and the teachings of the Likud Party.

The Likud party is a territorial party, that is, a party which is interested primarily in territorial matters. The party is indeed known for its extreme position over Jewish control of the West Banks of the Jordan River. This position goes back to 1949, when Begin refused to accept the demarcation lines which were agreed upon in the Armistice agreement.⁵² After the Six-Day War, the issue of Jewish control over the area resurfaced with full vigor, advancing Begin's old position. Because Begin was a member of the National Unity Government--which was formed during the trying days that preceded the war--Begin's stance became increasingly legitimate. In fact, it has been pointed out that the decisive Israeli victory of 1967 helped Begin to bring about the Herutization of the right-of-center political bloc.⁵³

But it was Begin's resignation from the National Unity Government in August of 1970 that helped popularize his extreme

⁵² Ilan Peleg, "The Impact of the Six Day War on the Israeli Right: A Second Republic in the Making?", in Lucaks and Battah (eds.), The Arab-Israeli Conflict (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988), p. 55.

⁵³ Ibid, p. 58.

position. His resignation came after the government decided to accept an American proposal and resume the Jarring talks, which had begun in November 1967 and terminated in April 1969.⁵⁴

Soon after his resignation Begin and his Herut Party became the backbone of Israel's annexationist forces, attracting many other members of the annexationist movement--some of whom were not early supporters of Begin--who joined his political camp. By 1973 these forces were united under Begin's leadership in the newly formed Likud Party. They were strengthened after the trauma of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war.

Although the Likud did not win the 1973 elections, it formed the first ultra-nationalistic opposition in Israel's history, and Begin became the recognized leader of a large bloc of political parties united under the banner of "Greater Israel."⁵⁵ From then on the rise to power of Likud was quite natural in the prevailing atmosphere. Once in power, with the support of the religious and right-wing camps, Begin could transform Likud's ideology into state policy.⁵⁶

Like Begin, Shamir is motivated primarily by territorial consideration. Like Begin, he is not ready for any more territorial compromises. Shimon Peres epitomizes Shamir's preoccupation with territory:

I had an argument with Shamir even on Taba. I asked him

⁵⁴For a discussion of the Jarring mission see Touval, The Peace Brokers, pp. 153-164.

⁵⁵Peleg, "Impact of the Six-Day War", pp. 58-59.

⁵⁶Ibid, p. 60.

why is this small piece of territory so important? There is doubt that it was ours; it has no strategic value, it was not promised to us in the Bible, it is nothing more than a strip of land where people go to sunbathe. But he insisted that the area is ours. This notion is built on obsession not on conception. It is hopeless. Our mistake was that we thought that Shamir could be educated.⁵⁷

Others in the Knesset also believe that Shamir does not want to return any land and is not interested in the peace process. Instead he is building the West Bank and Gaza according to his own outlook, which is currently more successful in the Knesset than the outlook of Peres or Rabin.⁵⁸

How did the Likud manage to implement its hawkish policies in a democracy that is divided almost evenly on the issues of peace, security, and territorial rights?

The answer rests with Likud's ability to manipulate the implementation of its policies through a strong collaboration with Gush Emunim and its supporters. For it was Gush Emunim that ambitiously aspired to the leadership of a massive drive for the colonization of the whole of the West Bank.⁵⁹

e. The Collaboration between Likud and Gush Emunim

The close relationship between Gush Emunim and the Likud,

⁵⁷Private conversation with MK Shimon Peres, Tel Aviv, July 3, 1991.

⁵⁸This conclusion is partly based on information gathered during a private conversation with MK Ezer Weizman, Caesaria, July 5, 1991.

⁵⁹Kieval, Party Politics in Israel and the Occupied Territories, p. 156.

coupled with the enormous encouragement Gush has received from religious parties and the parties of the extreme right--such as the NRP, Morasha, Thehiya, Tsomet, Kach, Moledet, or even a Jewish underground--created in essence an ultra-nationalist alliance in the Israeli polity, capable of undermining any peace initiative. It is well to note that with the exception of the NRP, all of these parties have emerged in the Israeli political scene after the Likud had risen to power in 1977.

Although Gush Emunim was only one small group among the protest groups that sprung between the 1973 war and the Likud rise to power in 1977, it remained the only group that the newly elected Menachem Begin symbolically idolized and encouraged. Indeed, once in power Begin's government had reinforced its political dominance through the adherence to ultra-nationalistic policies, mainly by using the Gush as a surrogate to promote its own ideology, and by legitimizing Gush Emunim and bolstering its position in the Israeli polity.⁶⁰

The major area of collaboration between Likud and Gush Emunim has been settlement activity in the occupied territories. This is hardly surprising, since for the Likud the settlement drive is not just a means of establishing an Israeli presence in strategically vital areas, but a means to realize the party's ideological obligations. From that standpoint, Likud views the establishment of settlements in the West Bank and Gaza as a means

⁶⁰ Ian Lustick, "Gush Emunim Ideology - From Religious Doctrine to Political Action", Middle Eastern Studies (vol. 18, no. 3, July 1982), pp. 265-275.

of reaffirming the claim to Jewish sovereignty on all of Eretz Israel.⁶¹

In practical terms, the settlement drive has guaranteed the incremental de facto annexation of the West bank and Gaza. This, coupled with economic interdependence, the creation of Arab dependency on the Israeli-established infrastructure in the territories--all deliberate Israeli tactics--has safeguarded an Israeli permanent control over the territories.⁶²

It has also served the Likud as a means to attract coalition partners, and to maintain political stability: as part of its coalition obligations, the settlement activity has ensured the Likud the continuous support of the religious and right-wing bloc, without which any Likud government--with the exception of a national unity government--would collapse.

Prior to Likud's rise to power Gush Emunim was forbidden by the Labor government to establish new settlements in areas that

⁶¹Kieval, Party Politics in Israel and the Occupied Territories, p. 142-43.

⁶²For the aggregate sum of land acquisition and settlement activity during the first Begin government see Ian Lustick, "Israel and the West Bank After Elon Moreh: The Mechanics of De Facto Annexation", The Middle East Journal Vol. 35, No. 4, Autumn 1981, p. 557-577. Lustick correctly insists that terms such as "irreversibility", "the point of no return", and "permanent", must be applied with care. Thus, "permanent" means here, to use Lustick's second of two thresholds, the point when the question of the future of the West Bank and Gaza is removed from the political agenda. See Ian Lustick, "The West bank and Gaza in Israeli Politics", Steven Heydemann (ed.), The Begin Era: Issues in Contemporary Israel (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984, p. 86.

were heavily populated by Palestinians.⁶³ Not accidentally, Gush Emunim was actively involved in the 1977 campaign. It demanded that "the devotees of Eretz Israel vote only for lists whose plank on the integrity of the Land is lucid".⁶⁴ At the heart of the Gush's demand was the end of the ban to settle in Samaria. That demand was answered with the establishment of the new Likud government in 1977.

To be sure, it was not the Likud government that had begun the settlement of the West Bank and Gaza. In fact, it was the Labor-led government that began to establish Jewish settlements in the occupied territories soon after the Six-Day War, primarily as part of its national defense strategy. But it was the Likud-led governments that envisioned a more elaborate and massive settlement of these areas, primarily to reinforce the right of the Jews to settle in any part of Biblical Eretz Israel. In reality, during the first ten years of the Israeli occupation, from 1967 to 1977, the Labor government established twenty-four settlements on the West Bank, whereas during the first ten years of Likud's rule, from 1977 to 1987, the government established 150 settlements there.⁶⁵ During this period the number of Jewish

⁶³ Shmuel Sandler, "The Protracted Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Temporal-Spatial Analysis", The Jerusalem Journal of International Relations (Vol. 10, No. 4, December 1988), p. 70.

⁶⁴ Yael Yishai, "Drafting the Platform: The Territorial Clause", Arian and Shamir, The Elections in Israel-1984 (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1986), p. 245.

⁶⁵ Aronoff, Israeli Visions and Divisions (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1989), p. 76.

settlers in these areas grew from a little more than 3,000 to about 70,000.⁶⁶ And, while part of this settlement activities did occur under the National Unity Government, it was done at a much slower pace than under the Likud Government.

How exactly did the Gush help Likud implement its de facto annexation of territory?

Soon after assuming power, the new Likud government announced a plan to settle more than a million Jews in the West Bank within a twenty-year period. But the task of realizing this goal--at least during the first term of the Likud government--fell on the shoulders of Gush Emunim. Indeed, during that period the movement dominated the settlement process in that over half of the new settlements established were affiliated with the movement.⁶⁷

David Schnall has argued that Prime Minister Begin utilized the existence of Gush Emunim to encourage settlement and land claims that his government could not easily undertake on its own. By condoning the Gush's activities he could achieve territorial goals without direct involvement; and by claiming that its influence on the movement was limited the Likud government has had a ready excuse for not doing what it was reluctant to do

⁶⁶Arian, "Israel's National Unity Government and Domestic Politics", Asher Arian and Michal Shamir (eds.), The Elections in Israel-1988 (Boulder: Westview, 1990), p. 217.

⁶⁷Gershon Shafir, "Institutional and Spontaneous Settlement Drive", David Newman (ed.) The Impact of Gush Emunim (New York: St. Martin, 1985). p.161.

anyway.⁶⁸

Asher Arian has pointed out that despite its ambitious settlement policy, the Likud had neither the personnel nor the organization to undertake the task of settling the West Bank and Gaza in a manner similar to that of the Kibbutz movement during the first half of this century. The Likud government was therefore satisfied to identify itself with the Gush's pioneers.⁶⁹

Similarly, Lustick has suggested that the ultranationalism and active messianism of Gush Emunim was able to fill the ideological vacuum which was created by the inability of the Likud to implement its annexationist objectives. Coupled with the practical expertise and pioneering zeal of the settlers, this provided the first Likud government with a valuable resource.⁷⁰

Still, no agreement among scholars exists regarding the impact of Gush Emunim on the Israeli political system. Some believe that the movement's impact on the Israeli political system is difficult to evaluate at best.⁷¹ The Gush's apologists believe that the movement's influence on the Israeli polity has

⁶⁸David Schnall, "An Impact Assessment", The Impact of Gush Emunim, p. 22.

⁶⁹Arian, Politics In Israel, pp. 87-88.

⁷⁰Lustick, For the Land and the Lord, p. 9.

⁷¹Aronoff, Israeli Visions and Divisions, pp. 73-89.

eroded altogether.⁷² Others regard Gush Emunim as an aggressive extra-parliamentary body which succeeded more than any other movement of its kind in achieving its political goals; a movement which has effectively influenced the Israeli political system; a movement whose impact has been felt not only on the political and policy related categories, but also on other categories, such as ideological, social, religious, and economic.⁷³ This latter view is shared here.

Indeed, it had been observed that within a relatively short period, Gush Emunim has not only succeeded in terms of its aspiration, but has also become a powerful actor on the political stage in Israel. Moreover, due to the legitimacy which has been allotted to the movement by the Likud government since 1977, not only has the Gush been accepted in government circles, but it has been absorbed into the institutional framework.⁷⁴

⁷²Eliezer Don-Yehiha, "Jewish Messianism, Religious Zionism and Israeli Politics: The Impact and Origin of Gush Emunim", Middle Eastern Studies (Vol. 23, No. 2, April 1987), p. 216.

⁷³Sprinzak, "Gush Emunim: The Tip of the Iceberg"; Lustick, For the Land and the Lord, p. 8.; Schnall, "an Impact Assessment", p. 22. For an excellent discussion on the what Sprinzak calls the movement's "invisible realm", see Sprinzak, The Ascendancy of Israel's Right (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 130-32.

⁷⁴David Newman (ed.), The Impact of Gush Emunim (New York: St. Martin, 1985), p. 1. For an absorbing discussion on the process by which the Gush managed to intermix its policies with the policies of the government see Sprinzak, "Gush Emunim: Tip of the Iceberg", pp. 40-46. In addition see Aronoff, "The Institutionalization and Cooptation of a Charismatic, Messianic, Religious-Political Revitalization Movement" in David Newman (ed.) The Impact of Gush Emunim, where the author shows how the movement institutionalized itself since 1977.

In reality, despite its refusal to identify itself with any single political party, the Gush has enjoyed parliamentary representation through parties such as the NRP, Thehiya and Morash; and through the support of MKs of other parties.⁷⁵ At least a half-dozen members of the Knesset are among the Gush leaders; and the Lobby--a parliamentary coalition formed in 1985 to wield pressure on behalf of Gush Emunim settlement aspirations--was made up of members from five different political parties. Within four-months from its inception, the Lobby's membership grew from 23 MKs to 38 MKs, or 32 per cent of the entire Knesset. Altogether the Lobby enjoys the steady support of fifty ministers and MKs.⁷⁶

Most significantly, the Gush has won the solid support of Ariel Sharon and David Levi, the two hawkish Herut members who have challenged Yitzhak Shamir's leadership.⁷⁷ Because of their patronage of the Gush, Shamir, as Prime Minister was unable to pursue policies that contradict those embraced by the Gush and its collaborators.

Sharon, the Minister of Agriculture and Chairmen of the Ministerial Committee of Settlements at the time, was the driving force behind the settlement campaign. As a zealous advocate of the permanent control of the West Bank and Gaza and the

⁷⁵ Aronoff, Israeli Vision and Division, p. 87.

⁷⁶ Lustick, For the Land and the Lord, p. 10.

⁷⁷ Levi, who became Israel's Foreign Minister in the ultra-right government Shamir had formed after the fall of the NUG, has since become the "dove" of that government.

optimization of the number of Jewish settlements and Jewish settlers in the area, there is little wonder that Begin chose him as head of the ministry in charge of settlements.⁷⁸

While he has always defended the right of the Jews to settle in all of Eretz Israel, Sharon has been mostly concerned with Israel's security, which for him could not be possible without Israeli control over these areas. Such control, according to Sharon, is meant to guarantee that a Palestinian state would never be created there. And, it is his belief that only through the establishment of Jewish settlements that control over these territories can be realized. "Those settlements" Sharon argued, "are stronger than any political definition and any written agreement". Moreover, "as long as these settlements are built, a Palestinian state will not be established in this area..."⁷⁹

Be that as it may, at the time of this writing the number of the Jewish settlers in the territories is estimated at about 120,000. In 1980 they established the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judea, Samaria and Gaza (Yesha). Yesha is a semi-official governing body, whose main feature is a legal association called Amana (Covenant).⁸⁰ It provides the government with significant administrative and economic resources, and is also directly involved in the implementation of government

⁷⁸ Lusick, "kill the Autonomy Talks", p. 24.

⁷⁹ Kieval, Party Politics in Israel, p. 154.

⁸⁰ For a discussion on Yesha and Amana see Sprinzak, The Ascendance of Israel's Right, Ch. 5.

policies in the West Bank and Gaza.⁸¹ Although its members belong to a number of political parties, its hard core belongs to the nationalist parties, especially Tehiya and the NRP.⁸²

Sprinzak noted that while the settlers may conduct most of their activities under the name of Yesha rather than under the Gush's name, they are by and large members of Gush Emunim.⁸³ Similarly, Goldberg and Ben-Zadok assert that Gush Emunim does represent the majority of the settlers; that the local leadership in Judea and Samaria--as reflected in Yesha--are composed largely of Gush Emunim's activists; that no prominent ideological trends other than that of Gush Emunim's exists in Judea and Samaria; and, citing Danny Rubinstein they argued that even in those settlements that are not affiliated with Amana, the identification with Gush Emunim is virtually total.⁸⁴

Aside from that, there is much empirical evidence to show the Gush's leverage on the Likud governments, especially on the settlement issue. First, in 1977 the government adopted the

⁸¹ Lustick, For the Land and the Lord, p. 10.

⁸² Sprinzak, The Ascendancy of Israel's Right, Ch.6, and Yishai, "The Territorial Clause", p. 245.

⁸³ Sprinzak, "Gush Emunim: Tip of the Iceberg, p. 34.

⁸⁴ Goldberg and Ben-Zadok, "Gush Emunim in the West Bank", p. 57. This argument does not deny the fact that some settlers chose to move to the West Bank because of pure economic reasons. However their numbers was insignificant until 1990, when more Israeli families moved to the West Bank because of the greater affordability of housing there. The need to find more affordable houses was the a result of the housing shortage caused within the Green Line due to the mass immigration to Israel of Soviet Jews. See The New York Times, September 23, 1990, p.

Gush's settlement plans for the West Bank.⁸⁵ After the 1981 elections, in which the movement actively campaigned, a super-hawkish alliance led by Begin, Sharon, and Shamir, dominated the new government.⁸⁶ This new government undertook still a more ambitious drive to settle Judea and Samaria.⁸⁷

The Camp David agreements were an anathema for the settlers.⁸⁸ Thus, from that time until the creation of the 1984 NUG, the government established new settlements, expanded existing ones, or promised to do both during all new peace initiatives; it legislated guarantees to protect existing and future settlements; it cooperated with the Jewish settlers on the questions of the establishment of unauthorized settlements, and illegal purchase of Arab land; and it collaborated with the settlers on the release of underground Jewish terrorists, and on

⁸⁵ Shafir, "Institutional and Spontaneous Settlement Drive", pp. 161-65.

⁸⁶ Sharon and Shamir replaced Ministers Dayan and Weizman--two key figures behind the Camp David agreements, who resigned from the government over the futility of the autonomy talks, after Begin had replaced Dayan with Yosef Burg of the NRP as Israel's representatives to the talks. Dayan resigned in October 1979, and Weizman resigned in June 1980.

⁸⁷ Sprinzak, "The Iceberg Model", p. 34.

⁸⁸ the settlements issue threatened to destabilize the government during the Camp David discussions, when a some a number of moderate members of Begin's cabinet clashed with some hard-liners over the issue of settlement activity in the West Bank. To avert a crisis, Begin accepted the position of his hawkish cabinet members and moved to secure the Israeli control over the West Bank and Gaza by giving a narrow interpretation to autonomy and a broad one to the powers of the Israeli mechanism of control, including the privileges of the Jewish settlers. Shimon Shamir, "Israeli View of Egypt and the Peace Process".

increased activity by the settlers against the Arab inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza.

