

**CANADA'S PERCEPTION AND POLICY TOWARDS  
THE ARAB -ISRAEL CONFLICT**

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Date: 27.01.2016

**DECLARATION**

I declare that the thesis entitled “CANADA’S PERCEPTION AND POLICY TOWARDS THE ARAB-ISRAEL CONFLICT” submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

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**CERTIFICATE**

We recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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**Prof. Abdul Nafey**  
Supervisor

*Dedicated to my  
Parents*

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*Kamaram M. K. Mondal*

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## PREFACE

The present research work is a modest attempt to describe and analyse Canada's evolving perception and policy towards the Arab-Israel conflict. Evidently, both external and domestic factors have shaped Canada's approach, and these include, for instance, Canada's status as the British dominion, alliance relationship within NATO and, among domestic factors, religio-cultural understanding of Canadian political elite and the influence of its Jewish population on public opinion and policy formulation, etc. The thesis focusses on Canada's understanding, perception and foreign policy behaviour in particular towards the creation of the state of Israel, Arab-Israel wars and various Arab-Israel peace processes.

The thesis is organised in six main chapters: (i) Canada and the Arab-Israel Conflict; (ii) Canada On War and Conflict Between Arabs and Israel; (iii) Canada and the Arab-Israel Peace Process; (iv) Canada's Refugee Policy; (v) Dynamics and Dimensions of Canadian Foreign Policy Towards Middle East; and (vi) Summary and Conclusions.

The Chapter I delineates, in two separate sections, the historical background of the Arab-Israel conflict; and Canada's involvement ever since the Palestine issue came before the United Nations. For better comprehension, the first section is subdivided into three subsections: (i) Balfour Declaration as a bone of contention between Arabs and Jews; (ii) Jewish immigration and land acquisition in Palestine; and (iii) British partition plan and Second World War as another factor of the Arab-Israel conflict. The second section deals with Canada's role in the Arab-Israel conflict. Canada, as a member of the 11-member United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP), had voted to support the majority report for the partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states that ultimately led to the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. The existence of state of Israel in the midst of Arab surrounding states became the major source of conflict between the Arabs and the Jews.

The Chapter II discusses Canada's support to the UN General Assembly resolutions on the first Arab-Israel war of 1948. In 1948, Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq invaded Israel and were defeated by a militarily superior Israel. The Chapter also describes in a separate section Canada's support to the 1949 Armistice agreements, which was a temporary ceasefire agreements, and not a final

peace agreements, that occurred among Israel and its four Arab neighbour states. The Chapter continues to describe and analyse the genesis and nature of the Suez Canal crisis of 1956 and development of UN peace-keeping force which allowed Canadian diplomacy a chance to resolve the conflict resulting from the Anglo-French-Israeli aggression of Suez Canal.

While building an understanding and analysis of Canada's support to Israel in the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israel wars, a separate section identifies the changes and shifts, and the reasons thereof in Canada's policy towards the Arab-Israel conflict. It is also worth adding in this Chapter the role of Canada in UN Peace-keeping in the Middle East.

While looking at Canadian perception, policy and initiatives like peace-keeping, the Chapter also looks into military and strategic dimensions of the state of Israel; its military programme based on a reserve system, that permits a reduction of armed forces during normal time and rapid expansion through popular mobilisation at the time of emergency and the annexation of West Bank, Jerusalem, Sinai Peninsula and Syrian Gola Heights after the 1967 war and its demographic consequence in the form of a large Arab population that came to live under Israeli sovereignty. The resultant demographic change raised the question about the multiethnic character of Israel as a nation and the nature of Jewish nationalism and its religious orientation.

The Chapter III examines aspects of peace process in the Middle East and the challenges and hurdles in the path of an enduring peace. Spread over seven main sections, some of the issues discussed are: Arab-Israel peace negotiations and agreements; Palestine-Israel peace process in the 1990s and Canada's role in it specially in the Refugee Working Group (RWG) as well as Canada's 'Track -II' initiative; and Canada's response to the Arab-Israel peace process in late 1990s and 2000s. The Chapter discusses and briefly describes the Arab-Israel peace process from period of Armistice Agreements of 1949 to the first Egypt-Israel treaty at Camp David in 1979. Camp David has generally been construed as the milestone in building peace in the Middle East: Egypt was the first Arab country to recognise Israel and it opened the path for establishment of relations between Israel and many other countries. The more contemporaneous Arab-Israel peace process of the 1990s like the Oslo I and II Accords were also historic; the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), for the first time recognised the state of Israel but in its pre-1967 existential form. In turn, Israel and the Western world recognised PLO as the only representative of the

Palestinians. In consequence, a Palestinian Authority came to be established in 1994. But a sovereign Palestine state, with international recognition, yet to be established.

Canada's direct contribution to the Arab-Israel peace process was limited; but the country has been more active and influential through multilateral process, specifically through the Refugee Working Group (RWG). It indicates that Canada remain engaged in the Arab-Israel peace process, because, the Palestinian refugees are the direct product of the Palestine-Israel conflict in particular and Arab-Israel conflict in general and RWG has emerged as a part of the broad Middle East Peace Process (MEPP). Canada's role in the RWG has been discussed in details that included humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian refugees who are living in the refugee camps. The second significant issue the Chapter highlights is Canada's 'Track II' Initiative in 1997, whose activities collectively known as the 'Ottawa Process'. During the period from 1995 to 2000 Canada supported a very broad and extensive range of research and dialogue projects on the refugee issue whether through IDRC, CIDA or dialogue funds controlled by Canadian diplomatic missions in the region. Despite its drawbacks, the Ottawa process had the greatest impact on the official Arab-Israel negotiating process. Canada's view on the so-called 'apartheid wall' or Israel's disengagement policy and Palestinian fraction have also been discussed.

The next Chapter IV deals mainly with Canada's refugee policy. After a brief discussion of the issue of Palestinian refugees under the international law and their conditions in refugee camps, run by UNRWA, a whole section discusses Canada's refugee policy. Canada has a robust immigration policy and programme; the country needs immigrants to work the economy and fill the demographic needs of the country. Refugee policy is part of the larger immigration policy and outlook; and admittedly, has gone through various phases and preferences for refugees from different countries and regions. A policy of refugee intake per year as a separate category along with immigrants was created formally only since the Immigration Act of 1976. Before that, Canada's continuing and sometimes intense involvement with persons who immigrate as refugees required the special action of the federal government. Such political urgencies were considered as non-recurring issues.

The present policy is based on the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) of 2002 that introduced private sponsorship system and to say that Canada's refugee policy is determined by the recommendations of international agencies like UNHCR, federal provinces capacity to accept the refugees and private sponsorship

system. The Middle East countries are major producer of refugees, although their number in Canada is very less, various issues and challenges of their inland claimant process and settlement in Canada has been discussed.

The Chapter V focusses on various dimensions of Canada's foreign policy towards the Middle East. Divided into five parts, the first section examines the influence of Canadian Jewish community on government's policy perception and choices, along with whatever limited influence Canadian Arabs have been able to exercise. The second part discusses Canada's economic and commercial interests in the Middle East and the discernible shift in its policy that came in the wake of the Arab oil embargo in 1973. It is also argued that Canada's economic and political compulsions made it reverse the decision to shift its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. A separate section discusses Canada's arms sale to Israel; and another sections looks into the changing foreign policy dynamics towards the Middle East. The final section describes Harper's foreign policy towards Israel that includes Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA).

A key aspect and something which has been noted in the present study is that it describes Canadian policy as more nuanced and balanced in the period, from the 1980s to early 2000s. Canada was among those countries which championed the resolution of the conflict. This reflected a change in Canadian perception in as much as perhaps it was recognition of the heightened activism on the part of the Palestinian movements and the Arab world in general. The shift was more noticeable under the Liberal governments of Jean Chretien and Paul Martin. Canada tilted away greatly in favour of Israel under the Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper (2006-15) who subscribed the 'neo-Conservatism'. Canada sided with Israel when the latter invaded Lebanon in 2006; explained away the bombing of civilian population as 'collateral' damage; and also Canada was one of the first countries to cut its aid to Palestine Authority after *Hamas* won the local legislative elections in 2006.

The last Chapter presents summary of the all the preceding Chapters and the conclusions in the light of the hypotheses that have been set in the introductory Chapter.

The study employs an eclectic approach focussing in particular on historical and comparative methodologies for studying and developing the research subject. For the sake of uniformity, all through the term Middle East rather than West Asia or Middle East and North Africa (MENA) has been used.

## **CHAPTER – I**

### **CANADA AND THE ARAB-ISRAEL CONFLICT**

The present Introductory Chapter focusses, in a sense, the basic framework of the entire research monograph. It is all about Canada's historical understanding and perception of the creation of Israel and the genesis of the Arab-Israel conflict; more important, the monograph examines Canadian engagements with the conflict in terms of its foreign policy principles and practices as well as domestic societal and political dynamics such as the presence of an active and vocal Jewish community in Canada. The Chapter presents a larger framework of research that includes research objectives; hypotheses; research methodology and the organisational schema of the Chapters.

Canada's involvement in the Middle East<sup>1</sup> can be found in particular since the UN decision to partition Palestine in 1947 into a separate state of Israel and another for the Palestinian Arabs. Canada, as a member of the 11-member United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP), had voted to support the majority report for the partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states that ultimately led to the creation of the State of Israel in 1948.

Canada's engagement in the Middle East has been political, humanitarian and military in character; and became particularly prominent especially since the Suez Canal crisis of 1956. In the years following the Madrid peace conference of 1991, Canada has played a more notable role in the Refugee Working Group (RWG). Canada is better known for its humanitarian activities in the refugee camps in the Middle East, where more than 5 million refugees live in. Canada has also resettled Palestinian refugees in Canada, though their number is very less, within the framework of Canada's refugee policy.

The UN resolution that partitioned Palestine and created a 'homeland' for the Jews of the world sowed the seeds of one of the most enduring and violent conflict that still defies any settlement. The state of Israel was created in 1948, when 56 per cent of the territory was given to the Jews who constituted 37 per cent of the population. The majority Arab population understandably rejected it, and an

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<sup>1</sup> Middle East, West Asia and Arab-Israel region are used interchangeably to denote the Palestine and its neighbouring area.

independent Palestine state never came into existence. The creation of State of Israel in the midst of large Arab, dominantly Muslim populations, which became states, has left several issues unresolved till date. Thus, at the initial level, it is necessary to deal with the history of the Arab-Israel conflict.

### **Palestine and the Genesis of the Arab-Israel Conflict**

What one understands of the state of Palestine today is West Bank and the Gaza Strip. It is about 5,997 square kilometers (2,315 square miles) which are not contiguous. It is surrounded and tightly contained by Israel from both the sea and the land; and remains largely under Israel's direct military control. There have been several numerous clashes, conflict, violence and even wars and massacre of civilians in this territory.

These particular territories were under the Ottoman Empire; and during the First World War, they fell under British rule which controlled these territories till the Second World War. After the Second World War, this area was partitioned through United Nations partition plan between Jews and Arabs. The UN partition plan of 1947, particularly the UN General Assembly Resolution 181, was accepted by the Jews and on that basis UN created a state of Israel for the Jews (Hibbard 2012: 2). For this purpose Israel fought against its Arab neighbours and in this process seven hundred thousand Palestinians fled or were expelled; and they scattered as refugees. The Arabs did not accept the UN partition plan. In the conflict with Israel, the Arabs lost their land and became refugees mostly surviving even today in the refugee camps. In other words, for the Arabs, it is *Al-Nakba*.<sup>2</sup> It means the catastrophe and the end of the homeland. They use the word *Al-Nakba* to express their sense of bottomless loss (Shabaneh 2012: 21).

Israel gradually occupied most of the Palestinian areas during the creation of the state of Israel, and further during the 1948 war with its Arab neighbours. Israel also occupied the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights during the Six-Day War in 1967. Israel began building settlements in the occupied territories, which are regarded as illegal under international law. In sum, Palestinian

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<sup>2</sup> The term *Al-Nakba* ("the catastrophe") was first coined by Constantine Zurayk, a Syrian scholar, who wrote after the Arab defeat in 1948. *Al-Nakba* has been used since to refer to the exodus of more than 700,000 refugees in 1948 as a result of the creation of the State of Israel.

Arabs have been marginalized and confined in their own lands where they had been residing for centuries. The Jewish settlements, and Israel's control over the roads and lands that strategically connect them have left Palestinians into a painful position in which normal life and travel are restricted and sometimes rendered impossible.

In response to the sufferings they were passing through, the most eventful was the Palestinian uprising, which became known as the *Intifada* or 'uprising' that started in 1987 and lasted till 1992. On the Palestinian side, the first *Intifada* was more of a civilian disobedience and, at worst, stone-throwing than any armed uprising. The Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) used cannon fire, missiles and aerial bombs in the densely packed towns and refugee camps. Palestinian orchards, agricultural lands were dug up, and settlers damaged olive groves. Palestinians were collectively subjected to long periods of military quarantine in their villages and homes. They were poured into jail where they were kept indefinitely without charge or trial. Again, the second Palestinian *Intifada* began in September 2000 which lasted till January 2007; and the IDF also suppressed that. This time, more than five thousand Palestinians and Israelis died, and thousands more were wounded (Martin 2010: 197).

Israel began building a 703 kilometre barrier<sup>3</sup> in and around the Occupied West Bank in 2002 as the only way to defend against suicide bombings by Palestinians which shook the country in the years of the *Intifada*, which began in 2000. After years of unremitting bloodshed and extensive reporting by the international media, Israel unilaterally evacuated its settlements from the Gaza Strip and four more small towns in the northern West Bank in 2005. Israel may not regard the unilateral Gaza pullout and the wall or fence as a perfect solution, but saw the moves as the beginning of a vital separation from the Palestinians. The disengagement, however, did not bring peace; Palestinian suicide bombings and rocket attacks and Israeli military incursions and assassinations continued to claim lives. There have been several attempts to have peace between Israel and Palestinians as well as among Israel and its neighbouring states. For instance, Oslo accord in the 1990s was important because it was for the first time Israel and Palestinians signed

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<sup>3</sup> In July 2004 the International Court of Justice (ICJ) declared that the barrier was illegal and construction should be immediately halted but Israel said it would not abide by what was an advisory ruling by the ICJ.

this accord. But all the accords or peace processes have failed to bring permanent peace in the region.

Internal political dynamics among within the Palestinians are also complex and conflictual. These are beside the Palestine-Israel conflict and the larger Arab-Israel conflict. Since the post-Oslo accord of the early 1990s, Palestine was controlled by the largest of the Palestinian representative political organisation i.e. *Al-Fatah*. But in January 2006, the more radical and an Islamist party, the *Hamas*, which is not recognized by the International community, got the majority in Palestinian parliamentary elections. Both *Hamas* and *Fatah* formed the Unity government. The US, the European Union and Israel tried to force the collapse of the Unity government by imposing crippling sanctions on the Palestinian Authority (PA) making it impossible for the PA to pay the salaries of teachers, health workers and other civil servants. The sanctions worsened poverty and aggravated the internal political crisis. Palestine hovered on the edge of civil war. In the end, *Hamas* controlled Gaza Strip, and *Fatah* controlled West Bank. Beneath the destabilizing chaos of 2006 and 2007, however, fundamental facts had not changed. Israel did not stop its settlement in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Extremist elements on both sides claimed title to the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea (Winslow 2007: xiv-xv).

The conflict has been described variously as the ‘Jewish-Arab’ conflict, the ‘Zionist-Arab’ conflict or the ‘Arab-Israeli’ conflict. When one is calling ‘Jewish-Arab’ conflict, one is mentioning the Jewish people as a whole against the Arab people as a whole. When one refer the term Zionist, it refers to belief in and support to the quest by Jews to return to Zion (i.e., the Jerusalem and the Holy Land) and it also implies the support for the creation of a Jewish state over those territories. Applying this definition, prior to the creation of State of Israel in 1948, the present thesis is dealing with the ‘Zionist-Arab’ or ‘Zionist-Palestinian’ conflict. Discussions from 1948 to 1973 is about the wider ‘Arab-Israeli’ conflict. In the period since 1973, and more so since 1993, the conflict is seen as narrower ‘Israeli-Palestinian’ (Arabs of the Palestine) conflict for sovereignty and self-determination on the same territory.

To mention, scholars refers to Jews as a people comprising many ethnic, cultural, and linguistic groups, but having a common identity like, belief in Judaism, a monotheistic faith harking back to the Biblical land of Israel; a biological lineage, i.e., being born to a Jewish mother; and/or unifying socio-cultural sentiment of sharing a

common ancestry, traditions, customs, heritage and future. Given these complexities, even the Knesset (Israeli Parliament) could not establish a universally accepted simple definition of 'Who is a Jew?'. In 2008, there were an estimated 13.2 million Jews in the world, of whom 5.4 million lived in Israel, 5.3 million in the USA and between 1 and 1.5 million in Europe (Caplan 2010: 17-18). Arabs can be defined as an ethno-national group with common cultural and linguistic roots emanating from ancient tribes in Arabian Peninsula. Mostly they are Muslims. In 2006-07 estimation, there were some 8 million Palestinians spread out in the region. 1.4 million in Gaza (of whom 1 million registered refugees) and 2.5 million in the West Bank (of whom 760,000 are registered refugees), they constitute the population of the Palestinian National Authority or Palestinian Authority (PA). Besides, there are 2.83 million refugees in 31 camps in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and also dispersed throughout the cities of the Middle East. Further, there are 1.45 million citizens of the state of Israel, descendants of those Palestinians who resided in the areas that became the Jewish state in 1948 (Caplan 2010: 4-5, 19).

However, the conflict between Arabs and Jews is a prolonged one and there are a number of events that caused the conflict. The history of the Arab-Israel conflict can be divided into three parts: (i) Balfour Declaration as a bone of contention between Arabs and Jews; (ii) Jewish immigration, land acquisition in Palestine and communal factor as the root cause of conflict; and (iii) British partition plan and Second World War as another factor of the Arab-Israel conflict.

***(i) Balfour Declaration as Bone of Contention between the Arabs and the Jews***

When the Ottoman Empire decided to enter the First World War siding Germany, it prompted Britain, France and Russia to plan for the partition of Ottoman territories in the event of an Allied victory. When the Ottoman Empire<sup>4</sup> was defeated during the First World War, the area known as Palestine fell under the British rule. During the Ottoman era, the Palestinian area was regarded as part of southern Syria and divided between the provinces of Beirut and Damascus and the special administrative unit of Jerusalem. The British captured Jerusalem in December 1917, detached the Palestinian area from Ottoman rule and placed it under British military occupation

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<sup>4</sup> The British pledge to Sharif Husayn of Mecca and the Sykes-Picot Agreement between Britain and France constituted two of the principal proposals for dividing the Ottoman Empire among the Allies.

from 1917 to 1920. After two years it was replaced by a British civilian administration that continued till the end of Second World War when Britain handed over Palestinian issue to the United Nations for a solution (Cleveland 2009: 243 and Shatara 1932: 181).

How did it come to the British mind that this British mandated Palestine will be the home for the Jews and ultimately be a 'State of Israel'? Several factors brought the question of Zionism<sup>5</sup> to the attention of the British cabinet.

It is argued that the Jews cause was aided not only by the institutions established within the mandate system but also by political and financial support from individuals and organisations operating outside Palestine. The most influential contacts between Zionism and British officials were those maintained by Chaim Weizmann, who became the president of World Zionist Organization<sup>6</sup> (WZO) in 1920. To mention, the first Zionist Congress was convened in Basel in 1897 and attended by over 200 delegates who established the World Zionist Organization as the central administrative organ of the Zionist movement.

Another source of outside support was provided by elements of the Jewish community in the US. The Zionist Organization of America was founded in 1917, under the leadership of the noted lawyer and later justice of the Supreme Court, Louis Brandeis. The Zionist became a factor in US political life. In the late 1930s, US representatives played an important role in the deliberations of the World Zionist Organization and private contributions from the United States made up a significant portion of the funds donated to the Zionist cause. With the rise of the United States to

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<sup>5</sup> Modern political Zionism focusing on Palestine originated in Russia. The scattered Jewish groups in Palestine were organised under a central coordinating agency and took the name the Lovers of Zion. During the 1880s and 1890s the Lovers of Zion sponsored small agricultural settlements in Palestine but it suffered from lack of funds and the settlements were not very successful. Yet it has assumed a prominent place in the historical consciousness of modern Israelis and is regarded as the first of several waves of settlement that contributed to the eventual creation of the state of Israel. Leo Pinsker (1891) in his booklet *Auto-emancipation* argued that anti-Semitism was so deeply embedded in European society that Jews would never be treated as equals. His call for action was appealing to young Russian Jews and in the 1890s a variety of Zionist organizations emerged, each with its own solution to the problems of Jewish identity and persecution. At that stage Zionism was an uncoordinated movement without direction.

<sup>6</sup> Theodor Herzl's experience as a journalist and correspondent in various Western European cities convinced him that anti-Semitism was such a deeply rooted prejudice that it could never be eliminated by legislation. Driven by this belief Herzl wrote *The Jewish State* (1896) which provided the ideological basis for political Zionism. *The Jewish State* had an electrifying effect on East European Jewry and provided Zionism with a clearly stated political objective which led to the establishment of WZO.

global power during the Second World War, American Jews played a vital role in shaping the outcome of the Palestine conflict (Wilson 1972:65).

The existence of a certain and deliberate sympathy within the cabinet towards the religious and humanitarian aspects of Zionism and the chance to secure British strategic interests interacted to produce a British declaration in support of Zionist objectives in Palestine. On 2 November 1917, the British foreign secretary Arthur Balfour wrote a letter to Lord Rothschild, a prominent figure in British Zionist circles<sup>7</sup>, to inform that the cabinet had approved the following declaration of sympathy for Jewish Zionist aspirations:

His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country (Stein 1961, cited in Newport 2014: 58).

The Zionists interpreted the term 'National Home' to mean a Jewish state and they expected the British administration to cooperate in the creation of such a state. In the Balfour Declaration, Britain had also pledged to uphold the rights and privileges of the 'existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine', referring to the 668,258 Arab inhabitants who constituted over 85 per cent of the population by that time. This was the duty of equal obligation, and later it became the insoluble contradiction between Arabs and Jews (Cleveland 2009: 245).

The San Remo Conference awarded Britain the Class 'A' Mandate over Palestine<sup>8</sup>, and the British military administration was replaced by a civilian administration in July 1920. Two years later the newly created League of Nations gave formal sanction to the Mandate, and the terms of the League mandate incorporated the Balfour Declaration and recognized Hebrew as an official language in Palestine. Strictly it was a Mandate for Palestine and Trans-Jordan where the British Government separated the administration of Palestine from that of Trans-

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<sup>7</sup> The Balfour Declaration of 1917 was a letter from the British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour for transmission to the Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland which stated that statement.

<sup>8</sup> Since the Mandates differed according to the stage of the development of the people, the physical situation of the territory, its economic conditions, and other similar circumstances, three categories of Mandates were established. Class 'A' Mandates included the former provinces of the Ottoman Empire — Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Transjordan, and Iraq. 'Class 'B' Mandates, former African colonies of the German Empire, included: Cameroon, Togoland, the Tanganyika territory, and Ruanda-Urundi. Class 'C' Mandates referred to Far East territories, which included the islands of Nauru, New Guinea, and Western Samoa.

Jordan which made the Jordan River the effective eastern boundary of modern Palestine. The Class 'A' Mandate for Palestine made Britain legally responsible for developing Palestine economically, socially and politically to the point where sovereignty could be handed over to its people and the country could gain its independence<sup>9</sup> (Biger 1981: 158-59 and Hadawi 1991: 46).

During those years, bloody clashes periodically erupted between Arabs and Jews. Britain sought to reconcile the conflicting aspirations of Zionists and Arabs and facilitated discussions between Weizmann and the leading Arab personality, Faysal of Syria. In an agreement in 1919, Weizmann pledged that the Jewish community would cooperate with the Arabs in the economic development of Palestine. In return, Faysal would recognize the Balfour Declaration and consent to Jewish immigration provided that the rights of the Palestinian Arabs were protected, and the Arab demands for the independence of Greater Syria including Palestine were recognized. The agreement was nullified by the fact that Faysal did not achieve the independence he sought, and the Palestinian Arab peasants and tenant farmers were not protected in their rights as the agreement stipulated.

Sir Herbert Samuel, who himself was a Jew and was appointed as Britain's first High Commissioner to Palestine, asked the Colonial Office to issue a statement clarifying the intent of the Balfour Declaration. Samuel believed that the Arab unrest and their opposition to the Balfour Declaration were based upon a misunderstanding of its implications (MacCallum 1929: 278, cited in Newport 2014: 115-16). On 3 June 1922, responding to Samuel's request and in an attempt to clarify its plans in Palestine, Winston Churchill, the colonial secretary, outlined to the House of Commons, his ministry's policy regarding the Balfour Declaration and the Palestine Mandate. Churchill's memorandum, commonly referred to as the Churchill White Paper of 1922, served as the basis for policy during most of the 1920s. To placate the

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<sup>9</sup> There was no formally recognized body of Arab representatives empowered to present the Palestinian Arab case to the high commissioner whereas Zionist access to British authority was sanctioned by the terms of the mandate which authorized the formation of a public body to consult with the mandatory government on matters affecting the establishment of the Jewish national home. To fulfill this function the World Zionist Organization created the Palestine Zionist Executive in 1921 and was reorganized as the Jewish Agency in 1929. The chairman of the Jewish Agency had regular access to the high commissioner and other British officials. Jewish communal affairs were conducted through a hierarchy of representative organizations. The national assembly constituted in 1920 was an elected body of some 300 delegates who were selected from among themselves the members of the national council or Vaad Leumi. The council was empowered to make administrative decisions on behalf of the Jewish community and was treated by the mandate government as the legitimate representative of Palestinian Jewish.

Arab community, the White Paper stated that the development of a Jewish national home did not mean the imposition of Jewish nationality upon the inhabitants of Palestine as a whole. However, it also conceded certain Zionist demands by declaring that the Jewish people had a right to be in Palestine. In other words, Palestine as a whole should not be converted into a Jewish national home, but that such a home should be founded in Palestine. The White Paper was intended to remove the ambiguities contained in the Balfour Declaration; it failed to do so. High Commissioner Samuel also proposed several schemes for the development of a unitary state but in vain<sup>10</sup> (Hadawi 1991: 16, 51).

Talat (1981), the Crown Prince of Jordan, argued that when the Balfour declaration was announced on 2 November 1917, Palestine was not under British control at that time. It was the moment when it became apparent that the British invasion of Palestine looked like being successful. It was only at the San Remo meeting of the Supreme War Council in April 1920 that the mandate for Palestine was allocated to 'His Britannic Majesty'. The Palestine mandate was confirmed by the League of Nations which came into force in September 1922 (Talat 1981: 28). Caplan (2010) also mentioned the problematic aspects of the Balfour Declaration. In the Balfour Declaration, a positive commitment to the Zionist state was conditioned by a negative injunction, not to harm the civil and religious rights of the non-Jewish population of Palestine. He also pointed out that the resident population was not referred to as Arabs or as Palestinians but rather as non-Jewish, and that only their civil and religious rights, not the political or national rights, would be safeguarded.

In trying to administer Palestine, Britain was caught between the rising ambitions and expectations of the Zionists who claimed Palestine as theirs by historical right and Balfour's pledge<sup>11</sup>, and the Arabs of Palestine and Syria, who

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<sup>10</sup> One of his proposals was to create a legislative council composed of elected Muslim, Christian and Jewish representatives plus eleven members nominated by the high commissioner. The Arab leaders rejected the plan as they would not serve in any constitutional government that did not annul the Balfour Declaration. Samuel then attempted to form an advisory council consisting of ten Arab and two Jewish representatives nominated by the high commissioner. This proposal also failed, as the Arab nominees were pressured into refusing to serve.

<sup>11</sup> In November 1917 in an effort to win favour among Zionists in Britain, the US and perhaps even Germany, the British Cabinet issued the Balfour Declaration. This was part of a letter written by British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour to Lord Rothschild in which Balfour declared that British policy aimed at "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jews people". This support was given with the qualification that nothing would be done to prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

claimed Palestine by right of possession and Mc Mohan’s promise<sup>12</sup> - two rival peoples and nationalisms. The British Mandatory authorities had an impossible task before them: to reconcile two apparently opposed movements and to govern, in one territory, two disparate communities bitterly distrustful of each other. Caplan (2010) argued that the British commitment to the Jews as well as to the Arabs were inconsistent with each other (Caplan 2010: 57-58).

**(i) Jewish Immigration, Land Acquisition in Palestine**

Jewish immigration and land acquisition in Palestine was an important reason contributing to the Arab-Israel conflict. The first wave of Jewish immigration to Palestine took place before the First World War. Later, from 1919 to 1923, about 30,000 immigrants mainly from Eastern Europe; and, from 1924 to 1926, an additional 50,000 immigrants mostly from Poland landed in Palestine. The numbers of immigrants increased in 1933 when the rise of Hitler and the Nazi Party forced many Jews to leave Germany and central Europe. From 1933 to 1937, a huge influx of about 170,000 Jews came to Palestine – suddenly doubling the size of the Jews (Caplan 2010: 24-25).

**Table 1.1  
Population of Palestine by Ethnic Group, 1931–1946**

| Year | Arab      | %  | Jewish  | %  | Other  | % | Total     |
|------|-----------|----|---------|----|--------|---|-----------|
| 1931 | 864,806   | 82 | 174,139 | 16 | 18,269 | 2 | 1,057,601 |
| 1936 | 983,244   | 71 | 382,857 | 28 | 22,751 | 2 | 1,388,852 |
| 1941 | 1,123,168 | 68 | 489,830 | 30 | 26,758 | 2 | 1,639,756 |
| 1946 | 1,310,866 | 67 | 599,922 | 31 | 31,562 | 2 | 1,942,350 |

(Source: Cleveland William L. and Martin Bunton (2009), *A History of the Modern Middle East, Fourth Edition*, USA: Westview Press, p. 255).

<sup>12</sup> In an attempt to gain Arab support for the war against Turkey – an ally of Germany and Austria – Britain had made promises to the Arabs in the fall of 1915 which aimed to fulfill Arab demands for independence. The pledges were made in a series of letters between Sharif Hussain of Mecca and Sir Henry Mc Mohan, British High Commissioner in Egypt. Mc Mohan acting for the British government tried to persuade Hussain to lead his Arab followers in a revolt against the Turks. Hussain was willing as long as Britain guaranteed independence to the Arabs after the Turks had been defeated. He sought British guarantee and they were given.

Table 1.1 shows that from 1931 to 1946, the Arab population grew from around 864,806 to 1,310,866. Still, the Arabs constituted two-thirds majority when the UN was called upon to recommend a plan for the future of the contested lands. During the same period, the Jewish community increased in Palestine from 174,139 in 1931 to 599,922 in 1946. By 1947, there were between 600,000 and 650,000 Jews in the country representing a ten-fold increase from the pre-World War I total. In a region of limited agricultural potential, the ownership of arable land became a matter of contention and survival (Caplan 2010: 26).

To settle the Jewish immigrants, it was necessary to acquire as much as cultivable land as possible. The organizations like the Jewish National Fund<sup>13</sup> usually acquired land by purchasing it from absentee Arab owners. The first and largest such purchase under the 'Mandate' was from the *Sursock* family of Beirut which sold 50,000 acres in the fertile Jezreel Valley to the Jewish National Fund in 1920. But even leading Palestinian notable families, attracted by the high prices the Zionists were willing to pay, sold cultivable land to agents of the Jewish National Fund or other Zionist purchasing organizations. By 1939, some 5 per cent of the total land area under the Mandate, which made up approximately 10 per cent of the total cultivable land, was Jewish owned<sup>14</sup> (Cleveland 2009: 255).

British taxation policy that required direct cash payments in place of the customary Ottoman payment in kind, forced peasant farmers to borrow funds at high rates of interest from local moneylenders who were frequently the large landholders. Sometimes they were compelled to sell their lands to the Zionist to pay tax to the British authorities. In one instance, the Jewish land broker stepped in and over 40,000 acres, comprising 18 villages were sold, resulting in the eviction of 688 Arab agricultural families. The cumulative effect of land transfers, British policy and the

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<sup>13</sup> The Jewish National Fund leased purchased land exclusively to Jews at a nominal rate. It also provided capital for improvements and equipment, a practice that enabled impoverished immigrants to engage in agricultural pursuits immediately upon arriving in Palestine.

<sup>14</sup> Of the various organizations formed to generate self-sufficiency within the Yishuv (the name of the Jewish community in Palestine before 1948) the most important was Histadrut, the Federation of Jewish Labour. Founded in 1920 to promote Jewish trade unionism Histadrut gradually expanded its role during the interwar years and came to engage in an extensive range of entrepreneurial activities and to exercise a decisive influence on the ideology and politics of both the Yishuv and the future State of Israel. Histadrut had interlocking ties with the kibbutz workers in the agricultural sector. The kibbutzim were collective agricultural settlements in which all property belonged to the community and all responsibilities were shared equally by the members. They became a symbol of the cooperative communal order that many of the early Zionists hoped to build in Palestine. Together, Histadrut and the kibbutz movement also represented the ideal of Jewish rejuvenation through the dignity of labour and working the land.

attitude of the Arab landholders was the increasing impoverishment and marginalization of the Palestinian Arab peasantry who expressed their discontent in outbreaks of violence against all the three parties (Hadawi 1991: 48).

Communal violence like the Wailing Wall disturbance of 1929 and the great revolt of 1936–1939 were directly related to the dislocations caused by Jewish immigration and land acquisition by the Jews in Palestine. In 1929, violence revolved around a dispute over the Jewish right of access to the remains of the Western, or Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. Jews regarded the Wall as a holy site and had gone there since centuries to pray. Muslims also had deep religious attachments to the Wall and its immediate surroundings, as it formed the western abutment of the *Haram al-Sharif* (the holy sanctuary) that contained the Dome of the Rock and *Al-Aqsa* mosque, which was associated with the Islamic belief of Prophet Muhammad's journey to the heaven. At the time of the Mandate, the Wall was designated as *Waqf* and was thus under Muslim jurisdiction. A year of claims and counterclaims over the status of the Wall turned into violent confrontations in August 1929, during which Arab mobs, provoked by Jewish demonstrations, attacked two Jewish quarters in Jerusalem and killed Jews in the towns of Hebron and Safad. By the time British forces quelled the riots, 133 Jews and 116 Arabs had lost their lives (Fraser 1995: 11).

In September 1929, Britain dispatched the first Royal Commission on Palestine headed by Sir Walter Shaw<sup>15</sup>. Shaw Commission believed that Jewish immigration had been overly excessive, and it had resulted in acute land shortages. Eviction of Arab tenants, as a result of land sales to Jews, would constitute a danger to public order. The Commission recommended a suspension of Jewish immigration until a more comprehensive investigation of its effects on Arab farmers was completed (Newport 2014: 118-19). To defer a final verdict on the question of Jewish immigration and land transfers, British Prime Minister MacDonald proposed another commission to study the rate at which Palestine was able to absorb Jewish settlers without causing unemployment problems and the possibilities of Jewish settlement without evicting Arab cultivators (MacCallum 1934: 161, cited in Newport 2014: 120-21).

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<sup>15</sup> Sir Walter Shaw reported that Jewish immigration should be brought directly under British control and that the practice of evicting Arab tenants following land transfers should cease.

Thus, instead of dealing with the Shaw Commission's report, the British sent another commission. John Hope Simpson, a former administrator in India and known for his work on the question of refugees, was selected to head the one-man commission. In 1930, the Simpson report, officially known as the "Report on Immigration, Land Settlement and Development", was incorporated into a statement of British policy known as the Passfield White Paper (1930). It declared that Palestine had a limited economic absorptive capacity and proposed that restrictions on Jewish immigration be introduced. The Zionists rejected it; and due to the Zionist pressure<sup>16</sup>, in February 1931 Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald read to the House of Commons a personal letter, which is known to the Arabs as 'Black Letter'. MacDonald had written to Weizmann in which the Passfield White Paper was effectively repudiated<sup>17</sup> (MacCallum 1934: 164, cited in Newport 2014: 125).

The first organised Palestinian Arab response to the post-World War I settlement came with the formation of Palestinian Arab Congress in 1919 at Jerusalem. The Congress met annually and at the Third Congress, held in 1920, a standing Arab Executive was created under the presidency of Musa Kazim al-Husayni, a former mayor of Jerusalem. Within the Arab Executive, there was a rivalry between two of the leading Muslim notable families of Jerusalem, the Nashashibis and the al-Husaynis<sup>18</sup>. The British, aware of the rivalry, used their power over appointments to maintain the divisions between the two families. Thus, in 1920, Raghib Nashashibi replaced al-Husayni as mayor of Jerusalem. In the following year, the British counter-balanced this Nashashibi gain by securing the selection of Hajj Amin al-Husayni as *Mufti* of Jerusalem. Despite his opposition to the Balfour Declaration, Hajj Amin al-Husayni appeared willing to cooperate with the British administration in preventing acts of violence (Fraser 1995: 10-11).

The *Mufti*'s authority was expanded by High Commissioner Samuel's creation in 1921 of the Supreme Muslim Council, an autonomous body charged with the

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<sup>16</sup> Weizmann joined by prominent members of the British and US Jewish communities and by British opposition politicians put tremendous pressure on the government to rescind the policy. It confirmed the Arabs belief in the ability of Zionist pressure groups to influence the decisions of the British government.

<sup>17</sup> Weizmann noted in his memoir, *Trial and Error*, that as a response to MacDonald's letter, Jewish legal immigration into Palestine was permitted to reach 40,004 in 1934 and 62,000 for 1935. MacCallum mentioned Jewish immigration rose from approximately 7,000 in 1932 to 33,000 in 1933.

<sup>18</sup> They were local urban notables whose power and prestige were based on their ownership of land and their domination of religious and municipal offices.

management of the entire range of Islamic institutions within the Mandate. Hajj Amin was elected President of the Council in 1922. In his twin capacities as *Mufti* of Jerusalem and President of the Supreme Muslim Council, he acquired control of a vast patronage network. Gradually, the *Mufti* was able to transform his religious authority into a political authority in Palestine. He continued in office upon the British goodwill until the outbreak of violence in 1936 (Cleveland 2009: 250).

Within the Arab community, there was growing disenchantment with the moderate leadership of Hajj Amin and the Supreme Muslim Council. The *Mufti*'s pre-eminent political position was challenged by a new party, the *Istiqlal*, composed of young Palestinian notables, which advocated direct action against Britain and endorsed the development of strong ties with other Arab countries. The violence that swept through Palestine in 1936 was a spontaneous popular reaction against Zionism, British Imperial Mandate, and the entrenched Arab leadership. In an attempt to channel the popular discontent into mass demonstrations against Britain and the Zionists, local Arab resistance committees declared a general strike on 19 April 1936 (Bercuson 1985: 6).

The Arab leaders on 25 April 1936 formed a national organization, the Arab Higher Committee under the presidency of the *Mufti* that included Christians, Muslims, Nashashibis, al-Husaynis, and prominent members of *Istiqlal*. The Arab Higher Committee was a belated attempt to unify the factions within the Palestinian elite. Although, the committee attempted to coordinate the strike, it lagged behind popular opinion and tended to respond to events rather than to create them. The strike spread rapidly and was accompanied by attacks on Jews and Jewish property and the destruction of British transport. When various attempts of mediation failed, Britain made a determined effort to crush the rebellion. In October 1936 after the deaths of 1,000 Arabs and 80 Jews, the strike was terminated by order of the Arab Higher Committee. It had revealed the depth of Palestinian Arab resentment against the British and the Jews (Cleveland 2009: 258 and Caplan 2010: 82-83).

### ***(ii) Second World War and Partition Plan***

When the Arab leadership called off the strike, Britain sent another investigation commission to Palestine. This commission, chaired by Lord Peel, issued its report in July 1937. According to the report:

It is manifest that the Mandate cannot be fully or honourably implemented unless by some means or other the antagonism between Arabs and Jews can be composed. But it is the Mandate which created that antagonism and keeps it alive and as long as the Mandate exists we cannot honestly hold out the expectation that Arabs or Jews will be able to set aside their national hopes or fears or sink their differences in the common service of Palestine.

By the findings, the Peel Commission proposed that the mandate be terminated and that Palestine be partitioned into separate Arab and Jewish states. The Arab Higher Committee opposed partition as a violation of the rights of the Arab inhabitants of Palestine. The Zionist leaders favoured the principle of partition but regarded the territory planned to allocate to the Jewish state as inadequate. This position was adopted by the World Zionist Congress in 1937 and amounted to a Zionist rejection of the Peel Commission's report. Britain's efforts to find a way out of the Palestine collapsed in the face of opposition from both Arabs and Jews (Newport 2014: 135 and Caplan 2010: 84-87).

After the announcement of the Peel Commission's proposals in July 1937, Arab violence was renewed. When the British district commissioner for Galilee was murdered in October, Britain responded by dissolving the Arab Higher Committee, arresting and deporting its members. The *Mufti* escaped to Damascus where he attempted to reconstitute the committee but in vain. The Arab rebel groups, composed mainly of peasants, concentrated their attacks on rail, roads, bridges and British police stations. They also destroyed Jewish property and killed Jewish settlers. They were supported by the bulk of the rural population and by 1938 much of the countryside and several of the major towns were in their hands. Government services came to a virtual halt, and even portions of Jerusalem fell under their control<sup>19</sup> (Cleveland 2009: 259).

In an attempt to put down the uprising Britain sent 20,000 troops into Palestine and adopted harsh measures of collective punishment on villages suspected of harbouring rebels. The revolt took a heavy toll and more than 3,000 Arabs, 2,000 Jews, and 600 British were killed. The economy of Palestine was vulnerable, and the Arab leaders were in exile or under arrest. The revolt failed to dislodge Britain from

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<sup>19</sup> In villages under rebel control rents were canceled, debt collectors were denied entry and wealthy landlords were coerced into making 'donations' to the rebel cause. Local resistance committees banned the *tarbush*, the headgear of the Ottoman administrative elite and insisted that men should instead wear the *kaffiya*, the checkered head cloth that has become a symbol of Palestinian national identity.

the Mandate, but it forced the British to make one more re-assessment of its Palestine policy (Bercuson 1985: 7).

Britain recognized if a conflict should erupt between Britain and Germany, British interests in the Middle East particularly the oilfields of Iraq and the Suez Canal Zone had to be protected, and this job would be much easier with Arab support. So, Arab states had to be placated. Against this background, Britain formulated a policy announced in the White Paper of 1939. The White Paper stated: "His Majesty's Government therefore now declare unequivocally that it is not part of their policy that Palestine should become a Jewish State." The document further stated that "Jewish immigration was to be limited to 15,000 a year over the next five years, at which point it would cease altogether unless the Arab community consented to its continuation; land transfers to Jews were to be restricted to certain specified areas; and in ten years, Palestine would be granted independence" (Bercuson 1985: 8). The Jews unanimously rejected and condemned the White Paper. A general strike was called and in Jerusalem Arab shops were looted, the police were stoned, and a British constable was shot. The most other Palestinian Arab leaders regarded it as a victory of sorts. But the *Mufti* in exile in Baghdad rejected the White Paper for not granting immediate independence. To prevent another outbreak of violence like the revolt of 1936 the British administration placed restrictions on Arab political activity and refused to allow the exiled Arab leaders to return (Hadawi 1991: 53-54).

During the Second World War, German policies and programmes under Hitler led to the extermination of approximately six million Jews. Hundreds of thousands remained and in 1945-46 many of them began to fill refugee camps in Central and Western Europe. Most were unable or unwilling to return home due to their security reasons. Most of the Jewish wanted to go to Palestine, and the Palestinian Jews were desperate to bring them into the country. Thus, the Holocaust, the systematic murder of millions of European Jews and others in Hitler's death camps influenced the future status of the troubled British Mandate (Fraser 1995: 14-17).

In 1944, at a conference in Alexandria, Egypt, the foundations of the League of Arab States were laid, and resolutions in support of the Palestinians were passed, repeating earlier Arab calls for the cessation of Jewish immigration, the preservation of Arab lands, and the achievement of independence for Palestine. Further, it was stated that there can be no greater injustice and aggression than solving the problem of

the Jews of Europe by another injustice, i.e., by inflicting injustice on the Arabs of Palestine. At another point of time, Saudi King Ibn Saud insisted stiffly that the European Jewish tragedy would have to be solved by the nations of Christian Europe (Caplan 2010: 105).

From their part, the Jews attempted to subvert the White Paper of 1939. The most forceful public expression of their position was contained in the Biltmore Programme, a set of resolutions adopted at a meeting of US Zionists<sup>20</sup> in 1942 calling for open immigration to Palestine and the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine (Wilson 1972: 65-66 and Newport 2014: 190). The Jews responded to the circumstances of the War with two conflicting policies. On the one hand, they committed themselves to the British War efforts against Hitler; on the other hand, they prepared for an armed confrontation with Britain once Germany was defeated. In support of the Allied cause, thousands of Jewish volunteers joined the British forces eventually forming a Jewish Brigade that fought as a unit of the British army in Italy. The combat experience they gathered during the war helped them to fight against Britain in Palestine after 1945.

There were three underground military organizations in Palestine, *Haganah*, *Irgun* and *Lehi*. *Haganah* concentrated on defying the White Paper, the *Irgun*<sup>21</sup> and the *Lehi* intensified their military operations against the British in Palestine<sup>22</sup>. The *Haganah*<sup>23</sup>, although technically illegal was allowed by the British administration to acquire weapons openly and to participate with the British forces in preparations for the defense of Palestine against an anticipated Axis invasion. When the Axis threat subsided after 1942, *Haganah* members retained their arms as well as their intimate

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<sup>20</sup> The United States became the centre of international Zionist activity since 1940 when the centre of world-wide Zionist activity was transferred from London to Washington and New York.

<sup>21</sup> During the mandate period when the creation of a Jewish state was in doubt, most Zionists accepted Weizmann's strategy of relying on Britain to bring about the fulfillment of Zionist objectives. However, a splinter group eventually called the Revisionists, condemned Weizmann's approach as too dependent on Britain. In 1933 the Revisionists formed a separate movement within Zionism and shortly thereafter they set up their own military force in Palestine, the *Irgun* which operated independently. The founder and leading spokesman of Revisionism was a Russian Zionist named Vladimir Jabotinsky.

<sup>22</sup> In January 1946 the *Irgun* penetrated Aqir Air base to steal arms, while *Lehi* killed seven British soldiers. In July 1946 the *Irgun* bombed the mandate offices in the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. The British responded with wholesale arrests, floggings, curfews, roadblocks, martial law and hangings. By late 1946 there was one British soldier or policeman for every five Jews in Palestine while the anti-British terror continued.

<sup>23</sup> Formed in 1920 in response to the Arab riots of that year *Haganah* gradually evolved into a permanent underground reserve army with a command structure that was fully integrated into the political institutions of the Jewish community as a whole.

knowledge of the British military network in Palestine (Cleveland 2009: 262 and Fraser 1995: 17).

The *Irgun* consisted of a dedicated core of militant Zionists who advocated a policy of reprisals against Arab civilians and British personnel. A segment of the Jewish community believed that any action taken in the cause of the creation of a Jewish state was justified. In 1943, the *Irgun* came under the command of Menachem Begin, an immigrant from Poland, who led the organisation until its dissolution in 1948. The other dissident military unit *Lehi* (often called the *Stern Gang* after its founder Abraham Stern who was also a Polish Jew) was much smaller and less effective as a combat force but was capable of isolated acts of terror, such as the 1944 assassination of the British minister of state for the Middle East, Lord Moyne (Fraser 1995: 17-18 and MacQueen 2013: 77-78).

In October 1945, Britain formally invited the US to join to find a solution to the Palestine question; and thus, the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry was established<sup>24</sup>. The Committee, jointly chaired by Judge Joseph C. Hutcheson and Sir John E. Singleton, was composed of six American and six British members. The Committee visited Europe including the Displaced Persons (DP) camps and Palestine in early 1946 and gathered submissions and testimonies from Arab, Jewish and the British representatives. In its report in May 1946, the Committee described the terrible plight of European Jewry and recommended the immediate admission to Palestine of 100,000 Jewish refugees. Its recommendations concerning the future of Palestine were not clear: “the Mandate should continue to function for the time being; neither an Arab nor a Jewish state should be constituted in Palestine; and Jewish immigration should not be subject to an Arab veto, but it should also not be allowed to continue until the Arabs were a minority in the country” (Fraser 1995: 29-30 and Caplan 2010: 106-07).

The British government rejected the report, fearing that Arabs will be provoked by the immediate admission of 100,000 Jews. The reaction of the US was quite different; and on 1 May 1946, President Harry Truman publicly endorsed the Committee’s recommendations concerning the admission of Jewish refugees. Thus,

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<sup>24</sup> In 1945 the new Labour government in Britain headed by Clement Attlee and with Ernest Bevin as foreign secretary stepped up its efforts to find a solution to the Palestine question. The international power balance had shifted dramatically and the US had emerged as the most important player in the western alliance.

the gulf that already existed between Britain and US on the Palestine question immediately widened further. The proposal to admit more Jews ended as a failure.

The differences between Britain and US have been variously described. One argument is that Franklin D. Roosevelt was the anti-imperialist American president, and Winston Churchill was the staunch imperialist prime minister and defender of the British Empire. Their strong convictions continued to shape both nation's attitudes and policies. As for President Truman, it is told that he seized the Palestine and Jewish problem as a personal and political mission. As he noted in his memoirs, the "plight of the victims who had survived the mad genocide of Hitler's Germany was a challenge to Western civilization, and as President, I undertook to do something about it." Truman viewed them as ethical issues, holding that obligations to the Jews were a moral imperative. However, many senior State Department officials such as Loy Henderson, the Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs, has stated that Truman's support for a Jewish homeland was largely motivated by domestic political considerations (Newport 2014: 191, 241, 243).

By early 1947, Palestine was an armed camp. Three underground Jewish armies were conducting military operations against the Mandate, and the Palestine Arabs were arming themselves once again. Almost every day British soldiers were killed, British property was destroyed, and *Haganah* ships appeared off the coast of Palestine ready to test the Royal Navy blockade. British law and order in Palestine were breaking down, and it was clear with each passing day that the hour of reckoning was approaching for the British Mandate. Britain was no longer willing or able to support the heavy burden of the Palestine Mandate (Bercuson 1985: 54).

Historians offered numerous perspectives on why the mandate became the source of so much discord. To some, the failure to resolve the conflict between Jewish immigration and the preservation of Palestinian Arab rights rests with the indecisiveness and biases of the various British governments that held power during the twenty-eight years of the mandate (1920–1948). Another group of historians argued that indigenous Arab inhabitants approximately eight to one in 1922 became a minority within the new Israeli state in 1948, due to lack of credible representatives of the Palestinian Arab population. Further, a small territory that had been inhabited by an Arab majority for some 1,200 years was promised by a third party (Britain) as a national home to another people (the international Jewish community) the majority of

whom lived in Eastern Europe. The Zionist claims to the same territory inhabited by Palestinian Arabs lay at the root of the conflict over Palestine (Cleveland 2009: 240).

After discussing the history of the Arab-Israel conflict, the next section focuses on Canada's involvement in this conflict. A set of questions may arise that what are the major interests of Canada in getting involved in the Arab-Israel conflict, whether it is the Canadian government's initiative or leader like Lester B. Pearson's personal interest which had been a major factor in support of the UN partition plan which led to the creation of state of Israel.

### **Canada's Involvement in Palestine**

Canada was a self-governing British Dominion in 1917 when the Balfour Declaration was issued. Canadian leaders were not consulted about the promises made to the Zionists, and in subsequent years did not consider themselves to be bound by the declaration. There were also questions whether Canada had legal obligations to the Zionists, which arose from Canadian membership in the League of Nations which granted the Palestine Mandate to Great Britain. Historically, in the 1920s and 1930s, Canadian governments did not get involved with Palestine matters as it had no direct political, economic or military interest in the Middle East. Lester B. Pearson, who went on to become the prime minister in the 1960s, states in his memoirs that Canada felt Palestine issue was a purely British problem. Therefore, it was better to follow the British lead on the Palestinian questions<sup>25</sup>. During this period, on one single instance in 1922, Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King addressed a gathering of the Zionist Federation at Ottawa and told the delegates that he endorsed the desire of the Hebrew people for their homeland where "they might make their contributions to the world's literature and civilisation and from which they might again shape the world's destinies" (Bercuson 1985: 14 and Munro 1973: 212).

In the 1930s, the British dominion was beginning to cut its teeth in international affairs. Canada was silent on the White Paper of 1939. In 1943, Prime Minister Mackenzie King commented on 1939 White Paper, which imposed

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<sup>25</sup> Prime Minister King was determined to maintain Canada's own autonomy, at the same time he admired the British and was prepared to follow their leadership in many international questions, particularly those that did not directly affect Canada.

restrictions on the Jewish immigration to Palestine. The White Paper was scheduled to go into effect in April 1944; before that, in 1943, A.J. Freiman (a Jewish community representative) approached Mackenzie King to intervene with the British government to forestall the imposition of the Jewish immigration restrictions in Palestine. Mackenzie King sought the advice of the Department of External Affairs before replying. The job of drafting an answer was given to Elizabeth P. MacCallum, a new member of the department and Canada's lead and bona fide expert on the Middle East. Her understanding of the Palestine-Israel conflict was published in 1929 in which she mentioned that the heart of the conflict was due to the existence of the opposing forces of two distinct nationalisms in one territory. She rejected all of Freiman's arguments. King replied to Freiman based on MacCallum draft that the intent of the British White Paper was not directed at limiting Jewish immigration but instead to create the political conditions that would facilitate the peaceful development of the Jewish National Home. The situation of the Jews in Palestine was best served "by agreement among those whose interests are directly concerned". King thus indirectly endorsed the White Paper of 1939 (Newport 2014: 146-48).

Canada opened a trade commission office in Cairo to increase trade in the Middle East in 1930. The commission covered the surrounding countries such as Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Persia and Cyprus. The first trade commissioner was Yves Lamontagne. Canadian trade links further expanded in 1935 when a trade treaty was concluded with France giving her 'most favoured nation' tariff concessions. Since Syria and Lebanon were both French Mandates, the tariff concessions were extended to them as well; and Canadian Embassy was opened in Ankara, Turkey in 1948. Despite all these initiatives, Middle East and Palestine had ranked low in Canada's priorities in external relations.

As for the trade, for example, in 1946, Canadian import from Turkey, Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Palestine totaled a little over \$4 million or about 0.2 per cent of all its total imports. In the same period, Canadian exports to those countries amounted to about \$ 24 million or only 0.1 per cent of its exports. In fact, Canada did not import Middle Eastern oil till 1948; and even the oil that it imported from Iran and Aden made up only a small proportion of its total purchases most of which came from Venezuela and the US (Bercuson1985: 14-15, 33).

Since Canada had little to do with the Middle East, the governments had no wish to get involved. Despite Zionist public relations campaign at home, no Canadian policy makers, with the possible exception of Lester Pearson then Canadian Ambassador to the US advocated an active role either in attempting to solve the Palestine question or in trying to persuade US or Britain to adopt one course or another.

In his memoirs, Lester Pearson called to mind the Department of External Affairs' (DEA) mounting concerns about the United States' growing dominance, and equally important, its impact on Canadian foreign policy. Pearson mentioned that "The country whose policies would now concern us most would not be Great Britain but the United States. American policies, therefore, must be watched closely. From their consequences, Canada could not escape...." (Pearson 1972: 284 cited in Newport 2014: 252)

In 1945, Hitler's armies were dissolved, and the victorious Allied powers prepared for the UN conference on a new international organization. On 25 April 1945, the UN conference opened in San Francisco. Mackenzie King headed the Canadian delegation which included Gordon Graydon, Conservative Party House Leader and M.J. Coldwell, Leader of the Co-Operative Commonwealth Federation party (1942-1960), as well as seven alternate delegates most of whom were members of the Department of External Affairs. For instance, at its heart were the department's three top officials: Norman Robertson, under-secretary of state for external affairs, Hume Wrong, associate under secretary for external affairs, and Lester B. Pearson, the Canadian ambassador to the United States. The Zionists were particularly concerned with the question of how the UN, as successor to the League of Nations, would dispose of former League Mandates and particularly the Palestine issue that was the only Class 'A' Mandate left<sup>26</sup>. The Arab delegations concentrated on an effort to force the Trusteeship Council to recognise only the rights of the largest single group in each Trusteeship territory. The Arab delegations from Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon used their position as official delegations at San Francisco to annul Jewish rights granted under the Balfour Declaration. The Zionists countered

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<sup>26</sup> Those proposals dealt, among many other matters, with trusteeship territories to be administered by UN or assigned to UN member countries for administration. No provision had been made that former League of Nations mandate territories would be automatically passed back to the UN for determination of their status.

this with a campaign to have the specific rights of the Jewish people in Palestine as defined by the Balfour Declaration. In fact, they need not have worried about Arab demands because Britain, France and US strongly opposed the Arab proposals (Newport 2014: 177, 231).

Canada was active in several important areas at the San Francisco meeting but on trusteeship matters refrained from the discussion and remained in the background (Lyon 1985: 26). Within the realistic limits of a 'middle power' role, Canadian policy makers were beginning to carve out areas of its active interest as its diplomats and political leaders from Mackenzie King had arrived at the conclusion during the War that Canada must take an active role in the international arena to protect its national interests. Hume Wrong, associate under secretary for external affairs, even worked out a theoretical basis for this activism when he formulated the concept of 'functionalism' which King explained to the House of Commons in July 1943. It was based on the notion that representation on post-War international bodies should be determined on a functional basis which will admit to full membership those countries, large or small, which have the greatest contribution to make to the particular object in question. Louis St. Laurent, Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs, in his statement in the General Assembly, on 18 January 1946 stated: "Our Government has always attached great importance to the first of these criteria: to what has been called the functional principle". Further he stated, "We believe that the interests of our country can best be served by that which best serves the whole community of nations" (Department of External Affairs, Canada 1946, Cited in Blanchette 2000: 23).

Perhaps, it was on this basis for example that Canada fought for representation on Allied War and post-War planning bodies such as the UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. During the Second World War, more than one million Canadians had served in the Allied forces. By the end of the War, its navy was the third largest among the allies and its air force the fourth largest besides its agricultural and industrial power proved important sources of allied strength. Part of Canada's post-war economic power came about by default – the bombed out factories of Europe contrasted dramatically with the untouched plants of Canada and the US; and part was also due to its wartime determination to spare no effort in the service of the Allied cause. Canada's immense wartime and post-war aid to Britain was but one example of

this state of mind. Canada was not a great power, but it had been an important ally in the larger alliance (Bercuson 1985: 32).

Less than two years after the end of Second World War, the British economy suffered from the ravages of war in 1947 and the people of Great Britain still had a hard time to find enough food and fuel. Things had seemed to get worse over the winter of 1946-47: unemployment increased as major companies closed down for long periods, the British Treasury was close to bankruptcy and the wheat supply decreased. On the other side, the combined pressure of *Haganah* sabotage, *Irgun* terror (such as the blowing up of a wing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem in 1946) and US opinion placed Britain in an impossible position. Britain tried once again to resolve the Palestine question (Fraser 1995: 28-29, 31-33).

British Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin (1945-1951) proposed a plan in January 1947. Instead of partition, Bevin advanced a plan that allowed 4000 Jews to enter Palestine per month for two years after which further Jewish immigration would be conditional upon Arab acceptance or UN arbitration; this came to be called the Bevin Plan<sup>27</sup>. Palestine would be transformed into a UN Trusteeship with local autonomy for both Arabs and Jews and after four years a constituent assembly would be elected by all the people of Palestine to decide the future political status of Palestine. If the assembly arrived at an agreement, independence would follow, but if not, the matter would be turned over to the UN Trusteeship Council for final determination. The British cabinet approved the plan on 6 February 1947, and it was presented to Arab and Jewish delegations; but both Arabs and Jews both rejected this proposal (Bercuson 1985: 3 and Cleveland 2009: 263).

Formally, on 2 April 1947, Britain referred the question of Palestine to the United Nations. Britain requested that the question of Palestine be placed on the agenda of the next regular session of the General Assembly and, further, that a special session of the General Assembly be summoned to constitute a special committee for that purpose. Trygve Lie, the UN Secretary-General, communicated the request for a

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<sup>27</sup> Bevin's preference was to continue the mandate a transitional period as a 'binational unitary state' with guarantees that either of the two provinces could secede and become independent, after a fixed period. Most of the cabinet opposed the Bevin scheme and favoured immediate partition; it appeared to be the only realistic solution.

special session to the member states and got the majority consent. Thus, UN General Assembly special session for the creation of a special committee<sup>28</sup> began at the General Assembly Hall, Flushing Meadow, New York, on 28 April 1947, and which ended on 15 May 1947 (United Nations Special Committee on Palestine Report 1947).

With the British announcement, the Palestine question instantly moved from being a British problem to an issue of international concern, a matter that neither Canada nor the United Nations could ignore or avoid. The implications were obvious to Ottawa: if the United Nations was unable to resolve the Palestine question quickly, decisively, and peacefully, the whole region could be thrown into bloodshed, chaos, and uncertainty. Furthermore, if the United Nations was unable to settle the issue, the organization's legitimacy and its value as an instrument of Canadian foreign policy could be permanently damaged (Newport 2014: 308).

On 12 April 1947, Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent sent Canada's approval of the special session to Lie; and two days later the cabinet authorised the dispatch of a Canadian delegation headed by Lester Pearson which included Elizabeth MacCallum and George Ignatieff of the Department of External Affairs. On 23 April, St. Laurent met with Riddel, MacCallum and Pearson to summarise the approach of Canada they would take at the UN. It was agreed that Canada would support efforts to limit the agenda to one item, that is the composition and terms of reference of the investigation committee and to bar substantive debate of the Palestine question. The Canadians would keep silent as long as possible but if that silence became embarrassing, the Canadian delegate might make a very brief statement underlining the importance of UN action in seeking a solution to this difficult problem and pointing to the damage that might be done to the UN (Bercuson 1985: 64 and Newport 2014: 317).

Canada's position was consistent with the basic foreign policy goals that St. Laurent had laid out in a speech inaugurating the Gray Foundation Lectures at the University of Toronto in January 1947. St. Laurent listed five basic principles: (i) the maintenance of national unity; (ii) the establishment and preservation of political liberty; (iii) the rule of law in national and international affairs; (iv) the preservation

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<sup>28</sup> Lie wanted to appoint an ad-hoc committee including representatives of the five permanent members of the Security Council. The British agreed but the US did not. Loy Henderson chief of the Near Eastern Affairs Division in the State Department proposed, instead, a short special session of the General Assembly.

of Christian values; and (v) the acceptance of Canadian responsibility in international affairs in keeping with Canada's conception of its role in the world (Chapnick 2007: 443 and John Kirton Conference Paper 2007: 1, 4).

The UN session began in the morning of 28 April 1947. Lester Pearson was elected as Chairman of the First Committee. This body was responsible for making recommendations on all political issues before the UN. The Committee faced two main questions: (i) the role to be played by the Jewish Agency in the committee's deliberations; and (ii) the composition and terms of reference of the investigating committee (Ismael 1994: 10). Pearson opened the First Committee meeting in the morning of 6 May 1947. The Arab countries did not want the Jewish Agency to appear, and the Arab Higher Committee representing the Palestine Arabs charged that the General Assembly had discriminated against it and threatened a boycott. Pearson guided the delegates through the discussion carefully and met informally with members of different delegations to work out a reasonable solution. Under the chairmanship of Pearson, the Committee decided to invite the Jewish Agency and the Arab Higher Committee but to bar all others (United Nations Special Committee on Palestine Report 1947).

From 8 May to 12 May 1947, the First Committee under Pearson's guidance tackled the thorny question of what investigating committee should be established, what it ought to study and who serve on it. The First Committee prepared a draft, giving the investigating committee "the widest powers to ascertain and record facts and to investigate all questions and issues relevant to the problem of Palestine" and allowing the committee to determine its procedures. It will conduct its investigation in Palestine and wherever it wished to receive oral and written testimony from Great Britain as well as from representatives of the people of Palestine. The draft report instructed the investigating committee to give most careful consideration to the religions in Palestine of Islam, Judaism and Christianity and to prepare a report for the 'Fall' General Assembly to be submitted no later than 1 September 1947 (Bercuson 1985: 70-71).

When the terms of reference of the investigating committee were fixed, then the First Committee turned to the question of its composition. The Canadian desire to include the great powers on the committee of the investigation made sense from one perspective, if a decision arrived at that had to be imposed by force, great powers

involvement was crucial. But from another point of view, it made no sense at all: great powers involvement meant Soviet involvement which would give the USSR a direct say in the determination of solution to the Palestine problem. Senator Austin speaking for the US put forward his original seven member-states; these are Canada,<sup>29</sup> Czechoslovakia, Iran, Netherlands, Peru, Sweden and Uruguay. Guatemala and Yugoslavia also became the members.<sup>30</sup> Australia and India were then elected, and the committee was complete with 11 member states<sup>31</sup>.

The day after the First Committee concluded its work; the General Assembly debated and adopted its report on the terms of reference and the membership of the investigating committee. Henceforth, this is known as the UN Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP).<sup>32</sup> It also adopted an appeal to the governments of the nominated states to appoint “persons of high moral character and of recognised competence in international affairs” who would act “impartially and conscientiously” (United Nations Special Committee on Palestine Report 1947).

The Canadian government appointed Ivan Cleveland Rand, a member of the Supreme Court of Canada to UNSCOP. Since each member country was also supposed to send an alternate, the government appointed Leon Mayrand, son of a Quebec newspaper editor and a career diplomat who had served in the Canadian embassy in Moscow and at Canada House in London. St. Laurent pointed out that Rand would be acting on his own, the Canadian representative has not been instructed by the Canadian government concerning the policy he is to advocate or support (Ismael 1994: 10).

Judge Emil Sandstrom, Chief Justice of the Swedish Supreme Court was elected Chairman of UNSCOP. UN Secretary General Trygve Lie’s choice to head the UNSCOP Secretariat was Dr. Victor Chi Tsai Hoo, assistant secretary general who

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<sup>29</sup> There is little direct evidence available to show why the US wanted Canada to be on the Palestine Committee. Perhaps Canada had all the characteristics US was looking for to qualify it for committee membership. It had a record of neutrality on the Palestine question. It had a solid record, during and after the war, of participation of international bodies and its diplomats and foreign service officers had a reputation for excellence. Canada was an ally, a North American country and close partner with the US in a broad field of activities.

<sup>30</sup> Austin also proposed beside these seven countries, four additional countries to be chosen from the South Pacific, Asia, East Europe and Latin America. The Chilean delegate moved an amendment calling for Guatemala and Yugoslavia to be given two of these four positions and the US motion as amended by Chile was passed.

<sup>31</sup> The Indian member of the Committee was a judge Sir Abdur Rahaman, an associate of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and an opponent of the partition of colonial India into India and Pakistan.

<sup>32</sup> UNSCOP submitted its final recommendations on 1 September 1947.

was to act as Lie's personal representative. On 26 May 1947, Trygve Lie opened the first formal session of UNSCOP, welcomed the delegates and announced that no hearings would be held in New York<sup>33</sup>. UNSCOP would begin its work in Palestine (United Nations Special Committee on Palestine Report 1947).

The Jewish Agency Executive, which was established in 1929, appointed Aubrey (Abba) Eban and David Horowitz to work with the Committee as liaison officers and observers until the Committee's task was done. The British liaison officer to UNSCOP was Donald C. MacGillivray, a former deputy district commissioner at Acre. Horowitz and Eban soon struck up a close working relationship on a professional and personal level with several key committee members including Canadian members Rand and Mayrand. It is impossible to determine accurately the impact they had on the outcome of UNSCOP deliberations, but there can be little doubt that this relationship helped sway some committee members towards the Jewish Agency's goals. Although the Arab Higher Committee was invited to send liaison officers to work with UNSCOP, it refused to do so and announced a total boycott of the investigation and its personnel, as it was biased against the Arabs (United Nations Special Committee on Palestine Report 1947).

