THE STRUGGLE FOR PALESTINE (Part 3: Toward Gaza)

In this concluding essay on "the struggle for Palestine," I propose to sort the complex and sometimes obscure events into nine categories. I must leave out much but will try to show how the main lines of development impact upon one another to create the pattern we face today. Then, in a concluding section, I will venture a guess on what lies ahead. I begin with the quest for peace.[1]

I   The Early Quest for Peace

To address the quest for peace, I begin with events at the end of the 1967 war. In that engagement, Israel had occupied the Sinai Peninsula right up to the edge of the Suez Canal. It then seemed likely to me that in defeat the Egyptian government would be prepared to bend on the attitude President Nasser had proclaimed on the eve of the war. He realized that Egypt needed peace and wanted to recover its lost territory. He had been sufficiently shocked by his defeat that he had at least *pro forma* resigned.[2]

Henry Kissinger, newly appointed director-designate of the National Security Council asked me to discuss the possibility of a peace treaty with President Nasser. At his request, I flew to Cairo, spent some hours with Nasser and the head of his national security council, and returned to report that I thought a deal was possible. Kissinger then asked me to return to Cairo "and push as far as you can get toward a peace treaty."

The main issues to be included in such a treaty on the Egyptian side had to be: Egypt (1) adhering to the treaty that would make the Enterprise Passage at the Straits of Tiran legally an international waterway; 2) demilitarizing the Sinai Peninsula once it was returned to Egypt; 3) moving toward free trade with Israel; and (4) recognizing Israel with all deliberate speed. In our many hours of discussion, Nasser agreed with these points and corrected in red ink the draft I wrote between the time when we were actually meeting. He went further: he cabled Kissinger, who had moved into the White House, asking him to meet me urgently.

When I met with Kissinger and handed over the draft peace treaty, he expressed no interest and would not even read it. I was absolutely astonished. I pointed out that this agreement was what the US government had been seeking for many years and was a unique opportunity to bring peace to the Middle East. He said he was busy, but that if I left the treaty on his desk, he would read it when he had time. That time never came. The

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[1]   Since I was a participant in some of these events, I will as useful alert the reader as my experience may skew my detached judgment. The literature on which I have drawn here and in several books and many articles is voluminous so I will not attempt to cite sources unless the subject is particularly controversial.

[2]   In several articles, I had laid out what I thought could be the shape of an agreement. Some of these were read by then Governor Nelson Rockefeller and Henry Kissinger. Rockefeller had not then been nominated, but he told Kissinger that he wanted me to be his Under Secretary of State. When Nixon was nominated, Kissinger left Rockefeller and went to work for Nixon. It was during the transition period, in December 1968, that he asked to see me and asked me to probe Nasser's intention.

opportunity to move toward peace was lost. Fighting along the Canal continued. As a result in the following months, at least 30,000 more people were killed.

As I wrote in my second essay in this series, it was Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir who took the next step in the summer of 1970, seeking a ceasefire on the Suez Canal. She asked me to mediate. I did. The ceasefire went into effect shortly before Nasser's death on September 28, 1970.

Nasser had been a jealous ruler. Most of the "Free Officers" with whom he had seized power in 1952 had long since retired; some were actually under house arrest; and during his 18 years in power no rivals had come to the fore. The old regime was dead; the only large political party, the Wafd, was just a memory; the Muslim Brotherhood, a phantom; and the always tiny Communist Party, a joke.

At his death, the two strongmen of Nasser's entourage compromised with one another by putting forward for the presidency a colleague whom they thought to be an amiable, unambitious, maladroit figure. Anwar Sadat had been publicly scorned by Nasser and was the butt of many an Egyptian joke. He was famous for affecting a military uniform illuminated with almost as much ribbon and brass as America's later General David Petraeus. One of the leading Egyptian commentators described him to me as "Charlie Chaplin playing James Bond." But it was Sadat who would carry the quest for peace to the next stage.[3]

Sadat was dealt a weak hand in that game: Egypt had catastrophically lost the 1967 war. The formerly industrialized cities along the Suez Canal were in ruins; the part of the army that was not bogged down in Yemen had been gutted; the economy was prostrate; Egypt's major oil field was being drained by the Israelis; the Suez Canal was closed; and the major source of hard currency, tourism, was dead. Hotels were empty. Worse, the trend was downward: the "postwar war of attrition" was hurting Egypt badly and preventing reconstruction along the Canal while the already terrifying population/land ratio was daily worsening.   In foreign relations, Egypt had few friends. It was deeply divided from both Syria and Jordan. Finally, an Israeli army was just a hundred miles from downtown Cairo.

It would be hard to think of a worse combination, but there was yet another factor that was, perhaps, even more debilitating. It was Egypt's (and the rest of the Arab world's) psychological-ideological turmoil. The Arab quandary is so crucial to the events that follow -- right up to today -- that I must take a detour to explain it; indeed, without an understanding of it, the events of the next years, and those of today, make little sense.

II   The Intellectual-psychological Context

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[3]   I first met Sadat when Nasser allowed me (as then a member of the Policy Planning Council) to go to Yemen during that country's civil war. He was infuriated that Nasser had allowed me to visit Yemen, even allowing me to visit the battle zones, and was astonished when Nasser's brother in law, Field Marshal Abdul-Hakim Amr, unrolled before me the maps of a planned Egyptian sweep of the royalist rebel area. Sadat was convinced that I must be a spy and later, with the encouragement of Henry Kissinger, made life in Egypt impossible for me. These issues are peripheral to my account here but can be accessed in my book, *Personal History* (Washington: Panda Press, 2003) which is distributed by Amazon.

The intellectual-psychological context in which Arabs have operated evolved in five stages: first, centuries-old teachings and more recent organizations to resurrect Islamic "purity;"[4] second, through early Twentieth century, partly Christian-led particularistic nationalism (Arabic: *wataniyah*); into, third, secular pan-Arabist (Arabic: *qawmiyah*) and Baathist (Arabic: *Baᶜath*) nationalism; fourth, into "Arab socialism" (Arabic: *ijtimaᶜiyah*); and finally into today's Muslim "militantism" (Arabic: *jihadiyah*).

Toward the end of the Eighteenth century, Muslims were experiencing the "impact of the West." That is, they were beginning to be challenged *commercially* by the growing European economy, *culturally* by Western-inspired changes in taste and style and *militarily* by the intrusion of Western soldiers. In response, a number of independent, non-official religious scholars and missionaries set in motion social and intellectual movements that, with intermissions, remain strong today. Although they differed from one another in their interpretation of their traditional norms, these scholars and missionaries all took positions in what is known today as Fundamentalism (Arabic: *Salafiyah*).

The *Salafis* went back for their inspiration to the dour Eighth-Ninth century scholar Ahmad bin Hanbal of Baghdad who preached a strict interpretation of the Islamic heritage and sought to prevent innovation (Arabic: *bidaᶜah*). His most influential successor was the uncompromising Fourteenth century jurist Ibn Taimiyah. These were the Muslim thinkers who laid the basis for the thought of the Egyptian theologian of the Muslim Brotherhood and today's Muslim Fundamentalists including Gaza's HAMAS, Sayyid Qutub.

In the view of such men as Hanbal, Taimiyah and Qutub, Islam was a coherent system in which the distinctions Westerners draw between the secular and the religious were themselves travesties. For them Islam was an all-encompassing way of life. Since they believed that it had been laid down by God in the Quran and was elaborated by the actions and saying of His "Messenger" Muhammad, the pattern of life and belief were, by definition, perfect and immutable. To change or even to allow change[5] was, therefore, a sin against God. Additions which had occurred over the centuries since the Quran was delivered needed to be purged. There was no justification for adaptation to changing circumstances. What God decreed had nothing to do with ephemeral human foibles; it was eternal and immutable.

Islam, the revivalists pointed out, is exact. It demands affirmation of the unity of God (*tawhid)* and denial of any sharing (*shirk*) of His majesty; men are not to exploit one another so taking interest (*riba*) is forbidden; Muslims are enjoined to help one another so everyone must pay a welfare tax, (*zakat*); all must abide by the law (*shariah*)[6] which derives from the

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[4]   There is no single name for these movements. They all stressed the brotherhood of believers, the purity of their religion, and their hostility to European colonialism and imperialism. Some went further to demand the return to a caliphate.

[5]   It is perhaps not irrelevant that the classical Arabic word for "to change" (*ghaiyara*) is not neutral, like the English word, which can be for the better or for the worse. Its basic meaning, applied to milk, meant "to sour" or "go bad," or as more generally applied "to be adulterated" or "become unwholesome."