Such activity was curbed during the duration of both NUGs. Still, after the creation of the NUG in 1984, the hawks in the Likud took it upon themselves to safeguard the interests of Gush Emunim and its supporters, ensuring the government's inability to make any territorial concessions. But the Gush's influence still manifested itself during this period in the Likud's stand on any territorial compromise, which made the Alignment powerless on this important matter.

X. RESULT I: THE NEAR-COLLAPSE OF THE NATIONAL UNITY
GOVERNMENT OVER SECRETARY SHULTZ'S 1988
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PLAN.

a. The Political Crisis over the International Conference.

The internal tension that erupted in Israel over the idea of an international conference turned into a political crisis after rotation occurred in October 1986, when Peres assumed the Vice Premiership and the Foreign Ministry, and Shamir became the Prime Minister. Although many of the ideas which Peres had incorporated in his perception of an international conference did not constitute sharp deviations from Shamir's own principles--in fact, they were quite similar to the ideas comprised in the 1991 Madrid conference--Shamir was under tremendous pressure from those on the far right who believed that the concept of Palestinian autonomy went too far. This camp was conspicuously represented by the hard-line Likud Ministers Sharon and Levi, and the Tehiya Party.

The end result was a conflicting foreign policy which was carried out at one and the same time by Shamir and Peres, and the near collapse of the National Unity Government (NUG). Although this posed tremendous difficulties for the Administration--it is indeed difficult to identify any other mediation efforts by a third party anywhere that had to deal with such complications, resulting from a split government--the assumption in Washington was that it was not the Administration's interest to meddle in Israel's internal politics. Instead, the basic guideline for the Administration, beginning with the NUG in 1984, was that the

Israelis have to work their differences out themselves. The most the Administration could have done was to present a plan and show some readiness to support its ideas, but it could not interfere or intervene in Israel's domestic affairs, even when the result was continued paralysis on peace process issues.¹

The rift that erupted within the government over the conference idea intensified in April 1987, when Shamir faulted Peres for accepting idea of the international conference "after a nightmare," and described the conference notion as "suicide, insane and monstrous." He also accused Peres of dictating the idea through "shrewd and clandestine tactics."²

Reacting, some Alignment ministers called for the dismantling of the government, but Peres hoped to prevent a government crisis. Instead, Labor agreed to a compromise according to which the party ministers would sustain relationship with Likud, however stormy, until a carefully prepared and concrete proposal for the specifics of the international conference could be submitted to the cabinet for a vote.

Shamir tried to avoid a government crisis when he rejected Tehiya's initiative for early elections. Indeed, both Likud and Labor preferred to stay in the government rather than facing the uncertainties of new elections.

¹These conclusions are based on information obtained in private conversations with Under Secretary Murphy, New York, April 9, 1991; and Ambassador Lewis, Washington D.C., April 26, 1991.

²FBIS/DR, 10 April 1987.

But the debate intensified when Likud leaked some details of a plan for an international conference which was proposed, according to Likud, by Peres, but submitted to the Israeli government for approval as an American proposal for the next phase of the peace process.

Finally, Shamir criticized Peres' proposal for its lack of substance and for surrendering Israeli security assets, including the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem. Shamir further argued that Peres did not speak in the name of the Labor Party because "that is not how Golda Meir and her friends talked, but rather how Peace Now, Mapam, and the Citizens Right Movement (CRM) talk."³

In a counter campaign, on May 11, Peres presented his full plan to the inner cabinet. Along with his plan, he introduced a letter which had been sent by Secretary Shultz to him and to the Prime Minister. In the letter Shultz indicated immediate American support for Peres' plan. He also assured the Israelis that the conference would lead to direct negotiations between Israel and its neighbors without coercion or pressure. He reiterated the American commitment regarding the conditions for a recognition of the PLO and the inclusion of the Soviet Union in the political process.⁴

Aside from his belief that his agreement with King Hussein provided an opportunity which Israel should not miss, Peres'

³ Ibid, 5 May, 1987. Peace Now is the best known peace movement in Israel; Mapam and the CRM are left-wing parties.

⁴ Ibid, 12 May, 1987.

justification for holding an international conference rested on the 1973 decision of the Meir government, and the 1977 decision of the Begin's government to support the same idea.

Peres conditioned negotiations under the international conference on the following: (a) negotiations would be direct, face-to-face, without any preconditions; (b) after the opening of the conference, negotiations would be conducted within the framework of bi-lateral committees, with the Palestinian issue negotiated between the Israeli delegation and the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, which would exclude PLO members. The negotiations themselves were to be based on United Nation resolution 242 and 338, and on the participants' renunciation of violence and terrorism.

For Peres the conference had three purposes. The first was to invite the warring parties to settle the Jewish-Arab conflict in a peaceful way. This included the settlement of the Palestinian problem "on all its aspects", in line with the Camp David formula.

The second purpose was to invite the parties to agree to establish bi-lateral committees in order to negotiate peace.

The third purpose was the actual formation of these committees--which were to include a Jordanian-Palestinian committee, a Syrian-Israeli committee, a Lebanese-Israeli committee, and if possible, a regional committee, which was to discuss regional issues such as irrigation and development.

The creation of any of these committees was not to depend on

the establishment any of the other committees. In that way, the participation of the Jordanian-Palestinian committee in negotiations would not depend on the participation of the Syrian-Israeli or Lebanese-Israeli committees.

In addition, the conference was not to participate in negotiations, nor to force a solution on the parties, and was not to repeal any solution the parties would have agreed on. In case of any breach in the conference regulations, the United States, together with Israel, were to withdraw from the conference. Also, the participation of the Soviet Union and China in the conference were conditioned on the establishing of diplomatic relations between these countries and Israel. In the case of the USSR, participation was also conditioned on a modification of the treatment of Jews, including permission to emigrate to Israel.

Finally, Peres pledged that the Labor Alignment would refuse to return to the 1967 borders; refuse to repartition Jerusalem; refuse to uproot Jewish settlements; and oppose to the participation of the PLO in the conference.⁵

But since the cabinet was evenly divided on the international conference, the Labor Alignment decided not to bring the issue for a vote. Shamir interpreted the decision as a renunciation of Peres' proposal by the Cabinet, thereby stripping the Foreign Minister of any mandate to pursue the idea any

⁵The Struggle for the Continuation of the Peace Initiative (Hebrew, a Labor Party publication), June 1987.

further. But Peres continued to directed the Israeli Foreign Ministry to peruse an unchanged policy.

On May 13, the Alignment officially demanded the resignation of Shamir, accusing him of obstructing the peace process. The move however was symbolic in nature since the Alignment did not expect to win the number of votes needed for early elections.⁶

Labor thus decided to stay in the government, but at the same time held overt negotiations with other parties regarding the possibility of calling for early elections. Peres himself left for a two-week visit to the United States, where he reportedly agreed with Secretary Shultz on a number of private moves to stimulate the peace process.⁷

Still, the crisis was not over: Shinui--a small left-of-center party--withdrew from the government in the hope that its departure would precipitate Labor's withdrawal from the government and thus force new elections. But on May 19, the NUG defeated three motions of no-confidence, advanced by a number of small left-wing parties.

Concluding that there was no chance to bring the government

⁶ Labor expected to receive the support for early elections from fifty-five MKs at most, including the votes of its own forty members: Mapam--six, the Citizens' Right Movement--(CRM) four, two or three votes from Shinui, and very "iffy" two votes from the progressive List for Peace (PLP); while fifty-six MKs were expected to oppose early elections: Likud's forty-one, Tehiya's five, the NRP's five, Agudat Israel's two, and MKs Abu Hatzera, Hurvitz, Verdiger and Kahane.

⁷ FBIS/DR, 18 May, 1987.

down, the Labor Alignment decided to remain in the government for the time being.⁸ Labor's decision was based on the assessment of a special team that examined the possibility of holding new elections, and on the fact that Shamir had an explicit commitment from the religious parties for their support of a narrow-based coalition headed by Likud, should the Alignment decide to withdraw from the government. On top of this, polls indicated that both the Alignment and the Likud were losing voters to the smaller and more ideological parties of both left and right.⁹

To justify Labor's remaining, Peres declared that Labor would not leave the NUG to a right-wing Likud that had come to represent the ideology of Gush Emunim, Tehiya, and religious extremism. He also called for a national referendum on the peace process--a call that was rejected by Shamir on the basis that the referendum idea did not conform to the Israeli political system. His assertion was confirmed by a team of jurists, which designated the idea as illegal.¹⁰

In October, the issue of the international conference became a time bomb, as Peres--in the United States at the time for the

⁸As for the Peres-Hussein agreement, in 1988, the secretive nature of the agreement prevented its publication or Labor's ability to deal with it. Private conversation with MK Shimon Peres, Tel Aviv, July 3, 1991.

⁹FBIS/DR, 15 and 22 of May; July 1 and 10, 1987.

¹⁰Ibid, 12 June, 1987.

forty-second General Assembly--made progress on the conference when he met Secretary Shultz and the Soviet Foreign Minister, Shevardnze.

But as Shultz's visit to the region neared (February 25, 1988), Shamir agreed to a tactical change in his position and declared his readiness to support the convening of an international conference, but only as a formality for the conclusion of negotiations on permanent agreements. He also formulated his own three-part proposal, which he intended to present to Shultz during his upcoming visit to Israel.¹¹

The first part of Shamir's new formula included a plan for solving the problem of Palestinian refugees through the construction of 41,000 housing units for the 280,000 refugees in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza who still resided in camps. This was to be carried out with the help of a special international fund, and completed within eight to ten years.

The second part of the plan contained a peace plan with Jordan. According to this proposal, negotiations with Jordan would span a three-year period, at which time autonomy would be established in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza. By the third year, joint agreements for de facto peace relation with Jordan would be secured in contracts. At the end of three years, Israel would negotiate with Jordan towards a permanent settlement for Judea, Samaria, and Gaza.

The third part included a detailed autonomy plan, based on

¹¹ Ibid, 22 February 1988.

the Camp Davis accords. It proposed to resume the autonomy talks at the point where negotiations with Egypt on the matter were stopped.¹²

Shamir had no basis to believe that any of the three parts of his plan would be accepted by King Hussein or by the Palestinians. First, not only was King Hussein unable to negotiate with Israel on his own, but the plan did not offer him any territorial gains during the first three years of negotiations. Second, the PLO has always maintained that the Palestinian problem was not a problem of refugees. The proposal then could not be anything more than a vehicle to release some of Washington's pressure on Israel to participate in the peace process.

Nevertheless, on the eve of Shultz's arrival to Israel, the Inner Cabinet devoted its session to this plan. But sharp division between the Alignment and Likud over the plan prevented the Inner Cabinet from reaching an agreement. While the Alignment accused Shamir of using the autonomy clause as an excuse to avoid negotiations, Peres pledged to remain in the NUG in order to promote the American initiative.

As the controversy sharpened, Shamir himself softened his position and was now prepared to accept an "international event" sponsored by the two superpowers in the form of a symbolic opening ceremony which would lead to direct negotiations. He justified his new position as a concession to King Hussein who

¹² Ibid.

had claimed that he needed an international backing for negotiating with Israel.¹³ But he accepted the idea only because he had a rare trust in Shultz, believing that Shultz was truly interested in Israel's well being in the deepest sense; and believing that Shultz was motivated by a deep concern over Israel's future.¹⁴

Peres argued that the rejection of the Shultz plan would deal the peace process its deathblow. He and other Alignment ministers demanded that the Prime Minister bring the Shultz initiative for a vote to the Inner Cabinet prior to Shamir's departure for the United States, a demand that was flatly rejected by Shamir. Indeed, as demonstrated below, the hard-liners in Likud prevailed over the more moderate elements in the party.

b. The Influence of the Israeli Right on the Domestic Debate over the Conference Idea.

The crisis over the international conference idea dates back to the abrogation of the Amman accords in February 1986, which prompted an internal debate in Israel as to what direction the peace process should take. The Amman accords constituted the agreement reached by King Hussein and Chairman Arafat on a framework for a joint Jordanian-Palestinian participation in peace negotiations.

¹³ Ibid, 1 March, 1988.

¹⁴ This conclusion is based on information obtained during a private conversation with Health Minister Ehud Olmert, Jerusalem, June 28, 1991.

It was then that Peres, as Prime Minister, thought that Israel should proceed with the peace process unilaterally and hand over to the inhabitants of the occupied territories autonomy over their internal affairs until formal arrangements could be reached.¹⁵

Alarmed, the Israeli right quickly moved to secure the Israeli hold over Judea, Samaria, and Gaza. First, soon after Hussein announced the abrogation of his agreement with Arafat, Geula Cohen from the ultra-right Tehiya Party, submitted to the Knesset a proposal to annex these territories.¹⁶ That followed a challenge to Shamir's leadership within his own party, when two hawkish ministers from Herut¹⁷--Ariel Sharon, Minister of Trade and Industry, and David Levi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Construction and Housing--expressed doubts that Shamir would be capable of dealing with such vital issues when assuming the position of Prime Ministry under the rotation agreement.¹⁸

In April, Peres recognized the Palestinians as a nation. That prompted Tehiya to submit to the Knesset a no-confidence motion in the government.¹⁹ Since in Israel it is almost

¹⁵ FBIS/DR, 10 February, 1986

¹⁶ On March 5, 1986, the Knesset rejected the proposal, which, one should emphasize, was supported by a number of Cabinet members. FBIS/DR, 5 March, 1986.

¹⁷ Herut is Likud's predecessor, and the most powerful faction in the Likud alignment.

¹⁸ FBIS/DR, 17 and 18 of March, 1986.

¹⁹ Ibid, 16 April. 1986.

impossible to topple a government through a no-confidence motion, such a motion is typically an expression of strong opposition to a certain policy, or a means to raise the public's consciousness over an issue.

When rumors circulated that Egypt, Israel, and the United States were preparing autonomy for the Gaza Strip, Tehiya adopted a resolution by which it endorsed the expulsion of the Arab inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza into Arab countries. On their part, the Jewish settlers in the occupied territories called for Israel's sovereignty over Gaza.²⁰

Less than a month after Peres revealed that secret diplomacy was underway between Israel and Jordan--a disclosure that was validated by Shamir--Sharon called for the annexation of the territories. Notably, Sharon always chose symbolic locations from where to make his announcement regarding the territories. This time he was speaking in the Hebron Hills, where he announced the upcoming establishment of a new industrial zone.²¹

At the end of September, as rotation neared, Shamir came under pressure from Tehiya, Gush Emunim, and from within his own party to launch a new mass settlement drive.²²

Thus, immediately before becoming Prime Minister, Shamir

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid, 21 May, 1986.

²² In Part IV, a separate chapter is devoted for a full discussion of Gush Emunim.

declared that settlements in the West Bank and Gaza would continue side-by-side along with the search for peace and security, and promised to consolidate the Jewish presence in all parts of the Land of Israel. Symbolically, on his first day in office as Prime Minister, amid an American appeal against the expansion of settlements in the territories, Shamir visited Kokhav Ya'ir--a settlement in Samaria--where he promised to settle all of the Land of Israel, so that "we have a place to absorb all of the Jews of the diaspora when they come."²³

Similarly, in mid-November Shamir declared that the green line cannot be a line of peace, and promised that land would not be partitioned again.²⁴ In December, after Peres had promised Senator Kennedy that Israel would not build new settlements in the territories, in a insubordinate mood, Shamir defiantly declared that new settlements would indeed be built.²⁵

By February 1987, Shamir's and Peres' opposing policies prompted discussions within both parties over the fall of the government.²⁶ When on February 25, Peres left for a second visit to Cairo to discuss the conference idea, Tehiya warned that if

²³ FBIS/DR, 22 October, 1986.

²⁴ Ibid, 13 November, 1986.

²⁵ Ibid, 11, 12 December, 1986.

²⁶ When ministers from the Likud tried to convince Peres to delay his trip to Cairo until Shamir's return from the United States, the Alignment accused Shamir of conducting an election campaign in the United States, where Shamir told American Jews that Peres had no authority to make any agreements concerning the international conference. FBIS/DR, 24 January 1987.

Peres continued to promote the idea of a peace conference there would be no choice but to hold early elections.²⁷

In reply Shamir vowed that regardless of Peres' talks with Mubarak, there would be no international conference. He promised to "foil" Peres' attempts to force the idea on the cabinet.²⁸

On March 1, after a stormy cabinet session, Likud decided to launch a wide-scale information campaign in Israel and the United States against the international conference.²⁹

When Peres reassured the Israelis that within the framework of an international conference Israel would not have to negotiate under pressure, Sharon argued that Peres' plan would bring Israel back to the 1967 borders and to the climate of terror that existed in the country during the first years after independence.³⁰

In reply Alignment ministers reaffirmed their commitment to use the conference only as a preliminary phase for direct negotiations. But Sharon described the idea as "one of the biggest frauds in the political campaigns Israel has faced", with the exception that this time it was a "home made Israeli fraud".³¹

Meanwhile, Tehiya threatened Likud that it would join the drive for early elections unless the government would put a

²⁷ Ibid, 25 February, 1987.

²⁸ Ibid, 25 February, 1987.

²⁹ Ibid, 2 March, 1987.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

complete stop to Peres' efforts to convene an international conference, and agree to the establishment of twenty-seven new settlements--a number that far exceeded the six settlements which had been approved by the NUG. The latter demand was also voiced by the Council of Jewish Settlements and several MKs from Likud. Together with Tehiya they requested that 30,000 more Jews be settled in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza during the remaining eighteen months left for the government. Gush Emunim demanded that the government be disbanded, unless the settlement movement was resumed.³²

On that same issue, on July 15, Tehiya threatened to submit a bill on the dissolution of the Knesset and the holding of new elections. It backed down from its threats after its leaders had secured a pledge from Likud for a substantial expansion of settlements in the West Bank.³³ These demands corresponded with increased support for Tehiya among the Israeli right, and the public's shift further to the right.³⁴

³² Ibid, 9 and 30 of June; 10 July 1987.

