

**THE POST-COLD WAR U. S. PEACE INITIATIVE
IN ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT**

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ORGANIZATION, AND DISARMAMENT
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DECLARATION

Certified that the dissertation entitled "POST COLD WAR U.S. PEACE INITIATIVE IN ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT" submitted by Aosenba in fulfillment of Nine credits out of total requirements of twenty four credits for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy (M.Phil) of this University, is his original work and may be placed before the examiners for evaluation. This dissertation has not been submitted for the award of any other degree of this university or of any other university to the best of our knowledge.

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T O M Y P A R E N T S

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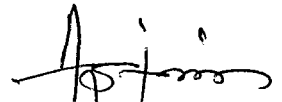
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AOSENBA

Preface

The end of Cold War marked the beginning of a new era of plurality in international relations. In place of the bipolar context, the United States emerged as the single most powerful country in the world. The United States has taken several initiatives to bring a peaceful solution to the long standing Arab-Israeli conflict. The conflict is not only geo-political but has a pronounced religious perspective. The one conflict that has stood out amongst problems of Arab World is the Palestine question and it shapes much of the dynamics of the Middle Eastern situation. The peace talks initiated at Madrid in 1991 have shown that the United States has developed a coherent and common strategy vis-a-vis the regional actors.

The dissertation is composed of five chapters including the conclusion.

In the first chapter, I have attempted an appraisal of the conceptual framework of the new process and examined (a) the preparation for negotiation, (b) statement of negotiation goals, (c) power imbalance and (d) cross cultural differences between Arabs and Israelis.

The second chapter of this dissertation provides a historical dimensions to contemporary events in order to assess basic structural developments.

The third chapter discusses the third party role of the United States in the Post Cold War period, and the efforts of U.S. policy makers to probe the relative effectiveness of alternative techniques.

The fourth chapter highlights the trend and developments in the peace talks which have been shaped by cross pressures.

The fifth chapter provides an overall evaluation of the U.S. Peace initiative.

Given the fluidity of the situation concerning the Middle East Peace process, the thesis can only arrive at tentative conclusions. The study would, however, have served its purpose, if it conveys the need for a radical shift in our thinking and attitude to the pursuit of stable peace in the post-Cold War world.

CHAPTER - I

PEACE INITIATIVES : A CONCEPTUAL INTRODUCTION

Peace initiatives are critically related to the broader perspective of establishing norms for resolving disputes and implementing plans for cooperation in pursuit of global or regional aims of security, justice reconciliation. After it has been generally recognised that violence and injustice have destroyed constructive relationships among states and peoples, the intolerable situation demands new objectives, decision modes and processes of choice to chart the change from the negative policies of pathological conflict to the positive policies of creative peace. A peace initiative must address the major causes and consequences of confrontationist policies and present a clear and logical way for analysing the themes of peace and conflict, and develop negotiating techniques which are adequate for the incidence and severity of conflicts.

The United States peace initiative in the Arab-Israel conflict after the end of the Cold War links themes of peace, environmental issues and development to a political spectrum arising out of the specific situation in the Middle East with the backdrop of the changes in the global context. A study of this initiative is of immense academic interest

because not only it can assess extraordinary events in the last few years, but it can also schematically examine the following aspects of the peace process:

1. Improvement in mutual perceptions
2. Improvement in communications
3. Generation of new proposals
4. Strengthening the political foundations of the negotiating process
5. Joint problem solving
6. Structural approach to negotiations

A general concern which underlies the study may be emphasised. This is based on the perspective that the United States has provided an impressive example of meeting its responsibilities as a Third Party by identifying new issues and appropriate modes for negotiations in the post Cold War setting by deliberately emphasising a "structured approach" to negotiations. Some of the images and concepts which has dominated earlier peace efforts have been replaced by new conceptual frameworks relevant to the new configurations of the structure of international society. It is not possible at this stage to provide a definitive view of the U.S. Peace initiative, but it is possible to examine the principles and norms which have emerged from this historically significant peace initiative of the fin de circle.

Preparation for Negotiations

It can be easily affirmed that preparation for negotiations is not merely the adoption of a formula or even outlining positions and attitudes. Analytically and intellectually preparation can only be regarded as adequate if theoretical position and paradigms for studying interrelated questions along with the network of informal conventions and norms can all be brought together to create stable tactical and strategic expectations. The multi-lateral negotiations, part of the peace process launched in Madrid in October 1991, are comprised of five working groups dealing with issues of regional concern:

1. Environment
2. Regional Security
3. Refugees
4. Water
5. Economic Development

The United States has given attention to the explanatory importance of both the external and internal conditions and circumstances which could stabilize expectations in all these five issue areas. The key here lies in the American contribution to the "learning process" both for bilateral adjustments and for the evolving multilateral situation.

Statement of Negotiation Goals

The characteristics and significance of negotiation goals in the post Cold War period cannot merely be restated in terms of the geo-political thinking of the two sides. The Americans have underscored the significance of the historic restatement of the Palestinian standpoint in the end of 1988, as giving the peace process more breathing space. Thus negotiation goals could now be stated from new intellectual foundations. Although the conflict situations remained unsolved, it seemed useful to the United States to explore the assumption that political leaderships could be moved towards integrative and cooperative approaches. The negotiation goals, therefore, can only be conceived in terms of innovative work leading to a multi-dimensional political settlement. The negotiation goals cannot be diluted or hampered by existing perceptions, or ideological orientations or even by the instrumentalities of peace at the micro-level; the Americans have taken a leading role in the formation and development of the latest peace initiative for the larger policy objective of functional cooperation between Arabs/Palestinians and Israelis as a long term goal of conflict avoidance. Since the U.S. role is wide and varied, the raison d'être is a level of mutual dialogue which can internalize tolerance and commitment to peaceful change.

Power Imbalance between Israel and Arabs

The United States peace initiative has acquired an increasing sophistication as a result of historical experiences, and a better understanding of the asymmetries in power that support the commitments of Israel and the Arabs. Arab and Israeli decision-makers do not share a common power-political culture, nor all the Arab parties characterised by similarity. Through a series of interactions with various actors, the United States has evolved a combination of equilibrium strategies. The underlying mechanism of the peace initiative cannot be explained through a generalising approach; it is rather a particularistic approach in which the relative bargaining power of each participant in the peace process is separately assessed, that marks the reconstruction of United States posture. There is no status quo rule which informs the U.S. outlook and unilateral change in strategy is not ruled out if structural tension between Arab and Israeli positions has to be ameliorated. The Americans do not any longer systematically favour either side; the new emerging order may be determined by one of many scenarios.

Cross cultural differences between Arabs and Israelis

The Peace Initiative when seen against the totality of the Arab-Israel conflict has to cope with cross cultural differences if the outcome of stable equilibrium is to be

achieved. The future will require adaptation to changing power constellations as well as consensual negotiation consistent with greater cultural pluralism. Communicative images and concepts have to be used deliberately in the peace process if contradictions plaguing hard-line approaches are to be eliminated. Whatever the eventual outcome, the American efforts in the peace initiative are intended to influence both the direction and degree of change which alone can remove barriers to peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours. The tools of statecraft have to contend with deep structures of culture and lead the nations towards "openness" in order to learn new ways in order to relate to one another.

CHAPTER - II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

In the 1880's towards the close of the Ottoman period the first Zionist settlers began to arrive in Palestine leaving their homes in Eastern Europe as a result of pogroms - and persecutions. They believed that the twin dangers to European Jewry, persecution in the East and assimilation in the West, could only be resolved by the establishment of a Jewish nation, able to order its own affairs on its own territory. It was natural that the Zionists should fix upon Palestine in European eyes a relatively underdeveloped land closely connected with their history 2,000 years earlier, when the Jews had been a free nation. For most, it was only after they had arrived in Palestine that they began to appreciate the practical difficulty facing the Zionist undertaking; that Palestine was already inhabited by half a million Christians and Muslim Arabs.

These Arab inhabitants quickly appreciated the dangerous implications of the Zionist settlements. In 1886 the first land disputes between the peasants and the settlers occurred. It was one of the about forty affrays

between Arabs and Zionist over the next thirty years. Zionist settlement was a good deal more noticeable in certain cities particularly Jaffa and Jerusalem.¹

The Jews of Israel belong to one of the oldest peoples in the world, and to the youngest of Nations. It is a tragic paradox that Hitler played a major role in creating this nations, without which there would today be no jewish state. The fact is that despite the alleged homelessness of the jews, until the rise of Hitler few of them were impelled even by anti-semitic persecution to settle in Palestine. Immigration under the mandate even before 1939 was also not free. More rapid expansion took place during world war II, when capital investment and the number of workers doubled, and industrial production increased more than two fold. It was this growth of the forces of industrial capitalism that effected a decisive qualitative change within the Yishuv, transforming a colonization project into a modern nation. A maturing nationhood, colliding with the British efforts to short-circuit its development generated the national struggle for statehood and independence.

In the first years of the new century warnings against the Zionist dangers were more publicly expressed by

1. David McDowell, Palestine and Israel: Uprising and Beyond (I.B. Tauris Company, London, 1989), p.17.

leading Arab thinkers. By 1914 Zionism was the major political issue in Palestine. Notables towns people and peasantry were well aware of zionist immigration, land purchases, urban settlement and the aims these activities implied. For the inhabitants of Palestine, Zionist settlement took place against a backdrop of unprecedented change, largely resulting from increased European economic penetration.²

In 1917 British Troops advancing from Egypt captured almost all Palestine from the Ottoman forces. The British Foreign Secretary Sir Arthur Balfour, secretly promised the zionist movement that, once World War I was over, Britain would facilitate the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine. After the war, Britain became the mandatory power in Palestine and the organised government backed immigration of jews mostly from East Europe, into Palestine began.

It is also clear from the terms of the Mandate, Article 2, that the national home for the jewish people was to be established in Palestine and that the Mandatory was under an obligation to implement that establishment subject to the further obligation to safeguard the civil and religious rights of all the inhabitants of Palestine

2. Ibid., p.18.

irrespective of race and religion. To the jews the Mandate spelt out their rights of return to "Eretz" (Biblical) Israel after the dispersal under the Roman Emperor Hadrian in AD 135. To the Arab Moslems and Christians it meant an alien and permanent intrusion into their homelands after thirteen centuries of their history.³

In hindsight, it would have been remarkable if communal violence exacerbated by the presence of the Holy places sacred to jews and the Moslems, had not broken out. In fact violence between the two communities occurred before the Mandate came into force. Although there had been some jewish colonization in Palestine before the first World War, there was a considerable increase in zionist activities after 1921, in the form of land acquisition and settlement. The Balfour Declaration of 1917 can now be seen as a considerable political victory for the zionist movement.⁴

Support for the aim of zionist was written into the League of Nations mandate for Palestine and was again endorsed by the United Nations in 1947, when the General Assembly voted by overwhelming majority for the restoration of jewish independence.

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3. C.H. Dodd & M.E. Sales - Israel and the Arab World (Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, London, 1970), p.68.
 4. Hassan Bin Talal - Palestinian Self Determination (Quarterly Books, London, 1981), p.31.



Mediterranean Sea

Tyre

LEBANON

Dan

Nahariya

Acre

Haifa

Tiberias

Nazareth

Mishmar Haemek

Gesher

Naharayim

Umel Fahm

Beit She'an

Jenin

Tiratzi

Netanya

Julkarm

Tayiba

Nablus

Herzliya

Kalkiya

Rosh Haayin

Tel Aviv

Jaffa

Lydda

Ramallah

Atarot

Jericho

Salt

Amman

Ramla

Neve Yaakov

Beit Ha'arava

Gan Yavne

Beer Tovya

Nizanim

Jerusalem

Gat

Kalila

Bethlehem

Yad Mordechai

Falujah

Kfar Etzion

Gaza

Dura

Hebron

Ein Gedi

Kfar Darom

Khan Yunis

Rafah

Beersheba

Karak

TRANSJORDAN

Nirim

Beit-Eshel

Sodom

Tafila

EGYPT

Sinai

It is perhaps pertinent at this point to recall that when the question of Palestine was debated in the United Nations in 1947, the U.S. and the Soviet Union strongly supported the Jewish case. In 1948 Zionism realised its dream of statehood by the proclamation by "the Jewish people in Palestine and the world Zionist movement", of a Jewish state which they called Israel. The proclamation was purportedly made on the basis of resolution 181 (II) of General Assembly of the UN dated 29 November 1947 which had recommended the termination of the British Mandate over Palestine, the creation of Arab and Jewish states and the establishment of a special international regime for Jerusalem.

Partition of Palestine Between Israel

This question was considered at a special session of the general assembly held in April and May 1947. On 15 May the General Assembly appointed the UN Special Commission on Palestine to study the problem and to submit such proposals as it might consider appropriate for its solution. The Palestinians and the Arab states opposed the partition of Palestine and the creation of Jewish state. Despite Arab opposition, the General Assembly, some of whose members were pressured by the US government and the Zionists adopted on 29 November 1947, by a vote of 33 to 13 with 10 abstentions, resolution 181 (II) for the partition of Palestine and the

internationalization of Jerusalem, basically on the lines suggested by the majority report.