Up to the moment of departure from New York, Rand remained optimistic about the committee's prospects for success. He stated that "Our objects seem to me to be quite clear, to satisfy, not the Jews nor the Arabs but the enlightened and the intelligent conscience of mankind as represented by the UN.... I am disposed to think that ... the highest morality will ultimately prove to be the highest strategy".

By the night of 15 June 1947, all UNSCOP members and the Secretariat and its staff had arrived in Palestine. The Committee's first day in the country was not auspicious: they awoke to a fifteen hour general strike called by the Arab Higher Committee to protest their arrival in Palestine and later in the day a British military court sentenced three *Irgun* prisoners to hang for taking part in a raid on Acre prison. Rand and other members of the committee had a tour to survey the vista of Haifa harbour where the Royal Navy and exodus Jewish refugee boats were rocked. Upon the arrival of the UNSCOP members in Haifa, a municipal reception was held which the Arabs boycotted (United Nations Special Committee on Palestine Report 1947).

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<sup>33</sup> Lie's decision came at the suggestion of the British who believed such meetings would have an "adverse effect upon the Arabs" because of the large Jewish population in the New York city.

The boycott did further damage to the Arab cause during the two weeks that the committee toured around Palestine. Everywhere they went, the UNSCOP members were warmly welcomed by the Jews but ignored or insulted by the Arabs and exposed the Arab antipathy for the Jews (Newport 2014: 328).

Rand did not become an instant and intense partisan of the Zionist cause as a result of these experiences and continued to maintain his judicial impartiality in both public and private sessions of the committee. But it is clear that this visit helped form three basic conclusions that marked his contribution to UNSCOP's final report: (i) the Mandate must end as soon as possible; (ii) importantly, the Jews must have a state of their own in Palestine; and (iii) Partition was the only hope for a solution to the Arab-Jewish conflict in Palestine (Bercuson 1985: 86).

The 18 of July was the last day of UNSCOP hearings in Palestine. Rand and the other members of the committee left Palestine and on 22 July 1947 met the Arab League members in Beirut. The Arab League clearly set out their position that there was no room for compromise with the Jews. On behalf of the six Arab League members, Hamid Bey Franjiyyah, the Lebanese foreign minister, read a joint statement that the Arab League considered "all Jews who entered Palestine since the Balfour Declaration to be illegal"<sup>34</sup> (Newport 2014: 329).

It may have convinced some delegates that Jewish population in Palestine needed a definite form of protection against the Arab world. The committee decided to send a subcommittee of alternate delegates to visit some Displaced Persons (DP) camps of Europe teemed with quarter million Jewish refugees and to report back to Geneva. This subcommittee was headed by Hood, who set out from Geneva on 8 August 1947. The visit to the DP camps had a major impact on the UNSCOP deliberations because UNSCOP now determined that the DP camps were "an integral part of the problem". The question of Jewish refugees in Europe and the question of Palestine had become directly linked to the views of the UNSCOP. The most important questions raised by the Arabs that the Jewish refugee problem in Europe, should not be linked with Palestinians; it meant thereby, why the Jewish refugee problem to be solved by overthrowing the Palestinians from their land and creating

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<sup>34</sup> The Jews were determined to bring the remnant of European Jewry to Palestine. They demanded statehood to give them the sovereignty to do so without interference and to protect the society they had built in Palestine over the previous half century.

another Palestinian refugee problem, which, till date, finding a solution from the world community (Bercuson 1985: 92, 99).

Specific positions of the different members of the UNSCOP began to emerge as they engaged in their first substantial discussion of the possible solution. Rahaman and Entejam favoured a unitary state with guarantees for Jewish minority rights. Simic advocated a bi-national state. Garcia Granados favoured Jewish statehood in a part of Palestine. Rand favoured a partition of sorts with the Jewish state free to manage its territory, and to establish its immigration policies and to have representation in the UN. He also favoured broad ties linking the Jewish and Arab states including a customs and monetary union, a common communication system and payment of a permanent subsidy from the Jewish to the Arab state because he did not believe the latter would be economically viable.

The committee was clearly beginning to consider partition as the most probable option but the questions of what kind of partition, the size and boundaries of the two states to be created and the economic viability and absorptive capacity of these states were still very much open. Since it was obvious that the committee was loosely split between those who supported and those who opposed some form of partition, Sandstrom split the committee into two groups (United Nations Special Committee on Palestine Report 1947).

Both the Working Groups<sup>35</sup> presented their proposals which were voted on: partition was supported by Rand, Lisicky, Garcia Granados, Salazar, Sandstrom, Blom and Fabregat. Simic, Rahaman and Entejam backed federation. Hood abstained because of the lack of unanimity (Wilson 1972: 69). On 29 August 1947, the entire committee met to consider the final version of the UNSCOP report. The first eleven recommendations were adopted unanimously. They called for the earliest possible termination of the Mandate and the quick granting of independence to Palestine. This was to occur after a short transition period during which the country entrusted with the task of administering Palestine would be responsible to the UN. Whatever the political fate of Palestine, the sacred character of the holy places and the right of free access to them should be preserved. The committee also called on General Assembly

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<sup>35</sup> The working group on the Federal State solution consisted of the anti-partitionists, Simic, Rahaman and Entejam. The pro-partition group was split into two committees: the Working Group on Constitution Matters with Rand, Sandstrom, Garcia Granados and Blom; and the Working Group on Boundaries with Salazar, Hood, Fabregat and Lisicky. Brunche wrote drafts for the pro-partition group.

to begin exploring ways in which the problem of the Jewish displaced persons could be solved. The remainder of the UNSCOP report was divided into a majority report favouring partition with the economic union and the minority report advocating federation<sup>36</sup> (United Nations Special Committee on Palestine Report 1947).

Sponsored by seven member states — Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, the Netherlands, Peru, Sweden, and Uruguay — the Majority Plan proposed the creation of an Arab State, a Jewish State, and an International Trusteeship that would administer Jerusalem. The plan recommended a partition scheme that would provide the Arabs 42.88 percent of the total area, or 4,476 square miles. This territory would consist of three non-contiguous parts: the Western Galilee; the relatively unproductive, poorly irrigated, and densely populated hilly country of Samarra; and Judea. The plan allotted 56.47 per cent of Palestine's total area to the Jewish State. By that time they owned only 6 per cent of the land. The Jews state was given Eastern Galilee, the coastal plain from Haifa to just south of Tel Aviv and the north-eastern, central and southern portions of the Negev<sup>37</sup>. It included both of Palestine's ports in Haifa and Jaffa, most of the country's vital water supply, and the majority of the Arab, as well as Jewish, citrus plantations. Except the Dead Sea potash works, nearly all of Palestine's industry, including those industries set up by foreign enterprises, would be in the Jewish State (Newport 2014: 333-34). There would be freedom of transit and visit between the two states, and the economic union was to last at least ten years. Both states upon receiving their independence were to be eligible for admission to the UN. The report was complete: just after midnight on 1 September 1947, it was released to the public (United Nations Special Committee on Palestine Report 1947).

The Arab Higher Committee rejected partition and they denounced the Majority Plan, claiming that it blatantly destroyed the territorial integrity of their homeland, made a 50 per cent Arab population in the proposed Jewish state officially and permanently subservient to the other 50 per cent comprising the Jewish population, and gave the latter control over Arab land (Newport 2014: 335).

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<sup>36</sup> But the committee was divided by a vote of eight to three on what kind of state independent Palestine should be. The minority report called for a federal state. The majority report recommended the partition of the mandate into two states, one Arab and one Jewish with Jerusalem designated as an internationalized district. Zionist leaders endorsed the report, Arab leaders rejected it.

<sup>37</sup> Horowitz made a personal plea to Rand to support inclusion of the two areas Negev and Western Galilee in the Jewish State. Rand told him that he would not allow the Jews to be placed in a territorial ghetto.

Canada conveyed that it was becoming increasingly frustrated about the growing inability of UN to take action on a variety of Cold War related issues. It also conveyed the message that Ottawa however had still not given up on the UN. Interestingly, its proclaimed hope of saving the UN became a major consideration in deciding what stance Canada would take on the Palestine question. St. Laurent announced that the growth and strengthening of the UN should be a real cornerstone of Canada's policy in foreign affairs.

The UN General Assembly meeting opened in New York on 16 Sept 1947. St. Laurent initially headed the Canadian delegation, and later J.L. Ilesley, minister of justice, replaced him. The Secretary General Lie decided not to put the Palestine matter before the First Committee but, instead, created an Ad hoc Committee on the Palestine question which would formulate the resolutions for the General Assembly. Dr. Herbert, Australian external affairs minister, became the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee (Bercuson 1985: 110-12).

The work of the Ad hoc Committee began on 25 September 1947. On 26 September, Arthur Creech Jones, Britain's colonial secretary arrived in New York to tell the Ad hoc Committee that although Britain accepted the UNSCOP suggestion that the Mandate be ended, it would not help implement any plan which did not have the agreement of both Arabs and Jews. It implied that Britain would not impose partition on Palestine<sup>38</sup>. Throughout the long days of the meeting, the Canadian delegates said nothing. On 11 October 1947, the US delegation informed the Committee that the US would support the Majority Plan with some territorial modifications<sup>39</sup> (Wilson 1972: 69). Newport (2014) argued that the Canadian strategy had done nothing to resolve either the Anglo-American differences concerning Palestine or to take any position on Palestine (Newport 2014: 235). Probably, Canada was clueless and had its sympathy for the Jews in Palestine.

R.G. Riddell, Chief Political Adviser to the delegation in consultation with Pearson and Ilesley began to work on a draft of Canada's position in the Ad hoc Committee. To Riddell and Pearson, inaction of UN would be disastrous; especially if

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<sup>38</sup> Arabs and Jews must be forced to face up to their responsibilities in order that they might accommodate each other and reach some understanding. Creech-Jones suggested. He claimed, in India similar action had had the effect of making both parties accept accommodation.

<sup>39</sup> President Truman launched an extensive lobbying effort on behalf of the majority report and pro-Zionist members of Congress pressured UN delegates with threats of the withdrawal of US economic assistance from their countries if they did not vote for the UNSCOP proposal.

Creech Jones was serious about pulling Britain out of Palestine, with or without a settlement. The only course open to Canada that Pearson believed to be very much in Canada's interests was to support partition and try to make it as reasonable and workable as possible. Partition was necessary, Riddell thought, because Arabs and Jews were far apart and they could not and would not cooperate on common goals and could not unite within a single state. Since partition was the only solution in Canadian perception, the Ad hoc Committee should concentrate on how this partition might be implemented. To this end, Riddell suggested the creation of a Sub-Committee to include the permanent members of the Security Council to work out the practicalities of partition (Bercuson 1985: 116-17).

This straight-forward approach of Riddell somewhat disturbed another member of the Canadian delegation, particularly Ilesley. MacCallum too was upset because she saw Riddell's draft disregarding democratic principles; and, important, she believed that it was too early to give up on efforts to conciliate the Arabs and Jews in Palestine. MacCallum believed it was a mistake for Canada to follow the US or the Soviet Union because their motivations were not to settle the Arab-Jewish conflict but to advance their own strategic and political interests in the region. MacCallum considered the US sponsorship of partition largely to have been driven by a desire to expand its own strategic and commercial influence in the region at the expense of the British. The Soviet Union's support for the majority report was motivated by a similar geo-strategic deep desire to push the British out of the Middle East and create a threshold upon which they could expand their influence and power into the Mediterranean region. Despite these objections, Riddell's draft was finally approved by Canadian cabinet. Canada endorsed partition in principle; but most other members of the Ad hoc Committee refused to do so at that stage (Newport 2014: 357, 362-63).

The General Assembly debated the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on 26 November. It was based on Subcommittee Report<sup>40</sup> that said for the appointment of a

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<sup>40</sup> To put a definite plan forward three subcommittees were established. Subcommittee I to work out plans for implementing partition, Subcommittee II to draw up proposals for unitary state and Subcommittee III to try to bring about Arab-Jewish agreement. The last group was headed by Evatt, made no progress and quickly abandoned its efforts. Subcommittee I consisted of pro-partition countries: Canada, South Africa, the US, the SU, Guatemala, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Pearson supported a suggestion that a small working group within the Subcommittee I, consisting of Guatemalan, US and SU representatives be formed to find an 'agreed proposal' to implement the partition plan. Pearson became a fourth member. By 18 November the working group proposed for the appointment by the General Assembly of a commission to administer Palestine during the transition period and fixed the date for the ending of the mandate, no later than the August 1948. By 1 October

commission to administer Palestine during the transition period and made some modifications of the UNSCOP majority report with changes in boundaries. J.L. Ilsley in his statement in the General Assembly on 26 November 1947 stated that “We are voting for the partition plan because it is in our judgment the best of four unattractive and difficult alternatives”. These four alternatives were, (i) doing nothing; (ii) establishing a unitary state; (iii) setting up a federal state along the lines suggested by the UNSCOP minority report; and (iv) partition. He further stated, “We have worked unremittingly in an attempt to obtain a solution which would be practical and workable, and we feel that our obligations, not only to this organization, but to our own people, are such that we could not justify an abstention and should for the resolution. This we propose to do” (Department of External Affairs, Canada 1947: 196-200, Cited in Blanchette 2000: 31-33).

Much later in the day, Pearson mentioned in his memoir: “...in my view that a solution to the problem was impossible without the recognition of a Jewish state in some form in Palestine. To me, this was always the core of the matter.” (Munro 1973: 217)

The vote on the Partition Plan in the UN General Assembly took place on 29 November 1947: as many as 33 nations voted in favour of partition, 13 opposed and 11 chose to abstain. Partition had achieved a two-thirds majority, ensuring the passing of UNGA Resolution 181: the creation of two independent states in Palestine was decided upon by the international community. Under the terms of Resolution 181, (II) the City of Jerusalem was to become a *corpus separatum*, administered by the Trusteeship Council, acting on behalf of the United Nations as the Administering Authority (Brecher 1978: 16). Canada voted ‘for’ along with Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Belgium, Brazil, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, USSR, USA and others. Jews in Palestine and all over the world began to celebrate almost immediately. The Arab delegation walked out of the Assembly, and the neighbouring

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1948 independent Arab and Jews states were to come into existence with boundaries laid out by the UNSCOP majority plan and modified by the Subcommittee I. The commission was to select and establish a provisional council of government for each state which would be responsible for the administration of its own area under the general guidance of the commission. On 20 November subcommittee II submitted its report to the Ad Hoc Committee which contained a proposal for Palestine to be established as a unitary state with guarantees of minority rights for the Jews.

Arab states speeded up their preparations for war<sup>41</sup> (Wilson 1972: 69 and Munro 1973: 214).

The Palestine war soon escalated with attacks and counter-attacks, atrocity and counter-atrocity until Jews and Arabs were locked in a mortal struggle from the Negev desert in the South to the Upper Galilee in the north. The disorder within Palestine was intensified when the UNSCOP report was presented to the UN, and Britain did not wait for the General Assembly's vote and immediately announced in September 1947 that the Palestine Mandate would be terminated on 15 May 1948. In the months between the announcement and the final British withdrawal, Palestine was plunged into chaos with UN remaining a mute spectator (Newport 2014: 374).

There had been no formal transfer of powers from the Mandate authority to a new local government for the simple reason that Britain had created no government of Palestine. As there was no political institution in its Mandate; Britain left the Arab and Jewish communities to struggle for supremacy. This was the period when the well-armed and -trained Jewish forces sought to secure the territory allotted to the Jewish state in the UN resolution. The scattered Arab bands, comprising mostly poor and illiterate peasants and tenant farmers, were no match for the disciplined *Haganah* forces. The *Haganah* opted to mount a large-scale operation; code named Nachson, aimed at occupying corridor 3 to 10 kilometres wide from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The *Haganah* mobilized 1500 soldiers for the operation and armed them with rifles and machine guns, secretly flown in from Czechoslovakia in the first of many illicit arms supply airlifts (Cleveland 2009: 264, 266 and Bercuson 1985: 161).

During this period, the *Irgun* perpetrated one of its most notorious acts. It massacred 250 unarmed civilian inhabitants of the village of Deir Yassin near Jerusalem. News of the massacre spread among the Arab population and contributed to the panic that made so many flee their homes. An Arab unit retaliated for Deir Yassin by ambushing a Jewish medical relief convoy on the outskirts of Jerusalem and killing some doctors (Cleveland 2009: 266).

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<sup>41</sup> The postwar Arab regimes such as Egypt, Syria and Iraq faced mounting domestic unrest. The ruling elite of these regimes, anxious to shore up domestic support, adopted a hard-line stance on the Palestinian issue as a means to demonstrate their anti-imperialism and to assert their newfound independence in foreign policy. On behalf of the Palestinians, they rejected all attempts at compromise including the UN partition plan, assuring the Arabs of Palestine that they stood ready to defend them militarily.

On 18 April, Jewish troops took complete control of Tiberias on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee after almost two weeks of fighting. Besides, they controlled Haifa the only major port in the country and the site of important industrial and refining facilities. A large part of the Arab population of Haifa fled to Lebanon by road and sea. The flight of the Haifa Arabs was the first mass exodus of Arab refugees from their homes in Palestine<sup>42</sup> (Bercuson 1985: 172-173).

Throughout this period, the British authorities made no effort to enforce order; and concentrated instead on preparations for its withdrawal. British forces intervened usually only to protect British lives or property. On May 14, 1948, in the midst of the turmoil, the last British High Commissioner General Alan Cunningham quietly departed from Haifa. As one eyewitness recalled the moment: “The Union Jack was lowered and with the speed of an execution and the silence of a ship that passes in the night, British rule in Palestine came to an end” (Cleveland 2009: 264).

In the meantime, the UN Security Council began its deliberations on the Palestine question with Canada’s permanent representative General A.G.L Mc. Naughton in the chair on 24 February 1948<sup>43</sup>. The Security Council voted unanimously for a ceasefire resolution and approved a resolution calling for a UN General Assembly special session, by nine votes, with two abstentions viz., USSR and the Ukraine. The special session of UN General Assembly opened on 16 April 1948. A sub-committee was created within the First Committee which was responsible for working out proposals for a provisional regime for Palestine which could take over

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<sup>42</sup> By 23 April Arab and Jews negotiators met under British auspices but in vain.

<sup>43</sup> On 5 March Security Council supported Belgian amendment of US resolution. The US resolution was introduced by Warren Austin in two parts. The first part called upon the council to accept the General Assembly’s request of 29 November to implement partition; the second part proposed the establishment of a committee composed of the five permanent members of the security council to inform the council regarding the situation in Palestine and to recommend courses of action to the council and through it to the Palestine commission. The resolution also called upon this five power committee to determine whether the situation in Palestine constituted a threat to international peace and security and if so to recommend appropriate course of action. The French and Belgian delegations informed that they would not support the first part of the resolution. The Belgian representative even suggested that partition itself might be regarded as a threat to the peace. Canada as a member of that council had to decide on it. In Pearson’s view the defeat of the first part of the US resolution could be interpreted as an abandonment of the Assembly recommendation on partition. He pressed the cabinet to vote against the Belgian amendment. Pearson claimed that any other action by Canada would be a reversal of the position it had taken in November. King disagreed. King believed that passage of the US proposal would lead to the dispatch of troops to the Middle East and put Canada in direct opposition to Britain. The resolution calling for implementation of the partition plan by the council was defeated. A committee consisting of the U.S., U.S.S.R, France and China was then established to examine the situation in Palestine and reported that a breach of the peace exists in Palestine and that some means of dealings with this would have to be found.

the administration of the country after the Mandate formally ends on 15 May. Canada was nominated to serve on this sub-committee, designated as Sub-Committee Nine (Bercuson 1985: 158-59, 173-74).

Sub-Committee Nine met on 5 May 1948. British colonial secretary Arthur Creech Jones told them that the Mandate would end on 15 May. Canada played a limited role on the Sub-Committee Nine. To bring US and UK together was more important. Secret talks between the US and the UK began on 5 May largely at the insistence of the Canadian delegation to seek common ground somewhere between the British approach as represented by Creech Jones and the original US trusteeship idea. This was an instance of Canada working as a mediatory power behind the scene. Britain refused to support official trusteeship. It would mean continued British involvement in Palestine and endanger Britain relations with the Arab world.

US presented a draft resolution aiming at the establishment of a UN-appointed “Commissioner for Palestine” who would use his good offices for the operation of essential services in the country, take steps to safeguard holy places and also promote agreement on the future of Palestine and cooperate with the truce commission. Britain and Canada approved with minor modifications on 12 May, and the resolution was presented to Sub-Committee Nine on 13 May by Phillip C. Jessup, the American representative, and finally, it was sent to the First Committee for action (Bercuson 1985: 174, 176-77).

In the meantime, on 9 April the General Zionist Council meeting in Jerusalem had declared that it would establish a Jewish state in Palestine in those areas allocated to the Zionists by the UN partition plan immediately after the Mandate expired on 15 May 1948. Most of the political leaders of the Jewish community in Palestine gathered at the Tel Aviv Art Museum after lunch on 14 May to hear the Declaration of Independence of the State of Israel. David Ben Gurion,<sup>44</sup> Chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive and Prime Minister-designate of Jewish State, began to read: “The land of Israel was the birth place of the Jewish people”. He summarized the recent history of the Jews and the Zionist movement and declared the “self-evident right of

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<sup>44</sup> He came to Palestine from Poland in 1906, first working on a kibbutz and then becoming involved in the inner circles of labor Zionism. He was a founding member of Histadrut and served as its executive secretary for several years before being elected chairman of the Jewish Agency in 1935. He was also active in the creation of the Mapai in 1930 and soon became the party’s leader. As both Mapai Party head and Jewish Agency chairman, Ben-Gurion was the acknowledged leader of the Yishuv and a popular choice as Israel’s first prime minister in 1948.

the Jewish people to be a nation, like all other nations, in its own Sovereign State”. On behalf of the National Council, Ben Gurion proclaimed that “the establishment of the Jewish State in Palestine to be called the State of Israel”. On 14 May 1948, the British completed their withdrawal. The new state was to come into existence one minute after the formal end of the Palestine Mandate at midnight. The deed had been done, and the world awaited the consequences (Bercuson 1985: 177-78).

Sixteen minutes after the declaration, the US, followed shortly afterwards by the USSR, recognized the new country; and the next day introduced a resolution in the Security Council to initiate an enforcement action under the UN Charter to stop the war that began between Israel and its Arab neighbours. It was an eloquent commentary on the competition between the two super powers since responsibility entrusted to UN under Chapter VII to maintain international peace and security.

Formal recognition continued to be a problem for Canada. Canada moved carefully. By November 1948, the government agreed that the situation had developed to the point where some measure of de facto recognition should be considered. Finally, on 24 December 1948 Canada extended de facto recognition to Israel. On 11 May 1949 Canada extended its de jure recognition to Israel when Canada voted for the admission of Israel to the UN (Munro 1973: 216-17). It was an equally eloquent commentary on Canadian middle power upholding the rule of law in international affairs

### **Review of Literature**

The Arab- Israel conflict has been researched and written about extensively by authors with very different perspectives that have produced arguments, debates, thoughts and ideas which construct the academic perceptions over a number of significant geopolitical issues. Some of these literatures are reviewed here; and have been presented thematically which is in consistency with the contents of the present research work. These themes are as follows:

#### ***(i) Canada’s Support for Israel is without any Perceptible National Interest***

A survey of existing literature brings out the varied perspectives on Canadian involvement in the Arab-Israel conflict. Tareq Y. Ismael in his article “Canadian Foreign Policy in the Arab World” talks of Canada as having a constant pro-Israel

bias. This is demonstrated in the utterances of Canadian political leaders and by their votes at the United Nations. For example, Canada was on the original 1948 United Nations Commission whose job was to partition Palestine. Later, Canada was among the first to recognize the new state of Israel which incorporated much of the Arab portion of Palestine. Arguing in the same line, Peyton Lyon in his article “Canada’s National Interest and the Middle East” discussed that at the UN, Canada is seen as one of Israel’s most predictable supporters. Compared to most of its allies, Canada’s condemnation of Israeli behaviour has been muted, its votes biased in favour of Israel and its dealings with PLO have been limited. The author argues that Canada’s pro-Israel tilt has not served its economic well-being, social justice, peace and security or the sovereignty and independence of Canada.

In his book “Canada and the Birth of Israel: A Study in Canadian Foreign Policy” David J. Bercuson holds that Canadian policy makers usually followed or supported British policies on the Palestine question during the decade 1940-1950; or, more rarely those of the United States. This was, of course, ‘made-in-Canada’ decision that what was clearly perceived to be the national interest, but it was not arrived at after a Canadian analysis of the Palestine conflict and was not based on Canadian views of how that conflict should have been resolved. Rather, Canada supported what the British or Americans supported whether or not Canadian policy makers thought they were right or wrong. For instance, Canadian Prime Ministers William Lyon Mackenzie King and Louis S. St. Laurent were understandably more interested in British-American harmony than they were in solving the Palestine question or supporting the birth of a Jewish state.

Canada had little concern with the Liberal concept of justice or protection of human rights in Palestinian camps; it was found more concerned with upholding the dignity and relevance of the UN. Yves Engler in his research work “Canada and Israel: Building Apartheid” refutes the myth that Canada is or ever has been an honest broker in the Middle East. Most Canadians believe that Canada acts as a mediator and peace-keeper *par excellence* on the world stage. While this belief may indicate a widespread desire for a democratic and humanistic foreign policy and it often does not reflect reality. The author argues that Canada supports a Jews state which is the last major European colonial project and based on one religion, at the cost of the dispossession of Palestinians.

This book begins with the position that Israel is an apartheid state, and Israel's laws are fundamentally racist. In the area of immigration, settlement and land development, Israel is committed to serving and promoting the interests of the Jews only. Zionist forces expelled 87 per cent of the Arab population during 1947-48. This was the first major act of apartheid. The properties of the Palestinian refugees were kept in the hands of the state and the Jewish National Fund, which were legalised by the Absentees Property Law of 1950. Most of the land Israel grabbed from the Palestinians is off-limits to the Arabs who remain in Israel. Although these Arab Israelis constitute 18 per cent of the population, and they receive about 4 per cent of public spending in the state-run religious schools, Jewish pupils receive nine times more funding than the Arab pupils.

In the West Bank, Israeli apartheid is obvious. The population has been pushed into Bantustan-like enclaves, encircled by a massive wall and are subjected to daily humiliation at military checkpoints. In Gaza, 1.5 million Palestinians live in a giant prison cut off from the world by the mighty Israeli military. He mentioned Zionism is an expansionist settler ideology, and they usurped Arab land. The 450,000 state-supported settlers illegally installed in the West Bank and East Jerusalem are an expression of this expansionism. The book also enumerates the important role Canadian diplomat played in 1947 UN negotiations to create a Jewish state on Palestinian land. Canadian diplomacy continued to support Israel. While on occasion Canadian pronouncements and UN votes have supported Palestinian rights, rarely have the different arms of Canadian foreign policy provided concrete support. The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) works closely with *Mossad* (its Israeli equivalent), and many Canadian weapon-makers ship their products to Israel. As private charities, every year Canadians send hundreds of millions of dollars worth of tax-deductible donations to Israeli universities, parks, immigration initiatives and also to illegal Israeli settlement in the West Bank.

In his article "Next Year in Jerusalem: Joe Clark and Embassy Affair", Charles Flicker explains in details the decision of the government of Prime Minister Joe Clark to shift Canadian embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. On 25 April 1979, during his election campaign leader of the Progressive Conservative Party Joe Clark announced it. On 5 June 1979, at his first official press conference as Prime Minister, Clark reaffirmed his election promise in no uncertain terms. On 23 June, Stanfield Commission was set up for this issue and finally Embassy move policy was reversed.

Clark's Embassy move policy reflects his pro-Israel bias. He confirms that there was no intense pressure from the Jewish community for this move. He also further argues that Clark's announcement was intended to win seats in some 'swing ridings' where a significant proportion of Jewish voters lived. Thus, Embassy policy move was based on domestic political considerations without keeping in mind the Palestinians or Arab sentiments involved in it.

Along the line of Charles Flicker George Takach in his paper "Moving the Embassy to Jerusalem 1979" argued that Clark's pro-Israel sympathy were based at least in part on his religious background as well as his view of Israel as an island of liberal western democracy in a sea of autocratic and Soviet manipulated regimes were shared by his senior advisers. He discussed another reason of his election promise of embassy transfer was to induce Jewish voters in key ridings in Southern Ontario to switch their traditional allegiance from Pierre Trudeau's Liberal party to the Conservatives. Takach also mentioned that Clark already would have learned enough about embassy-move initiative and constraint in Canadian foreign policy not to proceed with the electoral pledge.

John A. Munro and Alex. I. Inglis in their edited volume "Mike: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson, Volume 2, 1948-1957" discussed in details the important role Canada played in the UNSCOP that resulted in the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. This book also gives detailed accounts of Canada's role in the 1956 Suez Canal crisis. It also mentioned about Pearson's personal feelings regarding the Palestine-Israel conflict. It seems that at one stage of his life, Pearson knew far more about the geography of Palestine than he did about the geography of Canada. He could tell all the towns from Dan to Beer-Sheba but certainly not all from Victoria to Halifax. Pearson admitted that he was emotionally involved in dealing with the Holy Land, as it was the land of his Sunday School lessons.

Richard Newport in his research work "Outsider: Elizabeth P. MacCallum, the Canadian Department of External Affairs, and the Palestine Mandate to 1947", Ph.D Thesis, Carleton University, discussed in details the role Canada played during the period of the partition of Palestine. Newport worked on Elizabeth Pauline MacCallum who was Canada's leading expert on the Middle East and wrote three books and thirty articles on the problems and challenges confronting the Middle East and the British Mandate in Palestine, the central ground of dispute between the Arab and Jewish peoples, from 1925 to 1935, as a research analyst and author for the New York-based

Foreign Policy Association (FPA). Newport identifies the role that she played in the Department of External Affairs and assessed MacCallum's part in the making of Canada's policy towards the Middle East during 1947. The thesis further demonstrates that MacCallum made clear the dangers that the problem of Palestine posed to international peace and security, and the likely split that it would cause among the Great Powers over the territory's fate. She opposed the division of Palestine between its Arab and Jewish peoples in 1947 and predicted the Middle Eastern war soon to come, but Pearson's 'realpolitik subdued her views'.

*(ii) Canada's Peace-keeping Role in the Middle East is Part of its UN-based  
Multilateralist Foreign Policy and Western Alliance Commitments*

In his paper "Canada's Peacekeeping Role in the Middle East", Lieutenant-General E.L.M. Burns, Commander of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) explains that it was the 1956 Middle East war which brought Canada into its first UN peace-keeping role. He presents a clear analysis of the purpose and value of such forces. Exploring the transition in Canadian foreign policy from peace-keeping to peace-building based on a case study of the Canada Fund for Dialogue and Development (CFDD) in Israel/Palestine and Jordan, Tamil Amanda Jacoby, in the article "Canadian Peace building in the Middle East: Case Study of the Canada Fund in Israel/Palestine and Jordan" looks back at Canada's traditional involvement in the Arab-Israel conflict as a way to distinguish the current transition from Canadian peace-keeping to peace-building. The author argues that CFDD is a policy intended to implement Canada's commitment both to peace-building and human security.

In his article "Refugees and Border Security Post-September 11" Howard Adelman explains that in the aftermath of terror attacks in New York, many new changes were introduced in Canada to improve the control mechanisms to reduce the threat of terrorism and enhance security on dealing with refugees. It was done under the assumption that refugees create security problems. In December 2001, Canada and the USA signed a Joint Statement of Cooperation on Border Security and Regional Migration Issues otherwise known as the Smart Border Declaration to this direction. This paper assesses that though some of those defensive measures include enhanced immigration controls, there is virtually no evidence linking global terrorism with refugees. The author argues that global terrorists have not exploited the refugee

determination system to gain access to Canada though several attempts have been made.

In his paper “A Canadian Dilemma: the United States or the World” Robert W. Cox briefly outlines Canada’s relationship with the United States and explains that Canadian government’s actions are determined by conflicting interests and pressures of the moment on specific issues. The author argues that Canadian government policy has adjusted to an uneasy balance among the economic interests engaged in trade with the United States, the ethical commitment in civil society to peace and global fellowship, and the middle power realist politics of defending national sovereignty through multilateralism. In his paper “Addicted to Security: Globalized Terrorism and the Inevitability of American Unilateralism”, Frank P. Harvey discusses that any real power and influence Canada has in the world today does not come from its contribution to multilateral institutions; it comes from Canada’s relationship with the US and their capacity to deploy inter-operable Canadian forces abroad in the pursuit of just cause.

Yves Engler in his book “Canada and Israel: Building Apartheid” mentioned that both Liberal and Conservative governments from John Diefenbaker to Lester Pearson, Brian Mulroney to Paul Martin and Stephen Harper staunchly backed Israel. Lack of opposition also allowed the governments to make Canada the most pro-Israel country in the world. Another reason for supporting Israel is governments’ relation with Washington and its ties to the US-led imperialism.

***(iii) In Comparison to the Arab Canadians, the Small Jewish Community in Canada has had an Excessive Influence on the Course of Canadian Thinking and Policy towards the Palestinian Question***

David Howard Goldberg in his “Foreign Policy and Ethnic Interest Groups: American and Canadian Jews Lobby for Israel” briefly outlines the history, mandate and organisational structure of the Canada-Israel-Committee (CIC) and has placed the CIC and its ethnic political lobbying within the context of the Canadian foreign policy making process. Although the participatory base of the organisation has been broadened and the Committee remains fundamentally corporate and elitist in nature, comprising and dominated by a small group of the wealthiest and well-placed members of the Canadian Jewish Community. Goldberg compares between the CIC

and AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) and uses that comparison as the basis of analysis of the phenomenon of ethnic political behaviour.

In his paper “Zionist Interest Groups and Canadian Foreign Policy”, Alan Bones has produced an insightful account of the immensely powerful and highly efficient pro-Israeli lobby in Canada. In its efforts to prevent the holding of the “UN Conference on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders” scheduled for Toronto in 1975 the Zionist lobby was totally successful. The venue had to shift from Toronto to Geneva because they were against the PLO’s participation in it. Ontario political parties who were not unmindful of the impending provincial elections was also powerfully aided them.

Sasley, Brent E. and Tami Amanda Jacoby in their Chapter on “Canada’s Jewish and Arab Communities and Canadian Foreign Policy”, in Paul Heinbecker and Bessma Momani (eds.), *Canada and the Middle East: In Theory and Practice*, raise questions about the accuracy and effectiveness of the existing studies on the impact of Arab Canadians and, especially, Canadian Jewish groups on policy making. They argues that such studies have several conceptual and empirical problems, including a lack of a rigorous theoretical framework, serious measurement problems, inadequate attention to situational variables, deficiency of evidence, and a paucity of sustained empirical analysis. In spite of the problems, they find that the Jewish community is stronger in relative terms than the Arab community when it comes to the ability to mobilize and get its message heard in Ottawa. The Canadian Jewish community is older and more established than the Arab community, and it has profound effects on their respective organisational capacities. Moreover, their long involvement in the Canadian political system, combined with a series of developments and external conditions favourable to their interests, have created an environment in which these interests are often taken into account even without active efforts on the community’s part.

***(iv) Addressing the Palestinian refugee problem is not just humanitarian but essentially a political problem***

Presenting the most perceptive and realistic analysis so far of the Canadian approach to the vital aspect of the Palestine issue since 1967, Paul Noble in his article “From Refugees to a People? Canada and the Palestinians 1967-1973” documents the slow evolution from the perception of Palestinian problem as essentially a question of

refugee disposition to viewing it as a political issue demanding not a humanitarian solution but an international political action. The author highlights that some fundamental flaws in the international community's 'aid for peace' strategy, which is designed as international community's avowed support for the emergence of an independent Palestinian state "living side by side in peace and security with Israel".

Le More Anne in the article "Killing With Kindness: Funding the Demise of a Palestinian State" argues that in the course of the last decade, the international donor community has financed not only Israel's continued occupation but also its expansionist agenda. This has been done obviously at the expense of international law, of the well-being of the Palestinian population, of their right to self-determination and the international community's stated developmental and political objectives.

Tanya Basok and Alan Simmons in their paper "A Review of the Politics of Canadian Refugee Selection" examine how Canada selects refugees from different countries and regions since the new Immigration Act of 1976 through 1989. They mention that over the years from 1978-1987, Canada admitted two classes of refugees: those who meet the UN criteria are admitted as Convention refugees; and secondly, in select cases those who do not meet the UN criteria but are admitted as designated class refugees e.g. Vietnamese refugees.

The 1976 Act favoured greater diversity of origins, but the refugee selection showed evidence of long established biases in favour of certain countries or regions and ethnic groups. Ideological and ethnic forces in Canada guided the final selection of the refugees. For instance in 1973-74, Canada showed resistance to admitting exiled and persecuted Chileans most of whom had 'leftist' inclinations. Ethiopians, fleeing the 'communist' regime are the only African refugees admitted by Canada whose numbers are relatively significant. While the flow of Guatemalan refugees, caused by right-wing military repression, dropped in 1987, that of Nicaraguan refugees, who were dissatisfied with the Sandinista government, increased. For Indo-Chinese refugees, the Canadian government introduced a matching formula by which it accepted one refugee for each privately sponsored one. This programme enabled Canada to accept some 60,000 indo-Chinese refugees. But no matching formula was offered for the Ethiopian, Polish and Iranian or Afghan refugees. Economic consideration was another factor behind the fact that refugees between 1978 and 1987 tended to be relatively well-educated males.

Canadian definition of refugee-producing countries changed from time to time. Taking the case of Lebanon, the UNHCR views Lebanon as a refugee-producing country. But Canada did not recognize it. Hence, practically no Lebanese entered Canada within the refugee class. In fact, from 1978-1987, only 74 Lebanese refugees entered Canada. Around 13,035 Lebanese entered Canada as independent migrants (labour force) or as sponsored kin of previous migrants. Author's analysis is based on special tabulations of data compiled by Employment and Immigration Canada on the volume and characteristics of all immigrants landing in Canada.

Howard Adelman in his article "Canadian Refugee Policy in the Post-War Period: An Analysis" begins with a geographic analysis of Canadian Refugee Policy. He finds that the intake of refugees into Canada reveals that the overwhelming number of refugees came from Europe, Latin America and South East Asia, which produced the fewer refugees in comparison to Africa, Middle East or South Asia. Thus, the regions are not proportionately represented about the production of refugees in the respective regions.

He divided the period 1933 – 1989 into two major periods: the first 1933-1967 when Canadian policy was 'Euro-centred' and after 1967 it began to be 'World centred'. When Canada began to take European migrants as part of the special programme between 1947 and 1952, less than 10 per cent were Jews; around 16,000 European Jews went to Canada while 142,000 of the European remnants went to the new state of Israel. On the humanitarian ground, Canada responded to the Hungarian refugees produced by the Soviet repression in 1956 and took in more than 37,000 Hungarian refugees – almost 20 per cent of those who had reached Austria.

In 1967, Canada passed the Immigration Act with an intention not to discriminate among immigrants including refugees by race, religion and national origin that was attributed to economic factors like skills or talents Canada needed. Further, in 1969 Canada signed the Geneva Convention on refugees and its protocol thereby ensuring that Canada had an obligation to refugees by international law. In 1970s, Canada took several hundred Tibetans, 7,000 Ugandan Asians and 7,000 Chilean refugees.

The 1976 Immigration Act introduced refugees as a distinct category. A provision of 'designated classes' was introduced that included those who do not come under the refugee definition under the Convention. Further, groups of five or more people could sponsor them. This was most important innovation in the large flow of

refugees selected overseas. In the case of convention refugee, they select Canada as their choice but in the case of humanitarian refugees, Canada chooses those refugees that are consistent with its foreign policy objectives and best benefits Canada.

He also explains that in the 1980s Canadian government accepted the Nansen medal for the Canadian people for their work on behalf of refugees. But it was during the same decade the same Canadian government called a special session of parliament to pass Bills like C-55, C-84 after a boatload of Sikhs had landed on the shores of Nova Scotia to claim refugee status. In fact, the Bills were introduced to manage refugees by the Canadian governments.

Barbara Mc Dougall in her article “Notes on Canadian Refugee Policy” explains that on compassionate grounds Indo-Chinese was resettled in Canada. The convention definition is the cornerstone of Canada’s refugee law. But the humanitarian aspect of Canada’s immigration laws allow Canada to devise alternative definitions such as designated classes which are tailored to the needs of a particular group. Mc Dougall attended the international conference on Indo-Chinese refugees in 1989 in Geneva known as Comprehension Plan of Action or the CPA. Canada contributed \$ 6.5 million to the CPA, which provided hope of averting yet another massive human tragedy in South East Asia. She suggested it is worth pondering whether Canada could do more for the world’s refugees; if Canada could put fewer resources into resettlement and more into tackling refugee situations at the source, particularly in the Third World.

Stanley B. Knight in his article “The International Refugee Crisis: The Canadian Response” mentions Canada as an immigrants-receiving nation, whose citizens have roots in almost every country in the world and would respond to human interest stories like refugees. The perception of easy access and abuses that grew out of the Act of 1976, the numbers of refugee claimants became overloaded and choked to the point of breaking down. From 3,450 refugee claims in 1981 to 85,000 cases were waiting to be processed in 1988, which led to the restructuring of refugee determination procedure from Bill C-55 to the creation of IRB.

### **Research Questions**

The whole study is based on the following research questions:

1. What were the factors that made Canada engaged with Arab-Israel conflict?

2. What was Canada's perception towards Arab-Israel conflict till 1970s?
3. What were the domestic and international factors that changed Canadian perception towards the conflict?
4. What was Canada's role in different peace process?
5. What were the Canadian personality factors that shaped Canada's perception and policy towards the Arab-Israel conflict?

### **Hypotheses**

The hypotheses taken at the beginning of the study were:

1. Canada's perception towards Arab-Israel conflict was shaped by cultural-religious and historical factors rather than any liberal democratic viewpoint.
2. Elite perception and the presence of an active Jewish community in Canada have had significant influence on Canadian perception towards the Arab-Israel conflict.
3. Economic and national interest factors triumphed over cultural-religious and historical factors since 1970s.

### **Research Methodology**

The present study is based on both primary and secondary source material; and adopts a descriptive as well as analytical approach in delineating Canadian perception and policy towards the Arab-Israel conflict. The large volume of primary source material, available on Canadian government websites, besides the secondary source materials, to the extent available in various libraries, have been used to study and build the arguments as reflected in the monograph.

### **Chapters Organisation**

The present Introductory Chapter "Canada and the Arab-Israel Conflict" traces the history of Palestinian displacement and the creation of the state of Israel. It looks into the Balfour Declaration and British machinations and linkages with the Zionist groups in the 1920s and after. It covers aspects of British Mandate, even before the League of Nations had done it for Britain in Palestine, and rule in the region. The Chapter

focusses on Canada's role as a member of United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) that led to the partition of Palestine and created an independent state of Israel. The objectives of the study, hypotheses, eclectic methodology; and Chapter framework of the study have also been discussed in the Introductory Chapter.

The Chapter II "Canada on War and Conflict Between Arabs and Israel" provides an overview of Canadian's response and role in the major Arab Israel wars like 1948 Arab-Israel war, 1956 Suez Crisis, 1967 Arab-Israel war and 1973 Arab-Israel war etc. The Chapter III provides an overview of the Arab-Israel peace process and Canada's role in it. Canada's role in the Refugee Working Group (RWG) that was created in the 1990s as a part of the Middle East Peace Process, and Canadian-supported Track II efforts are explored in details. Next part attempts to assess the success and failure of the Track II effort, and also to identify the political, bureaucratic, and practical challenges faced by Canadian initiatives.

The Chapter IV is about Canada's refugee policy and the challenges facing the Palestinian refugees in their inland claimant process and their integration in Canada has been dealt with. In doing so, it begins with Palestinian refugees definition and status in international law and their life in the refugee camps has also been covered. The Chapter V "Dynamics and Dimensions of Canadian Foreign Policy Towards Middle East" discusses on the influence of the Jews and the Arabs in Canada; Canada's economic interests in the Middle East and Canada's foreign policy changes in the Middle East. It includes Stephen Harper's foreign policy towards Israel.

The final Chapter concludes by summarizing and identifying the difficulties involved in the Arab-Israel conflict and peace process that may be of relevant for the future, whether in connection with the search for Middle East peace or more broadly in any future effort by Canada utilising Track II techniques.

## CHAPTER - II

### CANADA ON WAR AND CONFLICT BETWEEN ARABS AND ISRAEL

The previous Chapter broadly outlined the genesis of the Arab-Israel conflict, and the creation of the state of Israel and homelessness of Palestinians. Canada's first substantial involvement in the region had occurred with the creation of the state of Israel, when, as a member of the 11-member United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) in 1947, Canada voted in support of the majority report calling for the partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states. Several variables worked to shape Canadian viewpoint: (i) foremost, Canadian views were shaped by cultural and historical factors rather than any liberal democratic viewpoint. As the previous Chapter has documented that Canadian delegation headed by R. G. Riddell had concluded in favour of partition and its approval by the UN General Assembly. It was more concerned with Britain's decision to quit the region, come what may by mid-May and Canada was concerned of the post-withdrawal consequences for the credibility of the world body. This was Canada's Real politics. One of the members of the Canadian delegation, Elizabeth MacCallum, was greatly disturbed by the fact that the US and Soviet viewpoints influenced Canadian approach. Both the Americans and the Soviets were thinking in terms of their own geostrategic interests in the region; and Canada consciously chose to be influenced by such considerations. (ii) Many of the Canadian politicians and policy makers viewed the 'Holy Land' through their Biblical prism and their predominantly Christian heritage and had particular sympathy for the Jewish people in the wake of the then Holocaust of European Jews. By contrast, the views of the majority of the indigenous Arab population in the territory counted for little. When Israel was established in May 1948 Canadians overwhelmingly supported the nascent Jewish state in the ensuing war with its Arab neighbours.

The present Chapter II discusses Canada's response and involvement in the first Arab-Israel war of 1948, in which Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq invaded Israel; and which resulted in the defeat of Arab forces. The Security Council moved in to end the fighting and adopted a resolution in 1948. The UK, US and Canada supported the resolution. By 1949, Israel signed armistice agreements with all the four neighbouring Arab states. Canada supported the ceasefire and armistice

agreements. After the war, Canada extended its de facto as well as de jure recognition to Israel.

The second major phase, the Chapter focuses on, is Canada's engagement in the 1956 Suez Canal crisis when Israel, France and the United Kingdom attacked Egypt. Anglo-French intervention was criticised by Washington; and Ottawa found itself uncomfortably torn between its American and British allies. It also points out how the Suez crisis highlighted the clash within Western imperialism which destabilised the entire Arab region. To resolve the splits in the Western alliance and avert the broader crisis, Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs (Foreign Minister) Lester Pearson (1948-1957) proposed the deployment of UN peace-keeping force in the Sinai. Canadian forces subsequently served in the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF), which was commanded for a period by a Canadian Lieutenant-General E.L.M. Burns. Pearson was awarded the 1957 Nobel Peace Prize for his contribution both to resolving the Suez crisis and the development of UN peace-keeping force.

The present Chapter also focuses on Canada's support to Israel in 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israel war and in the period up to the year 2000s. The Chapter highlights and identifies the changes and shifts, and the reasons thereof, during this period; including the 1970s and 1980s when a somewhat balanced approach was followed. It is also worth adding the role of Canada in UN Peace-keeping in the Middle East.

While looking at Canadian perception, policy and initiatives like peace-keeping, the Chapter looks into military and strategic dimensions of the state of Israel; its military programme based on a reserve system that permits a reduction of armed forces during normal time and rapid expansion through popular mobilization at the time of emergency. The chapter also covers aspects of the expansion of 'unauthorized' settlements that have created over 700,000 Palestinian refugees. Here, it is also explained how the Palestinian Arabs have been transformed into a permanent mass expelled and the refugees.

### **Canada and the Arab-Israel War, 1948**

The first round of fighting started on 15 May and continued till 11 June 1948. The poorly-armed and -trained army of Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq

invaded Israel and were badly defeated. The Israeli forces under the command of Ben-Gurion were motivated by the Zionist belief of a Jewish homeland and 'holy land' that has to be defended in a life-and-death struggle for the very existence of the Jewish state. The combined Arab army numbered around 21,500 whereas the *Haganah* and its affiliated units fielded a force of some 30,000 (Fraser 1995: 46).

United Nations Secretary General Trygve Lie (1946-52) was greatly worried about the consequences of UN inaction in the fighting. On 17 May 1948 US proposed a draft resolution and next day UK proposed another resolution that differs from US resolutions; finally on 19 May, Trygve Lie appointed Count Folke Bernadotte, President of the Swedish Red Cross as UN mediator. On 11 June, the guns fell silent in Palestine for the first time in more than six months. The truce came, it is believed, as a welcome relief for both sides; Israel was not some unconquerable nation.

Canada supported Bernadotte's ceasefire efforts, and the Canadian government took steps to ensure not to violate the UN embargo on the supply of war material or manpower reinforcements to the Arab and the Jewish forces in Palestine. In spite of this, more than 300 Canadians joined the Israeli forces while tonnes of military equipment, from Harvard training aircraft to radio sets, were smuggled out of Canadian ports. This was done with the assistance of leaders of the United Zionist Council and with the help of thousands of Canadian Jews who believed that even though the Canadian law and UN embargo were important but the survival of Israel was paramount (Bercuson 1985: 191 and Martin 2010: 196). The government of Canada either conveniently looked the other; or at heart sympathized with whatever pro-Israel Jewish community was doing.

Israel entered the next round of combat with its superior forces in July (9-18) 1948. The size of the *Haganah* was doubled and its firepower substantially increased by the procurement of supplies of small arms, heavy equipment and even a few aircraft from Europe (Cleveland 2009: 268). The Israelis concentrated their main effort on widening the narrow corridor linking Jewish Jerusalem to the Jewish dominated coastal plain and captured a large portion of Arab territory including south-east of Tel Aviv. Most of the inhabitants of Lydda and Ramle were driven out of their homes and lands by Israeli forces, adding to the number of Arab refugees.

The UN Security Council dutifully moved to end this second round of fighting. Both US and the UK agreed on a resolution that called upon Jews and Arabs

to cease fighting. The resolution was adopted on 15 July 1948, and the fighting ended in Palestine. Canada again supported the Anglo-American resolution. Canada abstained from Syrian resolution of sending this case to the International Court of Justice, arguing that it would undermine the work of mediators (UN Security Council Resolution 1948).

The Bernadotte report was transmitted to Trygve Lie in Paris on 16 September 1948. In his report, Bernadotte had rejected much of the 29 November 1947 UN partition plan as no longer workable or realistic. He thought that unitary Arab state or federal schemes were not worthy of consideration. It was also too late to establish an independent Arab state in any portion of Palestine because of the lack of organized authority springing from Arab Palestine itself. He also recommended that the Arab refugees should be allowed to return to their homes in Israel<sup>1</sup>. It is to be noted that US and UK had full support for Israel at this stage; and Arabs had refused to recognise Israel; and equally, Israelis were not ready to accept Arab refugees back into Israel (Progress Report of the United Nations Mediator on Palestine 1948).

The *Lehi*, one of the three armed Jewish militant groups, viewed Bernadotte as an enemy of Israel; the day after his report was submitted to Trygve Lie in Paris, the *Lehi* armed group murdered him in Jerusalem. Canada expressed general support for the Bernadotte proposals. McNaughton, the Canadian representative at UN, was asked to be cooperative but not to be too active in the campaign to convert the plan into a General Assembly resolution. That was the subtle diplomatic move by Canada to side with Israel while maintaining a seemingly principled position.

Again Israeli forces aimed at pushing Egyptian troops out of the Negev area that was allotted to Israel by the UN. With the 15 October 1948 shelling, the Egyptians were not driven completely out of the Negev, but their position had become more precarious. The Security Council had passed one resolution on 19 October which had ordered the fighting to stop but which did not clearly call for a return to the former ceasefire lines. Fighting broke out again on 30 October 1948. With this, Israelis army did completely drive the Arab army and the Lebanese forces out of

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<sup>1</sup> He also recommended that Israel give up its claim to the Negev in return for Western Galilee. The Arab areas of Palestine to be annexed to Transjordan. Jerusalem be accorded special status that Haifa become a free port and that Lydda become a free airport.

Galilee; and came to occupy fully it. The Bernadotte proposals had received another blow towards its extinction<sup>2</sup> (Fraser 1995: 48-50).

On 16 November, Security Council passed yet another resolution similar to Bernadotte proposal. It reaffirmed previous Security Council truce resolutions and decided that an armistice is established in all sections of Palestine to facilitate the transition from truce to permanent peace. It called upon Arabs and Israelis to negotiate directly or through mediators. The Israelis were not entirely happy with the resolution while the Arabs were not obliged to enter into direct negotiations (UN Security Council resolution 62, 1948).

Lester Pearson arrived in Paris on 29 November 1948 and represented Canada. He voted for it but he resisted a Lebanese and British effort to have it applied to Galilee as well as the Negev (Bercuson 1985: 209).

Israelis had once again started shelling Egyptian positions near Gaza on 22 December. On 28 December, Security Council was called into session to take action over the renewed fighting in Palestine. A British resolution was passed which called for an immediate ceasefire and the implementation of the Security Council resolutions passed on 4 November and 16 November. Canada voted for the resolution, but the US abstained<sup>3</sup>. Egypt was informed about a ceasefire and sent a delegation to Rhodes for armistice talks. Finally, it was on 6 January 1949; it looked as if the first Arab-Israel war was finally coming to an end (UN Security Council Resolution 66, 1948).

The Israeli-Egyptian talks in Rhodes began with great difficulty under Brunches guidance. Both sides moved towards an agreement which was signed on 24 February 1949 and was soon followed by other armistice agreements concluded between Israel and Lebanon; and Israel and Syria. Negotiation between Israel and Transjordan was more complex. As King Abdullah agreed to changes in the

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<sup>2</sup> The General Assembly proposed a Palestine Conciliation Commission consist of three states, US, France and Turkey which would assume the functions once exercised by Bernadotte. It was supported by US, UK, and most of the Commonwealth countries including Canada. It was opposed by SU and Arab countries. This commission also made no more progress towards a full peace as it happened with Bernadotte.

<sup>3</sup> Britain also informed US and commonwealth governments that they intended to send troops to Transjordan, and would intervene in the Sinai if the Egyptian government called for British aid under 1936 Anglo-Egyptian Treaty. Israel withdrew from Sinai and concentrated around Rafah and cut the main Egyptian supply lines to Gaza and the North Western Negev.

demarcation line, he was assassinated by a follower of *Mufti* before the agreement could be signed.

Few points bear significance here: (i) By the time the armistice agreements between Israel and its four Arab neighbours viz., Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon were signed in 1949 the Israeli had secured some 40 per cent more territory than was allocated to the Jewish state in the UN partition plan (Wilson 1972: 70). (ii) These agreements were not peace treaties, and they did not constitute recognition of Israel on the part of the Arab signatories; they simply stabilized the ceasefire borders without accepting them as final. (iii) Palestine had effectively been partitioned among Israel, Egypt and Transjordan, and thus Egypt remained in occupation of the Gaza Strip; and Transjordan had taken the old city of Jerusalem and the territory west of the Jordan River (Talal 1981: 37-40).

The question of Canadian recognition of Israel remained. In a cabinet meeting in December 1948, Pearson explained that de facto recognition of Israel would not embarrass the UK government nor prejudice the UK negotiations with Transjordan. There were also signs that Britain itself was ready to extend de facto recognition to Israel shortly. Pearson therefore proposed, and the cabinet agreed. On 24 December 1948 Canada extended de facto recognition to the state of Israel and Canadian Zionists celebrated. In later years, Elizabeth MacCallum remained convinced that Canadian recognition of Israel was hurried along by the Zionist lobby (Bercuson 1985: 221).

The British Royal Air Force (RAF) had flown regular photo reconnaissance missions over Israeli territory from the start of the war until November 1948. Four fighter jets from an RAF base at Deversoir, Egypt on a low-level armed reconnaissance mission were shot down near Rafah by Israeli fighter jets and anti-aircraft gunners. When more British planes were sent out to look for the missing fighters later in the day and one more British aircraft fell to Israeli guns (Fraser 1995: 50). An outraged British government threatened retaliation and the next day landed a battalion size force at Aqaba on the southern tip of Transjordan. The opposition, led by Winston Churchill attacked the government for flying such low reconnaissance missions. It was time for Britain to recognise reality in Palestine; the downing of British jets and the landing of British troops threatened to change the complexion of

the conflict. On 29 January, British foreign office made the announcement of recognising Israel after notifying the Commonwealth governments (Talal 1981: 41).

In early February 1949, the Israeli ambassador to the US, Eliahu Epstein visited Ottawa to promote Canada-Israel trade and determine Canada's reaction to a renewed Israeli application for UN membership. Escott Reid of the Department of External Affairs and Douglas Abbott, Minister of Finance, said that it was too early to discuss this subject. Epstein met Pearson, and he assured Epstein that as long as the situation in the Middle East remained stable, Canada would support Israel's application for UN membership.

Security Council passed a US-sponsored resolution that recommended to the General Assembly that Israel as a "peace-loving state... able and wishing to carry out the obligations contained in the UN Charter, be admitted to UN." When the admission resolution was finally placed before the General Assembly, Canada agreed to co-sponsor it. On 11 May 1949, McNaughton, Canadian representative, told the Assembly that Israeli admission to the UN would mark a significant stage in political growth of Israel; that Canada looked forward to Israel representing and upholding those traditions of freedom and democratic progress through which the purposes and principles of the UN could best be advanced; and to the contributions which Israel could make to the accomplishment of the aims of the UN. The General Assembly resolution passed with thirty-seven in favour, twelve against and nine including Britain abstaining. Pearson told a Toronto audience five days later that the Canadian vote signified the extension by Canada of full de jure recognition of Israel.

By the end of 1949, Israel sent its Consul General to Montreal and a Canadian trade mission visited Israel as part of a tour of Middle Eastern countries. Canadian diplomatic representation in other areas of Middle East was also soon expanded, and embassies were established in Lebanon, Egypt and Israel (Bercuson 1985: 227-29).

In sum, Canada muddled itself way through the early stages of Arab-Israel conflict. Beneath seemingly political ambiguities and low-key diplomatic approaches within and outside the UN, Canadian sympathy and support abundantly and warmly lay with the new state of Israel and whatever the Western world was doing and undoing in the Middle East. One cannot call it lack of knowledge about the Middle East or lack of maturity in handling international affairs on the part of a Dominion which had only began dabbling with the international matters. Canada was clear-

headed from the day one; if there is any doubt, one simply need to go through the writings of Elizabeth MacCallum. The government's pro-Zionist inclinations and the work of the strong Zionist lobby shaped the policy choices which were certainly not in consonance with its evolving Liberal Internationalism.

### **Canada and the Suez Crisis, 1956**

This section explores Canada's role in the Suez Canal crisis. In terms of the origin of the Suez crisis, it can be said that in recent times the crisis begins with President Gamal Abdel Nasser's declaration of nationalization of Suez Canal in 1956. In 1952, a corrupt and weak regime of Egypt was thrown out by the army and shortly afterwards replaced by a government under the charismatic leadership of Colonel Nasser first as prime minister and after 1956 as President. He was dedicated to wiping out the humiliation that Egypt suffered in the war of 1947-8. Related to this was Nasser's determination to make Egypt strong and independent, free from foreign control (in effect British) which he believed thwarted the growth of a strong national state.

To this end, the British military base in the Canal Zone had to be removed. A treaty signed in 1936 to end the military occupation of Egypt had given the British the right to maintain a base to defend the Suez Canal but without infringing Egyptian sovereignty. After several months of negotiations, the two governments Britain and Egypt signed a treaty in 1954 which provided for the evacuation of all British troops from the Suez Canal base within twenty months<sup>4</sup>. The British forces were withdrawn on schedule. The last British troops left the Canal Zone in June 1956. Nasser appeared to have achieved his goal through patient diplomacy. The Suez crisis highlighted the clash between imperialism and the Arab nationalism which desired to exercise national sovereignty. It also brought out the differences between the Cold War geostrategy of the Western alliance and Nasser's embrace of the concept of Non-Alignment; also, it resurrected the Arab-Israel conflict and the unresolved issues that had been festering since the birth of Israel and the first Arab-Israel war (Munro 1973:

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<sup>4</sup> In early 1950s Britain-Egypt relation was closely tied to developments in Sudan. During the final years of the monarchy, the *Wafd* demanded the unity of Egypt and the Sudan under the Egyptian crown. Although Britain tried to separate Egyptian issues from the question of the Sudan, Egypt insisted on linking the two. The Anglo-Egyptian Agreement signed in February 1953, recognized Sudan's right to self-determination and set forth the steps that would achieve that goal. Two years later,

218-19).

Ever since the armistice agreements had been signed in 1949, the Egyptian-Israeli border had been the site of frequent hostilities. The scale of the Israeli incursions and the ease with which Israeli forces carried out their missions emphasized their military superiority and made the Egyptians aware of the pressing need to replace the outmoded equipment left to them by the British. However, when Nasser approached the West for arms, he was rebuffed. He, therefore, turned to other sources (Cleveland 2009: 308-10).

In September 1955, Egypt concluded an agreement with Czechoslovakia to purchase \$200 million worth of advanced Soviet military equipment in exchange of Egyptian cotton. The so-called Czech arms deal was a Soviet-Egyptian arms deal, and it had far-reaching repercussions. The Czech arms deal caused considerable annoyance in Washington and London. With this single agreement, Nasser undermined the alliance system through which the United States had tried to contain the Soviet Union in the Middle East<sup>5</sup>. The Egyptian president allowed the Soviet Union to hurdle the Baghdad Pact and to achieve the century-old ambition of acquiring a base in the eastern Mediterranean. Nasser acquired the image of a Pan-Arab leader who not only would break the imperial domination of the Western powers but would also use his country's new found military strength to avenge the 'disaster' of 1948 (Munro 1973: 219).

Egypt's search for financial assistance to develop its agricultural base provided further background to the Suez crisis. After the coup d'état of 1952, Egyptian economic planners had resurrected a long-standing scheme to construct a second dam across the Nile at Aswan. The project was viewed as having both political and economic advantages. It would enhance the new regime's prestige and it would also have very real economic benefits by increasing the amount of land that could be irrigated and by providing enough hydroelectric power to supply the needs of the entire country. However, the estimated construction costs of at least \$1 billion were

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Sudanese parliament proclaimed independence, thus removed the Sudan question in Britain Egypt negotiations.

<sup>5</sup>Baghdad Pact was an attempt to extend the policy of containment that would serve as a barrier to Soviet expansion. Participants were Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Iraq and Britain. Nasser refused to join, claiming that it was an extension of imperialism and he criticized Nuri al-Sa'id of Iraq for entering into 'imperial alliances'. Nasser also began a propaganda campaign to persuade other Arab states to stay clear off the Baghdad Pact. His efforts were successful in convincing the governments of Jordan and Syria to decline membership in the alliance.

well beyond Egypt's financial ability. The government, therefore, sought foreign assistance. In late 1955, the World Bank approved a loan package that involved US and British participation and which required Egypt to accept certain conditions. While Nasser was deciding whether or not to accept the arrangement, the US government abruptly announced in July 1956 that it was withdrawing its loan offers (Cleveland 2009: 310).

A few days later, Nasser responded with a dramatic act of defiance. In his speech in Alexandria on 26 July 1956, President Nasser announced that the Egyptian government had nationalized the Suez Canal company, frozen its assets in Egypt and would use the Canal tolls to underwrite the construction of the Aswan High Dam on the Nile. Within Egypt and the Arab world at large, Nasser's bold action was greeted with tremendous enthusiasm (Munro 1973: 226).

Nasser's position was strengthened by the ability of Egyptian technicians to keep the waterway operating smoothly, something that Britain had claimed would be impossible. The Suez Canal, built with Egyptian labour but operated by a French company and used as the lifeline of the British Empire, had stood as a symbol of Western exploitation. The reaction in Western capitals was one of extreme hostility, but Nasser refused to compromise on the 'Egyptianisation' of the canal (Eayrs 1957: 98).

While efforts to reach a negotiated settlement of the crisis were under way, Britain, France and Israel concluded a secret agreement for a strong and swift joint military action against Egypt. Each country had its own reasons for approving the action, but they all shared a common desire to overthrow Nasser. Their secret agreement was activated on 29 October 1956, with an Israeli strike into Sinai. On October 31 the British air force began heavy bombing raids on military targets near Cairo and along the Canal Zone and Israeli ground forces raced to the east bank of the Canal. British and French paratroops dropped on Port Said on 5 November, and on the following day, the main Anglo-French force landed at the northern end of the Canal and began to advance on Suez City. The advance was halted when, at midnight on November 6, Britain and France agreed to a UN-sponsored ceasefire. The tripartite attack on Egypt was condemned by both the United States and the Soviet Union. The US government was particularly upset at the action of three of its close allies and took the position that none of them could be allowed to benefit from the use of force. The US was angry apparently because the three allies had not consulted it on the military

action, and it amounted to questioning US leadership. Under tremendous US pressure, Britain and France withdrew their forces in December, and the last Israeli soldier left Egyptian territory on 16 March 1957. This was when a Special UN Emergency Force was decided upon to be stationed in Gaza to act as a buffer between Egypt and Israel (Reford 1992: 62 and Munro 1973: 237).

The Suez crisis had important consequences for all the parties involved<sup>6</sup>. Egypt's military defeat was transformed into a political triumph for Nasser. Instead of being overthrown, he emerged from the crisis as an Egyptian and Pan-Arab hero. The United States and the Soviet Union defended Egypt's sovereignty, and when the battlefield was cleared, Egypt retained possession of the Suez Canal. As for Britain and France, their decision to ally with Israel in an attack on an Arab state was viewed as a monstrous offence. It had unfortunate repercussions within Egypt; many British and French nationals who had spent their entire lives in the country were expelled (Cleveland 2009: 312).

Canada's policy during the period of nationalisation of the Suez Canal in July 1956 was confined to an effort to control arms shipments to the Arab states and Israel so as to keep some balance of military power between them. This equidistance was interesting. As has been stated in the preceding Chapter, Canadian weapons were going essentially to Israel through private Jewish channels. Sustaining this policy proved to be a difficult one. Some six months of discussion in Parliament disclosed a certain lack of resolve in carrying out the policy and the Government came to the conclusion that it was best abandoned. Prime Minister St. Laurent (1948-1957) told the House of Commons on 11 July 1956: "We do not feel that ... it should be a responsibility left to the Government of Canada which has not the immediate interest in the area which other Western powers have" (Eayrs 1957: 98). Since Canada was not a member of the Suez Canal Users Association, there was no reason to assume that Canada would be heavily involved or should be unduly concerned about the events of the summer (Murray 1974: 48).

On 28 July Foreign Minister Lester B. Pearson expressed the Government's concern that the water-way be run efficiently and fairly in the future. On August 3, the

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<sup>6</sup> Soviet prestige among the Arabs was also enhanced during the crisis and continued to grow when the Soviets refilled Egypt's battered arsenal. The collusion among the three aggressors reinforced their negative images within the Arab world. If Israel had once again demonstrated the effectiveness of its armed forces, its attack on Egypt confirmed Arab opinion that the country was an agent of the Western powers.