³³ It was soon disclosed that Likud had made a secrete pact with Tehiya: in exchange for Tehiya's agreement to shelve its initiative for early election, the Likud pledged to establish six to eight new settlements that year, in addition to the two settlements that were initially approved by the NUG. FBIS/DR, 15 and 20 July, 1987.

³⁴ A public opinion poll conducted by the daily Ma'ariv found that 66.8 per cent of Israelis desired a solution which would leave Judea and Samaria in Israeli hands; 31.1 per cent wanted a solution based on territorial compromise; and 20.4 per cent believed that Israel should transfer the Arabs from Judea and Samaria. Source: FBIS/DR, 16 July, 1987.

A different survey conducted for the Jewish American Committee, found that forty per cent of young Israelis had

When it was learned that Shamir had responded positively to Shultz's offer of a limited super-power role in the peace process, Tehiya threatened that unless these reports were denied

positive views about Gush Emunim, against twenty-three per cent who felt positively about "peace now". Seventy per cent felt that the Jews' right to Eretz Israel was more justified than that of the Arabs. Forty-nine per cent believed that the Arabs could never be trusted to make true peace with Israel. The survey, conducted by Mina Tzemah of the Dahaf Research Institute, in conjunction with Eliyahu Hassin, had many other findings. Source: FBIS/DR, 19 October, 1987.

A poll commissioned by Ha'aretz, which found that a significant number of Likud voters had defected to the Tehiya. Still, the poll concluded that if elections were held, the Labor Alignment and its supporters would win 49.1 percent, while the Likud and its supporters would win only 40 per cent of the total vote. Source: FBIS/DR, 4 November, 1987.

A different study still, found that thirty per cent of young Israeli males thought that an Israeli annexation of the territories and the transfer of the Arabs to other countries in the Middle East was a "most desirable" solution, while forty-two percent thought such a solution was "acceptable". Source: FBIS/DR, 31 December, 1987.

Polls conducted before and after the Gulf War show that between March and October 1990, 30% of the Israeli public thought that Israel should annex the territories, while 44% believed that the territories should be returned for peace. In March 1991, 22% Israelis believed that the territories should be annexed, while 51% thought that the territories should be returned for peace. Source: Asher Arian, "Security and Political Attitude in Israel: 1986-1991," Public Opinion Quarterly (Spring 1992), pp. 116-128).

Another study shows that in 1990 12.6% of the Israeli public preferred a permanent solution based on a territorial compromise in the form of a Palestinian-Jordanian state; while in 1992 14.1% preferred such a solution. In 1990 12.6% preferred a permanent solution based on a territorial compromise with Jordanian; while 11.2 % preferred such a solution in 1991. In 1990 18.4% preferred a permanent solution based on autonomy under Israeli rule, while 16.7 % preferred such a solution in 1991. Also in 1991 5.2% preferred a permanent solution based on autonomy under Jordanian rule. In 1990 10.3 % preferred the annexation of the territories and transfer of the Arab population while in 1991 11.2% preferred such a solution. Source: Dan Barzilai and Efraim Inbar, "Do Wars Have an Impact?: Israeli Public Opinion After the Gulf War", The Jerusalem Journal of International relations (Vol. 14, no. 1, March 1992), pp. 48-64.

outright, it would submit to the Knesset a motion of no confidence. Submissively the Prime Minister Office produced the demanded denial.

Still, in the initial Cabinet debate over the Shultz initiative (January 31, 1988), Shamir deviated from his unyielding position. Surprisingly he asked the American Secretary of State to communicate to King Hussein that the territories were negotiable. Moreover, he informed the United States that he was prepared to grant the inhabitants of the territories full autonomy, with the exception of foreign affairs and security matters.³⁵

But the hard-line Ministers from Herut, Sharon and Levi, immediately revolted against Shamir, when they warned the country against the "Arab version" of autonomy, which Shamir was ready to embrace. So did minister Yosef Shapira from Morasha--one of Israel's religious parties--who feared the prime minister had been worn thin by the intifada.³⁶

These ministers made it clear to Shamir that the Israeli right would not permit him to do with the West Bank and Gaza what Prime Minister Begin had done with the Sinai. Sharon and Levi in particular demanded that the Prime Minister adhere to the autonomy plan as defined in the Camp David agreements, and called for a more aggressive settlement activity in the territories.³⁷

³⁵ Ibid, 1 February, 1988.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid, 1-2 February, 1988.

As usual Shamir acceded to the demand of his hard-line ministers, and agreed that negotiations with Shultz would be restricted to the Camp David accords. But he was unwilling to reject the Shultz initiative outright (the initiative did not yet constitute a formal American peace plan, and was not voted on by the Cabinet). Instead he demanded that several clauses in the plan be changed, including: (1) the elimination of the international conference; (2) the postponement of the time table suggested by Shultz for the implementation of autonomy; and (3) the elimination of a binding date for the beginning of negotiations on a permanent solution for the territories.³⁰

When Shamir and Shultz finally met in Jerusalem, under the motto "Israel is not for sale," activists from Herut, Tehiya, and Gush Emunim demonstrated outside the Prime Minister Office, protesting against any territorial concession. In return, Shamir repudiated the notion that a peace treaty might end Jewish settlement anywhere in Eretz Israel.³¹

Meanwhile the discrepancy between the Labor Alignment and Likud over Shultz's plan brought about renewed debate over early election. The possibility of new elections gave the hawkish members of Herut the opportunity to try to commit Shamir to a tougher position: Herut's Platform Committee decided to add to the movement's principles a series of hard-line paragraphs, including a commitment to act on the immediate implementation of

³⁰ Ibid, 16 February, 1988.

³¹ Ibid, 25 February, 1988.

Israeli law in all the territories. It rejected the autonomy concept as defined in the Camp David agreement, or any other form of self-determination to the Palestinians. It also rebuffed any "peace formula adopted from outside."⁴⁰

When Shultz presented his plan to Shamir as an official Administration document (March 4), Herut activists immediately began to campaign against the plan. Under the motto "no to the Shultz initiative", they called on the Prime Minister to reject the plan. In addition, a number of Likud MKs brought before the Knesset a motion to dissolve the Knesset and to hold early elections. If passed, such a motion would have been tantamount to the rejection of the Shultz plan.

Consistent as ever, the most vocal opponents of the plan in Likud were ministers Sharon and Levi, who accused the United States of breaking its commitments to the Camp David agreements. Both were soon joined by Minister Without Portfolio, Yitzhak Modai from Likud.

On the eve of Shamir's departure for Washington in mid-February, the daily Ma'ariv quoted him saying that he did not rule out the principle of "territory for peace" as part of negotiations on permanent arrangements. In a rather unusual statement he said:

somebody said I am opposed to peace in exchange for territories. Let us hold negotiations on the permanent document, and there it will be possible to discuss territories for peace....We are committed (according to the

⁴⁰Other Herut ministers however were quick to deny that the modified platform reflected the party's official position. FBIS/DR, 3 March, 1988.

Camp David accords) to negotiations on a permanent solution, as these are after all negotiations about territories and sovereignty.⁴¹

This remarks stimulated Sharon's own revolt. Few days after Shamir's departure Sharon announced his own plan: it defined the Jordan River as Israel's eastern security border, and deployed the IDF along the River; it determined that no foreign military force, including U.N. forces, would be present west of the Jordan River; that Israel would bear sole responsibility for security in Greater Israel; that there would be no foreign sovereignty over any part of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip; that no second Palestinian state would be established west of the Jordan; that the refugee problem will be solved as part of a political settlement in the area; that the Golan Heights were an integral part of Israel; and that the Arab population in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza would be granted autonomy to conduct its internal affairs, and the citizens of these areas would retain their present nationality. In addition, Sharon declared that he "definitely" saw himself as a future candidate for the prime ministry.⁴²

Other Likud leaders had decided to negotiate with the small Knesset factions in order to create a narrow-based government

⁴¹This remark was similar to one Shamir made in a letter which he had sent to Shultz on January 17 1988, when he complained that "Hussein constantly distorts our position on this matter when he declared that we treat the territorial issue as non-negotiable". The letter was one of the factors that influenced Shultz to initiate his plan. FBIS/DR, 14 March, 1988.

⁴²Ibid, 17 March, 1988.

without the Labor Alignment. They had the support of sixty MKs, including Meir Kahane of Kach.

The result was not unfamiliar: once more Shamir succumbed to pressure: upon his return, in an emotional speech before a special Knesset plenary session, he called for national unity in order to "deter all those who are plotting to harm us and force us to make concessions at the expense of Israel's security and national defense".⁴³

But that was not enough for Sharon, who insisted that the government explicitly demand the following: that the Jordan River be Israel's security border; continued Israeli control of the Golan Heights; expansion of Jewish settlements in Jerusalem, including the Muslim Quarter; and Israeli control to all parts of the city. As always, Sharon carefully chose the location from where to deliver his message: Jerusalem's Jewish Quarter, where Herut Central Committee organized a seminar.⁴⁴

While not acceding to Sharon's demands, Shamir upheld his opposition to the Shultz plan on the ground that the international conference idea and the proposition that negotiations on the permanent arrangements for Judea, Samaria, and Gaza should begin before the implementation of the interim arrangements deviated from the Camp David agreements.⁴⁵

⁴³ Ibid, 28 March, 1988.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 6 April, 1988.

⁴⁵ In May, a new political strife erupted in Israel after President Reagan praised Foreign Minister Peres for his support of the Shultz initiative (while at the same time he defined

In the meantime the campaigning for the upcoming Israeli elections began. This time it was Hussein's dissociation from the West Bank that provided for a pre-election political contest. Not unexpectedly Sharon--joined by the Tehiya Party-- seized Hussein's speech as an opportunity to call for the annexation of the territories as a way to fill the vacuum left by Hussein.⁴⁶ At the end the Likud platform endorsed the autonomy plan of the Camp David accords.

The results of the 1988 elections revealed that the Israeli public was undecided as to what direction the peace process should take.

Soon after a new political debate erupted over the Reagan Administration's decision to open a dialogue with the PLO. While the cabinet criticized that decision, other voices in the political echelon welcomed it as an opportunity to end the

leaders who did not support the plan as rejectionists who consistently reject new ideas). That Reagan made this statement following a meeting with Peres did not help matters. Indeed, accusing Peres for promoting policies which were opposed by his own prime minister, Levy immediately requested the recall of Peres from his U.S. trip; and while other Likud ministers accused Peres of enticing Reagan's statement, Modai condemned Peres for remaining neutral while his own prime minister was condemned.

⁴⁶The Tehiya Party updated its platform to include the following: impose the death penalty on terrorists; give more liberal orders on opening fire in the territories; take immediate action to quash the uprising; pledge not to leave Judea and Samaria.

deadlock in the peace process. Naturally, the NRP, Tzomet,⁴⁷ Tehiya, and Moledet⁴⁸ strongly opposed the American decision. But the Peace Now Movement, joined by the parties of the left, such as Shinui, Mapam, the CRM, and Hadash, called upon the government to join the United States and open a dialogue with the PLO.

⁴⁷Tzomet, an ultra hawkish list, was formed in 1984 by Rephael Eitan, the former Chief of the Military Staff, who together with former Defense Minister Ariel Sharon were responsible for the war in Lebanon.

⁴⁸Moledet (Homeland) was a new ultra-nationalist party which was formed prior to the 1988 elections. Headed by the former army General Rehavam Ze'evi, it called for the transfer of the Arabs from the territories to Arab countries.

XI. RESULT II: THE FALL OF THE GOVERNMENT, 1990.

a. Reaction to the Shamir-Rabin Plan.

As seen, the Shamir-Rabin plan--or as it became known, the Israeli Government initiative--was launched at a time when Israel had little choice but to react to regional changes, and to a changed American attitude towards the PLO. But the need to react to these changes had put Prime Minister Shamir in a serious predicament. For, the more evident it had become that Israel could not remain oblivious to a changed environment, the more threatened the Israeli right had become. The coming together of these two forces, perhaps more than any other time threatened not only the existence of the government, but Shamir's own survivability as Likud's leader.

Perhaps Shamir could have tried harder to adhere to the Israeli government initiative. But had he done so, at best it would have cost his party's unity; at worst his leadership. Perhaps he was all too happy to capitulate quickly to the demands of the Israeli right. But research suggests that he was inclined to adapt his own narrow interpretation of the Camp David agreements in a changed political atmosphere, especially after the inconclusive results of the 1988 elections, when he assumed the leadership of the second NUG.

First, at the beginning of January 1989, he declared that it was not necessary "to cling" to each and every word of the Camp

David accords, as long as their framework was maintained.¹

Second, with the approval of Shamir, Rabin was trying to arrange an indirect dialogue with the PLO leadership in Tunis, through the good offices of Palestinian figures from the territories.² This was done amid the conclusion of the Israeli defense establishment that without some form of a dialogue with the PLO it would be impossible to advance the peace process toward a solution to the Palestinian problem and the end of the intifada. In this way the PLO leadership could participate in the peace process without being directly involved in it, and Arafat's opposition to direct negotiations between Israel and a representation of the inhabitants of the West bank and Gaza be weakened.³

¹ FBIS/DR, 3 January, 1989.

² Contacts with the PLO for the purpose of advancing the peace process were encouraged by the Israeli left. As the Young Guards of the Labor Alignment demanded to drop from the party's platform any opposition to contacts with the PLO, on January 10, a delegation of left-wing MKs from Labor, Mapam, and the CRM left for Paris to participate in an international symposium in which PLO representative also attended. That followed by a recommendation made by a group of Alignment members that Ezer Weizman, the Alignment's Minister of Science and Development, lead a delegation of 100 Israeli figures from various political parties, to meet with Arafat in Cairo, to discuss the promotion of a peace agreement based on a tripartite confederation option. In mid-February a number of MKs from the Labor Alignment, Mapam, and Shinui, met with Faisal al-Hussaini--regarded by Israeli authorities as one of the most prominent PLO leaders in the West Bank and a chief co-ordinator of the intifada. Finally, on February 26, Weizman, urged the Inner Cabinet to open a dialogue with the PLO. Ibid, 11 January 1989, 31 January 1981, 16 February 1989, 26 February 1989.

³ FBIS/DR, 1 February, 1989.

Third, at the end of February, Shamir stated that while the Camp David accords served as a cornerstone for all his views about a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, he did not necessarily adhere to every fine point in the Camp David accords, since changes have taken place over time.⁴

Finally in an interview to Ma'ariv before his trip to Washington in April, Shamir promised to "...tell the Administration members things they may not have heard from me before. By that I mean primarily ideas regarding the interim arrangements." Government officials described that to mean full autonomy.⁵

But Shamir's ability to realize his adaptability to a changed environment was curtailed by strong opposition from the political far-right. Indeed, as soon as he showed some readiness to accept some formal U.N. participation in the peace process, Ariel Sharon, by now Shamir's chief Likud rival, publicly warned him that such a concession might jeopardize Israel's security.⁶ Tehiya submitted a no-confidence motion to the Knesset over Shamir's willingness to "negotiate the fate of Eretz Israel"

⁴ Ibid, 28 February, 1989. On March 6, in a speech before the Likud members of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Shamir reiterated the Camp David agreements as "the best, the most realistic, and more logical agreement invented so far" under existing circumstances. Ibid, 6 March, 1989.

⁵ For Shamir's interview see, ibid, 27 March, 1989.

⁶ Ibid, 19 January, 1989.

under the auspices of an international conference.⁷

The opposition to Shamir's "concession" spread despite the steps he had taken in order to convince the far right, especially Gush Emunim and its followers, of his commitment to remain in the territories. These steps included a renewed commitment to settle all parts of Eretz Israel and to redeem the country, entailing a pledge to establish eleven new settlements.⁸

Eventually, Shamir's final draft of his peace plan caused a serious rift within Likud between Shamir and his supporters, and other Likud members led by Sharon, Levi, and Modai, who joined forces with the extreme right, including Tehiya, Kach, and Moledet. Their opposition to the plan was based on their fear that if East Jerusalem residents would be included in the election plan, it would lead to the repartition of Jerusalem and to territorial compromise. Besides, the plan did not condition elections on the end of the intifada.

⁷The motion, which was submitted also in reaction to the government's agreement to return Tabah to Egyptian authority, was defeated. In addition, the Kach movement went as far as announcing its intention to form the state of Judea, in the area comprising Judea, Samaria, and Gaza. In a gathering named The First Zionist Conference of the State of Judea, Kahane declared his movement's plan to be the "last resort" if Israel would not annex the territories. The meeting was patterned after the first Zionist Congress which gathered in Basel in 1897. It went as far as introducing the new Judean national anthem and presenting a set of Judean flags. FBIS/DR, 19 January, 1989.

⁸Among other things, Shamir appointed his own special adviser on settlements affairs, whose tasks were to "encourage, direct, and assist public bodies dealing with settlement-related activities and serve as a liaison between the government ministries". Ibid, 3-26 January, 1989.

Sharon, took the lead in obstructing the plan, and pledged to block the "disastrous" election plan, which according to him could lead to the emergence of a Palestinian state. He viewed the inclusion of East Jerusalem in the elections as a "do-or-die" issue, since "most terrorist leaders operate out of Jerusalem...." He referred to Sari Nusaybah, Hanna Seniora, and Faysal al-Hussaini, who were considered by many as authentic Palestinian leaders.⁹

But the government endorsed the plan despite Sharon's warnings, and immediately proceeded to lay down the guidelines on how to conduct the elections. According to these guidelines the territories were to be divided into ten districts, each of which would have elected one representative to negotiate the interim agreement with Israel. Additional representatives would have been considered to join the delegation during the talks over the permanent solution, which would have begun three years after the establishment of autonomy.¹⁰

As the Knesset proceeded with its debate over the plan, thirteen Likud MKs threatened not to support the initiative unless the party convened an urgent session before the Knesset debate, in order to formulate a unanimous position. It was then

⁹For Sharon's interview, see FBIS/DR, 17 May, 1989.