On the same day as the British withdrawal, the Jews proclaimed the state of Israel purportedly under the UN partition resolution. Thereupon complete chaos prevailed in the whole of Palestine and a war broke out on 15 May 1948 between the neighbouring Arab states and the new states of Israel, Jerusalem became a battlefield. Subsequent development transformed the Israel-Palestine conflict into an ever more intense Israel-Arab confrontation marked by a feverish arms race and five wars in thirty four years.

Creation of the state of Israel and its implication for the Palestinian identity

The establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 was accompanied by the physical and political dispersion of the Palestinian people.⁵ The Palestinian Arabs themselves, their social structure and political institutions were shattered during the turbulence of 1947-1949. They ceased to be a major political factor in the conflict until the creation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1964. But their cause was upheld by various Arab states whose military power represented a continuing danger to

5. Alexander Scholch - *Palestine over the Green Lines* (Ithaca Press, London, 1983), p.147.

Israel. Furthermore, the issues in the Arab-Israeli conflicts ramified, as disputes with individual Arab states over territory, water and rights of passage were grafted into the original question of Palestine. The remaining portion of mandates Palestine (The West Bank and the Gaza Strip) were placed under Arab sovereignty with Jordan annexing the former and Egypt taking control of the latter. Since that time the Palestinian problem has become an Arab issue and has assumed a high visibility in inter-Arab politics. Palestinian leadership and Palestinian nationalism between 1948 and 1967 were relegated to a secondary position. The June war of 1967 altered this situation as it discredited the various Arab regimes and their conventional armies proving them to be weak and inadequate for liberating Palestine. While downgrading the Arab governments the war conversely accelerated the growth of Palestinian national consciousness manifested in the rise of the Palestinian resistance movement as a significant political force in the Middle East.⁶

Meanwhile the loss of all Palestine had created the first real surge of Palestinian solidarity since 1948. Although the Arab states had created a Palestine Liberation Organization in 1964, this was considered more a means of controlling, Palestine Nationalism than allowing it free

6. Ibid., page 147.

reign. Another group, Fatah had begun raids on Israel in 1965, and stepped up its attack after the dismal Arab showing of 1967; Palestinian everywhere felt that in view of the Arab failure, only the Palestinian people, could recover Palestine.⁷

During the next twenty years the P.L.O. became a central feature of the Middle East conflict. In Israel and the West it became best known for terrorism and implicitly, as an obstruction to a negotiated peace. It was seen as violent and extremist its aim.⁸ Fatah came to dominate the PLO and remained easily the most popular constituent group since its appealed solely to the idea of the return to Palestine. But most of the other groups, notably the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the breakaway Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) were more revolutionary in their ideology. They were leftist Arab nationalists, seeing the recovery of Palestine as part of an Arab struggle for liberation. The more ideological guerrilla group appealed after to those with more education, those who felt that only a vision of what was to be created gave any meaning to their endeavours to

7. David McDowell, Palestine and Israel, The Uprising and Beyond (I.B. Tauris and Co. Ltd., London, 1989), p.31.

8. Ibid., p.31.

recover Palestine, outside the region, however, these groups were seen as rejectionist, since they rejected any compromise with Israel.

The focus for the Palestinian struggle now switched to the refugee camps of Lebanon, where the guerrilla movement painfully rebuilt itself. The commandos were immensely popular in the camps, which for the first time since 1948 were able to remove Lebanese Secret Police and begin to control their own affairs.

The Palestinian movement gained world attention by spectacular acts of terrorism and air piracy both in the Middle East and internationally. It began to wield influence beyond its military strength and this was recognised in the wake of the 1973 war. Meeting in Rabat in October 1974, the Arab states acknowledged the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.⁹

In November 1975 the UN General Assembly had adopted three resolutions concerning Palestine. The first had established a 20 nation committee to work out plans for the implementation of the Palestinian right to self-determination and national independence. The second invited the PLO to take part in all future debates on the Middle

9. Ibid., p.33.

East and the third denounced Zionism as, a form of racism and racial discrimination. When the Security council debated the Palestinian question in January 1976 the USA used the veto powers to prevent the adoption of resolution affirming the Palestinian right to establish a state of their own and calling for an Israeli withdrawal from all the territories occupied since 1967.

Israel's persistence in establishing these settlements was a major factor in provoking serious rioting all over the occupied West Bank and Gaza during the spring and summer of 1976. The riots had a decisive effect on the outcome of municipal elections organized by the Israeli occupation authorities in the West Bank in April. The elections demonstrated the strength of Palestinian nationalism and widespread support for the PLO among the palestinians living under occupation.

The Palestine Uprising

The events of the second week of December 1987 in the Gaza strip and the west Bank took everybody by surprise. Thirteen Palestinian civilians were killed, 50 wounded and hundreds arrested in the most serious and sustained clashes between Palestinian youths and the Israeli army for many years. These clashes proved to be the beginning of what has become known as the Infifida (uprising) a mass Palestinian

demonstration against Israeli rule, which has surprised even the Palestinians themselves by lasting into the summer of 1991.¹⁰

On 16 April 1988, in Tunis an Israeli assassination squad murdered Khalif al-Wazir (alias Abu Jihad) Yasser Arafat, deputy commander of the Palestine Liberation Army. In the wave of violent demonstration that followed in the occupied territories, 16 Palestinian were killed in a single day. The assassination assisted the first steps of rapprochement between Arafat and President Assad, who had been at odds since 'Abu Musa' a fatah dissident led a Syrian-backed revolt in Lebanon against Arafat leadership of the PLO in 1983. However any prospect of a further improvement in relations was nullified by the revival in May 1988, of attempts by Syrian-backed PLO guerrillas, led by 'Abu Musa' to drive Arafat loyalists out of the Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut.

At the beginning of June 1988 an extraordinary summit meeting of the Arab League was held in Algiers to discuss the Intifida and Middle East Peace Moves. The final communique of the summit enforced by all 21 League members, effectively rejected the Shultz plan by demanding PLO

10. The Middle East and North Africa, (Europa Pub., 1992), p.50.

participation in the proposed International Peace Conference and insisting on the Palestinians rights to self-determination and the establishment of an Independent Palestinian State in the occupied territories. The 'summit' hailed the 'heroic' Palestinian uprising and pledged all necessary assistance to enable it to continue. After initial reports of differences between the PLO in Tunis and the underground leadership in the territories, a working relation between the two was quickly established, principally to ensure the passage of funds from outside the territories, but also to co-ordinate as far as possible, the political strategy of the PLO as a whole.

With battle lines thus, uncompromisingly drawn George Shultz returned to the Middle East in mid-April. To the surprise of no one, he achieved nothing, his efforts abstracted by Prime Minister Shamir's obstinacy, and hamstrung by his own unwillingness to bring pressure to bear on the Israelis. Despite the loss of interest in the western media, engineered chiefly by the restrictions Israel had imposed on reporting in the occupied territories, the intifida continued. By the end of July more than 290 Palestinian had been killed in the uprising and 28 deported. Fundamental changes had taken place in Palestinian society since the Intifida began, old class division had begun to break down as the West Bank's urban elite found itself as

depending on home-produced food by the poorest peasant families. In such a climate, Israeli repression could not break the popular will to continue the uprising, which was now a central fact the life of every Palestinian in the occupied territories, and rallying point for Palestinians throughout the diaspora.

The Effect of the Intifida on PLO Policy

Mass popular participation in grass-roots organization in the west Bank and Gaza had a major impact on the formulation of the PLO policy. The growth of the popular committees and the gradual, although partial, abrogation by Israeli state institutions of their role in the territories encouraged Palestinians intellectual to formulate ideal for the establishment of provisional governments for an independent Palestinian state. Despite the occupations, many national institutions had been constructed over the years, and with the widening of the base of participation in the management of Palestinian society that was brought about by the intifida, they suggested the model structure of such a government. From a series of meeting of the executive committee of the PLO in August and September 1988, there emerged two basic proposals for debate of the meeting of the PNC in Algiers in November. The first was for the declaration of an independent state in

the West Bank and Gaza, and advocated the establishment of a provisional government. The second recommended that the occupied territories be placed under the trusteeship of the U.N., pending a settlement of the conflict.

Declaration of Palestinian Independence Response and Recognition of PLO

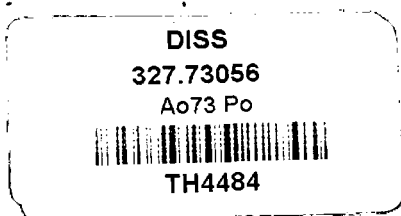
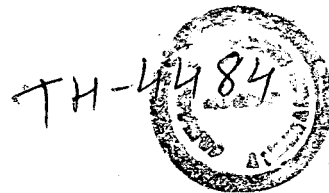
The 19th session of the PNC held in Algiers on 12-15 November 1988, brought together all the major components of the PLO, including those based in Damascus. As expected, the PNC unilaterally declared the establishment of the independent state of Palestine with its capital at Jerusalem. The UN General Assembly Resolution 181 provided the principle for Palestinian statehood in 1977 proposing the partition of Palestine into two states with define borders. However, the declaration of independence left open the question of the new states territory. The state was declared to be established, relying on the authority bestowed by international legitimacy as embodied in the resolutions of the United Nations since 1947, no mention being made of the specific details of any particular resolution, other than the principle of partition in Resolution 181.

The UN General Assembly Resolution 181 stipulated specific borders for two states in Palestine, while the UN

Security Council's Resolution 242 of 1967 urged Israel to withdraw from territories occupied in 1967 war.

The Israeli general election had resulted in a narrow victory for Yitzhak Shamir's Likud party while in the USA, a Republican President had again been returned to power. Shamir dismissed the results of the 19th PNC as tactical moves devoid of any importance. The response of the outgoing US administration was more damaging. Invited to address the UN General Assembly in New York in December 1988, Yasser Arafat and his aides had to obtain visas to enter the USA. On the personal instruction of the US Secretary of State, George Shultz, the visas were denied elsewhere in the world, however, the PNC declaration of Independence encountered more favourably responses. By the time that Shultz had banned Arafat from entering the USA, more than 60 states, including two permanent members of the UN Security Council (China and USSR) had recognized the state of Palestine.

Although the 12 members of the EC had not recognized the new state, they welcomed the decision of the 12th PNC as a positive step forward and continued with the backing of the USSR, to support the PLO's appeal for the convening of an International Peace Conference.



Even after finding US government almost completely isolated over its decision to ban Arafat from entering the USA, Shultz continued to refuse to acknowledge that Arafat had conceded anything previously demanded of him by the USA. Following Arafat's address in Geneva, it required hours of intense Swedish diplomacy to detail the concessions asked of the PLO in words which the USA would find unambiguous. Even then, pressure from the incoming President George Bush was needed to change Shultz's mind. On 16 December 1988 the USA Ambassador to Tunisia, Robert Pellatreu, held talk lasting 90 minutes with two representatives of the PLO. The USA had finally recognized the PLO. The PLO thus achieved its most important diplomatic breakthrough although it did not necessarily expect any concrete advances in the peace process to follow quickly. In the occupied territories, the outcome of the 19th session of the PNC was greeted with widespread jubilation, and the declaration of Independence was regarded as the greatest achievement of the Infifida.¹¹

Meanwhile, there were signs that the Israelis were preparing to announce a diplomatic initiative. Pressure from the USA and Europe, from both governments and Jewish communities, for Israel to redeem its intransigent image,

11. Ibid., pp.52-54.

together with condemnation of the uprising's high toll of casualties, led to rumours, officially disclosed, that the Prime Minister Shamir intended to reveal the initiative when he made his first visit to Washington since the election of President Bush.