Minister of National Defence, Ralph Campney (1954-1957) remarked in Vancouver that the Suez seizure was "primarily an European matter . . . not a matter which particularly concerns Canada. We have no oil there. We don't use the Canal for shipping". For these reasons, Canada was not among the twenty-four states invited to London in August to devise plans for the Canal's future. Had the Government been invited to send a representative, Pearson told the House of Commons, it would have been glad to do so; but it had not been invited, and had no objection to being left out. There was no protest at this policy in Parliament. Outside the House, however, John Diefenbaker, soon to be the Leader of Opposition, declared that "the Government should have made it known to Britain of her desire to be represented". On August 30, the Government endorsed the proposals of the London Conference and expressed the hope that President Gamal Nasser would find them a satisfactory basis for negotiation. In the light of the events of the following month in early September, Pearson discussed the Suez crisis in London with British Foreign Secretary, Selwyn Lloyd; and that the Canadian Government, in a number of confidential dispatches to the United Kingdom had urged that any attempt to settle the crisis should avoid the use of force and be conducted through the United Nations.

On 29 October, Israeli troops attacked Egypt in strength and moved swiftly towards the Canal. At the United Nations, a United States resolution in the Security Council calling upon the disputants to refrain from the threat or use of force was vetoed by Britain and France (Eayrs 1957: 98-100 and Delvoie 1997: 660-61).

At the first Emergency Session of the UN General Assembly, United States introduced a resolution similar to that which Britain and France had vetoed in the Security Council. Canada voted against Britain and France to have the resolution placed on the Assembly's agenda. From the voting on the resolution itself, Pearson was instructed to abstain. He justified this course by explaining to the Assembly that the resolution offered no constructive alternative. He supplied such an alternative at the following meeting, on the night of 3 November, by introducing a resolution calling upon the Secretary General to draw up plans for an emergency 'International United Nations Force' to bring about and secure a ceasefire. Adopted without a dissenting vote (though there were nineteen abstentions) and with the support of the United Kingdom, the Canadian resolution was swiftly acted upon by UN Secretary General Hammarskjold (1953-1961). On 4 November, Canada joined by Colombia and Norway, placed a further resolution before the Assembly endorsing the Secretary

General's proposal for a United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF)<sup>7</sup> under the command of Lieutenant-General E. L. M. Burns, the Canadian officer who had been the United Nations Truce Supervisor in Palestine since 1954. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 59 to 5, with 12 abstentions. On 5 November, the day before his re-election, US President Dwight Eisenhower telephoned St. Laurent to express his appreciation of the Canadian initiative.

Having brought UNEF onto the world scene, the Canadian Government felt obliged to nurse it during its early days. On November 7 the Prime Minister offered a contribution of one thousand or more infantry troops to be supported by a mobile base in the shape of H.M.C.S. Magnificent. It was announced on the following day that the first battalion of the Queen's Own Rifles, then at Calgary, would be sent to the Middle East. On 13 November, the main body of the Queen's Own Rifles was flown to Halifax; that night the H.M.C.S Magnificent arrived from Belfast. It was ready to sail on 18 November; exactly two weeks after the decision to create UNEF had been taken by the General Assembly (Eayrs 1957: 100-01 and Reford 1992: 65-68).

As the Queen's Own Rifles was being moved across Canada in a blaze of publicity, the Egyptian Government objected to playing host to troops in uniform not easily distinguished from those of the invaders and whose regimental title did not make any easier Egyptian comprehension. That time Canadian flag called the Red Ensign included the Union

Jack of Britain.<sup>8</sup> In any case, the Egyptian protest reached the Secretary General Hammarskjold and through him the Government of Canada before he left for Cairo to consult personally with Colonel Nasser. Finally, the Canadian Government changed its plans. Instead of sending the Queen's Own on the Magnificent, it would provide an

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<sup>7</sup>UNEF consisted of troops from six nations: Colombia, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Canada. Canada contributed 1007 personnel to the mission. The UNEF peacekeepers immediately became known as the 'Blue Berets', the colour of their headgear. In 1948, Pearson became a member of the Liberal party of Canada. Shortly after, he became the Minister of External Affairs and served as president of the United Nations General Assembly. His position allowed him to act as a mediator in the Suez Crisis. In 1957, Pearson's efforts to maintain world peace were recognized when he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The Nobel committee said he had "saved the world".

<sup>8</sup> The presence of the Union Jack of Britain in the flag was a source of controversy because French Canadians believed that the flag did not properly represent the French as one of Canada's founding peoples. If the Red Ensign were to be changed, many English Canadians would be alienated because this would be seen as a rejection of Canada's English heritage. Prime Minister Lester Pearson faced that tension between French and English Canadians. He wanted to create a new national flag that would unite all Canadians under one banner. In February 1965, the red and white maple leaf flag replaced the Red Ensign. For the first time in its nearly 100-year history, Canada had its first official flag.

airlift of some three hundred ancillary troops, signals, engineers, medical units and personnel for an Air Transport Headquarters. It was argued that the change in plan had been recommended by Lieutenant-General Burns himself who had told the Government that the ancillary troops were more useful contribution at that stage than that of an infantry battalion (Eayrs 1957: 101-02 and W. See 2011: 173).

In December, Britain and France announced that they would withdraw their troops from Egyptian territory. They were replaced by the forces of UNEF, which, by the end of the year, had been built up to about 5,500. Some 1,100 of these were Canadian, of whom eight hundred were stationed in Egypt, the remainder being air force personnel mainly based in Italy (Eayrs 1957: 102, Bishop 1965: 483 and Gordon 1992: 488).

Meanwhile, on 21 September 1956 Canada announced that it would export twenty-four F-86 Sabre Jets which Israel had requested to be delivered at the rate of four per month. Few days later Ben-Gurion wrote to St Laurent reaffirming that the Sabre jets would be used solely for defence against aggression. However, Canada made it clear in a statement that if 'political circumstances changed in a way which would warrant cancellation or postponement of all or part of this order, such action would be taken'. On 29 October, Israel invaded Sinai creating the pretext for the Anglo-French landing at Port Said. Pearson promptly called a press conference and stated that Canada was reviewing her decision on the Sabres. Thus Canada suspended delivery of its order for the Israeli invasion of Suez (Kirton 2007: 383, Fraser 1995:71 and Munro 1973: 236).

The Sabre deal, an issue which Pearson called the most difficult he had ever encountered and which dominated the cabinet's foreign policy discussions throughout much of 1956 appeared finally to have reconciled the contradictions in Canada's arms sale policy<sup>9</sup>. Israel merely requested a refund and made no serious attempt to obtain them. When members of the right wing, Herut argued about Pearson's cancellation of the Sabre deal, Ben Gurion retorted: "We asked for the sale to be cancelled because we had more and better aeroplanes from another source and we are grateful to the company concerned for agreeing to cancel the purchase and for giving us back the money which we needed for the other aeroplanes".

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<sup>9</sup> The Eisenhower administration, in response to the strong pro-Israel platform adopted by the Democratic party, decided to relax its opposition to arms sales to Israel. Great Britain increasingly saw

So much for Pearson's noise about cancelling the deal to sell fighter jets and Canadian concern for peace in the Middle East, Canada's arms sales saw a change. The St. Laurent government (1948-1957), as well as its Conservative successor under John Diefenbaker (1957-1963), adopted a strictly neutral stance by refusing to sell arms to either Israel or the Arabs. When in October 1958, Golda Meir came to Ottawa in search of torpedoes and other arms, Canada's response was categorical: "... a renewal of significant military shipments to Israel at this time would tend to retard present progress toward a solution of Middle East problems". He further stated that "... our recent approach to the Middle East problem has been to advocate methods of mediation, conciliation and restraint, preferably using UN machinery rather than the precarious balancing of positions of strength".

Canada was basking into the glory of its new found role as a mediator and peace-keeper under the multilateral banner of the UN. Israel received some weapons from the United States especially under the Kennedy administration, but France remained her principal source. The Soviet Union continued to supply Egypt and Syria and after 1958 Iraq as well. The arms race played an important role in precipitating the third Arab-Israel war in June 1967 (Oren 1990: 298-300).

### **Canada and the Arab-Israel War, 1967**

Within the Arab states, the memories of the Israeli victory in 1948 and the Israeli invasion of Egypt in 1956 were an active part of political consciousness. From the Arab perspective, Israel was an expansionist arm of Western imperialism, and there was a widespread belief that Israel would sooner or later launch an attack on the Arabs to gain more territory for Jewish settlement. Israelis in turn, accepted the Arab propaganda at face value and watched with alarm as the Soviets supplied arms to Egypt, Syria and Iraq.

In May 1967, Soviet and Syrian intelligence reported that Israel was preparing a large-scale military operation against Syria for its sponsorship of Palestinian guerrilla activities. The report was incorrect but at that time, it was taken to be true. Nasser in order to manifest his Pan-Arab leadership role responded to the threat to Syria by deploying troops in the Sinai Peninsula. This was posturing, an attempt to

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Israel as a foil to Nasser and, with the decline of British influence in Jordan, cared less for the security

demonstrate to the Arab world at large that Egypt stood shoulder to shoulder with other Arab countries against their common enemy<sup>10</sup>. It was a successful gesture, and anti-Israeli demonstrations broke out in several Arab cities. Nasser was thus tempted into escalating his brinkmanship. He requested that all UN forces be withdrawn from Sinai. His request was quickly granted, and the UN forces that had formed a shield between Egypt and Israel were evacuated. The momentum seemed to be with Nasser, and he took the crisis a step further by reoccupying the UN positions at Sharm al-Shaykh and announcing a blockade on Israeli shipping passing through the Straits of Tiran. In retrospect, with a large part of the Egyptian army bogged down in Yemen, and Egypt in no position to go to war with Israel, it is likely that Nasser expected Soviet-US intervention to calm the crisis and permit him to escape with his reputation renewed. However, Nasser had unleashed emotions, and other Arab leaders clambered to get on side. On May 30, King Husayn of Jordan, who only a few days earlier had been denounced in the Egyptian press, flew to Cairo to sign a mutual defence pact with Egypt. The Iraqi government joined the alliance a few days later (Cleveland 2009: 337-38 and Delvoie 1997: 665-66).

The Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol neither tolerated the blockade of the Straits of Tiran nor allowed the continued buildup of Arab solidarity around Nasser. The Israeli cabinet decided the situation had to be countered by military action. In the early morning of 5 June 1967, the Israeli air force attacked air bases throughout Egypt and destroyed most of the Egyptian air force while it was still on the ground. Later the same day, after Syria and Jordan had entered the conflict; Israeli pilots effectively destroyed the air forces of these two countries as well. With control of the air, the Israeli forces defeated the Egyptian army in Sinai and advanced to the east bank of the Suez Canal. The two states signed a ceasefire on June 9. In the meantime Jordan engaged Israeli forces in the Jerusalem area on June 5, only to be driven out of East Jerusalem and across the Jordan River, abandoning the West Bank to Israeli occupation (Fraser 1995: 84-85).

Finally, the Israeli army turned its full might against Syria and wrested the Golan Heights from Syrian control. The ceasefire on the Golan front was agreed to on June 11. In a mere six days, Israel had defeated three Arab states. The war was a

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of the Hashemite kingdom.

<sup>10</sup>In early 1967 the eastern Arab states were more concerned with inter-Arab affairs than with Israel.

resounding triumph for the Israeli military, a humiliating disaster for the Arab forces and a shattering blow to Nasserism<sup>11</sup>. It also clearly conveyed that in the Cold War contest, the two rival super powers were on the same side: Arabs shall never be allowed to defeat militarily Israel; and secondly, Arabs need to acknowledge the military superiority of Israel forever.

The Arab defeat was costly in both material and psychological terms. Each of the three Arab states surrendered territory to the Israelis. Egypt was deprived of the revenues from the Sinai oil fields and the Suez Canal, which remained closed to shipping from 1967 to 1975. To add to the humiliation, Egypt was forced to make up these lost revenues by accepting subsidies from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait monarchies. Jordan lost not only the West Bank, which had been its most productive agricultural region, but also the Holy City of Jerusalem. The Golan Heights were a major loss for Syria, but Israel's occupation of them placed the Israeli forces within easy striking distance of Damascus. Also, the armed forces of the Arab states were decimated. Egypt lost 12,000 men and 80 per cent of its air force and armour; Syrian losses were 2,500 men, and the Jordanian army was put temporarily out of action as a fighting unit (Cleveland 2009: 339).

Although the war lasted only six days, it created another tragic Arab refugee situation and a complex demographic dilemma for Israel. Jordan, by surrendering the West Bank, lost a large portion of its settled Palestinian population, but at the same time, it received 300,000 new refugees fleeing the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In Syria about 80,000 inhabitants were uprooted from the Golan Heights and in Egypt, the continued fighting along the Suez Canal reduced the cities of the Canal Zone to ruins and forced the evacuation of their inhabitants to other areas of the country. Israel, with the capture of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Sinai, and the Golan Heights, suddenly found itself administering a new Arab population of 1.5 million people. This situation raised important questions about the character of the Israeli state regarding its religious composition as well as its democratic traditions (Talal 1981: 43).

The peace that usually follows wars did not come to the Middle East after 1967. The UN Security Council adopted Resolution 242 on basic framework for regional peace on 22 November 1967. The resolution asserted "the inadmissibility of

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<sup>11</sup> Nasser exhausted Egypt's resources in a series of external adventures ranging from attempts to

the acquisition of territory by war” and called for a just and lasting peace based on the withdrawal of Israeli forces from territories occupied in the June War and the acknowledgment of the right of every state in the area to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries. The resolution also affirmed the need of achieving a “just settlement of the refugee problem.” Although Egypt, Jordan, and Israel endorsed Resolution 242, Syria and the Palestinian organizations rejected it. Because the document was so ambiguous and open-ended, even the accepting parties interpreted it quite differently. Thus, the resolution failed to provide a consensual basis for a peace settlement. However, Secretary of State William Rogers of the United States finally managed to put together a peace plan that Egypt, Jordan and Israel supported. The plan included provision for a ninety-day cease-fire that went into effect in July 1970. Although the cease-fire was renewed several times and was thus successful in bringing an end to the war of attrition, the United States could not convince Egypt to sign a peace agreement with Israel nor persuade Israel to withdraw from occupied Egyptian territory. But at least, the Rogers Plan had silenced the guns along the Suez Canal (Talal 1981: 43 and Fraser 1995: 88-89).

In the 1967 Arab-Israel war, Israel annexed West Bank, Gaza Strip and Golan Heights and Canadians remained overwhelmingly sympathetic to the Israeli side. At the same time, Canada supported UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 242 and its call for an Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories and a negotiated settlement among the warring states. The Palestinians and their claims for self-determination, however, did not yet figure as a major element in either UNSC resolution 242 or Canadian policy, other than as amorphous ‘refugees’ in need of a ‘just settlement’ to their plight (Brynen 2007: 74). It showed the double standard of Canada’s policy towards West Asia.

Allan J. MacEachen, Secretary of State for External Affairs made a statement to the UN General Assembly on 20 November 1974: “We remain opposed to any attempt to challenge the right of any other state in the region to live in peace within secure and recognised boundaries free from threat and acts of force”. He went on to further state: “If the emergence of any Palestinian entity were to be envisaged at any stage, it would be essential that this should be the result of an agreement among the parties directly involved, which, of course, include Israel. In this respect, the

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subvert the Jordanian and Iraqi regimes, to intervention in Yemen, to the final disaster of 1967.

establishment, evolution and existence of any such entity should in no way prejudice the continued existence of the state of Israel” (Blanchette 1980: 16-17).

Young Israeli generals like Ariel Sharon became national heroes. The marked superiority of the Israelis gave them certain arrogance. Meanwhile, Iraqi regime fell to a Ba’thist coup in July 1968; the Syrian regime survived for a time but in November 1970 it too was overthrown and Hafiz al-Asad began his long rule in Damascus.

Another significant result of the 1967 June War was the impetus it gave to the rise of Palestinian militancy and political organizations. In September 1970, clashes in Jordan between Palestinians and the Jordanian army prompted Nasser to offer his personal mediation of the crisis. An Arab summit meeting convened in Cairo and worked out a cease-fire that was acceptable to the Palestinians and King Husayn. On September 28 the day after the meeting concluded, Nasser, who had been involved in round the clock negotiations died of a heart attack. The Arab world temporarily suspended its rivalries to mourn for Nasser and to ponder its future without him<sup>12</sup> (Cleveland 2009: 341,343).

### **Canada and the Arab-Israel War, 1973**

Nasser’s successor Anwar Sadat (1918–1981) had inherited from Nasser a terribly difficult set of interrelated economic and diplomatic problems. The “no war – no peace” confrontation with Israel required military expenditures that were draining the Egyptian economy of several hundred million dollars per year. Egypt needed peace to rebuild its economy, but the diplomatic circumstances were not conducive to a lessening of tension. For this purpose, Sadat waged war, negotiated peace and formed an alliance with the United States.

In July 1972, Sadat abruptly expelled most of the 20,000 members of the Soviet military mission to Egypt. He wanted to demonstrate to the United States his independence from the Soviet Union and his willingness to entertain the notion of US diplomatic involvement in Egypt’s conflict with Israel. As it turned out, Sadat’s timing was unfortunate: the expulsion of the Soviets occurred just a few weeks before the Palestinian attack on the Israeli Olympic team in Munich. The Egyptian

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<sup>12</sup>Nasser’s attempt to break away from the Western embrace and its imperial connotations found a responsive echo in Baghdad and Damascus, in Tripoli and Algiers, and the promise of social and

president's gesture was wasted, as US had no sympathy for Arab causes (Fraser 1995: 96).

Sadat tried his best to break the diplomatic stalemate. If Egypt could show that Israeli military might was not all powerful as assumed, then perhaps the United States could be persuaded to enter the negotiating process and work to soften Israel's hard-line position. In pursuit of this aim, Sadat with Syria as an ally undertook war as an instrument of diplomacy. In the early afternoon of 6 October 1973 Egyptian forces launched an attack across the Suez Canal in coordination with a Syrian offensive against Israeli positions on the Golan Heights. The Egyptians achieved stunning success as they breached the Bar Lev line on the East Bank of the canal and overwhelmed the Israeli positions. It was a considerable achievement for Egyptian armed forces<sup>13</sup>.

Although Egyptian forces continued to perform well, they did not go on the offensive after the crossing. Instead, they stopped their advance and consolidated their positions in a front 8 miles (13 km) deep east of the canal. Sadat's limited objectives had already been achieved. He had restored Egypt's credibility as a military power, gained a certain amount of occupied Egyptian territory and demonstrated to the superpowers that Israeli superiority could not be taken for granted (Cleveland 2009: 375).

Egypt waited for international diplomacy to take its course and thus Israel got time to stabilize the Syrian front and to mount a counterattack against Egyptian positions. On 16 October Israeli forces under General Ariel Sharon attacked Egyptian defenses and crossed to the west bank of the Suez Canal. This plan entrapped the Egyptian Third Army and brought Sharon's tanks within striking distance of Cairo. The outlook of the conflict had suddenly been altered. On 22 October Secretary of State Henry Kissinger of the United States and Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko of the Soviet Union presented a ceasefire agreement that Egypt, Israel, and, later, Syria accepted<sup>14</sup> (Fraser 1995: 102-03).

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political reform associated with his policies became the ideal for reformers elsewhere. The dream of Arab unity was shared by millions disillusioned at the status of the Arabs in recent history.

<sup>13</sup>Egypt put 80,000 men across the canal and lost 200. 'The crossing' became a symbol of military triumph after a quarter century of unrelenting defeats at the hands of the Israelis.

<sup>14</sup> The agreement demonstrated that Sadat had achieved his purpose of involving the superpowers in the Middle East conflict. Indeed, the October War was to some extent a proxy fight. From October 14 to November 15, the United States airlifted 22,000 tons of military supplies to Israel; the scale of the Soviet resupply to Egypt and Syria was also enormous. There was something bizarre willingness of the

The cost of the war was shocking. Israel suffered a loss of over 2,500 men; Egypt lost 7,700 men, and Syria 3,500. Egypt and Syria together lost over 2,000 tanks and 450 aircraft as compared to Israeli losses of 800 tanks and over 100 aircraft. The war also raised even more chilling prospect of direct superpower engagement in the Middle East. On October 17, in a gesture of sympathy with Syria and Egypt, the Arab member states of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) announced that they would reduce their oil production by 5 per cent a month until Israel withdrew from the occupied Arab territories (Cleveland 2009: 376).

To be noted that earlier the oil-producing countries had little say in determining prices or production levels<sup>15</sup>. In an attempt to gain a greater measure of control over pricing policies, representatives from five of the major producing countries—Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela—founded the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1960. The organization later expanded to include thirteen nations. A parallel group, the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) composed of Arab oil exporters was created in 1968. The impulse behind the formation of the two organizations was a desire on the part of the member states to assert control of their most valuable natural resource<sup>16</sup> (Cleveland 2009: 457 and Fraser 1995: 102).

As world demand for oil rose, the Middle East came to supply an ever greater percentage of the demand. Saudi Arabia supplied 21.6 per cent of Europe's oil requirements in 1972 and 13 per cent of the world's total production of crude oil in 1973. Even the United States, a major producer and the world's largest consumer of petroleum, became dependent on imported oil. Saudi Arabia's share of US oil imports

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superpowers to replenish their clients' equipment in order to enable them to continue a war that might otherwise have ended sooner.

<sup>15</sup> For instance, the Saudi Kingdom's first oil concession was granted by Ibn Saud in 1933 to the Standard Oil Company of California (later as the Arabian American Oil Company, ARAMCO). The terms of the concession were favorable to ARAMCO. Oil was discovered in the eastern province of Dahrhan in 1938, but major commercial production took place after World War II. During the 1950s, the concession agreements were modified so that Saudi Arabia and most other Middle Eastern oil producers received 50 percent of the profits from the foreign companies. ARAMCO emerged as a giant multinational corporation that controlled not only the exploration and extraction of Saudi oil but also its refining, marketing, and pricing.

<sup>16</sup> OPEC was founded in the Nasser era, and its immediate objective was to utilize the collective bargaining power of its member states to pressure the Western oil companies to increase oil prices. But as long as the world supply of oil was plentiful, OPEC had limited success in its efforts to change the policies.

in 1973 was 8.1 per cent. The world was unprepared for the decision of the Arab producers to deploy their oil weapon as an instrument of diplomacy. In the midst of the Arab-Israel war of October 1973, the United States engaged in an extensive airlift of military supplies to Israel, and President Richard Nixon requested that Congress approve a \$2.2 billion appropriation for military assistance to Israel. Saudi Arabia responded to these actions by joining Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) in imposing an embargo on all oil shipments to the United States and the Netherlands. The other Arab oil producers also announced that they would cut back on oil production and reduce the amounts available to the consuming countries.

These announcements created panic and confusion within the industrialized countries. A scramble to purchase non-Arab oil took place, and prices began to rise. In November 1973, the political leverage of the oil weapon became apparent as the European Economic Community and Japan both issued statements affirming Palestinian rights and urging Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967. OPEC set the price at \$11.65 per barrel effective from 1 January 1974; a year earlier the price had been \$2.74 (Cleveland 2009: 457-58).

Within the context of the diplomacy of the Arab-Israel conflict, the use of the oil weapon prompted the US government to seek a peaceful settlement of the conflict. In January 1974, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger negotiated a disengagement agreement between Egypt and Israel, and in September 1975 he persuaded the two parties to sign a document known as Sinai II, which provided for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from western Sinai. Economic assistance smoothed US peace making. The special relationship between the United States and Israel was reconfirmed during the negotiating sessions and was reflected by an increase in US military aid from an average annual sum of \$400 million in the period 1971–1973 to an average of \$1.5 billion during 1974–1975. This amounted to 42 per cent of Israel's annual defence spending. Egypt also reaped rewards for its willingness to follow Kissinger's lead. The United States contributed to the reconstruction of the Suez Canal which reopened in 1975 and raised its economic assistance package to Cairo from \$8.5 million in 1974 to \$750 million by 1976 (Fraser 1995: 109). Although it is debatable whether there was any effect of 1973 Arab oil embargo on Canada, it was only after the 1979 peace treaty between Israel and Egypt that Canadian attitude began to shift.

## Geostrategic Dimensions of the Wars and Conflict

While looking at Canada's perception, policy and initiatives towards the Arab-Israel war, this section looks into the geostrategic importance of Israel, Palestinians resistance and Canada's role in the UN Peace-keeping. Related to this, the key issues drawing scholarly attention are the Israeli militarism and its aggressive expansionism; the religious and cultural composition of the society and militant religious movements; the policy of Jewish settlement; and its democratic system and the rights and freedom of the non-Jewish population. Also, this section covers Palestinian resistance that emerged in response to the conditions of miserable life under Israeli occupation. To show Canada's continuous involvement, Canada's role in the UN Peace-keeping has been added in this section.

### *(i) Importance of Israel*

Israel was established as a parliamentary democracy, based on the principle of universal franchise. The presidency was intended to be mainly a ceremonial office, and Chaim Weizmann became Israel's first president. The years from 1949 to 1977 Israeli politics was dominated by the Labor-oriented Mapai Party, the same organization that had played the most prominent role in guiding the Yishuv. David Ben-Gurion held both the offices of prime minister and minister of defense for most of the period from 1949 to 1963. The *Haganah* were reorganized as the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and placed under the authority of the civilian minister of defence. However, the other two dissident military organizations, the *Irgun*, led by Menachem Begin, and the smaller *Lehi*, refused to relinquish their autonomy and continued to conduct independent military operations. The list system of voting makes the system as 'the party state'; and thus dominated by the political parties. The system of proportional representation ensures that nearly every party and political group is represented in the Knesset. In May 1977 election there was transformation of political power in Israeli politics. The right-of-center coalition, the Likud bloc leader Menachem Begin became the prime minister. He was a proponent of revisionist Zionism and headed the extreme nationalist terrorist organization *Irgun* from 1943 to 1948. The Begin years (1977–1983) appeared to mark the beginning of a new era in Israeli history; the 'secular and socialist' Zionism was replaced by a highly charged

tone of religious militancy. His agenda was primarily focused on the retention of the territories occupied during the June War (Cleveland 2009: 346-47, 355).

Regarding population, from 1948 to 1951, the Jewish population increased from approximately 650,000 to slightly more than 1.3 million. This was the result of an influx of immigrants, a phenomenon that posed enormous economic, cultural and social problems for the new state. The first wave of immigration included Oriental (Sephardic) Jews from Arab countries and European (Ashkenazi) Jews. Between 1948 and 1956, roughly 450,000 Sephardic Jews arrived in the country. Speaking mainly Arabic, the Sephardic Jews did not integrate into Israeli society as rapidly as did the Ashkenazi Jews<sup>17</sup>. Ignored by the central authorities the Sephardics became an impoverished sector of the Israeli population. The emerging Israeli polity also had to deal with the presence of 160,000 Palestinian Arabs who had remained within the post-1949 borders of the state. The Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip after 1967, increased the number of Israeli Palestinians. Israeli Arabs numbered nearly one million, roughly 20 per cent of the population, by the late 1990s (Cleveland 2009: 349-50 and Fraser 1995: 53).

Concerning religious matter, it was not easy to separate religion from the state, given the historical and cultural background to the formation of Israel. In 1953, the religious courts were recognized as part of the formal judicial system of the state and were awarded exclusive jurisdiction in matters of personal status, marriage, divorce, the confirmation of wills, and the determination of who qualified as a Jew<sup>18</sup>. The fact is that the two main branches of Judaism, Conservative and Reform, had more followers within Israel than the Orthodox community. But their Rabbis were excluded from presiding over several basic religious ceremonies. Thus, for example, the only marriages recognized as legal in Israel were those performed by Orthodox Rabbis.

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<sup>17</sup> They occupied the most prominent positions in the political, judicial, religious and educational hierarchy of the Israeli state. Except Yitzhak Rabin who was born in the mandate Palestine, all of Israel's prime ministers from 1948 to 1992 were born in either Russia or Poland.

<sup>18</sup> Political Zionism was founded on the principle that a Jewish state was to serve as a homeland for all the Jews of the world. This principle was made a reality by the Law of Return (1950), a foundational principle of the new state, which gave every Jew in the world the right to immigrate to Israel. Who is a Jew? Which institution within the state is to authenticate an individual's Jewishness? Is religious law to regulate all of public life? In the contest for the right to decide these matters, the advocates for the application of a greater degree of religious law won several victories.

Similarly, conversions to Judaism within Israel were not recognized unless they were performed within the Orthodox religious framework<sup>19</sup>.

The religious basis of the state was further enforced by measures that granted the non-Jewish communities of Israel—made-up mainly of Muslim and Christian Arabs—the right to follow their own laws in matters of personal status. But this was not the case in questions of communal designation: Israeli identity cards defined the nationality of their holders as either ‘Jewish’ or ‘Arab,’ not as ‘Israeli.’ In this instance, nationality was equated with a specific religion for Jewish Israelis and with a specific ethnicity for Israeli Arabs, an ethnicity that had the negative effect of singling them out as non-Jewish (Cleveland 2009: 350-53).

As for the security and foreign relations, Israel as a nation was surrounded by Arab countries that remained technically at war with it. Ben-Gurion proclaimed that to survive, Israel had to become ‘a nation in arms,’ and he set out to make that goal a reality. Israel based its military programme on a reserve system that permitted a reduction of armed forces during the peaceful period and rapid expansion through full popular mobilization at times of national emergency. All Israelis were enrolled in the armed forces at age eighteen, men for three years and women for two years. Israeli Arabs and women with special family responsibilities received exemptions. To maintain the military reserve in a high state of combat readiness, men remained in the active reserve until their late forties, and women, until their mid-thirties. So pervasive were these practices that parents when asked how many children they had, sometimes replied: “We are raising three soldiers”.

The core principle of Ben Gurion was that every Arab act of aggression against Israel would be met with an armed response well out of proportion to the initial act itself. This policy was regularly implemented in the 1950s and continued in the ensuing decades. With arms from Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union reaching Egypt in the mid-1950s, Israel began to pursue a pro-Western foreign policy with special emphasis on relations with the United States. Ties between the two countries had been close from the very beginning, and they became even more so after the June War of 1967. US policymakers viewed Israel as a potential strategic asset to US

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<sup>19</sup> Although less than a third of Israelis regularly observed Orthodox practices, they decide the most sensitive personal status issues extended to the entire population. For instance, all public institutions, including the military, were required to observe kosher dietary laws which is the monopoly of the Orthodox establishment.

Middle Eastern policy. The Johnson and Nixon administration increased the delivery of sophisticated weapons to Israel and raised the level of US economic and military assistance from \$77 million in 1968 to \$693 million in 1975. The United States hoped that Israel's absolute military superiority would contribute to regional stability by deterring the Arab states from going to war against Israel, and Israel can act as a barrier to Soviet expansionism in the Middle East (Cleveland 2009: 353-54).

In terms of Israeli unauthorized settlement after 1967, it can be said that with the establishment of the State of Israel over 700,000 Palestinian became refugees. Throughout the remainder of 1948 and into 1949, there were incidents of forced expulsion of Arabs by *Haganah*. The creation of the state of Israel replaced the European Jewish refugee problem with a Palestinian refugee problem that has caused great personal suffering and regional political turmoil ever since. In the aftermath of the 1967 Arab-Israel war, the Labour-led Israeli government, unofficially guided by what is known as the 'Allon Plan', aspired to annex the newly conquered Jordan River Valley and East Jerusalem and the surrounding areas. The regions inhabited by Palestinians like Ofra, Kedumim, Elon Moreh, and the Jewish settlements in Hebron were all established by settlers. In 1977, the Likud Party dropped the 'Allon Plan' in favour of the more ambitious 'Drobless Plan'. Both the governments supported the settler's enterprise and provided significant financial assistance ((Cleveland 2009: 268, 271 and Haklai 2007: 722).

The *Gush Emunim* movement (the 'Bloc of the Faithful') emerged in 1974 and *Amana*, its executing arm, were at the forefront of settler mobilisation. Much of the movement's settlement activism took place in outlying territories, heavily inhabited by Palestinians. According to Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics, by the end of Labour's tenure in 1977, approximately 4,500 settlers were residing in the West Bank, about 2,000 of which were in the Jordan Rift Valley. By the early 1990s, the settler population size in the West Bank had increased to slightly more than 100,000. Even after Oslo agreements, it is estimated that more than 120 unauthorized<sup>20</sup> settlements have been constructed since 1996 which was populated by hundreds of families and

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<sup>20</sup> The main distinguishing factor between authorized and unauthorized settlements is the bureaucratic procedure involved in the process of establishment. The Ministerial Committee for Settlement, a government body, decides when and where a settlement is to be built, its intended population size, and all other aspects involved in planning and establishing. In practice, however, throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, there had been many cases in which the committee had retroactively approved settlements already established by the settlers themselves.

singles. By the summer of 2005, some settlements were populated by more than 20 families which had permanent building structures and were connected to electricity and water. Givat Hadagan, for example, was inhabited by about 25 families, practically all of whom were affiliated with the active *hesder yeshiva* (an institution that allows religious soldiers to combine premilitary studies with military service) hosted by the settlement.

Furthermore, unauthorized settlements were characteristically established on hilltops about 1 to 2 kilometers away from existing Gush Emunim settlements. Establishment outside the jurisdiction of existing settlements made them useful for expansion<sup>21</sup>. Human rights organizations have documented various sorts of Israeli ‘vigilante’ behaviour against the local Palestinian population from shooting and physical violence to the uprooting of olive trees and the destruction of property; they have frequently gone unpunished (Haklai 2007: 724-26).

### ***(ii) Palestinian Resistance***

The outbreak of the first Arab-Israel war in 1948 led to a massive refugee crisis that continues to this day. In 1950, 960,000 Palestinians were registered for relief by the United Nations. As a result of natural population growth and the displacements caused by the June War of 1967, the number of refugees rose to 1.3 million in 1968. Denied repatriation to Israel, they were dependent on the opportunities that the host countries were prepared to make available to them. These opportunities varied from country to country. For example, Palestinians registered as refugees in the Gaza Strip were not allowed to other parts of Egypt. In Syria, Iraq, and Jordan, Palestinians were allowed to work and open businesses but only in Jordan, they were granted citizenship. Of all the host countries, Palestinian refugees suffered most in Lebanon (Cleveland 2009: 357 and Knudsen 2009: 51).

The host governments feared that Palestinian political activities would bring Israeli retaliation. They, therefore, viewed the Palestinians with suspicion and prohibited them from forming political organizations. Absorption or resettlement, as it was known in the surrounding Arab countries was not an option, for the refugees

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<sup>21</sup> The relative nearness allowed a new settlement to be presented to state authorities as a new neighborhood of an established settlement rather than an altogether new one. Although new neighborhoods also require permits, such a veil facilitated access to electricity and water.

themselves saw this as a device to prevent them ever returning home (Fraser 1995: 57).

In the period between 1948 and 1967 many Palestinian exiles placed their hopes for repatriation on outside forces. But these were non-Palestinian solutions to the Palestine question<sup>22</sup>. Even the most specifically Palestinian organization of the time was little more than an instrument of the Arab states. The PLO was founded in 1964 under the auspices of the Arab League. Its creation represented an attempt by the Arab states to restrict Palestinian resistance activity and to prevent Palestinian movement from operating independently. The PLO was based in Cairo, where Nasser's security agencies closely scrutinized it. The Arab governments selected Ahmad Shuqayri, close to Nasser, a lawyer from one of Palestine's established notable families, to be chairman of the organization. The majority of the members of the PLO's executive council were like Shuqayri from the traditional Palestinian notability, and they were individuals whose lives as exiles were far from the experiences of the refugee camps (Fraser 1995: 77).

In 1967 June War the Arab States not only failed to liberate Palestine but they lost additional areas of Palestinian territory to Israel. Disillusioned with the Arab leadership groups of Palestinian activists felt that Palestinians themselves would have to assume the responsibility for liberating their homeland. Several small Palestinian organisations emerged. *Al-Fatah* was one of them. Most of *Al-Fatah's* founders were part of the 1948 exodus and were university graduates. Arafat (1929–2004) for example, obtained an engineering degree from Cairo University where he was also instrumental in founding the Palestinian Student Union. *Al-Fatah*, the dominant organization along with other small organizations, formed PLO and in 1969 Arafat was elected chairman of the PLO executive committee<sup>23</sup> and continued until his death in 2004. Indeed, when *Al-Fatah* took over the PLO in 1969, the occasion marked the

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<sup>22</sup> Groups of Palestinian intellectuals in Beirut endorsed various strains of Marxism, Ba'thism, and Pan-Arabism in the belief that the application of these doctrines would benefit the Palestinian cause by regenerating Arab society as a whole. Many others placed their faith in Nasser for the liberation of Palestine.

<sup>23</sup> Besides *Al-Fatah*, there was Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) within the PLO. The PFLP grew out of a pro-Nasser organization that was active in Beirut in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Headed by a Palestinian Orthodox Christian physician, George Habash, the organization was more committed to linking the Palestinian movement to the cause of social revolution in the Arab world at large. The DFLP, under the leadership of Nayif Hawatmah, also an Orthodox Christian. It formulated a platform in which workers and peasants were to be the main participants and beneficiaries of the Palestinian movement.

final transfer of Palestinian leadership from the established notability to a new group of full-time activists (Fraser 1995: 76-77).

The *Al-Fatah* and PLO initially refused to endorse UN Resolution 242. This refusal was based on two considerations: First, the resolution recognized Israel's right to exist and second, it mentioned the Palestinians only as a refugee problem, not as people with a right to a national homeland. Over the years, the reality of Israeli power produced certain modifications in the PLO's position. In 1974, the goal of liberating all of Palestine was dropped in favour of creating a Palestinian state comprising of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This new position implied but did not directly admit Israel's right to exist. Finally, in 1988, the PLO endorsed Resolution 242 and accepted the existence of the state of Israel in its pre-1967 boundaries (Cleveland 2009: 360 and Fraser 1995: 78).

PLO gradually acquired the characteristics of a government in exile during the 1970s, and it developed a complex network of committees and agencies that were engaged in providing social services to Palestinians. The PLO operated schools and medical clinics in the refugee camps and managed a Lebanese-based conglomerate that was involved in a variety of manufacturing enterprises. Also, the Arab world recognized PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinians at the Arab summit meeting held in Rabat in 1974. Later, the same year Arafat addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations, and the PLO was granted observer status in that body. In 1975, France authorized the opening of a PLO information office in Paris and most other Western European governments soon did the same. Austria took this development one step further in 1980 by according the PLO full diplomatic recognition. Despite its diplomatic successes elsewhere, the PLO was unable to obtain any public recognition from the United States until 1988 (Cleveland 2009: 361).

The condition of the Palestinian population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip became vulnerable as they lived under Israeli occupation that controlled the patterns of its existence and shaped its development. The West Bank comprised of 2,270 square miles and was inhabited in late 1967 by an estimated 596,000 Palestinian Arabs. The Gaza Strip was only 140 square miles in size, but crowded with nearly 350,000 Palestinians and the vast majority of them were refugees. Capturing the territories raised a series of questions for Israeli authorities about how to deal with the land and its inhabitants. If they were granted Israeli citizenship, they would dilute the Jewish character of the state and with their higher birth rate, they would become the

majority in the territory. On the other hand, to deny them citizenship was to accept that they were to be treated as a permanently occupied people deprived of basic human rights.

Rather than making clear-cut decisions on these matters, successive Israeli governments from 1967 to 1977 maintained the military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and launched a modest settlement policy designed to establish a Jewish presence in strategically important border areas along the Jordan River. The settlement activities expanded with the victory of the Likud bloc in 1977. For instance, when Menachem Begin assumed office there were 24 settlements inhabited by 3,200 persons and at his resignation six years later (1983) the number of settlements had increased to 106 and the number of settlers to 28,400<sup>24</sup>. The settlement policy adopted after 1977 was intended to break up and isolate areas where the Arab population was heavily concentrated. A militant religious organization pioneered this tactic called *Gush Emunim* (the Bloc of the Faithful), which began to establish illegal settlements on Arab-owned land in the mid-1970s. The Begin government endorsed *Gush Emunim's* actions and encouraged it and other groups to settle in predominantly Arab centers.

The land needed for the settlements was acquired in a variety of ways. The military administration that governed the occupied territories used its authority to appropriate private Arab land for security purposes. In 1980, the Begin government declared that unregistered and uncultivated land would be classified as state land. Under this system, Israel acquired 500,000 acres on the West Bank slightly more than 40 per cent of the total land area, and it was possible due to confused nature of West Bank land tenure system that existed in the wake of Ottoman, British and Jordanian rule. 30 per cent of the Gaza Strip was also transferred to Israeli state ownership by the early 1980s (Cleveland 2009: 364-65).

The economic component of Begin's annexationist strategy included hiring Palestinian labours from the territories to work in the construction industry in Israel at low wages. At the same time, the Israeli authorities imposed measures to prevent the territories from achieving their own independent economic development. For

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<sup>24</sup> In order to encourage Israelis to move to the occupied territories, the Begin government introduced a suburban settlement policy designed to appeal to commuters from Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Comfortable, low-cost housing was built to lure to the West Bank white-collar workers who might not be attracted to agricultural settlements.

example, import duties were levied on certain agricultural products brought into Israel from the West Bank, but Israeli growers faced no such barriers for their produce in the territories (Pappe 2004: 256-57).

To gain political control of the Palestinians under occupation, the Israeli military administration imprisoned or deported hundreds of activists and tried to break the spirit of those who remained. Collective punishment, house arrest, and the closure of business establishments were, but a few of the sentences meted out to the Arab population. The net effect of the Israeli occupation was the simultaneous demoralization and radicalization of the Arab inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. They felt resistance as the only alternative to annexation. In these circumstances, they turned to the one external body: the PLO. By the late 1970s, links had been forged between the PLO and the inhabitants of the occupied territories, and Arafat had become accepted as the spokesman for the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza Strip as well as of the refugees and exiles in the Arab countries.

### ***(iii) UN Peace-keeping and Canada***

In the early years of the Cold War, while the United States and the Soviet Union used their extraordinary powers to define their alliances and engaged in a nuclear arms build-up, Canada found itself in the position of being one of the former's most dedicated allies. At the same time, Canadians were concerned about maintaining their sovereignty. The apparent solution to this dilemma in the late 1940s and 1950s was to cultivate a middle power status. Lester Pearson, a career diplomat, embodied the middle power notion and became one of the chief architects of Canadian foreign policy in the early Cold War years (Holmes 1963: 138 and W. See 2011: 171).

It denied the validity of a simple division between great and small powers. There should be recognition of the existence of 'middle powers', those which were already making important contributions to the War and could similarly contribute to the maintenance of peace. It was not claimed or desired that Canada should compete for the lead with the great powers but rather that its voice should be heard in proportion to a capacity proven in the war and anticipated for the post-war period<sup>25</sup> (Bell 2007:13 and Canada Year Book 1967: 453).

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<sup>25</sup> Michael Molloy, former Canadian Ambassador to Jordan, stresses that while Canada may not be a superpower, there are numerous issues, large and small (e.g. landmines, human security), where

The country's middle power dilemma was profoundly tested in the Korean War. Troops from North Korea invaded South Korea in an attempt to unify the divided country in June 1950. A legacy of the Second World War, with the Soviet Union exerting influence in North Korea and the United States establishing a strategic alliance with South Korea, the conflict became a test of Canada's ideals and foreign policy aspirations (Andrew 1993: 33).

It was the 'mediatory' role that the middle power came to specialize in and was credited and trusted for by the big and smaller powers both. Suez crisis of 1956 had offered an opportunity to showcase its diplomatic capability and lead the super powers in the quest for establishing peace in the Middle East. The evolution of peace-keeping role under UN banner had a great transformative effect not only on Canadian foreign policy in subsequent years but on international relations as a whole during the Cold War period. In fact, for most of the period since 1956, Canadian foreign policy came to be associated with UN peace-keeping; its military budgets and size of the armed forces all came to be guided by the commitment to international peace-keeping.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs in the preface of his Departments report in 1964 wrote: "Canada's position in the world is that of a middle power. This involves some limitations upon the conduct of Canadian foreign policy. But it also provides Canada with opportunities for action...Canada's activities in the peace-keeping field...are a good illustration of what I have in mind. Canada has participated in every peace-keeping operation mounted by the United Nations since 1948" (Canada Year Book 1967: 461).

By the time, the peace-keeping idea became a standard feature of the Canadian middle power ideal. In 1954, Canada provided a chief of staff and a group of staff officers for the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation in Palestine. In 1956, Canada took the lead in proposing and also in staffing the first United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF). Canadians participated in similar operations in Kashmir, Lebanon and Congo. The performance of these essential tasks gave a certain style to Canadian diplomacy. By 1967, in over thirty countries around the world, including Congo, Cyprus, Cambodia and Haiti, Canada contributed to peace-keeping

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Canada has managed to have a profound impact in the face of superpower indifference or even opposition.

missions<sup>26</sup>. Canadians display a great deal of pride in this effort as evidenced by the peace-keeping monument near the National Gallery in Ottawa (W. See 2011: 173, Kirton 2007: 378 and Canada Year Book 1967: 462).

Pearson wanted to maintain Canada's visibility in the UN and NATO. Diplomats presented Canada as a fair-minded middle power, one with a special relationship with the United States but not under its control. Trudeau's Liberal governments from 1968 to 1979 and from 1980 to 1984 were heavily stamped by his political philosophy and anti Cold War perspective. In many ways, Trudeau's foreign policy represented a profound rejection of some of the Cold War's most cherished guiding principles. While most of his counterparts in the United States and Western Europe remained devoted to blocking Soviet expansion and as the United States became increasingly mired in the Vietnam War, Trudeau's government deliberately sought to weaken Canada's economic and cultural attachments to the Americans. The Liberals in 1970 published a series of pamphlets for public distribution called 'Foreign Policy for Canadians'. Trudeau sought a foreign policy more narrowly focused on Canadian national interests. He believed in assigning greater priority to their continent while downgrading their commitments to NATO. As NATO member, Canada decreased its already modest military presence in Europe by about half. Trudeau's priorities were to protect Canadian sovereignty rather than to participate aggressively in the Cold War containment of the Soviet bloc (Chapnick 2011: 25-26 and Hampson 2010: 9).

Bell (2007) mentions that Canada's role in Middle East peace-keeping has diminished over time. In the past, Canada's presence among peace-keeping forces in the Middle East region was sizable. During the 1990s, when Israel learned of Canada's decision to withdraw its air force unit from the MFO (the MFO constitutes the force and observers monitoring compliance with the military annex of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel ratified in 1979) and Israel asked the Canadian government to reconsider. The Canadian government upheld its decision, citing budgetary constraints. According to MFO sources (2007), Canada had 29 soldiers stationed between Egypt and Israel in the framework of the MFO.

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<sup>26</sup> Since 1988 Canadians have served with new operations in Afghanistan (UNGOMAP), Iran/Iraq (UNIIMOG), Namibia (UNTAG), Central America (ONUCA), El Salvador (ONUSAL), Iraq/Kuwait (UNIKOM), Western Sahara (MINURSO), Cambodia (UNAMIC), and later Yugoslavia.

The Canadian battalion in the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) between Syria and Israel was withdrawn in 2006. In that case also, Israel asked the Canadian government to reconsider its decision. Again, the response was negative, this time citing the military commitment in Afghanistan as an explanation. There has been no Canadian presence in the forces stationed in the south of Lebanon next to the Israeli border. These actions lead one to believe that Canada's diminishing role in peacekeeping efforts in the region runs contrary to the wish of Canadian policy makers to see Canada play an active role in the region (Bell 2007: 17).

Near a decade-long rule of the Conservative Harper government brought some significant changes in the Canadian foreign policy especially in terms of relations with Israel. Harper in his three terms as prime minister between 2006 and 2015, more so after the 2011 elections that gave him a parliamentary majority, came strongly in defence of Israel. Harper saw Canada not as a middle but as the principal power in international relations. He abandoned Liberal Internationalist values and norms of foreign policy and came to champion a robust, militaristic foreign policy. He came to see Canada as a leading light in the US-led 'Anglosphere'; a militarily strong Canada in the war against international terrorism. He came to eulogize Canadian valour and sacrifices during the two world wars rather than to glorify Canada's contribution to the international system in the form of UN peace-keeping (Funk 2007: 26).

Ismael (1973:12) remarks that, during the decades immediately following the Second World War, Canada "had, in essence, no Middle East policy beyond a desire for peace and balance"; this policy "evolved as a reaction to the changing relations among its allies and associates rather than in response to the situation in the Middle East." With the rise of U.S. influence in the region and the decline of European powers such as England and France, Canada's room to manoeuvre as a mediating middle power narrowed. Canadian policy makers began to take greater interest in social and economic development, trade ties and humanitarian affairs while seeking a low-profile niche in efforts to advance regional peacemaking through 'quiet' advocacy of an enduring settlement to the Palestine-Israel conflict. Canada willingly participated in the first Gulf War of 1991, at least partially on the basis of geopolitical expediency, but in 2003 abstained from the second Gulf War and the "coalition of the willing" for principled as well as pragmatic reasons.

Many advocates of the neo-conservative position are seeking to reframe Canadian Middle East policy in relation to a "clash of civilizations" or "struggle for

democracy” thesis. Accordingly, they argue that current Canadian policies should accord preferential status to Israel as a country with western roots and a competitive electoral process. To establish the credibility of this position, they point to the decisive role played by Canadian diplomats including Lester Pearson himself, in the United Nations partition plan of 1947. In contrast, those who argue that Canada should act as an honest broker between Israelis and Arabs – an idea that has come to be associated with Liberal Internationalism – note that, in addition to its early support for the creation of Israel, Canada was out in front in international efforts to support refugees through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Pearson’s contribution to preventing the escalation of the 1956 Suez crisis is itself a decisive event not only in the formulation of Canada’s traditional foreign policy vision but also in the formation of modern Canada’s national identity (Funk 2007: 28-29).

### **Summary and Conclusion**

This chapter reflected on Canada’s support to UNSC resolution on the first Arab-Israel war of 1948 and Armistice agreements of 1949. The first Arab-Israel war was important in the international scenario, as it was the first war after the creation of the state of Israel. The very existence of Israel was in threat. It was the question of survival of Israel; the organized and heavily equipped Israeli army defeated all the neighbouring Arab states. Through the UN intervention the war came to a halt and Armistice agreements were signed between Israel and its four Arab neighbours. These agreements were a temporary relief and were not an agreement of final peace. The next, Suez crisis of 1956 was also very much important event where all the major powers of the world got involved. Following the nationalisation of Suez Canal by Egyptian President Nasser, Israel along with France and UK attacked Egypt which was criticized by US and thus a conflict emerged within western imperialism. Canada fell in, to be or not to be, situation. It was Pearson’s attempt to resolve the conflict by proposing and developing the idea of UN peace-keeping force, for which he was awarded Nobel peace prize in 1957.

It can be pointed out that Israel was an expansionist state, which fought war in 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973, in order to get more territory for Jews settlement. Canada supported Israel during the Arab-Israel wars. The chapter showed that Canada was

pro-Israel from 1947 to the mid-1980s. It was only after the 1973 Arab oil embargo and after the 1979 peace treaty between Israel and Egypt that Canadian attitude began to shift. While discussing Canada's role in the Arab-Israel conflict, geostrategic importance of Israel, the miserable life of the Palestinians under Israeli occupation and their resistance against Israel has been discussed in this Chapter. After discussing Canada's role in the Arab-Israel wars, next chapter discusses the Arab-Israel peace process in general and Canada's role in it, in particular, that includes Canada's role in RWG and Track II initiatives.

### **CHAPTER - III**

#### **CANADA AND THE ARAB-ISRAEL PEACE PROCESS**

The previous two Chapters dealt with several aspects of Canada's involvement in the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. Canada served in the United Nations Special Commission on Palestine (UNSCOP) in 1947 that ultimately led to the creation of State of Israel. Canada also became involved in the major Arab-Israel conflicts specially during the Suez Crisis in 1956 when Lester Pearson took an important part in the negotiations that led to the establishment of United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF). Lester Pearson was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his yeoman services during the Suez crisis. A multilateralist Canada has been an enthusiastic supporter of the United Nations, and ever since participated in every United Nations peace-keeping forces as a part of middle power ideal of its foreign policy.

The previous Chapters also discussed Canada's support to the 1967 Arab-Israel war, when Israel annexed West Bank, Gaza, Sinai and Golan Heights and it was humiliation for the Arabs. It was the 1973 Arab oil embargo and the 1979 peace treaty between Israel and Egypt that Canadian attitude began to change. The first Egypt-Israel Treaty of 1979 was important because Egypt was the first Arab country that recognized the State of Israel. The present Chapter begins with this treaty of 1979, after a brief discussion on Armistice agreements of 1949, which was signed between Israel and its four Arab neighbour states, namely, Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Then the Chapter discusses the Arab-Israel peace process of the 1990s like the Oslo Accords, where Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) signed an agreement with Israel. It was historic because for the first time PLO recognized the state of Israel but in its pre-1967 existential form. Canada was ambivalent regarding PLO but gradually changed its mind regarding this. Does Canada have particular strengths or weakness to bring the Arab-Israel peace process? Is there any particular Canada's role in this process? If judged only on these questions, one could say that its direct contribution was limited. But Canada's role in the Refugee Working Group (RWG) indicates that Canada in one way or other was involved in the Palestine-Israel peace process. Because the Palestinian refugees are the direct product of the Palestine-Israel conflict in particular and Arab-Israel conflict in general and RWG was emerged as a part of the broad Middle East Peace Process (MEPP).

Another significant issue the present Chapter highlights is Canada's 'Track II Initiative'. A small group of Canadian officials and academics met in 1997 and decided that the discussion of refugee policy issues would be in quiet and out of the limelight discussions. These 'Track II' activities collectively became known as the 'Ottawa Process'. During the period from 1995 to 2000 Canada supported a very broad and extensive range of research and dialogue projects on the refugee issue whether through IDRC, CIDA or dialogue funds controlled by Canadian diplomatic missions in the region.

The Chapter also analyses the modest shift in Canadian policy that occurred between Liberal Prime Ministers Chretien and Martin and the much larger tilt that took place under Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper. This was evident in his handling of the Israel-Lebanon war in the summer of 2006 when Canada supported Israel and also in January 2006, with the electoral victory of *Hamas* in Palestinian Legislative Council elections, Canada was one of the first countries to cut its aid towards Palestine Authority. Later Canada's aid projects were restructured or some aid to Gaza continued through channels, not under *Hamas* control.

The Chapter is divided into seven sections. The major sections are: Arab-Israel Peace Treaties; Palestine-Israel peace process in the 1990s and Canada's role in it especially in RWG as well as Canada's 'Track II' initiative and Canada's response in the Arab-Israel peace process in late 1990s and 2000s etc.

### **Arab-Israel Peace Treaty, 1979**

Any attempt to explain the Arab-Israel peace process it is necessary to consider the legacy of the Arab-Israel conflict. The first Arab-Israel war began in May 1948 and ended in 1949 with the signing of Armistice Agreements between Israel and its four Arab neighbours; Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria, after UN-mediated negotiations. The Palestinians, the majority of whom were expelled from or fled the country, were not a party to these accords. Thus, a precedent was set by which contended issues between Arabs and Israelis are settled on a state-to-state basis. But the accords did not lead to peace treaties that were attained, at least in part, only after three additional rounds of violence and war.

In 1979, the first peace treaty was signed between Egypt and Israel under the auspices of the USA. Faced with mounting domestic unrest and poor economy,

President Anwar Sadat hoped to revive the economic fortunes of Egypt through peace with Israel. Negotiations were difficult by the fact that Sadat and the newly elected Israeli Prime Minister, Menachem Begin<sup>1</sup>, had different ideas on what they ought to be discussing. Sadat wanted Egypt-Israel bilateral relations as well as to get agreement on a comprehensive plan for the Middle East peace that would include a resolution of the Palestinian issue. Prime Minister Begin had no intention of relinquishing Israel's hold on the West Bank and Gaza Strip and, therefore, sought to confine the discussions to Egypt-Israel bilateral matters. Finally, through US mediation, three heads of states signed the Camp David Accords on 17 September 1978.

The Camp David Accord entitled "A Framework for Peace in the Middle East" endorsed UN Resolution 242 as the basis for a durable and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israel conflict. In spelling out the future status of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, the framework agreement proposed a staged plan for the achievement of Palestinian autonomy over a period of five years. However, the proposal was open-ended and based on assumptions that never materialized. Next year, on 26 March 1979, Sadat and Begin signed a formal Egyptian-Israeli treaty in Washington. The two countries exchanged ambassadors, and Israel began its staged withdrawal from Sinai, an operation that was completed in 1982. Begin had managed to exchange Sinai for retaining control of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Sadat and Begin shared the Nobel Peace Prize for this.

Egypt paid a high price in inter-Arab relations for its treaty with Israel. It was expelled from the Arab League and League headquarters were transferred from Cairo to Tunis<sup>2</sup>. All the Arab states, with the exceptions of Oman and Sudan, broke diplomatic relations; also, the oil-producing states canceled their subsidies, making

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<sup>1</sup> Menachem Begin was founder of Likud Party, and was the leader of the Zionist militant group *Irgun*. Begin authorized the invasion of Lebanon in 1982 to fight PLO there. As the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps massacre, shocked world public opinion and IDF forces remained mired in Lebanon, the public pressure mounted on Begin. Depressed by the death of his wife Aliza in November 1982, finally he resigned in October 1983.

<sup>2</sup> The Arab League (officially, the League of Arab States) was formed in 1945. The founder members were the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan (then Transjordan), Lebanon, Iraq, Syria and Yemen. The purpose of the League was to foster Arab co-operation and unity. Since its formation, another 15 Arab states have joined the League. In all, the League has 22 members, although Syria's participation has been suspended since November 2011 as a consequence of government repression during the ongoing uprising and civil war. Egypt was expelled from the League in 1979, following its bi-lateral peace agreement with Israel. After ten years of isolation, Egypt was re-admitted to the League in 1989. <http://www.saudinf.com/main/k41.htm>, accessed on 19.05.2014.

Egypt economically dependent on the West, especially the United States. Once the driving force behind the movement for Arab unity, Egypt was now isolated from the Arab world.

Sadat's political gamble of recognising Israel also distanced him from the Egyptian people. The treaty with Israel became a further source of discontent, and facilitated the rise of the fundamentalist opposition movements. The Muslim Brotherhood achieved considerable success in recruiting university students and graduates. Other organizations like *Al-Jihad* (Sacred Struggle) and *Al-Takfir wa al-Hijrah* (Excommunication and Emigration) rejected the Sadat regime as impious and claimed that it was an Islamic duty to work for its overthrow and replacement by a government committed to the restoration of the Shariah. Sadat recognized the danger, and in September 1981, he ordered the arrest and imprisonment of over 1,000 individuals suspected of plotting against his regime. On 6 October 1981, Sadat was assassinated<sup>3</sup> by the assassins who were affiliated with *Al-Jihad*. Sadat was succeeded by his vice president Husni Mubarak (Cleveland 2009: 378, 382).

### **Canada and the Israeli Invasion of Lebanon, 1982 and the First *Intifada*, 1987**

The next important treaty was signed between Israel and PLO in 1993, popularly known as Oslo I. In the meantime, the emergence of PLO and the Lebanese civil war, Israeli invasion in Lebanon and the Palestinian uprising became important aspects of Arab-Israel conflict.

Since its birth in 1964 and the rise of Yasir Arafat to the chairmanship in 1969, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) had emerged as the main representative of the Palestinian people. Following the wars of 1967 and 1973 war, the Palestinian leadership and people doubted the capabilities of the Arab countries to defend their rights. It was the context in which PLO came to be recognized as the principal party to the Arab-Israel conflict by the Arabs and rest of the world. When the UN formally granted recognition to the PLO on 23 November 1974, Canada was firmly opposed because this status "had hitherto been accorded only to sovereign

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<sup>3</sup> When Sadat reviewed a military parade held to celebrate the eighth anniversary of the crossing, one of the vehicles in the long line of US-made carriers paused in front of the reviewing stand, the hero of the crossing himself stood to salute its occupants. They returned his gesture with a hail of gunfire.

states or associations of sovereign states”. Several subsequent events, however, clearly influenced Canada’s position on the PLO. However, the presence of PLO as well as the presence of Palestinians in Lebanon caused the Lebanese civil war (Ismael 1994: 44).

Historically, the Palestinians were external to the land they hoped to liberate. They, therefore, required a base of operations in one of the Arab states bordering Israel. Jordan became the suitable place for them which later posed a direct challenge to King Husayn. By 1970, the Palestinian commandos were operating independently of the King’s authority, establishing their own administrative networks in the refugee camps and conducting raids into Israel that provoked the usual Israeli reprisals. The tension reached the breaking point in September when the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) hijacked four civilian airliners and landed three of them in a portion of Jordan that it defined as “liberated territory”. On 15 September 1970 King Husayn ordered the army to break the power of the Palestinian guerrillas and thus began the ten-day carnage known as Black September. Making no distinction between civilians and armed guerrillas, the Jordanian troops bombarded the refugee camps in and around Amman. When a ceasefire was finally arranged on 25 September, more than 3,000 Palestinians had been killed

Following the Black September, the PLO transferred its organizational base to Lebanon. Almost 300,000 Palestinian refugees who were already present in that country joined them. The Palestinians presence in Lebanon became one of the main factors in various civil wars and external interventions in Lebanon. The majority of them lived in camps in southern Lebanon. The PLO commando’s freedom to undertake military operations against Israel was based on a 1969 agreement in which the Lebanese government turned over the supervision of the refugee camps to the PLO in exchange for the PLO’s pledge to obtain the government’s consent for any armed incursions it might make. This latter restriction went largely unheeded, and from 1970 onward, the cycle of Palestinian raids into Israel and Israeli retaliation in force repeated itself countless times. The Israeli bombing attacks affected not only the Palestinians but also the Shia villagers of southern Lebanon, thousands of whom left their homes and migrated to the suburbs of Beirut, embittered at government that was unable to protect them from either Palestinians or Israelis.

The social and economic grievances of Lebanon Muslims were compounded by the sectarian arrangements that continued to favour the country’s Christians.

Kamal Jumblatt, the Druze community leader, recognized that the Shia Muslim community is largest single religious grouping in the country. In 1969 Jumblatt forged a coalition of discontented Muslims into a front known as the Lebanese National Movement. Standing in direct opposition to Jumblatt's National Movement and the Palestinian presence in Lebanon was the Christian Maronite political leader, Pierre Gemayel, who attacked the Palestinian refugee camp of Tal al-Zaatar located in the suburbs of Beirut in January 1976. This event drew the PLO back into the conflict. In May 1976, President Hafiz Al-Asad of Syria sent his army into Lebanon to rescue the Christian militias. Whatever Al-Asad's motives may have been for supporting the Maronite faction, Syria's invasion of Lebanon escalated the fighting and expanded the level of destruction (Cleveland 2009: 384-85).

On 18 October 1976, Syria and the PLO accepted a ceasefire drawn up by Arab heads of state, and the worst of the fighting came to a halt<sup>4</sup>. By 1977, Kamal Jumblatt was assassinated. The ceasefire agreement allowed the PLO to retain the same status it had enjoyed before the war.

The situation in Lebanon invited Israel's attention; weakness of the Lebanese government meant that its authority scarcely extended Beirut. PLO assumed a degree of administrative autonomy in the southern Lebanon, close to Israeli border. Israeli government wished to destroy this area. For this, in 1978, 25,000 Israeli troops invaded Lebanon as far north as the Litani River. The operation failed to dislodge the PLO and this effort came to halt with the intervention of the United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Following a series of PLO mortar and rocket attacks in the Galilee sector of northern Israel, Israel launched a huge invasion on 6 June 1982. Called "Peace for Galilee", Israel, through the summer of 1982, massively attacked West Beirut, the area of PLO concentration, subjecting it intense air, sea, and land bombardments that caused heavy casualties among the predominantly civilian population.

Finally, with international efforts an agreement was signed on 18 August 1982 which called for a multinational force headed by France and the United States to supervise the evacuation of the PLO fighters; it also provided guarantees for the safety of the Palestinian civilians who would be left behind. By 1 September, the

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<sup>4</sup> The terms of the agreement provided stationing in Lebanon of an Arab deterrent force to maintain law and order. In reality, the force was composed almost exclusively of Syrian troops. It was continued under al-Asad's successor into the early 2000s.

evacuation was completed, and the US forces were withdrawn. When in late August 1982, Bashir Gemayel was chosen as Lebanon's president, it appeared that the Israeli government had achieved its objectives. Two weeks after his election, Gemayel was assassinated, and in the wake of the assassination, Israel violated the evacuation agreement by sending its army into West Beirut. Instead of protecting the civilians as it claimed it was doing, the Israeli military allowed units of the Phalange to enter the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila and to massacre over 1,000 men, women, and children who had been left unprotected by the PLO evacuation.

The genocide at Sabra and Shatila produced an international outcry against the entire Lebanese operation and a wave of revulsion within Israel; it also showed US and France as no guarantors of civilian safety. Sections of the Israeli population protested against the invasion at a time when the survival of the state of Israel was not threatened. In response to the criticism, the government created a board of inquiry; the Kahan Commission, which held Israeli officials indirectly responsible for the genocide in Sabra and Shatila. Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon was forced to resign, and Menachem Begin resigned the prime ministership in 1983. In 1983, Israel decided to get out of Lebanon territory, but they remained there till 2000.

Arab League brought together various Lebanon's politicians and factions in the Saudi Arabian town of Taif in 1989. By reducing the authority of the Maronite president in favour of the Muslim prime minister, the Taif Accord recognized the changed composition of the population. Salim al-Huss was declared as the legitimate government of Lebanon<sup>5</sup>. The problem continued in Lebanon as the two major Shia militias, Amal and Hezbollah, would not voluntarily turn in their weapons. Hezbollah, supported by Iran, called for the establishment of an Islamic state in Lebanon. The effect of the Lebanon war on the PLO was profound. The Organization moved its headquarters to Tunis – some 2,000 miles (3,200 km) away from the territories it sought to liberate (Cleveland 2009: 387-92).

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<sup>5</sup> The term of President Amin Gemayel, brother of murdered Bashir Gemayel, expired in September 1988. Just before leaving office, he appointed Michel Aoun, a Maronite Christian, as acting Prime Minister. The existence of two competing governments, one headed by a Maronite Christian, Aoun, the other by a Sunni Muslim, al-Huss, threatened to create the permanent division of Lebanon. While the world's attention was focused on the October 1990 crisis created by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, Syrian air and ground forces launched an all-out attack on Aoun's positions. Aoun escaped to asylum in the French embassy.

As for Canada, it sought to evolve its responses to the rapidly evolving complex situation in Lebanon. On 8 June 1982, the House of Commons passed a motion which called for an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Israeli military forces from Lebanon. On 9 June, Prime Minister Eliot Pierre Trudeau wrote a strong letter of protest on the Lebanon war to Israeli Prime Minister Begin: "I am dismayed by the subsequent escalation of the conflict represented by the massive movement of Israeli forces in Lebanon. Great human suffering is being caused and rapid northward expansion of Israeli operations is posing an increasing risk of a wider war". Under the Trudeau Government, it had become fairly common for mid-level diplomats to maintain contacts with the PLO at a time when US diplomats were not allowed to do so. Canada's voting record at the UN, which on Middle East issues had frequently been in the company of the US and Israel, increasingly saw Canada vote with European partners such as Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden and Norway. In short, in the late 1980s and 1990s, Canada's posture and the position was not all that which would have pleased Israel; nor it was which the Palestinians or other Arabs might have wished. Nevertheless, Canada remained one of Israel's supporters, during the first *Intifada* that started in 1987 (Hibbard 2012: 5-6 and Milner 1991: 7).