[6]   The comparison to Judaic law is striking: in both, there are two laws, the law of the Book (the Quran and Torah) and the interpretation of legal scholars (*muftis* and *Rabbis*); each spelled out in great detail the laws of what one must do and what one must not do (*huddud* and *halakha*) and both assert that they are God-given, everlasting and unalterable.

Quran or from the actions and sayings (*hadith*) of the Prophet; as brothers (*Ikhwan*) Muslims are forbidden to kill one another; they should perform the pilgrimage (*hajj)* in which Muslims from all over the world assemble to express their faith, exemplify their unity and draw strength from one another; and Muslims are commanded to struggle (perform *jihad*) in the cause of God (*fi sabili'llah*) to create the community (*ummah*) He had ordered.

And Islam was not only clearly set out in the Quran but had evolved over the centuries an impressive body of law -- as did Judaism and Christianity -- that anchored its beliefs in practice. Thus, just as Christian theologians reached back for precedent to such early Church fathers as Tertullian in the Second-Third centuries, Saint Augustus in the Fourth-Fifth centuries and Saint Dominic in the Twelfth-Thirteenth centuries, so traditionalist Muslims drew on Hanbal and Taimiyah. They did not know the inspirer of the Inquisition, Dominic, but, in his emphasis on original meaning, ritual purity and stern discipline, he was not far from Hanbal or Taimiyah. Dominic agreed with the Muslim *salafis* on an uncompromising rejection of innovation (Arabic: *bidaᶜah;* Church Latin: *innovatio).*

Like Judaism, Islam contained vestiges of earlier beliefs and practices. The Old Testament and the Quran both reflected primitive tribal Hebrew and Arab societies, and the codes they set forth were severe. The Old Testament aimed at preserving and enhancing tribal cohesion and power while the Quran sought to destroy the vestiges of pagan belief and practice. Both were authoritarian theocracies.

Over the centuries, Islam outgrew its original isolation and came to deal with or incorporate diverse societies and beliefs. Thus, in practice, it became more ecumenical and put aside or modified some of its original concepts. A major adjustment was tolerating Hindus, who as polytheists were the ultimate enemy of the unitarian Muslims. Despite their beliefs, they were eventually treated as though they were "People of the Bible."

Among themselves, Muslims fragmented into sects and so violated the injunction of unity of faith, even fighting one another despite their proclaimed brotherhood. And local customs were incorporated into the practice of Islam. These and other modifications were seen by "true believers" as perversions. So, from time to time, some Muslim jurists have sought to "go back" to the original or "pure" message as they believed their ancestors had received it. Similar attempts at "return" were advocated by Protestants in Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries Europe, Old Believers in Seventeenth and Eighteenth century Russia and Middle Eastern reformers in the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries.

In America, New England Puritans implemented a draconian, Biblically-based legal code, complete with lashings, burnings and stoning to death for such crimes as adultery, sodomy and blasphemy. Today's militant Muslim Fundamentalists, similarly, have insisted on a literal interpretation of early Islamic practice or even, like the Taliban, implemented pre- or non-Islamic tribal customs (Pashtu: *ravaj*) or, like some African Muslim societies, such non-Islamic practices as infibulation.

As we see throughout history and in today's events, "true believers," each in his own religion, have little tolerance for those who follow other gods or who worship the same gods in different ways or under different names.   Until quite recently, Catholics and Protestants

hated one another with more fervor than either hated Jews or Muslims. In the Seventeenth century Thirty Years War, they virtually destroyed Europe, killing nearly four in each ten of one another. Similarly, throughout the history of Islam, Sunnis and Shiis have massacred one another. Today's Sunni Muslim "ISIS" regards Shia Muslims just as the Catholic Inquisition regarded Protestants. Among "true believers," difference is often lethal.

Even worse than difference is "near belief." Throughout history, heretics have everywhere been considered more dangerous than true outsiders. We perhaps forget that The First Crusade was not against Muslims but against a European Christian heresy, the Cathars. The Inquisition spent most of its energy sniffing out Christian deviation, crypto-Jews, and Muslims who only pretended to be Christians. Today, what so infuriates the Fundamentalist Muslims about the Druze, Alawis, Yazidis and other Shia sects is that they are "almost Muslims." That is, they are deviants within, but on the fringes of, the Islamic family. So Islamic revivalists struggle, often violently, for unity anchored in religious purity.

With this background, I can now turn to how these fundamental aspects of the Muslim experience were manifested.

III   The Arab Search for Guiding Principles Begins

I begin, as Muslim Middle Easterners did, with the basic concept of *salafiyah.* *Salafiyah* is a difficult concept for outsiders to comprehend. The word itself comes from the Arabic verbal "root," *salafa,* that can be translated as "to take the lead" but also "to keep pace with" and "to return to origins." (Arabic delights in such complexities.) Westerners usually place the emphasis on "return," that is, on "backwardness." There is justification for this interpretation, but the implication as shown in the three seemingly contradictory translations I just gave is "return to first principles *in order to advance.*"

If this seems awkward or unlikely, consider the European counterpart of *Salafiyah*. Protestant reformers in Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries Europe also thought that going back to origins was necessary in order to advance. That concept sparked the great commercial and intellectual revolution in Holland, Belgium and North Germany that laid the basis for modern Europe.

The *Salifis* were not so interested in commerce as the Lutherans, Calvinists and their various offshoots; their underlying objective was to recapture the power and dignity of the days when Islam was a world leader. They believed that by stripping away the shroud of dark ages and returning to "purity," that is to the original, God-given practice, they could advance toward a dignified, powerful and religiously-ordained future. Several of these *Salifis* created vast, enduring and far-flung societies -- virtual religious empires -- that were the most vigorous and popular movements of their times. And, as I will illustrate, what they thought and did, for better or for worse, remain significant today.

Among their leaders from the Eighteenth century were the Arabian Ahmad ibn Abdul Wahhab (the founder of Wahhabism); the Algerian/Libyan Muhammad bin Ali as-Sanusi (the founder of the North African Sanusi Brotherhood); the Sudanese Muhammad Ahmad al-Mahdi (the founder of the African Mahadiyah movement); the Iranian Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani (who inspired nationalist movements all over the Ottoman-Turkish, Qajar-

Iranian and Mughal-Indian empires); and the Egyptian theologian Muhammad Abduh (whose students taught millions of young Muslims all over Asia and Africa).

Until fairly recently, we in the West have known little of these men and their movements, but they were as influential among their peoples as Luther and Calvin were among Westerners. And, as we shall see, their influence is growing among today's 1 billion Muslims.

The early Muslim movements did not stop the "impact of the West" nor did they appeal to the Christian and Jewish populations of their areas. The Christians and the Jews eagerly accepted the Western intrusion and generally profited materially, intellectually and politically from it. However, toward the end of the Nineteenth century some, mainly Lebanese Christian members of the small educated elite, began to try to find a system of belief that could overcome religious difference. The cause remained essentially the same as earlier *salafiyah*: protection again Western intrusion but they focused more sharply on the political challenge. They thought -- or at least hoped -- that, if they dropped or at least obscured the criteria of religion and focused on something they all could share, they could gather together and become strong. The philosophical or emotional answer, they thought, was the same one that was then rallying Christians in Italy, Germany and France and the Jewish peoples of central and eastern Europe -- nationalism.

As I have written in my second essay, nationalism, as understood by the Arabs, was at first a geographically limited concept. The word adopted to encapsulate "nation" also meant "dwelling" or by extension "village" (Arabic: *watan*). Ironically, it is a reasonable Arabic translation of the word "national home" used by the early Zionists (Hebrew: *heimstaät*). The Zionists used "national home," as they said, to avoid frightening the British by admitting that they aimed to create a nation-state in Palestine. That was not the intent of the Arabs. They wanted to frighten the British and French into leaving their lands. For that purpose they had to devise a different concept and use a different word. It took them years to find a stronger rallying point, concept and word.

A different rallying point, concept and word came into use more or less coincident with the rise to power of Gamal Abdul Nasser. The word, taken to mean "pan-Arabism," was also drawn from classical Arabic. It was *qawmiyah.*

Qawmiyah was a curious choice because it is the abstract form of qawm. A *qawm* is a "clan," an even smaller group than a village, but it was the group to which each individual owed absolute loyalty. That loyalty was the quality that the greatest of the early Arab historians, Ibn Khaldun, called "social cohesion" (Arabic: ᶜ *assabiyah*). When it existed, societies became powerful; when it faded, they perished. So in that fundamental sense it suggested what the Arabs hoped that nationalism would mean to their society: unity.