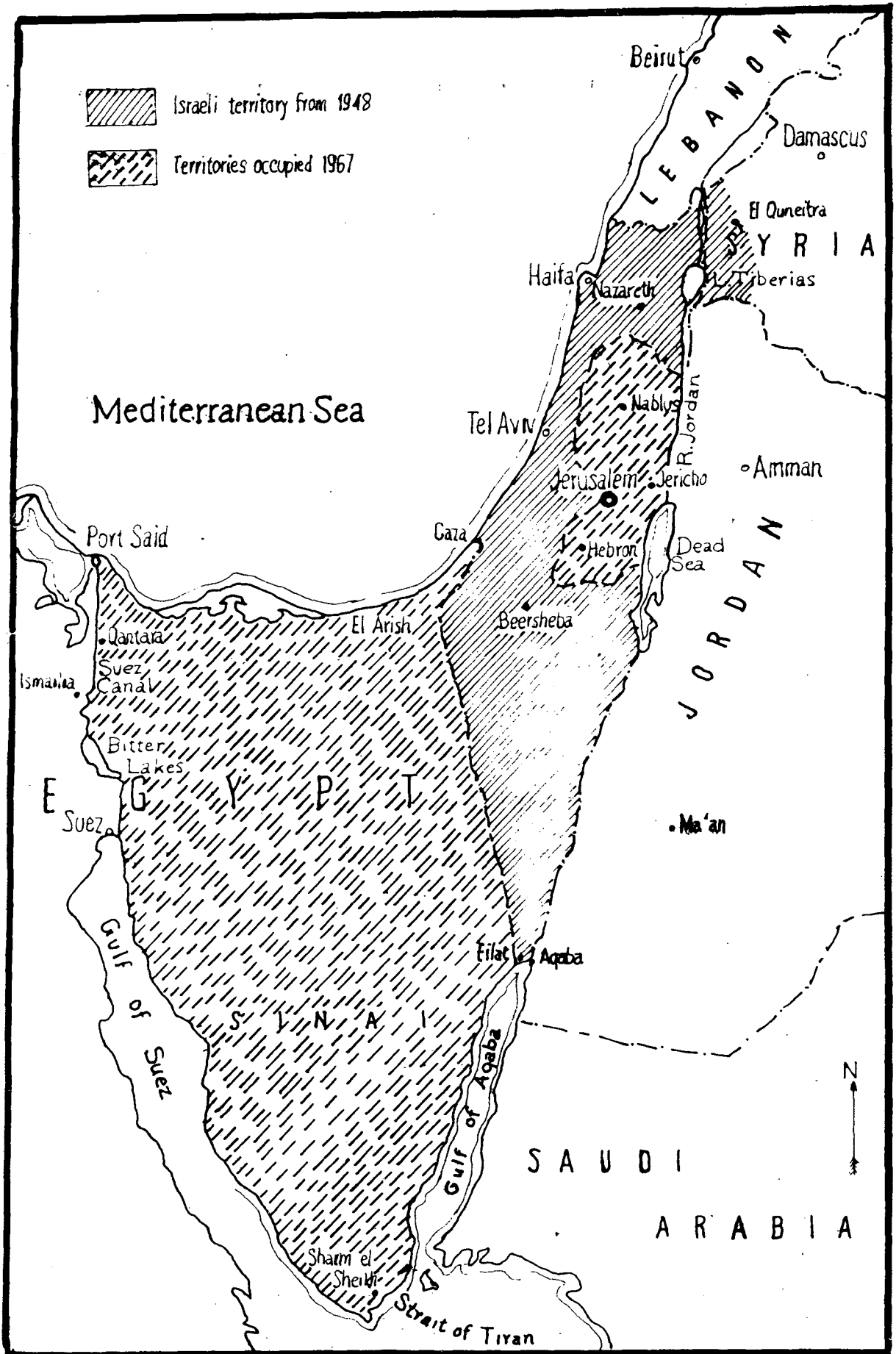
However, the leadership of the intifida and of the PLO in Tunis remained firm in their view that certain conditions needed to be satisfied before the Israeli peace plan could be accepted. The plan's resemblance to the Camp David's proposals of 1978 in many respects, its failure to clarify either who would be eligible to be a candidate or vote in the proposed elections, the status of the residents of East Jerusalem, its reiteration of Israel's opposition to the creation of a Palestinian state, that no change in the status of the territories could take place without the consent of Israeli government all fell short of what was acceptable not only to the Palestinians and the USSR, but also to the EC states. However, the plan made too many concessions in the view of right wing opinion in Israel, and its announcement provoked threats by settlers to establish their own independent state on the West Bank if Israel ever agreed to relinquish the territory.¹²

12. Ibid., pp.60-61.

Expansion of the Arab-Israeli Conflict and the Arab World

Since 1945, the one conflict that has stood out amongst problems of the Arab world is the Palestinian question. Some historians have suggested that it is this conflict which is the basis of all post war and present problems in the area. Indeed, in terms of events this view could be justified. However a closer look at the reasons behind such ancient reveals an issue which permeates almost every conflicts around the mid-terrenean and this appear to stem from the Arab-Israeli conflict "the issue of nationalism".

The fundamental conflict in the Arab-Israeli war is Zionism (the nation of the Jewish state) against the Palestinians. This is the term used to describe Arabs living in the Biblical land of the Philistines under the British mandate since 1918. The decision of the UN on 29th November 1947 to partition Palestine into Arab and Jewish states and to internationalise Jerusalem was only the tip of the iceberg. The tension between the two groups of people stems from historical times and appeared then, as it does today, to be ideologically irreconcilable. Historically, the Zionist dream was to gather all the "Jews of the world" into the "land of Israel" in the fulfillment of prophet and the device covenant with God, administered by an efficient



and capable state to safeguard the Jewish people interest, Palestine on the other hand, insist that Palestine existed before Israel and that the nation rights of self-determination were violated. The Palestinians also insist that it is part of the Arab land, linked to the historical unity of the Islamic nation founded in the seventh century and united by the region of Islam. This link to the religious, spiritual and cultural heritage of Islam, as well as the Arabic language brought into play another group of antagonists and another "Nationalistic" element. The Arab National Pan-Arabism is "an idea and a movement that recognises the close affinity shared by the Arab people and attempts to give that affinity some meaningful practical expression". Essentially then, the conflict of a nationalism in the Arab-Israeli conflict until 1982 can be identified as Palestinian and Arab Nationalism against Zionism.

After the acceptance of the UNSCOP Report majority plan for partition, on 14 May 1948, the Jewish community declared the independence of the state of Israel within two weeks set off the Arab-Israeli war of 1948-1949. The Zionist had declared that the land of Israel was the historic birthplace of the Jewish people, that the Zionist movement was enduring testimony of the role, Palestine had fulfilled in Jewish history, that the United Nations partition resolutions, the

sacrifice of the Zionist pioneers and the unendurable torments suffered by Jews in recent years had all laid the moral and legal foundations for the new states. No Arab states wanted to sign anything that might be interpreted as recognition of the Israeli state, including direct negotiation with Israel for peace. However, real evidence of the effort to re-establish Arab nationalism and the Palestinian cause can be found in the rise of power in Egypt of General Abdul Nasser and later the formation of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation.

Before the 1967 war Syria, Egypt and Jordan had all been concerned with the issues of Arab nationalism. After their defeat in 1967 war, each became primarily preoccupied with the recovery of the territory they had lost to Israel. In the case of Syria and Jordan, there was the fear that if Egypt, easily strongest of the three, negotiated separately with Israel, they would be too weak to recover their own lost territories. When those fears were fulfilled in 1978, Jordan and Syria condemned Egypt and refused to follow in its path. After Egypt's semi-retirement from the conflict in 1978 and Iraq's growing conflict with Iran in 1979, Syria emerged as regional leader against Israel. Its programme

necessarily went beyond the question of Palestine or the recovery of the Golan Heights, to the fulfillment of its regional ambitions. A contest was almost inevitable regardless of the conflict over Palestine.

The contest between Syria and Israel has evolved with increasing clarity since the 1967 war. Both have tried to wield their influence over Jordan and Lebanon, the two weaker states of geographical Syria, or at least deny the other's interference. In 1970 Syria invaded Jordan in support of the Palestinian guerrillas, but promptly withdrew when Israel warned that it would intervene to protect Jordan. Israel secured its objective of preserving Jordan against the challenge of the PLO and Syria but, in so doing, left Jordan embarrassed in the Arab arena. In Lebanon, however, Syria defeated Israel. In the years 1982-85 it successfully defended its primacy in Lebanese affairs despite its routs on the battlefield in 1982.

Syria remained hostile to any political process which would leave it standing along against Israel. It could not tolerate the possibility, in the year 1983-86, of Jordan and the accommodationist wing of the PLO negotiating a separate peace agreement, since this was bound to weaken its own regional position and destroy its primary in the Arab struggle against Israel. It remained determined to lead the

Arabs in peace negotiations, hence its continued opposition to independent PLO action.¹³

In the wake of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war the Arab states were forced to reconcile Arab national interest with the realisation that Israel could not be eliminated by military strength. Having restored military honour and dignity in the Yom Kippur War (1973), Anwar Sadat having used this event to demonstrate his leadership qualities. Thus in 1979 Israel agreed to return all of the Sinai to Egypt in return for a formal peace treaty negotiated with Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and President Jimmy Carter at Camp David accord in 1978. President Sadat Peace initiative turned the Israeli issue, the one rallying cry for the majority of Arab, into a source of bitter disagreement in the Arab community which ostracised Egypt for eight years. Ten years later, however, Hosni Mubarak was welcome back to the Arab fold with much fanfare at the 1989 Casablanca Arab Summit Conference. The willingness of Arab states to restore relations with Egypt without

13. David McDowell, *Palestinian and Israel, Uprising and Beyond*, (I.B. Tauris & Company Lt., London, 1989), p.41.

insisting of its abandonment of the peace treaty with Israel marked a major triumph for Egyptian Foreign Policy. It also held important positive implications for Israel, in that it signified increasing Arab acquiescence to Israel existence.

Together with the concept of regionalism, another fundamental issue underlying the problems of the Middle East is that of the religious rivalry. Religious rivalry tends to divide nations rather than unite them in a common code of living. In the Arab-Israeli conflict, for example Jewish demands that they should be allowed to live in an Israel which had been given to them by divine dispensation and a Biblical heritage, clashed with the political and religious dictates of Islam. The presence of Israel's zionism to Islam perceptions not only violated and offended Arabism, but the handing over of Jerusalem was seen as giving up a necessary defence of Islam's integrity in political ideals and cultural terms. Islam not only claim sovereignty over the jewish "promised land" but also sought Islamic other lands.

American popularity in the Arab world, resulting from a strong stand against Israeli, British and French military action in the Suez Canal was short lived. The Soviet Union

support Egypt and threatened military intervention which helped to establish a political position in Egypt, Syria and Iraq. The Eisenhower doctrine sought to stop Soviet political inroads, which were gaining momentum through military and economic aid, anti Israel support and Arab suspicion of western imperialism. The U.S. to play down its support for Israel and endeavoured to retain "diplomatic elbow room" protect its interest and limit Soviet gains.

U.S. and Soviet reactions to the six day war demonstrated the use of the Middle East as a scene of super power rivalry. The American position was that to recover territories occupied by Israel, the Arab states would have to commit themselves to a peaceful settlement of this conflict with Israel embodied in the UN Resolution.

The Palestine problem will require at least a two stage solution. The immediate goal is self-government for the Arabs in the Territories since 1967. Within three years, negotiations, towards the longer term Palestinian goal, the formation of an independent state, should begin. This second stage, however, can not begin until other Israeli-Arab conflicts - the occupation of the Golan, the "Security Zone" in Lebanon, and the disputed Jordanian-Israeli frontier have been resolved. The last stage which should begin within five years - is gradual movement toward

a final settlement, guaranteed by the Great Powers, of relations within Palestine and of Jewish Arab relations generally.

Arab-Israeli Conflict Over Water Resources

Their decades - long feud notwithstanding a new conflict between Arab-states and Israel over water resources is heightening tension in the Middle East. So much so that expert believes water will eventually determine the future of the region and will have to be part of any Arab-Israeli settlement.

Indeed, although seldom mentioned the control over water is a crucial question that under lies Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Before the 21st century, the struggle over limited and threatened water resources could send already fragile ties among regional states. The situation is already critical in the West Bank and the Gaza strip and threatened the agricultural sector which forms the backbone of the local Palestine economic they point out that water will be a key issue in any Arab-Israeli settlement and warn the crisis must be faced now.

Options for Peace

While negotiations must proceed "step by step" the final goal must be clear. The U.S. has to convey to the

Arabs confirmation of its recent promises regarding elements of a final settlement. It has also to reveal what commitments were made to Israel by previous administration on Jerusalem and its Arab population. Finally, the Jewish settlers in the occupied territories have to be prepared for withdrawal or agreement to accept arab control of the areas in which they live. A third option would be for Israel to retain these territories in exchange ceding Arab areas it has controlled since 1948.

CHAPTER - III

THE THIRD PARTY ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES

Ever since the Palestine crises arose at the end of the Second World War the United States has seen itself as an advocate and promoter of peace in the Middle East. The fact remains that for over twenty years a peaceful Arab-Israeli settlement has been a primary aim of American policy. The story of American efforts for peace is thus another way of describing the American peace policy toward Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict.¹

From 1955 onward Soviet-American rivalry was actively projected into the local conflict, with the result that U.S. influence with both sides was reduced. Cold War push U.S. policy sometimes in one direction sometimes in the other largely determined what was done, or not done, in the pursuit of peace between Arab states and Israel.² From the June 1967 war and the November passage of United Nations Security Council resolution 242 down into 1971 the primary focus was an developing terms of reference for negotiations of a "package deal" a series of agreement that would address

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1. Malcolm. H. Kerr (ed.)_ The Elusive Peace in the Middle East (State University of New York Press, 1975, p.249.
 2. Ibid., p.301.

any facet of the conflict from borders and recognition of refugee for peace. Earlier in the Nixon administration Soviet-US dialogue in 1969 concentrated on developing comparable position in Moscow and Washington from which the two powers might persuade their friends to break the stalemate by producing stalemate of changed position. Those efforts failed because the political foundations for peaceful relationship did not exist.³ Yet despite on dissent from the policy, the period from 1973-76 did see progress in the context of a general strategic understanding of the Middle East and its relationship to the United States. Indisputably, this period laid the foundation for Anwar Sadat own initiative. Since the Sadat initiative, however, US policy has been "muddle through" camp David can only become a triumph for peace for American policy and for American "full partnership" if it is followed by a strategy to bring about autonomy of the West Bank, to arrest renacent Israeli expansionist legislation, to clarify the purposive ambiguities of Camp David, and to attract Jordanian and Saudi participation rather than secure it through a possibly perception of Soviet threat.⁴ The Camp David Accord signed by Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister

3. Ibid., p.305.

4.. Paul A. Jureidim, R.D. McLaren - Beyond Camp David (Syracuse University Press, New York, 1981), p.93.