During the decade following the invasion of Lebanon in 1982, Israeli experienced fragmentation in its polity. In the elections of 1984 and 1988, numerous small parties at both extremes of the political spectrum attracted enough voters to deny the two main political groupings, Labour and the Likud, parliamentary majority. The two parties were therefore forced to govern together in what was called a National Unity government but was in reality a situation of political paralysis. The Labour Party favoured territorial compromise, whereas Likud was adamantly opposed to relinquishing any portion of the Gaza Strip or the West Bank. Likud's position was represented by its leader Yitzhak Shamir<sup>6</sup>, who served as Israel's prime minister from 1986 to 1992. Like his Likud predecessor Menachem Begin, he, as prime minister, intensified the construction of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and committed the government to a policy of incorporating the territories into Israel.

Administrative detention, a practice that permitted Palestinians to be arrested without a warrant and held for up to six months without being charged, was employed

with greater frequency. Palestinians were required to carry identity cards and pay special taxes; they had to overcome a maze of bureaucratic obstacles and security checks to obtain the most basic facilities and permits. They were arrested, imprisoned, deported and tortured at the slightest suspicion of political activism.

In this background, the Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza Strip participated in a mass uprising, which came to be known as the first *Intifada*, to bring an end to the Israeli occupation and establish an independent Palestinian state. *Intifada* endured for nearly five years and forced Israel to recognise the impact of occupation on the Palestinians. The mass uprising began in Gaza on 9 December 1987, but within a few days, the West Bank was also engulfed in the uprising, as thousands of demonstrators carrying stones and gasoline bombs confronted the Israeli armed forces. The *Intifada* soon broadened to include all strata of Palestinian society, and underground local leadership, called the Unified National Leadership (UNL) which was composed of local factions of the PLO, emerged. Beginning in January 1988, the UNL demanded that Israel stops building settlements and confiscating Arab lands and that it cancel the special taxes and restrictions that applied only to Palestinians. In the first three years of the uprising, Palestinians engaged in a campaign of civil disobedience that included general strikes, shop closures and a refusal to pay taxes. In addition, the Palestinians attempted to make the Gaza Strip and the West Bank economically self-sufficient by boycotting Israeli goods and relying as much as possible on homegrown produce and locally manufactured goods.

By early 1990s, one could see *Intifada* move from a broad civil disobedience movement to one resorting to violence such as shooting and killing not only of Israelis but also of Palestinians who were suspected of being collaborators. Underground tribunals sentenced dozens of suspected collaborators to death. As the uprising gained momentum, new organizations formed as rivals of the UNL, the most significant of which was the Islamic Resistance Movement, known widely by its Arabic acronym, *Hamas*, which came into existence in 1988.

*Hamas* leadership was dominated by young, university-educated individuals, mainly of refugee camp origin, who represented a new, socially mobilized stratum of Palestinian society. In contrast to the PLO, *Hamas* framed its programme in Islamic terms. In its charter of 1988, *Hamas* referred to itself as a Palestinian resistance

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<sup>6</sup> Born in Poland, Shamir followed Jabotinsky's maximalist version of Zionism. He joined the *Irgun* in

movement that takes Islam as a way of life. The land of Palestine, no part could be abandoned or conceded. This definition made it impossible for *Hamas* to accept the two-state solution gradually endorsed by the PLO. Working through such grassroots organizations as charitable societies, Islamic and secular educational institutions and a network of mosques under its control, *Hamas* emerged in the early 1990s as a viable political alternative to the local PLO. Its support base originally centered in Gaza but expanded to the West Bank during the later part of the decade. The Israeli government made a determined effort to crush the uprising. The violence of the youthful stone throwers was met by the violence of the well-armed Israeli military. The military also employed collective punishment on a broad scale, demolishing the homes of suspected stone-throwers, placing entire villages under twenty-four-hour curfew for several days at a time, cutting off water and electricity and closing the West Bank schools and universities. To undermine the Palestinian's efforts to gain economic self-sufficiency, Israeli troops and settlers uprooted fruit and olive trees and destroyed private vegetable gardens. However, Israel's use of collective punishment only caused participation in the *Intifada* to increase.

Although the *Intifada* continued sporadically until 1992 and by the end of this, the uprising had cost the lives of an estimated 1,025 Palestinians including 250 alleged collaborators and 56 Israelis. More than 37,000 Arabs had been wounded and between 35,000 and 40,000 arrested. It was at this point in the late 1990s that the intensity of the uprising began to diminish (Cleveland 2009: 476 and Barak 2005: 722).

*Intifada* had began as a purely local response to unbearable inhuman conditions; however once it began, the links were forged with the PLO. Yasir Arafat recognised that to have an independent Palestinian state to come into existence, Israel would have to stop annexing the occupied territories and only United States can persuade Israel stop it. However, the United States would not exercise its influence in this matter until the PLO recognised the state of Israel. In this context, in 1988 Arafat made a historic announcement that contained the following major points: the PLO accepted Israel's right to exist as a State; the PLO agreed that UN Resolutions 242 and 338 should serve as the basis for an international peace conference; the PLO proclaimed an independent Palestinian State in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with

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1937 and later became one of the leaders of the *Lehi*.

East Jerusalem as its capital. Arafat's programme represented the so-called two-state compromise: the PLO dropped its earlier insistence that all of Palestine should be liberated and acknowledged Israel's right to exist but within its pre-1967 borders.

Arafat's compromise ushered in a series of US-PLO negotiations conducted through the US embassy in Tunis. But this phase of US-PLO relations collapsed completely when a splinter group within the PLO tried to mount a raid into Israel and thus calling into question the sincerity of Arafat's renunciation of terrorism. US President George W. Bush, bowing to domestic pressure from Israel's supporters, broke off negotiations with the PLO in 1990. Arafat had recognized Israel's right to exist without receiving any concessions in return. Abandoned by Washington in the summer of 1990, Arafat made the fateful decision to associate PLO with the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein.

On 2 August 1990 the armed forces of Iraq invaded Kuwait; six days later, the Iraqi government announced that Kuwait had been annexed as the nineteenth province of Iraq. These actions precipitated an international crisis that culminated in a US-led war against Iraq in January and February 1991. The immediate effects of that war were strikingly evident: the devastation of Iraq, the creation of a refugee problem of momentous proportions, and the emergence of the United States as an uncontested superpower in the Middle East (Cleveland 2009: 473,477-79).

Egypt's decision to join the US-led coalition brought about the expulsion and flight of over 300,000 Egyptian workers from Iraq; and when Yemen chose not to endorse the coalition, Saudi Arabia expelled 800,000 Yemeni workers from the Kingdom. Kuwait had been home to a relatively prosperous Palestinian community numbering around 400,000; by the time the war was over, 350,000 Palestinians had fled Kuwait, and those who remained were subject to harassment for allegedly cooperating with the Iraqi occupiers. As a result, several thousand uprooted Palestinians were once again forced to dwell in UN-sponsored refugee camps, mostly in Jordan, West Bank and Gaza. After this strategic failure Arafat made another attempt in the Palestine-Israel peace process which resulted in the signing of Oslo agreement in 1993.

## Peace Process: Oslo I and Oslo II

The effect of Palestinian *Intifada* on Israeli society, the post-Cold War US unilateralism, and election of a Labour government in Israel formed part of a series of interconnected developments that contributed to a major breakthrough in Palestine-Israel conflict. Lining up Arab support behind its first Gulf War, Washington had promised its Arab partners that it would address the issue of the Arab-Israel conflict once the war with Iraq was over. Moreover, the logic of the liberation of Kuwait that people had the right to live free from occupation offered a compelling reason to the sole super power to seek a settlement of the Palestine-Israel question. The proposed peace conference was jointly sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union. The historic gathering opened in Madrid on 30 October 1991. It brought together for the first time, representatives from Israel, the Palestinian community and the neighbouring Arab states that had not yet recognised Israel's right to exist, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, to discuss peace. The Israeli and Palestinian spokespersons engaged in face-to-face meetings. Palestinian delegation was composed of 'insiders' i.e. who lived and worked in the Occupied Territories (Cleveland 2009: 500 and Barak 2005: 722).

Between December 1991 and spring of 1993, the Arab and Israeli delegations met several times in Moscow and Washington. In the meantime, in June 1992 Israeli election, Labour Party got the majority and Yitzhak Rabin became the first Israeli prime minister to be born in Palestine. Yasir Arafat's tilt towards Iraq cost the PLO heavily. In the Gaza Strip, the PLO's claim to political primacy came under renewed challenge from *Hamas*. So the PLO leaders, fearful of being overtaken by the appeal of *Hamas*, explored negotiations with Israel as a way of retaining their dominance (Cleveland 2009: 501-03).

At this juncture, the Norwegian government volunteered to provide facilities for secret talks and both Israel and PLO agreed to participate at Oslo. The Norway meeting presented an opportunity to both and in late summer of 1993, the sudden disclosure of a secret agreement reached between representatives of the Israeli government and the PLO took the world by surprise. It was an astounding document, stunning both for its unexpectedness and its contents. The agreement provided for mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO and laid the foundations for

Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip<sup>7</sup>. (i) The first agreement was a document of mutual recognition in which Israel recognised the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and in return, the PLO unequivocally recognised Israel's right to exist in peace and security, renounced the use of terror and violence, and pledged to remove the clauses in the PLO Charter that called for the elimination of the state of Israel (Barak 2005: 731).

(ii) The second agreement, formally known as the Declaration of Principles on Palestinian Self-Rule, commonly referred to as Oslo I, outlined a five-year programme for interim Palestinian autonomy in the occupied territories. Although Israel would retain overall sovereignty throughout the term of the agreement, the period was divided into several stages, each of which granted increasing administrative responsibility to the Palestinians. During the first stage, Israeli troops were to withdraw from the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank town of Jericho and Palestinian Authorities were to assume immediate administrative control of the two areas. In the next phase, an elected Palestinian Council was to assume responsibility for education, health, social welfare, tourism, cultural affairs and direct taxation throughout the entire West Bank and Gaza Strip. At the same time, the Israeli armed forces were to be redeployed outside the populated areas of the West Bank and the Israeli military to continue to be responsible for the security of Israeli settlers throughout the territories (Cleveland 2009: 503).

It needs to be emphasised that Oslo I was not a peace treaty but an interim agreement that was to lead in stages to a final peace settlement. In essence, the PLO accepted the notion of interim phases without any advance agreement on what the features of the permanent settlement would be. The creation of an independent Palestinian state was implicit but not explicit in the entire Oslo process. The declaration postponed a number of crucial issues for the interim discussions, prominent among them the future status of East Jerusalem and the Israeli settlements,

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<sup>7</sup> On 13 September 1993, Israeli and PLO leaders assembled on the White House lawn to participate in a ceremony. It began with the signing of the autonomy agreement and then moved to a round of speeches. When Yitzhak Rabin stepped to the podium, he admitted that as a former soldier he was not entirely comfortable with the agreement. However, Rabin proclaimed "Enough of blood and tears. Enough!" Yasir Arafat, for so long denied permission to enter the United States, expressed the hope that the agreement would bring a new era of peace and equal rights; then, addressing the people of Israel, he assured them that the exercise of Palestinian sovereignty and the removal of Palestinian feelings of injustice would be the strongest guarantees of Israeli security. The speeches were followed by a defining moment when the two former enemies exchanged a handshake of reconciliation.

the fate of Palestinian refugees living abroad, Israeli Arabs<sup>8</sup> and the crucial question of Palestinian sovereignty (Alpher 1995-96: 144).

Arab leaders, though upset at their total exclusion from the Norway talks, cautiously endorsed the proposal<sup>9</sup>. US President Bill Clinton (1993-2000) pledged his country's moral and financial support to re-establish formal contacts with the PLO that was broken off in 1990. Followed by that in July 1994, Yasir Arafat established residence in Gaza and began to put in place the rudiments of an administrative and security structure (Barak 2005: 728).

The final agreement of the two-year period following Oslo I was signed in 28 September 1995. It came to be referred to as Oslo II. The Oslo II document was more than 350 pages long and dealt with the stages of Israeli military redeployment in the West Bank, the process by which power would be transferred to Palestinian Authority and several other long and short-term matters. Oslo II divided the West Bank into three zones and specified a phased redeployment of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) from each zone. However, the extent of power was to vary from zone to zone. The result was that the Palestinian Authority would have direct control of Area A, 3 per cent of the West Bank; it would control some municipal functions and would share control with Israel in Area B, 24 percent of the territory; and Israel would retain total control of Area C, an area that made up 73 per cent of the West Bank and included all of the 145 settlements in the territory (Barak 2005: 727, Cleveland 2009: 506 and Alpher 1995-96: 131).

The clauses of Oslo II made it clear that the PLO had done nothing other than negotiate from a position of weakness. The Palestinians has been pushed into, what Yves Engler (2010) used the term, Bantustan-like enclaves, encircled by a massive wall, had their water, land appropriated, and are subjected to daily humiliation at the military check points. Both Jews and Palestinians aspirations went unfulfilled. Israel failed to settle the entire territory west of the Jordan River, and the Palestinians could not create an independent Palestinian State (Engler 2010: 7).

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<sup>8</sup> The Israeli Arabs are the remnants of the pre-1948 Palestinian population who either did not flee the first Arab-Israel war or who fled their homes but remained within the eventual borders of the state of Israel. The Israeli Arabs are the only Palestinians for whom the PLO does not claim to be negotiating. Yet they are strongly affected by a Palestinian solution. The sentiments associated with Israeli Arabs challenge their sense of identity as Israelis. The Israeli Arabs have been second-class citizens, deprived of equal budgetary allocations and education and employment opportunities.

<sup>9</sup> Egypt supported the peace process and others like Syria and Iran rejected it.

Even as the White House hosted official ceremonies of public self-congratulation for Arab and Israeli leaders at each conclusive stage of their negotiations, Palestinians continued to suffer the hard realities of Israeli military occupation. Israel confiscated about 20,000 acres of Palestinian land on the West Bank between 1993 and 1995. Some of the confiscated lands became part of an elaborate and expensive system of bypass roads that enabled Israelis to commute from West Bank settlements to major cities in Israel without having to come into contact with the Arab inhabitants of the territories. The bypass roads further fragmented the West Bank Palestinian community by cutting villages off from their hinterlands and by disrupting established communication networks.

Even the establishment of a Palestinian self-governing authority brought disappointment. From the moment he arrived in Gaza in 1994, Arafat endeavored to monopolize the decision-making process in the Palestinian Authority (PA). Arafat appointed to the top posts in the PA his loyal associates from among the former PLO exiles in Tunis. The local Palestinian leaders who had risen to prominence through their role in the uprising were largely bypassed in favour of the exile politicians who were referred to as 'the Tunisians' by the local Palestinian population.

The situation did not noticeably change with the election of a Palestinian Council in 1996. Although some local opposition candidates were elected, Arafat's supporters won a comfortable majority in the 88-member Council, and Arafat himself was chosen as the head of the PA. There were immediate murmurs of resentment in the new Council against the allegedly authoritarian ways of the President. Arafat buttressed his authority by creating an elaborate hierarchy of security forces. As many as seven different security services, numbering about 40,000 men and ranging from uniformed presidential guards to ordinary policemen, were deployed on behalf of the regime. Many Palestinians felt that the PA was becoming as oppressive as the Israeli occupation forces had been. The deteriorating economic situation in the occupied territories after 1993 further alienated the Palestinian community from the peace accords. Further, the cases of corruption within Arafat's circle also contributed to the economic malaise. Arafat himself exercised personal control over the foreign aid donated to the PA, using it to pay his security forces and top heavy bureaucracy instead of channeling it into infrastructure development. In addition, Israel's practice of sealing off the territories, denied Palestinians access to the Israeli labour market, on which they had become dependent, aggravated the problem.

*Hamas* was the main beneficiary of the growing disenchantment with the PA. *Hamas* was more directly involved in grassroots social welfare activities than were the PA ministries. From the moment Oslo I was signed, *Hamas* leaders had vowed to oppose it. The recognition of Israeli sovereignty over any portion of it constituted a betrayal of *Hamas*'s guiding principle of restoring the land to Islamic rule. The *Hamas* leadership also resented Arafat's promotion of external PLO figures in the authority. This sentiment was shared in many quarters of Palestinian society and enabled *Hamas* to consolidate its position as a legitimate homegrown opposition movement to Arafat and the so-called Tunisians. *Hamas*'s rejection of the entire Oslo peace process was manifested in suicide bombings directed at Israeli civilians in larger cities. The objective of the bombings was to sabotage the peace negotiations by turning the Israeli public against Rabin and the Labour government that had endorsed Oslo I (Cleveland 2009: 506-08).

The Israeli response to the bombings was to pressure Arafat to undertake more rigorous security measures in the areas under PA control and to protect the streets of West Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Israel made it clear that if Arafat failed to rein in *Hamas* militants, he would prove himself to be an unreliable partner in the peace process and negotiations would cease. In complying with Israeli demands, Arafat conducted raids and jailed hundreds of suspected *Hamas* activists. By doing so, Arafat undermined his credibility and turned Palestinians against his administration.

In the case of the Israel, the majority of Israelis were prepared to give Rabin's peace initiative a chance to succeed. However, *Hamas* bombings and the issue of security served to unify the diverse strands of Israeli society. To many Israelis, the Oslo Accords did not lead to security and thus the peace process was not worth pursuing. Opposition to the Oslo process was framed in religious terms. Israeli militants resorted to violence to express their opposition to the Oslo Accords. In February 1994 Baruch Goldstein an Israeli settler activist turned an automatic weapon on a large gathering of Palestinians praying in the Mosque of Abraham near the West Bank city of Hebron, killing twenty-nine of them before he himself was killed. Goldstein's murderous assault brought to the surface a threatening undercurrent of violence that was circulating within Israeli society (Barak 2005: 728).

On the evening of 4 November 1995 that current manifested itself. As he was leaving a large peace rally in Tel Aviv, Prime Minister Rabin was assassinated by Yigal Amir, a young Israeli student. Yigal Amir said that he acted out of the

conviction that Jewish law required the death of any Jew, who turned over Jewish land to the enemy. In this atmosphere of heightened tension, Israelis went to the polls and by the narrowest margins, chose their new Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu – the leader of the Likud coalition. Netanyahu had campaigned on a pledge to ‘slow down’ the peace process that finally led to the suspension of the peace process. Yigal Amir’s bullets and the bombs of *Hamas* had, it seemed, achieved their intended results.

Netanyahu, a proponent of Jabotinsky’s Revisionist Zionism, formed a coalition government that has been called one of the most conservative and religiously oriented in the history of Israel. Netanyahu adopted hard-line policies toward the occupied territories. He inaugurated a new round of provocative settlement activities. It has been estimated that as many as 5,000 housing units were under construction in the West Bank during 1997. The low prices of government subsidized housing in the occupied territories proved attractive and by the end of 1998, Israelis resided in areas that had been taken in the June War – about 180,000 in the annexed East Jerusalem, 164,000 in the West Bank, and 5,500 in the Gaza Strip.

The most controversial of the several settlement projects was the start of a large settlement in East Jerusalem. This was a violation of the Oslo Accords which stated that no change in the status quo of Jerusalem should take place until final negotiations. Oslo Accords were made by the PLO and Israel alone, completely outside the domain of the United Nations. They were not, therefore, subject to any UN resolutions or enforcement mechanisms. Only the United States was the political and moral guarantor of the Oslo Accords. Israel could ignore the terms of Oslo I with impunity, whereas the Palestinians had no choice but to bow to superior Israeli power (Cleveland 2009: 509-11).

### **Refugee Working Group (RWG) and the Canadian Vision Paper**

The present section describes the role of Canada in the Arab-Israel peace process in the 1990s. If judged only on the question of whether it advanced resolution on the Palestinian refugee question or is there any contribution to the peace process, one could say that its direct contribution was limited. Canada’s role in the Refugee Working Group (RWG) indicates that Canada in one way or other was involved in the Palestine-Israel peace process. Because the Palestinian refugees are the direct product

of the Palestine-Israel conflict and RWG emerged as part of the broad process of the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP).

As already mentioned, in October 1991, Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians met in Madrid under U.S. and Soviet auspices, a meeting that marked the beginning of the Arab-Israel peace process. The reason behind the multilateral process was to facilitate progress at the bilateral level, by involving neighbouring Arab states and the expertise of the international community where they could discuss what are technically considered non-political issues of mutual concern that would serve as confidence-building measures between the parties. The bilateral talks were to concentrate on the political issues of territorial control and sovereignty, border demarcations, security arrangements and the political rights of the Palestinians. Whereas the bilaterals would deal with the problems inherited from the past, the multilaterals would focus on the future shape of the Middle East (Brynen 2007: 75-76 and Robinson 2011: 696).

The thinking behind the initiation of the talks was outlined by then US Secretary of State, James Baker in his opening remarks to the organizational meeting in Moscow in January 1992: “We have come together, to address those issues that are common to the region and that do not necessarily respect national boundaries or geographic boundaries. These issues can be best addressed by the concerted efforts of the regional parties together with the support of the international community and the resources and expertise that it can provide”.

The problem with this multilateral process was that it was seen as an adjunct to the bilateral negotiations and continuation of the multilateral process that would prove to be dependent upon positive results in the bilateral negotiations. However, the multilateral process was intended to bring together countries of the region including those not invited to Madrid, to discuss regional issues, originally identified by the United States as “region-wide issues of water, refugee issues, environment, economic development and other subjects of mutual interest”.

In a preparatory meeting in Ottawa about how Canada should participate in the multilaterals, it had been concluded that the areas in which Canada might best use its relevant expertise would be in working groups on water, the environment or possibly arms control. But when Canada was asked to chair the group on refugees, there were concerns that this might be drawing Canada into one of the most contentious issues between the parties. Canada might have to contribute financially or have to take a

position on issues that might have domestic political repercussions in Canada. On the other hand, arguments in favour were that with its substantial history of credibility and engagement in the Middle East, Canada could make a useful contribution. Canada was agreed to serve as the chair for the working group, with the United States, the European Union, Russia and Japan acted as co-organizers. Thus, Canada became involved by assuming the role of chairmanship, what they called as 'gavel-holder', of the newly established Refugee Working Group (RWG), which was crystallised in Moscow conference in January 1992 as a part of the architecture of the overall Middle East Peace Process (MEPP) (Peters 1997: 321-23 and Robinson 2011: 697-99 and Brynen 2007: 76).

The first seven plenaries<sup>10</sup> of the RWG, under Canadian chairmanship, were marked by substantial differences including over the mandate and purpose of the RWG; and the question of who could speak for the Palestinians. The historic Oslo Accords of 1993 by which Israel finally recognised the legitimacy of the PLO as its partner in the negotiation process, resolved the question of Palestinian representation<sup>11</sup>.

Both Palestinians and Israelis tended to see the refugee issue in existential terms. For Palestinians, the forced displacement of three-quarters of a million Palestinians from Israel in 1948 and the flight of a further three hundred thousand or so from the West Bank and Gaza in 1967 was a turning point in their national history. At the time of Madrid, over half of all Palestinians lived in exile from their historic homeland. For the Palestinians, the 'Right of Return' was a central demand, and they

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<sup>10</sup> The RWG held seven plenary sessions, approximately every six months, in the period 1992-95; Ottawa, 13-15 May 1992; Ottawa, 11-12 November 1992; Oslo, 11- 13 May 1993; Tunis 12-14 October 1993; Cairo, 10-12 May 1994; Antalya, Turkey, 13-14 December 1994; Geneva, 11-14 December 1995.

<sup>11</sup> Pre-Oslo, the Palestinians could only be represented as part of a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, and Israel tried to prevent participation of declared members of the PLO from official participation. The first two rounds of talks in Ottawa, Israel boycotted the first meeting in protest at the presence in the delegation of Palestinians from outside the occupied territories, a move which they saw as directly contravening the terms of the Madrid conference. Under a compromise agreement brokered by Egypt's Foreign Minister, Amr Moussa, at the beginning of October 1992, the new Labour government in Israel agreed to the participation of Palestinians from the diaspora, provided that they were not members of the PLO or Palestine National Council and that the issue of the 'right to return' was not raised. The second round was boycotted by Israeli again. The Palestinian delegation for the second round was headed by Dr Muhammad Hallaj, a long-standing member of the PNC. After a day of intense negotiations on the sidelines, the fortuitous discovery that Hallaj's membership of the PNC had lapsed in 1991 brought this procedural impasse to an end. The issue of representation proved to be less contentious during the third plenary meeting held in Oslo in May 1993 and ceased to be an issue at all following the signing of the Declaration of Principles in September 1993 and the mutual recognition of Israel and the PLO.

cited the UN General Assembly Resolution 194 of December 1948, which calls for refugees to be allowed to return to their homes and compensation to be paid for the loss of property. Israel resisted any attempt to establish UN General Assembly Resolution 194 as a starting point for discussions and saw the RWG as a forum for discussing the humanitarian aspects of the Palestinian refugees (Peters 1997: 324 and Robinson 2011: 699).

Israel demanded that the refugee issue to be resolved in bilateral negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, in accordance with the terms of the Israel-PLO Declaration of Principles (Oslo) and the Israel-Jordan Common Agenda (September 1993). The 1993 Oslo Accords established the issue of refugees to be undertaken under the final status negotiations along with issues of boundaries, water and Jerusalem. At that time, the two sides also agreed to set up a quadripartite committee (including Egypt and Jordan) to address the modalities of return of persons displaced by the Arab-Israel war of 1967. Article 8 of the Israel-Jordan Treaty (October 1994) recognised that the massive human problems caused by the Arab-Israel conflict could not be fully resolved at the bilateral level<sup>12</sup>. Jordan viewed the RWG as useful in preparing the ground for discussing 1948 refugees, even if this was a final status issue. Israel regarded the multilaterals as a context for improving the living conditions of refugees in their present location, rather than for negotiating their return to what is now Israel.

Further complicating this, any eventual resolution of the Palestinian refugee issue touched upon vital national interests of Arab host countries, in particular, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon where most of the refugees live. Both Syria and Lebanon boycotted the RWG meetings, seeing them as ‘normalization’ with Israel. Moreover, the Palestine-Israel Declaration of Principles (Oslo I) in September 1993, the bilateral dynamics of the peace process tended to overshadow the multilateral process. The assassination on 4 November 1995 of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had a serious impact on the multilateral process as well. Further, events like terrorist bombings in

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<sup>12</sup> Indeed, Article V of the Declaration of Principles states explicitly that the refugee question will be discussed in the permanent status negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. Article XII also calls for the setting up of a joint Israeli- Palestinian-Jordanian-Egyptian committee which will decide upon ‘the modalities for the admission of persons displaced from the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967’. At the same time, many of the issues surrounding this question cannot be resolved exclusively at the bilateral level. Even though the future of the Palestinian refugees can only be decided through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, the outcome of any agreements reached will touch upon the interests of many other parties in the region and therefore warrant consideration in a multilateral framework.

Jerusalem, Ashkelon and Tel Aviv; Israel's war with Lebanon; the opening of the tunnel under *Al Aqsa* mosque; and Israel's beginning of construction in the West Bank settlement of Har Homa, etc., made it difficult to maintain the multilateral process at all and by April 1997, it had largely withered (Robinson 2011: 701, Brynen 2003: 3 and Solingen 2000: 181).

Canadian officials recognised the limits of the RWG to deal with the difficult political dimensions of the refugee issue. Much of the work of Canada as in Chair in 1995 was devoted to produce a 'Vision Paper' for the Refugee Working Group. The idea for drawing up such a paper did not develop as a result of the deliberations of the working group itself but rather emerged from an initiative launched during the meeting of the multilateral's Steering Group held in Tabarka, Tunisia in July 1994. There, it was decided that the Steering Group would be responsible for drawing up a comprehensive paper that would outline a long-term vision for the region and establish a set of priorities for each of the working groups (Brynen 2003: 4).

Not surprisingly, achieving consensus from Israel and the Palestinians over the purpose and scope of the Vision Paper for the RWG proved to be a task burdened with difficulties and controversy began with the definition of the future vision itself. Given the limited prospects of achieving any real consensus about the future of the Palestinian refugees, the draft paper produced by the Canadians concentrated more on suggesting a range of activities and measures aimed at furthering the work of the RWG. Accordingly, the Vision Paper emphasized the need for developing strategic policy support for the bilateral; and mechanisms for promoting dialogue on the refugee question. The ideas suggested included: the need to produce a comprehensive census of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza and the neighbouring states in order to provide basic data on the living conditions of the Palestinian population; an assessment of the absorptive capacity of the West Bank and Gaza in support of any return of Palestinians to those areas; and the potential implications of transfer of UNWRA activities to the Palestinian Authority (Peters 1997: 329)..

Israel was critical of the Vision Paper since it proposed precisely the sort of more political role for the RWG that it opposed. The Palestinians on the other hand, despite refugees as permanent status negotiations decided at Oslo, still felt the need to use the Working Group to focus international attention on the refugee issue. Discussion of the vision papers of the working groups was intended to be the principal item on the agenda of the Steering Group meeting in Montreux in May 1995. These

discussions were sidelined by a growing dispute over Israeli settlement construction in East Jerusalem. The meeting concluded with no real clarity on the purpose of the vision paper or how to proceed further (Peters 1997: 329-30, Robinson 2011: 704 and Brynen 2003: 5).

In May 1996, Israeli elections saw the defeat of the centre-left Labour Party. Benjamin Netanyahu was elected as new Israeli prime minister at the head of a center-right coalition led by his Likud Party. In the deteriorating atmosphere, it became impossible to convene another plenary session of the RWG<sup>13</sup>. Canadian efforts to encourage dialogue, this time around an IDRC-authored paper on processes of ‘adaptation’<sup>14</sup> to repatriation<sup>15</sup> in the West Bank and Gaza, did not meet with much more success than the Vision Paper<sup>16</sup> (Brynen 2007: 79, Robinson 2011: 706 and Peters 1997: 330-31).

*(i) Assessment of the Refugee Working Group (RWG)*

Although there are shortfalls and criticisms, the long-term importance of the Refugee Working Group (RWG) cannot be denied. The RWG offered the parties a sole forum within the framework of the peace process where the interests of the Palestinian population outside Gaza and the West Bank have been voiced. While the substantive needs of the Palestinian refugees have yet to be adequately addressed, the parties have been forced to start thinking constructively and creatively about the refugee issue.

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<sup>13</sup> In April 1996 during the Israeli election campaign the regional situation had deteriorated seriously as a result of Israel’s attack on Lebanon. It was difficult to go ahead with a ‘peace process’ seminar in the wake of this. The Israeli delegation was cautious about agreeing to anything before the new political landscape was clear. Washington, as cosponsor, also expressed reservations about the timing of the seminar lest it be marked by an Israeli boycott. The result was a Canadian decision to postpone the adaptation seminar—*sine die*. This constituted another setback to a Canadian desire to use the working group to encourage exploration of the vision paper’s policy questions.

<sup>14</sup> In order to discuss the term ‘adaptation’, an inter-sessional meeting was planned in Rome in 1996 and a concept paper, written by Canada’s International Development Research Centre, was circulated amongst participants in preparation for that meeting. The aim of ‘adaptation’, as envisioned by the Canadian concept paper, was to improve the well-being of the Palestinian population in the West Bank, to anticipate their needs—social, economic and infrastructural—and to plan for them in a sustainable manner. The Rome inter-sessional meeting was postponed due to the objections of the new right-wing Israeli government as the parties have yet to discuss formally the idea of adaptation. Salim Tamari who has served as a member of the Palestinian delegation to the RWG was dismissive of the idea: those issues of absorption and reintegration should be injected into the debate of the plenary in order to move the paralysis of the refugee group following the Antalya meeting in December 1994.

<sup>15</sup> The PLO finally even accepted an Israeli request that the seminar be titled “adaptation and rehabilitation” which would allow the Israelis to maintain it would be about rehabilitating the camps, not about preparing for return.

<sup>16</sup> Jill Tansley, “Adaptation in the West Bank and Gaza: A Discussion Paper,” reproduced in Shaml, *Reintegration of Palestinian Returnees* (Ramallah: Shaml Palestinian Diaspora and Refugee Centre, March 1996), online at <http://www.shaml.org/publications/monos/mlist.htm>.

In the opening round of RWG talks, the work of the Group was classified into six themes. These six themes, which have formed the basis of the inter-sessional activities of the refugee group, are: databases (Norway); family reunification (France); human resources development, job creation and vocational training (United States); public health (Italy); child welfare (Sweden); and economic and social infrastructure (European Union).

The Institute for Applied Social Science in Oslo (FAFO) underlined the need for data on the living conditions of Palestinian refugees elsewhere in the region, especially in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, which was essential for the efficient planning and coordination of policy-related studies and for determining priorities for future activities. The RWG has provided logistical support on a demographic survey of the West Bank and Gaza to the newly established Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS). The Group has also encouraged states to offer financial support for two proposals developed by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) presented to the meeting at Antalya for a unified registration scheme for Palestinian refugees and for a project to reorganize and safely store its archives.

Another major area of the Group's work has focused on the encouragement of dialogue, undertaken by France on the question of family reunification. While some progress has been made in some areas including the establishment of certain principles and criteria for the reunification of families and increases in quotas, no significant new measures have been adopted since the meeting in Tunis in October 1993. They fall far short of the expectations and aspirations of the Palestinians too. Further, France as a shepherd for this theme chose not to attend an informal consultative meeting of the RWG held in Jordan in November 1996 in protest of the lack of progress (Peters 1997: 325-28).

A substantive part of the working group's efforts has been concerned with improving the daily lives of the Palestinian refugees and mobilizing the necessary financial resources. The RWG has provided support for emergency housing in Lebanon; health clinics, vocational training centres and emergency housing in Syria; and secondary schools, maternal and child healthcare and vocational training centres in Jordan. It has also provided fundamental funding for the training of Palestinian refugees in areas ranging from public health and nursing through construction trades to agricultural skills and public administration.

The group has also attended to the health needs of the Palestinians by providing supplies and equipment for UNWRA and Palestinian Red Crescent Society clinics and has provided help in setting up a central public health laboratory for the people of the West Bank and Gaza. Italy as a shepherd for health has run a seminar on the overall health needs of the refugees and has also organized a workshop on Palestinian nursing. Finally, the working group through the work of Sweden as a shepherd has been involved in the planning and implementation of a programme developed by UNICEF, which concentrates on the needs of Palestinian children.

In all, by 1995 the RWG had become involved in over 100 specific activities including workshops and seminars on various themes, construction of schools and clinics in refugee camps in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. The Canadian government encouraged and supported academic discussion of the refugee issue with conferences in Canada followed by once in the UK and elsewhere. The purpose of these were to explore the options on the questions related to return, compensation, institutional change, the future of the UNRWA and so forth (Peters 1997: 328-29, Robinson 2011: 710 and Solingen 2000: 182).

Canada organised a meeting at Petra (Jordan) in November 1996. It was by design much more like a mini-plenary, which reflected the Canadian chair's wish to use the meeting as a substitute for a full plenary. An intensified dialogue with Lebanon and Syria in 1997 reduced the levels of suspicion and mistrust and permitted its government to develop a more nuanced attitude to the work of the RWG recognizing its value as a mobilizer of additional funds for refugee projects. A sign of the success of this process was that in 1998, Syria agreed to receive a Canadian but, not a working group, mission to the camps in Syria, on which RWG reported at the subsequent coordination committee meeting<sup>17</sup>.

During this period in November 1997, Canadian foreign minister Lloyd Axworthy visited the Arab region. He discussed the work of the RWG with the leaders of Egypt, Jordan, Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Lebanon, Syria and other countries. He also visited refugee camps in Jordan and Gaza and met refugees there, as well as discussing the refugee problem with the UNRWA commissioner general.

Between 1994 and 2000, Canada funded a programme to relocate Palestinian refugees from 'Canada Camp' in Egypt, to Gaza. Briefly to say about the 'Canada

Camp’; in the early 1970s, some areas of Israeli-occupied Gaza near Rafah were cleared for road construction. The Palestinian residents of that area were relocated to the then Israeli occupied Sinai, to a camp formerly occupied by a Canadian contingent of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF). Hence the name is ‘Canada Camp’. After the Egypt-Israel peace treaty of 1979 and the Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai, the border with Egypt was restored. Rafah was then divided into two areas. Most of ‘Canada Camp’ fell within the Egyptian part of Rafah, and leaving 496 Palestinian families effectively stranded and separated from their families and relatives in Gaza. Egypt was to provide funding to build new homes and Israel would provide serviced plots of land in the Tel El-Sultan of Rafah district in Gaza. But, the programme was interrupted due to financial constraints, after only 133 families were relocated. In 1994, Canada took the lead in relocating the remaining 363 families from the ‘Canada Camp’. Through donations to UNRWA, Canada and Kuwait provided each family with US \$12,000 to build home in Tel El-Sultan, and services were provided by the Palestinian Authority. By the end of 2000, all the families from Canada camp had been repatriated to the Gaza Strip and mostly were housed in the Tel El-Sultan housing project. In addition, Canada also provided funds for the construction of a community centre in Tel El-Sultan for the benefit of the returning families (Global Affairs Canada 2016).

Another project was the development of a scholarship fund for Palestinian women in Lebanon which received a major financial contribution from Qatar with the active support of the *Emir’s* wife, Sheikha Moza. Funding was also made available for this project from the OPEC fund for international development, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA); and also some funding coming from France and US. By 2010, the programme had supported 221 women, of whom 103 graduated (Robinson 2011: 715 and Mobina).

Although admittedly one would see that since the Oslo agreement there was no serious discussion of the central question within the group itself of the future of the refugees. Nevertheless, this group ensured that refugee issues received the attention of the international community and supported increased funding for UNRWA. Thus, Canada’s achievement in keeping the working group relatively active and visible in

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<sup>17</sup> After the difficult year of 1997 the working group returned to the coordination committee process but not to plenaries, with meetings in 1998 in Montebello and in 1999 in Washington and Egypt.

this period must, therefore, be assessed by more process-related considerations<sup>18</sup>.

As for Canada, on the domestic front, to the pro-Israel lobby in Canada, it had done Israel a favour by agreeing to chair the group. At the same time, to the pro-Palestinian and pro-Arab Canadian interest groups, Canada devoted its resources and energy to this question. Thus, Canada's role in the working group had a politically valuable domestic component. Internationally, Washington appreciated Canada's constructive and helpful role within the working group. In Europe and in international forums including the UN - where Canada was elected to the security council in 1998 - what Canada said about the Middle East had considerable credibility (Robinson 2011: 702, 717).

Whatever that would count as an achievement, the fact is that the purpose of the multilaterals was to complement, not substitute for the bilateral negotiations. Like other working groups, the lack of effective progress on the bilateral negotiations, multilateral negotiations on refugees were paralyzed as well. For Muhammad Hallaj, the former head of the Palestinian delegation to the RWG, after five years and seven rounds of meetings RWG failed to address the substantive concerns of the Palestinians refugee question. The bulk of the refugee talks centred on ways to assist the refugees rather than on confronting the issue of displacement and statelessness that makes the refugee questions the most volatile issue (Solingen 2000: 182 and Peters 1997: 332).

### **Track II Initiative: The 'Ottawa Process'**

Faced with the challenges of how Canada could maintain substantive work in the working group, a small group of Canadian officials and academics met in 1997 and decided that the discussion of refugee policy issues would be in quiet and out of the limelight discussions (Robinson 2011: 709-10).

In June 1997, this initiative was supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), the Canadian International Development

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<sup>18</sup> But if there was little public recognition, for example, at the Middle East donors' conference hosted by President Bill Clinton in Washington in 1998 where Axworthy received praise from his counterparts and from senior officials of a number of countries including the United States, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Denmark for Canada's continued attention to the refugee issue. A notable exception was Lebanon. But over time, however, Lebanese officials developed a more understanding attitude and privately expressed their appreciation for the Canadian work.

Agency (CIDA), and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC)<sup>19</sup>. These ‘Track II’ activities were intended to play an indirect role in facilitating the RWG’s activities, facilitating Palestine-Israel dialogue, expert analysis, joint problem solving and even limited pre-negotiation of the refugee issue. Collectively, they became known as the ‘Ottawa Process’. In this context, ‘Track II’<sup>20</sup> meant a dialogue and consultation among all the relevant actors – well-connected experts, former and present officials – with the objectives of facilitating formal ‘Track I’ diplomatic efforts between actors in conflict (Brynen 2003: 1, 5 and Rempel 1999: 36-37).

Canada’s ‘Track II’ initiatives involved the activities of the ‘core group’, a small group of Palestinian and Israeli experts and officials, and it supported a broad range of research and dialogue projects on the refugee issue, most importantly Stocktaking Conference and Compensation Workshop. These engagements were closely interlinked. Many were held under the auspices of Palestinian Refugee Research Net (PRRN), an IDRC-supported project that sought to encourage networking and dialogue among scholars of the Palestinian refugee issue through an email discussion list (fofognet) and a website <http://www.prrn.org> (Brynen 2003: 6-7).

The ‘core group’ began with the proposal for an initial Palestine-Israel dialogue meeting to test out the prospects for ‘Track II’ efforts. Two Canadians (Rex Brynen of McGill University and Janice Stein of the University of Toronto) and one British scholar (Joel Peters of Reading University and later of Ben Gurion University in Israel) undertook the effort with the assistance of the Middle East Initiatives office of IDRC and financial support of CIDA. The meeting was also considered that the activity be organized at arms length from the Canadian government in general and DFAIT in particular.

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<sup>19</sup> The participation as observers was the officials from the United States, the European Commission, individual European States and UNRWA.

<sup>20</sup> Track II efforts attempted to achieve several possible objectives: a. to open up indirect communications between the parties when direct and official negotiation is difficult; b. to develop trust and understanding both between the parties and at the interpersonal level among participants; c. to help identify and clarify issues and to foster a common agenda for addressing these; d. to provide an opportunity for co-operative thinking about common problems and to facilitate the development of innovative approaches or technical solutions; and also to provide a venue for quiet pre negotiation.

**Table 3.1****Track II Core Group meetings of ‘Ottawa Process’ from 1997 to 2000**

| <b>Date</b>      | <b>Activities</b>  |
|------------------|--|
| April 1997       | The first discussion of possible Track II initiative with DFAIT and IDRC.  |
| May 1997         | CIDA confirms initial support for the initiative.  |
| 3-4 August 1997  | First core group meeting (Reading, UK). Participants identify major policy research requirements.  |
| 7, 9 Dec. 1997   | Second core group meeting (Ottawa). Some of the group members met Foreign Minister Axworthy.   |
| 12 February 1998 | Third core group meeting (Jerusalem).  |
| 22 March 1998    | Fourth core group meeting (London). The group starts work on common “core group paper” outlining a possible solution to the refugee issue.   |
| 2-3 May 1998     | Fifth core group meeting (Istanbul). Substantial progress on core group paper. The resistance of some Israelis to WBG repatriation fades.  |
| 16, 23 Nov. 1998 | Sixth core group meeting (Jerusalem).  |
| 27-28 Feb. 1999  | Seventh core group meeting (London). Group addresses substantial disagreements over the inclusion of Palestinian repatriation and refugee return, with Palestinians demanding stronger guarantees. |
| 13 July 1999     | Eighth core group meeting (Ottawa). Core group paper largely completed, but differences remain over the issue of Jerusalem.  |
| 15 February 2000 | Ninth and final core group meeting (Jerusalem). Jerusalem issue remains unresolved.  |

The first core group meeting was held quietly in Reading, the UK on 3-4 August 1997. Invitations were sent not by IDRC but under the names of the organizers as an academic project based at McGill University. Two organizers, three Israelis and two Palestinians participated in the first meeting. One of the Israelis was a member of the Economic Co-operation Foundation (ECF), a pro-peace group that had close ties to the left wing of the Labour Party and had been a central participant in the original Oslo negotiations; a second was a retired senior military and intelligence officer, with personal links to senior Labour Party leaders and the third was a university-based strategic analyst. On the Palestinian side, there were two participants: a university professor and MEPP negotiation advisor and a former member of the Palestinian delegation to the Refugee Working Group. Two other Palestinian members were also invited. The first was unable to attend and the second one had been prevented from attending by Israeli closure of the West Bank. There

were some changes in the composition of the core group over time<sup>21</sup>. The atmosphere at the meeting was friendly: participants spoke freely, attitudes were flexible and open-minded. A 30 minute speakerphone conversation with one of the absent Palestinians was also included in the programme (Brynen 2003: 7-8 and Robinson 2011: 710).

The participants identified eight major areas of strategic research and policy analysis that might be undertaken so as to facilitate future Palestine-Israel refugee negotiations. These were the relationship of refugee issue to other final status issues; refugee absorption in the West Bank and Gaza; family reunification in Israel; the situation in present host countries; third party refugee absorption; compensation; the future of UNRWA; and interim measures etc. (Brynen 2003: 9).

To bring the regional participants and to show official Canadian interest, the Canadian ambassador to Israel hosted a dinner for the nearby members of the group in Ramallah in the following month. At that time, some of the group also received a private meeting with then Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy, who praised their efforts and pledged full support (Brynen 2003: 10-11 and Robinson 2011: 710).

The next meeting of the 'core group' was held on 12 February 1998 in Jerusalem. In his report on the meeting, one organizer noted: 'The aim of the paper would be to raise ideas and suggestions to overcome those obstacles identified. The raising of ideas will be as important an exercise if not more so, than reaching consensus on issues'. The first draft of this was written by the organizers based on their sense of the groups previous discussions and was presented when the core group met for the fourth time in London in 22 March 1998<sup>22</sup>.

Activities were often slowed by extended delays in securing funding for the project. Indeed, at times, the organizers would spend more time and energy on funding issues than they would on the actual core group and related activities. Part of the problem was bureaucratic: while Foreign Minister Axworthy had pledged support for the initiative in his meeting with core group members in December 1997, the

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<sup>21</sup> The three Israelis were joined by a fourth: a scholar and former senior Israeli foreign ministry official close to Labor Party leader Ehud Barak. Of the four Palestinians involved, one found himself unable to continue due to a heavy workload and withdrew from the group.

<sup>22</sup> This paper proposes a resolution of the Palestinian refugee issue that would include the establishment of a Palestinian state; a "right of return" primarily realized through the voluntary repatriation of refugees to such a state; compensation to refugees for damages and property losses; and international support for the costs of repatriation, rehabilitation and integration of refugees.

actual funds were lodged in particular envelopes and units at DFAIT and CIDA<sup>23</sup>. In the end, money for the ‘Ottawa Process’ came from three different sources like CIDA, DFAIT and IDRC.

The fifth meeting of the core group in Istanbul in May 1998 saw very substantial progress on the paper. Most of these revolved around the idea of an international commission for Palestinian refugees and a comprehensive economic development and rehabilitation programme to assist refugee resettlement and repatriation. The next two meetings, in November 1998 (Jerusalem) and in February 1999 (London) were largely devoted to address these concerns. With each meeting, the contentious text shrank and the amount of agreed text grew<sup>24</sup>. Nevertheless, almost all of the language in the paper reflected intense discussions and difficult compromises within the group. The most contentious issue was Jerusalem. There was disagreement within the group. In the end, no consensus position was reached.

From 1995 to 2000 Canada supported a very broad and extensive range of research and dialogue projects on the refugee issue. Those with the strongest connection with the core group and ‘Track II’ efforts were (i) the December 1997 stocktaking conference, (ii) the July 1999 compensation workshop and (iii) the February 2000 workshop on the future of UNRWA. Unlike the activities of the core group, this aspect of Canadian ‘Track II’ efforts became widely known among experts and officials, reported in the press and highlighted on the PRRN website<sup>25</sup> (Brynen 2003: 13-14, 17, 23).

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<sup>23</sup> A joint DFAIT - CIDA peace building fund existed, for example, lodged in the Peace building unit of the multilateral branch of CIDA. It is a slow and cumbersome process. Within CIDA, the Africa/Middle East programme of the bilateral branch waited to see whether the Peace building unit of the multilateral branch of the agency would fund the project before deciding on its own support. DFAIT also had a smaller peace building fund available to it but was reluctant to commit its money if CIDA money could be obtained.

<sup>24</sup> In the final version of the paper there were several heads like: A. The roles of the parties; B. Palestinian statehood; C. Supporting a settlement; D. Compensation; E. Repatriation of refugees; F. Recognizing the human tragedy; and G. Conclusiveness.

<sup>25</sup> Rempel (1999) noted: while the refugee issue will ultimately be decided by negotiators and refugees, the ‘Ottawa Process’ is a useful indicator of the parameters of any solution. The workshops, attended by Palestinians and Israelis, some of whom hold or held official positions along with international experts reveal much about the positions of the two sides including the gaps between them and the ‘elasticity’ of the positions (i.e., areas of compromise or trade-offs). The participation as observers of officials from the United States, the European Commission, individual European states, and UNRWA suggests that the international community also regards the process, in varying degrees, as a gauge for final status negotiations on the issue.

**Table 3.2**  
**Selected Research and Dialogue Activities from 1996 to 2000**

| <b>Date</b>             | <b>Activities</b>  |
|-------------------------|--|
| May 1995                | Canadian/RWG ‘vision paper’ identifies research priorities.  |
| May 1996                | Establishment of Palestinian Refugee Research Net, prrn.org  |
| August 1997             | Core group identifies research priorities.   |
| 8-9<br>December<br>1997 | “Stocktaking Conference on Palestinian Refugee Research” organized by PRRN/IDRC (Ottawa).  |
| 23-24 March<br>1998     | University of Warwick/UK/France/EU conference on “Resolving the Palestinian Refugee Problem: What Role for the International Community?” (UK). |
| September<br>1998       | Joint PLO/ECF proposal on “Bringing the Refugee Back In”.  |
| November<br>1998        | Funding crisis.  |
| 14-15 July<br>1999      | “Workshop on Compensation as Part of a Comprehensive Solution to the Palestinian Refugee Problem” organized by PRRN/IDRC (Ottawa).             |
| November<br>1999        | Funding crisis.  |
| 19-20 Feb.<br>2000      | PRRN/IDRC/RIIA ‘Workshop on the Future of UNRWA’ (UK).   |

The Stocktaking Conference on Palestinian Refugee Research in December 1997 provided an opportunity to bring Palestinian, Israeli and other researchers together. Despite its distance from the Middle East, Ottawa was chosen for the meeting, in order to put a Canadian stamp on the event<sup>26</sup>.

A series of guidelines were developed for the participants. In all, some 38 researchers participated including Palestinians and Israelis<sup>27</sup>. Official observers from the US, Britain and the European Union attended. They generally observed and said relatively little<sup>28</sup>. The conference itself consisted of both plenary session and smaller breakout groups to assure a balanced distribution of both expertise and political

<sup>26</sup> Approval for the project was rapidly received from DFAIT and CIDA, and detailed planning began. The invitation list consisted of core group members, almost all of the major scholars on the refugee issue, representatives from Palestinian refugee research projects, and a few influential journalists from the region—within the constraints of the budget assigned for the project and the physical capacity of IDRC’s conference facilities.

<sup>27</sup> Some Canadian officials participated as full members of the group, others as observers. Representatives from local embassies in Ottawa were not permitted, only the local PLO representative attended, on the grounds that it was hard to exclude a Palestinian from a conference about Palestinians. A full list of participants and a summary of discussions can be found at <http://www.arts.mcgill.ca/MEPP/PRRN/prconference2.html>.

<sup>28</sup> The only slight problem arose when a Lebanese official responsible for Palestinian refugees asked both to attend, and to receive an official invitation to do so. When told no such invitation was being issued but that he could attend as an observer, he declined to do so.

views. This conference was held in December 1997 at a time when both the bilateral and multilateral talks had come to a standstill following the May 1996 Israeli election and the decision by the Arab League in March 1997 to boycott all multilateral activities to protest Israeli settlement activity in Jerusalem. Participants were reminded that "a certain amount of political realism is also critical if academic musings are to have policy impact." The workshop identified a total of six areas requiring further research that could serve as an agenda for future workshops<sup>29</sup>. Because the issue of refugee return was not considered on the table by the Israeli participants, the first item identified was compensation. Thus, the second workshop was on Palestinian refugees, "Compensation as Part of a Comprehensive Solution to the Palestinian Refugee Issue", in short, compensation workshop, which was held in Ottawa in July 1999 (Brynen 2003: 23, 25-27 and Rempel 1999: 36-37).

The compensation workshop sought to address a number of interrelated issues: the case for compensation, the magnitude of Palestinian losses, including methods of valuation and categories of potential claims, the mobilization of resources to finance any possible compensation programme, the complexities and modalities of a possible Palestinian refugee regime including who could claim, the adjudication and administration of those claims and possible systems of payment etc. Participants agreed that refugees have a right to compensation under international law according to the principle of state responsibility. Some refugee and legal experts noted, however, that until the 1990s only states were able to make compensation claims against other states. As there was no state to press claims for stateless persons, this situation meant that stateless persons such as Palestinians were unable to file claims for compensation (Brynen 2003: 33 and Rempel 1999: 39).

Over the last decade, however, international practice and UN Security Council resolutions have increasingly dealt with compensation, repatriation and repossession of property. Legal expert John Quigley cites the examples of Abkhazia, Bosnia, Cambodia, Croatia, Guatemala, Kosovo and Rwanda. These developments occurred primarily within the realm of human rights law, although Quigley notes that the individual right to compensation and return is also found in the law relating to nationality and humanitarian law. The establishment of human rights courts in Europe

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<sup>29</sup> (1) The issue of return of the 1948 refugees to their homes and the various modalities associated with such a possible return; (2) compensation; (3) repatriation; (4) the future of UNRWA; (5) interim

and America has made it possible for claimants in these areas to pursue individual claims against states. Mechanisms to handle these claims, however, are not well developed, and regional human rights courts do not exist elsewhere.

Concerning Palestinian refugees, many participants recognized the relevance of UN Resolution 194 which identifies both the right of return and compensation for Palestinian refugees. While Israeli participants acknowledged, in principle, the right of Palestinian refugees to receive compensation for their properties, they differed considerably with Palestinian participants regarding the modalities of compensation. As for future individual claims for compensation, Palestinian participants noted that refugees should be free to reject any deal negotiated by the PLO that does not meet the parameters outlined in Resolution 194. Palestinian participants and researchers also noted that while Palestinian refugees had the right to compensation, this right was not a substitute for the right of return or the return of properties. Israeli participants, on the other hand, stressed that any bilateral agreement between Israel and the PLO would extinguish all further claims including individual claims. Israeli participants echoed a long-held position that while Israel would be willing to pay compensation in principle to Palestinian refugees; it would not be held morally responsible for the refugee issue (Rempel 1999: 39-41).

To be mentioned that Israel claimed compensation for properties that Jews left behind in the Arab world which aimed not to have individual financial reparations but rather to counter the Palestinian refugees' compensation claims and the right of return. While the 1993 Oslo Accord agreed to address the refugee questions directly, Israeli negotiator Zalman Shoval summed up his government's policy as "Israel would agree to cancel the Jewish claims if the Palestinians would give up their compensation demands". It was only in the 2000s specially in January 2001 at Taba (Egypt), the Israeli delegates agreed on the PLO position that Jewish property claims in Arab countries were "not a subject for a bilateral Palestinian-Israeli agreement". Ultimately the Taba talks failed due to the eruption of violence. There was another issue, David Tal, a Knesset member of Tunisian origin, mentioned that the Ashkenazi Jews who fled Germany and Eastern Europe got compensation. That money helped them establish themselves there. But the Sephardic Jews who fled Arab lands have never got anything. However, as noted in the compensation workshop summary, "it is

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measures (such as new development partnerships and the pressing social and economic needs of

possible to accept that compensation ought to be paid because the property was seized and Palestinian refugees barred from returning regardless of how blame is apportioned for the events of 1947-48” (Fischbach 2008: 15, 18, 21).

Compensation Calculation of the Palestinian Refugees was a critical aspect of the compensation workshop programme. Following the expulsion and displacement of some 750,000 Palestinians from their homes and lands, the right to compensation for Palestinian refugees was codified in UN Resolution<sup>30</sup> 194 of December 1948. Resolution 194 affirms two types of compensation: for non-returnees and damages. To implement the directives issued in Resolution 194, the UN established the Palestine Conciliation Commission (PCC) (Rempel 1999: 36-38, 41).

The property of Palestinian refugees, meanwhile, fell under the control of Israel's Custodian of Abandoned Property. This included the property of Palestinians who remained inside the borders of the new state of Israel and also who were displaced and not permitted to return to their homes and villages. While the Israeli government accepted the responsibility, in principle, to compensate the refugees for their properties, it ruled out returning the properties to their rightful owners. With the adoption of the Absentees' Property Law in 1950, the Israeli government transferred the property from Palestinian to Jewish ownership by a government payment to the Israeli Custodian of Absentee Property that replaced the Custodian of Abandoned Property. The Israeli government thus claimed that the property had been acquired legally (i.e., by payment) rather than through confiscation, even though no money ever went to the actual owners. Inside Israel, a series of laws were adopted to provide compensation to Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel so as to validate the transfer (i.e., confiscation) of property owned by internally displaced Palestinians, though the great majority refused to accept the payment.

To protect refugee properties and rights, the PCC called for the abrogation of the Absentees' Property Law, the suspension of all measures of requisition and occupation of Arab houses and unfreezing of Waqf property. The UN General Assembly, meanwhile, called for the establishment of a Refugee Office to facilitate the work of the PCC regarding both compensation and return. By September 1951

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refugees in Lebanon); and (6) linkages with other final status issues.

<sup>30</sup> The right of individuals in Palestine to compensation was recognized by the United Nations well before the massive exodus of Palestinian Arabs in 1948. Under UN Resolution 181 of November 1947 expropriation of land was prohibited except for public purposes.

with little progress on the return of refugees, the commission began increasingly to focus on the issue of compensation.

**Table 3.3**

**Palestinian Arab and Jewish Property in the Territory Occupied by Israel under the Terms of the General Armistice Agreement of 1949**

(Area in dunams. 4 dunams = 1 acre)

| Sl. No.      | Sub district | Arab-Owned Property <sup>1</sup> | Jewish-Owned Property <sup>2</sup> |
|--------------|--------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1            | Acre         | 774,416                          | 25,240                             |
| 2            | Baysan       | 239,438                          | 127,235                            |
| 3            | Beersheba    | 12,455,890                       | 65,231                             |
| 4            | Gaza         | 776,480                          | 49,566                             |
| 5            | Haifa        | 665,891                          | 387,492                            |
| 6            | Hebron       | 1,161,491                        | 5,466                              |
| 7            | Jaffa        | 182,251                          | 156,751                            |
| 8            | Jerusalem    | 301,209                          | 26,024                             |
| 9            | Jinin        | 255,676                          | 4,251                              |
| 10           | Nablus       | 23,414                           | ----                               |
| 11           | Nazareth     | 365,797                          | 142,856                            |
| 12           | Ramallah     | 6,240                            | ----                               |
| 13           | Ramla        | 662,727                          | 133,674                            |
| 14           | Safad        | 527,103                          | 167,833                            |
| 15           | Tiberias     | 267,766                          | 176,259                            |
| 16           | Tulkarm      | 351,381                          | 146,789                            |
| <b>Total</b> |              | <b>19,017,170</b>                | <b>1,614,667</b>                   |

1. Data from Sami Hadawi, *Palestinian Rights and Losses in 1948: A Comprehensive Study* (London: Saqi Books, 1988), appendix 8, p. 246. It includes all land claimed to be Arab-owned irrespective of the method of registration or recording in the records of the Palestine government. Includes both rural and urban lands. Includes land recorded in Village Statistics under the column 'public' per Palestinian Arab village. Includes villages in which some inhabitants remained in their homes in 1948. The term 'Arab' includes non-Jews, such as Armenians, Germans, Greeks, etc. It excludes the portion of lands of 'border' villages, which fell outside the territory held by Israel. Excludes Jewish settlements and Jewish-owned land in Arab villages.

2. Data from Sami Hadawi, *Palestinian Rights and Losses in 1948: A Comprehensive Study* (London: Saqi Books, 1988), appendix 6, p. 230. The lands of two German colonies, Sarona and Wilhelma, in the Jaffa subdistrict, acquired by Jews after World War II, are included as owned by Jews. The Huleh Concession Area in the Safad sub-district, is included in the land area owned by Jews. Land recorded in Village Statistics under the column 'public' is included under Jewish ownership where such land falls in Jewish settlements.

In November 1951, the Refugee Office completed a global identification and assessment of Palestinian refugee losses. Table 3.3 provides the documentation of Palestinian Arab and Jewish land ownership by sub-district. Despite deficiencies, these documentation remains to date a complete record of Palestinian refugee land. Refugee losses not identified by the commission include compensation for

psychological suffering and pain and other material claims such as industrial capital, agricultural capital, commercial and private vehicles, commercial capital and stock, private and personal property, hotels and restaurants, financial assets, infrastructure and natural resources (Rempel 1999: 36-39).

The value of Palestinian refugee compensation claims discussed at the workshop that ranged from several billion to several hundred billion dollars and also reflected the differing perspectives both on what should be included in claims and the criteria for valuation. Palestinian participants favoured inclusion of the range of compensation claims recognized in international law and practice specially the standard provided in UN Resolution 181: private and public goods, lost earnings and opportunities, psychological and social damages as well as depletion or use of natural resources, resulting in claims ranging from \$150 billion to \$235 billion. The Israeli perspective on compensation claims was confined to compensation, in principle, for refugee property provided that refugees could prove ownership, but excluded other types of compensation except for humanitarian and development assistance.

Israeli participants favoured what could be called 'adequate compensation' a term used by the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on International Co-Operation to avert new flows of refugees. It includes Israel's ability to pay and the ability of refugees to prove ownership, as long time elapsed since Palestinians were displaced. Thus Israeli estimates of compensation for Palestinian refugees range from a low of \$5 billion to \$10 billion mentioned by Shlomo Gazit in his paper on Palestinian refugees to a high of \$15 billion to \$20 billion in a joint Israeli-Palestinian project led by Joseph Alpher and Khalil Shikaki (Rempel 1999: 42). Brynen estimates that compensation in the range of \$6.7 billion to \$27.3 billion would be economically feasible for Israel but that only \$1 billion to \$5 billion would be considered politically sustainable.

A paper submitted by BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights, noted that the amount of compensation to be paid to Palestinian refugees could be reduced if a greater number of refugees were permitted to return to their places of origin inside Israel. BADIL estimates that the total cost of returning all refugees would be US\$41 billion (1994) as compared to \$132 billion in compensation for the private and public property. Most participants agreed that the potential sources available for funding Palestinian refugee compensation would be limited. Brynen emphasized that Arab states are among the most generous donors on a per capita basis

but they would be less amenable to provide financial assistance if an agreement did not provide for a significant return of Palestinian refugees to their homes and lands inside Israel.

In general, the participants of the compensation workshop felt that a successful, strong compensation mechanism should deliver a high degree of refugee satisfaction, facilitate easy documentation of losses and provide equitable distribution of compensation, sensitive to gender bias and poverty levels. Participants examined several models for compensation mechanisms like the tribunal established to adjudicate U.S. claims for losses in Iran, the Commission for Real Property Claims in Bosnia and the UN Compensation Commission for claims against Iraq, etc.

The role of UNRWA in dealing with compensation was also addressed. While Israeli participants stressed that the termination of UNRWA would be an important indicator that the refugee question had been resolved, other participants felt that UNRWA could play an important transitional role in facilitating compensation and return given the agency's long institutional memory, experience and ready administrative structure. The preservation of UNRWA during a transition period was also thought to minimize the potential reduction of donor funding for a refugee solution (Rempel 1999: 41-46).

The final workshop of research and dialogue activities was held on 19-20 February 2000 in Minster Lovell, UK. It addressed the question of UNRWA's possible future role in a refugee agreement. As usual, the workshop papers including an analytical overview of the meeting were posted to PRRN website<sup>31</sup> (Brynen 2003: 35).

*(i) Assessment of the 'Ottawa Process'*

The 'Ottawa Process' had mixed results. As final status talks opened formally with the Camp David negotiations in July 2000, there was considerable discussion in the core group as to what use should be made of the paper. At their November 1998 meeting, the participants agreed to share the paper with them before final status talks started. They also agreed that the paper would include all the names of participants but would not be issued as a public document.

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<sup>31</sup> [www.arts.mcgill.ca/MEPP/PRRN/prunrwa.html](http://www.arts.mcgill.ca/MEPP/PRRN/prunrwa.html)

The Palestinians were aware that many in their own community might oppose the flexibility they had shown, were the paper to become public. Moreover, there was Palestinian concern within the group and at very high political levels in the PA that the paper might weaken the Palestinian negotiating position. Some of the Israelis on the other hand, pushed for a fuller public release arguing that “there is a need to prepare ground among the politicians and the public opinion to be realistic and not to live with false illusions”.

However, at the Camp David, both the Israelis and Palestinians declared their formal opening positions on the refugee issue that were far apart. Neither party made substantial conciliatory gestures on the issue, and the result was an almost complete absence of productive discussion on refugees (Brynen 2003:18- 21).

Thus, it can be said that the ‘Ottawa Process’ was unable to bridge the conceptual difference between Palestinian and Israeli participants. A rights-based approach characterized the Palestinian position. Palestinian participants emphasised that compensation is an entitlement codified in international law and UN resolutions – namely UN Resolution 194 – and complements but does not substitute for the right of return. Palestinian refugees, moreover, would be free to pursue individual claims against Israel if they were not satisfied with the negotiated solution. Israeli participants, on the other hand, subscribed to the humanitarian based approach whereby compensation facilitates the economic and social development of refugees but does not entail recognition of responsibility (Rempel 1999: 46-47).

Despite its drawbacks, it can be said that of the various components of the ‘Ottawa Process’, the compensation workshop had the greatest impact on the official negotiating process. For instance, the permanent status talks began at Taba (Egypt) in January. Of the seven main Israeli and Palestinian participants, two of the Israelis had participated in ‘Ottawa Process’ activities. Many aspects of the approaches to refugee compensation that the parties discussed in Taba seemed to follow on from ideas that emerged from the ‘Ottawa Process’<sup>32</sup> (Brynen 2003: 22, 39).

The activities of the ‘Ottawa Process’ led into a number of other initiatives. Some might have occurred without the facilitation of the ‘Ottawa Process’, and some were certainly changed by their interaction with Canadian-organized activities.

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<sup>32</sup> For details of the Palestinian opening position and the Israeli response, see at <http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/cahier/proche-orient/refugeespal-en>. See also the EU summary of the Taba talks, at <http://www.arts.mcgill.ca/MEPP/PRRN/papers/moratinos.html>.

“Bringing the Refugees Back In” is one example of this. It was a Canadian-supported joint project undertaken by the Israeli NGO, Economic Cooperation Foundation (ECF) and PLO Department of Refugee Affairs in 1999 to organize people-to-people activities around the refugee issue. It took the form of visits by Israeli groups to Palestinian refugee camps, although on one occasion Palestinian refugees were able to visit their former neighbourhood in Israel. The long-term impact of these visits on attitudes is unclear, although at the very least they represented a pioneering effort to break down some of the ignorance and stereotypes that existed about the refugee issue. Moreover, the very close and cooperative working relationship that was forged between an Israeli NGO and the PLO was itself a very positive development. Unfortunately, continuation of these efforts was prevented by both lack of continued funding and the eruption of the second uprising, i.e., second *Intifada*.

Another benefit from the ‘Ottawa Process’ was the learning that occurred among the organizers themselves. Long Palestinian-Israeli debates and discussions in the workshops had a substantial effect on knowledge and understanding of the issue, in both its technical and political dimensions. This contributed to the quality of policy advice provided to Canada, the World Bank and others (Brynen 2003: 35-37, 40).