¹⁰Without delay, settlement leaders in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza warned that they will fight the plan through a political campaign and through the establishment of more settlements. Tehiya submitted to the Knesset another motion of no-confidence in the government. The motion was defeated on May 17. Noticeably, 50% of the Likud party was absent from the vote.

that Shamir began to capitulate to the right when he promised:

We will not give even one inch of land to the Arabs, we will give them nothing; those involved in PLO activities will not be able to negotiate on the territories; there will be no negotiations on the implementation of the peace initiative under a state of intifada.¹¹

He also expressed his belief that "the Arabs of East Jerusalem cannot take part in any process involving Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, such as elections".¹²

Despite these assurances, Modai called on both Shamir and Peres to resign,¹³ while Sharon convened some thirty Likud activists--symbolically, in his East Jerusalem residence--and demanded that Herut's Central Committee vote on the plan.¹⁴

When presenting the plan to the Knesset, Shamir reiterated his opposition to another Palestinian state--Likud believes that Jordan is Palestine; to negotiations with the PLO; and to any changes in the status of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza. But Levi claimed that the plan contradicted Likud's party platform, while Sharon demanded a written promise from Shamir that the intifada will be suppressed before the election process will begin, and

¹¹ FBIS/DR 17 May, 1989. After Baker's call on Israel to forgo her aspiration of a "greater Israel", Shamir's opponents in the party termed these promises as "wishful thinking".

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Peres described Shamir's election plan as a radical change in Shamir's thinking, and an important and historical opportunity to end the deadlock and the state of violence in the territories. Labor officially endorsed the plan on May 11.

¹⁴ In reaction the Prime Minister's office threatened that if Herut Central Committee approved a vote of no-confidence in Shamir, Shamir would resign, enabling Peres to assume the premiership.

that residents from East Jerusalem will not be allowed to participate in the elections. Later he added a third demand: a clear statement that under no circumstances will the status of Jerusalem be negotiable.¹⁵

As Likud's Central Committee convention neared, Shamir tried to manipulate between having to yield to the pressure from Sharon's camp, and at the same time adherence to the Israeli initiative.¹⁶ But on June 22, the "constraints ministers" as Sharon, Levi, and Modai became to be known, demanded four changes in the government's plan: (1) violence must stop not only for the duration of elections but for as long as negotiations take place; (2) Arabs of East Jerusalem cannot participate in the voting; (3) no Palestinian state will ever be created between the Jordan and the Mediterranean; (4) Israel will not stop settlements.¹⁷

In reply Shamir insisted that his peace initiative was a comprehensive proposal which was not open to changes but Sharon countercharged that the initiative will not lead to peace but to more bloodshed, including a possible war.¹⁸

¹⁵ FBIS/DR, 17-19 May, 16 June 1989.

¹⁶ For example, in a meeting with Herut's members of the Likud Central Committee, held on June 16, he promised to wipe out the Arab violence, but he also called for the initiation of "Camp David in a new packing". Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid, 22 June, 1989. A few days later, meeting with leaders of the Judea, Samaria, and Gaza settlements while touring the West Bank, Levi presented a plan to settle Soviet Jews in the West Bank, and revealed a plan to extend settlement activity there. Ibid, 28 June, 1989.

¹⁸ Ibid, 28-30 June, 1989.

The struggle was soon over. Seeking to avoid internal strife within the party, in his address before the Central Committee, Shamir reduced his entire initiative to "food for thought and for deliberation in the international arena." Thus, "it was too premature to determine whether it will indeed become reality", and "too early and unjustified to turn the issue into a bitter, internal feud."¹⁹

While still defending his own initiative, he succumbed to the demands of his opponents when he agreed that (1) no negotiations can take place while violence continued, and that the election process will be held only in complete calm; (2) Jerusalem was not part of the initiative, that is, the Arabs of East Jerusalem will not participate in the elections; (3) settlement activity will continue; and (4) in the negotiations of the permanent solution Israeli representatives would insist in Israel's sovereignty over areas that will be subject to negotiations.²⁰ From thereon Shamir adhered to this formula--in fact it had become the Likud's unified position--in spite of a commitment he later made to the Labor Alignment to adhere to the government's initiative of May 14.

With the exception of Sharon, the amended plan was endorsed overwhelmingly by the Likud. It was also supported by SHAS (Torah Observers Sepharadim), Tehiya, NRP, Gush Emunim, and Moledet. But the Alignment, Mapam, Shinui, the CRM, and Hadash, opposed the

¹⁹ Ibid, 6 July, 1989.

²⁰ Ibid.

new plan. While some in the Alignment called for the resignation of the party from the NUG, Mapam, Shinui, and the CRM submitted to the Knesset a vote of non-confidence in the government (the motion was defeated on July 7).²¹

The Alignment's position on these four issues was that the participation of East Jerusalem Arabs in the vote would not necessarily jeopardize Jerusalem's unity and Israel's sovereignty over the city, therefore they should be permitted to vote. Second, beyond the five or eight settlements to which the Alignment conceded, the party strongly objected to the establishment of new settlements. Third, while it condemned violence, the party opposed that the end of the intifada be a condition for the continuation of the peace process. Fourth, the Alignment was in favor of a territorial compromise in line with United Nations resolution 242.

Initially, Peres and Rabin, along with other Alignment ministers, decided to quit the government. But after two religious parties--SHAS and NRP--called upon the Alignment and Likud to maintain the NUG, insisting that the only binding peace plan was the one endorsed by the Cabinet and the Knesset, the Alignment issued an ultimatum according to which, unless Shamir disavowed the resolution adopted by Likud's Central Committee, it

²¹As far as the United States was concerned, the Administration was operating on the basis that the Government of Israel's May 14 proposal was the operative and legally binding basis for the Israeli government to proceed. Development in the Middle East: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the Committee on Foreign Affairs/House of Representatives, July 12, 1989 (doc. no. Y4.F76/1:M58/20/989).

would leave the government. The crisis ended when on July 23, Alignment and Likud ministers ratified the government's plan without any additions or changes.²²

But the Alignment took additional steps to rebut Likud's Central Committee's resolutions. On August 9, Labor's Central Committee adopted 12 principles, according to which, among other things, it rejected the renunciation of the land for peace formula; reaffirmed resolutions 242 and 338 as the basis for negotiations; allowed the participation of East Jerusalem Arabs in the proposed elections in the territories, provided that voting not be held in East Jerusalem itself; negotiations should be held with the Palestinians without delay and without conditions, i.e., not necessarily before the end of the intifada; observers from selected countries who maintain diplomatic relations with Israel be allowed to participate in the supervision of the election; the elections be conducted in an atmosphere of non-violence; Jerusalem must remain united under Israeli sovereignty; no Palestinian state will be established.²³

But before the government had the chance to discuss either Likud's or the Alignment's formulae, President Mubarak made public his ten-point plan. The heart of Mubarak's 10-point plan was elections in the occupied territories, of a delegation which would represent the Palestinians in negotiations with Israel. The

²² FBIS/DR, 10-24 July, 1989.

²³ In Likud, Shamir and Levy compared the resolution to Fatah's Convention. Ibid, 9-10 August, 1989.

negotiations would lead to an interim phase of Palestinian self government, and eventually to a final settlement based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

b. Reaction to Mubarak's and Baker's Proposals.

While Shamir's initial reaction to the content of Mubarak's plan was to reaffirm the Israeli government plan as the only initiative to which Israel was bound, Peres thought that with the exception of some of the points, the Egyptian initiative could serve as a basis for negotiations on the election plan.²⁴

When the "forum of four" (Ministers Shamir, Peres, Arens, and Rabin) began to discuss the content of Mubarak's initiative on September 13, the Egyptian suggestion that deported Palestinians be allowed to negotiate alongside other Arab residents from the territories became the focal point of controversy between the Alignment and the Likud.

Whereas the Alignment felt that deported Palestinians could be considered legitimate negotiating partners--since technically they were residents of the territories--the Likud thought that negotiating with deported Palestinians would imply recognition of the PLO. Furthermore, MKs from the Greater Israel Movement, who feared that the ten-point plan would lead to the creation of a

²⁴ Sharon and Levi feared that Israel might involuntarily begin a process involving Egyptian mediation between Israel and the PLO. They thus refused to legitimate the plan by public discussion. In any case, Israel delayed its formal response on the initiative since Egypt did not formally submit the document to the Israeli government until September 15 (a copy of the plan was presented to Rabin in Washington prior to that day).

Palestinian state, demanded that Shamir initiate a cabinet decision based on the formula endorsed by Likud's Central Committee, even if that would lead to the fall of the government.

Thus when Egypt officially presented its proposal to Israel, the Likud ministers decided to oppose it. Still, to avert an immediate crisis, the forum of four agreed to delay the decision on the plan until the Inner Cabinet would meet following ministers Arens' and Peres' return from their upcoming trip to Washington.²⁵

But on September 19, Shamir publicly rejected the ten-point plan on the ground that Israel could not agree to the inclusion of foreign residents in negotiations, or to the participation of East Jerusalem residents in the election plan.

To avoid a crisis, on October 5, the Alignment submitted to the Inner Cabinet a four-point proposal, according to which the government of Israel was committed to the peace initiative it endorsed on May 14; the government was ready to endorse Mubarak's proposal for a meeting between an Israeli and a Palestinian delegation in order to help realize its peace initiative; the Israeli delegation would participate on the basis of the original government resolution; the two countries will begin

²⁵At the same time the Cabinet approved Rabin's planned visit to Cairo to meet with President Mubarak. But since the visit entailed discussions on Mubarak's plan, the Sharon-Levi camp strongly opposed the trip, arguing the very meeting discredited the Israeli government own plan, and that the meeting encouraged the "involvement of foreign elements" in internal Israeli affairs. FBIS/DR, 19 September, 1989.

contacts to determine the composition of the Palestinian delegation at once.²⁶

But the proposal was defeated by the Likud ministers on the basis that since Egypt was coordinating the composition of the Palestinian delegation with the PLO, the acceptance of the proposal would involve the recognition of the organization.²⁷

In this regard, Mark Heller correctly argued that no pre or post-election negotiations about a future settlement could occur without the PLO's consent--whether formal or implied. Besides, Israel and the PLO were already engaged in a dialogue, however indirectly, through their discussions with third parties.²⁸ Meanwhile Baker's proposal reached Israel. To recall, the proposal called for the holding of a meeting in Washington (within two weeks) between the foreign ministers of the United States, Egypt, and Israel, aimed at achieving another meeting

²⁶ Ibid, 5 October, 1989.

²⁷ While the Likud and other right-wing parties supported the position taken by the Likud ministers, Tzomet called for new elections since half of the Inner Cabinet did promote Mubarak's initiative. Moledet saw the opportunity fit to call for the repeal of the government initiative, arguing that it would lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state. But on the left, Mapam was initiating an emergency session of the Knesset plenum in order to oblige the government to exhaust the ongoing political process. The CRM called upon the Alignment to set up an alternative government capable of furthering the peace process. On his part, following the rejection, Peres tried unsuccessfully to persuade Agudat Israel--a non-Zionist religious party--to join the Alignment in a narrow-based coalition. Ibid, 6 October, 1989.

²⁸ Heller, "The Middle East", p. 157.

between Israel and a Palestinian delegation in Cairo, to discuss elections in the territories, in accordance with the Israeli government initiative.

As soon as the proposal reached Jerusalem, it was opposed by the constraints ministers, who were supported by the Eretz Israel Front--about thirty right-wing MKs, including twenty from Likud. Thus, without discussing the proposal in the Cabinet, Shamir rebuffed it on the grounds that the PLO might become indirectly involved in the political process, and that Baker's formula fell short of a public statement he made in a press conference on October 2. According to that statement, Israel, Egypt, and the US would determine the makeup of the Palestinian delegation.²⁹ Another one of Shamir's concern was the possibility that the dialogue would deviate to topics other than elections in the territories.³⁰

When the Bush Administration offered to conclude a binding bi-lateral understanding with Israel--similar to the 1975 memorandum of understanding--which would include American

²⁹The constraint ministers convened an informal meeting of Likud's Central Committee where they complained that decisions vital to the very existence of Israel were being made in an amateur fashion in closed rooms, by a handful of people (Shamir and Arens). Sharon was also displeased with Shamir's assurance that he'll never talk to the PLO. He demanded the termination of discussions with Egypt, who never hidden its support of the PLO. FBIS/DR, 12 October, 1989.

³⁰Labor argued that since Baker's five-point plan was not debated by the government, its rejection by Shamir was invalid. Ibid, 11 and 20 October, 1989.

guarantees concerning Shamir's two main objections to the proposal, Shamir rejected the American offer, demanding instead that the guarantees be included in the five-point plan itself rather than a separate addendum to the document.

Meanwhile, the Israeli press reported that in order to iron out differences with President Bush, and to ensure the survival of the NUG, some senior figures in the Prime Minister Office and in the Likud high echelon were leaning toward consenting to the inclusion of two deportees in the Palestinian delegation to the Cairo talks, while others assented to the inclusion of East Jerusalem Arabs in the delegation. Indeed, sources close to the Prime Minister assessed that the Cairo meeting would take place during the first half of 1990.³¹

On December 6, the Administration notified Israel that Egypt had replied positively on the five-points.³² But as was evident from a series of interviews Shamir gave to the Israeli press, he refused to explicitly welcome the Egyptian reply as a constructive step forward. He and other Likud ministers downplayed Cairo's response, distrusting that the Egyptians had indeed accepted Israel's refusal to talk to the PLO or to deal

³¹ Ibid, 1-6 December, 1989.

³² In an interview for the Israeli Television, Defense Minister Rabin acknowledged that the Egyptian positive reply removed all obstacles to the tri-partite meeting in Cairo, where the foreign ministers of the Egypt, Israel, and the U.S., were to decide on the formation of the Palestinian delegation and on the agenda of the dialogue. In fact, Rabin termed the Egyptian response as "a great positive step forward", as did Peres. Ibid, 7 December, 1989.

with the implementation of Shamir's plan only. Needless to say, the constraints minister argued that in effect, through Egypt, Israel would be negotiating with the PLO.³³

Meanwhile another coalition crisis erupted in Israel: on December 31, Shamir dismissed from the Cabinet the Alignment's Science and Technology Minister, Ezer Weizman. The ground for the dismissal was Weizman's contacts with PLO leaders. In June, in a meeting that was arranged by Nabil al-Arabi--President Mubarak's legal adviser--Weizman did meet Nabi Ramlawi--the head of the PLO office in Geneva. Reportedly, Weizman advised the PLO to refrain from rejecting the election plan. The moderate approach the PLO had adopted vis-a-vis the election plan had frustrated Shamir, who was hoping that the PLO would reject the Baker plan, causing the termination of the US-PLO dialogue. Ultimately, in order to save the NUG Shamir agreed to remove Weizman from the Inner Cabinet only.³⁴

On January 25, 1990, the Inner Cabinet did agree to include two Palestinian deportees in the Palestinian delegation. In order to make it easier for Shamir and other Likud ministers to agree to such a move, the Inner Cabinet resolved that a group of ten deportees be allowed to return to their homes. But Shamir conditioned his acceptance of the idea on the exclusion of

³³ Ibid, 7-11 December, 1989.

³⁴ In reaction to this compromise Tehiya and Moledet submitted to the Knesset a no-confidence vote. The motion was defeated by the Knesset on January 8.

residents from East Jerusalem in the Palestinian delegation.³⁵

In the meantime, the struggle within Likud between the Shamir-Arens camp and the constraints ministers, Sharon in particular, intensified, as the three constraints ministers demanded that the Likud Central Committee be convened again, this time in order to review Shamir's response to Baker's proposals.³⁶

But at the opening of the convention--in itself an explosive showdown between Shamir and Sharon--Sharon submitted his resignation from the Cabinet, in order to "pursue the struggle for the attainment of the national goal whose attainment is in jeopardy as a result of the current government policy".³⁷

³⁵In mid-December Shamir's office denied reports that the forum of four had agreed on a formula according to which Palestinian deportee could be included in the delegation. According to the formula Israel would accept in the Palestinian delegation any Palestinian whose name appeared on the population register of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza. That way if the deportee were to return to the territories, they would be able to join the delegation.

³⁶While Sharon was engaged in an anti-government crusade, on February 2, Shamir and Levi issued a joint communique in which they stressed unity. But Levi warned that the constraint camp within the government did not vanish, and that it stood by its principles. Noticeably, each member of the Central Committee received two separate invitations to the gathering, one from Shamir, the other from the constraint ministers. As the convention (set for February 12) neared, Shamir threatened that unless supported by the Central Committee, he would resign as head of Likud, and subsequently, as Prime Minister. A public opinion poll conducted by the Dahaf Institute on 1/31-2/1, found that 70% of the public would have given Shamir their vote of confidence if participated in the convention. FBIS/DR, 1-13 February, 1990.

³⁷In an interview for the Israeli IDF radio station, Sharon blamed his resignation on the government's ineffectual stand on the terrorism and East Jerusalem. Sharon's resignation prompted the announcement of five Likud MKs, under the leadership of

As a member Sharon was free to raise in the Knesset any issue, to demand a government reply, or to insist that a specific debate continue in the Knesset plenum or in a Knesset committee.

Thus, much like his acquiescence to the constraints ministers during the Likud Central Committee convention in July 1989, this time Shamir pledged not to implement the election plan as long as acts of violence against Israelis continued; not to permit any loopholes through which the PLO would be able to participate in the political process through the back door; not to accept any move that would present any doubt regarding the status of Jerusalem; to reject any proposition regarding the right of return or to deal with the Arab diaspora; and to strengthen Jewish settlements throughout Judea, Samaria, Gaza, and the Golan Heights, according to the Likud platform.³⁸

While Shamir's pledges alleviated some of the pressure that had been built in Likud, he was now faced with the likely break-up of the coalition, a probability he could avoid by revoking his commitments to the Likud Central Committee.³⁹ To avoid such a

Modai, on the formation of a new party--Hamiflaga Lekidum Hara'aion Haztioni (the Party for the Advancement of the Zionist Idea.