Arabs are more devoted to their language than any other people I have ever known so not surprisingly another word came to men's lips in the 1940s. The word was "baath" (Arabic: baᶜath), meaning roughly "awakening," and as it became filled with meanings and associations, it signaled the rise of a new movement, a new answer, to the Arab dilemma.

The Baath movement grew out of a discussion group that was formed in Damascus on the eve of the Second World War by French-educated Syrian intellectuals. Immediately after the war, they formed a small but vigorous political party. Authoritarian -- it agreed with Rousseau that men had to be forced to be free -- and like some contemporary

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European ideologies, it was somewhat mystical. But above all, pan-Arab unity (Arabic: *ittihad'ul-Arab*) was its goal. To move toward this goal, it defined "Arab" culturally rather than religiously. Thus, in the quest for unity, it sought to efface the old distinctions that, it believed, were the principal cause of Arab weakness. Also exciting to the postwar generation of Middle Easterners was that it took up social and economic issues and thought of itself as a Socialist movement. What it meant by that is somewhat vague -- it identified with the then popular movements associated with men like Nehru -- and like them was determined to root out both the European colonists and their native heirs. The Baath movement spread to Iraq in the 1960s and was taken up by some of the Palestinian leaders.

Like the other nationalist quests -- the particularistic nationalisms of the several states, *wataniyah,* and the pan-Arabism of *qawmiyah* -- Baathism sundered on the different problems, cultures and objectives of the Arab states. The reasons were profound but allow me an anecdote illustrating the divisive results of the colonial-imperial heritage:

In 1952, the Rockefeller Foundation sponsored a meeting of prominent Arab intellectuals from around the Middle East. Few had ever met any of the others. All were Arabic speakers, but much of the discussion had to be held in English or French because the Iraqis and Jordanians were accustomed to English terms; the Syrians and Lebanese were accustomed to a French vocabulary; the Egyptians were divided between French for intellectual matters and English for dealing with the goods and services of the West; and the one Libyan, to Italian. This is a common experience throughout Asia and Africa. Up to the present, the Indians, Pakistanis and people of most of the former African colonies similarly think in and are more familiar with the languages of their former European masters than with their own heritage or the language and thought of their neighbors. This heritage of colonialism permeates their cultures, their economies and their politics. So it was with the Arabs. Everyone believed in *ittihad'ul-Arab* but each defined it and sought it in his own "vernacular." While this may seem recondite, it cuts to the quick of modern politics.

Nationalism under whatever name failed to meet the popular objectives of achieving strength, dignity and unity. Many modern Arab thinkers drew the lesson from their failures that their society had to be revolutionized from the bottom up: peasants and the urban poor had to be educated; standards of living had to be improved; diseases wiped out; industries created; land distributed and a new sense of belonging cultivated. To many this suggested what was understood as socialism (Arabic: *ijtimaiyah*); to some, as very briefly in Iraq around 1960, it required even more radical means like Communism or at least some sort of model inspired by the Soviet system.

Nationalism of various varieties and "Arab socialism" were the prevailing ideas and thrusts of movements of the 1960s. Each had its adherents and its aspirations. Each failed to deliver what the Arabs sought. If one could pick a date for the dividing line, it was the catastrophic defeat of the Arabs in the 1967 war. It is perhaps germane that 1967 marked the 40th year of Moses' "time in the wilderness" to remake his people. I turn now to look at what was happening apart from the Palestinians in the Arab states.

IV   The Role of the States:

None of the Arab states was comfortable with the Palestinians. Even when they agreed with the long-term aim of recovering Palestine, they feared that the Palestinians would act precipitously and so get them into conflicts with Israel for which they were

unprepared. Consequently, the Palestinian leaders periodically traded the drawing rooms of presidents and kings with prison cells.

The King of Jordan was the most consistently involved in Palestinian affairs. Following the 1949-1950 war, he realized that the Jordanian army would never be able to defeat the Israeli army. His army was a primarily bedouin force that had been established to keep order among the desert tribes. It lacked the manpower, the weapons and the skills for modern warfare. Consequently, King Husain, following in his father's footsteps, undertook virtually nonstop secret negotiations with Israel to work out one *modus vivendi* after another. Like all Middle Eastern secrets, these covert operations were discussed in every cafe.

King Husain also suffered from the fact that the relatively secure principality of Transjordan had become the kingdom of Jordan by the incorporation of the Palestinian West Bank. While most land was still Jordanian, most of the population had become Palestinian. The Palestinians were less interested in protecting Jordan and its king than in recovering their homeland. Thus, Jordan became the first center of the Palestinian militant groups; they, in turn, justified their existence by their conflict with Israel; that in turn made it more necessary for the King to deal with the Israelis. The cycle was vicious and soon led to the attempt by the Palestinians to take over Jordan in 1970. In "Black September" 1970, Husain released his army against the Palestinian and killed perhaps 10,000 of them before securing agreement with the Palestinian leadership that it and its armed groups would leave Jordan for Lebanon.

In Lebanon, there were already about 300,000 Palestinians. While most of them were congregated in huge camps and did not participate directly in Lebanese politics, they constituted about one in each six inhabitants. With the arrival of the leadership, they gradually became a state within the Lebanese state. This, in turn, frightened the Lebanese and threatened to upend the delicate balance that the French had established among the Lebanon's religiously defined ethnic groups. The Lebanese army, itself a reflection of Lebanon's social mosaic, simply broke up. Each community formed its own militia. The most vigorous was the Maronite population which spawned armed forces known as the *Kataib* (Arabic for "regiments").

Worried by this development, the president of Lebanon who, by the Constitution was a Maronite Christian, invited a Syrian army peacekeeping force to establish virtual control over the country in 1976. But one section of the *Kataib* led by a disaffected army major broke away and was armed, funded and established a separate military fief on the Israeli frontier, out of reach of the Syrians, by Israel.

The *Kataib* was an authoritarian, ultra nationalist militant movement modeled on the Falange Fascist movements in 1930s Europe. It viewed the Palestinians as the obstacle to its domination of Lebanon. To overcome them, it had to make common cause with Israel.

The Palestinians precipitated conflict with Israel in a long series of "incidents," among which was a significant raid on northern Israel in March of 1978. A few days later, on March 15, the Israeli army invaded south Lebanon. The move astonished the Carter administration, then in the midst of the Camp David peace negotiations. Acting with unusual determination, the US took the matter to the UN and secured both a motion demanding Israeli withdrawal and creating "the United Nations International Force in

Lebanon." UNIFIL was to monitor Israeli withdrawal but was given authority only to protect itself and was not even given adequate arms to do that. Israel paid it little attention. Israel did not withdraw and refused to allow UNIFIL into the frontier zone.

Emboldened by the entry of Israel into Lebanon, the *Kataib* began to try to push the Syrians out. The Syrians struck back and, for the first time, an Arab state asked Israel to come to its aid. Israel did, but its limited actions solved nothing and, after a long series of clashes in June 1982, Israel massively invaded Lebanon. Brushing aside UNIFIL and paying no attention to an almost unprecedented unanimous Security Council resolution demanding withdrawal, it reached the outskirts of Beirut. There it ran into Palestinian forces.

During these events, Syria warily watched. What happened in Lebanon was not only economically crucial to Syria but the Syrians remembered that the French had earlier used Lebanon as a bastion from which to control their country. They believed that Lebanon was rightfully a part of "Greater Syria." So their intervention, at the request of the Lebanese government, had seemed a historically justified event.

Lebanon was a risky place for Syrian action. While it might act as a buffer to Israel, its increasingly active Palestinian community could turn it into a battle ground with Israel.

The Baathist Syrian regime was at least as hostile to the Palestinian "freedom fighters/guerrillas" as the Jordanians and Lebanese. Early in his campaign, Yasir Arafat had been a guest in a Syrian prison and later the Syrian leader, Hafez al-Assad, had not only stopped his air force from assisting the PLO when it was being attacked by the Jordanian army in 1970 but in 1976 even assisted the *Kataib* in its vicious attack on a refugee camp that cost thousands of Palestinian lives. Later, in 1983, it invited to Damascus Arafat's arch enemy, Abu Nidal, the man who had organized the murder of Arafat's "ambassador" to the Israeli peace party, Issam Sartawi.[7]

Beyond personal antipathies -- always so evident in Arab affairs -- were strategic considerations. The PLO existed to fight Israel and that above all the Syrian regime did not want. Hafez al-Assad feared that a new war might be the end of his regime or even of Syrian independence. Although its agricultural area on the Golan Heights had been conquered by Israel, it was determined that Golan not be a theater for Palestinian guerrilla warfare and essentially banned the PLO and other Palestinian groups from activity there. Additionally, it tightly controlled its 300-400 thousand Palestinian residents, and where possible it sought a compromise with Israel according to the resolutions of the United Nations. At the same time, it turned to Russia for resupply of the equipment it had lost in the 1973 war and for protection through what became a mutual security treaty.