Apart from its role in RWG and ‘Ottawa Process’, Canada by virtue of its seat on the steering committee of the multilaterals, became a member of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC), a 15 member body established in 1993 to provide overall co-ordination and coherence to donor efforts in the West Bank and Gaza<sup>33</sup>. A Canadian representative office to the Palestinian Authority was opened in Ramallah in 1999 which was staffed by personnel from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Later, Canada also joined the Task Force on Palestinian Reform (TFPR), another small international co-ordinating body that functioned from 2002 to 2006 to oversee donor support for reform efforts in the Palestinian Authority<sup>34</sup> (Brynen 2007: 76).

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<sup>33</sup> The Oslo Accords of September 1993 paved the way for the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in parts of the West Bank and Gaza in 1994.

<sup>34</sup> While Canada has been a member of two exclusive aid coordination bodies — the AHLC and TFPR — it is not large enough to be a member of the so-called ‘aid politburo’ (the U.S., the EU, Norway, the World Bank) where most strategic aid decisions are made.

## **Canada and the Wye Accords, Camp David II, Taba Agreement and the Second *Intifada***

So as to carry the discussion forward, it is important and relevant here to describe Canada's response to the various peace initiatives and agreements signed in the late 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century as well as the second round of popular uprising, called *Intifada II* or the second *Intifada*. The Bill Clinton administration succeeded in bringing Netanyahu and Arafat together at the Wye River estate in Maryland in Autumn 1998. With President Clinton's mediation, Arafat and Netanyahu signed a set of agreements known as the Wye Accords. They represented a minor achievement, merely elaborating on the original Oslo agreements in which Israel accepted the principle of exchanging occupied land for peace and agreed to withdraw its military from an additional 13 per cent of the West Bank and the PLO agreed to renounce the use of terrorism. In accepting this principle, Netanyahu created deep rifts within the ruling Likud coalition and his government was on the brink of collapse. Netanyahu sought to appease his critics on the religious Right with an announcement that Israel would suspend its scheduled withdrawal from an additional 13 per cent of the West Bank. This was a violation of the Wye Accords he had signed only a month earlier. Yet, Netanyahu could not placate the religious Right, and he had to submit his government to the Israeli electorate.

Israelis went to the polls on 17 May 1999. Ehud Barak, a former army chief of staff and his expanded Labour coalition, known as 'One Israel', received 56 per cent of the votes, for the prime minister to Netanyahu's 44 per cent. In the 1999 elections, an unprecedented thirty-three parties received official authorization to field candidates, and fifteen of these parties ended up with representation in the Knesset. The problem of proliferation of parties was compounded by several competing domestic agendas among them<sup>35</sup>. On assuming his office Ehud Barak endorsed the resumption of peace negotiations with the Palestinians and sought to avoid the confrontational posture adopted by Netanyahu. During the election campaign, Barak had pledged to end the eighteen-year-old Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon. Some Israelis welcomed the unilateral withdrawal of Israeli forces and believed it

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<sup>35</sup> For example, Shas, an ultra-Orthodox religious party of Sephardic Jews that became the third largest party in the Knesset. Shas did not object to the peace process but it rejected the concept of a secular

would bring calm, if not formal peace. When the evacuation process started in May 2000, it served to bolster Hezbollah's status across the Arab world, and they started preparation for attacks (Cleveland 2009: 512-13 and Barak 2005: 732).

With little advance preparation, both sides went to Camp David, which was convened by US President Bill Clinton in July 2000 that faced huge challenges in bridging the chasm between them. Camp David II ended in an impasse but for the first time the final status issues that had been deferred for seven years including sovereignty over East Jerusalem, the future of Jewish settlements and the rights of return for Palestinian refugees, were subject to negotiation. However, the deadlock over how to share or divide Jerusalem proved troublesome. It was an abhorrence to the Likud opposition and other rightist parties that insisted on the retention of Israeli sovereignty over an expanded and united Jerusalem with no Palestinian authority to be allowed anywhere in it. As a result, several of Barak's cabinet members resigned and left him with a minority government and in December 2000, Barak announced his resignation (Barak 2005: 733).

In December 2000 following his party's loss in the previous month's US election, President Clinton put one last effort into salvaging the process by drawing up the parameters of a peace plan that envisaged the Palestinians getting between 94 per cent and 96 per cent of the West Bank for a future Palestinian state. Israel would annex portions of West Bank land comprising the major settlements, Palestinians would be compensated with a land swap, and arrangements would be made for a corridor connecting Gaza and the West Bank. After marathon meetings held in Taba (Egypt), in January 2001, Palestinian and Israeli negotiators tentatively agreed on a more detailed framework based on the Clinton parameters<sup>36</sup>. Nevertheless, overtaken by the escalating violence and with both Clinton's and Barak's terms of office coming to an end, the agreement had little time to take effect. As one negotiator lamented "If

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legal system and insisted instead that Israel should be governed by Jewish law. Israel's electoral system as such that encourages further factionalism and stalemate.

<sup>36</sup> Canadian-supported Track II activities raised awareness among the Palestinian and Israeli negotiating teams about the details of the refugee issues that had to be addressed and increased the negotiators' familiarity and comfort level with potential solutions. The best evidence of this is in the bilateral negotiations themselves. By the time of the last-minute negotiations in Taba, in January 2001, the discussion among the parties was no longer just about 'return' or 'no return.' Now it was about numbers, destinations, absorption rates, the institutional requirements for administration of compensation regimes and time tables for transition from UNRWA—all areas that had been identified, explored, discussed and argued over in quiet and not-so-quiet second track activities with Canadian funding and encouragement.

Camp David was too little, Taba was too late”. The Taba talks effectively marked the end of the Oslo peace process (Robinson 2011: 717).

The factors that prompted the Palestinian second *Intifada* (uprising) were firmly rooted in the failure of the Oslo peace process, to halt Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the parallel failure of Yasir Arafat and the Palestinian Authority to provide competent and honest governance. The proliferation of Israeli military checkpoints and the ongoing confiscation of land increased Palestinian’s feelings of being dispossessed and deprived of a future Palestinian State. Israel’s unilateral withdrawal from Southern Lebanon and Hezbollah’s advances became a dramatic inspiration to the Palestinians.

Those sentiments exploded in an outbreak of anger sparked by a provocative gesture undertaken by Ariel Sharon. In late September 2000 Sharon, leader of the Likud, accompanied by 1,000 security force, made a visit to the Haram al-Sharif, in Jewish terminology, the Temple Mount, in Jerusalem. Sharon’s purpose was to demonstrate that any Jew had the right to visit the Jewish holy site and in the context of the election campaign, discredited Barak’s alleged willingness to compromise. The Palestinians regarded the visit as an affront to Islam and protested in an outbreak of demonstrations and stone throwing. The Israeli reaction was swift and in the first two days of protest, Israeli security forces killed eighteen Palestinians which turned a series of demonstrations into a sustained popular uprising that soon spread beyond Arafat’s control. The violence was spread even to the northern Israel. When Israeli Arabs in Galilee demonstrated in support, Israeli police fired on the crowd and killed another thirteen.

In the February 2001 election, Barak who had been elected by a large majority only seventeen months earlier, Ariel Sharon received 62 per cent of the votes to Barak’s 37 per cent. Sharon became Israel’s fifth prime minister in six years. As Sharon formed his government, it looked like a replay of the first *Intifada*. The driving force of the second *Intifada* consisted of loosely organized groups of young men affiliated either with one of the groups, *Hamas* and Islamic Jihad or with Yasir Arafat’s *Al-Fatah*. Along with the stone throwing and burning tyres that had characterized the first *Intifada*, this time on the Palestinian side, the Islamic groups intensified their suicide bombing campaigns and were joined by elements of the Palestinian security forces armed with light automatic weapons.

On the Israeli side, the use of force was far deadlier and more heavily mechanised than before. The IDF deployed tanks, Apache helicopters and F-16 fighter jets against what was essentially a civilian population. As the uprising continued into 2002, Israel escalated its military operations and forcibly reoccupied all the territory in the West Bank and Gaza Strip that it had earlier turned over in the paper to the Palestinian Authority. At the same time, Israel imposed an internal closure on the West Bank, prohibiting Palestinians from leaving their communities of residence and effectively shutting down all forms of internal commerce. The result was an economic disaster for the West Bank Palestinians. The young Palestinian suicide bombers who attacked marketplaces, malls, night clubs and public transportation inside Israel heightened the Israeli public's feelings of vulnerability. These attacks prompted the massive Israeli military intervention that in turn led to new waves of suicide bombings. Between the fall of 2000 and the summer of 2003, the second *Intifada* claimed the lives of 2,400 Palestinians and 780 Israelis. This time, several initiatives emerged that aimed at breaking the diplomatic deadlock, but all failed<sup>37</sup> (Cleveland 2009: 514-17 and Brynen 2007: 76).

In the event of second *Intifada*, the UN Security Council Resolution 1322 deplored the provocation and condemned the subsequent excessive use of force, especially against the Palestinians, without mentioning Israel by name. It was passed with 14 votes in favour of the resolution, including Canada. But Prime Minister Jean Chretien, as had previous Canadian leaders, soon moved to soften what many in the Jewish community believed was a harsh anti-Israel stance. The CBC reported in early November 2000: "In a letter to Canadian Jewish leaders .... Chretien said he regretted that Canada's vote on UN SC Resolution 1322 has added to this distress and frustration. But one UN vote he said can not define, or re-define, the deep and long-

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<sup>37</sup> In early 2002, an attempt by Saudi Arabia to rescue the peace process received the unanimous support of the Arab League meeting in Beirut (the governments of Syria and Saddam Hussein's Iraq included). The proposal promised a normalization of relations between Arab states and Israel in return for an independent Palestinian state on almost all the occupied territories, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and a solution to the refugee problem based more on compensation than on repatriation. The Arab peace initiative was followed, the next year, by the efforts of a quartet of powers, consisting of the United States, the European Union, Russia, and the United Nations, to lay out a 'road map' for ending the conflict. Released in April 2003, shortly after the invasion of Iraq, the plan envisaged a three-stage programme. But lacking any enforcement mechanisms to monitor compliance with each stage's requirements, the road map only led the two sides in circles. With the stalling of international efforts and the violence unabating, prominent Israeli and Palestinian politicians launched their own effort in December 2003. Known as the Geneva accord, this initiative eschewed gradual measures and instead sought a comprehensive agreement that filled in some of the gaps left by the Taba talks.

standing friendship that exists between Canada and Israel". It demonstrated the exceptional degree to which Canadian governments in 2000 remained responsive to the concerns of Canada's Jewish community on Arab-Israel conflict (Hibbard 2012: 8-9).

To mention, Canadian policy on the Arab-Israel peace process has been described as the balanced approach from the 1980s to early 2000. The modest shift in Canadian policy occurred during Liberal Prime Ministers Jean Chretien and Paul Martin, and the major shift took place under Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Harper holds strong ideological views on the Arab-Israel issue including sympathy for Israel and support for the basic tenets of the Bush administration foreign policy. These instincts were particularly evident in the Israel-Lebanon war in the summer of 2006, when Canada supported Israel (Brynen 2007: 84).

Moreover, Canadian engagement in the Palestine-Israel peace process had been through the provision of development assistance. Between 1993 and 2004 CIDA allocated an average of approximately \$25 million per year with total disbursements \$333 million by the end of 2005. Canadian aid allocation included initial budget support to the Palestinian Authority, refugees, child welfare, municipal infrastructure and capacity building. Michael Bell, the former diplomat, argued that the dialogue fund established by the CIDA had great potential to be used as a bridge-building tool between Palestinians and Israelis at a critical time, but the fund was never used during his last period of duty in Tel Aviv (1999–2003). In January 2006, with the electoral victory of *Hamas* in Palestinian Legislative Council elections, four projects worth \$7.3 million were suspended and eight others worth \$23.9 million were limited or restructured. In June 2007, the situation changed again as civil conflict enveloped Gaza and the Palestinian Authority split. Canada responded by announcing a resumption of its bilateral assistance to the PA, more specifically to the *Fatah*-controlled government. Some aid to Gaza continued, but it was directed through channels, not under *Hamas* control (Bell 2007: 9 and Brynen 2007: 80-82).

## **Canada and Israel's Disengagement and the Division of Palestine**

By 2004, the focus of peace negotiations had shifted to the internal political dynamics of the two sides. The Palestinian leadership was growing fractured and isolated. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was pushing a unilateral approach on the grounds that he had no negotiating partners. Amid diplomatic stalemate and continued violence and in recognition that demographics did not favour the perpetuation of a democratic Jewish state, as well as in the hope of consolidating Israel's territorial control in the West Bank, Sharon adopted a unilateral approach. Sharon announced his own plan that Israelis would unilaterally separate from Palestinians. The policy came to be known as 'disengagement', and it involved, in the first stage, the removal of all settlers from the Gaza Strip and four settlements in the northern West Bank. Gathering support from left-wing parties, Sharon was able to push the plan through the Knesset and in August 2005 he completed the planned evacuation of settlers from Gaza.

In one hand, uprooting of 8,000 Jewish settlers from Gaza, a small strip of land home to 1.8 million Palestinian Arabs, can be seen as a response to the apocalyptic terms with which the higher Arab birth rate was being discussed in Israeli politics. Sharon saw that the dream of a Greater Israel i.e. a Jewish state in all of Mandate Palestine could not be reconciled with demographic projections of an approaching Arab majority in the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean. Moreover, pulling the settlements out of Gaza provided Israel a political cover to control over West Bank settlements. But he could not overcome the criticism from within his Likud party and in November 2005 Sharon quit the party in frustration and transformed Israeli politics by forming a new party, called Kadima (Forward), while his longtime rival Benjamin Netanyahu succeeded him as head of the Likud Party (Cleveland 2009: 517-18).

In support of disengagement, Canada provided technical expertise on border crossings management. A few Canadian military personnel in "Operation Proteus" assisted the U.S. Security Coordinator in supporting security sector reform and strengthening the capacity of Palestinian security personnel (Brynen 2007: 76-77).

A key component of disengagement in the West Bank was the construction of a 703 km physical barrier made up of a complex network of barbed wire, electric fences, patrol roads, and concrete walls about twenty-six feet high. Israel justified building this system of walls and fences as a necessary response to suicide bombers

attacking Tel Aviv and other Israeli cities. Palestinians viewed the measure as a grave violation of international law, as was in fact ruled by the International Court of Justice in February 2004 and condemned the manner in which it snaked its way many miles east of the green line<sup>38</sup>, the borders of Israel after 1949. Whereas Gaza had already been surrounded by fences built along the 1967 border, the walls and fences in the West Bank enveloped the large Israeli settlement blocs, thereby isolating and dividing Palestinian villages and absorbing large tracts of Palestinian agricultural land (Cleveland 2009: 518-19 and Barak 2005: 733).

When Sharon was felled by a stroke in January 2006 ending his political career and his deputy, Ehud Olmert stepped in as acting prime minister and in elections held in March Olmert was confirmed as prime minister. But the vision was gravely undermined by the July war with Hezbollah. Thousands of rocket attacks were launched by Hezbollah from territory that Israel had unilaterally withdrawn in 2000, at the same time rockets were fired from across the border in Gaza that was evacuated in 2005. It made Israelis extremely suspicious of any further withdrawal from territory without the assurance from an effective Palestinian government. Moreover, the July 2006 war shook Olmert's credibility. In 2008, he came under investigation for a corruption scandal involving the buying and selling of real estate. In summer 2008 Olmert announced that he would step down as Israeli prime minister in September after his Kadima party had replaced him as a leader.

On the other side, both the Israeli and the American governments blamed Arafat for the ongoing stalemate in the peace process and the continued violence. In 2002, Arafat was confined to his shattered Ramallah compound by Israeli forces. It immediately became clear that no one else had the authority to negotiate in his place, and the Palestinian leadership appeared increasingly adrift. On the one hand, factionalism in Palestinian politics centered on generational aspect like old and young leaders within *Al-Fatah*. On the other hand, relations within the PA, between the *Al-Fatah* and the *Hamas* deteriorated. Arafat's death in November 2004 was followed by the election of Mahmoud Abbas as president of the PA. Abbas had been an opponent of the second *Intifada*, and he called for a return to negotiations. Abbas initiated discussion on integrating *Hamas* into the constitutional structures developed under the Oslo accords. Abbas argued that its inclusion in the Palestinian legislative council

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<sup>38</sup> Claiming that the barrier was designed to prevent terrorist attacks against its citizens, Israeli leaders

would carry the responsibility to abide by its laws. So, elections were finally set for January 2006 (Cleveland 2009: 519).

Abbas faced great challenges in trying to rebuild the unity and credibility of his own party *Al-Fatah*. Some hoped that his leadership could be bolstered by successfully persuading the Israeli government to release prisoners or ease the checkpoints that, together with the Jewish settlements and their access roads, had effectively divided the West Bank into separated regions. The suffering and indignity caused by arbitrary Israeli restrictions on West Bank, travel was one of the most disruptive and painful daily reminders of the occupation. Despite Abbas's efforts, the number of physical obstacles, as reported by UN monitors, actually increased from 376 to 534 between August 2005 and December 2006<sup>39</sup>. Whereas Abbas had little to show regarding his diplomatic efforts, *Hamas* actively took credit for forcing Israel out of the Gaza Strip. Compared to the disarray in the once-dominant *Al-Fatah* party, *Hamas* by 2006 had established itself as a much stronger political force than many had expected. Though divisions in *Hamas* existed (notably between leader's resident in Gaza and those in exile in Damascus) the party proved to be well placed as the main opposition in the Palestinian Authority to take advantage of the growing protests against the corruption and incompetence of the *Al-Fatah* and its failures in achieving statehood. In January 2006 election campaign *Hamas* promised a clean government and stressed its record of efficiency in providing basic services, especially in Gaza. *Hamas* won 76 seats to *Al-Fatah's* 43 in the 132 seat legislative chamber. When *Hamas* assumed power in March 2006, with Abbas retaining the presidency, the United States along with the European Union and other Western countries led an international boycott against the new government (Cleveland 2009: 519-21).

Canada followed by other donors, cut off budget support and direct contact with the *Hamas*-controlled institutions of the Palestinian Authority while continuing to work with Abbas, the *Fatah* president of the Palestinian Authority (Brynen 2007:

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boycotted the hearings and instead encouraged public rallies and demonstrations outside the court.

<sup>39</sup> According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) the number of obstacles to movement inside the West Bank increased to 542 during 2013 from 529 in 2012. <https://afsc.org/resource/restricted-movement-occupied-palestinian-territory>, accessed on 16.01.2016. In addition, the military erects hundreds of surprise flying checkpoints along West Bank roads. In April 2015 the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) counted 361 flying checkpoints as compared with 456 in December 2014, 256 in December 2013, and 65 from September 2008 through March 2009. [http://www.btselem.org/freedom\\_of\\_movement/checkpoints\\_and\\_forbidden\\_roads](http://www.btselem.org/freedom_of_movement/checkpoints_and_forbidden_roads), Accessed on 16.01.2016.

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*Hamas* decried these moves as unconstitutional. Egypt and Jordan moved to support the Abbas government. Israel even withheld the transfer of millions of dollars in taxation revenues collected on behalf of the PA, further undermining *Hamas*'s ability to govern<sup>40</sup>. The declared policy was to force *Hamas* to honour previous Palestinian peace commitments, recognize Israel's right of existence and renounce violence. Palestinians, in turn, resented being punished for their democratic results. Meanwhile, their leaders failed to reach a consensus on how to build power-sharing institutions or political platforms that would relieve international pressure (Cleveland 2009: 521 and Barak 2005: 731-32).

Prevented by the *Al-Fatah* leadership from controlling the PA security services, *Hamas* responded by expanding the strength of its own military units, better known as its 'executive force'. The *Hamas-Al-Fatah* confrontation was most pronounced in Gaza where political tensions were exacerbated by deteriorating social and economic conditions. Growing lawlessness in 2006 was marked by a brutal series of shootings and kidnappings that left dozens dead and prompted the UN to withdraw its aid workers. In June 2006, one militant group tunneled under the border with Israel and captured an Israeli soldier. Israel responded to the abduction with armed incursions into Gaza that left hundreds dead and embarked on the arrest of dozens of *Hamas* officials including government ministers.

*Hamas* became increasingly concerned that forces loyal to President Abbas were preparing with American and Israeli support to overthrow it. In June 2007, *Hamas* swiftly seized all the main *Al-Fatah* bases in Gaza. From his position in the West Bank, Abbas accused *Hamas* of staging a coup. He then dismissed the *Hamas*-led government and created an emergency cabinet to rule the West Bank separately. The Israeli blockade on Gaza tightened in the second half of 2007, dramatically increased already stark poverty and unemployment rates there and hurt ordinary Gazan people the most. *Hamas* improved its military position in Gaza and established its control over rival militias. The tunnels under the border with Egypt were improved and brought under the oversight of *Hamas* officials including tax collectors. A semiofficial smuggling system slightly eased the flow of goods and money, at the

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<sup>40</sup> By 1993 the Palestinians were already dependent on Israel which controlled all their land and water resources and basic services such as water, electricity and telephones were provided by Israeli firms.

same time it contributed to the manufacturing of rockets that disparate militant groups fired indiscriminately at neighboring towns in Israel, especially Sderot, terrorizing the populations but causing few casualties.

The Israeli government, facing great pressure to respond to the shelling, buttressed its economic blockade with frequent military incursions and aerial bombardments which caused many more casualties. Meanwhile *Hamas* did little to prevent groups from launching the rockets; instead, it concentrated on reinforcing its military positions throughout Gaza in anticipation of a possible Israeli invasion, hoping to project the kind of deterrent power that Hezbollah had exhibited in the summer of 2006.

*Hamas's* most notable achievement was its move in January 2008 to relieve, if only momentarily, the pressure of the blockade by knocking down the barriers at the Rafah border crossing with Egypt. For eleven days, hundreds of thousands of Gazans, most of whom were leaving Gaza for the first time in years, poured through the breached walls to go shopping over the border in the small town of el-Arish and the surrounding markets that sprung up as Egyptian traders promptly responded to Gaza's pent-up demand. Muhammad Abu Trika, a popular Egyptian soccer player, when he raised his jersey after scoring an important goal in the African Cup to show a white shirt with the slogan "Sympathize with Gaza" reflected the influence that *Hamas* had in Egypt. The Egyptian government was concerned because the Muslim Brotherhood, the spiritual parent of *Hamas*, operated unofficially as the government's main opposition. Once the border was resealed, with *Hamas's* help, President Mubarak reinvigorated his efforts as an intermediary with Israel. In the changed circumstances, Egypt successfully helped negotiate a ceasefire between Israel and *Hamas* in June 2008. In return, Israel pledged to allow increased imports into Gaza. The agreement came as *Hamas* marked the first anniversary of its rule in the Gaza Strip.

In West Bank, increasingly fragmented by walls, fences and checkpoints and ever increasing Israeli settlement building, the possibility of a viable Palestinian state appeared to be eroding. Even if an agreement on a two-state solution were to be reached by the leaders, it was not clear that the Palestinian Authority of Mahmoud Abbas had enough legitimacy or credibility to sign off on it. In the meantime, the strengthening of *Hamas's* position in Gaza and that region's potential integration into the world economy through Egypt, as opposed to the rebuilding of connections with

the West Bank, have raised the possibility of a three-entity result (Cleveland 2009: 522-24).

### **Summary and Conclusion**

The present Chapter discussed a brief history and contemporary Arab-Israel peace process. It included the Armistice Agreements of 1949 that were signed between Israel and its four Arab neighbours; Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. The first Egypt-Israel treaty at Camp David in 1979, was historic in a sense that for the first time, an Arab country, Egypt, recognised Israel. Egypt got back Sinai that was captured by Israel in 1967. But Egypt was boycotted from other Arab countries and even Egyptian President Anwar Sadat was assassinated for signing this treaty with Israel.

Then it turned to the contemporary Arab-Israel peace process and Canada's engagement in that process. Oslo Accords I and II, Wye Accord and Camp David II were signed between Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel. Its importance lies in the fact; PLO recognised Israel but in its pre-1967 existential form and PLO was recognized as the sole representative of the Palestinians. It was agreed to have a Palestine state in West Bank, and Gaza and Israel would withdraw in a phased manner but subject to the final status negotiation. Canada was ambivalent regarding PLO but gradually changed its mind regarding this.

Canada's direct contribution to the Arab-Israel peace process was limited, but Canada's role in the Refugee Working Group (RWG) indicates that Canada in one way or other was involved in the Palestine-Israel peace process. Because the Palestinian refugees are the direct product of the Palestine-Israel conflict in particular and Arab-Israel conflict in general and RWG was emerged as a part of the broad process of the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP), that started in the early 1990s. Canada's role in the RWG has been discussed in details that included humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian refugees who are living in the camps.

Canada initiated 'Track II' activities, by which Canada supported a very broad and extensive range of research and dialogue projects on the refugee issue whether through IDRC, CIDA or dialogue funds controlled by Canadian diplomatic missions in the region. Despite its drawbacks, it can be said that of the various components of the 'Ottawa Process' or the research and dialogue workshops had the greatest impact

on the official Arab-Israel negotiating process. Canada's view on apartheid wall or Israel's disengagement policy and Palestinian fraction has also been discussed.

Moreover, Canadian policy on the Arab-Israel peace process has been described as the balanced approach from the 1980s to early 2000. The modest shift in Canadian policy occurred between Liberal Prime Ministers Chretien and Martin and the much larger tilt took place under Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Harper holds strong ideological views on the Arab-Israel issue including sympathy for Israel and support for the basic tenets of the US foreign policy. These were evident when Canada supported Israel in the Israel-Lebanon war of 2006. Further, in January 2006, with the electoral victory of *Hamas* in Palestinian Legislative Council elections, Canada suspended four projects worth \$7.3 million and eight others worth \$23.9 million were limited or restructured.

Next chapter is on the Palestinian refugees and international law, Palestinian refugees in the refugee camps in the neighbouring Arab countries, run by UNRWA. Canada's refugee policy and Palestinian refugee's claimant process and their challenges in Canada have been discussed. Although the number of Palestinian refugee in Canada is very less, their integration in Canadian society has also been discussed.

## **CHAPTER - IV**

### **CANADA'S REFUGEE POLICY**

The previous three chapters dealt with a broad outline on the history of the Arab-Israel conflict and Canada's involvement in it through United Nations, its responses towards the major Arab-Israel wars, and its policy formulation to several Arab-Israel peace process and its role in the Refugee Working Group (RWG). Refugee situations are by their nature, dramatic, tragic and emotional. This chapter focusses on the status of Palestinian refugees in international law, in general and Canada's refugee policy in particular.

Canada's refugee policy is defined as the sum total of refugee selection and admission standards, refugee status determination and protection systems, and appeal processes when applicable. Refugee policy in Canada is one of the most controversial and debated political and social issues. Canada has one of the highest per capita admission rates for immigration applications among western countries. The United Nations reports that there are increasing number of immigrants who are leaving their home countries, of which refugees are also in a sizable number, whether Canada is prepared to address the needs of asylum seekers, particularly those coming from the Middle East and seeking to be admitted as refugees according to the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, is a question that requires a clear address.

Canadian immigration policy, of which refugee policy is one component, has developed through various stages. A policy of refugee intake per year as a separate category along with immigrants was created formally only since the Immigration Act of 1976. Before that, Canada's continuing and sometimes intense involvement with persons who immigrate as refugees required the special action of the federal government and the cabinet. Such political urgencies were considered as non-recurring issues. The present Canada's refugee policy is based on Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) of 2002. It includes social, economic and humanitarian component which are in consonance with international law and Canada's obligations to it.

The first section of this Chapter defines Palestinian refugees and their status in international law, their conditions in the neighbouring refugee camps and reconstitution of their Palestinian identity who are living away from their homeland, through UNRWA. Next section concentrates on Canada's refugee policy that includes different Acts and factors that determine Canada's refugee policy.

### **Palestinian Refugees and International Law**

In 1948, in the context of the Arab-Israel war over the establishment of Israel, around 750,000 Palestinians were displaced from their homes, going to both neighbouring countries such as Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon and to the parts of Mandate Palestine that became the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Responding to this displacement, and partly in recognition of its involvement, the United Nations moved to provide humanitarian assistance. The first phase of the relief effort was mandated to the UN Disaster Relief Project (UNDRP) and due to its poor performance, transferred to the Red Cross and then to UN Relief for Palestine Refugees (UNRPR). On 11 December 1948, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 194<sup>1</sup>, recognizing Palestinian refugee's right of return or compensation, and established the UN Conciliation Commission for Palestine (UNCCP). The UNCCP was unable to reach its objectives vis-a-vis resolution 194, but was never formally abolished (Knudsen 2009: 52, Shabaneh 2012: 5 and Feldman 2012: 4).

Faced with a regional refugee crisis involving close to a million people denied repatriation, the UN General Assembly established the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)<sup>2</sup> on 8 December 1949. UNRWA was mandated to provide relief and assistance, but when the agency

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<sup>1</sup> Resolution 194 (III), stating in paragraph 11: Refugees wishing to return to their homes and live in peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practical date and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage of property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made by the Governments or authorities responsible.

<sup>2</sup> In 1949, the Palestine Conciliation Commission (France, Turkey and the US) sent a team known as the Economic Survey Mission (ESM) to the region. Headed by Gordon Clapp, chairman of the US Tennessee Valley Authority, the ESM worked quickly and recommended transforming the region economically to help refugees. Upon recommendation of the ESM, the GA adopted Resolution 302 (IV) on 11 December 1949, creating UNRWA. This resolution reaffirmed the right of return spoken of in Resolution 194, but its agenda was geared toward settlement and integration.

began its operations in May 1950, there were neither statutes nor specific guidelines for its work<sup>3</sup>. There was no provision in UNRWA's mandate for determining who qualified as a Palestinian refugee and hence was eligible for assistance. UNRWA's provisional definition of eligible persons, therefore, developed alongside its relief effort and over the years, which went through several revisions<sup>4</sup> (Knudsen 2009: 53, 68).

On 3 December 1949, just a few days prior to establishing UNRWA, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 319 (IV), which established the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). UNHCR's statutes were adopted a year later and the first international refugee convention, "Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees of 28 July 1951" (hereafter, 1951 Convention), was signed in Geneva on 28 July 1951. Unlike UNRWA, which was created to assist Palestine refugees, the 1951 Convention is generic; it provides a universal definition of a refugee and prohibits the forcible return of refugees. It was meant for European Second World War refugees. 1951 Convention applies to all those who became refugees before 1 January 1951, yet the refugees fleeing Palestine in 1948 were excluded. Arab states feared that submerging Palestinian refugees within the 1951 Convention would weaken the separate and special status of the Palestinian refugees<sup>5</sup> (Knudsen 2009: 53, Lacroix 2004: 148 and Gauthier 2010: 1).

The working definition of Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate is that a person who has lost his home and livelihood and resides in a country where UNRWA operates. The term Palestine refugee as used by UNRWA was never formally defined by the United Nations, nor did it specify whether refugee status applied to descendants of refugees. However, UNRWA's registration instructions registered as refugees are the descendants in the male line of Palestinian refugees. Because of this, refugee status was given to male descendants, even though

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<sup>3</sup> Resolution 302 (IV) gave UNRWA the following mandate: To carry out in collaboration with local governments the direct relief and works programme as recommended by the ESM, then, to consult with the interested Near Eastern Governments concerning measures to be taken.

<sup>4</sup>UNRWA's current definition of a Palestine refugee is: 'Palestine refugees are persons whose normal place of residence was in Palestine during the period 1 June 1946, to 15 May 1948, and who lost both their homes and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict'.

<sup>5</sup> Arab states neither acceded to the 1951 Convention nor ratified it. Only Egypt, a country outside UNRWA's area of operation, ratified the 1951 Convention, but it did not observe its provisions.

UNRWA's refugee definition did not include it. Today, there is no valid legal definition of a 'Palestinian refugee' beyond the provisional definition of UNRWA.

Operational instruction 104 of UNRWA in February 1952 elaborated which family members would qualify for registration based on dependent status and living in the household of a Palestine refugee, included: wife, children, parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts and uncles. In 1957 the definition was revised to describe specifically eligible refugees, referencing need and location - location meaning presence in one of the countries where UNRWA operates (Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, West Bank, and Gaza), in addition to the loss of home and livelihood. Those people who were displaced in 1948, but who left the area or who were found not needy during the general census of 1950/1951 were never registered with UNRWA. By 1965, the birth of a third generation, whose parents were not themselves born in Palestine, introduced new definitional challenges. UNRWA recognised the fundamental inhumanity of refusing health and educational services to children born in the camps and the practical limits on their access to rations due to existing rations ceilings, and in the absence of other directions continued to register the third generation. The question of registration and eligibility was at the heart of UNRWA's definitional efforts.

Apart from location and income as the primary mechanisms for determining refugee eligibility, gender was another significant line of distinction. The women who marry non-refugees is a continuing subject of controversy. Following the belief that responsibility for support of the family [should be] on the husband as head of the family, women who married non-refugees lost eligibility for services. Their children could not be registered and were ineligible for services.

The changing definitions of eligibility determine people's life courses in very concrete ways that included opportunities for education and employment provided by UNRWA. The definition of a Palestinian refugee also provided a mechanism for staking a claim on an international stage and insisted that UN General Assembly Resolution 194 applied to you and your property. The definitional practice was often contradictory in its effect. It introduced new vulnerabilities, produced new forms of loss and enabled new ways of making claims. For instance, that the investigation of legitimate need and proper presence on the ration rolls was a source not only of political tension but of a great deal of personal anguish, which was made clear in a series of documents on an investigation conducted in Lebanon in 1964. In one petition one complained about what he called the arbitrary and reckless cancellation of ration

cards in Lebanon. He described the possible consequences of this practice: “The cancellation of rations is like taking the crust out of the mouth of the hungry”. These petitions, and many related requests for employment, education, and rations, have also characterized the Palestinian experience. The multiple and changing categories of refugee, like refugee eligible for assistance, refugee eligible for some assistance, and refugee eligible for recognition, were central in shaping this experience (Feldman 2012: 7,12,16-17).

Although UNRWA was established as a subsidiary organ of the United Nations under General Assembly Resolution 302(IV), on 8 December 1949, its mandate has been renewed periodically. The agency’s activities are mainly humanitarian in nature and include a development component carried out through its three main programmes: education, health, and relief and social services. In the early years, UNRWA focussed on relief, supported their assimilation in the host countries and later focussed is much more on the individual capacity building. People received a range of material benefits when they were recognized as refugees: rations<sup>6</sup>, clothing, shelter assistance, education, healthcare, and sometimes vocational training. At present, UNRWA is the largest nongovernmental employer in the Middle East, with more than 30,000 employees, the majority of whom are Palestinian refugees. It serves almost five million Palestinian people in its 58 camps established to date<sup>7</sup> (Feldman 2012: 5 and Shabaneh 2012: 6).

### **Refugee Camps in the Neighbouring Countries**

The outbreak of the first Arab-Israel war in 1948 led to a massive refugee crisis that continues to this day. In 1950, 960,000 Palestinians were registered for relief by the United Nations. As a result of natural population growth and the displacements caused by the June War of 1967, the number of refugees rose to 1.3 million in 1968.

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<sup>6</sup> Rations provision was consistent across fields. UNRWA’s 1951 annual report detailed the monthly rations provided, including: 10,000 grams of flour, 600 grams of sugar, 500 of rice, 600 of pulses, and 375 grams of oil and fat. This ration ‘provides a daily average of 1,600 calories per head (UNRWA 1951).

<sup>7</sup> According to the ‘Global Trends’ report by the Office of UNHCR, in 2009 there were 43.3 million forcibly displaced persons. Of this 27.1 million were internally displaced persons (IDPs), 983,000 had pending asylum cases, and 15.2 million were refugees. Of these refugees, nearly a third—4.8 million—were Palestinian refugees registered with the UNRWA. Details can be found at [www.unrwa.org](http://www.unrwa.org).

To date about 5 million Palestinian refugees are registered under UNRWA. The refugees lived in makeshift camps located primarily in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and the Gaza Strip. The camps were not intended to become permanent; they had been set up as temporary shelters pending a solution to the refugee problem. However, after the 1948 War, the absorption of Palestinian land and property into the Israeli economy made it next to impossible for Israel to consider the repatriation of the Palestinians<sup>8</sup>.

Among the Palestinian refugees, those with wealth, family connections, or employable skills were able to re-establish themselves in other Arab states, Europe, and North America. In the Gulf States, for example, Palestinians found employment in the expanding economies of the oil-producing countries and eventually formed prosperous communities of business people, administrators, and technocrats. However, most of the refugees were of rural background—sharecroppers or peasant proprietors who had fled their land and their homes and left behind most of their family possessions. They were sustained by the UNRWA.

Opportunities provided by the host countries were varied from country to country. For example, Palestinians registered as refugees in the Gaza Strip were not allowed into other parts of Egypt. In Syria, Iraq, and Jordan, Palestinians were allowed to work and open businesses, but only in Jordan, they were granted citizenship. Many found employment in the Jordanian government. Those who prospered in Jordan became the core of a post-1948 Palestinian exile bourgeoisie, emotionally committed to the ideal of return to Palestine but practically devoted to the niceties of middle class existence (Cleveland 2009: 356-58).

Of all Arab countries hosting refugees, Palestinian refugees suffered a lot in Lebanon. So the study on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon has been emphasized here. In 1948–1949, about 100,000 Palestinian refugees fleeing Palestine crossed into Lebanon and gradually moved into 15 makeshift camps operated by UNRWA. Without any solution to the Palestine problem, roughly 300,000 refugees are today Lebanon's poorest and most disenfranchised community, more than half of them incarcerated in refugee camps resembling urban slums. Uprooted and the tragedy of displacement had not only left them without their land, livelihood and belongings but also robbed them of political leaders. Strict control of the camps was exercised by the

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<sup>8</sup> Between 1948 and 1951, 600,000 Jews immigrated into Palestine.

Lebanese army's security agency and paramilitary security forces. There were even restrictions on employment as well as on movement inside Lebanon.

In September 1965, the League of Arab States (Arab League) summit in Casablanca prepared the Protocol for the Treatment of Palestinians in the Arab States, colloquially known as the "Casablanca Protocol"<sup>9</sup>. This protocol made the Palestinian refugees right to work conditional on Lebanon's economic situation and restricted entry into and exit from Lebanon<sup>10</sup>. By late 1960s, the Palestinian presence in Lebanon became more complex. In November 1969, the PLO leadership concluded an agreement with the Lebanese authorities, the 'Cairo Agreement'. The agreement provided administrative autonomy to the camps and lifted the ban on employment. During the first phase (1975–1982) of the fifteen-year-long civil war, Palestinians under PLO command were involved in cross-border attacks that subsequently led to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 (Operation Peace in Galilee) (Knudsen 2009: 51, 54-55).

Israeli invasion was followed by the massacre in the refugee camps Sabra and Shatila, Palestinian fighters were expelled from Lebanon, and the PLO leadership were shifted to Tunis. With the PLO leadership and fighters exiled, the Ministry of Labour in Lebanon in 1983 issued Decree 38/11, which barred refugees from working in 72 professions. Rejecting refugee settlement became a rallying cry that unified the Lebanese, summed up in the slogan "Lebanon for the Lebanese", although the Palestinian refugees preferred the right of return (Arabic- *haq al-'awda*) and not to assimilate with Lebanese.

The Lebanese cabinet unilaterally repealed the Cairo Agreement in May 1987. In the 1990s, the Casablanca Protocol came up for review. In late 1991, two members of the Council, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, proposed an amendment to which member state's refugee policies became subject to national priorities. This was widely

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<sup>9</sup> The Casablanca protocol called on Arab nations hosting refugees to grant them rights of work, travel and residency. Seven member states signed the protocol without reservations, Jordan, Algeria, Sudan, Iraq, Syria, Egypt and Yemen. Lebanon signed the protocol with several reservations.

<sup>10</sup> In 1960, decree 319 termed Palestinian refugees as 'stateless foreigners' lacking 'documents from their original countries and residing in Lebanon'. The refugees were now residents in Lebanon but they were not citizens, although a few, mainly Christian Palestinians were granted citizenship. In Arab countries, however, nationality is the key to obtaining civic rights and serves as a primary right from which other civil rights and entitlements are derived. The marginalization of refugees in Lebanon continued when, in 1964, Law 17561 barred Palestinians from joining professional syndicates, a pre-condition for employment in a range of high-status professions (medicine, engineering, law etc.).

interpreted as a move to punish Palestinians for the PLO's support of the regime of Saddam Hussein.

The signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993 and the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) a year later had a direct bearing on the status of refugees in Lebanon. The Oslo Accords made the prospect of Palestinian statehood a political reality but left sensitive issues such as the final status of Jerusalem, the refugee's right of return, and the pull-out of Jewish settlements, to be settled in the so-called final status talks. Although no agreement was reached on the status of refugees, there was a perception among the refugee community that the Oslo Accords weakened the refugees' 'right of return' as stated in UN Resolution 194. The Lebanese authorities, likewise, feared that the Oslo Accords could legitimize the permanent settlement of refugees. The fact that the right of return was the key demand of the Palestinian refugees because accepting naturalisation would erase the refugee problem and let Israel evade its historical responsibility for them. Hezbollah is the only non-Palestinian party that publicly supported granting civic rights to the refugees in Lebanon. Hezbollah did not see the granting of civic rights to Palestinians as being opposed to their right of return (Knudsen 2009: 55-58).

In 1995, the government introduced new visa regulations that made return to Lebanon contingent on obtaining a re-entry visa. The pretext for this move was preventing the return of the roughly 5,000 Palestinians expelled from Libya. The Lebanese Ministry of the Interior issued a decree (no. 478), regulating entry and exit of Palestinians. The new law left thousands of refugees stranded abroad and prevented those in Lebanon from returning to their jobs abroad. In 1998, Prime Minister Hariri in a statement acknowledged that the refugees' situation was extremely bad but added that improving their living conditions would facilitate their permanent integration into Lebanon. So in a later statement the same year, Hariri rejected all forms of support to Palestinian refugees, including the civic or economic rights, or even work permits. In January 1999, the Al-Hoss government revoked the restrictions, but getting a work was still hard for Palestinian refugees: in 1999, only 350 work permits were granted to resident Palestinians, compared to more than 18,000 permits issued to Egyptian labourers.

In November 2000, Hariri returned as Prime Minister. Following a ministerial decree (no. 4082), the Department of Palestinian Refugee Affairs (DAPR), an office under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs established in 1959, was renamed Department

of Political and Refugee Affairs. The new name was widely interpreted as a move to end Lebanon's official host status for Palestinian refugees. Since 1991, special restrictions have applied to southern refugee camps due to their proximity to the border; the camps were cordoned off with barbed wire, army check-points multiplied, and security controls became daily routine. From 2000, new travel restrictions made it mandatory for refugees living in camps north of the Litani River to have written permission to visit the south. The original 15 refugee camps were reduced to 12 following their destruction during the civil war (Knudsen 2009: 59-61).

In May 2006, the PLO Office in Beirut was reopened after having remained closed since 1982. However, the deep political and economic crisis gripped Lebanon after July 2006 Israel-Lebanon war. In late May 2007, fighting broke out in Nahr el-Bared, a Palestinian refugee camp near Tripoli between the Lebanese Army and a new militia group calling itself *Fatah al-Islam*. After 15 weeks of intense fighting, the camp was reduced to rubble and more than 500 soldiers and militants were killed. The Nahr el-Bared incident was unique in several aspects. It was the first time that a refugee camp has been crushed during peace-time. More than 30,000 families became homeless. Most of them were forced to live under dire conditions among families and friends in neighbouring camps (Knudsen 2009: 64, 66-67).

The living conditions among camp-dwelling Palestinian refugees find that the refugees suffer from widespread unemployment, poor living conditions, ill health, low education levels and rising illiteracy. UNRWA was meant to be a temporary relief mission, but has now existed for more than 64 years; its mandate extended every three years, and UNRWA is also coming under pressure to perform on a tighter budget<sup>11</sup>. Lebanon is not alone in being responsible for this misery – so is Israel, which from the beginning rejected refugee repatriation and claims for reparation (Knudsen 2009: 69).

### **UNRWA and Reconstituting the Palestinian Identity**

National governments are widely recognised as a powerful force in fostering a sense of nation, national identity, and nationalism through education policies in their own

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<sup>11</sup> In 2004, UNRWA's budget was about US\$350 million, with more than half of this used to fund the education programme.

societies. In the case of the Palestinians, however, there was no stable national government after *Al-Nakba* of 1948; more than 80 per cent of the Palestinian people became refugees, for most part, in different Arab countries. Consequently, Palestinian social and cultural cohesion was dispersed.

Palestinians never had independence in matters of education. In the times of the Turks, Palestinian education was a tool at the hands of the Turkish regime. In the time of the British mandate, Palestinian education did not change in form or content and was designed to serve British colonialism. After *Al-Nakba*, between 1948 and 1967, Jordan was in charge of the West Bank's education system, and Egypt, that of the Gaza Strip. From 1967 to 1994, Israel assumed full administrative control over Palestinian education while Jordan maintained its indirect control over the school curriculum, specially textbooks, in the West Bank. How is it that Palestinians have reconstituted a national identity despite required texts that avoided Palestinian history, the mandate to assimilate (except Lebanon and to a certain extent Syria), and intense pressure from all host countries to suppress Palestinian nationalism and many donors expecting the same?

Before *Al-Nakba* Palestinians used to live in more than 420 cities, towns, and villages, but afterwards, most became refugees in the 48 camps that the United Nations established for them between 1948 and 1967, while, after 1967, UNRWA established ten more camps to absorb those who left during the 1967 Six Day War. The social interaction, mobilization, and cohesion in space and time was unprecedented in the history of the Palestinian people. After *Al-Nakba*, Palestinians became bound in a brotherhood by sharing their experience of dispossession and destitution in and around UNRWA's camps and academic centres. Living under UNRWA, receiving its rations, and attending its schools made Palestinians aware of 'self' and 'other', especially in Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, and even in the West Bank and Gaza there emerged a distinction between refugees and city dwellers. To mention, many keys were displayed on walls and behind the main door in a gesture signifying that houses and farms in Jaffa, Haifa, Bisan, Lidya, Ramallah, Acre, West Jerusalem, and many other towns and cities will never be forgotten.

Although some Palestinians studied in private or public schools in Jordan, Egypt, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, the majority have been educated by UNRWA. Although UNRWA did not intentionally set out to use education to control the socialization process in such a way as to promote Palestinian nationalism, the

educational process themselves had the effect of providing a tool for reconstituting the Palestinian identity. UNRWA schools not only provided a forum in the classroom for creating a shared narrative of exile, but they also allowed and favoured most extracurricular activities to be oriented toward Palestinian history, culture, and politics, educating Palestinians about Palestine and the exodus of the refugees. Legally, UNRWA schools must use the host country's curriculum, but the interaction between teachers and students inside the classroom provided the occasion for what Moughrabi (2001) calls tacit learning. UNRWA recruit teachers exclusively from the refugee community. Indeed, Palestinian teachers often conducted classes in a way that favoured their narrative rather than the host country's official story. Teachers were not supposed to commemorate national occasions, like the partition of Palestine, the day of the Balfour Declaration, and the strike of 1936, yet they managed to make sure that students were aware of them so that they could commemorate these special days on their own (Shabaneh 2012: 2-4, 19).

In fact, Schools formed the nucleus of each and every refugee camp, the centre around which all other activities revolved. Thus, UNRWA's educational activities unintentionally provided a structure crucial not only for the continuation and growth of Palestinian personal identity but also for reconstituting the national identity among Palestinians in refugee camps and beyond through poetry, music, plays, paintings, short stories, traditional songs and dances, and workshops.

In terms of UNRWA's Education Programmes in Jordan, West Bank and Syria, it can be said that UNRWA's Department of Education constitutes a major part of the organization's services. The Department provides direction, policies, guidance, and professional support for the Education Officers, all of whom are Palestinians, in its Beirut, Damascus, Amman, Jerusalem, and Gaza offices<sup>12</sup>. In addition, UNRWA created the Education Development Centres (EDCs) to carry out its academic vision in the areas of its services. EDCs were established in Jordan and Gaza in 1974 and the West Bank, Syria, and Lebanon in 1980. EDCs give UNRWA schools some autonomy in the host country, and these schools have introduced new materials beyond the host countries' curriculum with full coordination with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations.

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<sup>12</sup> The department comprised of: the Office of the Director, School Education and Teaching Methods Division, Teachers and Higher Education Division, Vocational and Technical Education Division, and Placement Service for Employment of Refugee Graduates.

For instance, between 1999 and 2003 UNRWA introduced textbooks in human rights and conflict resolution separately from the host countries. EDCs created a centralized bureaucracy and co-ordinate all academic activities, which in turn creates a powerful force for cohesion in spite of the different curriculum of each host country.

Teacher training at the pre-service level seeks to ensure that sufficient qualified teachers are available to staff UNRWA school system in the region. Since 1993 the upgraded teacher training programme has been offered at three UNRWA Faculties of Educational Science (FES) in Amman (Jordan) and two Educational Science Faculties (ESFs) in Ramallah (West Bank). Also, UNRWA established vocational schools with a focus on teaching skills needed for improving the economic well-being of the community. From 1953 to 1971, UNRWA established eight vocational training centres, starting in 1953 with Kalandia Vocational Training Centre (KTC) and then Gaza Vocational Training Centre (GTC). Other centres were constructed subsequently over the years: Ramallah Men's Training Centre (RMTC) and Ramallah Women's Training Centre (RWTC) in 1962, and Amman Training Centre (ATC) in 1971. Khan Younis Training Centre in Gaza was established in 2007–2008 (Shabaneh 2012: 6-7).

While primary and preparatory education shaped the communities' loyalties and love for the homeland, vocational and teachers' colleges were necessary to help the communities survive the socio-economic hardship. Many students who studied liberal arts eventually left the camps to work in the Gulf States or other neighbouring Arab countries. Many students are finding and doing local jobs after completing their vocational training. Many Palestinians who benefited from UNRWA's vocational training stayed in camps to work as an active player in the development of their communities. Thus, UNRWA's education has helped refugees stay in their communities and forge national consciousness.

A respected academic expert on UNRWA's schools in Jordan explained some of the ways in which UNRWA's educational programmes promoted nationalism unintentionally. In the course of his 35-year career with UNRWA, he was a teacher, a school principal, head of Ramallah Teachers College, and head of the Education Department in Amman. He dealt with most of UNRWA's Commissioner Generals and helped shape many of its academic programmes and policies. When asked how refugee children maintained a sense of belonging to a land they had never seen, and how refugees react to living within states eager to force them to forget about their

past, he said, “The fact that the teachers were refugees themselves made it natural for them to communicate their experiences with the students”. Administrators at UNRWA’s Teachers College in Amman, in response to a question, explained “. . . students expect to know that education is a right, clean water is a right, to live in peace is a right, and to be treated as a human being is a right, too”.

Although UNRWA and the host countries resisted Palestinian nationalism at the beginning but failed for several reasons: (1) the refugee camps preserved Palestinian identity; (2) the refugee schools nurtured that identity; (3) oral history and narratives kept memories alive, as each night in every camp, first, second, and third-generation refugees gathered and repeated stories about Palestinian culture and heritage; and (4) the fact that UNRWA was financed by the international community, not the host states, gave the agency some autonomy. Writers, intellectuals, poets, artists, resistance leaders, and political leaders have emerged from refugee camps, e.g., Ghassan Kanafani, Ahmed Dahbour, Najee Al Ali, Husam Khader, Ahmad Yaseen, Khaleel Al-Wazeer. These individuals, in turn, became key players in Palestinian society and helped in developing a distinct Palestinian identity (Shabaneh 2012: 10-11).

In West Bank refugee camps, students were both politically and historically conscious as their peers in Jordan. For example, after a history class in the Al Aroub refugee camp, about ten students described in details about the way their elders were forced to leave. The children could narrate events from the war down to the smallest detail because they had heard these stories so many times from their parents and grandparents that one might think they had lived through it themselves. The children not only spoke about war and violence, but also about the homes, orchards, gardens, and farms their elders had left behind.

A visit to a geography class in the Aida refugee camp, five miles south of Jerusalem, showed how the classroom can support the reconstruction of Palestinian identity. A teacher began the class with Palestine’s topography, location, boundaries, and resources with an informative lecture on the land and its nature, mentioning various cities of the West Bank and Gaza, and also inside Israel, where many Palestinian Arabs still live, but to which she referred as part of ‘pre-1948’ Palestine. She also spoke of the religious sites in Palestine, mentioning Christian, Islamic and Jewish sites in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron, Jericho and Nablus etc.

Glorifying national heroes are also an important aspect of reconstituting nationalism. Early Palestinian heroes have become iconic in the eyes of the students and the Palestinian collective memory, and their names are frequently mentioned in conversations among refugees in the camps and schools. Stories about leaders who sacrificed themselves to protect the homeland, battles like Al-Karamah 1968, Black September 1970, the exodus from Beirut in 1982, and the two Palestinian Intifadas 1987 and 2000, rekindled the narrative in the schools and the camps. For instance, Khalid al-Hassan, a founder and long-time leader of the PLO, said, “After Karamah, we were forced to make our mobilization and ideological education [of] . . . the people in the camps by masses, by lectures, not by cells: and there is a big difference in both ways. There we deal with an individual; here we deal with masses, with 100 at one time”. Several students talked about the fact that they or their parents had been attending public schools instead of UNRWA schools, but their identity would not have been as strong and as distinct (Shabaneh 2012: 12-13).

In Syria, the deep commitment of the Ba’ath party to Arab nationalism gives UNRWA schools a clear advantage in teaching and cultivating Palestinian nationalism compared to other host countries. Many schools are named after villages and towns in historic Palestine, with entrances displaying maps and images of towns from pre-1948 Palestine - a clear reminder to students of their origins. Before morning classes, students listen to the Palestinian National Anthem (*Feda’i, Feda’i* or ‘sacrificer, sacrificer’), or other Arab national anthems, especially the Syrian one. The impact of teacher training was seen clearly in a history class at the Tabatya Secondary School in Syria’s Deraa refugee camp. The teacher focussed on the cultural values of the Palestinians before *Al-Nakba*. Students were encouraged to share their stories through presentations, acting, drawing, and reciting poetry. Many students acted out the painful journey of their elders. The Syrian history books that the ninth grade book demonstrates that Syrian history is part and parcel of the struggle to liberate Palestine, and details how the question of Palestine began in 1917.

Thus, it can be said that UNRWA schools, vocational training centres, teachers’ colleges, and academic programmes have played a central role in reconstituting Palestinian nationalism. UNRWA schools and camps not only protected Palestinians but also enabled them to resist assimilation and integration into host countries. Through its historical involvement as a relief agency, UNRWA provided spaces where all refugees shared their experiences. Given this support, refugees

resisted assimilation and integration and instead reconstituted their tradition and with that their national identity (Shabaneh 2012: 14-15, 20).

To sum up, it can be said that the UNRWA continued from its inception through Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza in 1967; Israeli occupation of south Lebanon from 1982-2000; civil wars in Jordan (1970-71) and Lebanon (1975-90), including three rounds of PLO-Amal “War of the Camps” in Lebanon in 1985-87; two Palestinian intifadas; Palestinians fleeing during Gulf war in Kuwait (1990-91) and later Iraq (2003); destruction of Nahr al-Barid camp of Lebanon in 2007; Israeli attacks against Gaza in 2008-09; the continued Israeli-Egyptian blockade of Gaza; and the rise and fall of the Palestine-Israel peace process. The Agency has navigated all of this while dealing with the extremely sensitive Palestinian refugee issue.

However, the UNRWA has been criticised by several donor countries<sup>13</sup>. Some have accused it of artificially keeping the refugee issue alive, or perpetuating refugee camps and failing to integrate the refugees into host countries. Some in Israel have been unhappy with the Agency’s frank reporting of attacks and the devastating social and economic effects of the blockade of the Gaza Strip. Unfortunately, these criticisms, in turn, have potential political effects, as donor officials are lobbied to cut funding for UNRWA for its alleged transgressions. UNRWA operates in a very difficult environment, in which it balances the sensitivities of refugees, host countries, and international donors. Brynen (2009) wished UNRWA were unnecessary, if refugee issues had long ago been resolved. Until they are, however, the Agency, its staff, and their very hard work remain invaluable (Brynen 2009: 2-7).

### **Evolution of Canada’s Refugee Policy**

Refugee policy in Canada is one of the most controversial and debated political and social issues. Canada’s refugee policy can be partly understood by the fact that

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<sup>13</sup> On May 13, 2002, US Congressman Tom Lantos called for congressional hearings on the refugee organization. He wrote to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan asking him to conduct a probe into UNRWA’s operations: ‘My concern is that, for too long, UNRWA has been part of the problem, rather than the solution, in the Middle East. However initially well-intentioned, UNRWA camps have fostered a culture of anger and dependency that undermines both regional peace and the well-being of the camps’ inhabitants’.

refugee policy has been inextricably tied to Canada's immigration policy. Seen as a source of nation-building, immigration has always been a controversial political question, and the main concern has always been the selection of immigrants. Historically the immigration department has had a central role in controlling admission to the country and has been the central apparatus for refugees.

Canadian immigration policy, of which refugee policy is one component, has developed through various stages. The first Immigration Act was passed in 1869 when immigrants of agricultural background from European states were given preference through to the 1920s that was needed to colonise the agricultural western part of Canada. After the Second World War, Canada wanted to become not only a major urban industrial state but also a world leader in peace, humanitarian and development efforts. The 1967 Act eliminated racist preference system and introduced individual point system that would be suitable for adaptation and contribution to Canadian society. The 1967 Act did not provide any special status for refugees. Refugees were perceived to be a phenomenon arising from the post-war problems and East-West Conflict in Europe. The 1976 Act gave explicit recognition to refugee as a distinct entry class (Basok and Simmons 1993: 134-36).

***(i) Immigration and Refugee Acts: 1970s to 1990s***

Until 1976 selection of refugees had been done on an ad-hoc basis<sup>14</sup> and was motivated by the discrimination<sup>15</sup>. The 1976 Immigration Act instituted, for the first time, a legal framework for the determination of the cases of people claiming refugee status at the border or on Canadian territory. The 1976 Immigration Act, came into effect in 1978, allowed Canada the discretion to select refugees on humanitarian

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<sup>14</sup> Canada did not sign the UN Refugee Convention upon its formulation in 1951. The notion of refugee as defined by the UNHCR Convention was adopted only in 1969 by Canada, although it had been used implicitly since 1951. Two implications followed from this ambivalence. First, Canada as a government appeared reticent to assume responsibility for refugees as an international commitment, above and beyond national goals, until late in the sixties. Secondly, the definition was somewhat maladaptive if used exclusively. Rather it opted to use the definition as an operating guideline for identifying refugees.

<sup>15</sup> It had its roots directly in the anti-Semitism of bureaucrats, such as Frederick Blair and politicians such as Prime Minister Mackenzie King. In the period from 1933 to 1945, US took in 190,000 Jews, UK took in 65,000 and France took in 55,000 and Canada, a country of immigrants, admitted a bare 5,000. Canada began to take European migrants as part of the special programme between 1947 and 1952, less than 10 per cent were Jews; 16,000 went to Canada, while 142,000 of the European remnant went to the new state of Israel.

grounds for entry into Canada. A provision of “designated classes” was introduced, that included those who do not come under the Convention refugee definition. Further, groups of five or more people could sponsor them. This was most important innovation in the large flow of refugees selected overseas, particularly the Indo-Chinese refugees. They were humanitarian refugees, i.e., members of the designated classes, people in refugee like situations who are in need of resettlement but who may not meet the strict definition of convention refugee. In the case of Convention refugee, they select Canada as their choice, but in the case of humanitarian refugees, Canada chooses those refugees that are consistent with foreign policy objectives and best benefits Canada. Thus, admissibility involves a certain amount of discretion, even though the ultimate criterion remains the potential success of establishment in Canada (Adelman 1991: 173, 200).

Refugees under “Designated Classes”<sup>16</sup> specifications are examined individually while the convention refugees are determined to be refugees on group basis. The criteria differ in that the definition of a humanitarian refugee is broader and more flexible than the case of convention refugees. If both eligibility and admissibility are affirmative, visa can be issued as landed immigrant the same status as other immigrants to Canada (Canefe 2007: 207 and Adelman 1997: 272).

With the development of annual planning of refugee intake, the plan announced in early 1979 specified the following refugee intake of that year: Indo-chinese 5,000, East Europeans 2,300, Latin American 500, Convention Refugees 200 Contingency Reserve 2,000, in total 10,000<sup>17</sup>. But the planning exercise is complicated administratively as it is related to overall immigration policy, governmental fiscal year planning and international developments. The levels of overall immigration result from a negotiated plan involving provincial economic and social concerns as well as from forecasts of natural replacement and net immigration (Lanphier 1981: 118 and Abella 1993: 93).

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<sup>16</sup> Currently there are three different Designated Classes: 1) Indo-chinese; 2) Latin American; and 3) Self-exiled. The categories differ among themselves in specifications. Persons from Indo-China and East Europe, for example, need not demonstrate fear of political reprisal but must be residing outside their home country (and for East Europeans, outside the bloc of countries so included). To qualify as Latin American designated class on the other hand, citizens must be residing within their home country and demonstrate fear of some reprisal if they remained.

<sup>17</sup> In 1978 Canada agreed to accept about 6,000 refugees per year as part of a projected annual arrival of 100,000 immigrants.

**Table 4.1**  
**Annual Refugee Plan Allocations by Regions (1984-89)**

| <b>Regions</b> | <b>1984</b> | <b>1985</b> | <b>1986</b> | <b>1987</b> | <b>1988</b> | <b>1989</b> |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Eastern Europe | 2300        | 2000        | 3100        | 3100        | 3400        | 3400        |
| S.E. Asia      | 3,000       | 3,700       | 3,200       | 3,200       | 3,000       | 3,000       |
| Latin America  | 2,500       | 3,000       | 3,200       | 3,200       | 3,400       | 3,400       |
| Africa         | 1,000       | 1,000       | 1,000       | 1,000       | 1,000       | 1,000       |
| Middle East    | 800         | 800         | 900         | 900         | 1,800       | 1,800       |
| Others         | 200         | 400         | 300         | 300         | 100         | 100         |

Source: CEIC, Annual levels reports. Nasir Islam (1989), "Canada's Immigration Policy: Compassion, Economic Necessity or Lifeboat Ethics?", in Katherine A. Graham, ed., *How Ottawa Spends, 1989-90: The Buck Stops Where?*, Ottawa: Carleton University Press Inc, p. 231.

Table 4.1 shows that the Middle East and West Africa, the two largest refugee producing regions of the world, have traditionally been allocated the lowest refugee quota. It seems government has two refugee policies, one for Eastern Europe and another for the third world. Voluntary repatriation and resettlement in countries of first asylum is considered to be a preferred solution for Africa and the Middle East. For the Eastern Europeans, resettlement in Canada is encouraged. Since most refugees from Eastern Europe are included in the designated classes, they are not affected by the stringent refugee determination process. The latter applied to convention refugees. For example, the Afghan refugees, during 1981-86 Canada received a total of 1,104 Afghan refugees. It suggests that they are well protected and have an opportunity to settle in Pakistan or to be voluntary repatriated. These arguments remain questionable but increasing the quota for the Middle East from 900 to 1,800, although rather modest, this is a positive step (Islam 1989: 231-32). Table 4.2 also shows, less importance were given to the Africa and the Middle East refugees.

**Table 4.2**  
**Deployment of Resources Abroad**

| <b>Region</b>      | <b>No. of Posts</b> | <b>No. of Officers</b> |
|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| U.S.               | 12                  | 29                     |
| W. Europe          | 13                  | 42                     |
| Asia/Australia     | 5                   | 12                     |
| Africa/M.E.        | 8                   | 17                     |
| L. America/America | 14                  | 36                     |
| Total              | 64                  | 203                    |

Source: Dept. of Ext. Affairs. Nasir Islam (1989), "Canada's Immigration Policy: Compassion, Economic Necessity or Lifeboat Ethics?", in Katherine A. Graham, ed., *How Ottawa Spends, 1989-90: The Buck Stops Where?*, Ottawa: Carleton University Press Inc, p. 237.

Basok and Simmons (1993) analysed the data compiled by Employment and Immigration Canada on the volume and characteristics of all immigrant landing in Canada. They found that the 1976 Act favoured greater diversity of origins, but the refugee selection showed evidence of long established biases in favour of certain countries or regions. Ideological forces in Canada guided the final selection of the refugees. For instance, Ethiopians fleeing the communist regime are admitted in Canada whose numbers are relatively significant. While the flow of Guatemalan refugees, caused by right wing military repression dropped in 1987 that of Nicaraguan refugees, who were dissatisfied with the left-wing Sandinista government increased. Indeed, between 1945 and 1982 about 80 per cent of refugees accepted into Canada were fleeing from communist states (Basok and Simmons 1993: 133, 148 and Abella 1993: 90)

For Indo-Chinese refugees, Canadian government introduced a matching formula by which it accepted one refugee for each privately sponsored one. This programme enabled Canada to accept some 60,000 Indo-Chinese refugees. But no matching formula was offered for the Ethiopian, Polish, and Iranian or Afghan refugees. Economic consideration was another factor behind the fact that refugees between 1978 and 1987 tended to be a group, relatively well-educated males (Basok and Simmons 1993: 149, 155 and Islam 1989: 230).

Canadian definition of refugee-producing countries changed from time to time. Taking the case of Lebanon, the UNHCR views Lebanon as a refugee-producing country, but Canada did not recognize it. Hence, practically no Lebanese entered Canada within the refugee class over this decade. In fact, from 1978-1987, only 74 Lebanese refugees entered Canada, around 13,035 Lebanese entered Canada as an independent migrants (labour force), or as sponsored kin of previous migrants (Basok and Simmons 1993: 146).

From the geographic perspective, it was also found that the intake of refugees into Canada reveals that the overwhelming number of refugees came from Europe, Latin America and South East Asia which produced the fewer refugees in comparison to Africa, Middle East or South Asia. Thus, the regions are not proportionately represented in relation to the production of refugees in the respective regions (Adelman 1991: 182). The perception of easy access and abuses that grew out of the Act of 1976, the numbers of refugee claimants became overloaded and choked to the

point of breaking down. In 1981 from 3,450 refugee claims to 85,000 were waited to be processed in 1988 (Knight 1993: 20).

Keeping in view this discrimination, in 1985, the Supreme Court of Canada declared in the case of *Singh et al. Vs. Canada* (Minister of Employment and Immigration) that a large part of the refugee protection system at the time was at odds with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Although Canadian government accepted the UNHCR Nansen Prize for the Canadian people for their work on behalf of refugees, almost in the same period, an increase in the arrival of Central American refugees and the arrival of a boatload of Sikhs off the coast of Nova Scotia led to Parliament being recalled from summer vacation in 1987 for an emergency session to deal with the issue. The media created a sense that Canada was being invaded by refugees and contributed to building up the issue into a political crisis. Unable to control the source and volume of the arrival of asylum seekers, the determination system was allowed to grind to a halt to pave the way for radical restructuring (Lacroix 2004: 150 and Adelman 1991: 174).

In response to this crisis and following the Supreme Court ruling of 1985 the Immigration officials tabled the 1976 Act with some changes in the summer of 1987. Bill C-55 was designed to streamline the refugee determination process, creating the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB). Thus, created by the Parliament of Canada, the IRB is an independent tribunal body mandated to adjudicate all asylum claims registered in Canada, as well as to receive appeals relating to immigration decisions, and also an order for removal (Lacroix 2004: 150, Gauthier 2010: 19 and Canefe 2007: 207).