³⁸For the full text of Shamir's address before the Likud Central Committee, see FBIS/DR, 12 February 1990.

³⁹Anticipating Shamir's capitulation to the constraints ministers during the upcoming Likud Central Committee convention, at the beginning of February, Peres and Rabin agreed to leave the NUG should the peace process be blocked. In fact, Peres had begun discussions with the religious parties on the possibility of forming a narrow-based government under his

repeal Levi and his supporters within the party called for the complete rejection of the Baker plan. In fact, Levy threatened to call for another meeting of the Likud's Central Committee if any of Baker's proposals were accepted.⁴⁰

Some in the Administration felt that Shamir could have defused the constraints camp by compensating Levi with a position Levi had wanted. Indeed, as a Foreign Minister Levi has become a different player. But Shamir did not play that card for a long time, almost as if he encouraged the constraint ministers to hold him back.⁴¹

However, given Shamir's suspicious nature, he could not have left the control of foreign policy matters in Levi's hands in a government which was not controlled by the Likud, and whose Defense Minister was a member of the Alignment. Later Shamir did designate Levi to that post because the government was a Likud government.⁴²

At any rate, unable to stall a reply to Baker's proposals for much longer, on March 6, the Likud ministers agreed to participate in the Cairo meeting on condition that the Alignment agree (1) to secure Israel's sovereignty over united Jerusalem,

leadership.

⁴⁰For Levi's complete interview with the IDF radio station on March 4, 1990, see FBIS/DR, 5 March, 1990.

⁴¹This inference is partly based on a private conversation with Ambassador Lewis, Washington D.C., April 26, 1991

⁴²This conclusion is based on information obtained in a private conversation, Jerusalem, June 28, 1991.

including an understanding that East Jerusalem Arabs will not participate in the election process either by voting or by being elected; (2) to prevent the PLO from taking control of the political process.⁴³

In reply, the Alignment adopted its own resolutions, according to which (1) Israel would continue the peace process according to its initiative of May 14, 1989; (2) the status of Jerusalem as the sovereign and indivisible capital of Israel was not an issue for discussion; (3) Israel would not negotiate with the PLO; (4) the Prime Minister should convene the Inner Cabinet on March 7 1990, to discuss and to decide to deliver a positive response to Secretary Baker; (5) Labor would not permit Likud to condition the acceptance of this resolution on Labor's acceptance of any deviation from the government peace initiative of May 1989.⁴⁴

When the Inner Cabinet convened on March 7, it tried, but failed to draft a compromise formula which could appeal to both parties. The next day--after a meeting he had held with other Likud members, including Sharon, Levi, and other MKs associated with the constraints ministers--Shamir declared that his answers to Secretary Baker would have to await the government's decision

⁴³ But Sharon, still a Likud MK, challenged these resolutions, on the ground that they did not explicitly declare that the Palestinian delegation to Cairo would not include deportee or East Jerusalem Palestinians who had second residences. He accused Likud of paving the way for undermining Israel's sovereignty over Jerusalem and for recognition of the PLO. FBIS/DR, 6 March, 1990.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 7 March, 1990.

on the issues of Jerusalem and the PLO. Meanwhile thousands of right-wing demonstrators, led by MKs from Tehiya, Moledet, and Tzomet, and leaders of the settlement movement demanded that Israel abide by its commitment not to talk to the PLO, and that Shamir reject Baker's plan. In fact, Moledet submitted a motion of no-confidence in the government because of what it viewed as the government's acquiescence to the Baker's demands.

March 11 was the final date, according to the Alignment's ultimatum, for the government to decide on its response to Baker. Attempting to arrive at a compromise during the Inner Cabinet debate, Rabin suggested that the government submit a positive answer to Baker and only afterward coordinate its position. He also suggested that if during the Cairo talks the issue of voting by East Jerusalem residents was raised--the only remaining issue on which the two parties disagreed⁴⁵--a Knesset plenum should be the body to decide the issue.

But Shamir refused to administer a vote on Rabin's proposal.⁴⁶ Thus, in a bid to avert an unavoidable Cabinet

⁴⁵Rabin held that there was no argument between the parties regarding the indivisibility of Jerusalem under Israel's sovereignty, adding that the autonomous Palestinian authority that would be established after the elections would have no jurisdiction over Jerusalem. On the question on the participation of the PLO in the talks, Rabin stressed that inclusion of the principle of barring negotiations with the PLO in the government's basic guidelines and in the peace initiative, fulfilled the necessary guarantees.

⁴⁶While Likud refrained from discussing Rabin's proposal, the NRP felt that the proposal covered a trap, and demanded that the Knesset should decide on the vote of East Jerusalem before the Cairo talks. Tehiya warned that the acceptance of Baker's

crisis, Zvulun Hammer, the Religious Affairs Minister of the NRP, drafted a plan which could easily be accepted by both parties. According to the plan, in the talks with the Palestinians (1) Jerusalem was not negotiable and was not part of autonomy; (2) Israel would not negotiate with the Arab delegation if it announced that it was a delegation on behalf of the PLO; (3) Jerusalem would not be part of the election process, but if any of its Arabs inhabitants wanted to vote in another city, the issue would be submitted to the Knesset for a decision before the Israeli delegation departed for Cairo; (4) in response to Secretary Baker's proposals, the Inner Cabinet will agree on the composition of the Palestinian delegation.⁴⁷

But Shamir did not accept Hammer's proposal. In fact, anticipating that the government could be toppled in the March 15 Knesset discussions concerning seven no-confidence motions which were submitted to the Knesset (by five left-wing and two right-wing parties) in reaction to the government's indecision, Shamir fired Shimon Peres. By dismissing Peres Shamir, who was unsure about the Alignment's intentions whether or not to remain in the government, made certain that the Alignment could not be part of a care-taker government in case the no-confidence votes passed. As expected, the rest of the Alignment ministers collectively resigned from the government.

proposals would constitute a giant step toward the creation of a Palestinian state. FBIS/DR, 12 March, 1990.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

Justifying his step, Shamir argued that with the Alignment's positions on the Baker proposals, particularly its stand on Jerusalem, the Likud was the only buffer between Israel and a Palestinian state. He further explained: "I see no chance for a realistic and reasonable compromise between the Likud and the Alignment. That is why ... I have no choice but to take steps in the government against the Alignment."⁴⁸

While Tehiya, Tzomet, the NRP, and the new Party for the Advancement of the Zionist Idea⁴⁹ immediately announced their support for a Likud-led narrow-based government, Degel Hatorah and SHAS offered a compromise which allowed the Alignment to return to the Cabinet, the no-confidence motions be canceled, and Baker be given an affirmative answer along with a variety of injunctions concerning Jerusalem. More precisely, the SHAS proposal recommended that the entire issue of Jerusalem not be negotiated at all; that a positive response be given to Secretary Baker; and that the dismissal of Peres along with the resignation of the Alignment ministers be revoked.⁵⁰

Within Likud, the more moderate ministers--Olmert and

⁴⁸ Ibid, 13 March, 1990. The announcement to which Shamir was referring was a decision made by the Alignment's Central Committee following the Inner Cabinet's session on March 11, according to which the Labor Party faction in the Knesset together with the Labor Party Bureau were authorized to determine the necessary steps the party would take in the Knesset no-confidence debate.

⁴⁹ On March 15, the new faction which was headed by Modai was accorded the status of an independent faction, but the five MKs who formed the faction still voted with Likud.

⁵⁰ FBIS/DR, 16 March, 1990.

Meridor--along with Arens, supported the SHAS proposal, against the opposition of Levi, Modai, and Sharon. On March 15, Shamir and Peres met with SHAS' spiritual leader, Rabbi Ovadia Yosseff, who in a last bid to save the government suggested that all the ministers resume their duties; and that a week-long interim period be assigned, after which Baker will be given a positive answer. After Shamir refused to accept this proposal, the Alignment proceeded with the no-confidence motion, resulting in the government's fall. The roll call in the Knesset vote was 60 for and 55 against.⁵¹

⁵¹The motion passed only because five out of the six SHAS members abstained from the vote. Yitzhak Peretz, the Immigrant Absorption Minister and SHAS political leader, was the only SHAS member to vote in support of the government.

XII. CONCLUSION.

This dissertation has shown that while third parties can be instrumental in helping adversary parties negotiating a compromising solution, they cannot choose for the adversaries the timing for negotiations. Indeed it is the warring parties themselves that have to determine whether or not the time for negotiations is ripe.

It is widely accepted that ripeness depends on: (1) the conclusion of the combatants themselves that the continuation of a status quo worsens their situation; and (2) the desire of the parties to make an agreement at the same time. But as shown here, ripeness equally depends on (3) the domestic support for a negotiated solution.

For example, after the 1973 war, Egypt was too weak economically and politically to attempt another military solution without an assured military victory; while for Israel it had become too difficult to keep holding on to the West Bank and Sinai.

More specifically, when Egypt and Israel finally decided to negotiate peace in 1977-78, President Sadat wanted to solve Egypt's economic problems; to wage war with Israel he needed to modernize his military and his Airforce, yet he remained skeptical about the result of another potential war with Israel; he wanted to regain the Sinai; he has no faith in the Geneva Conference, and he feared that the USSR might reenter Egypt through the back door.

Prime Minister Begin remembered the heavy cost of the 1973 war, and the power demonstrated by the Arab oil-weapon; he needed to appear flexible before the Americans--government and public alike--in view of Israel's increased dependence on the US; he wanted to divide the Arab coalition against Israel, and to isolate Israel's strongest enemy from that coalition; and he wanted to secure the West Bank and Gaza.

Most importantly, when both leaders decided to negotiate peace with one another, they enjoyed sufficient power in their own political systems to make the necessary concessions and to sustain their body politics with them.

But in the period that followed the Camp David agreement, in Israel, only the Alignment and its followers promoted the American peace initiatives. But the Alignment did not enjoy the internal support it needed, and was not strong enough politically to push its position. Ultimately, the role of powerful groups such as Gush Emunim and the Israeli right-wing parties was more important than the fact that Israel was almost evenly divided on the peace process between Likud and Labor and their supporters.

Had the United States scrutinized the internal situation in Israel before making suggestions, it would have learned that there was no leadership in Israel capable of taking advantage of the American initiatives. Even Begin, who was too preoccupied with his Lebanon adventure, was in no mood to confront the questions which the Reagan initiative presented him. Indeed, not

enough attention is given to the domestic landscape, both in theory and practice.

The American peace initiatives during the years 1982-1990, were introduced under a favorable regional or international environment. For example, the Reagan Plan was introduced at the time when the PLO was badly weakened, and did not have the power to jeopardize the peace process. It was also designed to enable Israel to end its unfortunate venture in Lebanon.

The Shultz plan was initiated after the Arabs had begun to pay more attention to the Iran-Iraq war than to their conflict with Israel, and after the outbreak of the intifada.¹ Moreover, the plan was initiated after the Administration had received the encouragement of local leaders, including leaders in Israel. It also had the enthusiastic support of the Europeans--enough to improve Israel's relations with the European Community instantly, had Israel agreed to endorse the plan.

Baker's election plan, which was based on the Israeli peace initiative of May 14, 1989, was introduced after the 19th PNC session, in which the PLO had demonstrated relative unity on the two-state solution; and after the beginning of an American-PLO dialogue, following Arafat's recognition of Israel's right to

¹The Arabs had evidently deviated from their hard line position against Israel when they refrained from discussing Israel and Zionism during the Arab League Summit in Amman, in November 1987, and concentrated instead on the need to reach a unified Arab position against Iran, which was at war with Iraq. It is widely believed that this was an important factor in the outbreak of the intifada, as the Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza concluded that no Arab state will go to war for their cause.

exist and his denunciation of terrorism. It also received the tacit endorsement of the PLO, and help from the Egyptian government.

It is also noteworthy that these initiatives were based on the Camp David agreements, which comprise the only formal document signed by Israeli, Arab, and American heads of state; and ratified by the Israeli, Egyptian, and American legislatures. It is also the only document ever to be signed by Israel and an Arab state preparing the ground for future peace processes. Had any of these initiatives been realized, they would have only been the start of a long and laborious process. Such a beginning could constitute a pre-negotiation process, or the first step in what Joseph V. Montville called the rehumanization of the adversary relationship between the parties in ethnic conflicts.²

Why then has none of these initiatives been accepted by Israel, especially since the Israeli public is almost evenly divided on the peace process? Why has none of these initiatives been accepted by Israel, since in addition to the favorable regional or international conditions, these initiatives included enough workable elements which Israel could have accepted?

As shown in this dissertation, in the end, it was the Israeli right, led by Prime Ministers Begin and Shamir, that gained the upper hand in the debate over the American peace initiatives. The refusal of right-wing groups to endorse these

²Joseph V. Montville, "Psychological Considerations in the Peace Process", in Lukacs and Battah (eds.), The Arab Israeli Conflict, pp. 367-68.

initiatives was the result of domestic political changes that have occurred in Israel with the Likud rise to power in 1977--changes that are traceable to the period that immediately followed the 1967 Six-Day War. These changes included the strengthening of the Israeli right, which in turn helped sustain a strong domestic demand to secure Israel's control over the occupied territories. This helped the Likud to undermine any chance the Americans might have had in mediation.

More precisely, in 1977, after three decades in opposition, Likud became the strongest party in Israel. By the time of Prime Minister Begin's resignation in 1983, he had managed to delegitimize the concept of territorial compromise, particularly concerning the West Bank and Gaza. In fact, Begin's outright rejection of the Reagan plan, and the melodramatic fashion with which he had done so, set the tone for Israel's reaction to subsequent American peace initiatives.

Begin's successor--Yitzhak Shamir--was just as eager as his predecessor to continue the occupation of the disputed territories. But under American pressure, and under the pressure from the Labor Alignment during the Likud-Alignment partnership in the NUG, Shamir apparently agreed to negotiate some limited form of Palestinian autonomy. However, fearing that Palestinian self-rule would jeopardize Israel's grip over the territories, the Israeli right effectively restrained Shamir and his Alignment colleagues from accepting the American peace initiatives.

Begin's ability to safeguard the status quo politics is

traceable to the rise of a right-wing ideology that overtook Israel as a result of the Six-Day War, a shift that together with other factors facilitated the rise of Likud to power. Once in power the Likud government consciously and systematically strengthened and secured its right-wing policies through tactics that included de jure, but mostly de facto annexation of territory, the latter involving massive settlement activities in the West Bank and Gaza; and the cultivation of a special relationship with Gush Emunim--the vanguard of the settlement movement.

The sound support that Gush Emunim has secured from ultra-right and right-wing parties, such as Tehiya, the NRP, and others, created in turn a forceful and influential right-wing axis, capable of obstructing any meaningful progress in the peace process.

Certainly, extremism has become tolerable by a sizable segment of the Israeli public so as to permit the election of Rabbi Meir Kahane of the Kach Party to the Knesset, and "Kahanism" to become a considerable threat to the democratic nature of Israel.³ That threat had become serious enough for the Knesset to oust Kahane as its member and to promulgate anti-racist laws.

Meanwhile, within Likud, hawkish members such as Ariel

³ "Kahanism" views the Arab population as a malignancy with which Israel could not survive. It calls for a total separation of Arabs and Jews through the expulsion of all Arabs from all of Eretz Israel. For the philosophy behind Kahanism see Rabbi Meir Kahane, The Must Go (Miami Beach: Copy Service, 1987).

Sharon and David Levi have become powerful enough to challenge Shamir's leadership and to block any policies which they deemed too moderate. In fact, after the departure of Begin from politics in 1983, Shamir had to prove himself through adamant policies as the indisputable leader of his party, worthy to step in Begin's shoes.

Ultimately, when Shamir himself had little choice but to moderate his positions on the international conference idea, or over the question of Palestinian autonomy, he was unable to do so because moderation was not acceptable to the Israeli far right.

As shown here, the first NUG nearly collapsed over the international conference idea--it survived only because Shimon Peres, who did not have the votes to form a new government, chose to drop the conference idea and remain in the government. But the second NUG did not survive the debate over Palestinian elections in the territories, when Peres and his colleagues decided that they could no longer be partners with Likud in the same government.

Surely, the collapse of the NUG in itself was a relatively small price for Shamir to pay. A costlier risk was a strong resistance by the right, which had become a formidable force in the Israeli political scene. In fact, it has not been ruled out that the Jewish settlers and their supporters might threaten civil war, or even resist militarily, if the government decides

to agree to withdraw from even parts of Judea and Samaria.⁴

One can of course argue that the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty and the return of the Sinai to Egypt epitomize the fact that the ideological shift to the right did not restrain Israel from making territorial compromises. But such an argument is disputable on a number of grounds.

First, it was to Begin's benefit to give up the Sinai--in itself a territory of moderate economic significance for which Israel had been generously compensated by the United States--in order to secure the West Bank and Gaza through the autonomy clause of the Camp David agreements.

Second, for most Israelis the Sinai had never acquired the same religious and ideological value as did the West Bank and Gaza. Indeed, the Sinai was never considered part of Eretz Israel by most right-wingers. In addition, the Sinai contained very few Jewish settlements.

Third, regardless, the return of the Sinai to Egypt provoked strong opposition from religious and hawkish Knesset and cabinet members, who had vowed never again to allow the dismantling of Jewish settlements in Eretz Israel.

Fourth, peace with Egypt never challenged the integrity of the Zionist state. Indeed, as a disciple of Ze'ev Jabotinsky--the father of the Revisionist movement--Begin, who for over thirty

⁴Samuel Lewis, "Israeli Political Reality and the Search for Middle East Peace", SAIS Review (Winter/Spring 1987, Vol. 7, no.1), pp. 67-80, Sprinzak, The Ascendancy of Israel's Radical Right, p. 312.

years was the leader of the Israeli opposition, was widely trusted as a guardian of hard-line Zionism.

Fifth, by concluding peace with Egypt and returning the Sinai, Israel had neutralized her strongest enemy.