During these years, Egypt had gone its own way. Following the death of President Nasser, his place was taken by Anwar Sadat. From being the weak, compromise candidate, Sadat was transformed by the structure of the Egyptian state and the nature of the Egyptian

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[7]   When Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir asked me to negotiate a cease fire on the Suez Canal in the summer of 1970, the head of the Egyptian national security council told me that President Nasser would need to have the support of at least one of the leaders of the Palestinian combatants. I flew to Jordan and spent some hours with Sartawi. The day after Nasser made his speech that triggered the deal on the ceasefire, Sartawi issued a statement approving it. I recount the episode in my *Personal History* (Washington: Panda Press, 2003).

tradition into a pharaoh.   When those who had chosen him, tried to recoup their power on May 13, 1971, he used the army to squelch them.   The price he had to pay for his victory was giving the army the equipment it needed to rebuild after the debacle of 1967.

Sadat wanted peace. But, he realized that to have accepted Israeli terms for peace before the Army had tried and failed to avenge the 1967 defeat, would probably have caused some "younger Sadat" to overthrow him.   Even if that did not happen, the Israeli terms would have turned Egypt into an Israeli economic colony.   So he applied to Russia for arms and to the UN for support.   From Russia, he got the arms along with large numbers of "advisers," technicians and guardians. From the UN, despite American opposition, in July 1973 13 of the 15 members of the Security Council voted to "deplore" continued Israeli occupation of Egyptian territory; but the United States vetoed the resolution. That was the end of the peace initiative.

Seeing Sadat's weakness, as General Itzhak Rabin told me, Israel upped the price of peace. As Rabin admitted, the Arabs could not accept these terms so they must, in effect, surrender and accept what Israel would give.[8]

Rabin was right. Sadat could not accept Israeli terms and, on the advice of his general staff, prepared for war. Egypt lost the 1973 war, but his having given the army its chance freed Sadat to try another approach. He offered to go to the UN with all the Arab states' leaders (and some unidentified Palestinians) to negotiate a peace "based on respect for the legitimate rights of all the people in the area," to stop the fighting "provided Israel returned to the June 5, 1967 lines." He got nowhere.

Sadat was desperate. The Egyptian public was increasingly hungry and blamed the government for food shortages, massive unemployment and corruption. So, Sadat set in motion a series of secret meetings with Israeli officials that set the terms for his remarkable diplomatic gesture: Sadat flew to Jerusalem in November 20, 1977 to address the Israel's parliament, the Knesset, and urge the cause of peace. I turn now to what he encountered in Israel and faced in its strategy.

V   The Strengthening of Israel and the Continuing Israeli Policy

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[8]   Reflecting on these points, I was sure (once again) that war would break out in a few months. This time, I thought it likely that in desperation, Egypt would strike out. Most of those observers whose opinions I then respected agreed and so did the Russians.   Ironically, the more Sadat warned of the danger of war, the less he was believed. But arms were arriving in early 1973 in both Egypt and Syria in increasing quantities and improving quality. Even Yugoslavia began to furnish Egypt with new anti-tank missiles. By June, we now know, Sadat and Syrian President Hafez al-Assad had agreed on a plan and had picked a date. Subsequently, King Husain of Jordan joined the group. October 6, 1973 was to be their "D Day." As the Jewish Yom Kippur it seemed a favorable moment and as the anniversary of one of the most important events in early Islam, the Battle of Badr, it seemed auspicious. Israel precipitated the war by shooting down eight Syrian aircraft off the Syrian coast on September 13, but the plan was already in motion. The Egyptian strategy was to create a war of sufficient magnitude that the world powers would have to intervene in their own interests. It never, for example, included an attack on Israel itself but only on the occupied areas. Indeed, the battle plan was the major cause of their defeat: they stopped their troops only ten miles into Sinai at places they could not defend. The Egyptians, at least, never thought they could defeat Israel.

As we have seen, Israel was already a unified, modern society by the middle of the 1930s. All that changed thereafter was a continuing growth of capacity. Population soared at the end of the Second World War and received major infusions in the following years. After 1989, when Mikhail Gorbachev allowed emigration, about one and a half million Jews left the Soviet Union and nearly a million of them went to Israel.

According to the Orthodox Rabbinate, about one in four of these people were not "Jewish" but were a mixture of Jews and others, and both biological and historical studies indicate that many were not of Semitic heritage.[9] But the Israeli "Law of Return" considered them to be Jews and so rightful immigrants. That 1 in 6 Israelis who are culturally Russian has profoundly affected Israeli society and politics. The Israel of the Twentieth-first century is very different from the Israel of the Twentieth century.

By 2014, the Israeli Jewish population reached approximately 6,200,000. Most Jews now live in the area designated by the UN resolutions as Israeli, but about 540,000 live on the West Bank and East Jerusalem which were designated by the UN resolutions and ceasefire agreements as Palestinian. An additional 20,000 live in the disputed Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. About 1,700,000 Israelis are Palestinians. (Jordan's population was then roughly 8 million and Lebanon's 4,500,000.)

The land of Palestine has always been short of water, and, despite large-scale efforts at water management and massive draw-downs of aquifers -- Israelis use at least three times as much water per capita as Jordanians -- the Israelis have not been able to "make the desert bloom." Less than 14% of the land is classified as "arable," and less than 4% can be permanently cropped. (This compares to Jordan's 1.97% of arable land and slightly less than 1% of permanently cropped area. Most of Jordan, like Egypt, is desert.) The demand for more water is a key factor in Israeli policy.

The Israeli population is young with a median age of just under 30; 4 in each 10 Israelis are below the age of 25. These figures give Israel a large military potential. Taking the portion of the population aged 16 to 49 as fit for military service, Israel can draw on 1.8 million males and 1.7 million females. Each year an additional 62 thousand males and 59 thousand females reach military age.

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[9]   The medieval empire of the Khazars in Central Asia sought to establish a distinct position for itself in a neighborhood of Greek Orthodox Christians and Muslim Iranians, Turks and Arabs by adopting a different religion: the rulers and probably the bulk of the population adopted Judaism. Even in the modern period, under Soviet rule, there was a Jewish republic in the Soviet system. A sort of Soviet "Israel" was established by Stalin in 1934 to enable Russian Jews to promote their own culture. Known as Yereyskaya it was in the Far East on the frontier with Manchuria. The capital city was Birobidzhan. At its height, it contained nearly a quarter of a million Jews, but most emigrated so that the population today is almost entirely ethnic Russians and Ukrainians. A number of other Jewish populations (the Mountain Jews, aka the Juhuro, and the Georgian Jews) existed in Central Asia. The biological relationship of these peoples to Sephardic, Ashkenazi and Oriental Jews is controversial but, apart from physical appearance which varies markedly, differing susceptibility to certain illnesses has been observed. The latest note is Nicholas Wade, "Genes suggest..." *The New York Times,* October 8, 2013. It appears that a significant part of the Russian Jewish population is not of Semitic origin. Intermarriage with and/or conversion to Judaism by such peoples as the Berbers is documented; less well studied is the origin of African, Indian and Chinese Jews.

The Gross domestic product (GDP) of Israel in 2013 was $274.5 billion (roughly 8 times the GDP of Jordan or Lebanon) which made it the world's 49th richest country.

As these figures indicate, Israel is a rich, technologically advanced country, which has captured world markets in advanced military equipment, pharmaceuticals and the more traditional cut diamond trade. It actively encourages (particularly Jewish) tourism both to earn foreign currencies and as an aspect of its security and economic policies.

Israel benefits greatly from foreign investment and even more from the overseas Jewish communities' donations. These benefits have resulted in recent years in a growth rate of nearly 5% per annum. Absent major war, the economic future appears bright. Perhaps the most significant new development has been the discovery of large deposits of natural gas off the Mediterranean coast.

Despite these favorable conditions, about 1 in each 5 inhabitants (mainly Oriental Jews and the Israeli Arab citizens) live below the poverty line. In mid-2011, significant protests were mounted about income inequality and inflation. In fact, income inequality and poverty rates are among the highest of OECD countries.
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The basic resource of Israel is a highly educated, strongly motivated and cultural unified Jewish majority of its population. As I have mentioned in the previous essay in this series, this enables the government to mobilize military forces in hours that would require weeks or even months in its Arab neighbors. The small size of the country enables it to shift its military force from front to front to achieve "theater dominance."