Menachen Begin on September 17, 1978 were a significant turning point in recent Middle East History. Praised by some laying for foundations for peace between Egypt and Israel, the accords have also be criticised for failing to achieve a comprehensive settlement including a resolution of the Palestinian question. The supporters and critics alike recognize the importance of what happened at Camp David, and both groups acknowledge the vital role played by the United States in reaching an agreement. The efforts to resolve Arab-Israeli conflict more from attempt to start a comprehension negotiation to the shuttle diplomacy of Secretary of States Henry Kissenger the Camp David meeting and the Egyptian Israeli Peace Treaty.

Negotiations on an agreement for a Palestinian self-governing authority were pursued through the Carter administration and then put on the back burner by the Reagan administration while it pursued an anti-Soviet "strategic consensus" in the Middle East. In late summer 1982 George Shultz as the new Secretary of State enabled President Reagan to make a speech attempting to revive the peace process, but for much of the year the administration devoted most of its energy to the crisis in Lebanon. The change in the Palestinian position brought to the force the question of

what instruments and political approaches can help reconcile to negotiate the practical elements of a peaceful relationship them.⁵

As the administration of President George Bush its attention to the Arab-Israeli conflict within weeks of his inauguration, it was possible to cast the problem in the following way. Choice between two ways of looking at the Arab-Israel Peace Process. One would describe primary problem as finding a vehicle and formulation for beginning a negotiation between Israel and the Palestinian movement. In March and April 1989, that vehicle will take the form of proposal by the Prime Minister of Israel to negotiate arrangements for holding election on the West Bank and Gaza to choose Palestinian to negotiate with Israel. Another approach, to see the primary task in the peace process not just as beginning negotiations but as changing the Israeli Palestinian relationship.⁶

Post cold War U.S. peace policy

Now the Cold War is over, there are new challenges and opportunities facing the United States in the Middle

5. Judiths Kipper and Harold H. Saunders (ed.) - The Middle East in Global Perspective, Westview Press, American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1991, p.308.

6. Ibid., p.309.

East. The U.N. is playing a stronger role in the world affairs, Arab-Israel negotiations are taking place. The American government is deeply involved in Arab-Israel-Palestinian affairs more than ever before the past years. In the post Cold War era, the U.S. has a continuing national interest in preventing any hostile power from dominating the region in maintaining access to region's oil at reasonable prices and to the region strategic waterways in supporting and stability through the resolution of conflict, and in human rights, economic opportunity and political self-determination.

Russia and the other republic of the former Soviet Union are too weak to preoccupied with their domestic affairs and their relations with each other, and too desirous of economic assistance from the United States and the west to mount deliberate challenged. The Cold War reverberated around the globe effecting virtually everyone everywhere. Today East-West rivalry over the future of Europe and the third world has been transformed. Partnership has replaced conflict. A new mode of international cooperation has replaced the acrimony of the Cold War.⁷

7. George McGovern, Middle East Policy vol.1, no.3, 1992, p.1.

The coming of Bush administration has bring the drastic change of US foreign policy towards the Middle East. When President Bush in his address to congress on March 6, declaimed in a Crescendo of emotion that "the time has come to put an end to the Arab Israeli conflict in accordance with the principle of territory for peace" he raised no small degree of fear and confusion among seasoned observers of Arab-Israeli affairs. Western European President and Prime Minister are falling over each other to project optimism and urge quick action. More seriously, Henry Kissinger no amateur no matters Arab-Israeli believes the new balance of power in the region after the war is "a historic opportunity" should be translated into a major diplomatic efforts within a few months of Gulf War. The Persian Gulf war leaves the US as the world's only multi-dimensional Super Power. With strong Soviet help a thing of past, Syria might now be reconciled to making peace with Israel and Syria, clearly has ever represented the gordian knof to be cut if peace is to be achieved.⁸ The PLO is down and may be out, already Saudis and Egyptian are moving to displace the current Palestinian leadership, and the king of Jordan, though weakened by crisis in war, is sharpening his knives as a result and most important, Arab politics are

8. Adam Garfinkle, National Review, April 1, 1991, p.37-38.

aligned along and Egyptian Syrian-Saudi axis, with all other claimants to influence defeated or marginalized. The last time these three came together in alliance in 1973 was the only time in the history of Arab-Israeli conflict. How the reasons goes if those three aligned for peace no one in the Arab world can stop them, the key as always is whether the major Arab states are ready for real peace. May be as the result of the Persian Gulf war, they have finally had this fill of Palestine nihilism and are ready to separate their own interest from those of PLO. If so that is what Mr Baker should be trying to find out then a US role as honest broker will become both necessary and right.

The passing of Cold War and the demonstration of American Power in the Gulf war put on end, the US administration believes to what was once the Achilles heel of America's Middle East diplomacy. For the first time, an administration sees itself in a position to bring order and peace to the middle East of a bearable cost. ⁹

A new mode of international cooperation which secretary Baker has called "collective engagement" is replacing the acrimonious competition of the Cold War. This sea of change in world politics has had profound effect in

9. Robert W. Tuckin, The protectorate, The New Republic August 10, 1992, p.20.

the Near East. An example of the new "collective engagement" was the response to Saddam Hussain invasion of Kuwait. In US partnership with Russia, have been able to bring Israel and all her immediate Arab neighbours, Syria, Jordans, Lebanon and Palestinian together for the first time over in a historic peace process to negotiate a comprehensive settlement of their long standing disputes in direct face to face negotiation based on United Nation Security Council Resolution 242 and 338.¹⁰

The U.S. and the U.N.

The US is obviously willing to orchestrate and lead UN "Collective Security" measures and response to a crises such as Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The Bush administration has indicated that it will work together through the United Nations when possible it has also reserved the right to act in a selective coalition or to act alone. The US Defence Department stresses that "the United States should be postured to act independently when collective action can not be orchestrated" or when a rapid response is necessary. Furthermore, despite Israel rejection of negotiation under UN auspices and even of UN participation in negotiations the

10. Edward P. Djerejian, The U.S. and the Middle East in a changing world, U.S. Department of State Dispatch, June 8, 1992, p.444.

US has forged ahead with its own diplomatic efforts. This US diplomacy has welcomed a willing Russia as a co-sponsor, has encouraged participation by a diverse set of UN members, particularly in the Multi-lateral Talks of regional cooperation, and has aimed of the implementation of Security Council Resolution 242 and 338 that are fair and feasible.¹¹ In the future, the United States and other major power should develop arms sales, arms control and foreign aid policies designed to create military stalemate between third world adversaries in an effort to discouraged aggression. We can then aim of the diplomatic resolutions of their conflicts, which would make subsequent and more significant limitations of arms possible. Moreover, in the wake of Iraq's military defeat in the midst of Arab-Israeli peace negotiations and in the light of Israel's nuclear deterrent and conventional superiority, it is not clear that major new arms transfer to Israel are really necessary.¹²

US Peace Initiative after the Gulf War

The opportunity for Middle East Peace process was open during the Bush administration. For George Bush and

11. George McGovern - Middle East Peace Policy, vol.1, no.3, 1993, p.3.

12. Ibid., p.4.

James Baker the Revival of their Middle East Peace initiative came not a moment too soon. For a brief few days after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in early August 1990, there was the reason to hope that there would indeed be a "new world order". The cold war had all but indeed, the Soviet Union impoverished and internally, divided, was about to become an oil importer, and would no doubt be pleased to see a peaceful, "international" resolution to the Gulf crisis. In fact there appeared to be a common agreement on this by all of the Permanent Members of the Security Council, and a broad sense the UN itself would be used as they were originally intended.

Throughout the course of the Gulf war, George Bush and his coalition partners, most of them at least were of pains to avoid, shun, ignore and deny any "Linkage" between Kuwait and Palestine. In the White House, the political portents the danger signs, were recognised. A very popular war could suddenly turn into a silly, wasteful looking exercise if no tangible results could be produced. So the luminaries of the Bush administration, who had been content to ignore the Palestine issue through ten years of the Reagan-Bush regime, suddenly discovered "window of opportunity", Secretary of States James Baker was dispatched to begin several months of intense Shuttle Diplomacy. In fairness it must be said that once he was given the job, he

pursued the objective of peace negotiations vigorously, and in the process, existed at least some pressure upon all the parties involved including Israel.¹³

When Baker began his peace shuttle shortly after the end of the hostilities he announced that he was seeking a process that would involved direct negotiation with both the parties of Arab and Israeli. The Bush administration and those few others who support this curiously lopsided peace process, the ultimate purpose of the exercise, a genuine lasting state of peace between Israel and her neighbours based upon mutual respect.¹⁴

During Secretary of state James Baker eight trip to the Middle East in the wake of the Gulf war, he and the new Soviet Foreign Minister Boris N. Pankim announced that the U.S and the Soviet Union had jointly issued invitations to Israel, its Arab neighbors and the Palestinian to attend a historic Arab-Israeli Peace Conference. This Conference convened on October 30, 1991, in Madrid (Spain), and was opened by President Bush and Gorbachov. The invitations were finally issued after month's of difficult diplomacy

13. Stephen Green - American-Arab Affairs, 1992, pp.45-46.

14. Ibid., p.47.

based on Baker Assessment that the issue of Palestinian representation was being resolved according to Israel desiderata.

The Peace Conference in Madrid, President Bush termed to event of "Mission of hope". With the opening of the conference middle East turned an important historic page - away from the intractability and insolubility of this 4 decades-old conflict and towards the achievement of genuine comprehensive peace and reconciliation between Israel and its Arab neighbors through direct dialogue and negotiation.¹⁵ Never before had there been direct bilateral negotiations between Israel and each of its Arabs and Palestinian Neighbors and never again there be such a taboo against such face to face contacts. The US throughout this process was an honest broker, a catalyst for peace and a driving force to help ensure that negotiation works. Both the President and Secretary have reiterated their personal commitments to play an active role in helping the process succeed that we are in it for the long haul. President Bush and Secretary Baker have in hand unprecedented agreement on face to face negotiations between Arabs and Israelis. The strength of America, position in the Middle East is the

15. Edward P. Djerejian, U.S. Department of State Dispatch, no.25, 1991, p.861.

product of many factors of the President courage in the Gulf war and of the collapse of Soviet Union power, which in turn is the result of the forty years of western firmness (especially in the last decades).

U.S. Policy on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has failed over the past years, but during the Bush administration US fully involved an taking peace shuttle to settle down the conflict. The advent of Madrid Peace Conference, Washington Conference and Moscow Conference, those bilateral talks were initiative by US and co-sponsor with the Soviet Union, but the peace talk was not come out upto the peaceful solution, the differences arose among the parties and peace negotiation was deadlock. To come to the peaceful solution of this prolong Arab-Israeli conflict, US taking peaceful initiative and explored the Middle East to pressurize both the parties to bring back into the peaceful negotiation. With respect to the question of Arab Israeli conflict, US commitment was to seek a comprehensive settlement based on UN Security Council Resolution 242 and 388. The aftermath of the Gulf war made a window of opportunity for United States to make significant progress in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict. How long this window might be open, and that's all the more reason why the United States think ought to all work as actively to try and take advantage of whatever time there is to resolved this Arab-Israeli conflict.

US Policy Goals in the Middle East

For over 4 decades, the central characteristic of international relations was the dichotomy between the Soviet empire of dictatorship regimes and centrally planning and the free world of democratic governments and market economics. Thus, the Cold War reverberated around the globe effecting virtually everyone everywhere. Much of American foreign policy and that of many other free nations was either driven by or derivative of collective efforts to contain Soviet aggression and expansion. Today, East-West rivalry over the future of Europe and the Third World has been transformed. Partnership has replaced conflict. A new mode of international cooperation has replaced the acrimony of the Cold War. This sea change in world politics has had a profound effect in the Middle East. In partnership with Russia, US have been able to bring Israel and all her immediate Arab neighbours- Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestinians-together for the first time in a historic peace process to negotiate comprehensive settlement of their long standing disputes in direct face to face negotiations based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.¹⁶

16. Edward P. Djerejian, U.S. Department of State Dispatch, June 8, 1992, p.444.

Amidst these changes, basic U.S. Foreign Policy objectives remain consistent and clear. US has two key sets of policy goals in the Middle East : The first has to do with a lasting and comprehensive peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours; the second is the creation of viable security arrangements for friends and allies on the Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf.