Surely without any further territorial compromise by Israelis, no American attempt to mediate an Arab-Israeli peace can be successful. But as we have seen, the only concept which the Likud has been willing to embrace, however, reluctantly, is a limited autonomy for the Palestinians. This was confirmed during and in the aftermath of the October 1991 Madrid conference.

And while the Likud government continues to abide by the notion that any discussions on the permanent status of the territories should begin only after the end of a three-year period of Palestinian autonomy, considering the aggressive manner with which Israel continues to build settlements in the territories, it is safe to speculate that by the time such discussions could begin, the permanent status of the West Bank and Gaza would be determined by established facts. Tactically, the settlement movement, together with Likud, is relying on the time factor to complete the process of de-facto annexation of the rest of the West Bank and Gaza.⁵

Indeed, Israel controls today more territory in the West Bank and Gaza than thirteen years ago, when it signed the Camp David agreements, in spite of Begin's pledge at the time to

⁵This last conclusion is based partly on information gathered during a private conversation with MK Ezer Weizman, Caesaria, July 5, 1991.

withdraw forces from these areas, including civilians.

The staging of the Madrid conference highlights the favorable regional and international conditions that existed prior to the conference, conditions which were even more favorable than those that existed prior to the preceding American plans.

They included: President Bush's popularity as a result of his victory in the Gulf War; the cessation of Soviet influence in the Middle East as a result of the collapse of the Soviet state, and Moscow's willingness to collaborate with the US in the region; the need of Syria's President Hafez al-Assad to cooperate with the West; the deterioration of the PLO's status in the Arab World as a result of its support for Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War, and the shifting of the balance of power from Tunis to the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza; the trauma in Israel caused by the Iraqi scuds attacks during that war, and Israel's need for a loan guarantee to help settle the influx of Soviet immigrant; and the great sense of expectation in the Arab world that Washington would influence the peace process. These conditions perhaps provide the most favorable milieu since the 1973 October war. They undoubtedly helped Secretary Baker to convene the Madrid conference.⁶

⁶Noticeably, the idea behind the conference is quite similar to Shultz's concept of a one-time meeting under the auspices of the US and the USSR. Still, all the essential conditions that were imposed on Secretary Baker by Likud in 1989/90, were accepted by Secretary Baker for the October 1991 peace conference.

Still, at the time of this writing there are no indications that Israel will be willing to discuss any territorial compromise any time soon. This confirms the hypothesis presented here, that no matter how favorable the international constellation might be for a successful third party mediation, the domestic landscape must be as favorable.

In addition to this general conclusion, using this case study as an example, a number of other, perhaps more specific conclusions can be made, concerning the effectiveness of third party peace initiatives.

First, the attainment of peace is rarely an exclusive goal. Usually, peace initiatives in regional conflicts are a result of (a) the self-interest of the third party in a particular region; and (b) the concerns over the direct consequences to the third party as a result of the continuation of conflict in that region. Hence, third party initiatives can often be approached by the direct parties with a great deal of cynicism, enough to undermine their validity.

Therefore, while self-interest should not prevent the third party from being an honest broker when presenting a new peace initiative, the third party must not appear immersed with its own interests, to the point of neglecting the deep concerns of the direct parties.

For example, the Reagan plan reflected President Reagan's own preoccupation with the Soviet influence in the Middle East, without giving enough thought to Prime Minister Begin's

preoccupation with Israel's security.

As for the introduction of the idea for an international conference, the Administration initially failed to take into account Likud's fear that such a forum could become a stage from which the Arabs could manipulate a unified anti-Israeli position. By the time the idea allowed for an opening ceremony for direct bi-lateral talks, the position of Shamir's opponents has become too strong to permit it.

Lastly, when Baker refused to give Shamir the guarantees he had wanted--because of the Administration's desire to safeguard its broader diplomatic capacity with the Arabs--the United States was not viewed in Israel as an honest broker. That helped the Likud to justify its refusal to accept the peace initiative.

Second, without the existence of a pre-negotiation period, a third party ought not initiate, let alone publicize, any new peace plans. Indeed, one of the mistakes the Americans have made was to publicize their initiatives before they had reached an understanding with the protagonists as to what kind of agreement they will accept. This was particularly true for the Reagan plan, which was instantly rejected by Begin as a violation of Camp David--it was also looked at very critically by a number of the Arab states as only another version of Camp David.

As David Kimche has noted, "there are no guarantees for successful negotiations, even with the most thorough pre-negotiations, but... a comprehensive delineation of topics to be discussed and goals to be reached can go a long way toward

preventing a breakdown of talks".⁷

In this regard, the question of what would the parties talk about at the negotiating table may be more important than the technique of getting the parties together. The collapse of negotiations after they had begun, could become a greater danger than not talking at all.

Still, the need to pre-determine the agenda is not without problems. For, when introducing a new peace initiative, the third party must avoid sensitive issues, allowing preliminary discussions instead of permitting the parties to reject the initiative outright. For example, one of the major mistakes the United States had made when it initiated the Reagan and the Baker plans was raising the topic of East Jerusalem--by far one of the most sensitive issue for almost all Israelis, as very few, if any, would agree to the repartition of Jerusalem.

The gap between the need for pre-negotiations on one hand, and vagueness on the other, should be filled by skillful diplomacy.

Does all this mean that third parties should refrain from initiating new peace plans in deep rooted conflicts? The answer is yes, at least until the domestic landscapes in the disputing parties is ripe for serious negotiations.

⁷David Kimche, "The Importance of Prenegotiation: Observations of a Former Diplomat", The Jerusalem Journal of International Relations (Vol. 13, No. 4, December 1991, pp. 65-70).

Regarding the domestic landscape in the Arab side, since the announcement of Reagan plan King Hussein and the PLO Chairman Yassir Arafat did try to formulate a joint approach to peace. But until the Madrid conference Arafat could not make good on his intention to give King Hussein a mandate to negotiate for the Palestinians. The reason for that was Arafat's fear that any sign of diplomatic concessions on peace with Israel might cause the disintegration of the PLO, because of the stance of hard-line factions within the organization.

This position, however, was changed because of the intifada, which could not be maintained indefinitely without some encouraging developments for the Palestinians. Indeed, since the Madrid conference it is West Bank Palestinians, more than the PLO, who have determined the course of the peace process.

As for King Hussein, the role Washington assigned to him throughout the peace process was to negotiate not only on behalf of Jordan, but also on behalf of the Palestinians. But since 1974--the year the Arab League designated the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people--coupled with Jordan's military and political weakness, King Hussein had no mandate to negotiate for the Palestinians without the approval of the PLO and the Arab League.

Another Arab state that is an interested party in the peace process is Syria. But until the Madrid conference Syria had no reason to enter the peace process. First, Syria has been able to live without the Golan Heights--hardly an inhabitable region--

while assuming the role of an all-Arab crusader. In return, the Syrian regime could appeal to Syrian patriotism, Arab nationalism, and Islamic sentiments among both the civilian population and the military--all this in order to unite the Syrian population, including the military, around the regime. Moreover, the holy war against Israel in which Syria has been engaged has helped the Alawite Syrian regime to neutralize the growing opposition of the Sunni majority.⁸ But the end of the Cold War, combined with the Syrian need for economic aid from the West, and the victory of the American-led coalition in the Gulf War, changed Assad's position about entering the peace process.

What useful role can a third party play? to use the words of a key Israeli politician who is closely connected to the peace process,

perhaps it is best for third parties to redefine their goals, so even if their initiatives do not bring negotiations, they may still avert negative developments. If this is how the third party defines its interests, it can continue to occupy itself with peace initiatives, knowing that the chances of success are slight. This midway goal then becomes worthwhile to pursue, even if the primary goal of peace cannot be achieved.⁹

⁸ Moshe Maoz, Modern Syria (Hebrew; Tel Aviv: Reshafim, 1972), pp. 93-95.

⁹ Private conversation with Minister Olmert, Jerusalem, June 28, 1991.

PART V: APPENDIXES.

APPENDIX A

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338.

UN Resolution 242, November 22, 1967.

The Security Council

Expressing its continuing concern with the grave situation in the Middle East,

Emphasizing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every state in the area can live in security,

Emphasizing further that all Member States in their acceptance of the Charter of the United Nations have undertaken a commitment to act in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter.

I. Affirms that the fulfillment of Charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which should include the application of both the following principles:

(i) Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;

(ii) Termination of all claims or stages of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force,

2. Affirms further the necessity:

(a) For guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area;

(b) For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem;

(c) For guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarized zones;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to designate a Special Representative to proceed to the Middle East to establish and maintain contacts with the States concerned in order to promote agreement and assist efforts to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement in accordance with the provisions and principles of this resolution;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council on the progress of the efforts of the Special Representative as soon as possible.

UN Resolution 338, October 22, 1973.

The Security Council

1. Calls upon all parties to the present fighting to cease all firing and terminate all military activity immediately, no later than 12 hours after the moment of the adoption of this decision, in the positions they now occupy;

2. Call upon the parties concerned to start immediately after the cease-fire the implementation of Security Council Resolution 242 (1967) in all its parts;

3. Decides that, immediately and concurrently with the

cease-fire, negotiations shall start between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East.

Source: Yehuda Lukacs (ed.), Documents on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 1967-1983, pp. 1-2.

APPENDIX B

PRIME MINISTER BEGIN'S AUTONOMY PLAN, DECEMBER 28, 1977.

1. The Administration of the Military Government in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be abolished.
2. In Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district, administrative autonomy of the residents, by and for them, will be established,
3. The residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will elect an Administrative Council composed of 11 members. The Administrative Council will operate in accordance with the principles laid down in this paper.
4. Any resident, 18 years old and above, without distinction of citizenship, or if stateless, will be entitled to vote in the elections to the Administrative Council.
5. Any resident whose name is included in the list of candidates for the Administrative Council and who, on the day the list is submitted, is 25 years old or above, will be entitled to be elected to the Council.
6. The Administrative Council will be elected by general, direct, personal, equal and secret ballot.
7. The period of office of the Administrative Council will be four years from the day of its election.
8. The Administrative Council will sit in Bethlehem.
9. All the administrative affairs relating to the Arab residents of the areas of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be under the direction and within the competence of the Administrative Council.

10. The Administrative Council will operate the following Departments: education; religious affairs; finance; transportation; construction and housing; industry; commerce and tourism; agriculture; health, labor and social welfare; rehabilitation and refugees; and the administration of justice and supervision of local police forces; and promulgate regulations relating to the operation of these Departments.

11. Security and public order in the areas of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be the responsibility of the Israeli authorities.

12. The Administrative Council will elect its own chairman.

13. The first session of the Administrative Council will be convened 30 days after the publication of the election results.

14. Residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district, without distinction of citizenship, or if stateless, will be granted free choice (option) of either Israeli or Jordanian citizenship.

15. A resident of the areas of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district who requests Israeli citizenship will be granted such citizenship in accordance with the citizenship law of the state.

16. Residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district who, in accordance with the right of free option, choose Israeli citizenship, will be entitled to vote for, and be elected to, the Knesset in accordance with the election law.

17. Residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district who are citizens of Jordan or who, in accordance with the right of

free option will become citizens of Jordan, will elect and be eligible for election to the Parliament of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in accordance with the election law of that country.

18. Questions arising from the vote to the Jordanian Parliament by residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be clarified in negotiations between Israel and Jordan.

19. A committee will be established of representatives of Israel, Jordan and the Administrative Council to examine existing legislation in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district, and to determine which legislation will continue in force, which will be abolished, and what will be the competence of the Administrative Council to promulgate regulations. The rulings of the committee will be adopted by unanimous decision.

20. Residents of Israel will be entitled to acquire land and settle in the areas of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district. Arabs, residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district who, in accordance with the free option granted them, will become Israeli citizens, will be entitled to acquire land and settle in Israel.

21. A committee will be established of representatives of Israel, Jordan and the Administrative Council to determine norms of immigration to the areas of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district. The committee will determine the norms whereby Arab refugees residing outside Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be permitted to immigrate to these areas in reasonable numbers. The rulings of the committee will be adopted by unanimous decision.

22. Residents of Israel and residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be assured freedom of movement and freedom of economic activity in Israel, Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district.

23. The Administrative Council will appoint one of its members to represent the Council before the Government of Israel for deliberation on matters of common interest, and one of its members to represent the Council before the Government of Jordan for deliberation of matters of common interest.

24. Israel stands by its right and its claim of sovereignty to Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district. In the knowledge that other claims exist, it proposes, for the sake of the agreement and the peace, that the question of sovereignty in the areas be left open.

25. With regard to the administration of the holy places of the three religions in Jerusalem, a special proposal will be drawn up and submitted that will include the guarantee of freedom of access to members of all the faiths to the shrines holy to them.

26. These principles will be subject to review after a five-year period.

Source: Yhuda Lukacs (ed.), Documents on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 1967-1983, pp. 61-3.

APPENDIX C

THE CAMP DAVID ACCORDS, SEPTEMBER 17, 1978.

Preamble

Mohammed Anwar el-Sadat, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, and Menachem Begin, Prime Minister of Israel, met with Jimmy Carter, President of the United States of America, at Camp David from September 5 to September 17, 1978, and have agreed on the following framework for peace in the Middle East. They invite other parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict to adhere to it.

The search for peace in the Middle East must be guided by the following:

-- The agreed basis for a peaceful settlement of the conflict between Israel and its neighbors in United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, in all its parts.

-- After four wars during thirty years, despite intensive human efforts, the Middle East, which is the cradle of civilization and the birthplace of three great religions, does not yet enjoy the blessing of peace. The people of the Middle East yearn for peace so that the vast human and natural resources of the region can be turned to the pursuit of peace and so that this area can become a model for coexistence and cooperation among nations.

-- The Historic initiative of President Sadat in visiting Jerusalem and the reception accorded to him by the Parliament, government and People of Israel, and the reciprocal visit of Prime Minister Begin to Ismailia, the peace proposals made by

both leaders, as well as the warm reception of these missions by the people of both countries, have created an unprecedented opportunity for peace which must not be lost if this generation and future generations are to be spared the tragedies of war.

-- The provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the other accepted norms of international law and legitimacy now provide accepted standards for the conduct of relations among states.

-- To achieve a relationship of peace, in the spirit of Article 2 of the United Nations Charter, future negotiations between Israel and any neighbor prepared to negotiate peace and security with it, are necessary for the purpose of carrying out all provisions and principles of Resolutions 242 and 338.

-- Peace requires respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force. Progress toward that goal can accelerate movement toward a new era of reconciliation in the Middle East marked by cooperation in promoting economic development, in maintaining stability, and in assuring security.

-- Security is enhanced by a relationship of peace and by cooperation between nations which enjoy normal relations. In addition, under the terms of peace treaties, the parties can, on the basis of reciprocity, agree to special security arrangements such as demilitarized zones, limited armaments areas, early

warning stations, the presence of international forces, liaison, agreed measures for monitoring, and other arrangements that they agree are useful.

Framework

Taking these factors into account, the parties are determined to reach a just, comprehensive, and durable settlement of the Middle East conflict through the conclusion of peace treaties based on Security Council Resolution 242 and 338, in all their parts. Their purpose is to achieve peace and good neighborly relations. They recognize that, for peace to endure, it must involve all those who have been most deeply affected by the conflict. They therefore agree that this framework as appropriate is intended by them to constitute a basis for peace not only between Egypt and Israel, but also between Israel and each of its other neighbors which is prepared to negotiate peace with Israel on this basis. With that objective in mind, they have agreed to proceed as follows:

A. West Bank and Gaza.

1. Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the representatives of the Palestinian people should participate in negotiations on the resolutions of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects. To achieve that objective, negotiations relating to the West Bank and Gaza should proceed in three stages:

(a) Egypt and Israel agree that, in order to ensure a peaceful and orderly transfer of authority, and taking into

account the security concerns of all the parties, there should be transitional arrangements for the West Bank and Gaza for a period not exceeding five years. In order to provide full autonomy to the inhabitants, under these arrangements the Israeli military government and its civilian administration will be withdrawn as soon as a self-governing authority has been freely elected by the inhabitants of these areas to replace the existing military government. To negotiate the details of a transitional arrangement, the Government of Jordan will be invited to join the negotiations on the basis of this framework. These new arrangements should give due consideration both to the principle of self-government by the inhabitants of these territories and to the legitimate security concerns of the parties involved.

(b) Egypt, Israel, and Jordan will agree to the modalities for establishing the elected self-governing authority in the West Bank and Gaza. The delegations of Egypt and Jordan may include Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza or other Palestinians as mutually agreed. The parties will negotiate an agreement which will define the powers and responsibilities of the self-governing authority to be exercised in the West Bank and Gaza. A withdrawal of Israeli Armed Forces will take place and there will be a redeployment of the remaining Israeli forces from into specified security locations. The agreement will also include arrangements for assuring internal and external security and public order. A strong local police force will be established, which may include Jordanian citizens. In addition, Israeli and Jordanian forces

will participate in joint patrol and in the manning of control posts to assure the security of the borders.

(c) When the self-governing authority (administrative council) in the West Bank and Gaza is established and inaugurated, the transitional period of five years will begin. As soon as possible, but not later than the third year after the beginning of the transitional period, negotiations will take place to determine the final status of the West Bank and Gaza and its relationship with its neighbors, and to conclude a peace treaty between Israel and Jordan by the end of the transitional period. These negotiations will be conducted between Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and the elected representatives of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza. Two separate but related committees will be convened, one committee, consisting of representatives of the four parties which will negotiate and agree on the final status of the West Bank and Gaza, and its relationship with its neighbors, and the second committee, consisting of representatives of Israel and representatives of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza, to negotiate the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan, taking into account the agreement reached on the final status of the West Bank and Gaza. The negotiations shall be based on all the provisions and principles of U.N. Security Council Resolution 242. The negotiations will resolve, among other matters, the location of the boundaries and nature of the security arrangements. The resolution from the negotiations must also recognize the

legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and their just requirements. In this way, the Palestinians will participate in the determination of their own future thoughts:

(1) The negotiations between Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and the representatives of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza.