Moreover, Israel holds the military "trump card." From the early 1960s, if not before, Israel was working on the design and production of nuclear weapons at a secret site at Dimona. In a variety of ways, including espionage, it acquired crucial information and materials from France, the US and South Africa. Relations with South Africa, then a repressive, segregated state that viewed its black population much as the Israelis viewed the Palestinians, were close. South Africa also offered help on developing and testing nuclear weapons and even sent troops to help patrol its West Bank frontier.[10]

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[10]   *The Guardian* published on May 24, 2010 a crucial document on Top Secret negotiations between then Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and South Africa Defense Minister P. W. Botha. What they were planning was among other things a violation of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, The document was found in the South African government archives, after the fall of the white supremacist regime by Professor Sasha Polakow-Suransky. Polakow-Suransky subsequently published it in his *The Unspoken Alliance: Israel's Secret Alliance with Apartheid South Africa.* Peres denied his participation.
    Israel probably on September 22, 1979 conducted at least one atmospheric nuclear test whose characteristic double flash was detected by an American satellite and is thought to have conducted other tests in or off the coast of South Africa.
    At least by 2003, Israel had deployed nuclear-tipped American cruise missiles on its submarine fleet. Israel has neither denied nor confirmed its nuclear arsenal, but it is believed to have a large inventory (perhaps 200 or more) of nuclear devices along with chemical and biological weapons. On American involvement see Amir Oren, "Newly declassified documents..." *Haaretz,* August 30, 2014.
    The use of South African troops to patrol Palestinian areas and in turn assist South African troops in Africa is reported in the *Sunday Times* Defense correspondent James Adam's book, *The Unnatural Alliance.* Further information was provided by *The Guardian's* correspondent Chris McGreal in a 2006 series entitled "Brothers in arms -- Israel's secret pact with Pretoria." South

A major additional resource has been Israel's ability to draw financial, education and commercial preference from governments. American contributions of various kinds to date total well over $100 billion. Israel has also received preferential treatment on contracts with the US Department of Defense and at least one branch of its government, its intelligence organization, is largely funded by the CIA.

To address how these attributes impact upon relations with the surrounding Arab countries and with the Palestinians, I turn to the Israeli national strategy.

As I have laid out in the second essay in this series, the fundamental Zionist strategy has been continued by the state: it was and is to acquire land on which to settle Jewish immigrants. This was embodied on the eve of the 1947-1949 war in what was known as "Plan D." Tactical implementation of the Strategy varied according to circumstances over the years, but the central thrust of the policy remained: Israel wanted land without non-Jewish people. To accomplish this goal it was prepared to adopt any tactics regardless of legality or world opinion.

In addition to hundreds of separate actions -- attacks on villages, confiscation of land, expulsion of populations and planting of settlements -- the strategic guidance of the principal Israeli officials and statesmen can be seen in the following statements.

During the build-up to the 1973 war, when Egypt alienated the Western powers by seeking a military alliance with Russia, Prime Minister Golda Meir set the terms of what Israel would demand in a settlement. Israel would 1) retain that part of Syria it had conquered (the Golan Heights); 2) would keep control over the West Bank and probably force much of the Palestinian population out; 3) would tie the Jordan economy to Israel by allowing Jordan access to its ports at Haifa and Gaza; 4) would keep and perhaps incorporate the Gaza strip; and (5) would retain a sizable area around Sharm ash-Shaikh adjacent to the Straits of Tiran where the war had begun.   At that time, Israel appropriated an additional 400 square miles of the occupied West Bank.

General Moshe Dayan, the minister of defense during the 1973 war, later described what might be called by analogy to the Nineteenth century British policy in Afghanistan as the Israeli "Forward Policy."   Focusing on the Golan Heights, he told a confidant that the Israelis "would send a tractor to plow some area where it wasn't possible to do anything, in the demilitarized area, and it knew in advance that the Syrians would start to shoot. If they didn't shoot, we would tell the tractor [driver] to advance further, until in the end the Syrians would get annoyed and shoot. And then we would use artillery and later the air force also, and that's how it was." He anticipated that after the Israeli army, on his personal order, seized Golan in 1967, the "Israeli farmers would waste no time settling on the fertile land, making it difficult [for the Government] subsequently to withdraw...They didn't even try to hide their greed for that land."[11]

Africa's then Prime Minister John Vorster visited Jerusalem where he was entertained by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin along with Menachem Begin and Moshe Dayan in 1976.

[11]   Rami Tal who kept the talk secret for 21 years and then published it in the weekend supplement to the newspaper *Yedioth Abronoth.* It was then quoted by Serge Schmemann as "Firestorm Over the Golan," International *Herald Tribune,* May 12, 1997.

As I noted above, General Itzhak Rabin, the chief of the Israeli general staff and later ambassador to Washington and still later prime minister, told me, Israel had used its victory in the 1973 war to "up the price" of peace. It then included face-to-face negotiations to achieve "reconciliation" to the existence of a Jewish independent state; completely open frontiers with free trade and maintenance of Israeli overwhelming military superiority without any interference by UN peacekeeping forces. Rabin admitted that the Arabs could not accept these terms so they would be driven to surrender and accept what Israel would give.

Skipping ahead several years, General Ariel Sharon, then minister of defense, in a speech at Tel Aviv University on December 15, 1981, laid out the adaptation of the basic strategy to the new situation created by the growth of Israeli power and the transfer of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestine Authority to Lebanon. The strategy was expanded to occupy south Lebanon and completely destroy the PLO. In fact, although he did not spell this out, the objective was even more inclusive. According to the former deputy mayor of Jerusalem, Meron Benvenisti, "The true objective of the war...was the destruction of the powerful political and intellectual center of Palestinian nationalism that had developed over the years in Beirut."[12] That is, it was to "decapitate" and demoralize the Palestinians. That was the first part of Sharon's plan.

As Sharon laid out, the second part of his plan was to install a Maronite *Kataib* government. This government, owing its position to Israel, would sign a peace treaty. Then, third, Israel would "encourage" the remaining West Bank Palestinians to "transfer" to Jordan. This would have the effect of opening the entire West Bank to Jewish settlement, turning Jordan into "Palestine," and so ending Palestinian claims on Israel.

Sharon recognized that these moves would convulse Jordan; consequently, Israel would intervene there to install a government that would also sign a peace treaty. Finally, these moves would leave Syria isolated and would force Saudi Arabia to compromise, thus making Israel the predominant Afro-Asian power.[13] As I have described above, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon on June 6, 1982, 6 months after Sharon's speech, set his plan in motion.

Overall, in each of the statements on Israeli strategy, it is clear that the American slogan of trading "land for peace" was never seriously considered; land was always the primary goal of Israeli strategy. Emptying the land of its Palestinian inhabitants was the goal of Plan D in 1948 and remains the underlying Israeli policy today. Everything else was tactics.

I now briefly focus on the experience of the Palestinians during these years.

VI   FATAH, The PLO and the Quest for Statehood in Jordan and Lebanon

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[12]   "The Turning Point in Israel," *The New York Review of Books,* October 13, 1983. During its withdrawal, the Israeli army packed up and took to Israel the "memory bank" the Palestinians had been assembling as their national archives. See my *The Arab World Today* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 352.
[13]   Sharon's talk was published as a Government press bulletin in Jerusalem on December 15, 1981 and was summarized by Robert Neumann in *Foreign Affairs* 62(1983).

The failure of the Arab states in the 1973 war gave the Palestinians their first clear shot at achieving statehood. Before that time, they had been scattered, isolated and mutually hostile bands operating with little effect on the Israeli borderlands. It was the states, not the Palestinians, that mattered.

As I have written in my second essay, the national movement was composed of two major organizations. The first was FATAH (Arabic: *Harakat at-Tahrir al-Falastini*) Like a number of Middle Eastern political movements, it grew out of student discussion groups. Its early members were professional men among whom the leader was Yasir Arafat. He was to play the major role in Palestinian affairs for the next 30 years.

Very different in origin and character was the second group, the Palestinian Liberation Organization. (Arabic: *Munazzama't-Tahrir al-Falastini*). The PLO had been founded in 1964 by the Arab states and was more or less superimposed on the Palestinians. The stated aim was to engage in armed struggle against Israel while the unspoken purpose was to control the divergent groups of Palestinian militants. Its titular leader, who never really established leadership, was a Palestinian who had joined the diplomatic service of Saudi Arabia.