Adjudication of claims would be undertaken by a quasi-judicial panel made of two members. In effect, the concept of asylum is reduced to a set of procedures for refugee determination of persons who land in Canada and wish to make such a claim. Bill C-84 gave new powers to immigration officers to turn back ships in international waters that were suspected of carrying claimants, imposed new fines for carriers, and instituted new powers of search and seizure and detention. Although widely contested by non-governmental organizations, church groups and refugee advocates, Bills C-55 and C-84 went into effect on 1 January 1989. The IRB system underwent legislation changes in 1992 and 1995 and was also later modified by the implementation of the 2002 IRPA.

Under Bill C-55 a “safe third country” provision allowed claimants who had sojourned in a safe third country to be returned to that country to make their claim. However, this provision was not enforced in practice. In the early 1990s the “safe third country” clause was ambiguous as it was too difficult to establish what constituted a “safe third country”. The government’s reasoning for instituting this clause is somewhat clarified in a letter sent to the president of the coalition in July 1996. In this letter, Lloyd Axworthy, then Minister of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, wrote that the breadth of unprecedented migrations at the international level and the limited means of host societies jeopardize the international community’s capacity to deal with the increasing challenges posed by asylum seekers. It has become necessary, in the interest of refugees themselves, to clarify the responsibilities of states to prevent the abusive use of refugee determination procedures by persons having no real need of protection, as well as to discourage irregular international movements of people having already found refugee protection. The response reveals an acceptance of the dominant discourse at the international level at the time and points to Canada’s pre-occupation with control of unwanted migrants.

Discussions on the “safe third country” clause continued sporadically throughout the 1990s. In December 2002, following the events of 11 September 2001, a new agreement between Canada and the United States allowed claimants who have gone through the United States to be returned there and not allowed into Canada to make their claim. Non-governmental refugee advocate groups have decried this situation as an attack on the non-refoulement principle, i.e., forced return. Since the end of January 2003, the Canadian government has forcibly returned to the United States hundreds of people trying to seek Canada’s protection, even in cases where it is known that the claimants will be jailed by the US and, therefore, unable to return to Canada to pursue their claim. The US Committee for Refugees (USCR) is concerned that Canada’s turning back of asylum seekers at its land borders with the United States could lead to the refoulement of genuine refugees to countries where they could face persecution, an egregious violation of international law (Lacroix 2004: 150-51).

In the meantime, the Refugee Resettlement Model (RRM) was developed in 1997, and proposed to prioritize refugees protection rather than their potential ability to establish successfully themselves once in Canada. It also proposed to prioritize

family reunification and to ensure the immediate resettlement of urgent protection cases. These measures were incorporated into Bill C-31, which was later incorporated into the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, 2002 (Gauthier 2010: 12).

*(ii) Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, 2002*

On 28 June 2002, the Canadian government came with the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA). It was implemented in combination with the decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada, federal courts, trial courts, and the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB). This immigration and refugee system has three main components. (i) The social component refers to state facilitation of family reunification and permission for members of the nuclear family unit to immigrate with principal applicants. (ii) The economic component shapes the body of regulations pertaining to immigrant selection, including the acceptance of skilled workers and business immigrants. (iii) The humanitarian component relates to Canada's international obligations in the area of humanitarian and international public law. There are also arrangements of government-assisted and privately sponsored refugee settlement and protection programmes abroad. These provisions are considered as Canada's commitment to international efforts to provide assistance to those in need of humanitarian aid, resettlement, and safe places. They are also mechanisms through which Canada provides direct protection for individuals with a fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, or membership in a particular social group, as well as those at risk of torture or cruel and unusual treatment or punishment (Canefe 2007: 206-07).

Three issues are of particular concern regarding this. First, the law was implemented without providing an appeal process, even though the appeal was an integral part of the law. Second, claims are now heard by a single member of the IRB. Third, the IRPA provides some immigration categories that are precarious, meaning that they could be refused the right to stay in Canada and dependent on third parties: asylum seekers sponsored family members, holders of temporary work visas, live-in care givers, etc. (Lacroix 2004: 151).

Regarding IRB, the possibility of settling in Canada depends on obtaining a positive decision from the IRB, and only that piece of paper will ensure their future. Without that paper, nothing can move forward in their lives.

The claimant from Kenya summarized the worry expressed by all claimants, “The waiting is difficult because one doesn’t know. The day you go in and tell your story, everything depends on the officer who is in front of you, on his mood, on his receptiveness. A story can be authentic, surely, but it’s in the way to convey it. There are a lot of unknowns that are difficult to control”. Reasons for flight differed according to individual circumstances, but the impact of flight on their becoming refugees was strikingly similar for all. All described a strong attachment to their country, where they were settled, lived with their families, had jobs, cars, and houses. One refugee recall, “When you decide to be a refugee, it’s that you accept, at about 90 per cent, to cut yourself off from that environment. I would say that it’s cutting the umbilical cord; you leave that elsewhere. And I am here . . . I don’t even know how to represent myself to myself now”.

According to the Canadian Council for Refugees, for many years, Canadian security provisions have unfairly hurt a few refugees who were caught up in the very wide definition of security risk in Canadian law. The breadth of the definition can be seen in the fact that all members of the African National Congress, the ruling party in South Africa, are by default inadmissible to Canada, as members of an organization that has engaged in terrorism where terrorism is not defined. Since 11 September 2001, there is, of course, a greatly heightened focus on security, and an unfortunate and unfair association has been made between refugees and terrorism. The security and medical screening procedures are also considerably limiting those admissible for resettlement to Canada. While UNHCR already executes one level of security screening by applying the exclusions outlined in 1951 Convention, Canada will still refuse some UNHCR-referred cases based on security grounds – cases that are at times subsequently accepted by the United States or the Netherlands. In addition to the fact that Canada was also found to be slow in conducting its security reviews, which created additional delays in the resettlement operations (Gauthier 2010: 27 and Lacroix 2004: 152-56).

For Canada, interdiction refers to the practice of denying individuals in possession of improper documentation access to the country. Migration Integrity Officers (MIO) are employees of the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA), who are placed “in 46 key foreign embarkation, transit, and immigration points around the world.” Global MIO staff counts 56 individuals. They are involved in the interdiction of approximately 5,000 individuals per year. The Migration Integrity Officer

programme was developed in the context of Canada's Multiple Borders Strategy, described as a strategy "focusing its intelligence and interdiction efforts on each of these overseas checkpoints to keep inadmissible and potentially harmful individuals as far away from North America as possible. Passenger analysis units are established at Canadian airports to identify high-risk travelers before they arrive, thus enabling Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) to identify criminals and security threats earlier in the travel continuum" (Gauthier 2010: 67).

Sponsorship arrangements were developed clearly in Canada through IRPA 2002. There are three main types of sponsorship programmes: the Government Assisted Refugee (GAR) Programme, the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) Programme, and the Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS) Programme. Those resettled under the GAR programme are referred to Canada by UNHCR, and are supported financially by the Canadian government, and assisted by the staff of Canadian Service Provider Organizations (SPOs). On the other hand, Canadian individuals or organizations (in the case of a church, its local parishes or congregations) wishing to sponsor a refugee for resettlement to Canada must submit a PSR application for this individual or family to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). Canadian visa offices can also suggest a case to be resettled by a Private Sponsor (Visa Office Referral – VOR). Once CIC approves the private sponsorship application, or that a VOR is matched to a Canadian sponsor, a Sponsorship Agreement is signed, and the file is sent to the visa office abroad for adjudication. Private Sponsors are entirely responsible for the cost of the application process, and for the financial assistance provided to the refugees for up to one year. Sponsors are also responsible for assisting refugees in their settlement process, also for up to one year. Lastly, the Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS) programme represents a combination of the GAR and PSR programmes. Cases are referred or selected in the same manner as the PSR programme, although individuals will receive financial assistance from the Canadian government for up to three years, and the sponsors will assist the refugees through their process of resettlement during the same period.

The existence of these different protection programmes thus allows a greater number of individuals to be resettled in Canada through different channels. Through these programmes, Canada is able to offer resettlement to the most vulnerable (through the GAR programme), to promote family or community reunification (through the PSR programme), and also to allow access to those who may have

otherwise fallen under other programme's radars (through the PSR and JAS programmes) (Gauthier 2010: 13-14).

Thus, policy development has therefore encouraged participation of the private and organizational sectors in sponsorship while maintaining the centralized procedure of admissions. Numbers of refugees admitted to Canada may thereby vary not only with international political conditions but also the level of participation of the private sector within Canada as private sponsorships are supplementary.

Moreover, the refugee determination process in Canada is lengthy and complicated. Although some refugee claims may be channeled to a fast-track system and decisions rendered within a few months, research indicates that for many claimants in Quebec the average waiting period is seven months for a hearing and another 22 months for a permanent residency application to be processed. During this period, refugee claimants have limited access to work, social welfare, health, social services and are generally separated from their immediate families. Different steps are involved in the refugee determination process. First, refugee claimants must declare their intentions to claim asylum to the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) within 28 days. If the answer from IRB is positive, the claimant applies for permanent residency, initiating at the same time the process of family reunification. If the decision is negative one may appeal to the Federal Court or apply for a humanitarian review of that case. If these recourses fail, an exclusion order will be issued, and the claimant will be scheduled for deportation (Lacroix 2004: 118, 152).

There are debates whether the Canadian resettlement is focussing more on the economic integration or the cultural integration of its resettled refugees. Quebec's system being more focused on the cultural integration, involving on the refugees French language skills, as well as the knowledge of Quebec politics and history. With the entry into power of the Conservative government at the federal level in 2006, similar objectives have been voiced by CIC Minister, Jason Kenney, concerning new migrants' civic responsibility to learn one of the two official languages, and to expand the level of knowledge on Canadian history and politics that would be necessary to succeed in their Canadian citizenship examination. Economic integration, then, has come to be seen as insufficient. Immigrants of all categories, including refugees, are now expected by the Canadian Government to blend fully into their new society. It could also be considered insufficient if the refugee is not able to attain a certain level

on the job market to perhaps bring to the economy, at least, the equivalent in the public funds invested in his or her resettlement to Canada (Gauthier 2010: 31).

There are some criticisms regarding this. Lippert (1998) highlighted that Canada's refugee programme initially stemmed from humanitarian principles, and then moved towards a system that prioritized accounting and cost-benefit analysis. He also pointed out that a pay of \$975 landing fee required from all immigrants to Canada, in addition to the fee of \$500 for the administrative processing of their landed immigrant status application. This amount thus expected to account for over half of the costs of the resettlement programme incurred by the federal government, evidently taking away from the principle of providing humanitarian assistance to some of the world's most vulnerable people (Lippert 1998: 387).

From the early 1990s to the early years of 2000, Casasola (2001) noted a shift in the profile of the refugees resettled by Canada. The resettlement of individuals with special needs – such as women at risk, elderly refugees, and some with medical needs – increased from 89 individuals in 1996 to over 550 individuals in 2000. While there was no legislation to this effect, Canadian visa officers were reported to have decreases the application of the “ability to establish” criterion. Also, the region of origin of the resettled refugees also shifted from Europe in the 1990s, to Africa and the Middle East at the beginning of 2000 (Casasola 2001: 80).

Beiser (2006) argued that due to its intake of approximately 300,000 immigrants per year, representing about 1 per cent of its existing population, Canada has made immigration one of its most debated issues, and greatest challenge. While refugees only represent a small proportion of this quota (between 5 and 10 per cent), Beiser observed that Canada prides itself on treating refugees fairly and compassionately. He argues, however, that the limited allocations of funding are more of an indication that Canada may be admitting a certain number of refugees in order to save its humanitarian reputation, a more instrumental objective, rather than representing a truly humanitarian values and action (Beiser 2006: 56-57).

### **Canada and the Refugee Settlement**

In terms of numbers of refugees admitted to Canada, Canada lacks a continuous record of data all of which are classified according to similar characteristics. Canada's

resettlement occurred in the decade immediately succeeding the Second World War when a near quarter million persons arrived as refugees. They were almost entirely of Eastern European origin, although the specific reason for the movement of each group and wave was preceded by particular political circumstances. Some five thousand were political refugees immediately after the Second World War. The largest proportion, more than 37,000 refugees, arrived in the two-year period, 1956-1957, following the Hungarian uprising during that time<sup>18</sup>.

Canada received comparatively few refugees during 1959-1967. Most camps of displaced persons had been cleared, by that time. Only a substantial influx of refugees of Yugoslavian origin had intervened before the political events in Czechoslovakia accelerated intake activity in 1968; thereupon, some 12,000 Czech refugees entered by the end of 1969. Table 4.3 presents in aggregate form the waves of refugees and displaced persons arriving in Canada for the period 1947-1967.

**Table 4.3.**  
**Refugees, Displaced Persons and Stateless Immigrants to Canada, 1947-1967, by Ethnic Origin**

| <b>Countries</b>             | <b>1947 – 1958</b> | <b>1959-1967</b> | <b>1947-1967</b> |
|------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Hungarian                    | 42,987             | 2,640            | 45,627           |
| Polish                       | 42,533             | 1,211            | 43,744           |
| Russian                      | 32,925             | 491              | 33,416           |
| German                       | 20,610             | 204              | 20,814           |
| Yugoslav                     | 19,613             | 11,320           | 30,933           |
| Jewish                       | 17,406             | 574              | 17,980           |
| Other E. Europe <sup>a</sup> | 39,346             | 1,565            | 40,911           |
| Other W. Europe <sup>b</sup> | 7,502              | 354              | 7,856            |
| All Others <sup>c</sup>      | 377                | 554              | 931              |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>223,299</b>     | <b>18,913</b>    | <b>242,212</b>   |

Source: Canada: Department of Employment and Immigration, 1974

Notes: a. Albanian, Bulgarian, Czechoslovakian, Estonian, Finnish, Lettish, Lithuanian, Romanian, Turkish.

b. Austrian, Belgian, Danish, Dutch, French, Greek, Italian, Norwegian, Portuguese, Spanish, Swiss.

c. Chinese, Egyptian, Iranian, Lebanese, Syrian and all others.

These data are specifically detailed, along with refugees through successive years in Table 4.4. The period 1970-71 witnessed relatively low refugee movement to

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<sup>18</sup> Since the Second World War Canada has received some 324,660 immigrants as refugees, displaced persons or "Designated Classes". The largest proportion 79 per cent, were from Central and Eastern Europe. Refugees from Asia accounted for 10 percent of the total. Africa and South America accounted for 3 and 2 per cent respectively, with the remainder, 6 per cent from various parts of the world.

Canada. The ascending number of refugees from 1975 onwards is attributable to multiple movements from Chile, Indo-china (especially Vietnam), Lebanon and Mozambique<sup>19</sup> (Lanphier 1981: 119-20).

**Table 4.4.**  
**Refugees Admitted to Canada, by Year, by Birthplace**

| <b>Birth Place</b>   | <b>1968</b> | <b>1969</b> | <b>1970</b> | <b>1971</b> | <b>1972</b> | <b>1973</b> | <b>1974</b> | <b>1975</b> | <b>1976</b> | <b>1977</b> | <b>1978</b> | <b>1979<sup>(a)</sup></b> | <b>Total</b> |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| Vietnam              | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | 19,818                    |              |
| Kampuchea            | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | 1,170                     | -            |
| Laos                 | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | 3,884                     | -            |
| Other                | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | 502                       | -            |
| Subtotal S.East Asia | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | 3,576       | 2,602       | 777         | 1,315       | 24,819                    | 33,089       |
| East Europe          | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | 2,225                     | 2,225        |
| Czechoslovakia       | 9,147       | 2,797       | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -                         | 11,943       |
| Tibet                | -           | -           | -           | 187         | 41          | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -           | -                         | 228          |
| Uganda               | -           | -           | -           | -           | 4,875       | 2,075       | 119         | -           | -           | -           | -           | -                         | 7,069        |
| Chile                |             |             |             |             |             | 20          | 1,054       | 1,857       | 1,351       | 1,214       | 729         | 432 <sup>(b)</sup>        | 6,657        |
| Lebanon              |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             | 6,116       | 3,661       | 1,078       |                           | 10,855       |
| Mozambique           |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             | 691         | 750         | 271         |                           | 1,712        |
| Others               | 825         | 807         | 1,361       | 614         | 324         | 288         | 483         | 1,023       | 1,023       | 951         | 868,        | 264                       | 8,831        |
| Subtotal refugee     | 9,971       | 3,604       | 1,361       | 801         | 5,204       | 2,383       | 1,656       | 6,331       | 11,783      | 7,353       | 4,261       | 27,740                    | 82,448       |
| Other immigrants     | 174,003     | 157,927     | 146,352     | 121,099     | 116,766     | 181,817     | 216,809     | 181,550     | 137,646     | 107,561     | 82,052      | 84,149                    | 1,707,333    |

<sup>19</sup>The figure in 1979 of 19,818 refugees from Vietnam represents the largest intake of people from any single country to Canada since 1976. Compared with immigration of persons from all other countries to Canada in the same year, it is the largest identifiable group.

|             |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |             |                |             |                       |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------------|
|             |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |             |                |             | 1                     |
| Grand Total | 18<br>3,9<br>74 | 16<br>1,5<br>31 | 14<br>7,7<br>13 | 12<br>1,9<br>00 | 12<br>2,0<br>06 | 18<br>4,2<br>00 | 21<br>8,4<br>65 | 18<br>7,8<br>81 | 14<br>9,4<br>29 | 114,<br>914 | 86,<br>31<br>3 | 111,<br>889 | 1,7<br>90,<br>21<br>5 |

Source: Refugee Policy Division, Employment and Immigration Canada.

Notes: a. Preliminary figures, b. Latin American refugees.

Resettled refugees account for approximately 4 to 6 per cent of all immigrants to Canada. If added to the proportion of individuals who represent successful asylum claimants, the total percentage of protected persons selected by Canada in proportion to all migrants to Canada is between 10 and 13 per cent. As a point of comparison, in 2008, the United States resettled 60,108 refugees and admitted 22,930 asylum claimants (totaling to 83,038 individuals), Canada admitted a total of 21,860<sup>20</sup> and Australia, a total of 14,000. This represented a proportion of 1 for every 3,667 individuals in the United States, 1 for every 1,539 individuals in Australia, and 1 for every 1,524 individuals in Canada. A total of sixteen countries have a yearly quota of refugees they admit to their territories while other countries only run ad-hoc programmes according to the needs of a given refugee population at a given time.

It is stated that although the number of resettlement countries and their allocated resettlement spaces were increasing, it still did not match the current resettlement needs of the world's refugee population, as per UNHCR's assessment of global resettlement needs<sup>21</sup> (Gauthier 2010: 12, 32).

Regarding the destination of refugees and designated class immigrants to Canada is partly the result of agreements struck between the various provinces and the federal government and partly a matter of the wishes of the immigrant. Quebec, in particular, has a Ministry of Immigration which sets policies and quotas for the refugees. In the case of other provinces, the policy is pronounced by the federal government after formal consultations with the provinces.

<sup>20</sup> Regarding resettlement numbers, Cochetel reported that Canada determined its resettlement capacity to be of 6,140 GARs for 2008 (representing 0.018% of its population). This was in comparison to the U.S.'s determined capacity of 50,000 (representing 0.016% of its population), and Australia's capacity of 6,000 (representing 0.028% of its population). The global resettlement capacity of all receiving countries combined thus amounted to 69,610 refugees in 2008.

<sup>21</sup> The resettlement needs of Iraqis alone were assessed by UNHCR to be of approximately 60,000 in early 2009.

**Table 4.5.**  
**Refugee and Designated Class Immigrants, 1979, by Province of Canada<sup>(a)</sup> (%)**

|   | <b>Brit.<br/>Col.</b> | <b>Alta<br/>.</b> | <b>Sask<br/>.</b> | <b>Man.<br/>&amp;<br/>Terr.</b> | <b>On<br/>t.</b> | <b>Qu<br/>e.</b> | <b>New<br/>Bru<br/>ns</b> | <b>N.S.<br/>&amp;<br/>P.E.I.</b> | <b>N<br/>Fld</b> | <b>(%)</b> | <b>Tota<br/>l</b>                 |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| Indo<br>China <sup>(b)</sup>                  | 11                    | 13                | 5                 | 6                               | 38               | 22               | 2                         | 2                                | 1                | 100        | 24,8<br>19                        |
| Latin<br>Americ<br>a <sup>(c)</sup>           | 1                     | 7                 | 19                | 15                              | 22               | 36               | -                         | -                                | -                | 100        | 432                               |
| East<br>Europe<br>an <sup>(d)</sup>           | 8                     | 17                | 3                 | 8                               | 52               | 11               | (*)                       | 1                                | -                | 100        | 2,22<br>5                         |
| Conven<br>tion<br>Refuge<br>es <sup>(e)</sup> | 6                     | 6                 | 6                 | 3                               | 48               | 29               | -                         | 1                                | 1                | 100        | 264                               |
| Total   | 10                    | 13                | 5                 | 7                               | 39               | 22               | 1                         | 2                                | 1                | 100        | 27,7<br>40                        |
| All<br>Immigr<br>ants                         | 15                    | 11                | 3                 | 5                               | 46               | 17               | 1                         | 1                                | 1                | 100        | 111,<br>889                       |
| Populat<br>ion                                | 11                    | 8                 | 4                 | 5                               | 36               | 27               | 3                         | 4                                | 2                | 100        | 23,8<br>09,8<br>00 <sup>(f)</sup> |

Source: Refugee Policy Division, Employment and Immigration Canada

Notes: a. Preliminary figures.

b. Birthplace Vietnam, Kampuchea, Laos, and other former residents of those countries.

c. Citizens of Chile, Argentina and Uruguay.

d. Self-exiles from Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, GDR, Hungary, Poland, Romania, USSR.

e. Both selected abroad and receiving protection once arrived in Canada.

f. Estimate January 1, 1980.

- No cases.

\*Less than 1 per cent.

Table 4.5 indicates that the proportions of refugees received by the province follow the rank, but not proportionate level, of population in the province. Proportionally, Ontario receives a larger share of refugees than its present proportion of total population, although its share of all immigrants arriving in 1979 is even higher. Of the various origins only refugees from Latin America are mostly concentrated in regions other than Ontario. Quebec has received the second largest proportion of refugees. These refugees form a larger part of the total number of immigrants received than in most other provinces. Latin American refugees are more heavily represented in comparison to Eastern Europe in Quebec. Alberta ranks third in the proportion of refugees arriving in 1979 while British Columbia ranks closely

behind Alberta, with largest proportions arriving from Indo-Chinese origins. All other regions received refugees more or less in proportion to their population and number of immigrants in total (Lanphier 1981: 121).

Table 4.6 indicates that the number of Middle East refugees has increased after the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, 2002, yet their proportion to immigrants in Canada is very less.

**Table 4.6**

**Permanent Residents in Canada from the Middle East by Category**

| Source area                | Year-wise number |         |        |         |         |         |         |         |         |         |
|----------------------------|------------------|---------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
|                            | 1996             | 1997    | 1998   | 1999    | 2000    | 2001    | 2002    | 2003    | 2004    | 2005    |
| Family class total         | 68,359           | 59,979  | 50,898 | 55,277  | 60,612  | 66,795  | 62,304  | 65,129  | 62,260  | 63,352  |
| Africa and Middle East     | 20,234           | 23,121  | 19,284 | 18,999  | 23,414  | 30,706  | 30,604  | 25,384  | 27,591  | 28,649  |
| Economic immigrant (Total) | 125,370          | 128,351 | 97,911 | 109,255 | 136,299 | 155,719 | 137,861 | 121,047 | 133,745 | 156,310 |
| Africa and Middle East     | 8,665            | 7,975   | 7,662  | 8,503   | 10,338  | 9,663   | 8,824   | 9,536   | 12,593  | 11,439  |
| Refugees (Total)           | 28,478           | 24,308  | 22,842 | 24,398  | 30,092  | 27,919  | 25,124  | 25,984  | 32,687  | 35,768  |
| Africa and Middle East     | 422              | 642     | 488    | 222     | 101     | 61      | 525     | 1,293   | 1,445   | 1,562   |

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2006).

**(i) Factors Influencing the Refugee Resettlement**

According to Canadian legislation, the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism must declare to Parliament on November 1 of every year how many individuals, by category, will be admitted to Canada within the following year. This is referred to as the 'levels plan'. As immigration is one of the only two issues under the Constitution Act for which federal and provincial governments have formal shared

jurisdiction, every year, discussions occur at the Ministerial level, at the Deputy Minister level, with each province, and then as a collective. Provincial governments thus have an influential voice with regard to how many individuals of each immigrant category will be admitted to their territory. Once provinces determine how many immigrants they are in a position to take, the number of refugees they will receive will be a specific proportion of their immigrant intake.

UNHCR also influence Canada's Resettlement Policies and Operations. Canada works very closely with the main implementer of the Convention and Protocol relating to the status of refugees, UNHCR. UNHCR's mandate is notably to identify those most in need of protection through resettlement. CIC is invited to Geneva thrice yearly to attend UNHCR meetings along with other resettlement countries, and to meet with UNHCR bilaterally as well. In the context of these meetings, Canada follows UNHCR's lead, and seek guidance from UNHCR on which groups are in need of resettlement worldwide and prepare strategy to share the international burden of refugee crisis. The principle of responsibility sharing simply implies that the country contributes in some way to attempt to alleviate refugee crisis, and assist of those in a state of asylum. In such an equation, however, states are left with the upper hand, while UNHCR and other refugee-aiding organizations attempt to find the best solutions for all those affected, given the limited resources made available to them, and the fact that some levels of the Canadian government accepts to commit a certain level of budget that would serve to accomplish just enough to uphold Canada's humanitarian image (Gauthier 2010: 70-71, 106-07).

It can be noted that UNHCR cannot initiate any resettlement operations without a) the commitments of resettlement states to offer a certain number of resettlement space, and b) the financial commitments of various contributors. For instance, on behalf of Canada, Barbara McDougall attended the international conference on Indo-Chinese refugees in 1989 in Geneva known as Comprehension Plan of Action or the CPA. Canada provided a grant of Can\$ 5 million to the UNHCR to help implement the CPA for Indo-Chinese refugees, an amount that grew to Can\$8.4 million over the three-year period by 1991, representing 3 per cent of the total contributed. Data shows that Canada contributed USD 1.36 per capita to UNHCR in 2009, far behind Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, and 45 per cent less than the U.S. In net numbers, Canada was the ninth largest contributor to UNHCR in 2009. However, it is also the fact that Canada is the second largest resettlement

country after the United States. Thus, although Canada does not seem to be one of the top donors to UNHCR, it does seem to contribute to the refugee aiding efforts in various forms (McDougall 1991: 4, 9 and Adelman 1997: 261).

With the creation of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration following the Act of the same name in 1994, the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration as it is known today was established. The policy-making decisions relating to refugee resettlement in Canada are officially based on Canada's humanitarian objectives, refugee populations' protection needs and Canada's available capacity. The mandate of this Committee is to examine orders of references that the House of Commons refers to it. Orders of reference may relate to bills, estimates or order-in-council appointments. The Committee may also study issues of its own choice. Also, the Committee studies and reports on all matters relating to the mandate, management and operations of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB). Members of the Committee are drawn from most (or all) parties represented in the House of Commons and the Chair being a member of the ruling party (Gauthier 2010: 85).

UNHCR and CIC considered that one of the main factors driving Canada to resettle refugees was its humanitarian tradition. However, it seemed evident when looking at CIC's perspective that the main priority of Canada's refugee resettlement programme was for the initiatives to remain effective. This aim could be interpreted as an indication of actual intentions, aiming primarily to maintain Canada's humanitarian tradition and reputation, all by remaining cost-effective, rather than simply aiming to protect refugees and others in need due to national moral obligations.

Although the recent world economic crisis only took place in 2009, the resettlement budget had not seen an increase in over a decade. It was made clear by CIC that the ceiling of approximately 10,000 to 12,000 of refugees resettled in Canada yearly was only due to the limited budget. CIC also explained that decisions to resettle refugees from one location or another were also mainly based on costs. It is argued that a group of refugees that would be closer to a CIC mission abroad would, reduce the cost of processing, and thus allow for a greater number of refugees to be resettled sooner with the given budgetary allowance. This was not to say that CIC would never reach the refugees in remote locations, but rather, that there would be a necessity to wait until the number of refugees was large enough to make a selection

mission in this location cost-effective. However, resettlement is still part and parcel of Canada's humanitarian agenda, despite its high costs and limited breadth (Gauthier 2010: 97-99).

Besides, the history of the IRB and the changes made to asylum-related regulations and refugee law indicate when the system cannot respond to inland refugee claimants cases that may fall outside the existing legal-bureaucratic framework, the negotiation for change often involves consultations with refugee groups and advocacy organizations. In other words, there has been a noteworthy component of political and advocacy interventions in the inland refugee determination stream of the Canadian refugee policy. Political judgment, policy measures, and international humanitarian principles all interact in shaping the Canadian refugee policy (Canefe 2007: 208).

Moreover, the Canadian government's decisions related to its yearly resettlement targets are said to be mainly based on the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, 2002, the Canadian government's humanitarian objectives, the protection needs of refugee populations or of populations in refugee-like situations, as identified by UNHCR, and on UNHCR's capacity and resources in the potential target source countries or countries of asylum. Four policy pillars guide the global resettlement community – i.e., the resettlement states, and UNHCR – in their assessments and decision-making process. These policy pillars are: the use of resettlement as an individual protection tool, resettlement as a possible mechanism to share global responsibilities, resettlement as a durable solution, and finally, the strategic use of resettlement.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) considers resettlement first and foremost as an individual protection tool used for refugee persons or refugee groups in situations of serious physical risk. Also the strategic use of resettlement, a more recent pillar only beginning to gain attraction, and being particularly supported by Canada. In the majority of the cases, resettlement is offered to individuals who would not otherwise have access to a solution that could end their state of asylum. Such possible durable solutions include permanent integration to the country of asylum or return to the individual's country of origin. Assessing whether resettlement is the only durable solution available to the individual is one of the main components of the assessment conducted by UNHCR, and later by Canadian immigration officers. In the case of the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) programme, the CIC officer will

be the one determining whether resettlement is the only durable solution available to the applicant. After determining, if the individual meets the refugee definition, can be admitted to Canada under the full responsibility of his or her private sponsors.

Resettlement is also used by Canada and its resettlement partners as a strategy to alleviate some of the numerous outcomes of the refugee crisis. The strategy does not attempt to resettle as many refugees as possible, but rather, to resettle specific portions of a given refugee population to derive benefits for the non-resettled refugees of the same caseload in a given camp, city, or country. Resettlement can be used to reduce the pressures on a given country of asylum, and encourage these asylum countries to keep their borders open to future refugee flows. Canada has been a promoter of the strategic use of resettlement. It continues to support the ideas set out in the 'Multilateral Framework of Understandings on Resettlement', including the strategic use of resettlement and seeks out opportunities to apply them<sup>22</sup>.

One of the foundations of the Canadian Refugee Resettlement programme is the principle of responsibility sharing. Canada aims to use resettlement to alleviate the human and financial costs, as well as the pressures of refugee influxes on major asylum countries' economies and infrastructure. It is the main reason Canada committed to resettling Iraqis out of the Middle East, Afghan refugees from Pakistan, Iran, the former Soviet Union (and others especially since 2004), and the Colombians since 1988. Another context in which resettlement was used to share responsibility was in Turkey<sup>23</sup> (Gauthier 2010: 47-50).

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<sup>22</sup> The strategic use of resettlement, as it was originally intended, was notably applied in the contexts of Nepal, Thailand, as well as in the case of the resettlement of a group of Somali refugees residing in Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya. Upon the initial proposal of the latter resettlement project by UNHCR, Canada and Australia committed to resettling all members of the one specific Somali clan. This clan was facing targeted persecution in the camp; the limited resources were thus absorbed by the extensive efforts made to protect the members of this specific group.

<sup>23</sup> While Turkey ratified the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol, it has retained the geographical limitations of Article 1B(1) of the Convention, which only committed it to accepting refugees whose fear of persecution originated from events that occurred on European territory. According to the country's 1994 Asylum Regulation, Turkey will only grant temporary asylum to non-Europeans who meet the 1951 refugee definition while they await resettlement to a safe third country. The Turkish government thus accepts to leave its borders open to more asylum seekers, under the condition that other countries such as Canada accept to resettle some of the Convention Refugees on its territory.

*(ii) Challenges Facing the Palestinian Refugees*

The original Canadian form of refugee acceptance, dating back to the early 1950s, is resettlement. In this framework, refugees and people falling into other humanitarian categories are brought to Canada for permanent resettlement. The government of the day sets regional and situational targets for resettlement programmes, which respond to regional crisis and UNHCR's priorities. Political judgment, foreign policy considerations, and the principle of international burden sharing play a direct role in the setting of Canada's resettlement targets. Once set in motion, these programmes operate out of the visa sections of Canadian embassies abroad. Selected refugees and displaced people are then settled through a variety of mechanisms including government assistance, private sponsorship, joint assistance, host families, and the women at risk programme.

Overseas refugee problems have traditionally guided the resettlement programmes. Current Canadian practices rely on official monitoring processes, international organizations such as the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), and international human rights non-governmental organization (NGO) such as the Amnesty International. The independent status of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB), a major positive feature of the current system, made possible the development of processes and structures sensitive to judicial and political correctives.

The 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol, incorporated into the IRPA, 2002, not only affect Canada's actions relating to its own resettlement and asylum systems, but it also affects its choice of responsibility-sharing duties. For example, if a country is signatory to the Convention, Canada will not normally accept a refugee referral from this country, as it will expect this country to exercise its own responsibility-sharing duties by granting asylum to the individual<sup>24</sup>. However, it was felt that Canada was failing on many levels to meet its legal obligations in relation to the protection of refugee populations, notably in terms of statelessness. While Canada has signed the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, it has not yet signed

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<sup>24</sup> However, Canada accepts referrals from Kenya, Thailand, and South Africa, among a few others. In the case of South Africa, although this country has signed the Convention, Canada has accepted to resettle some of its asylum seekers. This is due to the fact that South Africa is still in the process of building its own refugee determination system, for which Canada provided technical expertise and support.

the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, which is considered to be the most significant one. As the latter Convention had not been signed, and therefore not incorporated into Canadian laws, it does not provide stakeholders the appropriate tools to protect the rights of stateless persons and to find a remedy to their situation. It is also feared that UNHCR is too accepting of the image that Canada is projecting – one of a true humanitarian country with excellent programmes, in land and overseas. When it comes to having the opportunity to truly commit to measures that may effectively protect all refugees, it is felt that Canada fails, with regards in particular to stateless persons, high needs medical cases, women at risk, or even persons referred under its own Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) programme who are not admitted, despite seemingly appearing to meet all the criteria necessary to be granted resettlement (Gauthier 2010: 68).

The present Canadian immigration and refugee policy is based on the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) 2002, which is implemented in combination with the decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada, federal courts, trial courts, and the IRB. As already it has been mentioned that this immigration and refugee system has three main components: the social, the economic and the humanitarian component. Humanitarian component relates to Canada's international obligations in the area of humanitarian and international public law. Humanitarian principles embedded in related international conventions that guide Canada's actions in deciding claims for protection made by people arriving spontaneously in the country, as well as for the arrangement of government-assisted and privately sponsored refugee settlement and protection programmes abroad. These provisions are considered as Canada's commitment to international efforts to provide assistance to those in need of humanitarian aid, resettlement, and safe places.

Here the focus is on humanitarian component of the Canadian immigration and refugee policy with a focus on inland refugee applicants arriving from the Middle East. The refugee admission adheres to the basic humanitarian principles defined in international law. As a signatory to international agreements including the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Canada continuously reflects on its humanitarian commitments in shaping and maintaining its refugee policy.

The fact is that the case of Palestinian refugees and their plight in the Middle East has a history of more than 67 years. The number of Palestinian refugees in the Middle East region has been put at around 5 million, most living in neighbouring Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. This include 1.7 million Palestinians displaced in 1948 and 1967 from Israel proper, who are registered refugees in Gaza and the West Bank with the UNRWA.

It is not possible to get definite statistics on the total number of Palestinian refugee claimants in Canada due to the fact that official statistics are classified by country. Palestinian refugee claimants are stateless refugees and therefore hold Palestinian refugee travel documents issued by their host country. As such, Palestinian refugee claimants from Lebanon are classified as refugees coming from Lebanon alongside Lebanese nationals who claim refugee status in Canada. In order to get a more accurate number of Palestinian refugee claimants coming from the refugee camps in Lebanon, one would have to reopen all files from Lebanon and separate Palestinian refugees from Lebanese nationals. On the 17 April 2003, Simon Perusse, regional director of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) in Montreal, informed the “Coalition Against the Deportation of Palestinian Refugees”<sup>25</sup> that this was not possible.

Another issue involving in this regard is the issue of right to return of the Palestinian refugees. An illustration regarding Palestinian asylum seekers in Canada explains how complex matter it is. John Manley, on his first trip to the Middle East in 2001 as Canada’s foreign minister, publicly suggested that Canada might resettle some Palestinian refugees as part of a comprehensive peace agreement. This prompted enormous anger in various refugee camps where protest rallies were organized and people were asked to sign pledges not to immigrate under any circumstances. Despite or perhaps because of the outcry, within six weeks of Manley’s statement, young Palestinians began appearing at the border between New York and Quebec, responding to what they perceived as his offer. Sadly most were rejected by the IRB (Bell 2007: 15).

Historically, when Jack Pickersgill was Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, from 1954 to 1957, Canada took step of admitting some Palestinian

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<sup>25</sup> It was an organisation, created in 2003 to support the Palestinian refugees facing deportation, particularly in Montreal. Main demand was to stop immediately, the deportation of the Palestinian refugees and to grant them permanent residency.

Arabs, driven from their homeland by the Israeli–Arab war of 1948. In 1955, when the idea for the scheme was conceived, over 900,000 Palestinian refugees were living in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Gaza. The resettlement of these refugees abroad was nothing if not a politically explosive issue in the Middle East. By participating in the operation Canada risked incurring the wrath of Arabs, who might charge that it was part of a Zionist plot to remove Palestinian refugees from the care they received from the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration and deprive them of their right to return to Palestine. Nevertheless, in 1955, a young official at the Canadian legation in Beirut, Lebanon, where UNRRA had its headquarters, approached the agency and obtained its co–operation in arranging for a selection of Palestinian refugees to be interviewed by a Canadian immigration team.

The following January, a Canadian immigration mission visited Lebanon and Jordan, and from among 575 applicants presented to it by UNRRA, chose 98 who were “apparently well qualified to become Canadian citizens.” This number was eventually trimmed to 39 heads of families and their dependents and it was this group that departed for Canada in the summer of 1956. Much to the surprise of Canadian officials in Beirut, the undertaking did not trigger nearly as much opposition from Arab sources as they had anticipated (Government of Canada 2006).

“Coalition Against the Deportation of Palestinian Refugees” (2016) documented that Palestinians who have claimed refugee status in Canada are stateless refugees whose parents and grandparents were expelled from their homes in Palestine in 1948 and who, for the past 56 years, have been living in extremely difficult conditions in refugee camps. These stateless Palestinian refugees fled the continued collective and individual persecution they faced, and sought the protection of Canada, in hopes of building a secure future. The Palestinian refugees in Canada are from the refugee camps in Lebanon and from the Occupied Territories. Some of the Palestinian refugees have fled from the Occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. They have escaped from the atrocities committed daily by the Israeli army against them collectively and individually. The majority are from refugee camps in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, while others come from cities such as Hebron and Nablus. Most of the Palestinians coming from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip carry travel documents issued by the Palestinian Authority under strict inspection of the Israelis who control all border crossings into the Occupied Territories.

The “Coalition Against the Deportation of Palestinian Refugees” prepared a list of Palestinian refugee claimants facing deportation in 2004, but their list did not cover all Palestinian refugee claimants, since they were mainly in contact with the Palestinian refugee claimants residing in Montreal region. As of February 2004, the figures of the “Coalition Against the Deportation of Palestinian Refugees” showed that: there were over 135 Palestinian refugee claimants, and approximately 90 per cent of the refugee claimants were from the refugee camps of Lebanon. Approximately 10 per cent of the claimants are from the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Of the 135 Palestinian refugee claimants: 66 had been accepted as “Convention refugees” by the Refugee Protection Division of the Immigration and Refugee Board; at least 40 were facing deportation, of whom 9 have overstayed their removal orders and were living underground; 14 were deported from Canada in 2003-2004, and; 15 were awaiting their respective hearings at the Refugee Protection Division of the Immigration and Refugee Board.

The issue of deportation raised public concern and led to a wide network of alliances among advocacy organizations active in social justice issues as well as in the area of immigration and refugee law. Asylum seekers and advocacy organizations argued that the consequences of deportation would be grave. Advocates for Palestinian refugee rights pointed out that in Lebanon, in particular, Palestinian refugees in the refugee camps are in a poor condition, working in selected professions, not receiving proper health care, and accessing higher education. Israeli military occupation, public insecurity and the poverty faced by Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza are also widely cited on Palestinian refugee applications as reasons for their request for refugee status in Canada.

The public debate surrounding the case of three elderly Palestinian refugee claimants who found sanctuary in a Montreal church exemplifies this ongoing situation. Originally from Mandate Palestine (pre-1948), the claimants spent most of their lives moving among refugee camps throughout the Middle East. In 2001, feeling that the violence was too intense in Lebanon, they fled the Middle East and arrived in Canada where they claimed refugee status. Their claim was rejected in 2003 and appeals proved unsuccessful. In January 2004, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) asked the claimants to present themselves for deportation that February. In mid-January, the three Palestinians sought refuge in a church, whose members unanimously decided to support their case and stop their imminent deportation to the

refugee camp of Ein el-Helweh in Lebanon. The three were granted permission to stay in Canada on humanitarian and compassionate grounds after taking sanctuary in the church for a year.

Unfortunately, things are not so simple, and many of the refugee claimants are relegated to the defining characteristic of ‘Case Number’, rather than individual human beings. The frustration of this near obliteration of identity is best captured by Mohammed Hamdi, when he explains that: “Besides, I am a professional and have many skills that can contribute to the country. But you find out that those skills are worth nothing here. Your social and historical past is obliterated. You are now a refugee. That is all you are allowed to be. You are lumped in with people with whom you rarely have anything in common. You are homogenized. You find that everywhere you go people analyze you through the problems you are facing, not who you really are”.

In common parlance, it can be said that the Arab Canadians may be divided into three groups in accordance with their degree of adaptation; (i) Integrationists: the group includes those who prefer to be identified as Canadians. Sometimes they adopt Canadian names and speak French or English at all times. They might isolate themselves from other Canadian Arabs and choose Canadian friends, especially those who are married to Canadians. This group of Arab Canadians is the smallest. (ii) Isolationists: these individuals prefer to live in areas with high concentration of other Arab speaking residents and with services catering to their specific cultural needs. They speak Arabic at all times in their homes and with their friends. They do not feel that they need to learn English or French. This group of Arab Canadians is the second largest of the three groups. (iii) Reconcilers: members of this Arab Canadians group have chosen to combine the best of both the Arabic and Canadian cultures in their lives. They are usually well educated, open minded and rationalist. They are able to negotiate with their culture of origin and the new culture. This group of Arab Canadians is the largest of the three groups. Arab Canadian children and youth suffer not only from the common peer pressure other Canadian children experience, but in addition they have to cope with cultural differences and prejudices of race and colour<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup>Details can be found at <http://nyx.meccahosting.com/~a00052c7/index.php>, accessed on 20.01.2016

Middle Eastern refugees have different experiences in Canada compared to immigrants arriving from the same region. They navigate unique circumstances originating from their distinct status as unwanted or targeted people before seeking asylum. They often struggle to carry forward a message to the world at large that injustices rendering them as asylum seekers continue to affect their homeland. Refugees from the Middle East also need to deal with inter-communal conflicts related to their marginal status and claims within the Muslim diaspora. It is often argued that refugees are politically more involved compared to immigrants because of their attentiveness to issues ‘back home’ where they have ‘unfinished business’.

Educated professionals from these communities act as public intellectuals and discuss Middle Eastern politics, Islam, authoritarian nationalism, chronic human rights abuses in their home countries and the ailments that produce forced migrations and systemic political violence in the region to Canadian audiences. By publicly speaking about their ordeal, refugees often find themselves in a head-on collision course with their brethren from their home countries who arrived and settled in Canada as immigrants. Muslim immigrant communities are concerned with the recognition of and legalised respect for their ethno-religious identity. For many, the problems of their society of origin should not be discussed in the already skeptical environment in their adopted homes. It is worth noting that none of the publicly recognized Muslim organizations with wide membership in Canada address the refugee issue or refugee concerns in their mandate, programmes or activities (Canefe 2007: 215-17).

Meanwhile, a growing body of scholars, legal practitioners, and advocacy organizations posit that Canada selects the kinds of refugees whose absorption into Canada’s economy and society would be easier, rather than saving lives in need. Also, lengthy appeal processes, consequences of rejection such as deportation orders, and delays in the processing of permits and visas due to security clearance are among the issues that are raised to improve the system. CIC added a section to its website in 2006 and noted that refugee stakeholders have raised five questions relating to the Canada’s refugee programmes. These are the “Canada-U.S. Safe Third Country Agreement”<sup>27</sup>, the “Refugee Appeal Division”, the “Private Sponsorship of Refugees

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<sup>27</sup> Safe Third Country Agreement was endorsed by Canada and the U.S. in December 2004. This agreement does not allow refugees to make a claim if they have already passed through another country where they could have sought refuge. People from the Middle East are particularly at risk of potential

Programme”, “Family Reunification”, and individuals who benefit from a stay of “Temporary Suspension of Removals”.

In addition, there is refugee claimant population whose applications were refused but who continue to remain in the country despite deportation orders. Since the 1990s, Canada is estimated to have accumulated half a million non-status people living and working in its midst. Along with illegal immigrants, such “clandestine refugees” find work in the construction and hospitality industries and live on the edges of Canadian society. They wait for periodic amnesties to legalise their existence.

IRPA contains a provision called the Pre-Removal Risk Assessment (PRRA), which permits an asylum seeker, whose application has been turned down, to apply for a review before being deported. In most cases, the risk assessment is broad, including the risk to life, cruel and unusual treatment, or punishment. If protection is granted, the concerned individual is allowed to apply for permanent residency. Those who fail at this stage or whose hearings have not been concluded often remain in limbo for years. Though some case like the *Goven* case<sup>28</sup> gives some respite to the individual solution cases but that can not be applicable in general as a rule. These concerns can be potentially hazardous to Canada’s reputation as a global forerunner on human rights and refugee protection. Redressing policy weaknesses is crucial in the light of the fact that Canada widely endorses the principle of human security and adheres to humanitarian values in international politics<sup>29</sup> (Canefe 2007: 210-11, 220-21).

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dragnet exercises. In the past, numerous claimants have been recognized as legitimate refugees in Canada after having been refused in the United States.

<sup>28</sup> In the post-September 11 era, the common worry expressed by refugee organizations is that screening out terrorists and criminals who pose a danger for Canadian safety and security is both ethical and necessary. But the issue of the curbing of excessive and unforeseen effects of new security measures instituted in the aftermath of September 11, which inadvertently produce victims who have no involvement with international crimes. This is the significance of the *Goven* case.

<sup>29</sup> The human security principle has been described by DFAIT as a people-centred approach to foreign policy, which recognizes that lasting social stability cannot be achieved until people are protected from state-led threats to their individual rights and safety. Canada’s current human security agenda includes the protection of civilians and public safety. Most refugee appeals are launched precisely with reference to these two principles. In this regard, there is a direct, but largely unrecognized, connection between the stated aims of Canadian foreign policy and its refugee regime. The experiences of inland refugee claimants can be seen as a potent test case for the efficacy of Canadian foreign policy, albeit in home territory.

## Summary and Conclusion

This chapter first discussed the definition of Palestinian refugees under international law and their conditions in 58 refugee camps, mostly in the neighbouring Arab states, run by the UNRWA. This chapter has shown that refugees maintained their Palestinian identity through UNRWA's education and training system, without having their national state, symbols or songs. After discussing this, the evolution of Canada's refugee policy that is integrated with the immigration policy of Canada has been discussed in details. The major change in the policy occurred through the 1976 Act that introduced refugee intake per year along with the immigrants. It also introduced 'Designated Classes' as a separate category, by which refugees can be admitted liberally, when one cannot meet the strict demand of the convention refugee criteria. Canadian government can decide, from time to time, who will be admitted to Canada under the 'Designated Classes' category.

The present policy is based on the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act 2002, which has three main components, social, economic and humanitarian component. The humanitarian component is concerned with the refugees that related with international law and Canada's obligation in it. Further, it introduced three types of sponsorship programme that includes private sponsorship programme. The advocacy groups have criticized it as the fate of the refugee is depending on the Private sponsors or the capacity of the provinces. Although the number of Palestinian refugees in Canada is very less, various issues of their inland claimant process and integration in Canada has been discussed. After discussing this, next chapter focuses on various dimensions of Canada's foreign policy towards the Middle East. It includes Canada's economic interest in the Middle East, Stephen Harper's policy towards Israel, specially Canada-Israel relations in terms of military and economic aspects during the period of Stephen Harper from 2006 to 2015.

**CHAPTER - V**  
**DYNAMICS AND DIMENSIONS OF CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY**  
**TOWARDS MIDDLE EAST**

The first two chapters dealt with Canada's role, in the creation of the state of Israel, in the major Arab-Israel conflict and its involvement in the UN peace-keeping force as a part of Canada's middle power ideal of its foreign policy. Canada's role as a in the chair of Refugee Working Group (RWG) as a part of Middle East Peace Process (MEPP) has been discussed in details in the third chapter. Canada's contribution in helping the Palestinian refugees in refugee camps outside Canada, i.e. West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, etc. has also been dealt with. Canada's refugee policy in general and Palestinian refugee's claimant process in Canada has been covered in the fourth chapter. This chapter concentrates on dynamics of Canada's foreign policy towards the Middle East.

This chapter contains five parts. The first part examines the influence of Canadian Jewish community on government's policy perception and choices, along with whatever limited influence Canadian Arabs have been to exercise. The second part discusses Canada's economic interest in the Middle East and its policy change at the time of Arab oil embargo in the 1970s, and it has been discussed that Canada's economic and political compulsion which compelled Canada to reverse its embassy shift policy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The third part is Canada's arms sale to Israel and Canada's foreign policy. The fourth part is Canada's changing foreign policy dynamics towards the Middle East and the last part covers Harper's foreign policy towards Israel that includes Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA).

**Jewish and Arab Communities in Canadian Foreign Policy**

There are multiple factors and considerations that determine a state's foreign policy. It has been argued that Canadian foreign policy is in part, determined by societal inputs, that is the values and preferences of Canadians themselves. In the framework of Canadian policy towards the Middle East and more particularly the Arab-Israel conflict, the impact of domestic ethnic groups specifically the Jewish and Arab communities on policy making, therefore, bears significance. Of course, measuring and coding such ethnic influences and impact is a difficult task; besides such

influences do not always work. For instance, Canadian Jewish groups were unable to convince the government to declare Hezbollah a terrorist group under Canadian law prior to September 11. But in the post-September 11 terrorist attacks, America's forceful pursuit of and Canada's support for the "war on terrorism" pushed Canada to list Hezbollah as a terrorist group over the objections of Canadian Arab groups. Personal choices and beliefs are equally important. There has been a popular opinion that Harper came to office with a social conservative and fundamentalist religious outlook and a strong inclination to support Israel. He defended Israel's military response to Hezbollah and *Hamas* attacks in 2006 in near categorical terms (Sasley 2007: 189 and Zahar 2007: 61).

Domestic actors have some room to operate and try to influence policy makers but how much room is available is open to debate. Within the Canadian context, Denis Stairs (1970–71) and Kim Richard Nossal (1997) have argued that while societal actors can force their concerns in the foreign policy agenda and even set parameters on the range of policy options under consideration, they cannot dictate either the specific policy or its implementation. In contrast, John Kirton (2007) suggests that societal determinants, in fact, influence specific policies and how they are formulated (Sasley 2007: 191-192).

Notwithstanding differing viewpoints, it is argued that Jewish community in comparison to Arab community plays a significant and indispensable role in advocating support for Israel. In the case of Arab-Israel conflict, Israel and Arab states have propagated dichotomous narratives and images of their conflict that underline their beliefs and policies. The main differences are the appropriate boundaries of Israel, Israeli settlements in the occupied territories and future of the Palestinian to establish a Palestine state, the disposition of Palestinian refugees, security for people on both sides and which party is responsible for preventing successful efforts at peace negotiations. These narratives are utilized and promoted by the Jewish and Arab communities abroad including in Canada where they seek to shape Canadian identity and thus shape interests along lines favourable to their narratives.

The Arab community has emphasised that Canadian identity is about the law, a rule-based system and the promotion of adherence to international legal structures and organisations. The policy corollary is that Canada should press Israel to abide by United Nations resolutions such as Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions 242 and

338 which for the most part call on Israel to withdraw from all or most of the West Bank and Gaza. This includes, for example, the argument that Canada should support the International Court of Justice's ruling against the Israeli construction of the separation barrier in parts of the occupied territory in the West Bank. The Jewish community, on the other hand, has emphasized that Canadian identity is based on its liberal democratic tradition. The policy corollary here is Canada should support for a fellow liberal democracy in Israel, in the face of efforts to undermine its legitimacy by authoritarian Arab states and hostile entities such as *Hamas*.

Many Canadians would likely subscribe to parts of both narratives and would not consider themselves partisan in doing so. Being pro-democracy does not necessarily mean being pro-Israel or being pro-international law necessitate being pro-Palestinian (Sasley 2007: 194-195).

Historically, the 1871 census, the first after Confederation, counted 1,115 Jews in Canada. Unlike most immigrants to Canada, Jews did not come from a place where they were the majority cultural group. Jews were internationally dispersed at the time of the ancient Roman Empire and Jews lived, sometimes for many centuries, as minorities in the Middle East, North Africa and Europe. By the time the outbreak of First World War, there were over 100 000 Jewish Canadians (The Canadian Encyclopedia 2012).

Many Hungarian Jews arrived after the 1956 revolution, from Iraq and Egypt during the 1950s, from Romania in the 1960s and from former Soviet Union in the 1970s. The cultural and linguistic character of the Jewish community of Montreal started to change in the late 1960s with the influx of francophone Sephardic Jews from France and North Africa. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, immigration from North Africa, especially Morocco, became the predominant new Jewish immigrant group in Quebec, with their French language, background facilitating their successful integration into Québec society. This group now constitutes a sizeable proportion of Montreal's Jewish population. Since 1990, new immigrants from the countries of the former Soviet Union have significantly changed the face of the Canadian Jewish community.

Canada is now home to the 5<sup>th</sup> largest Jewish community in the world - following the US, Israel, the former USSR and France. According to the National Household Survey, the Canadian Jewish population in 2011 was 391,665, representing 1.2 per cent of the total Canadian population. More than half (57.9 per

cent) of Jews in Canada reside in the province of Ontario, and about a quarter (23.9 per cent) in the province of Quebec. Smaller percentages of the total reside in British Columbia (8.9 per cent), Alberta (4 per cent) and Manitoba (3.7 per cent). About a third (33.1 per cent) of Canada's Jewish population are immigrants, whereas 66.9 per cent were born in Canada. In terms of immigrants arriving between 2000 and 2011, the largest number came from the Former Soviet Union (13,540); a similar number arrived between 1990 and 1999 (13,400). Between 2000 and 2011, 7,955 Israeli-born immigrants settled in this country, compared to 3,550 individuals between 1990 and 1999 (CIJA 2012 and Berman Jewish Data Bank 2015).

The Jewish community in Canada had been well served for decades by two primary advocacy organizations: Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) and Canada-Israel Committee (CIC). Supported by the organized Jewish community through Jewish Federations of Canada – UIA, these agencies responded to the needs and reflected the consensus within the Canadian Jewish Community. However, the Federation of Canadian Zionist Societies, founded in 1899 - two years after the first World Zionist Congress - became the first nation-wide Canadian Jewish organization.

It is also found that the Jewish Agency Executive which was founded in 1929 played an important role during the UNSCOP members visit to Palestine. The Agency appointed Aubrey (Abba) Eban and David Horowitz to work with the Committee as liaison officers and observers until the Committee's task was done. The British liaison officer to UNSCOP was Donald C. MacGillivray, a former deputy district commissioner at Acre. Horowitz and Eban soon struck up a close working relationship on a professional and personal level with several key committee members including Canadian members Rand and Mayrand. It is impossible to determine accurately the impact they had on the outcome of UNSCOP deliberations, but this relationship helped sway some UNSCOP members towards the Jewish Agency's goals.

Beginning in 2002, the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) served as the management umbrella for CJC and CIC and until 2011, each organization was governed and directed by independent Boards of Directors and professional staff. In 2011, these separate bodies were consolidated into one comprehensive and streamlined structure, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA), which has been designed as the single address for all advocacy issues of

concern to Canadian Jewry. CIJA is now responsible for all activities previously administered by Canadian Jewish Congress, Canada-Israel Committee, Quebec-Israel Committee, and the University Outreach Committee.

With a rich history stemming back to 1919, Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC), served as an advocate for matters affecting the status, rights, and welfare of Jewish Canadians – for the purpose of strengthening Jewish life in Canada. CJC focused on outreach to ethnic and faith-based groups, civil society organizations and labour, and it worked to promote civil discourse, the constitutional rights and freedoms of all Canadians, and Jewish and Canadian shared values.

Canada-Israel Committee (CIC) maintained offices in Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and Israel, and its staff consisted of experts in government policy, communications, Arab-Israeli relations and Middle East affairs, and Canadian Middle East policy. CIC was the representative of the organized Canadian Jewish community on matters pertaining to Canada-Israel relations. Aimed at advancing all aspects of the Canada-Israel relationship, CIC communicated on a regular basis with government officials, journalists, academics and other public opinion leaders across the country.

Quebec-Israel Committee (QIC), affiliated with Canada-Israel Committee, QIC was mandated by the Jewish community of Quebec to communicate the community's positions on Israel to all segments of Quebec society with objective of improving understanding and support for Israel in Quebec. Key target audiences included media, government, and volunteer sectors, as well as students, academics and the business community. As in the case of CIC, QIC's activities included media monitoring and response, missions to Israel, and innovative advocacy programming.

University Outreach Committee (UOC), working with Hillels and other Jewish student organizations across Canada, UOC worked to empower Jewish students to advocate for their issues of concern on campus. Its activities included providing students with communications training and advice, liaising with faculty and administration, and designing creative programming to help Jewish students build connections with their non-Jewish colleagues on campus.

The new structure of Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) provides for a robust, cohesive, and dynamic organization to represent the aspirations of Jewish Canadians across the country. As a non-partisan organization, the Centre creates and implements strategies to improve the quality of Jewish life in Canada and abroad,

advance the public policy interests of the Canadian Jewish community, enhance ties with Jewish communities around the world, and strengthen the Canada-Israel relationship to the benefit of both countries. CIJA works closely with its Jewish Federation partners across Canada, providing strategic advice and advocacy solutions both tailored to local conditions and consistent with the Jewish community's national advocacy priorities. CIJA maintains offices in Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver, and Jerusalem.

Using research to better understand issues and opinions, the Centre works to coordinate, streamline, and direct strategic, targeted advocacy programming on behalf of Canada's diverse Jewish community. The Centre aims to enhance Jewish unity across Canada but not uniformity of viewpoints, an approach that is premised on the belief that, when combined with a broad sense of solidarity, a healthy diversity of opinion among Jewish Canadians is a source of community strength and vitality.

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) builds and nurtures relationships with leaders in government, media, academia, civil society and other faith and ethnic communities to ensure greater understanding of the issues that impact the Jewish community. CIJA combats anti-Semitism and discrimination in all its forms and advocates for fundamental rights and freedoms, social justice, and support for the people of Israel. CIJA's lobbying and outreach efforts have included meetings and functions that attract high-ranking members of the Canadian government, including the Prime Minister, and it has financed trips to Israel for Canadian officials and thought leaders.

CIJA's CEO, Shimon Fogel, explained the logic behind the new advocacy structure in a 2012 column in the *Jerusalem Post*: "Israel and Jewish causes have benefited from unparalleled support from Canadian governments and from all federal political parties – most intensively over the past eight years. Not coincidentally, it was exactly eight years ago that the Canadian Jewish community reorganized its advocacy efforts into one unified and coordinated operation. ...By consolidating the Canada-Israel Committee, the Canadian Jewish Congress, the Quebec-Israel Committee and the University Outreach Committee into one professionally managed and nationally supervised agency, the voice of Canadian Jews has grown stronger and more credible. Our community now benefits from strategic advocacy planning on the national level, sophisticated outreach abilities, and very effective lobby mechanisms – in addition to better operational accountability and cost savings" (CIJA 2012).

Arab Canadians, or more specifically, Syrian-Lebanese immigrants, began to arrive in Canada in small numbers in 1882. More than 90 per cent were Christians seeking freedom from poverty and the Ottoman (Turkish) colonial regime. The post-Second World War wave of Arab immigrants comprised a broader mixture of Christian groups and a substantial number of Muslims and Druzes who were motivated by the desire to escape unfavourable social, economic and political conditions in their homelands. In the 1980s and the early 1990s a large number of Convention Refugees arrived from countries of the Arab world (1983-1992: 24 813), namely Somalia, Lebanon and Iraq. During the same period, 1983-1992, a total of 13 379 investors/entrepreneurs came from Lebanon, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, but with representation from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Syria.

The label "Arab Canadian" does not refer to one religious affiliation or country of origin but to a mixture of characteristics and beliefs that members of this ethnic group have assimilated from their family or have acquired in Canada. Of the people who described themselves as Arab in the 2006 census, 44 per cent were Muslims, 28 per cent were Catholic, 11 per cent were Christian Orthodox; 5 per cent were Protestant; and 6 per cent had no religious affiliation. In 2001, about 10 per cent of the Arab ethnic group in Canada are of Lebanese origin; 13 per cent are of Egyptian origin; 6 per cent are of Maghrebi origin; 5 per cent are of Syrian origin; 5 per cent are of Somali origin; 3 per cent are of Palestinian origin and 2 per cent are of Iraqi origin. The balance (about 17 per cent) is recorded in the Canadian census as "Arab," with no specific reference to a country of origin. In terms of religious affiliation, about 40 per cent are Muslims; 29 per cent are Catholic; 20 per cent are Eastern Orthodox; 9 per cent are Protestant; and the remaining 2 per cent is made up largely of individuals who claim no religious affiliation (The Canadian Encyclopedia 2012).

According to the 2011 Census there were 470,965 Canadians who claimed that Arabic is their first language spoken at home. According to the 2011 Census there were 661,750 Canadians who claimed full or partial ancestry from an Arabic speaking country. The large majority of the Canadians of Arab origin population lives in either Ontario or Quebec.

According to Canada's 2011 National Household Survey, there were 1,053,945 Muslims in Canada or about 3.2 per cent of the population, making them the second largest religion after Christianity. In the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), 7.7

per cent of the population is Muslim. Arab Canadians come from all of the countries of the Arab world. Arab Canadian also includes Christians and Druzes.

**Table 5.1**  
**Arabic speaking people in Canada in 2011 census**

| <b>Arab Countries</b>     | <b>Population</b> | <b>Arab Countries</b> | <b>Population</b> |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Lebanon                   | 190,275           | Tunisia               | 15,125            |
| Egypt                     | 73,250            | Jordan                | 9,425             |
| Morocco                   | 71,910            | Saudi Arabia          | 7,955             |
| Iraq                      | 49,680            | Libya                 | 5,515             |
| Algeria                   | 49,110            | Yemen                 | 3,945             |
| Syria                     | 40,840            | Kuwait                | 2,240             |
| Palestine                 | 31,245            | Arab, n.o.s.          | 94,640            |
| Sudan                     | 16,595            |                       |                   |
| Total in Canada = 661,750 |                   |                       |                   |

Source: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011>, accessed on 20.01.2016.

No particular political ideology or political party is dominant among Arab Canadians. They are involved in the political process at the municipal, provincial and federal levels. Arab ethnicity has not been a prominent feature of their political involvement in Canada, except in pressure-group politics involving their social status in Canada or Canada's Middle East policy.

There are some Arab community organizations but mostly focusing on the issues in Canada, like the Canadian Arab Federation (CAF), the National Council on Canada-Arab Relations (NCCAR), the Arab Community Centre of Toronto (ACCT) and Canada-Arab Business Council (CABC) etc. NCCAR is an educational organization comprised of Canadians of diverse backgrounds. Its mission is to build knowledge and ties between Canadians and the people of the Arab world in order to develop stronger relations and cooperation between them as well as raise an appreciation of their common values. The Arab Community Centre of Toronto (ACCT) is a non for profit organization with charitable status, and is non-political and non-sectarian. The ACCT is a focal point for all Arab and non-Arab communities in which they can find an outlet for settlement and social services inquiries. Supported by corporate membership, the Canada-Arab Business Council (CABC) is the

Canadian non-profit association focusing exclusively on promoting trade and economic relations between Canada and the Arab countries of the Middle East.

The Canadian Arab Federation (CAF) deal with domestic issues, but also stress on those work which are closely connected to foreign policy. There is, for Canadian Arabs, a nexus among foreign policy, domestic policy and identity. One Canadian Arab official pointed out that specific foreign policies also have implications for domestic policy: Canada's active support of American efforts in fighting terrorism has led to judicial and legal consequences for Canadian Arabs, such as racial profiling by law enforcement and transportation authorities etc.

Both communities concentrate on domestic issues in Canada, but all of them make statements on and offer suggestions about how their constituencies should react to Canadian policy in the international arena, particularly on some issues of Canadian policy towards the Middle East.

The Jewish community is stronger in relative terms than the Arab community when it comes to the ability to mobilize and get its message heard in Ottawa. Their capabilities are the natural outgrowth of a long historical process. The Canadian Jewish community is older and more established than the Arab community, and this fact has had profound effects on their respective organisational capacities. Jews began immigrating to Canada in greater numbers earlier than Arabs did. They had compelling reasons to relocate to Canada and build a new institutional life. Although Jews had been immigrating to Canada since the 18th century, the mass immigration of Jews from Eastern Europe began at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. In contrast, Arab immigration to Canada started only after the Second World War and particularly began in the 1960s but even then in smaller numbers. By the early 1990s a second wave of Arab immigrants, mostly fleeing regional conflicts and repressive regimes, began arriving in Canada.

The difference in staying period and size of the communities has had an important effect on their lobbying abilities. The Jews have had a longer period of time to adapt to the Canadian political system, they have been able to establish more sophisticated institutional structures to represent them at the political level and generate more resources to support them. For their part, many Arabs are either reluctant to become involved in politics or have not had a civic education in politics in their home countries. They are less experienced, particularly since many of their countries of origins are repressive autocracies with little or no capacity for societal

involvement in policy making. The period of the Jewish community is also important for another reason. The Jewish community has had more time to establish itself within Canada's economic system as well, and significant numbers of Jews have succeeded in this area. This has provided them with access to non-Jewish political leaders too. Samuel Bronfman, heir to the Seagram's business empire and former president of the Canadian Jewish Congress, is often cited as an example (Sasley 2007: 195-197).

In addition to its own efforts, the Jewish community has benefited from the sympathy many Canadian politicians have had for persecuted Jews and Israel particularly in the years after the Second World War. Lester Pearson, for example, who contributed much to the United Nations Partition Plan and thus to legitimising Jewish aspirations for their own state in Palestine, seems to have been heavily influenced by his 'Sunday school' visions of the Holy Land and the role of the Jews in it. After the Holocaust, Canadian public compassion for Jewish survivors also played an important role in setting up a sympathetic public opinion, providing Canadian politicians more leeway to support the immigration of Jews into Palestine (Sasley 2007: 197 and Bercuson 1985: 233).