(2) Submitting their agreement to a vote by the elected representatives of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza.

(3) Providing for the elected representatives of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza and to decide how they shall govern themselves consistent with the provisions of their agreement.

(4) Participating as stated above in the work of the committee negotiating the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan.

2. All necessary measures will be taken and provisions made to assure the security of Israel and its neighbors during the transitional period and beyond. To assist in providing such security, a strong local police force will be constituted by the self-governing authority. It will be composed of inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza. The police will maintain continuing liaison on internal security matters with the designated Israeli, Jordanian, and Egyptian officers.

3. During the transitional period, representatives of Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and the self-governing authority will constitute a continuing committee to decide by agreement on the modalities of admission of persons displaced from the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, together with necessary measures to prevent

disruption and disorder. Other matters of common concern may also be dealt with by this committee.

4. Egypt and Israel will work with each other and with other interested parties to establish agreed procedures for a prompt, just and permanent implementation of the resolution of the refugee problem.

B. Egypt-Israel.

1. Egypt and Israel undertake not to resort to the threats or the use of force to settle disputes. Any disputes shall be settled by peaceful means in accordance with the provisions of Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations.

2. In order to achieve peace between them, the parties agree to negotiate in good faith with a goal of concluding within three months from the signing of this framework a peace treaty between them, while inviting the other parties to the conflict to proceed simultaneously to negotiate and conclude similar peace treaties with a view to achieving a comprehensive peace in the area. The framework for the conclusion of a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel will govern the peace negotiations between them. The parties will agree on the modalities and the timetable for the implementation of their obligation under the treaty.

C. Associated Principles

1. Egypt and Israel state that the principles and provisions described below should apply to peace treaties between Israel and each of its neighbors--Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.

2. Signatories shall establish among themselves relationships normal to states at peace with one another. To this end, they should undertake to abide by all the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. Steps to be taken in this respect include:

- (a) Full recognition;
- (b) Abolishing economic boycotts;
- (c) Guaranteeing that under their jurisdiction the citizens of the other parties shall enjoy protection of the due process of law.

3. Signatories should explore possibilities for economic development in the context of final peace treaties, with the objective of contributing to the atmosphere of peace, cooperation and friendship which is their common goal.

4. Claims Commissions may be established for the mutual settlement of all financial claims.

5. The United States shall be invited to participate in the talks on matters related to the modalities of the implementation of the Agreements and working out the timetable for the carrying out of the obligations of the parties.

6. The United Nations Security Council shall be requested to endorse the peace treaties and ensure that their provisions shall not be violated. The permanent members of the Security Council shall be requested to underwrite the peace treaties and ensure respect for their provisions. They shall also be requested to conform their policies and actions with the undertakings

contained in this framework.

Source: Yehuda Lukacs (ed.), Documents on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 1967-1983, pp. 63-8.

APPENDIX D

THE REAGAN PLAN--U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN MIDEAST PEACE EFFORT, 'A MORAL IMPERATIVE'. PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN, SEPTEMBER 1, 1982.

Today has been a day that should make all of us proud. It marked the end of the successful evacuation of the PLO from Beirut, Lebanon. This peaceful step could never have been taken without the good offices of the United States and, especially, the truly heroic work of a great American diplomat, Philip Habib. Thanks to his efforts, I am happy to announce that the U.S. Marine contingent helping to supervise the evacuation has accomplished its mission.

Our young men should be out of Lebanon within two weeks. They, too, have served the cause of peace with distinction and we can all be very proud of them.

But the situation in Lebanon is only part of the overall problem of the conflict in the Middle East. So, over the past weeks, while events in Beirut dominated the front page, America was engaged in a quiet behind-the-scenes effort to lay the groundwork for a broader peace in the region. For once, there were no premature leaks as U.S. diplomatic missions travelled to mid-East capitals and I met here at home with a wide range of experts to map out an American peace initiative for the long-suffering peoples of the Middle East, Arab and Israeli alike.

It seemed to me that, with the agreement in Lebanon, we had an opportunity for a more far-reaching peace effort in the region - and I was determined to seize that moment. In the word of the Scripture, the time had come to "follow after the things which

make for peace".

Tonight, I want to report to you on the steps we have taken, and the prospects they can open up for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

America has long been committed to bringing peace to this troubled region. For more than a generation, successive U.S. Administrations have endeavored to develop a fair and workable process that could lead to a true and lasting Arab-Israeli peace. Our involvement in the search for mid-East peace is not a matter of preference, it is a moral imperative. The strategic importance of the region to the U.S. is well known.

But our policy is motivated by more than strategic interests. We also have an irreversible commitment to the survival and territorial integrity of friendly states. Nor can we ignore the fact that the well-being of much of the world's economy is tied to stability in the strife-torn Middle East. Finally, our traditional humanitarian concerns dictate a continuing effort to peacefully resolve conflicts.

When our Administration assumed office in January 1981, I decided that the general framework for our Middle East policy should follow the broad guidelines laid down by my predecessors.

There were two basic issues we had to address. First, there was the strategic threat to the region posed by the Soviet Union and its surrogates, best demonstrated by the brutal war in Afghanistan; and, second, the peace process between Israel and its Arab neighbors. With regard to the Soviet threat, we have

strengthened our efforts to develop with our friends and allies a joint policy to deter the Soviets and their surrogates from further expansion in the region, and, if necessary, to defend against it. With respect to the Arab-Israeli conflict, we have embraced the Camp David framework as the only way to proceed. We have also recognized, however, that solving the Arab-Israeli conflict, in and of itself, cannot assure peace throughout a region as vast and troubled as the Middle East.

Our first objective under the Camp David process was to ensure the successful return of the Sinai to Egypt in April 1982. To accomplish this, we worked hard with our Egyptian and Israeli friends, and eventually with other friendly countries, to create the multinational force which now operates in the Sinai.

Throughout this period of difficult and time-consuming negotiations, we never lost sight of the next step of Camp David: autonomy talks to pave the way for permitting the Palestinian people to exercise their legitimate rights. However, owing to the tragic assassination of President Sadat and other crises in the area, it was not until January 1982 that we were able to make a major effort to renew these talks. Secretary of State Haig and Ambassador Fairbanks made three visits to Israel and Egypt this year to pursue the autonomy talks. Considerable progress was made in developing the basic outline of an American approach which was to be presented to Egypt and Israel after April.

The successful completion of Israel's withdrawal from Sinai

and the courage shown on this occasion by Prime Minister Begin and President Mubarak in living up to their agreements convinced me the time had come for a new American policy to try to bridge the remaining differences between Egypt and Israel on the autonomy process. So, in May, I called for specific measures and a timetable for consultations with the governments of Egypt and Israel on the next steps in the peace process. However, before this effort could be launched, the conflict in Lebanon preempted our effort. The autonomy talks were basically put on hold while we sought to untangle the parties in Lebanon and still the guns of war.

The Lebanon war, tragic as it was, has left us with a new opportunity for Middle East peace. We must seize it now and bring peace to this troubled area so vital to world stability while there is still time. It was with this strong conviction that over a month ago, before the present negotiations in Beirut had been completed, I directed secretary of State Shultz to again review our policy and to consult a wide range of outstanding Americans on the best ways to strengthen chances for peace in the Middle East. We have consulted with many of the officials who were historically involved in the process, with members of the Congress, and with individuals from the private sector, and I have held extensive consultations with my own advisors on the principles I will outline to you tonight.

The evacuation of the PLO from Beirut is now complete. And we can now help the Lebanese to rebuild their war-torn country.

We owe it to ourselves, and to posterity, to move quickly to build upon this achievement. A stable and revived Lebanon is essential to all our hopes for peace in the region. The people of Lebanon deserve the best efforts of the international community to turn the nightmares of the past several years into new dawn of hope.

But the opportunities for peace in the Middle East do not begin and end in Lebanon. As we help Lebanon rebuild, we must also move to resolve the root causes of conflict between Arabs and Israelis.

The war in Lebanon has demonstrate many things, but two consequences are key to the peace process:

First, the military losses of the PLO have not diminished the yearning of the Palestinian people for a just solution of their claims; and second, while Israel's military successes in Lebanon have demonstrated that it armed forces are second to none in the region, they alone cannot bring just and lasting peace to Israel and her neighbors.

The question now is how to reconcile Israel's legitimate security concerns with the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. And that answer can only come at the negotiating table. Each party must recognize that the outcome must by acceptable to all and that true peace will require compromises by all.

So, tonight, I am calling for a fresh start. This is the moment for all those directly concerned to get involved - or lend their support - to a workable basis for peace. The Camp David

Agreement remains the foundation of our policy. Its language provides all parties with the leeway they need for successful negotiations.

I call on Israel to make clear that the security for which she yearns can only be achieved through genuine peace, a peace requiring magnanimity, vision and courage.

I call on the Palestinian people to recognize that their own political aspirations are inextricably bound to recognition of Israel's right to a secure future.

And I call on the Arab States to accept the reality of Israel--and the reality that peace and justice can be gained only through hard, fair, direct negotiations.

In making these calls upon others, I recognize that the United States has a special responsibility. No other nation is in a position to deal with the key parties to the conflict on the basis of trust and reliability.

The time has come for a new realism on the part of all the peoples of the Middle East. The state of Israel is an accomplished fact; it deserves unchallenged legitimacy within the community of nations. But Israel's legitimacy has thus far been recognized by too few countries, and has been denied by every Arab State except Egypt. Israel exists; it has a right to exist in peace behind secure and defensible border, and it has a right to demand of its neighbors that they recognize those facts.

I have personally followed and supported Israel's heroic struggle for survival ever since the founding of the state of

Israel 34 years ago. In the pre-1967 borders, Israel was barely 10 miles wide at its narrowest point. The bulk of Israel's population lived within artillery range of hostile Arab armies. I am not about to ask Israel to live that way again.

The war in Lebanon had demonstrated another reality in the region. The departure of the Palestinians from Beirut dramatizes more than ever the hopelessness of the Palestinian People. Palestinians feel strongly that their cause is more than a question of refugees. I agree. The Camp David Agreement recognized that fact when it spoke of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and their just requirements. For peace to endure, it must involve all those who have been most deeply affected by the conflict. Only through broader participation in the peace process - most immediately by Jordan and by the Palestinians - will Israel be able to rest confident in the knowledge that its security and integrity will be respected by its neighbors. Only through the process of negotiation can all the nations of the Middle East achieve a secure peace.

These then are our general goals. What are the specific new American positions, and why are we taking them?

In the Camp David talks thus far, both Israel and Egypt have felt free to express openly their views as to what the outcome should be. Understandably, their views have differed on many points.

The United States has thus far sought to play the role of mediator; we have avoided public comment on the key issues. We

have always recognized - and continue to recognize - that only the voluntary agreement of those parties most directly involved in the conflict can provide an enduring solution. But it has become evident to me that some clearer sense of America's position on the key issues is necessary to encourage wider support for the peace process.

First, as outlined in the Camp David accords, there must be a period of time during which the Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza will have full autonomy over their own affairs. Due consideration must be given to the principle of self-government by the inhabitants of the territories and to the legitimate security concerns of the parties involved.

The purpose of the five-year period of transition which would begin after free elections for a self-governing Palestinian authority is to prove to the Palestinians that they can run their own affairs, and that such Palestinian autonomy poses no threat to Israel's security.

The United States will not support the use of any additional land for the purpose of settlements during the transition period. Indeed, the immediate adoption of a settlement freeze by Israel, more than any other action, could create the confidence needed for wider participating in these talks. Further settlement activity is in no way necessary for the security of Israel and only diminishes the confidence of the Arabs that a final outcome can be freely and fairly negotiated.

I want to make the American position clearly understood: the

purpose of this transition period is the peaceful orderly transfer of domestic authority from Israel to the Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza. At the same time, such a transfer must not interfere with Israel's security requirements.

Beyond the transition period, as we look to the future of the West Bank and Gaza, it is clear to me that peace cannot be achieved by the formation of an independent Palestinian State in those territories. Nor is it achievable on the basis of Israeli Sovereignty or permanent control over the West Bank and Gaza.

So the United States will not support the establishment of an independent Palestinian State in the West Bank and Gaza, and we will not support annexation or permanent control by Israel.

There is, however, another way to peace. The final status of these lands must, of course, be reached through the give-and take of negotiations. But it is the firm view of the United States that self-government by the Palestinian of the West Bank and Gaza in association with Jordan offers the best chance for a durable, just and lasting peace.

We base our approach squarely on the principle that the Arab-Israeli conflict should be resolved through negotiations involving an exchange of territory for peace. This exchange is enshrined in United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, which is, in turn, incorporated in all its parts in the Camp David Agreements. U.N. Resolution 242 remains wholly valid as the foundation stone of America's Middle East peace effort.

It is the United States' position that--in return for peace

--the withdrawal provision of Resolution 242 applies to all fronts, including the West Bank and Gaza.

When the border is negotiated between Jordan and Israel, our view on the extent to which Israel should be asked to give up territory will be heavily affected by the extent of true peace and normalization and the security arrangements offered in return.

Finally, we remain convinced that Jerusalem must remain undivided, but its final status should be decided through negotiations.

In the course of the negotiations to come, the United States will support positions that seem to us fair and reasonable compromises, and likely to promote a sound agreement. We will also put forward our own detailed proposals when we believe they can be helpful. And make no mistake, the United States will oppose any proposal -- that threatens the security of Israel. America's commitment to the security of Israel is iron-clad. And, I might add, so is mine.

During the past few days, our ambassadors in Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia have presented to their host governments the proposals in full detail that I have outlined here tonight.

I am convinced that these proposals can bring justice, bring security, and bring durability to an Arab-Israeli peace.

The United States will stand by these principles with total dedication. They are fully consistent with Israel's security requirements and the aspirations of the Palestinians. We will

work hard to broaden participation at the peace table as envisaged by the Camp David accords, and I fervently hope that the Palestinians and Jordan, with the support of their Arab colleagues, will accept this opportunity.

Tragic turmoil in the Middle East runs back to the dawn of history. In our modern day, conflict after conflict has taken its brutal toll there. In an age of nuclear challenge and economic interdependence, such conflicts are a threat to all the people of the world, not just the Middle East itself. It is time for us all -- in the Middle East and around the world -- to call a halt to conflict, hatred and prejudice; it is time for us all to launch a common effort for reconstruction, peace and progress.

It has often been said -- and regrettably too often been true -- that the story of the search for peace and justice in the Middle East is a tragedy of opportunities missed.

In the aftermath of the settlement in Lebanon we now face an opportunity for a broader peace. This time we must not let it slip from our grasp. We must look beyond the difficulties and obstacles of the present and move with fairness and resolve toward a brighter future. We owe it to ourselves -- and to posterity -- to do no less. For if we miss this chance to make a fresh start, we may look back on this moment from some later vantage point and realize how much that failure cost us all.

These, then, are the principles upon which American policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict will be based. I have made a personal commitment to see that they endure and, God willing,

that they will come to be seen by all reasonable, compassionate people as fair, achievable, and in the interests of all who wish to see peace in the Middle East.

Tonight, on the eve of what can be a dawning of new hope for the people of the troubled Middle East -- and for all the world's people who dream of a just and peaceful future -- I ask you, my fellow Americans, for your support and your prayers in this great undertaking.

Source: Yehuda Lukacs (ed.), Documents on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 1967-1983, pp.35-41.

APPENDIX E

TEXT OF THE 'TALKING POINTS' SENT TO PRIME MINISTER BEGIN
BY RESIDENT REAGAN. WASHINGTON D.C., 8 SEPTEMBER, 1982.

(The same points were presented to Arab governments as a preamble to the Reagan plan).

General Principles.

- A. We will maintain our commitment to Camp David.
- B. We will maintain our commitment to the conditions we require for recognition of and negotiation with the P.L.O.
- C. We can offer guarantees on the position we will adopt in negotiations. We will not be able, however, to guarantee in advance the results of these negotiations.

Transitional Measures.

A. Our position is that the objective of the transitional period is the peaceful and orderly transfer of authority from Israel to the Palestinian inhabitants.

B. We will support:

- * The decision of full autonomy as giving the Palestinian inhabitants real authority over themselves, the land and its resources, subject to fair safeguards on water.

- * Economic, commercial, social and cultural ties between the West Bank, Gaza and Jordan.

- * Participation by the Palestinian inhabitants of East Jerusalem in the election of the West Bank-Gaza authority.

- * Real settlement freeze.

- * Progressive Palestinian responsibility for internal security based on capability and performance.

B. We will oppose:

- * Dismantlement of the existing settlements.
- * Provisions which represent a legitimate threat to Israel's security, reasonably defined.
- * Isolation of the West Bank and Gaza from Israel.
- * Measures which accord either the Palestinians or the Israelis generally recognized sovereign rights with the exception of external security, which must remain in Israel's hands during the transitional period.

Final Status Issues.

A. U.N.S.C. Resolution 242.

It is our position that Resolution 242 applies to the West Bank and Gaza and requires Israeli withdrawal in return for peace. Negotiations must determine the borders. The U.S. position in these negotiations on the extent of the withdrawal will be significantly influenced by the extent and nature of the peace and security arrangements offered in return.

B. Israeli sovereignty.

It is our belief that the Palestinian problem cannot be resolved (through) Israeli sovereignty or control over the West Bank and Gaza. Accordingly, we will not support such a solution.

C. Palestinian state.

The preference we will pursue in the final status negotiation is association of the West Bank and Gaza with Jordan. We will not support the formation of Palestinian state in those negotiations. There is no foundation of political support in

Israel or the United States for such a solution. The outcome, however, must be determined by negotiations.

D. Self-Determination.

In the Middle East context the term self-determination has been identified exclusively with the formation of a Palestinian State. We will not support this definition of self-determination. We believe that the Palestinians must take the leading role in determining their own future and fully support the provision in Camp David providing for the elected representatives of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza to decide how they shall govern themselves consistent with the provision of their agreement in the final status negotiations.

E. Jerusalem.

We will fully support the position that the status of Jerusalem must be determined through negotiations.