Also different was the way the two organizations mobilized themselves for the struggle. While the PLO formed a standing military force, the Palestine Liberation Army, FATAH was inspired by and tried to copy what its leaders thought had given the Algerian national movement its power. This turned out to be a misunderstanding and was so important in the development of the Palestinian movement that I must clarify it.[14]

The Algerian standing army never engaged the French army; it spent its time in exile in Tunisia. The fighting was done by small fighting groups (Arabic diminutive: *kutaib*) of less than a hundred Algerian men and women scattered throughout Algeria's districts who fought with guerrilla tactics; in the cities the fight was carried on by even smaller cells that used terrorist tactics. Their aim was to drive the French out of Algeria by making staying there unacceptably expensive both financially and politically for them.

None of this worked for the Palestinians. They tried to find their "Tunisia" in both Jordan and Lebanon but were driven out of both, ironically finally to the real Tunisia. Nor could they establish either *Kutaib* or terrorist cells inside Israel; such attacks as they could mount were always from external bases. Finally, whereas the one million or so European settlers in Algeria could go to France or elsewhere, most of the several million Israelis believed that Israel was their final destination.

But, like the Algerians, the Palestinians thought of their organization as a state in the process of being born or, perhaps more accurately at least in their hopes, a state in the process of being recognized. In fact, the PLO was a coalition of eight separate and ideologically heterodox bands that were loosely tied together by a sort of parliament, the Palestine National Council (Arabic: *al-Majlis al-Watani al-Filistini*).

Following the defeat of the Arab states in the 1967 war, the PLO underwent a radical change: building on the organization's strength as a national movement dedicated to

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[14]   As head of the American government task force on Algeria, I had access to everything that the American government could find out about the war; later I researched all available public materials to write the chapter on Algeria in my book *Violent Politics* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007).

guerrilla warfare, Yasir Arafat's FATAH gained control of the PLO at the 1969 National Council meeting in Cairo. From that time until his death in 2004, Arafat was the recognized leader. As the best informed and most able of the observers of the movement, Eric Rouleau, wrote,[15] by the 1980s, "...Fatah, the core and mainstream of the PLO... represents some 80 percent of the Fedayeen and probably a like percentage of the Palestinian population at large."

From the FATAH/PLO perspective, the Jordanian monarchy was both an antiquarian residue of colonial times and a virtual Israeli puppet. But Jordanian territory offered the potential for Palestinian survival as a nation and a base for guerrilla operations that might lead to the recovery of at least a part of Palestine. So, as I have mentioned, the Palestinians in the spring of 1970 steadily encroached upon the prerogatives of the Jordanian state. Someone, thought to have been a Palestinian, tried to assassinate King Husain; the PLO mounted attacks on government buildings; and more or less officially the PLO demanded that the King dismiss a number of senior officials including his uncle who was head of the army. The King then realized that he would have to destroy the PLO or be destroyed by it. He unleashed his army in September -- "Black September" -- which, after killing perhaps 10,000 Palestinians, drove the rest out of Jordan.

With Jordan closed to them, the PLO moved to Lebanon where it thrived. The pluralism of Lebanese society made entree for the leadership easy and the existence of numbers of refugee camps in which some 300,000 Palestinians lived gave them a niche. In fact about one in six residents of Lebanon was a Palestinian. But, the Palestinians soon overplayed their hand and built resistance to themselves that would have particularly tragic consequences.

During their time in Lebanon, the Palestinians changed both the structure and tactics of their armed forces. Arafat decided that the PLO armed forces should convert from a guerrilla force to a regular army and that they should stop their attacks across the frontier. The first made them much more vulnerable to the Air Force and army of Israel and the second did not prevent the Israelis from attacking. Israel invaded in 1982.

Despite, or perhaps because of, the new tactics, the PLO fought a hard fight. Defeating the Arab armies in 1967 had taken Isreal only 6 days and in 1973 just three weeks, but they required ten weeks in Lebanon to defeat the PLO. Beirut proved no easy prize. Besieged, the Palestinians held out for more than two months despite massive Israeli air and artillery bombardments and the cutting off of water and electricity. Both Lebanese and Palestinian casualties were heavy. Finally, brokered by the United States, the leadership and nearly 15,000 Palestinian combatants departed for exile in Tunisia and other Arab states.

What they left behind in Lebanon was a disaster. Once PLO soldiers had departed, the refugees in the camps were defenseless. The United States government had guaranteed

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[15]   "The Future of the PLO," Foreign *Affairs,* Fall, 1983. Eric Rouleau was born an Egyptian of Jewish background who, as the Middle Eastern correspondent of the French newspaper *Le Monde* won the respect and trust of Arafat (and remarkably of his rivals and enemies) in half a century of reporting. He later became the French ambassador to Tunisia.

their safety, but did not lift a finger when, two weeks later on September 16, they were butchered by the Maronite *Kataib* under Israeli control and with Israeli assistance.[16]

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VII   The *Intifadas*, the Evolution of the PLO and Relations with Israel

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Palestinians, by then numbering nearly five million, scattered in camps in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza, impoverished and dependent upon the UN relief agency, UNRWA, were beginning to realize that they were represented by an always distant, high living and nomadic establishment. Tales of corruption among the leaders spread, and step by step Yasir Arafat gave up the Palestinian objectives which he had proclaimed and on which he based his legitimacy. Those of us who visited the camps and talked with the "inmates" -- they were virtual prisoners -- heard everywhere sounds of growing anger. Conferences at which the leaders made speeches seemed to many with whom I spoke not only irrelevant to their lives but even sick jokes.   Arafat had begun to be regarded as an Arab Quisling.

For the meantime, the Israelis pushed ahead with their programs and in a growing variety of ways treated the Palestinians much as Germans had treated the Jews and the Boers had treated the Bantus in South Africa. For years, the Palestinians just ducked. They could do little else, but their very weakness invited further repression. As Ben Gurion said of them already in 1947, the "only thing left for them to do is to run away."[17]

Jewish memories of the European oppression had become distant.   During the 1980s settlers in the new Israeli town of Ariel forced the local Palestinians to wear badges inscribed the Hebrew words for "Foreign Worker.'   When three Jewish reporters came to investigate, Ariel townsmen beat them up. Then, when the Israeli press pointed out how bitterly Jews had resented being forced to wear identifying labels (yellow stars) in Europe, the town changed the wording but kept the badges.[18]

For years, *Jewish* settlers on the West Bank had formed vigilante "intervention forces" that the government armed and authorized to act as auxiliary police. These groups

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[16]   The *Kataib* massacred well over a thousand civilians, mainly women and children. General Sharon subsequently admitted that in addition to having the camps under the control of his forces, he had arranged that it lighted flares to assist the *Kataib.* So shocked was world opinion that, too late, the US rushed in a Marine detachment which, subsequently frequently clashed with Israeli troops. In Israel, too, the reaction was one of astonishment and disgust. 350,000 Israelis demonstrated in Tel Aviv against the government, a senior government official, the military governor of the West Bank (a former colleague of mine) resigned and one thousand Israeli army reservists requested not to be assigned to Lebanon. The massacre and Sharon's role in it were investigated by a justice of the Israeli Supreme Court who recommended that three senior officers, including the chief of staff, be relieved of their command and that Sharon be removed from office.   Sharon refused.

[17]   During my first visit to Palestine in 1946, I spent a weekend with some Jewish friends I had met on the ship going from New York. Among the group were several *sabras,* Jews born in Israel. At one point in our discussion, the issue of the tragedy of the German Jews came up. To my astonishment, the *Sabras* expressed little sympathy. The Holocaust victims, one said, just "marched tamely to their deaths. They should have fought. We would have." I think that attitude was transferred to the Palestinians. Having just acquiesced, they invited repression. Many Jews simply despised them for their weakness.

[18]   *The New York Times,* June 3, 1989, Alan Cowell "Documents Given to Arabs."

were well known for searching, raiding and intimidating Arab villagers while the more extreme groups acted as terrorists. On the national level, an American, Rabbi Meir Kahane, was involved in various terrorist attacks. When some of the Jewish terrorists also began to attack Jews, the Israeli police moved against them.

Among both Jews and Arabs, anger was endemic. But, despite all the warning signs, the sudden explosion of December 8, 1987 caught everyone by surprise.

Like many explosions, the revolt was triggered by a relatively small event. An Israeli army truck ran into a civilian car in one of the huge Gaza refugee camps and killed four Palestinians. The story spread throughout the West Bank and Gaza that it was no accident but yet another in the many and increasingly vicious ways the Israelis treated the Palestinians. That is, they saw the event as proof of what they already believed.
So began what has been called "the First *Intifadah*."[19]

The Palestinians were not being incited by their self-appointed leaders.[20] The *Intifadah* was a popular uprising: on their own, workers stopped going to jobs on Israeli farms and workshops, refused to ride in cars with Israeli license plates, wrote graffiti calling for resistance on walls in Jerusalem and wherever they could reach, even barricaded streets and (subconsciously or consciously picking up the David and Goliath theme) began to use slingshots to stone Israeli police and soldiers.