Many non-Jewish clergies supported the Zionist cause, as well as the establishment of some Jewish homeland in Palestine for the survivors of the Holocaust. This also helped generate support among Canadian public opinion and the media. The Arabs, given that they were not prominent in the Bible and had not suffered genocide themselves, did not garner the same sympathy for their communities' causes. The Christian evangelical groups sympathetic to Zionist objectives have further conducted their own pro-Israel advocacy. Public opinion does not normally determine foreign policy, but it does have a guiding or limiting influence on policy. Thus, Canada's historical sympathy for persecuted Jews and then by extension for Israel was an important factor facilitating Jewish groups' early advocacy efforts. The existence of small groups outside the majority mainstream, most Canadian Jews have a strong affinity for and identification with Israel, particularly since the 1967 Arab-Israel War. This applies as well to Israeli policy vis-a-vis the Arab-Israel conflict which has translated into very strong support for Israel. This in turn has provided organised Jewish groups with an institutional and personnel base that is unmatched in the Arab community (Sasley 2007: 197).

The Arab community has a unifying cause as Palestinian suffers under the Israeli occupation and military incursions into the West Bank and Gaza and as

refugees in the wider Middle East. The historical narrative of Palestinians is reflected in *al-Naqba*, the Catastrophe, symbolizing an end to Arab hope for self-governance in the area of the former Mandate of Palestine and the resultant displacement of Palestinians. The existence of millions of Palestinian refugees and their aspirations for their own state is also a rallying call for many in the Arab community. Canadian Arabs had supported the Arab states' positions on the Arab-Israel conflict that have - at least until the mid 1990s, when they evolved toward acceptance of a two-state solution - been at odds with the Canadian Jewish position. Nevertheless, the Canadian Arab community is more divided along a national, regional and religious line which has actively prevented it from presenting a united front to policy makers. Also, Canadian Arab groups are hampered by their own political objectives and organizational deficiencies. For example, one civil servant who served in a variety of governmental offices noted that Jewish lobbyists would meet with him regularly to present the community's ideas on certain issues. In contrast, though, 'almost never' any representative from the Arab community did the same (Sasley 2007: 197-198 and Barry 2010: 193).

Since the Oslo Accords, international discourse about the conflict has been underlined by the idea that two states, an Israeli state and a Palestinian state - is the only reasonable, effective and feasible solution. Many moderate Israelis and Palestinians have also adopted this proposal. The Canadian Jewish groups that deal with foreign affairs emphasize that they actively support this proposition. One Canadian Arab group representative when asked about his organization's position on the right of return, supported the two-state solution but then argued that any resolution of the conflict must also include the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes in Israel from where they were dispossessed during the 1948 Arab-Israel war. Given that some estimates of the number of Palestinian refugees reach six million or more, this would mean the end of Israel as a Jewish state. Arab Canadians could argue that some Canadian Jewish support for Jewish settlements in the West Bank pose a similar problem for Canadian policy makers, although this kind of backing is apparently no longer promoted at the official political level by the Canadian Jewish groups (Sasley 2007: 198).

The complexities of the Arab-Israel conflict combined with the emotional pulls on Arab and Jewish domestic elements within Canada render problem for Canada to maintain its policy and identity as an impartial, fair-minded and principled

country. Preserving this identity is made more difficult when it comes to make concrete foreign policy decisions that touch upon the interests of these domestic groups. Given that these groups are part of the Canadian cultural mosaic, help form and are formed by a broad set of Canadian values and have become part of the landscape of citizenship, their views and ideas become important in the policy-making process.

Moreover, Jewish Voters are important factors in the electoral politics of Canada. Historically, Canadian Jews back the Liberal party because of its support for the creation of the state of Israel. By the 1970s Jewish support for the liberals was 20 per cent above the national average. Joe Clark's Progressive Conservative Party attempted to sway Jewish voters in the 1979 election by promising to move Canada's embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The Conservatives won four of those seats to the Liberal's two, although party organizers said the embassy pledge was marginal to the outcomes. Joe Clark tried to implement the plan after he became Prime Minister. However, he retreated in the face of strong opposition including the threat of sanctions from Arab states and adverse public opinion (Barry 2010: 195-96). The plan of embassy shift reversal has been discussed in details in the section of the Middle East economic factor in Canadian foreign policy in this chapter.

This embassy shift issue caused the defeat of the Conservatives in 1980 election, and Pierre Trudeau's Liberals came to power (1980-1984). It also had a long-term impact on Canada's Middle East policy which shifted from a pro-Israel bias to a more even-handed treatment. Canada established relations with the PLO, its voting record in UN was more balanced and strongly criticised the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. Still Canadian Jews remained loyal to the Liberals. The Jewish connection remained same during Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's Progressive Conservative government (1984-1993) and Prime Minister Jean Chretien's Liberal government (1994-2003) who supported Israel's right to exist within secure borders and the establishment of a Palestine state.

The Canadian policy began to tilt towards Israel under Chretien's Liberal successor Paul Martin and more assertively under the Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper. This time, pro-Israel parliamentarians gained significantly more strength in government, with six MPs who formed "Liberals for Israel" caucus, got cabinet appointments. Cabinet and caucus supporters tried a change in Canada's votes at the UN, as did Jewish organisations including the Canada-Israel Committee which

lobbied the government to adopt criteria to assess resolutions it considered biased against Israel (Barry 2010: 196 and Brynen 2007: 78). In July 2004, Canada abstained on a UNGA resolution calling Israel to abide by the International Court of Justice opinion regarding the illegality of Israel's separation barrier in the West Bank. The vote on the resolution was 150 in favour and 6 against, with 10 abstentions. While the U.S. and Australia opposed the resolution, every other country in the Western world supported it. This trend of either abstaining or opposing resolution condemning Israeli violence against Palestinians continued during that period.

In 2006 election, to get the majority, Conservative Stephen Harper appealed to non-traditional conservatives including Jews, on the basis of shared social values<sup>1</sup>. Barry (2010) observed that Harper's pro-Israel politics has won the respect and support of a large segment of Canada's Jewish community. After taking power, Harper created an "ethnic outreach team" to build support for the Conservatives to replace the Liberals as the primary voice of the Canadians and the ethnic minorities. As of now 391,665 (2011 Census) Canadian Jews are an established part of the country's economic and political landscape. Most of them have a strong affinity for and identification with Israel. Concentrated primarily in Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and Winnipeg, they were an important focus of Harper government's attention. For instance in a 2007 briefing paper, the "ethnic outreach team" used the Toronto area constituency of Thornhill to show how the recruitment strategy works. Comprising 37 per cent of the electorate in the riding, Jews were a key target in the effort to secure the 5000 additional votes the Conservatives estimated they would need to unseat the Liberal incumbent. The approach included maintaining an updated database of Jewish and other ethnic group electorates, championing the positions on issues that concern the community, targeted mailings, and individual contact at various events.

Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA), which was established in 2002 and later became Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs in 2011, adopted a two-fold strategy, to emphasize the shared values of democracy between Canadians and Israelis and to downplay the significance of whatever the Palestinians

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<sup>1</sup> Harper has done all he can to win their support starting with his anti-same-sex marriage advertising campaign of early 2005. He insisted that the 2006 election platform contain specific measures, such as an apology for the Chinese head tax, lowering landing fees for immigrants and better recognition of their credentials; and he has worked hard to fulfill these promises after forming the government.

were or were not doing. During the election campaign Harper assured the CIJA that the Jewish community had a good friend in the Conservative party<sup>2</sup>. Harper government would not support resolutions at the UN that are aimed specifically at Israel or designed to create a bias in the resolutions on the Middle East. In 2006 Canada's voting record on UNGA resolutions was sympathetic to the Palestinians which stood at 8 votes in favour, 4 votes against, and 4 abstentions, compared to 13–0–3 for France, Italy, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and the UK (among other Europeans) and Japan, 5–8–3 for Australia, 0–14–2 for the U.S., and 0–15–1 for Israel (Barry 2010: 191-94 and Brynen 2007: 78).

On the wake of *Hamas's* victory in their 2006 Palestinian Council election, Harper government reduced its annual \$25 million assistance package to the West Bank and Gaza by a third. Another \$10 million continued to go to the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) via the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Canada can not send any direct aid to an organisation that refuses to renounce terrorist activities, said foreign minister Peter Mackay. Pro-Israel organisations praised the announcement and condemned by Arab and Muslim groups. A “resounding slap in the face to Canadian values” charged the Canadian Islamic Congress, which accused Harper's government of blindly following the lead of Washington and the influential pro-Israel lobby in Canada. Opposition parties in parliament urged the government to concentrate on humanitarian assistance to Palestinian civilians. In fact, Harper put more distance between his government and *Hamas* telling a Holocaust Memorial Day ceremony that *Hamas* posed a threat to Israel similar to that of Nazi Germany (Barry 2010: 198).

### **Canada's Economic Interests in the Middle East**

Initially, the Middle East was not important to Canada. On the whole, the Middle East has not seemed, for which the Canadian government have felt a distinctively Canadian policy ought to be evolved. In the post-war period, Canada had virtually no commercial or strategic interests in the area. In 1946, for example, Canadian import from Turkey, Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Palestine, totaled a little over \$4 million or about

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<sup>2</sup> In 2007 the Israeli Knesset established the Christian Allies Caucus to expand Christian support for Israel. The Canadian Israel Allies Caucus was launched in February 2007. Activities have included speaking tours of major Canadian cities to encourage evangelical Christians to back Israel.

0.2 per cent of all its total imports. In the same period, Canadian exports to those countries amounted to about \$ 24 million or only 0.1 per cent of its exports. In fact, Canada did not import Middle East oil till 1948 and even the oil from Iran and Aden made up only a small proportion of its total purchases, most of which came from Venezuela and the United States.

There was less expansion of Canadian diplomatic or commercial contacts with the area. Canada had only one trade commission office in Cairo to increase trade in the Middle East in 1930. The commission covered the surrounding countries such as Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Persia and Cyprus. The first trade commissioner was Yves Lamontagne. Canadian trade links expanded in 1935 when a trade treaty was concluded with France giving her “most favoured nation” tariff concessions. Since Syria and Lebanon were both French mandates, the tariff concessions were extended to them as well. Even at the Commonwealth Defence Minister’s Conference of 1951, when Middle Eastern questions dominated the agenda, Canada chose to be represented by an observer. It was in 1954 that Canada was represented in the Middle East by its own diplomatic missions (Bercuson 1985: 14-15 & 33 and Eayrs 1957: 97).

It was from the 1970s Canada grew its economic interest in the region. Among many factors, Arab economic sanction against Canada over the issue of Canadian Embassy shift policy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem was one factor of Canada’s growing interest as well as policy change in the region. The issue of Middle East Economic Sanctions against Canada in 1979 began during the 1979 Canadian election campaign, when Joe Clark, then leader of the opposition Conservatives, promised to relocate the Canadian embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, implicitly recognising the Israeli claim to Jerusalem as its capital. At the time, only 13 countries, Netherlands and 12 Latin American countries, located their embassies in Jerusalem and they had all been there since before the creation of Israel in 1948 (Flicker 2002-03: 115, 117).

To mention, Canadian involvement in the Jerusalem issues dates from the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. Following the Arab-Israel war of 1948, Canada called for the internationalization of the holy place and gave de facto recognition of Jerusalem as a part of Israel by conducting some diplomatic business there, while keeping its embassy in Tel Aviv. Canadian position changed during the 1967 war when Israel captured the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Old City formerly occupied by Jordan. Between November 1967 and June 1979, Canadian policy on the

status of Jerusalem was based on the full support of UNSC Resolution 242, which called for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from territories occupied during the 1967 war, including East Jerusalem and Old City. But it was Clark boldly chose to pursue both de jure recognition of Jerusalem and a de facto move of the embassy (Takach 1992: 273-74 and Flicker 2002-03: 117).

Clark issued this promise, because of his pro-Israel sympathies, which were based at least in part on his religious background as well as his view of Israel as an island of Western liberal democracy in a sea of autocratic and Soviet manipulated regimes. Another reason was to induce Jewish voters in key ridings in Southern Ontario to switch their traditional allegiance from Pierre Trudeau's Liberal party to the Conservatives. To Clark's advisers, Toronto's swing ridings, specially Eglinton, Lawrence, Willowdale, and St. Paul's in all of which only a few percentage points separated the Liberal and Conservative candidates and the Jewish votes, constituted at least one quarter of the electorate, were critical (Takach 1992: 276-77 and Flicker 2002-03: 123).

After forming a minority government following the May 1979 election, Clark announced in late June that he would appoint former Conservative leader Robert L. Stanfield to study the embassy move before taking precipitous action<sup>3</sup>. Stanfield issued an interim report in late October, that urged the government to refrain from moving the embassy for three reasons: it would undermine Canada's position as a neutral party and "fair-minded interlocutor" in the region; it would create the impression that the Canadian government was fully in accord with the Israeli position toward Jerusalem, thereby prejudging future negotiations; and, it might strengthen Israel's hand in future negotiations and, potentially, undermine the Camp David agreement in the Arab world by making it appear that the pact would prevent a solution to the conflict over Jerusalem on grounds favourable to the Palestinians. In compliance with the Stanfield report's recommendations, Clark officially cancelled the move (Ripsman 2002: 163 and Flicker 2002-03: 115, 136).

Some observers have highlighted the role that the threatened economic sanctions by the Arab states played in convincing the newly elected, minority Conservative government's prime minister Clark to cancel the planned embassy

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<sup>3</sup> Jimmy Carter and the Democratic party in the United States, which had made a similar promise in the 1976 presidential election campaign but then postponed the move indefinitely after their victory.

move. Some argue, while Arab sanctions threatened against Canada, contributed to the outcome, they did so only indirectly; powerful domestic and international political pressures had a more direct influence on Clark's policy reversal.

*(i) Economic and Political Factors in the Embassy Shift Policy Reversal*

It is a matter of debate whether there was any Canadian economic, trade, financial and monetary sensitivity in 1979 that caused Canada to reverse its policy of embassy shifting. By traditional measures of sensitivity (for example, exports and imports as a percentage of Canada's total trade, trade as a percentage of GDP or trade partner concentration) Canadian sensitivity to a disruption of trade with the Arab world was insignificant. For instance, trade with the Arab League states amounted to a paltry 1 per cent of Canadian GDP. By comparison, trade with the United States accounted for 31 per cent of Canadian GDP.

On the contrary, a consideration of the material composition of trade discloses the first signs of Canadian sensitivity to a disruption of normal economic relations with the Arab states. Specifically, after 1975, Canada was unable to meet all of its oil needs through domestic production and thus had to import about 15 per cent of its consumption. If the Arab states had cut off all oil exports to Canada, they would have disrupted 10-15 per cent of Canada's overall petroleum needs. Canada, however, produced enough energy and oil to be self-sufficient, although undoubtedly there would have been some transactions costs associated with either purchasing oil elsewhere or exploiting domestic resources. Canadian policy makers were well aware of the importance of Arab oil, stating in a leaked cabinet memo in 1976 that a disruption of imports would have serious effects in the form of oil shortages and unemployment. An oil cut-off at this time might have been especially significant since inflationary psychology, that is, expectations of more rapid inflation in the future was again on the rise in Canada (Ripsman 2002: 159 and Flicker 2002-03: 132).

Canadian financial and monetary sensitivities were higher than its trade sensitivity. Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) announced on 18 June that it would withdraw its holdings from Canadian financial institutions and may even have withdrawn all its money by the beginning of 1979. The real fear was that the AMF action would persuade Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to pull out their money in which case Canada would suffer serious economic damage. Estimates of investment in Canada by Arabs, both public and private, ranged from CDN\$2 billion to CDN\$4.5 billion. The

dominant financial concern was that any withdrawal of funds, would hurt the value of the Canadian dollar, which had fallen nearly one cent against the US dollar after the AMF announced its new policy, inflation to increase, and Canada's sizeable \$ 5 billion current account deficit to rise (Ripsman 2002: 160 and Flicker 2002-03: 132).

Canada borrowed heavily from abroad to cover its current account deficit and its immense public debts; between 1974 and 1976, the international debt grew from CDN\$72.7 billion to CDN\$97 billion, an increase of more than 30 per cent. Around the same period, total public debts surged from CDN\$59.8 billion to CDN\$80 billion. A growing proportion of this public debt was financed by borrowing from abroad, and the foreign currency debt increased considerably.

If the members of the League of Arab States dumped their Canadian currency, the Canadian dollar would have declined in value, both as a direct effect of the actions of Arab League states and from the actions of international investors. On the declined value of Canadian dollar, the governor of the Bank of Canada, G. K. Bouey, pointed out that there were "doubts [among the international investor community] about the ability and determination of Canadians to avoid further exchange rate depreciations." Hence, any shock spurred by the Arab states would undoubtedly have pushed many investors to sell their Canadian currency. Finally, it would have prompted capital flight among those investors who feared further declines in the Canadian currency. In these respects, it is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that Canada was fiscally sensitive (Ripsman 2002: 161-62).

Besides, Canadian corporations with actual or potential interests in Arab countries stood to lose billion of dollars. It is estimated that if the embassy move went ahead, Canada would lose over \$ 1 billion in business and some 55,700 jobs. Among major corporations, Bell Canada was the most vocal. It had the most to lose in \$1.2 billion contracts to modernize the Saudi telecommunication system. Canadian companies with interests in the Middle East embarked on a major lobbying effort directed at several ministers, particularly finance, external affairs and trade. They also lobbied Clark personally and his senior political staffs to cancel the embassy move (Flicker 2002-03: 133).

Regarding political reason of Embassy shift policy reversal, there were a variety of compelling political reasons for the Clark government to back down from its pledge that had little to do with economic sanctions. The first of these centred on the effect that the embassy relocation would have on Middle East peace talks and,

ultimately, the final status of Jerusalem. While Clark had intended to move the embassy to win over the Canadian Jewish community, he also genuinely wanted to reward Israeli Prime Minister Begin for his efforts toward peace with Egypt by respecting Israel's designation of Jerusalem as its capital. When the Arab states, and particularly the US, stressed that the proposed move could prejudice future developments in the region, the prime minister had diplomatic incentives to reconsider. The American effort culminated in a meeting between US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and MacDonald at the United Nations, where Vance expressed his country's grave reservations about the Canadian initiative. President Carter reinforced this message personally when he met Clark at the G-5 Tokyo Summit at the end of June.

A second political consideration concerned the implied threat to Canada's special status as an international peace-keeper. Peace-keeping is one of the primary defence missions for the Canadian Armed Forces and an ideal source of prestige for a middle power. Ever since the 1956 Suez crisis, the continued Canadian participation in UN peacekeeping efforts was a considerable source of pride to the country and lay at the core of the Canadian national identity. Arab and American representatives made this connection explicit to both Clark and MacDonald: if the embassy moved to Jerusalem, the Canadian role as a peace-keeper would be severely compromised. The non-aligned nations similarly judged that the embassy move would be an abandonment of impartiality, vowing at the 1979 Non-Aligned Nations Summit in Havana to "take firm measures against any country that transfers its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem". Hence Clark's pledge threatened to undermine the pillar of Canadian foreign policies since the mid-1950s.

Cabinet also opposed the move. According to then Minister of Finance John C. Crosbie, "the threatened economic sanctions by the Arab states naturally was a factor to be considered, but if the policy had been soundly conceived and based in the first place and with the necessary support of others in the government, the policy would have been adhered to anyway no matter what the threats on economic sanctions were" (Ripsman 2002: 167-69).

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Syrian government also threatened appropriate retaliation if the embassy were moved. Nine Arab ambassadors, namely of Morocco, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Somalia, Sudan, Iran, Tunisia, and Jordan, met with MacDonald on 7 June, and with Clark on 23 June

to express their outrage over the policy and to threaten retaliatory action if it were implemented. Then, on 23 June several hours before his departure for the summit in Tokyo, Clark announced what became known as Stanfield mission (Flicker 2002-03: 131 and Takach 1992: 278).

Thus, in 1979, for example, the threat of sanctions ‘worked’ in that they contributed to Clark's policy change on the embassy move. At the same time, they ‘did not work’ because without strong political incentives and cabinet opposition they may have been insufficient in themselves to produce a policy change. Because of these powerful political incentives, moreover, sanctions may not have been necessary to produce the change either, although they probably were a lightning rod, drawing Clark's attention to the political costs (Ripsman 2002: 172).

Whether the embassy move affair worked or not, it had geopolitical implications. In 1980, all 13 states with embassies in Jerusalem moved them to Tel Aviv. Again, the embassy affair had a profound impact on Canada's Middle East Policy, which shifted from a pro-Israel bias to a more even-handed treatment in the 1980s. After Trudeau's back in power in 1980, Canada established relations with PLO, its voting record at the UN was more balanced, and it criticized the invasion of Lebanon in 1982 (Flicker 2002-03: 137).

### ***(ii) Importance of Middle East as a Market for Canada***

Over the past decade, Canada has substantially increased its trade presence in the Middle East, which has become an increasingly important trading region for the Canadian economy, representing 1.4 per cent of total Canadian trade, up from 0.6 per cent in 2002. This growth has been primarily driven by trade with the GCC countries, with total two-way trade increasing by 325 per cent over the past decade to a total of \$6.8B in 2011. The GCC region alone now accounts for a greater percentage of Canadian trade (0.76 per cent) than the entire ME region did in 2002 (Momani 2013). For example, Canada's exports to the GCC are comparable to Canada's exports to India and greater than exports to Brazil or Russia. The GCC ranks as equivalent to Canada's 15<sup>th</sup> export destination; in comparison, India ranks 14th, Brazil ranks 17th, and Russia ranks 20th (Table 5.1). In fact, the Middle East have been overlooked by Canada's trade officials (Momani 2007: 161-62).

**Table 5.2**  
**Canada's Top Export Partners in 2006**

| <b>States</b>            | <b>Exports in 2006<br/>(CA\$ millions)</b> | <b>Rank<br/>2006</b> | <b>in</b> | <b>Share<br/>of<br/>Total<br/>Exports</b> |
|--------------------------|--|----------------------|-----------|---|
| United States            | 359,258                                    | 1                    |           | 81.6%                                     |
| United Kingdom           | 10,133                                     | 2                    |           | 2.3%                                      |
| Japan                    | 9,416                                      | 3                    |           | 2.1%                                      |
| China                    | 7,661                                      | 4                    |           | 1.7%                                      |
| Mexico                   | 4,385                                      | 5                    |           | 1.0%                                      |
| India                    | 1,677                                      | 14                   |           | 0.4%                                      |
| Gulf Cooperation Council | 1,613                                      | 15                   |           | 0.4%                                      |
| Brazil                   | 1,338                                      | 17                   |           | 0.3%                                      |
| Russia                   | 870  | 20                   |           | 0.2%                                      |
| Total Canadian Exports   | 439,500                                    |                      |           |   |

*Note:* Gulf Cooperation Council = Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

*Source:* Adapted from Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade 2007.

While two-way trade between the GCC and Canada declined significantly in the 1980s and 1990s, it has skyrocketed during 1995-2006. Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Israel have consistently been the most important import partners in the region. Main import products from these countries are oil and oil products, electrical machinery, precious stones, and pharmaceuticals. On the export side, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Iran, and, recently, Israel are the main markets for Canadian products, especially vehicles, aircraft products, machinery, cereals, metals, wood and paper (Momani 2007: 165).

In recent years, Canada's exports to the Middle East have been growing. In 2005, there was a 25 per cent increase in exports to the region. Yearly growth rates of Canadian trade with the Middle East were unstable before 2003; however, this rate of growth followed the general trend of Canadian exports overall over the past 15 years. Canadian exports to the GCC have risen by 192 per cent since 1999; in comparison, Canadian exports to China have risen by 188 per cent. Similarly, Canadian imports from the Middle East have increased by more than 300 per cent since 1990, mostly as a result of energy imports. Until 1999, Canada had enjoyed a consistent trade surplus with the Middle East, but subsequently, Canada's trade deficit with the region has increased more than threefold to \$1.5 billion. Canada's growing trade deficit with the Middle East is mainly attributed to rising oil prices (Momani 2007: 165-166).

An examination of the growth in imports and exports to the Middle East reveals that Canada would be interested in forging stronger ties to the region. Besides, political instability in the Middle East, the revenues generated by oil and gas trade as well as the resulting accumulation of wealth and growing middle class, especially in the oil-rich economies of the GCC, open up some opportunities for exporters. Countries in the Middle East are among the fastest growing economies in the world. Over the past ten years, growth rates in the Middle East's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) have grown an average of 4.2 per cent per annum. Some GCC countries have shown outstanding GDP growth rates, comparable to China and exceeding India and other emerging market economies. Qatar's GDP, for example, has grown at 9.4 per cent per annum over the past ten years. The GCC's foreign reserves have also been accumulating significantly over some years (currently at US\$1.6 trillion, compared to China's US\$1.1 trillion), mainly due to increases in oil revenues. These petro-dollars can be recycled or spent, and Canada can be considered a safe destination for Gulf investments (Momani 2007: 166).

A comparison of Canada's trade performance with the GCC to other industrialized countries illustrates that Canada has the potential to improve its economic relationship with the region. Canada's exports to the GCC average only 11 per cent in comparison to other OECD members. In other words, for every dollar exported to the GCC by France, Germany, or Italy, for example, Canada exports only 11 cents. In comparison, Canada captures nearly half (46 per cent) of the average OECD member's trade with China and India. Thus, while Canada is a strong exporter to China and India, the GCC market is being overlooked<sup>4</sup> (Momani 2007: 166).

What are the products that Canada can provide which are needed in the Middle East? According to the Trade Specialization Index, Canada has a comparative advantage in almost all products with the exception of mineral products (GCC), chemicals (Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar), textiles (Israel, Egypt, Oman, and Bahrain), food (Israel and Egypt), precious metals and stones (Israel and Egypt), and arms and ammunition (Israel). The sectoral mix of Canada–Middle East trade is tilted in favour of exported machinery, wood, agriculture, aerospace, and automobile products, and in favour of imported natural resources and textiles. Canada has

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<sup>4</sup> The Middle East's GDP growth rate is double that of the member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and significantly higher than the world average (5.4 per cent, 2.5 per cent, and 3.2 per cent respectively in 2006) (World Bank 2006, 4).

complementary trade with the Middle East, but the potential for growth in noted sectors is also an important source of Canadian economic growth (Momani 2007: 168-169).

It is important to note that new sectors increasingly generated Canadian economic growth. In the late 1990s, Canada's economy was dominated by sectors such as high-tech, auto manufacturing, and information and communication technologies. Since the beginning of the decade, however, these industries have slowed, while construction, resources, health, education, and related services are currently driving the Canadian economy. By way of example, yearly growth in construction in 2006 was 7.2 percent and oil and gas extraction 3.4 per cent, while manufacturing and primary industries (agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting) experienced negative growth (Statistics Canada). An important factor in the weak performance of the manufacturing sector has been increased competition from emerging countries (for example, China and India). This is especially visible in textiles, clothing, electrical equipment, leather products, and furniture. On the other hand, computer and electronic products, wood, chemicals, and transportation equipment are currently the most successful manufacturing areas in Canada (DFAIT 2007).

DFAIT (2005) has highlighted key market access priorities with countries in the Middle East. These specified sectors can be correlated to sectors where opportunities for growth and the positive ripple effect on the Canadian economy have been suggested by other economic analyses. According to DFAIT, opportunities in the Middle East have been identified in the wood and pulp and paper sectors (Egypt and Syria), equipment and veterinary health products, transportation equipment and machinery, and aircrafts (Jordan), water (Jordan), energy (Syria), information technology and communications (Egypt and Syria), automobiles (Iran), and petrochemical (Egypt) industries. In high-tech products (such as computer, communications equipment), firms have already started diversifying their exports away from the United States and United Kingdom markets to more prospective emerging markets (EDC 2007, 61–62). Given the declining exports of Canadian forestry products to the U.S., expansion of trade with the Middle East is an option worth considering. Canada sees trade opportunities in—and seeks further liberalization of bilateral trade in—canola oil (Israel, Iran, and Egypt), processed food

(Jordan and Iran), dairy products (Jordan), live cattle (Iran) and beef and veal (UAE) (Momani 2007: 171-172).

In services, the potential for growth seems to be located in professional, scientific, and technical services (currently growing at approximately 2.8 per cent annually) and architectural and engineering services (3.3 per cent). Entertainment, recreation, and accommodation services have also recently experienced accelerated growth (between 3 per cent and 5 per cent annually). Export Development Canada (EDC) in 2007 estimates that service exports to emerging markets will grow faster than to the United States (3 per cent to 4 per cent and 1 per cent respectively). In services, the potential for expansion has been noticed in education (Egypt and Saudi Arabia), consulting, training, software, and financial services (Syria), tourist services (UAE), infrastructure, construction, and engineering (Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE), and health care (Saudi Arabia) (Momani 2007: 172).

Export Development Canada (EDC) has also highlighted oil and gas, infrastructure, and environment as key sectors for strong Canadian investment and export potential. In this context, it seems that the market access priorities in the Middle East as identified by DFAIT follow domestic developments in various sectors of the economy. In addition, the fact that the oil-rich economies of the GCC are working toward higher economic diversification, using the oil revenues to increase spending on infrastructure, construction, other non-oil industries, real estate, tourism, and finance is a clear sign that Canada needs to look to the region for potential commercial opportunities (Momani 2007: 172).

While Canadian energy companies have traditionally established their presence in the Middle East and include, to name a few, Nexen, Petro-Canada, and BC Gas are becoming increasingly interested in the region. In Aerospace, CAE, a Canadian manufacturer of flight simulators, has invested in a large flight training centre in Dubai; in infrastructure, Snc-Lavalin, Bombardier, and Gartner Lee are also well represented in the region. CANSO and CANSULT have provided engineering and project management expertise throughout the UAE on multi-million-dollar building initiatives. Canada is also increasingly active in providing educational services, such as the College of the North Atlantic-Qatar, and health training such as Inter-Health and training of Saudi medical doctors in Canada. Some Canadian retailers also figure prominently in the GCC, including Aldo, CinnZeo, La Vie en

Rose, and Second Cup. The GCC stands out in the Middle East as a place where Canadian businesses can grow at remarkable rates (Momani 2007: 172).

While the growth in both exports and imports in the region are certainly positive developments for Canada, it has consistently run a negative trade balance with the Middle East region. In 2011, the negative trade balance in the region rose to \$3.8B, as Canada experienced a significant jump in imports from the oil exporting nations of Iraq, Saudi Arabia and UAE from 2010 to 2011. As a result, the trade balance with GCC was negatively impacted, falling to -\$1.4b in 2011 after fluctuating between surpluses and deficits for much of the decade.

The Middle East is the potential market as it accounts for an increasing percentage of the world's economic output, accounting for 5.13 per cent in 2011, up from 4.3 per cent in 2002. GDP Growth rates in the region have consistently outperformed the more advanced economies, with an average GDP per Capita (PPP) OF 5.26 per cent over the past decade compared to 3 per cent in Advanced economies and 2.7 per cent in the G7.

There are a number of reasons to believe that this type of growth in the Middle East will continue over the next two decades. First, rapid population growth and an increasingly well-educated and modern youth will contribute to an ever more favourable dependency ratio in the region. This will provide a strong labour force to support economic activity, provided there is an infusion of investment. Secondly, there are a number of sectors that are ripe for expansion. The growth in ICT, Hospitality and Tourism sector will help close the employment gap, a key priority for governments in the region. Finally, liberalization of the banking sector in the Arab Middle East has made it one of the fastest growing industries in the world.

From a Canadian perspective, the potential of the market is multiplied due to comparative advantages in trade, which extend to almost all products with the exception of mineral products (GCC); chemicals (Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia and Qatar); textiles (Israel, Egypt, Oman and Bahrain); food (Israel and Egypt); precious metals and stones (Israel and Egypt); and arms and ammunition (Israel). The combination of trade advantages and economic growth in the Middle East make it a potentially lucrative region to further Canadian economic interests.

The GCC countries have experienced some of the fastest growth rates in the world and are expected to have over \$3.5 trillion in Foreign Direct Investment by 2020. In the coming years, opportunities for investment and development in the oil

and gas sector will remain strong, but a commitment to drawing down reserves and reinvesting oil revenues into sustainable economic sectors has, and will continue to, open doors in numerous sectors that will be advantageous for Canada.

Canada has made tremendous progress on trade relations over the last few years; the Economic Action Plan for 2012 has called for the Global Commerce Strategy to be revisited, providing an opportunity to reassess Canadian trade and investment objectives to ensure they are making progress in strategic markets for the Canadian economy. Additionally, Canada has concluded or brought into force 11 Foreign Investment and Protection Agreements, including ones with Bahrain and Kuwait (Momani 2013).

### *(iii) Challenges and Prospects of Canada–Middle East Economic Ties*

Former parliamentary secretary to the minister of international trade Mark Eyking has suggested that Canada gained respect in 2004 for the government's handling of the Iraq crisis. Peter Ventin, vice-president of Cansult, one of the profitable Canadian engineering firms working in the Middle East, says that Canadians have "got an incredible reputation....doors are open to us because we're a Canadian firm. That may not be the case if you're an American firm or a British firm, especially in light of the recent political environment in that part of the world". Moreover, Canada is favoured in the region because it is seen as having "no preset agenda" and being a country of diversity and compromise and is therefore considered good business partners. Canadian businesses are often surprised that the Middle East has a high per capita income. Yet, the president of the Canada-Arab Business Council (CABC) noted, there is a general misperception that the region is unfriendly to foreign business.

Since 2005, the CABC has brought Canada's potential and growing level of trade with the GCC to the Canadian government's attention in a number of presentations to the Standing Committee on International Trade (CIIT). In 2006, the Canadian government created a special committee to investigate potential opportunities for enhancing Canadian-GCC linkages. There have been some synergies to push trade further with the Middle East. In 2005 Prime Minister Paul Martin addressed the CABC and stated, "Unfortunately, and I speak to government, I speak to the business community, and I speak to the ambassadors who are here, the simple fact of the matter is we have done little more than scratch the surface of the opportunities that are open to us in the Arab world." Trade Minister David Emerson

made similar remarks in his 2007 address to the CABC, “There’s an awful lot of room for improvement; and just the few conversations I had coming in and meeting people [at the CABC annual meeting], I heard just enormous enthusiasm coming from people of just the highest caliber realizing that there is a window of opportunity here to deal with the Middle East in a way that would bring tremendous benefits to Canada and the region over the next couple of years” (Momani 2007: 173-74).

While Middle Eastern diplomats have complained about Canada’s UN voting record on issues concerning the Middle East under the Harper government, several individuals in government noted that this was not nearly as damaging to our reputation as critics have argued. Canada’s ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Roderick Bell, reflected on this by saying:

Some might say we’re coasting on our reputation from the past. I personally think there is merit in that argument and that perhaps in recent years we haven’t deserved the reputation we garnered in the past. Nonetheless, we still have it, more particularly since the events of 9/11. The Canadian position on Middle East issues, and more particularly on Iraq, are extremely valued, and this is not just at the government level...We really do have a special place in these Arab countries, but we don’t exploit it as much as we should.

Momani (2007) had taken many interviews with interested business leaders, stakeholders, parliamentarians, and past and present government bureaucrats to synthesize a number of factors that present challenges to enhancing business in the region.

First, as the U.S. monopolizes Canada’s official and business interests, there is a declining interest in much else. While there is interest in DFAIT and EDC to exploit new markets, the emphasis is more often placed on the better known emerging market economies called the BRICS: Brazil, Russia, India, and China. In a sense, Canada wears ‘blindfolders’ when pursuing trade opportunities beyond the BRICS. Dwain Lingenfelter (2005), the vice president (international relations) of Nexen, says that “it’s much more difficult to get ministers to lead trade missions to the Middle East than I think it is to India or Brazil or China. The record shows that there are many more ministers going to those countries than going to the Middle East. And so I think this is just one part of it, but I think we all have to do our part.” This sentiment exists despite the EDC’s observation that it is relatively easier to conduct business in the Gulf than in India or China. Second, Middle East populations are relatively small. Business and the bureaucracy are more impressed by and interested in exporting to

larger consumer markets, such as India and China. It is simply more impressive to boast that Canada has secured stronger ties with a market of more than 1 billion than to boost ties with a Middle East market of 250 million or a GCC market of 35 million.

Third, there are strong perceived political risks associated with conducting business in the region. Undoubtedly, business has been dissuaded by the news headlines about Iraq, Lebanon, Israel and Palestine. Some countries like Saudi Arabia and Libya, make it difficult for Canadian business people to travel and visit the region. Fourth, in conducting business in the GCC, cultural nuances need to be respected. Gulf states can be highly image conscious. Ambassador Bell emphasizes the importance of this issue in promoting economic ties, saying that “culture values, face-to-face contact, but believe me, Arab culture puts a premium on it. We need the Prime Minister there; we need ministers there, and we need MPs there”<sup>5</sup>. In other words, Canadian businesses operating in the Middle East need the political support of Canadian government officials to help promote strong bilateral economic relationships. Sending bureaucrats instead of ministers to important trade meetings in the GCC does not help trade negotiations with the region.

Fifth, Canadian embassies need to be better represented in the Middle East. Canada’s embassies serve a vital function in promoting bilateral economic relations. While Canada has embassies in many Middle East countries, there are a number of important posts remaining to fill. Qatar, Oman, Yemen, Bahrain, and Iraq are still waiting for a permanent Canadian mission. Some argue that the government has failed to view embassies as investments in Canadian business and economic growth. Moreover, Canadian embassies in the Middle East are overwhelmed with offering visa and immigration services, making trade and investment promotion a relatively lower priority (Momani 2007: 175-177).

If Canadian trade officials are stretched to the limit, what can be done in the short term? It has been suggested that Canadian trade officials can negotiate additional Foreign Investment Protection and Promotion Agreements (FIPAS). A free trade agreement, for example, can require 30 highly trained DFAIT employees to negotiate and manage at any given time, whereas, a FIPA requires only six, with some cooperation from the Department of Finance. Canada signed two FIPAS with Egypt

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<sup>5</sup> Paul Mariamo, senior vice-president of snc-Lavalin, states that “we would love to see our Prime Minister or minister there often, promoting our product. We can fight companies, but we cannot fight governments. We need you to fight the governments for us; we cannot do it ourselves.”

and Lebanon in 1996 (in force 1997) and 1997 (in force 1999), respectively. The agreements contain provisions for the treatment of established investment, expropriation, transfer of funds and performance requirements, taxation measures, and dispute settlement, among others. FIPA negotiations with Jordan also have been completed (Prime Minister's Office 2007) and the groundwork has been laid for talks with Kuwait. Strengthening Export Development Canada (EDC) office resources in the Middle East would also be a useful policy<sup>6</sup> (Momani 2007: 180).

In other words, a free trade agreement with the Middle East, specially the GCC would be beneficial and would be a welcome signal for Canadian foreign investment, but DFAIT'S limited capacity makes this proposal less likely in the short term. The challenges noted in advancing trade in the Middle East, and most importantly in the GCC, however, are political ones. Indeed, there is a real need for enhanced political commitment on the part of the Canadian government to help enhance Canadian business activity in the Middle East. Expanding embassy services to include more trade commissioners would similarly be valuable in many more Middle East postings. Finally, it is clear that there is a greater need for personal involvement of senior government members in Canada's trade policy with the Middle East. The prime minister, members of Parliament, and even Canadian senators could be useful in opening many doors to lucrative business opportunities that will effectively help Canada's economy grow and prosper, and improve relations between Canada and the Middle East generally (Momani 2007: 181).

### **Canada's Arms sale to Israel**

After discussing the Middle East economic factor in Canadian foreign policy, this section discusses Canada-Israel relations in Canadian foreign policy, particularly Canada's arms sale to Israel in Canadian foreign policy. Regarding Canada-Israel relations, it has been analysed and discussed that Canadian diplomat played an important role in 1947 at UN negotiations that created a Jewish state in Palestine land. Engler (2010) argues that Canadian diplomacy continuously supported Israel. While

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<sup>6</sup> Export Development Canada (EDC) is Canada's export credit agency. It is a Crown corporation wholly owned by the Government of Canada, which provides financing and risk management services to Canadian exporters and investors in up to 200 markets worldwide, with 17 offices spread across all provinces in Canada, and permanent representations in 12 foreign market.

on occasion Canadian pronouncements and UN votes have supported Palestinian rights, rarely have the different arms of Canadian foreign policy provided concrete support. The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) works closely with Mossad (its Israeli equivalent), and many Canadian weapon makers ship their products to Israel. As private charities, every year Canadians send hundreds of millions of dollars worth of tax-deductible donations to Israeli universities, parks, immigration initiatives and also to illegal Israeli settlement in the West Bank. Further, Engler mentioned that both Liberal and Conservative governments from John Diefenbaker to Lester Pearson, Brian Mulroney to Paul Martin and Stephen Harper staunchly backed Israel. Lack of opposition also allowed the governments to make Canada the most pro-Israel country in the world. Moreover, Canada-US relation is another reason for supporting Israel.

This section focuses on Canada's arms sale to Israel in the 1950s. This period saw many transitions in the international and regional politics of the Middle East: among them the surrender of Anglo-French hegemony to the superpowers, the entrenchment of the Arab-Israel conflict, and the rise of Arab nationalism. These transitions were accelerated by the flow of advanced technology, specially the weapons, to Middle Eastern states became a contentious issue in the international relations of the 1950s. In the post Second World War period, the sale of arms to the Middle East was the exclusive purview of Great Britain and France. Great Britain supplied to those states with whom she had bilateral treaties - Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and the Gulf states -while France supplied those states formerly under her mandate, Syria and Lebanon. By 1950, however, the United States had emerged as a potential competitor for Middle Eastern arms markets (Oren 1990: 280).

Arms supply to the Middle East was not, of course, a purely economic enterprise. Western leaders viewed it as a means of extending their influence in a region with tremendous strategic value and vast oil reserves. The US interests clashed with those of Great Britain and France, as the United States sought the goodwill of local nationalist movements, and to distinguish herself from the so-called imperialist powers, through the medium of military aid. For the newly independent states of the Middle East, the acquisition of modern weapons was virtually an obsession. Arab regimes, often military in character, needed weapons to preserve their image, as well as to defend themselves against domestic and regional rivals. Israel required arms for national defence, as well as for the protection of the Jewish people. Both the Arab

countries and Israel paraded their weapons as symbols of their newly won independence, and that came from the Western countries. Given the levels of supply and demand, arms sales to the Middle East would have expanded rapidly in the early 1950s, but for the arms embargo imposed by the Security Council after the outbreak of fighting in Palestine in May 1948. The ban remained in force for over a year, being lifted only after the conclusion of the general armistice agreements between Israel and its four Arab neighbours in 1949. A peace settlement did not evolve, however, and the perpetuation of the Arab- Israel conflict impelled the Western powers to seek additional means of restricting arms sale to the region. In May 1950, Great Britain, France, and the United States issued their Tripartite Declaration Regarding Security in the Near East (Oren 1990: 281).

To enforce the declaration, and to reduce competition among themselves, the three states also created a top-secret, Washington-based group, the Near East Arms Coordinating Committee (NEACC), which reviewed requests for weapons from Middle Eastern states and collected intelligence on arms levels in the area.

As a country with few interests, diplomatic or economic, in the Middle East, Canada originally had little to do with arms sales to the region. Apart from the export of some surplus, the small Canadian arms industry existed to serve domestic needs. By 1949, however, with the intensification of the Cold War and the outbreak of regional conflicts in the Far and the Middle East, the Canadian government found itself swamped with requests for the export of its current production of arms. Canadian weapons manufacturers, their stores swelling with surplus, were eager to meet the demand, but the development presented the Canadian government with serious dilemmas. Concerned with demonstrating their independence of the United States, Canadian leaders had nevertheless to accept Canada's dependence on the US economy and need to avoid undue competition with US industry. They also had to take into consideration Canada's traditional relations with France, Great Britain, and the Commonwealth, all of which could be impaired by Canadian infringement of 'habitual source' spheres. Furthermore, the role of arms supplier conflicted with Canadian aspirations to be seen as a mediator of conflicts in the post-war world, a bridge between East and West<sup>7</sup> (Oren 1990: 282).

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<sup>7</sup> In 1946, the Canadian cabinet assumed the right to scrutinize arms exports and, in the following years, it involved in-depth reviews of arms requests by the departments of defence and external affairs, the joint chiefs of staff, and the Canadian mission to the United Nations.

The Middle East, for Canada, meant Israel. While Arab states occasionally looked to Canada for minor military items, Israel, lacking a habitual source, looked to her for major weapons supplies. Before the creation of the state, the precursor of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF), the Haganah, acquired from Canada, the boats for smuggling immigrants into Palestine. Beginning in July 1949, Israel submitted a number of requests for arms, including 42 Harvard trainers, which could also serve as light bombers. Ottawa welcomed these approaches. Alone among the growing number of new states seeking Canadian arms, Israel was prepared to pay in cash, with credits totalling \$100 million. Furthermore, Canadian public opinion was generally supportive of the Jewish state, as were many members of the cabinet of Louis St. Laurent. Among these was Lester B. Pearson, the Secretary of state for external affairs and architect of Canada's arms policy, who was particularly outspoken in support of Israel (Oren 1990: 283).

Not all Canadians, however, favoured arms sale to Israel. Professionals in the department of external affairs, like their counterparts in the United States, Great Britain, and France, were quick to point to Israel's military superiority and expansionist tendencies. By arming Israel, they warned, Canada would jeopardize her developing relations with the Arab states, and compel them to buy even more weapons, perhaps from the Soviet Union. These reservations notwithstanding, Canadian leaders were disposed to meet Israel's requests, in particular for the training planes, but they were prevented from doing so by the UN arms embargo on Israel and the Arab states. Paradoxically, Canada co-sponsored, along with France, the August 1949 Security Council resolution that terminated the embargo; but the international decision did nothing to clear the way for Canadian arms sales to Israel. On the contrary, far more formidable opposition arose from Great Britain, France, and to an even greater extent, the United States.

Eisenhower's policy, as framed by the secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, was at once anti-imperialist and anti-Communist and supportive of liberation movements. Characteristically, the US administration viewed arms sales as a means of attaining these goals. In August 1952, and again in July 1954, the United States offered substantial quantities of arms to the nationalist regime in Egypt led by Colonel Gamal Abdul Nasser. At the same time, to encourage co-operation with British efforts towards regional defence, the United States approved military aid to Iraq (Oren 1990: 285).

There was a disparity between the Israeli and Arab arsenals, particularly in jet planes. In 1953, the Arab states possessed 100 jets; Egypt alone had 41, compared with Israel's 15. That time, the United States was opposed to the export<sup>8</sup>, even of surplus arms, to Israel, that Canada was thinking of. Having failed in their efforts to buy both American Sabre and Swedish Saab jets, the Israelis hoped to obtain aircraft, as well as other military hardware, from Canada (Oren 1990: 285).

Canadian officials were dissatisfied with NEACC's refusal to supply Israel at a time of mounting military aid to the Arabs. Equally disturbing was the sense that the western powers aimed to exclude Canada from the Middle Eastern arms market. As Pearson told the Israeli ambassador in Ottawa, Michael Comay: "Canada has a political and commercial interest in coming in (to the Middle East arms trade). I do not see why the Americans and the British should be taking us for a ride". Beginning in 1953, Canada cautiously embarked on a more independent arms policy towards Israel. Despite the opposition of the US state department and the British foreign office, the cabinet approved in June the sale first of TNT and then of 25-pound guns to Israel. The outcome, however, was hazardous (Oren 1990: 286).

Italy and Canada produced Sabres, but whereas Italy merely assembled the planes as offshore procurement, Canada actually manufactured them. In theory, then, Canada had greater latitude in selling the jet - a fact on which Israel counted - but in reality, the United States, through her control of the design, could block its export. Israel requested for purchasing Canadian Sabres in 1954 and pledged to use the planes for defence only. The United States, however, continued to oppose such sales, and the Israelis hoped that the purchase of Canadian Sabres would create a precedent that the British and the French could follow (Oren 1990: 287).

Comay, together with Israel's ambassador to the United States, Abba Eban, lobbied hard for the Sabres, but without effect. With western arms flowing to the Arabs, and with Canada trying to demonstrate her political independence in the Middle East, rejection of Israel's requests would only reinforce the impression that Washington dictated Canada's Middle Eastern policies. Dulles, meanwhile, showed no inclination to moderate his policy on military aid to Israel. On the contrary, his opposition was strengthened by the inauguration of Alpha, a secret Anglo-American

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<sup>8</sup> United States claimed that Iraq and Saudi Arabia were not direct parties to the Palestine conflict. So there is no logic of supplying arms to Israel to have parity between them and Israel.

initiative to achieve a non-aggression pact between Egypt and Israel. In fact, no substantive progress was made on Alpha (Oren 1990: 288).

By that time, Egypt received from Soviet hundreds of tanks, guns, and naval vessels, the Czech arms deal, as it came to be called, included 200 MiG-15 fighters and 50 Ilyushin-28 bombers. Israel perceived the Czech deal as a mortal threat. Israeli Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, appealed to western leaders for arms to redress the imbalance. Otherwise, Israel would be compelled to launch a pre-emptive strike against Egypt, or itself turn to the Soviets. The replies of the United States and Great Britain were identical. While sympathetic consideration would be given to Israel's requests, the West would not be drawn into an arms race in the Middle East (Oren 1990: 290).

During this time, Canada became involved in a small way in the arms traffic to the Middle East. Canada had sold some anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns to Israel as defensive equipment and were not criticized, as it was agreed by the great majority in the House of Commons that an embargo on all arms shipments to either side would be unfair to Israel. But when in 1955, Canada sold fifteen Harvard trainer planes to Egypt, the conservative opposition in the House of Commons vigorously attacked the government for helping an anti-British dictator (Munro 1973: 219-20).

On 3 April 1954, Comay presented to Pearson an official order for 24 Sabre jets. To the cabinet, Pearson recommended approving the request once the UN secretary-general, Dag Hammarskjold, returned from a mediation mission to the Middle East. Pearson assumed that the United States would endorse the decision, and Canada, together with France, would arm Israel. But the United States, while not openly opposing Canada's decision, would not publicly endorse it. Meanwhile, the Arab states started to protest against it, and Hammarskjold expressed strong reservations. Under the circumstances, Pearson was unwilling to 'act alone', and Comay's repeated pleas to him were of no avail.

Pearson's vacillations reflected the continuing dilemma facing Canada: her wish to support Israel as a bulwark of the West, against her objection to the use of Canadian weapons for aggressive purposes. Twice in 1955, Canada had halted shipments of small arms to Israel in reaction to IDF raids against Arab targets. Also, she sought to satisfy the demands of public opinion, but at the same time, to uphold the UN and preserve a reputation for impartiality in regional conflicts (Oren 1990: 292).

This was particularly important in the Arab-Israel conflict, where a Canadian, General E.L.M. Burns, was commander of the UN peace-keeping force. Lastly, Canada wanted to assert her independence and to develop her own industries, but also to maintain a united front with her Western allies, especially the United States. The sole means of reconciling these contradictions lay in what Pearson called a 'collective arrangement'. Canada would act in concert with other states - Great Britain, France, and Italy - to meet Israel's major defence needs while the United States would publicly approve the sale and, it was hoped, supply some arms as well. Israel and the European states appeared to support the suggestion, but the United States balked.

Given the Nasser's final refusal to co-operate with US efforts to negotiate an Arab-Israel settlement influenced the decision of the United States and Great Britain to withdraw funding from Egypt's Aswan Dam project (Oren 1990: 293). In his speech in Alexandria on 26 July 1956, President Nasser announced that the Egyptian government nationalized the Suez Canal company, frozen its assets in Egypt, and would use the canal tolls to underwrite the construction of the Aswan High Dam (Munro 1973: 226).

The situation presented Dulles with alternatives: either to urge the Soviet Union to adhere to an international embargo on military aid to the Middle East, or to sell arms to Israel. Neither was viable. The former would result in an arms boycott of US allies in the Northern Tier - Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey - and the latter in the loss of US influence in the Middle East.

The solution Dulles devised for these many predicaments was a unique concept, code-named Stockpile. Stockpile called for the deposit of defensive weapons in the eastern Mediterranean for the use of the victim of aggression in case of an Arab- Israeli conflict. Specifically, ground weapons for the Arabs would be stored aboard a vessel of the US Sixth Fleet.

There remained, however, a basic technical problem: the only jet available in the eastern Mediterranean was the Sabre, which Israeli pilots did not know how to fly. To provide the necessary training, without directly implicating the United States, Dulles proposed that Israel should be supplied with 24 of the jets by Canada. When presented with the plan in May, Pearson's first response was skepticism (Oren 1990: 294).

Canada would figure as an agent in the identical sense that Czechoslovakia could be said to be a Russian agent. Nevertheless, on 13 July the Canadian cabinet

voted to approve in principle the sale of Sabre jets to Israel. Pearson was also disappointed by the Soviets' refusal to limit military aid to the Middle East, and the poor outcome of the Hammarskjold mission (Oren 1990: 295).

In the end, a series of meetings between Pearson and Livingston T. Merchant, the US ambassador to Canada, together with pressure from France and Great Britain, produced an agreement by which Canada would export 12 Sabres in July and 12 more in September; the United States would secretly sell those items it had earmarked, and publicize only the launching of Operation Stock-pile. The Soviet Union continued to supply weapons to Egypt, and began to arm Syria as well. France, meanwhile secretly provided Israel with three squadrons of Mystere fighters as well as hundreds of tanks, vehicles and guns. Receipt of the Mysteres served only to intensify Israel's quest for Canadian Sabres (Oren 1990: 257).

On 21 September, Canada announced that 'in consultation with certain friendly governments'; it would sell Israel 24 Sabres. The statement stressed that the plane would be used only for defence, and reserved to Canada the right to suspend the agreement if the situation in the Middle East so warranted. Israel, in separate documents, agreed to these conditions. The Sabre deal, an issue that Pearson called the most difficult he had ever encountered and which dominated the cabinet's foreign policy discussions throughout much of 1956, appeared finally to have reconciled the contradictions in Canada's arms policy.

The Eisenhower administration, in response to the strong pro-Israel platform adopted by the Democratic party, decided to relax its opposition to arms sales to Israel. The breakdown was fore-shadowed in the days after the announcement of the Sabre deal when the IDF launched a series of large-scale retaliations against Jordan.

On 29 October, Israel invaded Sinai, creating the pretext for the Anglo-French landing at Port Said. Pearson promptly called a press conference and stated that Canada was reviewing her decision on the Sabres, and in the meantime, was suspending deliveries, although the first instalment of 8 Sabres were ready for shipping. Israel merely requested a refund on them and made no serious attempt to obtain the remaining Sabres. The following year, when Pearson was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his role in resolving the Suez crisis, Ben-Gurion praised him before the Knesset, for his part in providing arms for Israel. When members of the right-wing Herut party asked him about Pearson's cancellation of the Sabre deal, Ben-Gurion retorted, "We asked for the sale to be cancelled because we had more and

better aeroplanes from another source and we are grateful to the company concerned for agreeing to conceal the purchase and for giving us back the money which we needed for the other aeroplanes” (Oren 1990: 299).

The Sabre sale changed Canada's attitude towards arms sales to Middle Eastern states. After that, the St. Laurent government, as well as its Conservative successor under John Diefenbaker, adopted a strictly neutral stance, refusing to sell arms to either Israel or the Arabs. When in October 1958, Golda Meir came to Ottawa in search of torpedoes and other arms, Canada's response was categorical: “... our recent approach to the Middle East problem has been to advocate methods of mediation, conciliation and restraint, preferably using UN machinery rather than the precarious balancing of positions of strength”.

Israel received some weapons from the United States, especially under the Kennedy administration, but France remained her principal source. The Soviet Union continued to supply Egypt and Syria and, after 1958, Iraq as well. The arms race would play an important role in precipitating the third Arab-Israeli war in June 1967 (Oren 1990: 300).

Canadian Arms Sales are governed by the country's Export and Imports Permits Act, 1985. The Trade Control Bureau issues permits and certificates for various products included in the Export Control List. Global Affairs Canada compiles and releases an annual “Report on the Export of Military Goods from Canada”, which provides statistics on the export of goods and technology identified on the “Munitions List” section of Canada’s Export Control List (ECL) (Global Affairs Canada 2015). The exports naturally come from private Canadian companies, but the government in Ottawa reviews each of these sales. “A key consideration in the review of each application is the end-use of the export. Careful attention is paid to mandatory end-use documentation in an effort to ensure that the export is intended for a legitimate end-user and will not be diverted to ends that could threaten the security of Canada, its allies, or other countries or people”, a spokesperson for the Department of Foreign Affairs said (Ling 2015).

Canada imported \$2,592,517 worth of arms and ammunition from Israel in 2010 and exported \$658,734, but analysts say the value of military-related trade between the two countries exceeds those amounts when related technologies are included. The business relationship in the security and military sectors has been helped by a declaration of intent Canada and Israel signed in 2008 in which they

agreed to enhance co-operation in the areas of public safety and counter-terrorism (CBC News 2012).

In response to the bombing of Gaza in 2008-09 and the deaths of hundreds of innocent children and other civilians, the Coalition to Oppose the Arms Trade (COAT), an Ottawa-based, Canadian anti-war network, produced a report on Canadian military companies that have direct or indirect export links to Israel (Sanders 2009). COAT reported that Ottawa-based business association/lobby group called the Canadian Association of Defence and Security Industries (CADSI), organised a “Canada-Israel Industry Partnering Mission” to “advance industrial partnerships between Canadian and Israeli companies”. Since 2006, when Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade began proactively disclosing “grants and contributions over \$25,000,” CADSI has received three government donations totaling \$192,000 for “generic international business development activities”. COAT's report lists more than 50 Canadian military exporters that have supplied a wide range of essential components and services for three major US weapons systems that are used by the Israeli Air Force: the F-15 ‘Eagle’, F-16 ‘Fighting Falcon, and AH-64 ‘Apache’. These fighter aircraft and helicopter were the main varieties of weapons systems employed by Israel during the aerial bombardments of Gaza. There are more than 140 Canadian military industries have exported their products directly to Israel. COAT's reported that more than one third of these Canadian military companies have known links to CADSI.

Global Affairs Canada (2013) reports that for the year 2012 – 2013, Canada's total exports of military goods and technology amounted to approximately \$1.72 billion. The major share (\$1.15 billion or 67 per cent) went to member countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or non-NATO AFCCCL destinations. Saudi Arabia, a non-NATO AFCCCL destination was the largest single destination of Canadian military exports each year, received \$575.1 million in military exports, accounting for 33 per cent of all Canadian military exports. Five NATO countries were also in the top ten destinations for the same period: the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, France and Belgium. One other of the top ten destinations was non-NATO AFCCCL destination; Australia, which received a combined \$46.9 million in military exports. The list includes the United Arab Emirates, Austria and Singapore, the second, fourth and ninth-largest destinations for military exports

respectively. Military exports to Participating States of the Wassenaar Arrangement<sup>9</sup> accounted for \$741.7 million, or 43 per cent of the total military exports. The military goods export to the selected Middle East countries are as follows (in Table 5.3).

**Table 5.3**  
**Exports of Military Goods and Technology in the Middle East**

| <b>Countries</b> | <b>2011</b>   | <b>2012</b>   |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Egypt            | \$3,965       | \$7,252,754   |
| Israel           | \$2,379,586   | \$4,846,505   |
| Jordan           | \$718,799     | \$888,467     |
| Saudi Arabia     | \$422,298,391 | \$152,772,708 |

Source: Global Affairs Canada 2012.

Yves Engler (2013), a Montréal-based activist and author, mentioned that despite the Israeli Defense Force's many human rights violations, many Canadian companies sell weapons directly to Israel. In 2012 British Columbia-based MacDonald, Dettwiler and Associates won a \$90 million contract to supply Israel Aerospace Industries with satellite technology. Ottawa's Allen Vanguard Corporation provides 'counterterrorist' equipment and training; iMPath Networks of Ottawa and Halifax design solutions for real-time video surveillance and intrusion detection technology; Mecachrome Technologies, based in Montréal and Toronto, provides components for military aircraft. MPB Technologies of Pointe Claire, Edmonton, Airdrie and Calgary manufacturers, among other things, communications equipment and robotics for [Israeli] military use; and British Columbia-based 360 Surveillance sells technology for Israel's apartheid wall and checkpoints. Harper's government, for instance, is close to the Canadian military companies that sell to Israel and do business with that country's top-flight weapons industry. Additionally, Canadian military leaders appreciate the tactical information and expertise Israel's well-practiced military shares.

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<sup>9</sup> The Wassenaar Arrangement has been established in order to contribute to regional and international security and stability, by promoting transparency and greater responsibility in transfers of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies, thus preventing destabilising accumulations. It was established in 1996, Secretariat is located in Vienna.

## Changing Foreign Policy Dynamics

Historically, Canada was biased towards Israel from 1947. From that point to 1970s, Israel's public relations campaign, and the presence of an influential Jewish community in Canada had succeeded in portraying Israeli's as the victim in the Arab-Israel conflict. It also successfully projected itself as a more Western, democratic country with skills in self-defence; and one which is law abiding. In effect, Canadians had viewed Israel as another Western country (Martin 2010: 196).

There are scholars who maintain that the Canadian policy was that of liberal internationalism, means Canadian foreign policy was a principled middle power with commitments not only to Western and North American alliance but also to the institutions and the norms of United Nations system. But the Canadian foreign policy changed in when the Liberal Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau (1968-1979 and 1980-1984) came into power. In 1968, Trudeau announced that his government intended to conduct a comprehensive review of Canadian foreign policy. In 1970, the Ministry of External Affairs published a series of six booklets, collectively titled "Foreign Policy for Canadians", which called for the extension of domestic interests abroad. Canada followed bilateral policy without jeopardizing its relationship with the United States or abandoning its multilateral commitments. The new policy emphasized on the direct pursuit of national self-interest, systematic assignment of priority to those countries best able to contribute to the defined national objectives and planned development of stable, long-term relationships with priorities countries. Canada expanded its bilateral relationships with selected Arab countries.

Thus, in the 1970s changes in Canadian Middle East policy heralded a new era of association with the Arab world, beyond the context of the Arab-Israel conflict. However, Canada maintained to ensure Israel's existence within secure and recognizable borders and continued to argue that Resolution 242 should continue the only basis for negotiations between Israel and her neighbours. Therefore, changes in Canadian Middle East policy during this period should not be interpreted as anti-Israel or pro-Arab. Rather they have to be seen in the context of Trudeau's policy that emphasized the concept of extension abroad of domestic interests (Miller 1991: 9-10).

However, there were other reasons for Canadian policy change in the 1970s and 1980s. One of the reasons was oil embargo imposed by the Arab states. While Canada was not specifically targeted, the oil embargo and subsequent oil price

increases led Ottawa and most other Western capitals to be more mindful of Arab views and sensitivities. After 1973 war and Arab oil embargo, Canada opened an embassy in Saudi Arabia and adopted a policy of strengthening relations with all states in the region. The 1979 Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt was another factor in changing the Canadian attitudes towards Arabs (Ripsman 2002: 163 and Flicker 2002-03: 115, 117). At the same time, some Israeli actions notably, illegal settlement activity in the occupied territories as well as the annexation of East Jerusalem eroded Canadian support for Israeli policies (Brynen 2007: 74-75; and Kirton 2007: 383).

Canadian perception and policy manifested in favour of Israel when the new Progressive Conservative government proposed in 1979, against the advice of the Department of External Affairs, to relocate Canada's embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. But the negative Arab reaction led Prime Minister Joe Clark (1979-80) to appoint former Conservative leader Robert Stanfield to review both the embassy issue and the broader spectrum of Canada's relationship with the Middle East. While stressing Canada's sympathy, friendship and strong support for Israel, Stanfield's report suggested that the embassy not be moved in view of the political sensitivities involved. It also suggested that Canada deepens its bilateral and commercial relations with the Arab world. Significantly, the report offered some recognition of the importance of the Palestinian issue noting that the Palestinians "have now emerged fully conscious of their identity and anxious to give that identity political expression".

Takach (1992) argued that Clark's pro-Israel sympathies were based at least in part on his religious background as well as his view of Israel as an island of Western liberal democracy in a sea of autocratic, soviet manipulated regimes. Opposition in Canada and international power politics forced the Clark government to scrap the idea. When his budget proposal called for an increased gasoline tax of eighteen cents per gallon to help pay down the deficit, his government failed to receive Parliament's approval. Less than nine months after acquiring power, the Conservatives lost power to Trudeau's Liberals (Takach 1992: 273 and Hibbard 2012: 3-4).

When Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982, Trudeau, then back in power found it easy to tilt away from Israel. Canadian public opinion grew somewhat more sensitive to the rights of the Palestinians. Canadian policy was, of course, slower to change in this regard than were the policies of many other Western countries. While support for Israel was much of the reason for this and there was also some concern about the

ramifications of supporting Palestinian political self-expression or self-determination at a time when Ottawa faced a growing sovereigntist movement in Quebec (Brynen 2007: 75 and Kirton 2007: 384).

During this time, Canada continued to express its unwavering support for the security of the state of Israel but also admitted that Palestinian interest also needed to be taken into account (Martin 2010: 197). Canada's Foreign Affairs department characterized it as a fair-minded approach to the Arab-Israel conflict that began during the Mulroney era in the 1980s when Joe Clark was foreign minister. The trajectory established by Clark was largely maintained during the years of the Liberal Prime Minister Jean Chretien (1993-2003). For example, when Israel sent agents in 1997 to assassinate *Hamas* official Khalid Mishal in Jordan under the cover of forged Canadian passports, the Canadian government reacted with a vigour that took the Israel by surprise. Canada recalled its ambassador from Tel Aviv and restored normal relations only when the Israelis undertook to refrain from using Canadian documents in the future (Bell 2007: 12).

Chretien's period marked the start of formal talks on Canada-Israel free trade deal in 1994. It aimed to eliminate tariffs on most goods by January 1, 2006. Soon afterwards trade agreements with Jordan and Palestine Authority arrived. Further, Chretien's foreign policy in the Middle East was largely defined by war. When the United States asked Canada for military action against Iraq in fall 2002, Chretien held back, insisting on waiting for the report of the UN weapon inspectors and proof of the presence of weapons of mass destruction. Chretien's decision on Iraq has variously been explained as a consequence of Canada's multilateralist commitments and alternatively as the result of domestic political calculation revolving around Quebec's opposition to the war and the provinces centrality to federal Liberal electoral prospects (Zahar 2007: 59). But United States war on terror made it difficult to the successive governments to escape. When Paul Martin was sworn in as prime minister in December 2003 emphasised on improving relations with the United States (Kirton 2007: 385 and Fraser 2005: 179, 183).

The policy shifted in the mid-2000s, back to an overtly pro-Israel approach. It started during the 2003-06 government of Paul Martin. After Martin's predecessor Jean Chretien had angered the George W. Bush administration by refusing to join the coalition invading Iraq earlier in 2003, it was believed that Canada needed to win the favour of Washington. One of the means chosen was to change its voting pattern at

the UN and not vote against the US in certain UN resolutions that criticised Israel. For instance, Canada voted against a text recognizing the Palestinian right to self-determination. This change in approach is also extended to other fronts; for example, government representatives in public referred to Palestinian ‘aspirations’ rather than Palestinian ‘rights’ (Martin 2010: 197 and Bell 2007: 8).

### **Harper’s Foreign Policy Towards Israel**

The victory of the Stephen Harper’s Conservatives in the January 2006 election contributed to change Canada’s Middle East policy and shifted towards Israel further. It was partially due to a narrowing of the attitudinal gap between the US and Canadian governments. Harper’s views were closer to US President George W. Bush on a number of key issues than were his predecessor. Zahar (2007) argues that “Harper is a social and fiscal conservative with a deeply religious orientation – all characteristics that should endear him to President Bush”. A significant ideological congruence between the new Canadian and the Bush administration derives from what Bush himself described as mutual values, namely the need to stand firm against terrorism and to address the problem of rogue states. Their convergence was further confirmed when Canada became the first country to suspend all aid to the Palestinian Authority in the wake of *Hamas*’s victory in the Palestinian Legislative Council. Having described the group as a terrorist organization, Harper government unilaterally cut the Canadian aid to the *Hamas* government which was democratically elected on 25 January 2006, before any of the G8 partners did. But on other issues like on Iranian nuclear issues, Canada was contended to follow the lead of the US and EU (Martin 2010: 197-98 and Kirton 2007: 385 and Zahar 2007: 61).