Peace Process

The first of these goals - the search for peace between Arabs and Israelis - has challenged every US administration in the last 4 decades. In the Middle East where war has at times secured endemic, the road to achieving lasting peace through negotiation and compromise now before us. The first historic steps forward have been taken and the process is gaining momentum.¹⁷ Fundamental and bitterly contested differences separate the parties to the conflict. Nevertheless, there have now been eight rounds of direct bilateral talks between Israelis and Arabs, the US stressed to all the parties the need to bring to the negotiating table serious, substantive proposals. The time has come for talks aimed at defining possible areas of agreement and at narrowing the gaps, through compromise,

17. Ibid., p.444.

where disagreement persists. The negotiating parties have responded positively to US call. The Israelis took steps to improve the atmosphere for this round even before it began. The new government of Israel halted work on many of the settlements, which we characterize as obstacles to peace, and ended many of the incentives programs which supported settlement in the territories. The Prime Minister Rabin has said publicly, is a fundamental shift in Israeli national priorities away from investment in the occupied territories and toward meeting pressing social, economic and human needs within Israel.

At the bargaining table, substantive papers, which provide a foundation for further negotiations have been presented by the Syrians, Palestinians and Israelis. Acting US Secretary Egeleburger met with all the delegations just prior to the Labor Day break, when some of the delegations departed Washington for consultations.

Bilateral Relations

The U.S. Peace process about bilateral relations with the Arab states and with Israel - The United States today maintains to broad-based dialogue with Syria on a wide range of issues. This policy of engagement has yielded results which serve important US interests. President Assad's affirmative response to President Bush's letter inviting

Syria to participate in the peace negotiations with Israel was one of the major breakthrough which allowed Secretary Baker to proceed with constructing a peace process engaging Israel in Bilateral negotiations with all its immediate Arab neighbors.

U.S. policy toward Lebanon remains firm and consistent. This policy was reiterated to both the Syrian and Lebanese leadership during Secretary Baker's trip to Syria and Lebanon. US support Gulf implementation of both the letter and the spirit of the Taif accord and the withdrawal of all non-Lebanese forces from Lebanon, and repeatedly made this clear to all concerned parties. Finally, US discussed serious concerns over the situation in South Lebanon with key governments in the region, asking all to exercise maximum restraint lest the confining violence lead to even more serious consequences for all concerned.

Jordan is playing a very constructive role in the peace process at both the bilateral and multilateral levels. This role helped U.S. make moderate progress toward the gradual restoration of a bilateral relationship that was severely strained by the Gulf war.

Egypt continues to play an active role in the peace process, participating in each of five multilateral working

groups, working closely with the United States in urging the parties to the bilateral process to focus on issue in the region, and helping to dampen unrealistic expectations by preparing the parties for a long term process.

The solid foundations of close US-Israeli relations remain constant and are instrumental in promoting progress in the peace process. The new Israeli government has taken a number of important steps to improve the atmosphere for the peace talks and to improve conditions in the occupied territories. These includes - halting construction of over 7,000 planned housing units in the West Bank and Gaza and halting to reduce mortgage and other incentives which have encouraged Israelis to settle in the territories. Cancelling deportation orders on 11 Palestinians and releasing almost 800 prisoners from camps and formally accepting the applicability of UNSC Resolutions 242 and 338 on all fronts.

We believe those steps are significant, but recognise that these steps alone are not enough, more needs to be done by all sides to keep the process moving forward. One such important step - important for the United States as well as the peace process - is the end of the Arab boycott of Israel. President Bush reiterated long standing opposition to this obstacle to peace. Its time for this change to happen.

Second major aspect of US Middle East policy is the security and stability of the Persian Gulf. The Arabian Peninsula are located in a dangerous neighbourhood and confront risk to their sovereignty and independence. Stability in the Gulf is vital not only to national interest but also to the economic security of the whole world.¹⁸

The facts bear that out, the united States has good, productive relations with countries and peoples of all religious throughout the world including many whose systems of government are firmly grounded in Islamic principles. Religious freedom and tolerance are integral elements of American national character and constitutional system. Indeed, as much as any society, the American people understand the meaning of diversity and the virtues of tolerance.

The broad policy goals of the United States in the Middle East region have been laid down by President Bush and Secretary Baker, genuine peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors enhancing security and deterring or defeating

18. Edward P. Djerejian, U.S. Department of State Dispatch, September 14, 1992, vol.3, no.37, pp.702-703.

aggression, helping to protect the world's economic security, promoting economic and social justice, and promoting the values in which we believe.

The coming of new US President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher follow the same George Bush and Baker peace policy in the Middle East. The US peace initiative is going on and on to look forward to resolve this restless conflict. The US administration is still taking peace sponsorship and negotiating with Arab neighbors, and Israelis and Palestinians to bring back together based on Madrid Peace Conference 1991, to resolve this prolong Arab-Israeli conflict.

CHAPTER - IV

SECURITY, WORLD ORDER AND ARAB-ISRAELI IDENTITIES: THE MADRID PEACE CONFERENCE AND AFTER FOLLOW-UP

The West Asia Peace Conference that opened in Madrid (Spain) on Wednesday October 30, 1991, was not a "historic or unprecedented" as had been claimed because it was not strictly speaking the first occasion on which the Arabs and Israelis had met face to face across the conference table.¹ In his opening remarks of the Peace Conference in Madrid, President Bush termed the event a "Mission of hope", and affirmed that the Middle East had turned a important historic page away from the intractability and insolubility of this over four decades old conflict. The achievement of genuine, comprehensive peace and reconciliation between Israel and its Arab neighbours through direct dialogue and negotiation were no longer conditioned by the bloc system and the domination of bipolar rivalry. Direct bilateral negotiations were lunched between Israel, Jordanian-Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian delegation with inbuilt features of accommodation proffered by an American peace strategy.

1. Times of India, October 27, 1991, New Delhi.

In his closing Press Conference in Madrid, Secretary James Baker termed those developments a "good start". For over 12 hours on November 3, Israeli and Arab delegates debated the issues across the table of negotiations.² Many hours were spent in discussion with key Middle East figures, Prime Minister Shamir of Israel, President Assad of Syria, King Hussain of Jordan, President Mubarak of Egypt, President Hrawi of Lebanon and Palestinian representative like Faisal Hussiani and Hanan Ashrawi in an effort to understand their concerns, examine the differences between their positions and to develop the terms of reference for the extended negotiations.

The central developments in the initiating process which should be noticed were:

1. The parties agreed that the goal is a comprehensive peace settlement achieved through direct negotiations based on UN security Council Resolution 242 and 338.
2. They agreed on two negotiating tracks between Israel and Arab states and between Israel and Palestinians.

2. Edward P. Djerejian, Middle East After the Gulf War, U.S. Department of State Dispatch, November 25, 1991, p.861.

3. They agreed that the negotiations between Israel and Palestinians would be conducted in phases with the initial phase focusing on interim self government arrangements and the second phase focusing on a permanent settlement.
4. They agreed that the direct negotiations would be launched by a peace conference - Co-sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union and that the Conference would not be imposed solutions, veto agreements, make decisions or vote.
5. They agreed that the Palestinians would participate in a joint Jordanian Palestinian delegation, and that Palestinians who participate would be those who accept to negotiate on two tracks and in phases and who accept to live in peace with Israel.,
6. They agreed to invite the European community and Egypt to participate alongside the co-sponsors.
7. They agreed to invite the Gulf cooperation Council, the Arab Maghreb Union, and the United Nations to each send an observer to the conference.

Three Crucial Issues

In translating these agreements into a workable peace conference and negotiations, the parties themselves had identified three critical issues.

The parties had expressed a yearning for peace, a desire to live mutually satisfying relationship with neighbors, and to have those relations characterized by peace treaties, diplomatic relations, economic relations, cultural ties, and political dialogue.

The parties emphasized the importance of land and the desire of people to exercise authority and political governance over territories they consider part of their patrimony.

And the parties stressed the need for security. That was the requirement that people should lived free of fear and all should affirm the obligation of governments to do their best to protect their citizens.³

At the end of three days it was impossible to comprehend the flow of events. The delegates concluded the opening phase by quarreling bitterly about whether they should continue meeting in Madrid or move to some different venue. President Bush warned that no agreement could be foreseen in "a day or a week or a month even a year"⁴ A possible compromise was to move the talks to another

3. Ibid., pp.861-862.

4. George J. Church - Time, November 12, 1991, Washington, p.10.

European city or Washington. Several weeks after the Madrid Conference and the initial bilateral talks that follows, the United States and the Soviet Union invited all of the relevant parties to resume the bilateral talks in Washington DC on December 4, 1991.

**Second Phase of Peace Talks-Washington
December 10, 1991**

Bilateral negotiations finally opened in the office of the US State Department of December 10, 1991 and continued with a break on December 13-15, until December 18, where they were adjourned until January 7, 1992. The talks ended with no progress having been achieved and no genuine meeting of the Israeli and the Jordanian-Palestinians having taken place. At the start of negotiation on December 10, the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation claimed that Israel had agreed in Madrid to enter into "two track" negotiations. The Israeli delegation rejected such an interpretation and insisted that they would only negotiate with a Jordanian Palestinian delegation. The joint delegation might however be broken up into "sub-committees" to discuss specific topics.

Bilateral talks did take place between Israel and Syria, and between Israel and Lebanon. No side reported specific progress, although the Israeli and Lebanese sides reported constructive dialogue and Israel reportedly offered

to sign a peace treaty with Lebanon. The talks between Israel and Syria concentrated on the status of the Golan Heights. The Syrians and Israelis made no progress in their six days of negotiations.

Third Phase of West Asia Bilateral Peace Talks-Washington 13 January 1992

When all the delegations finally arrived in Washington and began communicating, Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian quickly resolved the procedural impasse that had not been resolved in December 1991. The leaders of the three delegations, agreed to convene a meeting that lasted for half an hour on the evening of January 13, and then proceeded to have a meeting of the Israeli delegation with the Palestinians, a delegation that included two Jordanians. Remarkably, the Israeli-Palestinian meeting constituted the first official face to face discussion about the future of the occupied territories that the parties had, had since the establishment of Israel in 1948. But these discussions did not go well the Palestinians demanded a freeze on Jewish settlement building in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, but the Israeli indicated that they would not even negotiate over this issue.

At the same time, the Israelis and Syrians failed to move beyond their December position, the Syrian unwillingness to discuss nature of peace and the Israeli

unwillingness to discuss withdrawal from the Golan Heights,⁵ could hardly provide the opportunity to beat swords into ploughshares.

Moscow Peace Conference

The two-day West Asia Peace Conference boycotted by Palestinians, Syria and Lebanon, ended in Moscow on January 29, 1992 setting up several working groups for multilateral talks. The issues to be considered by the groups included disarmament, water sharing, environment, economic development and refugees.

An expanded Palestinian delegation continued its boycott of the conference on the final day over a dispute about the delegation's composition. The delegation include representative from East Jerusalem. But Russia and the United States the co-hosts of the conference supporting the Israel stand, told the Palestinians that only representatives from occupied territories of West Bank and Gaza strip would be allowed to participate.

Israel and Jordan held their first formal substantive peace talks but Israeli officials exchanged bitter accusation with Arabs on terrorism.

5. Thomas R. Mattair, Middle East Policy, vol.1, no.2, p.73.

**Fourth Round of Washington Bilateral Peace
Talks concluded on 4 March 1992**

The bilateral Arab-Israeli talks were deadlocked less than six months after they started. Yet all sides recognized that stagnation without progress or the collapse of the process would have far reaching effects.

For the Arabs a major concern was that peace process should not play into hands of Yitzhak Shamir whose main objective was to be re-elected in June. Shamir had managed to keep talking without offered any substantive concessions. Israel was able to persist in its own interpretation of UN Security Council Resolution 242 in a way that absolved it from a commitment to a territorial compromise.⁶

In short, the fourth round only reinforced the truth that the Arabs and the Israelis were seeking different goals. Israel was seeking to maintain and to improve the status quo through normalisation of relations: the Arabs were seeking an Israeli withdrawal from the territories it occupied.

**Fifth Round of Bilateral Peace Talks on
Washington 27 April 1992**

6. Lamis Andoni, Middle East International, March 6, 1992, p.3.

The fifth round of Middle East bilateral negotiations opened on time in Washington on 27 April in an unusually positive mood. As expected, the Israeli formally tabled their proposals for municipal elections in the West Bank and Gaza strip, and the Syrian-Israeli track of negotiations was given a much-needed boost when Syria agreed to lift restrictions on its Jewish population.

Syria's Jews, estimated to number around 4,500 would from now on be allowed to travel abroad freely, provided they did not try to go direct to Israel. Other restrictions, including that of buying and selling property, were also lifted as a gesture toward Israel. No headway was made in the substantive dispute between the two countries, which centered on Israeli's occupation of the Golan Heights.

Israel's proposal for municipal election in the territories was not rejected out of hand by the Palestinians. Hanan Ashrawi said her delegation would study the plan, and although she complained that it fell short of Palestinian aspirations, which centered at this stage on a national legislative assembly for the Palestinians, she did say there was "a distinct possibility of achieving serious progress" in the talks. Yasir Arafat firmly rejected the Israeli Idea, as did other Palestinian leaders. But this rejection was not final in the time of transition, particularly in the light of Ashwari's remarks. As the

talks progressed and the PLO was subjected to pressures from various sides,⁷ which were part of American shock-therapy to set in motion sweeping changes.