F. Settlements.

The status of Israeli settlements must be determined in the course of the final status negotiations. We will not support their continuation as extraterritorial outposts.

Additional Talking Points.

1. Approach to Hussein.

The President has approached Hussein to determine the extent to which he may be interested in participating.

* King Hussein has received the same U.S. positions as you.

* Hussein considers our proposals serious and gives them

serious attention.

* Hussein understands that Camp David is the only base that we will accept for negotiations.

* We are also discussing these proposals with the Saudis.

2. Public Commitment.

Whatever the support from these or other Arab states, this is what the President has concluded must be done.

The President is convinced his positions are fair and balanced and fully protective of Israel's security. Beyond that they offer the practical opportunity of eventually achieving the peace treaties Israel must have with its neighbors.

He will be making a speech announcing these positions, probably within a week.

3. Next Procedural Steps.

Should the response to the President's proposal be positive, the U.S. would take immediate steps to re launch the autonomy negotiations with the broadest possible participation as envisaged under the Camp David agreements.

We also contemplate an early visit by Secretary Shultz in the area.

Should there not be a positive response, the President, as he has said in his letter to you, will nonetheless stand by his position with proper dedication.

Source: Yehuda Lukacs (ed.), Documents on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 1967-1983, p. 41.

APPENDIX F

PERES-HUSSEIN AGREEMENT (THE LONDON DOCUMENT), APRIL 11, 1987.
(Accord between the Government of Jordan, which has confirmed it to the Government of the United States, and the Foreign Minister of Israel, pending the approval of the Government of Israel. Parts "A" and "B," which will be made public upon agreement of the parties, will be treated as proposals of the United States to which Jordan and Israel have agreed. Part "C" is to be treated with great confidentiality, as commitments to the United States from the Government of Jordan to be transmitted to the Government of Israel.)

A Three-Part Understanding Between Jordan and Israel.

A. Invitation by the UN secretary general: The UN secretary general will send invitations to the five permanent members of the Security Council and to the parties involved in the Israeli-Arab conflict to negotiate an agreement by peaceful means based on UN Resolutions 242 and 338 with the purpose of attaining comprehensive peace in the region and security for the countries in the area, and granting the Palestinian people their legitimate rights.

B. Decisions of the international conference: The participants in the conference agree that the purpose of the negotiations is to attain by peaceful means an agreement about all aspects of the Palestinian problem. The conference invites the sides to set up regional bilateral committees to negotiate bilateral issues.

C. Nature of the agreement between Jordan and Israel: Israel and Jordan agree that: 1) the international conference will not impose a solution and will not veto any agreement reached by the sides; 2) the negotiations will be conducted in bilateral committees in a direct manner; 3) the Palestinian issue will be discussed in a meeting of the Jordanian, Palestinian, and Israeli delegations; 4) the representatives of the Palestinians will be included in the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation; 5) participation in the conference will be based on acceptance of UN Resolutions 242 and 338 by the sides and the renunciation of violence and terror; 6) each committee will conduct negotiations independently; 7) other issues will be resolved through mutual agreement between Jordan and Israel.

This document of understanding is pending approval of the incumbent governments of Israel and Jordan. The content of this document will be presented and proposed to the United States.

Source: William B. Quandt (ed.), The Middle East Ten Years After Camp David (Washington D.C: The Brookings Institution, 1988), pp. 475-6.

APPENDIX G

THE SHULTZ INITIATIVE, MARCH 4, 1988.

I set forth below the statement of understanding which I am convinced is necessary to achieve the prompt opening of negotiations on a comprehensive peace. This statement of understanding emerges from discussions held with you and other and other regional leaders. I look forward to the letter of reply of the government of Israel in confirmation of this statement.

The agreed objective is a comprehensive peace providing for the security of all states in the region and for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

Negotiations will start on an early date certain between Israel and each of its neighbors which is willing to do so. These negotiations could begin by May 1, 1988. Each of these negotiations will be based on United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, in all their parts. The parties to each bilateral negotiations will determine the procedure and agenda at their negotiation. All participants in the negotiations must state their willingness to negotiate with one another.

As concerns negotiations between the Israeli delegation and the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, negotiations will begin on arrangements for a transitional period, with the objective of completing them within six months. Seven months after transitional negotiations begin, final status negotiations will begin, with the objective of completing them within one year. These negotiations will be based on all the provisions and

principles of United Nations Security Council Resolution 242. Finally status talks will start before the transitional period begins. The transitional period will begin three months after the conclusion of the transitional agreement and will last for three years. The United States will participate in both negotiations and will promote their rapid conclusion. In particular, the United States will submit a draft agreement for the parties' consideration at the outset of the negotiations on transitional arrangements.

Two weeks before the opening of negotiations, an international conference will be held. The Secretary General of the United Nations will be asked to issue invitations to the parties involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. All participants in the conference must accept United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, and renounce violence and terrorism. The parties to each bilateral negotiation may refer reports on the status of their negotiations to the conference, in a manner to be agreed. The conference will not be able to impose solutions or veto agreements reached.

Palestinian representation will be within the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. The Palestinian issue will be addressed in the negotiations between the Jordanian-Palestinian and Israeli delegations. Negotiations between the Israeli delegation and the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation will proceed independently of any other negotiations.

This statement of understanding is an integral whole. The United States understands that your acceptance is dependent on the implementation of each element in good faith.

Sincerely yours,

George P. Shultz

A similar letter was sent to King Hussein. Source: William B. Quandt, The Middle East Ten Years After Camp David (Washington D.C: The Brookings Institution, 1988), pp. 488-89.

APPENDIX H

THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT PEACE INITIATIVE, MAY 14, 1989.

The Government's Resolution:

It is decided to approve the attached peace initiative of the Government of Israel. A peace initiative by the Government of Israel.

Generals:

1. This document presents the principles of a political initiative of the Government of Israel which deals with the continuation of the peace process; the termination of the state of war with the Arab states; a solution for the Arabs of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district; peace with Jordan; and a resolution of the problem of the residents of the refugee camps in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza district.

2. The document includes:

- a) The principles upon which the initiative is based.
- b) Details of the processes for its implementation.
- c) Reference to the subject of the elections under consideration. Further details relating to the elections as well as other subjects of the initiative will be dealt with separately.

Basic Premises:

3. The initiative is founded upon the assumption that there is a national consensus for it on the basis of the political guidelines of the Government of Israel, including the following

points:

a) Israel yearns for peace and the continuation of the political process by means of direct negotiations based on the principles of the Camp David Accords.

b) Israel opposes the establishment of an additional Palestinian state in the Gaza district and the area between Israel and Jordan.

c) Israel will not conduct negotiations with the PLO.

d) There will be no change in the status of Judea, Samaria and Gaza other than in accordance with the basic guidelines of the Government.

Subjects To Be Dealt With in the Peace Process:

4. a) Israel views as important that the peace between Israel and Egypt, based on the Camp David Accords, will serve as a cornerstone for enlarging the circle of peace in the region, and calls for a common endeavour for the strengthening of the peace and its extension, through continued consultation.

b) Israel calls for the establishment of peaceful relations between it and those Arab states which still maintain a state of war with it for the purpose of promoting a comprehensive settlement for the Arab-Israeli conflict, including recognition, direct negotiations, ending the boycott, diplomatic relations, cessation of hostile activity in international institutions or forums and regional and bilateral cooperation.

c) Israel calls for an international endeavour to resolve the problem of the residents of the Arab refugee camps in Judea,

Samaria and the Gaza district in order to improve their living conditions and to rehabilitate them. Israel is prepared to be a partner in this endeavour.

d) In order to advance the political negotiation process leading to peace, Israel proposes free and democratic elections among the Palestinian Arab inhabitants of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district in an atmosphere devoid of violence, threats and terror. In these elections a representative will be chosen to conduct negotiations for a transitional period of self-rule. This period will constitute a test for co-existence and cooperation. At a later stage, negotiations will be conducted for a permanent solution during which all the proposed options, and peace between Israel and Jordan will be achieved.

e) All the above-mentioned steps should be dealt with simultaneously.

f) The details of what has been mentioned in (d) above will be given below.

The Principles Constituting the Initiative:

Stages:

5. The initiative is based on two stages:

- a) Stage A--A transitional period for an interim agreement.
- b) Stage B--Permanent Solution.

6. The interlock between the Stages is a timetable on which the Plan is built: the peace process delineated by the initiative is based on Resolutions 242 and 338 upon which the Camp Davis

Accords are founded.

Timetable:

7. The transitional period will continue for 5 years.

8. As soon as possible, but not later than the third year after the beginning of the transitional period, negotiations for achieving a permanent solution will begin.

Parties Participating in the Negotiations in both Stages:

9. The parties participating in the negotiations for the First Stage (the interim agreement) shall include Israel and the elected representation of the Palestinian Arab inhabitants of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district. Jordan and Egypt will be invited to participate in these negotiations if they so desire.

10. The parties participating in the negotiations for the Second Stage (Permanent Solution) shall include Israel and the elected representation of the Palestinian Arab inhabitants of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district, as well as Jordan; furthermore, Egypt may participate in these negotiations. In negotiations between Israel and Jordan, in which the elected representation of the Palestinian Arab inhabitants of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will participate, the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan will be concluded.

Substances of Transitional Period

11. During the transitional period the Palestinian Arab inhabitants of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be

accorded self-rule by means of which they will, themselves, conduct their affairs of daily life. Israel will continue to be responsible for security, foreign affairs and all matters concerning Israeli citizens in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district. Topics involving the implementation of the plan for self-rule will be considered and decided within the framework of the negotiations for an interim agreement.

Substances of Permanent Solution

12. In the negotiations for a permanent solution every party shall be entitled to present for discussion all the subjects it may wish to raise.

13. The aim of the negotiations should be:

a) The achievement of a permanent solution acceptable to the negotiating parties.

b) The arrangements for peace and borders between Israel and Jordan.

Details of the Process for the Implementation of the Initiative:

14. First and foremost dialogue and basic agreement by the Palestinian Arab inhabitants of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district, as well as Egypt and Jordan if they wish to take part, as above-mentioned in the negotiations, on the principles constituting the initiative.

15. a) Immediately afterwards will follow the stage of preparation and implementation of the election process in which a representation of the Palestinian Arab inhabitants of Judea,

Samaria, and Gaza will be elected. This representation:

I) Shall be a partner to the conduct of negotiations for the transitional period (interim agreement).

II) Shall constitute the self-governing authority in the course of the transitional period.

III) Shall be the central Palestinian component, subject to agreement after three years, in the negotiations for the permanent solution.

b) In the period of the preparation and implementation there shall be a calming of the violence in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district.

16. As to the substance of the elections, it is recommended that a proposal of regional elections be adopted, the details of which shall be determined in further discussions.

17. Every Palestinian Arab residing in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district, who shall be elected by the inhabitants to represent them--after having submitted his candidacy in accordance with the detailed document which shall determine the subject of the elections--may be a legitimate participant in the conduct of negotiations with Israel.

18. The elections shall be free, democratic, and secret.

19. immediately after the election of the Palestinian representation, negotiations shall be conducted with it on an interim agreement for a transitional period which shall continue for 5 years, as mentioned above. In these negotiations the parties shall determine all the subjects relating to the

substance to the self-rule and the arrangements necessary for its implementation.

20. As soon as possible, but no later than the third year after the establishment of the self-rule, negotiations for a permanent solution shall begin. During the whole period of these negotiations until the signing of the agreement for a permanent solution, the self-rule shall continue in effect as determined in the negotiations for an interim agreement.

Source: FBIS/DR, 15 May, 1989.

APPENDIX I

SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS OF NEGOTIATION PROPOSALS

1. United Nations Resolution 242, November 22, 1967.
 - A. Focus: the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.
 - B. The occupied territories: the resolution requested the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the Six Day War.
 - C. Mutual recognition: the resolution requested the recognition of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries.
2. Prime Minister Begin's Autonomy Plan, December 28, 1977.
 - A. Focus: Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza.
 - B. The occupied territories: the plan called for the abolition of the Military Government in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district, but maintained Israel's claim of sovereignty to these areas.
 - C. Autonomy: the plan called for the establishment of an administrative autonomy by and for the residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district--subject to review after a five-year period. Autonomy would cover the following categories: education; religious affairs; finance; transportation; construction and

housing; industry; commerce and tourism; agriculture; health, labor and social welfare; rehabilitation and refugees; and the administration of justice and supervision of local police forces.

- D. Elections in the West bank and Gaza: the residents of Judea, Samaria and Gaza would elect an Administrative Council composed of 11 members. The period of office of the Administrative Council would be four years from the day of its election.

3. The Camp David Accords, September 17, 1978.

- A. Focus: the establishment of a framework for peace in the Middle East.
- B. Basis for a peaceful settlement: United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, in all its parts.
- C. The occupied territories: the Israeli military government and its civilian administration in the West Bank and Gaza would be replaced by a self-governing authority.
- D. Autonomy: a self-governing authority in the West Bank and Gaza would be established to run the own affairs of the Palestinian inhabitants in these areas, for a five-year transitional period. No later than the third year after the beginning of the transitional period negotiations would take place to determine the final status of these areas.

- E. Elections in the West Bank and Gaza: the self-governing authority would be freely elected by the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza to replace the existing Israeli military government there.
 - F. Palestinian participation in negotiations: the delegations of Egypt and Jordan might include Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza or other Palestinians as mutually agreed.
4. The Reagan Peace Plan, September 1, 1982.
- A. Focus: a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.
 - B. Bases for a peaceful settlement: United Nations Resolution 242, and the Camp David agreements.
 - C. The occupied territories: the Arab-Israeli conflict should be resolved through negotiations involving an exchange of territory for peace, applicable to all fronts, including the West Bank and Gaza.
 - D. Autonomy: Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza would have full autonomy over their own affairs during a five-year transitional period.
 - E. Elections in the West Bank and Gaza: the five-year period of transition would begin after free elections for a self-governing Palestinian authority.
 - F. Palestinian participation in negotiations: the US supported a broad participation at the peace table as envisaged by the Camp David accords.

- G. Israeli settlements: the US called for the immediate adoption of a settlement freeze by Israel, denying that settlement activity was necessary for the security of Israel.
 - H. The establishment of a Palestinian state: the US opposed to the establishment of an independent Palestinian State in the West Bank and Gaza.
 - I. Annexation: the US did not support annexation or a permanent Israeli control of the West Bank and Gaza.
 - J. The status of Jerusalem: Jerusalem must remain undivided, but its final status should be decided through negotiations.
5. President Reagan's 'Talking Points', September 8, 1982.
- A. Basis for a peaceful settlement: Camp David.
 - B. The occupied territories: the US called for an Israeli withdrawal in return for peace.
 - C. Autonomy: the US supported full autonomy, giving the Palestinian inhabitants real authority over themselves, the land and its resources, including water. It also supported progressive Palestinian responsibility for internal security based on capability and performance.
 - D. Election in the West Bank and Gaza: the US supported the participation of the Palestinian inhabitants of East Jerusalem in the election of the West Bank-Gaza authority.

- E. Israeli settlements: the US did not support the continuation of settlements as extraterritorial outposts, but it was opposed to the dismantlement of existing settlements.
 - F. The establishment of a Palestinian state: the US was opposed to the establishment of a Palestinian state.
 - G. Annexation: the US was opposed to an Israeli annexation of the territories.
 - H. The status of Jerusalem: the US fully supported the position that the status of Jerusalem must be determined through negotiations.
6. Peres-Hussein Agreement (the London Document), April 11, 1987.
- A. Focus: the convening of an international Middle East peace conference
 - B. Bases for a peaceful settlement: the acceptance of UN Resolutions 242 and 338, and the renunciation of violence and terror. Israel and Jordan also agreed that: 1) the international conference would not impose a solution and will not veto any agreement reached by the sides; 2) the negotiations will be conducted in bilateral committees in a direct manner; 3) the Palestinian issue will be discussed in a meeting of the Jordanian, Palestinian, and Israeli delegations.
 - C. Palestinian participation in negotiations: the

representatives of the Palestinians would be included in the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

7. The Shultz Initiative, March 4, 1988.
 - A. Focus: the convening of an international Middle East peace conference.
 - B. Bases for a peaceful settlement: the acceptance of UN resolutions 242 and 338, and the rejection of violence and terrorism. Negotiations would be conducted by bilateral delegations; the conference could not impose solutions or veto agreements reached.
 - C. The occupied territories: the initiative supported the "territories for peace" formula.
 - D. Autonomy: the initiative called for a three-year transitional period.
 - E. Palestinian participation in negotiations: Palestinian representation would be within a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.
8. The Israeli Government Peace Initiative, May 14, 1989.
 - A. Focus: the continuation of the peace process.
 - B. Bases for a peaceful settlement: UN Resolutions 242 and 338, and the Camp David agreements.
 - C. The occupied territories: there would be no change in the status of Judea, Samaria and Gaza other than in accordance with the basic guidelines of the Government.

- D. Autonomy: a five-year transitional period would constitute a test for co-existence and cooperation. At a later stage (no latter than 3 years), negotiations would be conducted for a permanent solution.
- E. Elections in the West bank and Gaza: Israel proposed free and democratic elections among the Palestinian Arab inhabitants of Judea, Samaria and Gaza.
- F. Palestinian participation in negotiations: in these elections a representative will be chosen to conduct negotiations for a transitional period of self-rule.
- G. The establishment of a Palestinian state: Israel was opposed to the establishment of an additional Palestinian state in the Gaza district and the area between Israel and Jordan.

9. The Baker Proposals, October 10, 1989.

- A. Focus: a dialogue in Cairo, between Israel, Egypt, and the US to discuss elections in the West Bank and Gaza.
- B. Basis for a peaceful settlement: the Israeli election plan of May 14, 1989.
- C. Palestinian participation in negotiations: an elected Palestinian delegation from the West Bank and Gaza would participate in peace negotiations.
- D. The status of Jerusalem: the plan itself did not mention Jerusalem, but the US supported the

participation of Palestinians from East Jerusalem
in the elections.

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