Events in the Middle East took an unexpected turn on 12 July 2006 when Hezbollah fired rockets into northern Israel and attacked a military patrol killing three soldiers and abducting two others in an attempt to force Israel to return Lebanese prisoners. Calling the attack an ‘act of war’ Prime Minister Ehud Olmert ordered a massive artillery, air and ground offensive to break Hezbollah’s grip on southern Lebanon. By the time the conflict ended 34 days later more than a thousand Lebanese civilians had been killed, almost a million had been displaced, and much of the country’s infrastructure was destroyed. Harper declared Canada’s unequivocal support for Israel’s devastating bombing campaign against Hezbollah in Lebanon

(Martin 2010: 198).

When hostilities broke out Canadian Prime Minister Harper was en route to Europe for meetings with Prime Minister Tony Blair in London, G-8 colleagues in St. Petersburg and President Jacques Chirac in Paris. Although up to 50,000 Canadians were stranded in Lebanon, Harper agreed with President George W. Bush that Israel had “the right to defend itself” describing its response as ‘measured’.

The crisis in Lebanon dominated discussion among the G-8 leaders. The US, UK and Canada opposed an immediate end to the fighting, in effect giving Israel green signal to destroy as much of Hezbollah as it could. France, Germany and Russia agreed that Hezbollah had started the conflict but condemned Israel’s disproportionate response and insisted on an immediate ceasefire. Harper joined Bush in opposing Chirac’s call for an immediate ceasefire that he argued was not the ‘first thing’ or ‘the only thing’ called for in the G-8 statement.

Canada participated in peace talks in Rome in late July which failed to produce any agreement on ending the war. Canada joined the United States and the UK in insisting that a durable settlement had to precede a ceasefire while moderate European and Arab states maintained that the fighting had to end first. Harper said Canada would not participate in a possible peace-keeping force and adding that its purpose should be to drive out terrorists. He would ask Israel and the UN for an explanation after Israeli forces bombed a UN observer post in southern Lebanon, killing a Canadian officer and three other soldiers serving with the UN Truce Supervision Organisation. But Harper appeared to blame the UN for putting the soldiers at risk. A Canadian Forces board of inquiry later held Israel’s military responsible for the deaths, which it called ‘tragic and preventable’ (Barry 2010: 199-201).

Canada’s pro-Israel tilt at the UN became more pronounced when the government abstained on three more General Assembly resolutions dealing with Palestinian people’s right to self-determination, nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, and Israel’s exploitation of natural resources on “occupied Arab lands” which its predecessor had supported. Harper admitted that diplomacy was the only way to achieve peace, but his government would not deal with *Hamas* and was looking for ways to encourage dialogue with the Palestinian Authority through President Abbas (Barry 2010: 204 and Brynen 2007: 78).

Martin (2010) argues that in the matter of halting Israeli settlement

construction in the West Bank, Ottawa is silent. Historically Canada has described this construction as illegal under international law. The same applied to the hardship placed on the Palestinians by the construction of the “separation barrier” and by multiple checkpoints and home demolitions in the occupied territories.

Senior Palestinian officials questioned Canada’s characteristic support for the rule of law and upholding human rights. In 2008-09, the only law they saw Canada supporting was law and order through programmes to train Palestinian judges, police and the national security forces. Although such support is needed and wanted, it seemed clear to Palestinians that Canada had chosen to carry out only the kind of programmes that pleased Israeli security-conscious as well (Martin 2010: 199).

Among advocates of the liberal internationalist vision, Canada’s foreign policy identity is that of a principled middle power with strong commitments not only to Western and North American alliance structures but also to the institutions and norms of the United Nations system. Domestic commitments to peace, order and good government correlate closely with external priorities: advancing human security through persistent diplomacy, encouraging respect for international law, supporting humanitarian action, and promoting economic and social development. Canada mediates crises, works for consensus and whenever possible avoids one-sided bellicose stands. Canada’s internal security, in turn, is enhanced by international regard for the “peace-keeping nation” (Kirton 2007: 378).

According to a rival perspective which can be referred as “neo-conservative”, Canada’s self-image as a “principled middle power” and “peace-keeping nation” is either outdated or spurious. The events of 11 September 2001, demonstrate that we live in an unpredictable and dangerous world—a world in which it is impossible to maintain neutrality between rival forces. Canada should, therefore, define itself in particularistic terms as a western power and prepare to stand with allies in a militarised struggle against international terrorism. To be a full and respected partner of more powerful nations and to guarantee the country’s economic and political status in North America and the broader Anglophone world, Canada should become preoccupied with pulling its own weight and maintaining a united military and diplomatic front against enemies of liberal democracy (Funk 2007: 26).

A close analysis of historical policies reveals that Canada has been on both sides of the Arab-Israel divide. Canada has been a midwife to Israel and a nurse to Palestinians. An architect of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) in the

Sinai and the first country to withdraw support from the Palestinian Authority after *Hamas* won the elections of 2006. Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau argued against the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, and Prime Minister Stephen Harper acted as a vocal supporter of Israel's summer 2006 offensive against Hezbollah.

Regarding Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA), it can be said that expanding the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement is part of the Harper government's broad and ambitious free trade agenda. To mention, Canada has few free trade agreements in the world, only one of which with a country in the Middle East region is Israel. Under the Mulroney government in the early 1990s, Israel had actively pursued closer economic ties with Canada and raised the idea of a bilateral free trade agreement. However, the Mulroney government was preoccupied with the Canada-U.S. free trade agreement and did not want to pursue another politically contentious bilateral trade agreement yet. Prime Minister Jean Chretien raised the issue with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin when they met in 1994 (Momani 2007: 178).

The main motivations for the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA) were to strengthen economic relations and create a framework for promoting investment and cooperation (DFAIT 1996). Despite Canadian foreign affairs political officers suspicion, trade officials in the same department argued that Canadian firms needed a free trade agreement with Israel to level the playing field with EU and American competitors that enjoyed tariff-free access (the EU in 1975 and the U.S. in 1985 had both concluded free trade agreements with Israel). In contrast, Canadian producers and industries, such as telecommunications, were paying tariffs of 10 per cent to 25 per cent to export into Israel. This discrepancy presented a considerable disadvantage to Canadian exporters (Momani 2007: 178).

The CIFTA entered into force on January 1, 1997, eliminating tariffs on all industrial products manufactured in Canada and Israel as well as a limited number of agricultural and fisheries products. Between 1999 and 2003, additional agricultural tariff reductions on goods were successfully negotiated. This included preferences for some Canada's top agricultural and agri-food exports to Israel. The CIFTA is a goods-only agreement (Canada Office of the Minister of International Trade, 2010).

In February 2007, the Harper government announced that it would make bilateral free trade agreements, an important government policy by committing greater financial resources to trade negotiations. In June 2007, DFAIT concluded the

agreement with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries. Trade negotiations with South Korea, Singapore, Peru, Columbia, and the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) were also on the horizon (Momani 2007: 178-179).

Canada's motivations for negotiating CIFTA were also political and geopolitical. The same can be said for the potential trade negotiations with Jordan announced in the summer of 2007 by Stephen Harper (Prime Minister's Office 2007). At the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs on the eve of the CIFTA signing, Senator Pierre De Bane expressed skepticism that the creation of CIFTA was motivated on economic grounds:

We all know the size of the trade between our country and Israel, and if we were interested in having a level playing field, I can give you a lot of other markets where we do not have a level playing field because of their agreements with the European Union. The reason here—everybody knows. As a Canadian, I applauded when that agreement in principle was announced, because it was our gift to that region—we wanted to encourage them in the peace process. This is it. You have your own point of view about what kind of spin to give to this, but let me tell you that it is essentially a political gesture on the part of Canada, and you cannot, with all due respect, hide it with an economic rationale (Momani 2007: 179).

Peter Van Loan, Minister of International Trade, visited Israel in October 2010 to promote closer commercial relations, including exploratory talks to expand the CIFTA. He met his counterpart Binyamin Ben Eliezer, Israel's then Minister of Industry, Trade and Labour, in Tel Aviv, announced that Canada and Israel were to undertake steps toward modernizing the existing CIFTA. The Ministers agreed that officials would start exploratory talks to work on moving beyond the original, first-generation trade agreement by significantly expanding its application (Canada Office of the Minister of International Trade, 2010).

“The Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement has been tremendously beneficial for our two countries. Two-way merchandise trade has more than doubled since its implementation,” said Minister Van Loan. “Canada's ties to Israel are very deep, and our friendship is important. Our government is building on these ties and looking at opportunities to expand our trade relationship. We are committed to creating new sources of jobs, growth and prosperity for both of our countries in the years ahead.”

“Expanding the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement is part of the Harper government's broad and ambitious free trade agenda. In just four years, our

government has negotiated new trade agreements with eight countries, is in negotiation with close to 50 others, and is now expanding the three first-generation agreements signed by the former government,” said the Minister.

While in Tel Aviv, Minister Van Loan met with Israel’s Minister of Science and Technology, Daniel Hershkowitz. Their meeting focused on strategies for increasing cooperation in science and technology. Minister Van Loan also met with the Chief Scientist of Israel’s Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labour, Dr. Eli Opper, to discuss potential joint innovation initiatives.

“There are great many opportunities for cooperation between Israel and Canada when it comes to the commercialization of science,” said Minister Van Loan. “Canada and Israel can be even more effective partners in the areas of technology collaboration, research and development, and innovation commercialization. We hope to see increased collaboration that will bring significant benefits to both our countries, including future economic growth, improved health and environmental sustainability.”

The Minister also visited Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd. in Petach-Tikva and met with President and Chief Executive Officer Shlomo Yanai. The Israel-based company is a leader in the pharmaceuticals sector, with production facilities and offices in Canada.

Israel is Canada’s sixth-largest merchandise export market in the Middle East (Canada Office of the Minister of International Trade 2010). Since the implementation of CIFTA, Canada-Israel bilateral goods trade has more than doubled, from \$507.3 million in 1997 to \$1.4 billion in 2012 (Canada Office of the Minister of International Trade, 2012).

Benjamin Netanyahu's visit to Ottawa on 2 March 2012 reflects the growing significance of Canada's relationship with Israel, which in recent years has deepened — both politically and economically. In 2011, Canada exported \$394,215,685 worth of goods to Israel and imported \$982,084,862 worth of merchandise. Canada’s main exports to Israel are machinery, electrical equipment, paper and newsprint, plastics, wood and aluminum. Israel's main exports to Canada are pharmaceutical products, electrical equipment, precious stones and metals, machinery, optical equipment and organic chemicals. Machinery, electrical equipment and mechanical appliances make up the most significant exports, totalling \$81,105,318 in 2011. Chemical products, primarily pharmaceuticals, are the most

significant imports, totaling \$310,261,787, followed by machinery, electrical equipment and mechanical appliances, which totalled \$219,837,399 in 2011. Israel foreign direct investment in Canada was \$1 billion in 2010 (CBC News 2012)

Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of the State of Israel, announced the launch of negotiations to expand and modernize the CIFTA, a cornerstone of the commercial relationship between the two countries. The announcement was made during an official visit by Prime Minister Harper to Israel in January 2014. Prime Minister Stephen Harper said: “Our Government is committed to providing Canadian businesses with the market access they need to compete and succeed internationally. An expanded and modernized trade agreement with Israel will generate more jobs and economic growth at home and in Israel while strengthening the close friendship that both countries enjoy” (Canada Prime Minister’s Office, 2014).

The first round of negotiations took place in Israel from February 3-9, 2014. Ed Fast, Minister of International Trade, announced the start of the first round of negotiations to expand and modernize the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA). An expanded and modernized CIFTA will enhance bilateral commercial flows by reducing technical barriers, enhancing cooperation, increasing transparency in regulatory matters and reducing transaction costs for businesses. In the area of sanitary and phytosanitary measures, a modernized agreement will provide new mechanisms to increase cooperation and resolve market access irritants more expeditiously, including rules of origin, institutional provisions and dispute settlement. This initiative will also create new opportunities for Canadian agriculture, agri-food, fish and seafood companies in the Israeli market.

Since CIFTA came into force in 1997, Canada’s two-way merchandise trade with Israel has more than doubled, to \$1.41 billion in 2013. It comprised of \$380.9 million in Canadian exports to, and \$1.1 billion in imports from, Israel. Israel was Canada’s 44 largest export destination and it was Canada’s 43 largest source of imports globally in 2013. At the provincial/territorial level, Quebec and Ontario together accounted for 66.1 per cent of the value of Canada’s exports to Israel in 2013, with exports valued at \$132.1 million and \$119.8 million respectively. Over the 2008 to 2013 period, the fastest growing provincial/territorial exporters to Israel were Prince Edward Island, British Columbia and Nunavut, with average annual growth

rates of 61.1 per cent, 24.8 per cent, and 15.6 per cent respectively (Library of Parliament 2014).

Ed Fast, Minister of International Trade, said: “Launching these negotiations so quickly after the Prime Minister’s historic visit is clear proof that we want to continue to strengthen the Canada-Israel trade and investment relationship to the benefit of Canadians and Israelis alike. An expanded and modernized CIFTA will create new jobs and opportunities for Canadians by improving access to the Israeli market for Canadian producers, manufacturers and exporters” (Canada Office of the Minister of International Trade 2014).

In addition to the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA), Bell (2007) mentions that there is the Canada-Israel Industrial Research and Development Foundation (CIIRDF). Its programme is a modest one, but it did a wonderful job of matchmaking between high technology companies in Canada and Israel, which are now working together to develop new technologies. The CIIRDF has been so successful that the province of Ontario initiated and funded its own programme with Israel. Four more provinces are in discussions to follow suit, namely Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec, and Newfoundland (Bell 2007: 16).

### **Summary and Conclusion**

This Chapter discussed that Jews Canadians are more influential in determining Canada’s policy towards the Middle East, rather than their counterpart Arab Canadians. Arab Canadians are divided among various groups depending on their home countries cultural practices. The Jews who are residing in Canada since long almost 250 years, are more organized in their institutional structure like CIJA, that facilitates in bonding Canada-Israel relations and any issues related to the Jews whether in Canada or abroad. The Chapter also discussed that the Arab oil embargo in 1973 changed the international equations in the Middle East. Oil prices went high and the whole Middle East oil producing region became internationally importance. There was also an effort from the United States to stabilize the region through a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel in 1979. Whether Canada was effected from the oil embargo or not, economic interest in the Middle East became a factor for Canada to change its policy towards Middle East. So far Canada was supporting Israel, but from this period Canada maintained a balanced approach towards Palestine. After the 1982 Israeli

invasion of Lebanon, Canada strongly criticized Israel.

Stephen Harper's support to Israel has been discussed in details as Harper's social and fiscal conservative with deep religious orientation shaped his policy to support Israel strongly. Canada's arms sale to the Middle East, specially to Israel directly or indirectly went against its end-use policy of military arms, because the military equipments Israel use on the Palestinians are supplied directly by Canadian companies or Supplied to the United States that is being used by Israel.

## CHAPTER - VI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The doctoral research monograph has made a modest effort to describe and analyse, using historical and comparative methods, Canada's perception and approach towards the Arab-Israel conflict and the various Arab-Israel peace process. The thesis has examined Canada's engagements with the conflict in terms of its larger foreign policy principles and practices as well as domestic social and political factors; importantly, such as the cold war perspectives, the presence of an active Jewish community in Canada, and personality factors - like Pearson or Stephen Harper's support to Israel. The thesis, in its initial part, has drawn the attention on the history of the Arab-Israel conflict.

Historically, Arab-Israel conflict is rooted in 1917 Balfour Declaration. The Balfour Declaration became a major issue of conflict between the Arabs and the Jews. The whole Palestine area was under the Ottoman Empire but after the defeat and dissolution of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War, the area comprising Palestine fell under the British rule. The San Remo Conference awarded Britain the Class 'A' Mandate over Palestine, and the British military administration was replaced by a civilian administration in July 1920. Two years later the newly created League of Nations gave formal sanction to the British Mandate. In the meantime, there had prevailed a sympathy and a deliberate attempt was made within the British cabinet towards the religious and humanitarian aspects of Zionism. On 2 November 1917, the British foreign secretary Arthur Balfour wrote a letter mentioning that the cabinet had approved the establishment of a 'National Home' in Palestine for the Jewish people. The Zionists interpreted the term 'National Home' to mean a Jewish state. The Arabs who were the majority community in Palestine felt ignored. Since then bloody clashes periodically erupted between the Arabs and the Jews.

The second major issue involved in the Arab-Israel conflict was Jewish immigration and land acquisition in Palestine. In a region of limited agricultural potential, the ownership of cultivable land became a matter of contention and survival. Violence like the Wailing Wall disturbance of 1929 in Jerusalem and the Arab revolt of 1936-1939, were directly related to the dislocations caused by Jewish immigration and land acquisition by the Jews in Palestine. There were three Israeli underground military organizations in Palestine, *Haganah*, *Irgun* and *Lehi* who had

conducted military operations against the British Mandate and every day British soldiers were killed, British property was destroyed, and the law-order situation in Palestine was breaking down. Britain sought to control it, and came with several commissions, like Shaw (1929), Simpson (1930), Peel (1937), and White Paper (1939), but all had failed. As a result Britain handed over Palestine to the United Nations for its solution.

Regarding the role of Canada in the Arab-Israel conflict, it can be admitted that Canada had no reason to get involved in the Middle East affairs. One of the major foreign policy goals of Canada was to help maintain good relations between Britain, which many Canadians felt a strong connection with, and the United States, the then emerging super power. Moreover, Canada's participation in the United Nations had drawn it in the Arab-Israel conflict, closely and emotionally. When Britain referred the Palestine issue to the United Nations on 2 April 1947, the first UN Secretary-General, Trygve Lie (1946-52), called a special session for the creation of a Special Committee to solve the issue. For this purpose a First Committee (28 April 1947), was created and Lester B. Pearson, Canadian Ambassador to the United States (1945-46), later became the Secretary of State for External Affairs (1948-1957) and Prime Minister (1963-68), was elected as chairman of this Committee and that created another Committee, which is known as the UN Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP). Through the institutional means, Canada had a role in terms of UNSCOP.

The Canadian government appointed Ivan Cleveland Rand, a former Attorney General in New Brunswick and a serving member of the Supreme Court of Canada to the 11-member UNSCOP. On 15 June 1947, all UNSCOP members arrived in Palestine and wherever they went, the UNSCOP members were warmly welcomed by the Jews but ignored by the Arabs and it exposed the bias within UNSCOP. Headed by John Hood (Australia), a Sub-Committee of the UNSCOP visited the Displaced Persons (DP) camps, and had a major impact on the UNSCOP members. Rand and his assistant from the Department of External Affairs, Leon Mayrand, were sympathetic to Zionism. Rand was an admirer of prominent American Zionist and Supreme Court Judge, Louis Brandeis; and a number of Canadian Jews living in Palestine apparently influenced Rand during his time of UNSCOP. Justice Rand had emotional experiences during his time in Palestine and became sympathetic to the Jews. He ignored the plight of the Palestinians. The important question is raised, why Canada

supported the Jews and ignored the suffering of the Palestinians. It indicates that the religio-cultural factor of the Canadians led them to support the Jews blindly.

Specific positions of the different members had begun to emerge in terms of their engagement with the first substantial discussion of a possible solution. On 29 August 1947 all the members of the UNSCOP met to consider the final version of the UNSCOP report. They clearly considered partition as the most probable option. R.G. Riddell, Chief Political Adviser to the delegation in consultation with Pearson and J.L. Ilsley, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada (1946-48), said that Partition was necessary, because the Arabs and the Jews were far apart and they could not and would not cooperate on common goals and could not unite within a single state. J.L. Ilsley, a member of the Canadian Delegation to the United Nations, in his statement in the General Assembly on 26 November 1947, stated: “We are voting for the partition plan, because it is in our judgment the best of four unattractive and difficult alternatives”. Pearson was active in seeking support for votes in favour of partition in the General Assembly. Supporting partition does seem to be in line with Canada’s foreign policy objective, which included successful resolution of the Palestine issue by the United Nations, even Prime Minister Mackenzie King was reluctant at first, to support it, for fear of upsetting Britain. The vote on the Partition Plan in the UN General Assembly took place on 29 November 1947 and with the support of two-third majority Resolution 181 was passed. Thereafter, on the day 16 April 1948, Canada was also nominated to the Sub-Committee Nine that was created within the First Committee to work out proposals for a provisional regime for Palestine which could take over administration of the country after the British Mandate formally ends on 15 May 1948.

From the formation of Committee and Sub-Committee, one can see how a preconceived and somewhat artificially-created new state of Israel came into existence on 14 May 1948 – one minute after the formal end of the Palestine Mandate at midnight. Then the US, and the USSR, recognized the new country. Formal recognition continued to be problem for Canada, because Britain delayed recognising Israel and there was no consensus within the Canadian Cabinet. Finally, on 24 December 1948 Canada extended de facto recognition to Israel. On 11 May 1949, Canada extended its de jure recognition to Israel by voting for the admission of Israel to the UN.

Now, it is necessary to talk about the variables that shaped Canadian viewpoint: (i) Canadian views were shaped by cultural and historical factors rather than any liberal democratic viewpoint. It has been documented that Canadian delegation favoured partition and tried to get its approval by the UN General Assembly. The present monograph has established that Canada was more concerned with Britain's decision to quit the region, and the post-withdrawal consequences for the credibility of the world body. This was Canada's 'Real Politics', as one of the members of the Canadian delegation, Elizabeth MacCallum, was greatly disturbed by the fact that the US and Soviet viewpoints influenced Canadian approach. Both the Americans and the Soviets were thinking in terms of their own geostrategic interests in the region; and Canada too was consciously influenced by such considerations. (ii) Many of the Canadian politicians and policy makers viewed the 'Holy Land' through their Biblical prism and their predominantly Christian heritage and became sympathetic for the Jewish people in the wake of the then Holocaust of European Jews. (iii) Further, Canada muddled its way through the early stages of Arab-Israel conflict. Beneath seemingly political ambiguities and low-key diplomatic approaches within and outside the UN, Canadian sympathy and support lay with the new state of Israel and whatever the Western world was doing and undoing in the Middle East. One cannot call it lack of knowledge about the Middle East or lack of maturity in handling international affairs on the part of a Dominion which had just then begun dabbling with international matters. Canada was clear-headed from the very beginning; if there is any doubt, one simply need to go through the writings of Elizabeth MacCallum. The government's pro-Zionist inclinations and the work of the strong Zionist lobby shaped the policy choices which were certainly not in consonance with its evolving Liberal Internationalism.

Be that as it may, Canada supported UN Security Council resolutions on the first Arab-Israel war of 1948, and also the armistice agreements of 1949 that were signed between Israel and its four neighbouring Arab states, namely, Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Few points bear significance here: (i) By the time the armistice agreements were signed in 1949 the Israeli had secured some 40 per cent more territory than was allocated to the Jewish state in the UN partition plan; (ii) These agreements were not peace treaties, they simply stabilized the ceasefire borders without accepting them as final; (iii) Palestine had effectively been partitioned among Israel, Egypt and Transjordan, and thus Egypt remained in occupation of the Gaza

Strip; and Transjordan had taken the old city of Jerusalem and the territory of west of the Jordan River.

Next, the 1956 Suez Canal crisis was so significant in the world politics where major powers of the world got involved. Canada's engagement in this crisis was remarkable. The pretext was the nationalisation of Suez Canal by Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser (1956-70), who saw that the Canal was built with Egyptian labour but operated by a French company and used as the lifeline of the British Empire, and stood as a symbol of Western exploitation. By the time, the Israel, France and the United Kingdom's attack on Egypt, was criticised by Washington; and Canada found itself in 'to-be' or 'not-to-be' situation between its American and British allies. Also, the Suez crisis exposed the internal clash within Western imperialism, which destabilised the entire Arab region. To resolve the splits in the Western alliance and avoid the broader crisis, Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs (Foreign Minister) Lester Pearson (1948-1957) proposed the creation and deployment of a UN peace-keeping force in the Sinai. Canadian forces subsequently served in the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF), which was commanded for a period by a Canadian Lieutenant-General E.L.M. Burns. The idea of UN peace-keeping force is one of the great innovation under the UN system; a novel tool in the arsenal of diplomacy that allows negotiations to prevail over conflict. Pearson's idea allowed all combatants to save face by withdrawing to allow in peace-keepers, while not having to admit defeat at the hands of the other side. Pearson won the 1957 Nobel Peace Prize for his contribution to both resolving the Suez crisis and the development of UN peace-keeping force.

In June 1967 war, in a mere six days, Israel annexed East Jerusalem, West Bank, Gaza Strip, Sinai Peninsula, and the Syrian Golan Heights, and with this annexation suddenly Israel found itself administering a new Arab population of 1.5 million people. This situation raised important questions about the Israeli character of Jewish nationalism and religious traditions; and citizenship and human rights of the Arabs who found themselves living under Israeli sovereignty. Regarding Canada's role in the 1967 Arab-Israel war, Canada remained sympathetic to the Israeli side. At the same time, Canada supported UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 242 (22 November 1967), which called for Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories. In October 1973 Arab-Israel war, Israel attacked Suez Canal and Golan Heights and in a gesture of sympathy with Egypt and Syria, the Arab member states of the OPEC

(Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries) and OAPEC (Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries) announced to reduce the production of oil. It was after the 1973 Arab oil embargo, and the 1979 peace treaty between Israel and Egypt, once notices that Canadian attitude began to shift away from strong support and sympathy for Israel and towards a more nuanced and balanced approach towards the Middle East.

Canada has had a continuous and active involvement and engagement with the Arab-Israel issue in the Middle East. The preceding Chapters II in particular has focussed at some length on Canadian peace-keeping, with the argument that in the aftermath of the Suez Canal crisis, peace-keeping became a standard feature of the Canadian Middle Power Liberal Internationalism. It was the 'mediatory' role that the middle power came to specialize and its military budgets and size of the armed forces all came to be guided by the commitment to international peace-keeping. Pearson wanted to maintain Canada's visibility in the UN and NATO. Diplomats presented Canada as a fair-minded and credible middle power, one with a special relationship with the United States but not under its control. Canadian foreign policy during the period starting from the Suez Canal crisis till the end of the cold war came to emphasise on its specialisation in UN peace-keeping and carved out the 'niche' area of 'quiet' diplomacy. Under Trudeau's Liberal government's priorities were put to protect Canadian sovereignty rather than to participate aggressively in the Cold War containment of the Soviet bloc. Harper viewed Canada not as a middle but as the principal power in international relations. He abandoned Liberal Internationalist values and norms of foreign policy and came to champion a hardcore militaristic foreign policy. He came to see Canada as a leading light in the US-led 'Anglosphere'; a militarily strong Canada in the war against international terrorism. He came to eulogize Canadian valour and sacrifices during the two World Wars rather than to glorify Canada's contribution to the international system in the form of UN peace-keeping. However, Canada's role in Middle East peace-keeping has diminished over time, as the Canadian government cited budgetary constraints.

While discussing Canada's role in the Arab-Israel war and peace-keeping, the thesis looks into the geostrategic and military dimensions of Israel in the Middle East. Israel's internal military programme is based on a reserve system that permits a reduction of armed forces during normal time and rapid expansion through popular mobilization at the time of emergency. All Israelis were enrolled in the armed forces

at age eighteen, men for three years and women for two years and men remained in the active reserve until their late forties, and women, until their mid-thirties. In contrast, in response to the Israeli occupation and harsh treatment of the Palestinians and failure of the Arab states to liberate Palestine, several small Palestinian organisations emerged. *Al-Fatah*, the dominant organization along with other small organizations, formed Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and in 1969 Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat was elected as its chairman and he continued until his death in 2004. PLO initially refused to endorse UN Resolution 242. But, in 1974, the goal of liberating all of Palestine was dropped in favour of creating a Palestinian state comprising of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. With this, PLO was granted Observer status in UN in 1974. Finally in 1988, the PLO endorsed Resolution 242 and accepted the existence of the state of Israel, but in its pre-1967 boundaries. With this PLO received public recognition particularly from the United States in 1988.

In the meantime, the emergence of the Lebanese civil war, Israeli invasion in Lebanon and the Palestinian uprising became important aspects of the Arab-Israel conflict. The PLO was based in 1969 in Jordan, but after a civil conflict where 3,000 Palestinians were killed, they moved its base to Lebanon. Almost 300,000 Palestinian refugees who were already present in Lebanon, mostly in the refugee camps, joined them. The Palestinians presence in Lebanon became one of the main factors in various civil wars in Lebanon and external interventions in Lebanon in 1982. On 6 June 1982, Israel launched a huge invasion in Lebanon. Massive air, sea and land attack in West Beirut caused heavy casualties among the predominantly civilian population. With an international effort, an agreement was signed on 18 August 1982 which called for a multinational force headed by France and the United States to supervise the evacuation of the PLO fighters; it also provided guarantees for the safety of the Palestinian civilians who would be left behind. In late August 1982, Bashir Gemayel, Christian Maronite, became Israel's chosen Lebanon's president. But after his assassination, the Phalange, military unit of Christian Maronite, entered the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila and massacred over 1,000 men, women, and children. Israeli military allowed the Phalange, instead of protecting the Palestinians refugees, which Israel agreed to protect them in the August 1982 agreement. Canadian Prime Minister Eliot Pierre Trudeau (1980-84) wrote strong letters of protest on the Lebanon war to Israeli Prime Minister Begin. Canada's voting record at the UN, which on Middle East issues had frequently been in the company of

the US and Israel, increasingly saw Canada voted with European partners such as Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden and Norway.

Israel used frequently 'administrative detention', and the Palestinians were arrested, imprisoned, deported and tortured at the slightest suspicion of political activism. In context of this background, the Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza Strip participated in a mass uprising, which came to be known as the first *Intifada* that began in December 1987, to bring an end to the Israeli occupation. The Islamic Resistance Movement, known widely by its Arabic acronym, *Hamas* came into existence in 1988 as rivals to the Unified National Leadership (UNL) who led the first *Intifada*. The violence of the youthful stone throwers was met by the violence of the well-armed Israeli military. After enduring five years the first *Intifada* came to an end in 1992.

In the meantime, after armistice agreements of 1949, next important treaty was the 1979 Egypt-Israel treaty. It was a milestone achievement in the Arab-Israel peace process, because it was the first treaty when an Arab state recognised Israel. Anwar Sadat, the Egyptian president was assassinated for signing this agreement with Israel. The effect of first *Intifada* on Israeli society, the post-Cold War US unilateralism, and election of a Labour government in Israel formed part of a series of interconnected developments that contributed to a major breakthrough in Palestine-Israel peace process. Between December 1991 and spring of 1993, the Arab and Israeli delegations met several times in Madrid, Moscow and Washington. Under the guidance of Norway, the PLO and Israel signed an agreement which provided for mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO and laid the foundations for Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. (i) The first agreement was a document of mutual recognition in which Israel recognised the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and in return, the PLO unequivocally recognised Israel's right to exist in peace and security, renounced the use of terror and violence, and pledged to remove the clauses in the PLO Charter that called for the elimination of the State of Israel. (ii) The second agreement, formally known as the Declaration of Principles on Palestinian Self-Rule, commonly referred to as Oslo I, outlined a five-year programme for interim Palestinian autonomy in the occupied territories. Although Israel would retain overall sovereignty throughout the term of the agreement, the period was divided into several stages, each of which granted increasing administrative responsibility to the Palestinians.

The final agreement of the two-year period following Oslo I was signed in 28 September 1995. It came to be referred as Oslo II. Oslo II divided the West Bank into three zones; Area A, B and C and specified a phased redeployment of the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) from each zone and the extent of power was to vary from zone to zone. The clauses of Oslo II made it clear that the PLO had done nothing other than negotiate from a position of weakness. The Palestinians has been pushed into Bantustan-like enclaves, encircled by a massive wall, had their water, land appropriated, and are subjected to daily humiliation at the military check points. Both Jews and Palestinians aspirations went unfulfilled. Israel failed to settle the entire territory west of the Jordan River, and the Palestinians could not create an independent Palestinian State. *Hamas* rejected the Oslo peace process, which was manifested in suicide bombings against the Israeli. On the other side Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated in 4 November 1995 for signing the Oslo Accords. Benjamin Netanyahu, the leader of the Likud coalition, came to power in June 1996 election and had campaigned on a pledge to 'slow down' the peace process. The Hamas activities, assassination of Yitzhak Rabin and the emergence of Benjamin Netanyahu as Prime Minister of the Likud coalition, finally led to the suspension of the peace process.

On the question of peace process in the 1990s and Canada's role therein, if judged only on the question of whether Canada in some way contributed towards the resolution of the conflict, its direct contribution is found to be limited. However, Canada's contribution through multilateral mechanisms especially in terms of handling the question of Palestinian refugees remained significant. Canada's role in the Refugee Working Group (RWG) indicates that Canada remained engaged in the Arab-Israel peace process. Because the Palestinian refugees are the direct product of the Palestine-Israel conflict and RWG emerged as part of the broad process of the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP).

Yet, in all, by 1995 the RWG had become involved in over 100 specific activities including workshops and seminars on various themes, construction of schools and clinics in refugee camps in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. The Canadian government openly encouraged and supported academic discussion of the refugee issue with conferences in Canada followed by the once in UK and elsewhere. The purpose of these were to explore the options on the questions related to 'return' of Palestinians to their homes, compensation, institutional change, the future of the UNRWA and so forth.

Between 1994 and 2000, Canada funded a programme to relocate Palestinian refugees from 'Canada Camp' in Egypt, to Gaza. In the early 1970s, due to road construction, the Palestinians in Israeli-occupied Gaza near Rafah were relocated to the Israeli occupied Sinai. But, after the Egypt-Israel peace treaty of 1979 and the Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai, the border with Egypt was restored and Rafah was divided into two areas. Most of 'Canada Camp' fell within the Egyptian part of Rafah, and leaving 496 Palestinian families effectively stranded and separated from their families and relatives in Gaza. Egypt provided funding to build new homes and Israel provided serviced plots of land in the Tel El-Sultan of Rafah district in Gaza. But, it was interrupted due to financial constraints, after only 133 families were relocated. In 1994, Canada took the lead in relocating the remaining 363 families from the 'Canada Camp'. Through donations to UNRWA, Canada and Kuwait provided each family with US \$12,000 to build home in Tel El-Sultan, and services were provided by the Palestinian Authority. By the end of 2000, all the families from 'Canada Camp' had been repatriated to the Gaza Strip and mostly were housed in the Tel El-Sultan housing project. In addition, Canada also provided funds for the construction of a community centre in Tel El-Sultan for the benefit of the returning families. RWG meetings were used to have Arab states participation and raising funds that was necessary for humanitarian projects. Canada's achievement in keeping the Working Group relatively active and visible in this period must, therefore, be assessed by more process-related considerations.

Besides, there were limitations to the work of the RWG, because there was no consensus between the Palestinians and Israelis on the refugee issue and failure of the bilateral peace process. Accepting the limitations, Canadian officials prepared a 'Vision Paper' for the Refugee Working Group, which emphasized the need for developing strategic policy support for the bilateral; and mechanisms for promoting dialogue on the refugee question. The ideas suggested included: the need to produce a comprehensive census of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza and the neighbouring states in order to provide basic data on the living conditions of the Palestinian population; an assessment of the absorptive capacity and the socio-economic and infrastructural requirements of the West Bank and Gaza in support of any return of Palestinians to those areas; and the potential implications of transfer of UNWRA activities to the Palestinian Authority. Thus, the 'Vision Paper' had mentioned many of the core aspects of the refugee issue and discussion of the 'Vision

Papers' of the Working Groups was intended to be the principal item on the agenda of the Steering Group meeting in Montreux (Switzerland) in May 1995. These discussions were sidelined by a growing dispute over Israeli settlement construction in East Jerusalem. The meeting concluded with no real clarity on the purpose of the 'Vision Paper' or how to proceed further.

Another significant involvement, as discussed in the preceding pages, relates to Canada's 'Track II Initiative'. A small group of Canadian officials and academicians met in 1997 and decided that the discussion of refugee policy issues would be in quiet and out of the limelight discussions. These 'Track II' activities collectively became known as the 'Ottawa Process'. During the period from 1995 to 2000 Canada supported a very broad and extensive range of research and dialogue projects on the refugee issue whether through International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), or dialogue funds controlled by Canadian diplomatic missions in the region. Some of those with the strongest connection with the core group and 'Track II' efforts were the December 1997 stock taking conference; the July 1999 compensation workshop; and the February 2000 workshop on the future of UNRWA which gained great significance in terms of development of ideas and best practices related to the handling of refugees and the role of international civil society towards conflict resolution.

The compensation workshop which was held in Ottawa at IDRC in July 1999 was more complex. It sought to address a number of interrelated issues: the case for compensation, the magnitude of Palestinian losses, including methods of valuation and categories of potential claims, the adjudication and administration of those claims and possible systems of payment etc. Compensation calculation of the Palestinian refugees was a critical aspect of the compensation workshop programme. In this regard, BADIL Resource Centre worked extensively in the compensation calculation. While the Israeli government accepted the responsibility, in principle, to compensate the refugees for their properties, but that would be within Israel's ability to pay. Palestinian participants and researchers also noted that while Palestinian refugees had the right to compensation, this right was not a substitute for the right of return or the return of properties.

The Ottawa Process had mixed results. It was unable to bridge the conceptual difference between Palestinian and Israeli participants. In any case, many aspects of

the refugee compensation that were discussed in Taba seemed to follow on from ideas that emerged from the Ottawa Process.

So as to carry the discussion forward, it is important to describe the agreements like Wye River, Camp David II and the Taba. These agreements occurred with the mediation of the US President Bill Clinton (1992-2000). The Bill Clinton administration brought Netanyahu and Arafat together at the Wye River estate in Maryland (United States) in 1998. They merely elaborated on the original Oslo Accords in which Israel accepted the principle of exchanging occupied land for peace and agreed to withdraw its military from an additional 13 per cent of the West Bank and the PLO agreed to renounce the use of terrorism. In accepting this principle, Netanyahu created deep rifts within the ruling Likud coalition and he suspended its scheduled withdrawal from an additional 13 per cent of the West Bank. This was a violation of the Wye Accords he had signed only a month earlier.

Again both sides met at Camp David, which was convened by US President Bill Clinton in July 2000. Camp David II ended in an impasse but for the first time the final status issues that had been deferred for seven years including sovereignty over East Jerusalem, the future of Jewish settlements and the rights of return for Palestinian refugees, were subject to negotiation. Due to the Likud opposition and other rightist parties that insisted on the retention of Israeli sovereignty over an expanded and united Jerusalem, in December 2000 Barak announced his resignation.

In December 2000 following his party's loss in the previous month's US election, President Clinton put one last effort into salvaging the process by drawing up the parameters of a peace plan that envisaged the Palestinians getting between 94 per cent and 96 per cent of the West Bank for a future Palestinian state. Israel would annex portions of West Bank land comprising the major settlements, Palestinians would be compensated with a land swap, and arrangements would be made for a corridor connecting Gaza and the West Bank. After marathon meetings held in Taba (Egypt), in January 2001, Palestinian and Israeli negotiators tentatively agreed on a more detailed framework based on these parameters. Nevertheless, overtaken by the escalating violence and with both Clinton's and Barak's terms of office coming to an end, the agreement had little time to take effect. In short, it can be summarised as "If Camp David was too little, Taba was too late". The Taba talks effectively marked the end of the Oslo peace process.

The failure of the Oslo peace process, and Ariel Sharon's visit to Jerusalem in September 2000, resulted in the birth of the second *Intifada*. The UN Security Council Resolution 1322 deplored the provocation and condemned the subsequent excessive use of force, especially against the Palestinians, without mentioning Israel by name. It was passed with 14 votes in favour of UN Security Council Resolution 1322, including by Canada. But Prime Minister Jean Chretien (1993-2003), moved to soften the position as many in the Jewish community believed that Canadian vote constituted a harsh anti-Israel stance.

Notable to the understanding is that modest but a clear shift in Canadian policy occurred between the Liberal government of Jean Chretien and the successor government of Paul Martin (2003-06); and a much larger and fully open tilt towards Israel that took place under Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper after 2006. These shifts were particularly evident in Harper's handling of the Israel-Lebanon war in the summer of 2006 when Canada supported Israel and also in January 2006 when, with the electoral victory of *Hamas* in Palestinian Legislative Council elections, Canada was one of the first countries to cut aid towards Palestine Authority.

The period also witnessed a factional conflict and violent power wrangling between *Hamas* and *Al-Fatah* that led to the split of Palestinian Authority where *Hamas* controlled Gaza and *Al-Fatah* controlled West Bank. The study has also discussed Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's unilateral decision to separate Israelis from Palestinians, which is known as 'disengagement'. It involved the removal of all settlers from the Gaza Strip that was done by August 2005. A key component of disengagement in the West Bank was the construction of a 703 kilometre physical barrier that isolated and divided Palestinian villages and absorbed large tracts of Palestinian agricultural land. Palestinians viewed the measure as a grave violation of international law, as was ruled by the International Court of Justice in February 2004.

Canada's role was found as ambivalent. Canada supported International Court of Justice decision. On the other, in support of disengagement, Canadian technical expertise on border crossings management was provided. A few Canadian military personnel in "Operation Proteus" assisted the US Security Coordinator in supporting security sector reform and strengthening the capacity of Palestinian security personnel.

Chapter IV in details described and discussed the definition of Palestinian refugees under international law and their conditions in 58 refugee camps, mostly in the neighbouring Arab states, run by the UNRWA.

On 3 December 1949, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was established that provided a universal definition of a refugee and was meant for European refugees of the Second World War; and those who fell under it came to be called Convention refugees. The UN General Assembly established the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) on 8 December 1949. The 1951 Convention applied to all those who became refugees before 1 January 1951, and thus excluded Palestinian refugees; therefore UNRWA was specifically meant for the Palestinian refugees. The UNRWA's activities were mainly humanitarian in nature and included a development component carried out through its three main programmes – education, health, and relief and social services. To date, about 5 million Palestinian refugees are registered under UNRWA and mostly live in 58 refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip; and they are all sustained by the UNRWA.

In 1948, in the context of the Arab-Israel war and over the establishment of Israel, around 750,000 Palestinians were displaced from their homes and were scattered in the refugee camps; and thus their social and cultural cohesion was also dispersed and disturbed. UNRWA's educational activities unintentionally provided a structure that helped not just for the continuation and growth of Palestinian personal identity but also worked in the reconstitution of the Palestinian national identity in the refugee camps scattered across countries. The reconstituted national identity went beyond poetry and plays and folklores. It gave rise to the collective consciousness that Palestine is a nation but without a sovereign state; and clarified that the ultimate objective of the Palestine movement is to establish a state of its own that would serve and protect the Palestine nation. In the refugee schools, run by UNRWA, they nurtured their identity; oral history and narratives kept memories alive, as each night in every camp, first, second, and third-generation refugees gathered and repeated stories about Palestinian culture and heritage. Writers, intellectuals, poets, artists, resistance leaders, and political leaders emerged from camps, and helped in developing a distinct Palestinian identity. UNRWA operates in a very difficult environment, in which it balances the sensitivities of refugees, host countries, and international donors.

Canada's refugee policy is one of the most debated and controversial political and social issues. With the end of the Second World War, Canada emerged as a place of refuge for those fleeing religious and political persecution. It developed a clear refugee policy and received large number of refugees and immigrants from Hungary and Czechoslovakia in the 1950s and the 1960s. Canada's refugee policy can be partly understood by the fact that refugee policy has been inextricably tied to Canada's immigration policy and it has been developed through various stages. A policy of refugee intake per year as a separate category along with immigrants was created formally since the Immigration Act of 1976. This gave explicit recognition to refugee as a distinct entry class. Designated classes are those who do not come under the Convention refugee definition. They are people in refugee like situations who are in need of resettlement but who may not meet the strict definition of Convention refugee, which was defined by the United Nations in 1951. Further, groups of five or more people could sponsor them. This was most important innovation in the large flow of refugees selected overseas, particularly the refugees from Indo-China in the 1970s. In the case of Convention refugee, it is they who opt Canada as their choice, but in the case of designated classes, Canada chooses those refugees that are consistent with foreign policy objectives and best benefits Canada. Thus, in Canada, one can enter either as Convention refugees or designated classes that were introduced in 1976.

Annual planning of refugee intake was also announced in 1979 as much as in total 10,000. Annual refugee plan by regions from 1984 to 1989 indicates that the refugees of Eastern Europe and Latin America were given more refugee quota than the Middle East and West Africa, the two largest refugee producing regions of the world. Most refugees from Eastern Europe and Latin America are characterised as belonging to 'designated classes' who are not affected by the stringent refugee determination process. The planning exercise is complicated administratively as it is related to overall immigration policy, governmental fiscal year planning, provincial economic and social concerns and international developments.

The present Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) 2002 had three main components. The humanitarian component relates to Canada's international obligations in the area of humanitarian and international public law. There was also sponsorship arrangements like, government-assisted, referred by UNHCR, and privately sponsored refugee settlement and protection programmes abroad. These

provisions are considered as Canada's commitment to international efforts to provide assistance to those in need of humanitarian aid, resettlement, and safe places. Thus, numbers of refugees admitted to Canada may thereby vary not only with international political conditions but also the level of participation of the private sector and also the willingness of the provincial governments of Canada.

Quebec's system is more focussed on the cultural integration, involving the refugees' French language skills, as well as the knowledge of Quebec culture. With the coming to power of the Conservative government in 2006, similar objectives were voiced by the federal government concerning new immigrants' civic responsibility to learn one of the two official languages. Beside economic integration, immigrants and refugees are expected by the Canadian government to integrate with the Canadian society.

Canada's refugee policy has moved towards a system that prioritizes accounting and cost-benefit analysis. The landing fees account for over half of the costs of the resettlement programme incurred by the federal government, evidently taking away from the principle of providing humanitarian assistance to some of the world's most vulnerable people. The limited allocations of funding are more of an indication that Canada may be admitting a certain number of refugees in order to save its humanitarian reputation, rather than working on truly humanitarian values.

The fact is that the case of Palestinian refugees and their plight in the Middle East has a history of more than 65 years. The number of Palestinian refugees in the Middle East region has been put at around 5 million, most living in neighbouring Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. This include 1.7 million Palestinians displaced in 1948 and 1967 from Israel proper, who are registered refugees in Gaza and the West Bank with the UNRWA.

It is not possible to get definite statistics on the total number of Palestinian refugee claimants in Canada due to the fact that official statistics are classified by country. Palestinian refugee claimants are stateless refugees and therefore hold Palestinian refugee travel documents issued by their host country. As such, Palestinian refugee claimants from Lebanon are classified as refugees coming from Lebanon alongside Lebanese nationals who claim refugee status in Canada. In order to get a more accurate number of Palestinian refugee claimants coming from the refugee camps in Lebanon, one would have to reopen all files from Lebanon and separate Palestinian refugees from Lebanese nationals. On the 17 April 2003, Simon

Perusse, regional director of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) in Montreal, informed the “Coalition Against the Deportation of Palestinian Refugees” that this was not possible.

Another issue involving in this regard is the issue of right to return of the Palestinian refugees. An illustration regarding Palestinian asylum seekers in Canada explains how complex matter it was. John Manley, on his first trip to the Middle East in 2001 as Canada’s foreign minister, publicly suggested that Canada might resettle some Palestinian refugees as part of a comprehensive peace agreement. This prompted enormous anger in various refugee camps where protest rallies were organized and people were asked to sign pledges not to immigrate under any circumstances.

Historically, when Jack Pickersgill was Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, from 1954 to 1957, Canada took step of admitting some Palestinian Arabs, driven from their homeland by the Arab-Israel war of 1948. By 1955, over 900,000 Palestinian refugees were living in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Gaza. Canadian immigration team selected 575 applicants and only 39 heads of families and their dependents were admitted in Canada by the summer of 1956.

The “Coalition Against the Deportation of Palestinian Refugees” prepared a list of Palestinian refugee claimants facing deportation in 2004, but their list did not cover all Palestinian refugee claimants, since they were mainly in contact with the Palestinian refugee claimants residing in Montreal region. As of February 2004, the figures of the “Coalition Against the Deportation of Palestinian Refugees” showed that: there were over 135 Palestinian refugee claimants, and approximately 90 per cent of the refugee claimants were from the refugee camps of Lebanon. Approximately 10 per cent of the claimants are from the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Of the 135 Palestinian refugee claimants: 40 were facing deportation, of whom 9 have overstayed of their removal orders and were living underground; and 15 were awaiting their respective hearings at the Refugee Protection Division of the Immigration and Refugee Board.

The Middle Eastern refugees find unique circumstances originating from their distinct status as unwanted or targeted people before seeking asylum. They also need to deal with inter-communal conflicts related to their marginal status and claims within the so-called ‘Muslim diaspora’. They are also attentive to issues ‘back home’ where they have ‘unfinished business’. Also, lengthy appeal processes, consequences

of rejection such as deportation orders, and delays in the processing of permits and visas due to security clearance are among the issues that are raised to improve the system. Scholars, legal practitioners, and advocacy organizations posit that Canada selects the kinds of refugees whose absorption into Canada's economy and society would be easier, rather than saving lives in need.

The penultimate Chapter V has five parts, wherein the first part examines the influence of Canadian Jewish community on government's policy, perception and choices, along with whatever limited influence Canadian Arabs have been able to exercise. Both the Jewish and the Arab communities have several organisations and the Jewish community in comparison to Arab community plays a significant role in advocating support for Israel. The Canadian Jewish community is older and more established than the Arab community, and this fact has had profound effects on their respective organisational capacities.

According to the National Household Survey, the Canadian Jewish population in 2011 was 391,665, representing 1.2 per cent of the total Canadian population. More than half (57.9 per cent) of Jews in Canada reside in the province of Ontario, and about a quarter (23.9 per cent) in the province of Quebec.

The Jewish community in Canada had been well served for decades by two primary advocacy organizations: Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) and Canada-Israel Committee (CIC). Beginning in 2002, the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) served as the management umbrella for CJC and CIC and CIJA was restructured as the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) in 2011, which has been designed as the single address for all advocacy issues of concern to Canadian Jews. CIJA is now responsible for all activities previously administered by Canadian Jewish Congress, Canada-Israel Committee, Quebec-Israel Committee, and the University Outreach Committee.

The new structure of CIJA provides for a robust, cohesive, and dynamic organization to represent the aspirations of Jewish Canadians across the country. The Centre creates and implements strategies to improve the quality of Jewish life in Canada and abroad, advance the public policy interests of the Canadian Jewish community, enhance ties with Jewish communities around the world, and strengthen the Canada-Israel relationship to the benefit of both countries. CIJA works closely with its Jewish Federation partners across Canada, providing strategic advice and advocacy solutions both tailored to local conditions and consistent with the Jewish

community's national advocacy priorities. CIJA maintains offices in Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver, and Jerusalem.

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) builds and nurtures relationships with leaders in government, media, academia, civil society and other faith and ethnic communities to ensure greater understanding of the issues that impact the Jewish community. CIJA's lobbying and outreach efforts have included meetings and functions that attract high-ranking members of the Canadian government, including the Prime Minister, and it has financed trips to Israel for Canadian officials and leaders.

According to the 2011 Census, there were 470,965 Canadians who claimed that Arabic is their first language spoken at home; and there were 661,750 Canadians who claimed full or partial ancestry from an Arabic speaking country. The large majority of the Canadians of Arab origin population lives in either Ontario or Quebec. Arab Canadians are mixture of Muslim, Christian and Druzes. There are some Arab community organizations but mostly focussing on the issues in Canada, like the Canadian Arab Federation (CAF), the National Council on Canada-Arab Relations (NCCAR), the Arab Community Centre of Toronto (ACCT) and Canada-Arab Business Council (CABC) etc. The Canadian Arab Federation (CAF) deal with domestic issues, but also stress on those work which are closely connected to foreign policy.

Both communities concentrate on domestic issues in Canada, but all of them make statements on and offer suggestions about how their constituencies should react to Canadian policy in the international arena, particularly on some issues of Canadian policy towards the Middle East. Arabs are less experienced, particularly since many of their countries of origins have repressive autocratic governments with little or no allowance and capacity for societal involvement in policy making. Also, Arabs in Canada are divided into multiple Arab nationalities, on issues of common interests sometimes come together but on most occasions otherwise remain divided on many substantive issues. The Jewish community has also benefited from the sympathy many Canadian politicians have had for persecuted Jews. Jewish Voters became important factors in the electoral politics of Canada. Historically, Canadian Jews back the Liberal party because of its support for the creation of the state of Israel. Joe Clark's Progressive Conservative Party attempted to sway Jewish voters in the 1979 election by promising to move Canada's embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. But it

was another issue that Joe Clark had to reverse the embassy move. The plan of embassy shift reversal has been discussed in details in the previous pages.

In 2006 election, Stephen Harper had appealed to non-traditional conservatives including Jews, on the basis of shared social values. After taking power, Harper created an “ethnic outreach team” to build support for the Conservatives to replace the Liberals as the primary voice of the Canadians and the ethnic minorities. As of now, 391,665 Jews (2011 census) are an established part of Canada’s economic and political landscape; and most of them have a strong affinity for and identification with Israel. Further, during the 2006 election campaign, Harper had assured the CIJA that the Jewish community had a good friend in the Conservative party. He assured that his government would not support resolutions at the UN that are aimed specifically at Israel or designed to create a bias in the resolutions on the Middle East. He played two-fold strategy to emphasize the shared values of democracy between Canada and Israel and to downplay the significance of Palestinians rights and their plight.

It has also been noted that Canada’s economic interest in the Middle East have been growing since the 1970s and these economic interests have had an impact on Canadian position and policy towards the Arab-Israel conflict. Initially, the Middle East was not important to Canada. In the post-Second World War period, Canada had virtually no commercial or strategic interests in the region. It was from the 1970s onwards that Canada began developing economic interest in the region. Among many factors, Arab economic sanction against Canada over the issue of shifting Canadian Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem called for a review of Canada’s growing interest as well as the event facilitated some policy change towards the region. Sanctions might not have been necessary to produce the change, given the limited economic exposure but sanctions put Canada, in particular the government of Joe Clark, in very poor international political light. Political cost of shifting the embassy was high in terms of Canada’s international reputation as a ‘good international citizen’ and supporter of international rule of law. In response, a perceptible shift took place and Canada began diluting its strong pro-Israel bias in favour of a more even-handed approach in the 1980s. When Trudeau returned to prime ministership after a brief interlude, Canada recognised and established relations with PLO. Its voting record at the UN also underwent change, becoming more balanced. Canada also openly disagreed and criticised the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

A closer examination reveals that Canada's overall trade with the Middle East had been growing; and Middle East is seen as a significant region as far as the goal of diversification of foreign economic relations, away from dependence on US, is concerned. For example, Canada's exports to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) are comparable to Canada's exports to India and greater than exports to Brazil or Russia. Besides, political instability in the Middle East, the revenues generated by oil and gas trade as well as the resulting accumulation of wealth and growing middle class, especially in the oil-rich economies of the GCC, has opened huge opportunities for Canadian business and export firms in the areas of construction, telecommunications and resource extraction. Countries in the Middle East are among the fastest growing economies in the world. DFAIT (Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade) and EDC (Export Development Canada) has identified several sectors where Canadian businesses can grow at remarkable rates.

Regarding Canada's arms sale to Israel, it can be said that the sale of arms to the Middle East was the exclusive purview of Great Britain and France and by 1950s the United States joined in. As a country with limited bilateral interests, in the Middle East, Canada originally had little to do with arms sales to the region. The small Canadian arms industry existed to serve domestic needs, only a surplus were sold to the Middle East countries. But this conflicted with Canadian aspirations to be seen as a mediator of conflicts in the post-war world, a bridge between East and West. This was particularly important, when a Canadian, General E.L.M. Burns, was commander of the UN peace-keeping force.

Before the creation of the state of Israel, the *Haganah*, acquired boats from Canada for smuggling immigrants from Canada to Palestine. In 1949, Israel submitted a number of requests for arms, including 42 Harvard trainers, which could also serve as light bombers. Ottawa had then welcomed these approaches as Israel was prepared to pay in cash. During the period of Czech-Egypt arms deal in September 1955, Canada had sold some anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns to Israel as defensive equipment and was agreed by the majority in the House of Commons that an embargo on all arms shipments to either side would be unfair to Israel. But in 1955, Canada sold fifteen Harvard trainer planes to Egypt; the conservatives opposed it and attacked the government for helping an anti-British state. It reflects Canada's support to Israel.

Canada's arms sale are governed by the country's Export and Imports Permits Act, 1985". The exports naturally come from private Canadian companies, but the

government in Ottawa reviews each of these sales. A key consideration in the review of each application is the end-use of the export.

In response to the bombing of Gaza in 2008-09 and the deaths of hundreds of innocent children and other civilians, the Coalition to Oppose the Arms Trade (COAT), an Ottawa-based, Canadian anti-war network, produced a report on Canadian military companies that have direct or indirect export links to Israel. COAT listed more than 50 Canadian military exporters that have supplied a wide range of essential components and services for three major US weapons systems that are used by the Israeli Air Force: F-15 'Eagle', F-16 'Fighting Falcon', and AH-64 'Apache'. These fighter aircraft and helicopter attack gunships were the main varieties of weapons systems employed by Israel during the aerial bombardments of Gaza. There are more than 140 Canadian military industries have exported their products directly to Israel. Yves Engler (2013), a Montréal-based activist and author, mentioned that despite the Israeli Defense Force's many human rights violations, many Canadian companies sell weapons directly to Israel.

Canada imported \$2,592,517 worth of arms and ammunition from Israel in 2010 and exported \$658,734, but the value of military-related trade between the two countries exceeds those amounts when related technologies are included. The business relationship in the security and military sectors has been helped along by a declaration of intent Canada and Israel signed in 2008 in which they agreed to enhance co-operation in the areas of public safety and counter-terrorism.

Global Affairs Canada (2013) reports that for the year 2012 – 2013, Canada's total exports of military goods and technology amounted to approximately \$1.72 billion. The major share (\$1.15 billion or 67 per cent) went to member countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or non-NATO AFCCL (Automatic Firearms Country Control List) destinations. Saudi Arabia, a non-NATO AFCCL destination was the largest single destination of Canadian military exports each year, received \$575.1 million in military exports, accounting for 33 per cent of all Canadian military exports. Five NATO countries were also in the top ten destinations for the same period: the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, France and Belgium. One other of the top ten destinations was non-NATO AFCCL destination; Australia, which received a combined \$46.9 million in military exports. The United Arab Emirates, Austria and Singapore, the second, fourth and ninth-largest destinations for military exports respectively, were the only non-NATO and non-AFCCL countries in the top

ten. Military exports to Participating States of the Wassenaar Arrangement accounted for \$741.7 million, or 43 per cent of the total military exports. Harper's government is close to the Canadian military companies that sell to Israel and do business with that country's top-flight weapons industry. Additionally, Canadian military leaders appreciate the tactical information and expertise Israel's well-practiced military shares.

Regarding Canada's foreign policy dynamics, historically Canada showed bias in favour of Israel from the very beginning. Israel's public relations campaign and the presence of an influential Jewish community in Canada had succeeded in portraying Israeli's as the victim in the Arab-Israel conflict. Israel also successfully projected itself as a more Western, democratic country with skills in self-defence; and one which is law abiding compared to the Arab nations.

The Canadian foreign policy had been changed in when the Liberal Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau (1968-1979 and 1980-1984) came into power. His policy emphasized on the pursuit of national self-interest; systematic assignment of priority to those countries best able to contribute to the defined national objectives of Canada; and planned development of stable and long-term relationships with prioritized countries and regions. There under this policy, Canada expanded its bilateral relationship with selected Arab countries.

While Canada was not specifically targeted, the 1973 oil embargo and subsequent oil price increases led Ottawa and most other Western powers to be more mindful of Arab views and sensitivities. The 1979 Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt was another factor in changing the Canadian attitudes towards Arabs. At the same time, some Israeli actions notably, illegal settlement activity in the occupied territories as well as the annexation of East Jerusalem eroded Canadian support for Israeli policies.

Canadian perception and policy manifested in favour of Israel when in 1979 the new Progressive Conservative government proposed, against the advice of the Department of External Affairs, to relocate Canada's embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Arabs oil embargo and international power politics forced the Clark government to scrap the idea. When Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982, Trudeau, then back in power found it easy to tilt away from Israel.

The policy shifted in the mid-2000s, back to an overtly pro-Israel approach. It started during the 2003-06 government of Paul Martin. After Martin's predecessor

Jean Chretien had angered the George W. Bush administration by refusing to join the coalition invading Iraq earlier in 2003, it was believed that Canada needed to win the favour of Washington. One of the means chosen was to change its voting pattern at the UN and not vote against the US in certain UN resolutions that criticised Israel.

The victory of the Stephen Harper's Conservatives in the January 2006 election contributed to change Canada's Middle East policy and the policy most clearly shifted towards Israel. It was partially due to a narrowing of the attitudinal gap between the US and Canadian governments. Harper's views were closer to US President George W. Bush on a number of key issues; the 'neo-Cons' had come to deeply influence the world-view of the government. Harper, a social and fiscal conservative with a deeply religious orientation had come to hold the view that Canada has to be militaristically a strong country actively involved in promoting Christian values and norms in international affairs. Under him, Canada became the first country to suspend all aid to the Palestinian Authority in the wake of *Hamas*'s victory in the Palestinian Legislative Council in 2006. In 2008-09, the only law, Canada supporting, was law and order through programmes to train Palestinian judges, police and the national security forces. Although such support was needed and wanted, it seemed clear to Palestinians that Canada had chosen to carry out only the kind of programmes that pleased Israeli security-consciousness as well.

Promoting Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA) became part of Harper's broad and ambitious free trade agenda. In February 2007, the government announced that it would make bilateral free trade agreements an important part of government external trade and economic policy. Canada's motivations for negotiating CIFTA were also political and geopolitical. On the eve of the CIFTA signing, Senator Pierre De Bane expressed that "it is essentially a political gesture on the part of Canada, and you cannot, with all due respect, hide it with an economic rationale.

A close analysis of various facts suggest that Canada had been and has been on both sides of the Arab-Israel divide from the beginning. As has been often said, Canada has been a midwife to Israel and a nurse to Palestinians. It was the chief architect of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) in 1956; and also it was the first country to suspend all aid to Palestine when *Hamas* won the local elections of 2006. Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau argued against the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982; decades later, Stephen Harper justified Israeli aggression in Lebanon in 2006.

In final conclusion, a closer scrutiny of Canada's perception and policy towards the Arab-Israel conflict highlights interesting facets and dimensions of Canadian foreign policy. Foremost, one may ask what were the factors that made Canada engaged with Arab-Israel conflict. The Dominion of Canada apparently had no reason to get involved in the Middle Eastern affairs. However, the sympathy and support of its incipient foreign policy establishment in the 1940s lay with the Jewish people and the British proposal for a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Importantly, it is evident that in subsequent years, it was Canada's participation in the UN and its various activities that drew Canada actively into the Arab-Israel conflict – closely and emotionally. Canadian diplomats and delegates, including Lester Pearson and Ivan Cleveland Rand, arrived at the biased conclusion in support of the partition of Palestine into two states; that ultimately led to the creation of the state of Israel and ignored the plight of the Palestinians who are suffering from Israeli occupation till date.

What was Canada's perception towards Arab-Israel conflict over the years; are there phases; and have there been some nuanced shifts in its stance after the 1973 war? Answers to these questions are more complex. No doubt, Canada supported the partition plan in the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) that ultimately led to the creation of the state of Israel. During 1950s, to avert the clash among within the European powers, Canada came up with the proposal of a United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) in 1956. Given the context of cold war, Canada had come to develop very close strategic and defence relations with US by the 1950s; these relations went beyond the alliance relationship within NATO. A series of bilateral agreements had made Canada welcome American military installations in its northern parts under the NORAD; and also it had facilitated American access to Canadian strategic resources under the Defence Production Sharing Agreement (1956). The US was aghast and angry at the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of Suez Canal; an aggression committed by the two colonial powers in the Middle East whom Canada regarded as the 'mother' countries. It were the special historical and cultural circumstances that got Canada involved actively in the Middle East; and after the Suez Canal crisis was over, kept it engaged with UN peace-keeping, observations and refugee issue.

What were the domestic and international factors that changed Canadian perception towards the conflict? It was the 1973 oil embargo and the reassessment of

Arab-Israel issue in the Western world besides the improvement of Arab-Israel relations including initiation of several peace processes which impact and changed Canada's perception towards the conflict through the 1970s. A shift away from open support to Israel became discernible; and thereafter one could sense a more nuanced and balanced approach towards the region well into the 2000s.

A significant issue is that Canada has been the role in different peace processes during the 1990s. Considering the limitations of Canada's direct role in the Arab-Israel peace process, it can be said that Canada played an important role in the Refugee Working Group (RWG), which was part of the broader Middle East Peace Process (MEPP) that started in the 1990s. Canada through RWG and its 'Track II' initiatives, worked in refugee camps and organised several seminars, workshops, where Canada engaged research experts, officials as well as Palestinian and Israeli representatives on the refugee issue.

Personality factors and impact of individual leadership have been important questions in dealing with the subject. What were the Canadian personality factors that shaped Canada's perception and policy towards the Arab-Israel conflict? Lester B. Pearson was so active during the creation of the state of Israel through United Nations. Pearson worked feverishly to broker the partition plan, which would be acceptable to the United States and the USSR. Preoccupied with the great powers, Pearson dismissed any solution that did not involve partition, which effectively meant a Jewish state in Palestine. He was also the brain behind the idea of UN Peace-keeping; a yeomen contribution for which he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957. It was Pearson's Christian heritage, particularly the 'Sunday School' that brought him close to the Arab-Israel conflict, as he mentioned it in his memoirs. Ivan Cleveland Rand was sympathetic to Zionism. Rand was an admirer of prominent American Zionist and Supreme Court Judge, Louis Brandeis and his emotional experiences during his time in Palestine as a member of UNSCOP, made him sympathetic to the plight of Jews. It was his personal experience in mind, that Justice Rand began to support the idea of partition, as the best solution in Palestine. It was also the personality factor of Liberal Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, whose policy emphasised on national self interest and long term relationship with priority countries, which included bilateral relationship with selected Arab countries and followed a balanced approach towards Israel.

Further, it is said that Stephen Harper had his own 'neo-Con' worldview to guide him in support of Israel including Israel's aerial bombing of civilian population in areas under Palestinian Authority. His deep religious orientation, which led him to blindly support Israel, was reflected in his support of Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 2006 and expanding and modernising the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA). Harper who visited Israel in January 2014, said: "An expanded and modernized trade agreement with Israel will generate more jobs and economic growth at home and in Israel while strengthening the close friendship that both countries enjoy".

In sum, Canada's perception and policy towards Arab-Israel conflict have been shaped by the religio-cultural and historical factors rather than its acclaimed Liberal Internationalism. Secondly, growing economic and commercial interests after the 1973 Arab-Israel war and its perceived national interest made it adopt a more nuanced and balanced approach towards the conflict. It has also been argued that elite perception specially the initiatives by Lester Pearson and presence of an active Jewish community have had a significant influence on Canadian perception towards the Arab-Israel conflict. Arms sale policy has been one of the core areas of cooperation with Israel. The hypotheses which were set out at the beginning of the study thus stand tested through the present monographic study.

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