In the period between the fourth and fifth round of talks, the PLO came under both US and Arab states' pressure to remain engaged in talks about the interim arrangements. There were explicit messages conveyed by the three aides of Secretary of State Baker who visited the territories at the end of March and again by the Egyptians and other Arab leaders.

**Sixth Round of Bilateral Talk, Washington
August 24, 1992**

The Arabs and Israeli expressed hope and optimism after the first day of the month long sixth round of West Asia peace negotiation in Washington. The Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, said, his government was doing all it could to give peace a change. Hours before the talks began, Mr Rabin cancelled expulsions of 11 Palestinians ordered by the previous hard line Likud government. He also announced that he would release 800 Palestinian prisoners. All these were positive actions which had a dramatic effect.

7. Ibid., May 1, 1992, p.5.

The Jordanian spokesman, Mr Marwan Mansher said after the first round of talks that he was now "cautiously optimistic" that Jordan and Israel would reach agreement on the agenda. "The gap has been somewhat bridged" by the initial meeting he said.⁸

The Syrian spokeswoman, Mrs. Bushra Kanafani said at a news conference, that she welcomed the Israelis affirmation that they were "Committed to a comprehensive settlement on all fronts"

The Israeli Foreign Minister, Mr Shimon Peres, said that talks with Syria in Washington had got off to a good start. But he said the Syrian would have to soften their position on Israel withdrawal from the Golan Heights or risk jeopardizing the West Asia Peace Process.⁹

Mr. Peres urged Syria to consider interim arrangements while seeking a permanent settlement. "We are opening our ears to hearing suggestion from the Syrian side about partial, gradual interim proposals". Syria had so far rejected Israeli overtures for an interim agreement dealing with the Golan Heights, which Israel captured in the 1967

8. Times of India, August 26, 1992.

9. Ibid., August 26, 1992.

Arab-Israeli war and subsequently annexed. However Peres expressed optimism that the recent movements with Syria will continue. The Syrians for their part were demanding a commitment by Israel to full withdrawal from the Golan Heights- a demand they repeated in the Washington talks.

All the parties were aware of the undercurrents which were acting, although they did not always surface in the negotiations. Characteristically, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said at the Washington talks, "What is called face to face negotiation" in the peace talks is "partly back of back negotiations."¹⁰

**Seventh round of bilateral talks adjourned in
Mid December 1992, Washington**

Since the seventh round of bilateral adjourned in mid-December 1992, there was a hiatus in the negotiation. President Clinton sent Secretary Christopher to the Middle East in February not only to re-energize and reactivate the peace talks but also to assess the determination and commitment of the parties to the goal of a negotiated peace.

The President and Secretary especially wanted to emphasize the commitment of the United States to a full partnership role in this complex and difficult process they

10. Times of India, September 16, 1992.

signaled to all the parties come to the table prepared to engage in serious and meaningful negotiations in order to narrow the substantive differences between them.

**Eighth round of bilateral peace talks fails
30, April 1993 Washington**

The United States failed to resolve the Israeli Palestinian differences over a Palestinian proposal to study water rights in the occupied territories. The Palestinian demand had been the focus of much of the third round of talks on scarce water resources in the West Asia.

Mr. Allen Keiswetter, head of the U.S. delegation told a reporter after the three days of nearly round the clock negotiations that more progress on "other issues" had been made than on any of the "side talks".

Mr. Keiswetter said "We attempted more and took on a very difficult issue" referring to the Palestinian demand for an independent study of water rights in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.¹¹ The Palestinians who complain that Israel deprived them of scarce water to benefit the Jewish settlers and meet other Israeli needs, were demanding that an independent group go into the occupied territories to assess water rights.

11. Times of India, May 1, 1993.

Israel however, saw the issues as threatening its control of water in the area, which it affirmed was part of its national sovereignty.

An Israeli delegation statement blamed the stalemate and the Palestinian refusal to discuss practical issues concerning ways to increase the availability of fresh water in the West Asia.

Meanwhile Syria's Chief negotiator at the Israeli-Arab peace talks, reiterated the need for an Israeli-Arab peace talks, reiterated the need for an Israeli promise to withdraw fully from the Golan Heights to achieve peace.

Mr. Monaffak Al-Allaf who made the statement at the end of the third meeting, added that the Israeli had presented nothing new, saying they only brought up old proposals. The Syrian could not accept the Israeli document because it contradicted the UN Security Council Resolution 242 and 338 and the fundamental principle of land for peace.¹²

Development and Response to the Peace Initiative

The advent of West Asia Peace Conference has laid foundation for direct dialogue and negotiation between

12. Ibid., May 1, 1998.

Israel and its Arab neighbours. In partnership with Soviet Union, US, have been able to bring Israel and her immediate Arab neighbours, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestinians together for the first time ever in a historic Peace Process to negotiate a comprehensive settlement of their long standing disputes in direct face to face negotiation based on UN Security Council Resolution 242 and 338.

Syria

The developments and response by Syria to the Peace initiative taken by US has been positive and indeed, constitute a historic step. The Syrians and Israelis have been addressing core-issues - namely territory, security and the nature of peace.

The development of the peace initiative by the United States places crucial reliance on a broad-based of dialogue with Syria on a wide range of issue. This policy of engagement with President Assad has yielded results which serve important US interests. The Syrian President's affirmative response to President Bush's letter inviting Syria to participate in the peace negotiations with Israel was one of the major breakthroughs, which allowed Secretary Baker to proceed with the multilateral diplomatic process engaging Israel in bilateral negotiations with all its immediate Arab neighbors.

The talks have concentrated on the status of Golan Heights, occupied by Israel's on 1967 six-day war. But both the parties have failed to move beyond their entrenched position.

No sooner had the Israeli-Syrian negotiation started than there was a head on collision. Except for very short period the negotiations were a dialogue between the deaf. The Syrians would raise the issue of Israeli occupation, the Israeli would play the tapes of anti-Israel revolutionary rhetoric broadcast by Radio Damascus during the 1967 Israeli Arab war. Even when the two discussed resolutions 242, they found they were talking about two different things, the Syrians were referring to an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, while the Israeli were referring to Israel Security concerns. The Syrians spokeswoman Ms Bushra Kanafani described the process as "an exercise in futility".¹³ But with the change of leadership in Israel Yitzhak Rabin now helping to demonstrate that he had a better perception of the security needs, wants and fears of the Syrians, the result is that both sides have given up "biased" approaches in favour of 'balanced' consideration of the conflict situation.

13. Lamis Andoni, Middle East International, March 6, 1992, p.3.

Egypt

Egypt continues to play an active role in the peace process. It participates in the Peace conference and in multilateral working groups, working closely with the United States in urging the parties to the bilateral process to focus on issues on the table rather than events in the region. President Mubarak has also helped to dampen unrealistic expectations by preparing the parties for a long term process.

The President of Egypt and Israel Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin have agreed that it is time to move for peace in West Asia and Mubarak indicated his readiness to visit Israel. Egypt not only has a separate peace treaty with Israel, it is also an important participant in the multilateral negotiations with Israel on regional issues like economy, water sharing and disarmament. Mr. Mubarak said he still wanted "much more" action from Rabin to freeze Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Arabs and the US regard the settlements as the biggest obstacle to peace. Rabin has undertaken to freeze all new building contracts and suspend approval of new

settlements. Mr. Mubarak said "It is a good step on the right track and we appreciate it, yet we need much more but we leave it to him (Rabin) now."¹⁴

Jordan

When King Hussein visited the United States he pledged to President Bush, Jordan's continued commitment to the Peace Process and to abide by the UN Security Council Resolutions on Iraq. Subsequently, Jordan tightened its enforcement procedures. The Jordanian knows that continued progress in bilateral relationship with the United States depend not only on the peace process, but also on sustainable and effective Jordanian actions to enforce UN sanctions against Iraq.

An encouraging development of Israeli-Jordanian Peace talks was that Jordanian spokesman Marwan Mouasher told reporters that "our vision of peace - when the issues between us are resolved - would certainly include full co-operation including diplomatic relations. However Mouasher indicated that Jordan would demand Israeli withdrawal from all of the territories occupied in 1967, including East Jerusalem. Thus even if the Jordanians were willing in the

14. Times of India, July 22, 1992.

end to accept some minor adjustment of the borders, as they probably would be there was little likelihood of resolving the key issue of Jerusalem between Jordan and Israel.¹⁵

Lebanon

Lebanon wants Israel to withdraw its forces from its self-proclaimed "Security Zone" in Southern Lebanon, dissolve its proxy militia, the South Lebanon army and release some 300 Arab prisoners, but the Israelis are aware of the considerable disparity of power and influence between them and the Lebanese. The spate of Israeli air raids against South Lebanon in the week leading up to the negotiations dominated the atmosphere of the Israeli Lebanese talks. As expected, Israel used the violence to demand a Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon and end to the presence of "terrorist organization" in the country. The Lebanese delegation insisted on its country's sovereignty and the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425 which like all other pertinent UN resolutions Israel dismissed as irrelevant. At one point the Israel delegation told the Lebanese that Israel could not negotiate with

15. Thomas R. Mattair, Middle East Policy, vol.1, no.2, 1992.

people who are under occupation - meaning Syrian occupation. Such an approach was hardly pragmatic or realistic keeping in view the long term requirement of conflict-avoidance.

Palestine

Never before had there been direct face to face talks between Israeli and Palestinians. The PLO welcomed the current peaceful efforts and endeavours including the call by President Bush and Gorbachov for convening a peace conference. They, however, emphasised on the prerequisite that the peace conference should be based on international legality and its resolutions including UNSC Resolution 242 and 338. The reaffirmed the commitment to enforce them ensuring the total Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, including Holy Jerusalem and on the realisation of the principle of land for peace and the national and political rights of the Palestinian people.

Israel

The advent of West Asia Peace talks brought the dramatic change in the problem solving methods of Israel. Earlier, Israeli wanted peace treaties with Arabs without giving back any occupied land. Former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has made the future of Jerusalem non negotiable and had ruled out a freeze on settlements and

withdrawal from all occupied territories. Now at the peace talks Israel was ready to adopt an interim Five Year Plan that would grant Palestinians limited self-rule while maintaining control of the land, security arrangements and foreign affairs.

President Bush presented the doctrine of "Land for peace" and told Israel to stop house building activity in the occupied territories. He advised Tel Aviv to seize the opportunity to normalise relations with its neighbours and vacate the occupied territories of the Gaza Strip and West Bank and the Golan Heights.¹⁶ Under the auspices of the Middle East peace initiative, America proposed a two track solution for normalization of relations between Israel and the Arab neighbouring countries and between Israel and the Palestinians. Initially, Israel was not impressed by all these postures. Mr. James Baker famous for his negotiating skills, even after visiting Jerusalem eight times could not convince Israeli leaders to either give up the occupied territories or at least stop the building activity there. Instead, he himself ended up conceding the Israeli demands in the form of the Palestinian delegation.

Israel said it would not talk to the Palestinians

16. Third Concept, October-November, 1991, p.36.

belonging to the Palestinian Liberation Organization and those living in East Jerusalem. It would talk to the Palestinian of the occupied territories only, provided they are the part of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation and throughout the crucial talks remained 'mute' while all the talking was done by the Jordanians. It was revealing to see how everyone involved in the convening of peace talks was ready to concede Israel concession after concession. Equally surprising was the way the regional countries agreed for talks with Israel on its own terms.

The key Israeli move for both Washington and the Palestinians was Yitzhak Rabin's intention to slow the growth of Jewish settlement in the territories. He rejects the all out freeze that the Palestinians had demanded and the Bush administration would have preferred, but made plans to abolish financial incentives for building what he calls "Political settlements". That alone improved Israel's strained relations with Washington and prodded the Bush administration into reconsidering the \$ 10 billion in loan guarantees Jerusalem wanted to help resettle Russian jews. The United States relationship had been in jeopardy under Shamir, the Americans President simply liked Rabin better than the stubborn Shamir.

As Yitzhak Rabin took office, he conveyed an image of desiring peace without adding any specifics to his well-

known campaign positions. His government tried sincerely to advance toward peace within the frame-work of the Madrid formula, and proceeded on negotiating tracks with Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians. Some progress has been made but more is needed order to come to agreement.

From the above it seems reasonable to suggest that the syndrome of the U.S. peace initiative is shaped by American ideas on security and world order. They have made it clear to all the parties that they will not accept any "fundamental" barriers to a more peaceful Middle East. The Americans have adopted a high profile through conceptual development of the peace process but they have not directly negated the expectations and priorities of the parties. Even when chances of success are minimal, the U.S. effort has been to develop links by face-to-face negotiations which in turn can general flexibility in approach for the future, even when it is impossible to produce immediate results.

CHAPTER - 5

CONCLUSION

EVALUATION OF THE U.S. PEACE INITIATIVE

In spite of threats to the peace process and occasional withdrawal from the talks, there is a growing realisation that the American peace initiative has engendered a new interest in international cooperation. Even when the Palestinians have complained of "Israeli Intransigence" and "American Bias" they have not done much worse than complain that they will turn to the European Community to intervene. The Israelis have complained that the Palestinians have reneged on their eve-of-Madrid commitments made under the shadow of the Iraqi reverses in the Gulf war. But again all that they have resorted to is appeals to Washington to clarify the correct position to the Palestinian delegation.