The Israeli government struck back with massive force. Minister of Defense General Yitzhak Rabin sent 80,000 soldiers into the affected areas and authorized them to fire live ammunition into demonstrators. As he told *New York Times* correspondent Anthony Lewis, "'The first priority is to use force, might, beatings...' As the policy was explained by an analyst in the *Jerusalem Post*, 'beating suspected protest leaders 'is considered more effective than detentions.' A detainee is released after 18 days unless there is evidence to hold him and 'he may then resume stoning soldiers. But if troops break his hand, he won't be able to throw stones for a month and a half." As John Kifner reported in *The New York Times* on February 25, 1988, breaking bones is "a new, officially declared policy of the Israeli army and the police..."[21] And the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* reported that "hospital and clinic records showed that 197 people had been treated for fractures

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[19]   Like many Arabic words, *intifadah* is more complex than the usual translation, "uprising," suggests. It incorporates the notion of violence, a shaking (of the body) and also forcing a person to pay back what is owed, so "retribution" and, in a more primitive sense, to plumb the bottom of a well.
[20]   Professor Don Peretz reports (*Foreign Affairs,* Summer 1988) that "army intelligence officers whom I met concluded that the uprising was indeed spontaneous, not caused by outside agitators or programmed by PLO directives from abroad."
[21]   David K. Shipler reported in *The New York Times* (U.S. Jews Torn Over Arab Beatings," January 26, 1988) The head of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations called the beatings "an offense to the Jewish spirit" that "betrays the Zionist dream." He cabled the Israeli president, "We plead with you to bring this madness to an end." But there was little criticism in the American Jewish community. Some groups reported that contributions had actually increased and "some have called wanting to arrange education and fund-raising parties, asking who from the army can come and speak." Mr. Rabin denied responsibility but Colonel "Yehuda Meir, who is being court-martialed for reportedly ordering his troops to arrest Arabs and then break their arms and legs..." said that he was acting according to orders from Mr. Rabin who was then Minister of Defense. The Israeli Parliament decided not to investigate. *New York Times* ("Israel Declines to Study Rabin Tie to Beatings, July 12, 1990)

because of beatings in [just the first] three days" of implementation of the new policy. Additionally, there were a number of reports of security police beating Palestinian suspects to death.

And it wasn't only the regular security police who acted: the Army admitted that it allowed teenage Jewish paramilitary trainees to beat Palestinian detainees with clubs, breaking their bones. The young Israeli trainees were developing attitudes and "skills" that would affect the rest of their lives.   And, since for 16 months during 1988 and 1989 all the schools and colleges were closed, young Palestinian men and women had little to do but nurse grudges and throw stones. The cycle of hatred had moved to the next generation of both Palestinians and Israelis.

The breakdown of humanism ultimately impacts on everyone.

Casualty, wounding and demolition statistics are variously reported, but even the minimal figures are staggering. During those months 25,599 Palestinians were injured and at least 430 were killed, 48 were expelled across frontiers, 176 houses were blown up or bulldozed by the IDF and 6,599 Palestinians were imprisoned. The United Nations "Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories" reported on October 24, 1988.   Its activities had been restricted but it quoted Knesset Member Dedi Zucker as saying in a speech at the Knesset that in the previous ten months, "1,999 Arabs had been injured from beatings with truncheons, causing breaking of bones, 647 were injured from gas and 979 from shooting. During the same period 44 houses were demolished without trial, leaving 600 people homeless."

Acting on the report, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 43/21 of November 3, 1988 in which it "*Condemns* Israel's persistent policies and practices violating the human rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, and, in particular, such acts as the opening of fire by the Israeli army and settlers that result in the killing and wounding of defenceless Palestinian civilians, the beating and breaking of bones, the deportation of Palestinian civilians, the imposition of restrictive economic measures, the demolition of houses, collective punishment and detentions, as well as denial of access to the media [and]...*Demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, abide immediately and scrupulously by the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, and desist forthwith from its policies and practices that are in violation of the provisions of the Convention..."

In the months following the initial outburst, the killings and beatings continued. To what end, one may ask?

The consensus of observers including Israeli intelligence services and the chief of the Israeli General Staff was that the Palestinians perceived a mortal challenge of such magnitude that their reaction to it forged it into a nation. Even the normally passive Israeli Arabs joined. The UN investigation noted that "For the first time...the Arab population of Israel held a strike in sympathy with the population of the territories..."

What then happened were developments that were common among other repressed communities. Prison camps became "schools of hatred" in which the politically active communicated their beliefs and experiences to the new arrivals and, like the earlier Jewish terrorist group, the Irgun, and the dissident Russians under Stalin with their *samizdat*, the Palestinians began to circulate among themselves mimeographed newspapers and articles.

They were avidly read and also helped to focus public opinion on the *intifadah.* The audience was there. As Robert Friedman wrote (*New York Review of Books,* March 29, 1990) "Every refugee family I met in the occupied territories had at least one son in prison, in the hospital or dead."   In the twenty years after 1967, 300,000 Arabs had been arrested.

The Israeli chief of staff was reported on June 17, 1989 on Israeli radio saying that the uprising could not be resolved militarily "short of mass deportation, starvation or genocide."

Meanwhile, living conditions of the Palestinians continued to deteriorate. By 1988, Gaza, which is about twice the size of Washington D.C. but is mainly desert was bulging with 650,000 people. It would soon double.   And the Israeli government estimated that over half of the occupied territories had passed into the hands of Israel or Israeli citizens by 1986.

During these years, a sequence of well publicized meetings took place between the PLO and the Israeli government -- in Madrid, Oslo, Camp David, Taba, Annapolis and elsewhere. I will skip over them as they were more public relations affairs than substantive meetings. Meaningless events is also how they seemed to the Palestinians who again took up their slingshots and rocks in what is known as the Second *Intifadah.*

Like the First *Intifadah*, so the Second Intifadah was ignited by what seemed to the Israelis and even to Yasir Arafat and other senior members of the PLO an unimportant event: the outstanding Israeli "hawk," Ariel Sharon, on September 28, 2000 went to al-Aqsa Mosque (the Haram ash-Sharif) as he said "to show that it was still under Israeli sovereignty."   As events showed, Muslim Palestinians saw his act as an attack on their religion. It also demonstrated how out of touch the PLO leaders were with the Palestinians. Furious, they threw themselves into the insurrection.

The Second *Intifadah* was even more violent than the first. Thousands of Israeli Jewish citizens attacked the Israeli Arabs and their property while the Israeli army attacked Palestinians.   The police used live ammunition and helicopter gunships against stone-throwing youths. Fairly detailed records were compiled by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, but, despite a UN Security Council order (which, that time, was not vetoed by the United States), the Israeli government tried to block a UN Human Rights Council investigation and refused to cooperate with it.

The UNHRC investigation was under the chairmanship of Justice Richard Goldstone of South Africa.[22] The Mission made an "inclusive approach to gathering information" with on site interviews of scores of officials and ordinary people and by accessing satellite imagery and video and other films. (I cite the chapters of the Report by § + number; this is §18). It included extremely detailed accounts of the events and related each to international law, conventions and treaties. The Report was published on September 25, 2009.

The Israelis were furious. Both they and their mainly Jewish supporters in America and Britain put extraordinary pressure on the members of the team to alter their findings. Goldstone, a notably sober, experienced and fair-minded man, who although himself Jewish,

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[22]   Other members were Christine Chinkin, Professor of International Law at LSE; Hina Jilani, Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and a member of the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur in 2004; and Desmond Travers, a former colonel in the Irish Defence Forces and member of the Board of Directors of the Institute for International Criminal Investigations.

was accused of anti-Semitism. He cracked under the strain. In a letter to the editor of The *Washington Post* on April 1, 2009, he disavowed what he and the other team members had found. The other members of the team, themselves distinguished investigators, were outraged and reaffirmed their findings. Indeed, since the report was so exhaustive, it is difficult to see how Goldstone could meaningfully have retracted its findings. They were accepted by the UN General Assembly, the UNHRC, the European Union and the relevant non-governmental organizations.