It would be appropriate to mention that the participation of Palestinians in a working group on confidence building measures and long-term objectives for arms control and regional security is a new focus for cooperative efforts which constitutes a qualitative difference and a radical change of direction. While it is important not to overestimate the removal of barriers to cooperation, it is equally important not to dismiss modest

improvements in perception of those responsible for negotiating the new order in the Middle East.

Question of Reconciliation for Permanent settlement of Arab Israeli Conflict

Events in the Middle East have historically captured the attention of the world. Unfortunately, too often this has been because of war. This is a region that since 1948 has known five Arab-Israeli wars. And every time there has been a war the world has held its Breath because the risk of a superpower confrontation was ever present. That risk is now a thing of the past. The end of the cold war has created an unusual opportunity for progress towards peace in the region. In the middle East, such opportunities are unlikely to last very long, and the cost of lost opportunity would be very high.¹ Hailing the end of the cold war as heralding a new opportunity to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. "The new relationship between Russia and America is a God sent contribution to the pacification of the Middle East."² The important steps taken at the Madrid Conference have opened up a wide vista of possibilities. At last, Arabs and Israelis are sitting together in face to face

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1. Secretary Christopher - Resumption of Middle East Peace Negotiations, US Department of State Dispatch, March 15, 1993, vol.4, no.11, p.141.
 2. Thomas R. Mattair - Middle East Policy, vol.1, no.3, 1992, p.152.

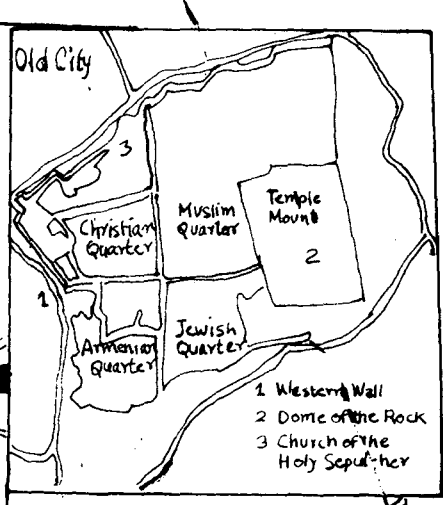
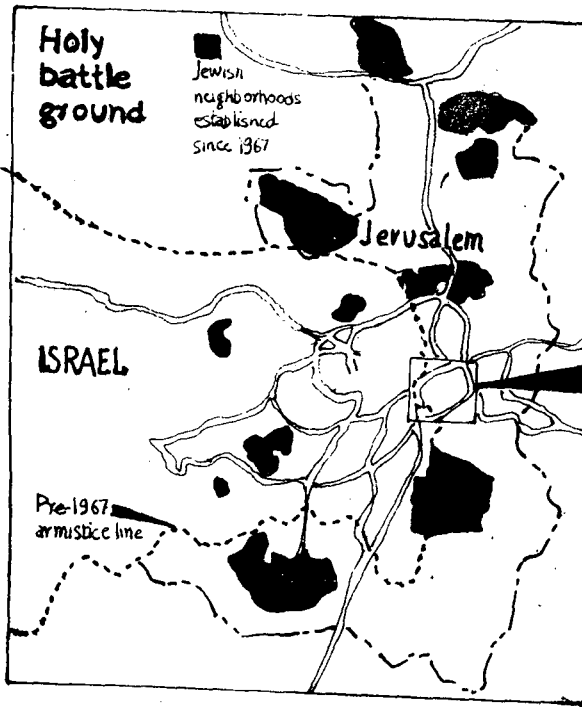
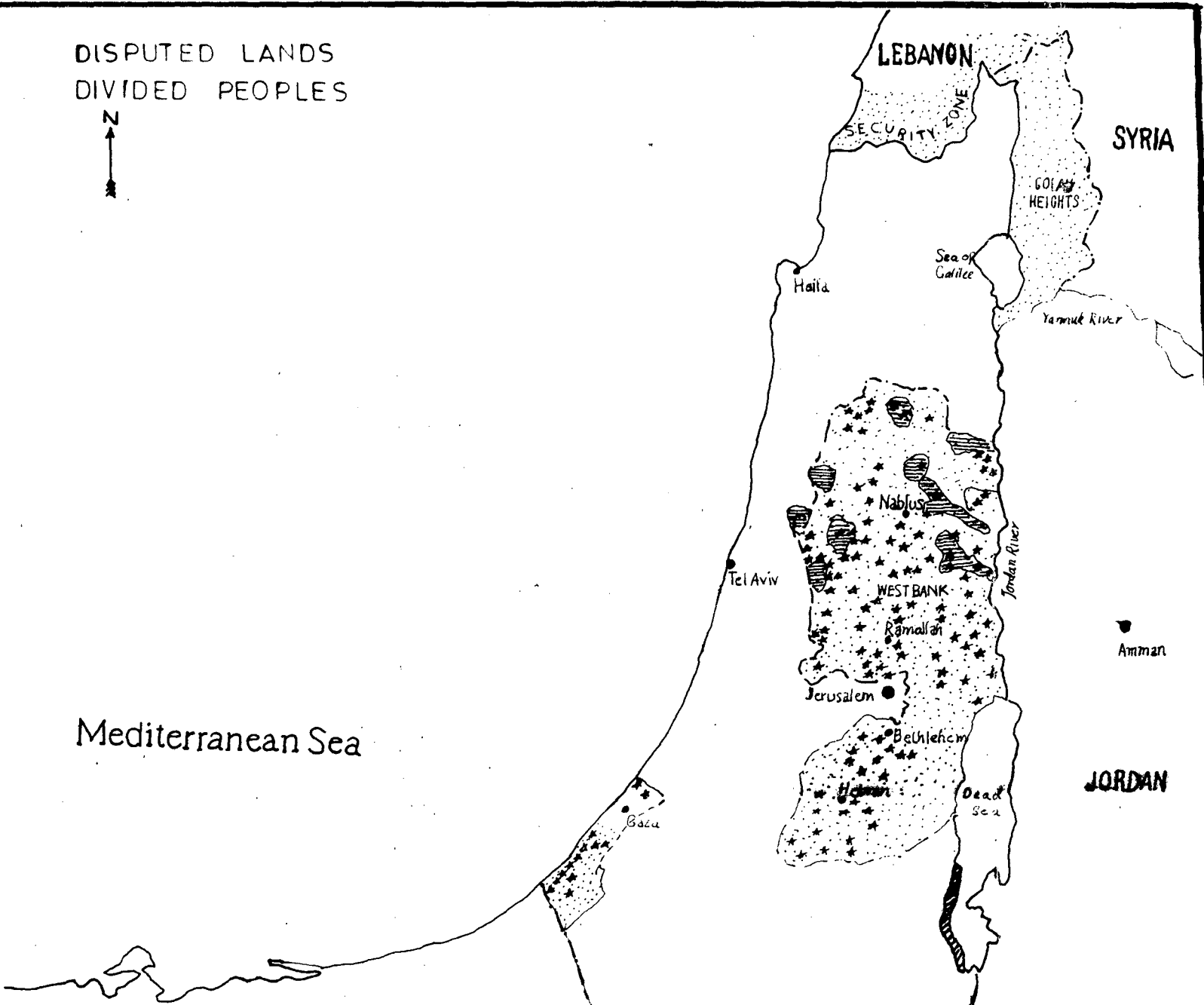
negotiations, seeking to achieve a comprehensive settlement based upon UN Security Council, Resolution 242 and 338. They have also joined in multilateral negotiations on such diverse and pressing issues as arms control and regional security, economic development, water, refugees, and the environment. They have sought to build a Middle East in which neighbors work together to resolve common problems. But the peace conference and bilateral negotiation did not bring peace solution to resolve this prolong Arab-Israeli conflict. Some problems involved to reconciliation for permanent settlement of this conflicts, disputed lands divided peoples.

Israel took the Golan Heights in the 1967 six-day war, and effectively annexed the area in 1981 Syria seeks restoration of its sovereignty, Israel sees rugged, 450 square mile high ground as vital to its military security.

Local militias backed by Israeli forces still control "security zone" in Southern Lebanon to protect Israel's northern border against PLO terrorist attacks. Lebanese forces recently disarmed the Palestinians guerrillas and Lebanon wants the israelis to get out.³

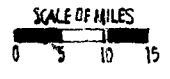
3. Carla Anne Robbins with David Makovsky, Richard Z. Chesnoff Kenneth T. Washington and Bruce B. Auster, US News and World Report, August 12, 1991, p.18.

DISPUTED LANDS
DIVIDED PEOPLES



LEGEND

- ★ Jewish settlement
- Jewish irrigated lands
- Arab irrigated lands
- Israeli-occupied territory



Jordan renounced its claims to the West Bank, which it occupied from 1948 to 1967. Negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians will initially focus on interim autonomy arrangements for the 1.7 million Palestinian Arabs living under Israeli occupation in the West bank and Gaza, which Israel captured from Jordan and Egypt in the six-day war.

Settlement

The Palestinians ultimately seek an independent state. Israel, citing historical, religious, and security claims, continues to build new Jewish settlements on the West Bank and says it will not trade land for peace.

Water

Israel has tapped West Bank aquifers with deep boreholes to provide water for settlements and irrigation. Close to half of West Bank water supplies are allocated to Jewish settlers.

Jerusalem

Jews were denied access to the western wall for two decades during Jordanian rule: after capturing the old city in the six-day war. Israel annexed East Jerusalem and says the issue is non-negotiable. But the eastern half of the

city includes sites holy to Muslims and Christians, too, and is home to 150,000 Palestinians.⁴

These are the issues which the parties cannot reconcile each other for the peaceful settlement.

The Middle East conflict results from an accumulation of problems during the last century. The central problem is the confrontation between Jewish and Arab nationalisms. This conflict, however, has spread to neighbors of Palestine, raising questions of sovereignty and security. Nonetheless, the central problem remains the relationship between Jews and Arabs in Palestine. No line can be drawn within Palestine to satisfy the security and sovereignty claims of both peoples. And the approaches to a resolution of this central problem - whether the resolution is seen as a unified secular and democratic state (as the PLO suggests) or a Zionist state with a genuinely safeguarded Arab minority - are completely blocked by the subsidiary problems that it has created. Advocates of any long term settlement must first help create the conditions when creative alternatives can be placed on the negotiating agenda.

Despite the acceptance of the American Peace Plan by important Arab states and Israel, Arab-Israeli relations in

4. Ibid., p.19.

their essential are not radically different today from what they were before the Gulf war. The first requirement for Arab-Israeli peace and for greater regional stability is progress towards a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The Gulf war removed none of the underlying causes of Arab radicalism; some it exacerbated. Huge differentials in wealth under-development, demographic pressures, and a growing shortage of water should be of concern to Israel as well as to the Arabs. Any attempt to address such systematic problems seriously will fail unless the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is perceived to be moving toward a solution.

The compromises necessary for such a solution will be painful for all concerned. A focus on modalities will achieve little what must be confronted is substance. The key issue remains the following.

1. Is Israel prepared to cede control of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Golan Heights and South Lebanon in return for normalization of relations with the Arab states?
2. Are the Arab states in fact now prepared to negotiate directly with Israel and to grant Israel such normalization?
3. In this stage of global democracy, are Palestinian to be accorded to right to political self-determination?

4. Are Arabs to be extended a share of political authority in a United Jerusalem?

As long as any party answers any of these questions with a categorical negative, one can expect little progress toward better times.

Yasser Arafat's decision to support Iraq has probably compromised Palestinian aspirations more than any recent combination of Israeli and Arab actions. But the PLO remains an unavoidable interlocutor (however "package") for any serious talk about Israeli-Palestinian peace. It is no secret that Israel has always refused to deal with the PLO not because it is a "terrorist" organization but because Israel considers PLO's demand for a two-stage settlement to be unacceptable.

The achievements of the Gulf war, bolstered by recent American diplomacy may now alter the best opportunity in decades for a breakthrough toward Middle East peace. The parties are unlikely - even if willing to move forward by themselves. If real momentum toward peace is to develop, energetic American participation in the peace process must continue.

Such participation should build on established American policy concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict. Exchanging land for peace, termination of the Arab boycott

(as now offered by Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia) a halt to Israeli settlement, and the determination of the future of Jerusalem only through negotiations - these need to be formally stated with greater precision by President Bush. Moreover, now may well be the time for him to express some broader vision of what the Middle East future must be, beyond an Israeli-Palestinian peace. Of what elements might a new Middle East consist, and what might the United States be prepared to do to strength those elements and bring them together.

For those Arabs and Israelis struggle for a peaceful Middle East and they are legion-provision of hope is vital. Perhaps uniquely, the United States is today in a position to offer such hope. What is required is the political will to do so.⁵

Another point is without the PLO there can be no movement toward resolving the Israeli Palestinian conflict. And if there is no resolution of that conflict, relations between Israel and some of its Arab neighbors will again move to the edge of war. What the Middle East is heading toward is a system of deterrence based on Israel's nuclear capability versus Arab chemical weapons and nuclear

5. Antony T. Sullivan - National Review, August 26, 1991, pp.27-28.

potential such a system will sooner or later prove explosive.

Instead of focusing on procedural efforts to bring the two sides closer to the negotiating table, the US needs a new policy, one based on two lessons that should have already been learned, first, no peace is possible without deep political transformation inside Israel. Second, while changes in Israeli politics will be determined more by what the Arab and Palestinian world does than by any other variable, Palestinians politics has exhausted its ability to make unilateral concessions. Thus the United States should focus on unilateral steps it can take to create an environment within which Israeli and Palestinian moderates can gradually produce broad public support in Israel for an end to the occupation.

An unusual coincidence of events has the last two years substantially improved the prospect for advancing the peace process in the Middle East. There is no certainty that this extraordinary situation will persist beyond the next two or three years, and if the peace process does not begin, this historic opportunity will be jeopardy.

This coincidence of circumstances is mainly connected with the dramatic change occurring in the Soviet Union, which put an end to the cold war. As a result the United

States is the only super power. The Soviet Union is now a sort of American satellite, as we saw during the Gulf war.⁶

The second event is the Intifida of the Palestinians in the territories administered by Israel. For the first time since 1948, the people living in the West Bank and the Gaza strip now lead in the struggle for their self-determination. Another important event is also the Jewish immigration from the Soviet Union. The flow of immigrants is now very considerable, and can be even larger. Israel urgently needs loans, subsidies, and strong economic relations for the sake of its immigrants as well as for its own young generation. However, if the political process stalls, Israel will have difficulty in getting the financial assistance required to absorb the new immigrants. Moreover, in view of the recent revolutionary changes in the USSR, it is feared that Jewish immigration to Israel may dwindle, and so the Jewish people and the state of Israel risk losing a unique historic opportunity.

There are in Israel two approaches towards the peace process and how it should be conducted. The first approach has proved its effectiveness since 1949 (the armistice agreements between Israel and its four Arab neighbors) and

6. Yitzhak Rabin, National Review, October 7, 1991, p.24.

upto the peace treaty with Egypt in 1979. According to this step by step approach, Israel should not simultaneously negotiate with more than one Arab country at a time. Only after the negotiations with one country are concluded and a peace treaty is signed should the negotiations with another Arab country begin.

The second approach attempts to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict as a whole, by convening an international or regional peace conference in which Israel and all its Arab neighbors would take part. This approach has not yet led to any tangible results.

The peace initiative of the US Secretary of States James Baker, based on the second approach calls for a regional conference to be convoked. The meetings will begin with a plenary session. After the opening session, the talks will break up into bilateral, face to face negotiations, Israeli-Jordanian-Palestinian discussions and negotiations between Israel and every Arab country that wishes to join the talks. This initiative was built on a three step process. The first was to be establishing a representation elected by and from among the Palestinians living in the territories. The second step was to be establishing a self-governing authority in the territories (not including East Jerusalem) as an interim solution for a five year transition period. The third phase, which would

have begun no later than three years after the establishment of Palestinians autonomy, called for beginning negotiations towards a permanent solution. These talks were to be attended by Israel, Jordan, the Palestinian representation and other interested parties. The negotiations were to be based on Resolutions 242 and 338 of UN Security Council.

The Baker initiative to convene a regional peace conference is now the only operative proposal. The initiative will be deemed successful if the meeting actually take place and if the promoters succeed in separating the negotiations with the Palestinians (or Jordanian-Palestinian) delegation from the talks on the second tracks, between Israel and other Arab countries or in fact, with Syria. Any attempt to connect the two tracks will lead to a deterioration of the general situation in the areas.⁷

Of course it is theoretically possible that the reason Israel's policies have become so popular is that they are good and wise and conducive to a new era of peace and harmony. And yet the enemies of Israel know something about these policies that the friends of Israel are failing to see. Why Syria is so eager to resume negotiations with Israel, the murderous dictator of that country, who has been dictated all these years to the goal of wiping Israel off

7. Ibid., pp.24-25.

the face of the earth, suddenly become reconciled to the existence of a sovereign Jewish state on territory he regards as his own. No wonder, then, that Assad has made so little of the deportations and that he can hardly wait to get back to the bargaining table. Obviously the peace process is good for Syria; but is it good for Israel?

The Palestinian - or to be more precise the "mainstream" faction of the PLO which has been involved through its local proxies in the negotiations with Israel are also eager to get back to the bargaining table. To be sure, they have made much more of the deportations than the Syrians, even at some point vowing that until all 400 deportees are returned they will have no choice but to boycott the peace process.

Not that these "moderate" followers of Arafat have hesitated to murder other fellow Palestinians for "collaboration" with Israel - the same crime of which they themselves stand accused by Hamas. Nor does the "mainstream" PLO disagree with Hamas on the question of co-existence with Israel. The difference between them is merely tactical. Hamas is openly and forth rightly committed to the destruction of Israel through terrorism and holy war, while the "mainstream" PLO has in recent years shifted to what is known as the "phase plan".

This plan prescribes negotiations as a first stages, to be concluded by the withdrawal of Israel from the territories it has occupied since 1967; the second stage will end with the establishment of the new Palestinian state on those territories: and the third will culminate in a final assault on a weakened and demoralized "zionist entity". Thus as recently, Faisal Hussein, the leader of the "moderate" Palestinians in the territories, defined a talk in Jordan defending the Phase plan as a strategy for the eventual take over not just of the occupied territories but of Israel in its entirety.

In adopting this plan, the "moderates" have shown great political intelligence. In the past, their refusal to negotiate and their rejection of the idea of co-existence strengthened the position of those in Israel who were convinced, that Palestinian state poses of mortal threat and must be resisted at all costs. Conversely, the new line calling for a "two-state solution" has given rise to the hope in Israel that peace may at last be hand.

Even so, however, relatively few Israelis are ready to accept the "two-state solution" war-weary as they are after living in a constant stage of siege from the day of their country's birth, desperate as they are to realise the dream of peace, and sick as they are of ruling over a million and-a-half restive and rebellious Palestinians, the

vast majority of Israelis are nevertheless still unpersuaded that a new Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza is the answer or the way out. Therefore, the idea of autonomy as a device for squaring the circle - that is, for relieving Israel of the burdens of occupation without exposing it to the dangers of Palestinian statehood.

Yitzhak Rabin undoubtedly thinks so, which means that he must also think that autonomy is a way to block statehood, if not necessarily forever, then at least for a decent interval. In offering this interpretation of Rabin's thinking, assuming that his own long-standing opposition to a Palestinian state remains in place and that he, unlike some members of his party and indeed of his own Cabinet is not a convert to the idea that there can be no peace, or justice, without Palestinian statehood. Proceeding, then on this assumption, that Rabin, who is not famous for humility, has talked himself into the idea that he can control the dynamics of the peace process that it is up to him to decide how far it will go and where it will stop.

Similarly, if Rabin imagines that the Clinton administration will remain any more satisfied with autonomy than the Palestinians, he has badly misjudged the degree to which practically everyone in Washington along with practically everyone in the wider foreign policy establishment has by now bought the view that Palestinian

statehood is both a political and a moral necessity. The love affair with Israel will continue so long as Israel goes on doing what United States wants it to do. But when the time comes for Israel to say No to the transformation of autonomy into full Palestinian statehood, the affair will turn sour and Washington will turn on a rather different kind of heat.⁸

Improvement in Mutual Perceptions

Given the unsteady momentum on the peace process is it possible to develop a vision of a real improvement in mutual perceptions ?

The end of the Cold War has offered the United States an opportunity with unique possibilities in the Middle East. When the Shultz initiative was taken, it was impossible for the U.S. to contemplate that there would one day be a bilateral Israel-Syria agreement. A new agenda for a solution to the Golan Heights problem has been set up and Syria's Assad has shown a rare ability to maneuver. Israel's security anxieties and the Palestinian vulnerabilities have become items on a common agenda for diplomats to explore. The historic possibilities of face to face dialogue have not produced "conflict resolution" but

8. Norman Podhoretz - A Statement on the Peace Process, Commentary, April, 1993, pp.21-22.

have led to a scaling down of the invectives that were factored into Israeli-Arabs exchanges. It should also be underlined that significant progress has been made in the agreement reached between the Israeli and Jordanian delegation about a joint agenda for bilateral negotiations without mentioning contentious issues. A related aspect is the new voices within the Israeli establishment which favour Israel's dialogue with the PLO. While mutual perceptions have by no means entered an era of clarity, the policy choices are being increasingly discovered by what has been aptly termed as an "exploratory phase" replacing "rejection" at the peace talks. In spite of differing interpretations of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, the old constraints have loosened, and there are incentives for moderate positions.

Improvement in Communications

A basic problem in the Rogers peace Plan of 1969 and the peace process in the 1980s was the exclusive attention to political and strategic goals while communication goals were neglected. The Camp David accords of course materialised through improved communication of perceptions of national interest on the part of Egypt and Israel. The

coercive aspect was pushed into the background. During the post-Cold War peace initiative the American negotiators injected new life into the communication framework. The enhanced level of interest in international relations after the Gulf war enabled the United States to present their peace initiative in terms of the new world order. A lot of attention was directed towards non-controversial issues with emphasis on maintaining and enduring the various movements in the peace process. By moving the rhetoric towards "common problems" and expressing strategic competition in moderate language, the peace initiative tried to shift the focus of conflict of course the communication improvement was not enough to compensate for real difficulties over substantive issues but the themes and trends of the post Madrid period are shaped in a political environment which is compelled to discover new ideas and perspectives in a context of improved communications.

Generation of new proposals

Although mutual recriminations have continued, the American post cold war peace initiative has been marked by the identification of a number of areas where new proposals have been generated by experts in inter-sessional activities

of the peace process. The workshops which are part of the process include topics like :

- verification
- communication
- exchange of information on military activity
- long term arms control objectives
- declaratory measures
- idea of a centre for conflict prevention

Prodded by the American, the new approaches confidence building measures in developing and implementing concepts for a changing security environment will provide political saliency to those who have technical competence and managerial skill. If a United States - Palestinian dialogue develops beyond routine interaction, the possibility of developing and implementing new proposals like evacuation of the Israel Defence Forces from all territories beyond the Green Line and developing an "interlock" between the interim arrangement and the final settlement cannot be ruled out.

Some of these proposals favour one side or the other. If the Palestinians succeed in opening direct talks with the Clinton Administration and the U.S. gives up its view that the PLO should not be introduced through the back door in the multilateral talks, the perplexities for the Israelis would increase initially.

They key word in relation to the generation of new proposals in "trust", which would enable the Arabs and the Israelis to think of their enlightened self interest and also to develop a cooperative expectation. Immediately it would be difficult in Arab - Israel relations to reject the psychological foundations of deterrence but as part of reshaping the political environment the American desire would remain to introduce credible alternatives to the present threat systems.

Political foundations for the peace process

The post Cold War peace initiative by the United States has been grounded in firm political foundations It is not an isolated act of mediation of merely a form of informal peace making. The U.S. has devoted considerable analytical attention to the kind of peace which is achievable in this turbulent area. In the aftermath of the military confrontation with Saddam Hussein, American diplomatic efforts views joint problem solving involved in reconciliation work as strengthening the political decision-making process within the respective governments in the region. The U.S. does not have reasons to expect that it will get over the problems and dilemmas of the protracted conflict. Washington is more comprehensive and more realistic in its political attitude towards the chief actors than at any time since 1969. It is not another "package"

that has been created, in order to surpass the sophisticated Soviet political strategy. The "step by step" diplomacy adopted later also was not intended to start a political process in the full sense of the term. After the Madrid meeting there is not only a problem solving orientation adopted by Washington, but the U.S utilises its different postures and capabilities to create better political communication and understanding and uses its leverage to influence both sides to achieve a secure and stable peace through an overtly political project.

Structural Approach to Negotiations

The United States won political relevance after the end of the Cold War by finding itself with high military credibility after the defeat of Saddam Hussein. It started with the normative premise of removing obstacles to negotiations in the Middle East in order to pave the way to a new world order. Having conceptualized on a structural approach to negotiations, the American were all placed to utilise informations and political perspectives for organising a peace initiative for the Arab-Israel dispute. It is difficult to project the hypothetical future of the peace process, and it will be of no help to make worst case analysis. It is more important for understanding the dynamics of contemporary peace-building to assimilate the significance of the American initiative. In the light of

the previous discussion it cannot be postulated as to what kind of peace will emerge in the Middle East. A central factor of the American achievement is that the peace initiative has provided conceptual space for coordinated actions to remove mistrust and misperceptions. It is not the assured rational of military thought or plan coercion that provides the main lines of U.S. thinking in evolving and implementing the peace initiative. It is a general political reorientation that plays the central role in relating to the different "interest", "values" and "cultures" in the Middle East. The United states has conducted a well managed peace process with the clear intention of helping the parties to find common ground through a structural approach to negotiation.

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APPENDIX

CHRONOLOGY

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