The Report makes clear -- -- that the Israeli intent was not only to kill the Palestinian leadership, an echo of Ariel Sharon's stated policy during the Lebanon campaign, but to make Gaza unlivable by destroying food: "...the only purpose [of destroying a mill] was to put an end to the production of flour in the Gaza Strip." (§ 50, 915-927); water (§52,1022); housing: "3,354 houses [were] completely destroyed and 11,112 partially damaged (§53,67); power sources (§65,187) and sewage treatment (§971). The Committee pointed out (§57,67) that these measures particularly harmed children, large numbers of whom were already "stunted" and in poor health from lack of an adequate diet.[23] Women were "detained in degrading conditions, deprived of food and access to sanitary facilities, and exposed to the elements in January without any shelter." (§57) Women and children as well as men were used as human shields (§58). "The Palestinian men who were taken to detention facilities in Israel were subjected to degrading conditions of detention, harsh interrogation, beatings and other physical and mental abuse." (§59) This treatment was "contrary to fundamental principles of international humanitarian law and human right law...Such acts are grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions and constitute a war crime." (§60) " Hospitals and ambulances were targeted by Israeli attacks." (§68) "Some 280 schools and kindergartens were destroyed." (§70)

The Report found that "Settler violence in the West Bank in the period preceding the Israeli military operations in Gaza...[is a result of] Israel's decade-long policy of facilitating and encouraging the settling of its citizens inside occupied Palestinian territory, defined as transfer of population and prohibited by international humanitarian law." (§1384) Casual and unnecessary cruelty was repeatedly evident. One civilian who had been shot in front of his family was " pleading for help from his wife, children and relatives.... [but they] were under a very credible threat of being shot themselves if they came to his help, and [they]

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[23]   Already in 2003, according to UNRWA Commissioner General Peter Hansen in "Hungry in Gaza" (*The Guardian, Mrch* 5, 2003) "Palestinians are suffering in the main from micro-nutrient deficiencies" that cause children to "fail to grow and develop normally; their cognition is damaged, often severely and irreversibly, and their immune systems are compromised..." He continued, "The stark fact is that almost a quarter of Palestinian children are suffering from acute or chronic malnutrition..." Independent journalist accounts confirm this: *Haaretz,* September 3, 2006, Gideon Levy, "Gaza's Darkness." *The Independent,* September 9, 2006, Patrick Cockburn "Palestinians forced to scavenge for food on rubbish dumps." He reports that 4% of Gaza's agricultural land was destroyed by Israeli bulldozers and that 70% of the population could not meet their food needs. "The 35,000 fisherman cannot fish because Israeli gunboats will fire on them if they go more than a few hundred yards from the shore." *The Guardian,* December 21, 2008, Peter Beaumont, "Israeli blockade 'forces Palestinians to search rubbish dumps for food'" notes that the UN Relief and Works Agency had compiled figures showing that 51.8% of Gaza's then 1.5 million inhabitants lived below the poverty level. *The Washington Post,* December 15, 2007, Scott Wilson, "Sealed off by Israel, Gaza Reduced to Beggary." He reported that "The Israeli government is increasingly restricting the import into the Gaza Strip of batteries [even for hearing aids for the 20,000 hearing-impaired children], anesthesia drugs, antibiotics, tobacco, coffee, gasoline, diesel fuel..."

were compelled to abandon him on the road to bleed to death. " (§742). " The Mission found in the above incidents that the Israeli armed forces repeatedly opened fire on civilians who were not taking part in the hostilities and who posed no threat to them." (§ 800)

Overall, the Report pointed out that "Israel's military operation in Gaza between 27 December 2008 and 18 January 2009...fits into a continuum of policies aimed at pursuing Israel's political objectives...Many such policies are based on or result in violations of international human rights and humanitarian law." (§1877) "... the policy of blockade that preceded the operations and that in the Mission's view amounts to collective punishment intentionally inflicted by the Government of Israel on the people of the Gaza Strip...These measures were imposed by Israel purportedly to isolate and weaken Hamas after its electoral victory in view of the perceived continuing threat to Israel's security that it represented. Their effect was compounded by the withholding of financial and other assistance by some donors on similar grounds. Adding hardship to the already difficult situation in the Gaza Strip, the effects of the prolonged blockade did not spare any aspect of the life of Gazans." (§1878). About 3,000 Palestinians and 1,000 Israelis lost their lives.

Even during the fighting, conferences and secret meetings continued to be held. Outside the PLO leadership, these seemed just puffery or even efforts to enhance the wealth and power of Arafat and his colleagues. One faction of the "executive committee" of the Parliament, the Palestinian National Council, (PNA) revolted. Its dissident members decided that there was no hope for any kind of compromise with Israel. They charged Arafat and his colleagues with equivocating, delaying and compromising while the Israelis moved ahead, step by step, to implement their long-term strategy.

This judgment was seconded by outside observers. For example, Jackson Diehl (the deputy editorial editor of *The Washington* Post) wrote in *The New York Times* on July 23, 2002 that Prime Minister Ariel Sharon had already made a Palestinian state impossible.   He cited the trend: since 2000, Sharon had created 44 new settlements and poured in nearly $100 million in subsidies for settlers as well as building supporting infrastructure including new roads and walls "that are advertised as security measure but will have the practical effect of roping off new tracts of land for settlement expansions."

Undeterred, the PLO leadership continued to agree to accommodations with Israel. The best known of these resulted in the Oslo Accords that led to the formation of a new organization the Palestinians called the Palestinian National Authority (Arabic: *As-Sultah al-Wataniyah al-Filistiniyah*). The Israelis omitted the word "National." Established on May 4, 1994, it agreed to recognize Israel and to stop resistance in areas under its control.

A subsequent meeting divided "Arab Palestine" into three parts: the PNA/PA was to exercise limited authority in the West Bank and Gaza over what were designated as Zone A (the urban areas) and Zone B (rural areas). Area C, which was to remain under Israeli control, included the growing number of Israeli settlements, the restricted roadways that laced the West Bank and the whole Jordan valley area. East Jerusalem was excluded from the Accords. The following map shows (with the red areas to be kept by the PNA and white areas under Israeli control and presumed future sovereignty) that an impossible "state" resulted. It has been likened to an archipelago.

A detailed account of the happenings of these years between the First and Second *Intifadahs* in which Palestinian society was convulsed would add little of lasting import except for one development: the advent of the Gazan offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, HAMAS (Arabic: *Harakat al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyah*), the "Movement of Islamic Resistance." Meanwhile secret negotiations between the PLO leadership and the Israelis continued. They were revealed a "whistleblower" in 2008. Ziyad Clot, a French lawyer of Palestinian origin who was on the staff of the PLO team, concluded that[24]

> the 'peace negotiations' were a deceptive farce whereby biased terms were unilaterally imposed by Israel and systematically endorsed by the US and EU capitals. Far from enabling a negotiated fair end of the conflict, the pursuit of the Oslo process has deepened Israeli segregationist policies and justified the tightening of the security control imposed on the Palestinian population as well as its geographical fragmentation. Far for preserving the land on which to build a State, it has tolerated the intensification of the colonisation of the Palestinian territory. Far from maintaining a national cohesion, the process I participated in, albeit briefly, proved to be instrumental in creating and aggravating divisions amongst Palestinians. In its most recent developments, it became a cruel enterprise from which the Palestinians of Gaza have suffered the most. Last but not least, these negotiations excluded for the most part the great majority of the Palestinian people: the 7 million-Palestinian refugees. My experience over those 11 months spent in. [the PLO headquarters] confirms in fact that the PLO, given its structure, was not in a position to represent all Palestinian rights and interests.

Subsequent events make clear that many Palestinians agreed, but if not the PLO, who would lead them?

VIII   *Salafiyah* redux

Having tried early Islamic fundamentalism, such nationalist movements as *wataniyah, qawmiyah* and Baathism and having at least flirted with socialism or *ijtimaiyah,* some Arab thinkers and much of Arabic society has come full-circle.   Seeing the failures of

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[24]   He published his account in Paris under the title *Il n'y aura pas d'Etat palestinien* or "There will be no Palestinian State" (Paris: Ed. Max Milo, 2010). Other information was published in 2011 by the Israeli magazine *972. Aljazeera* got access to 1,700 files containing thousands of pages of memos, emails and minutes. Also see *The Guardian,* January 23, 2011*,* Seumas Milne and Ian Black, "Secret papers reveal slow death of Middle East peace process." They comment that "The overall impression that emerges from the documents, which stretch from 1999 to 2010, is of the weakness and growing desperation of PA leaders..."

all the ideologies, many Arabs and particularly the Palestinians began to think that all that was left for them was the Islamic core. So this must take us, as it took the Palestinians -- and increasing numbers of peoples all over the Middle East, Africa and Asia -- back to *salafiyah.*

Today, as we are daily informed by the media, many Middle Easterners are picking up the spirit if not exactly the form of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth century salafi movements. We think of theirs as a religious movement, and in part it is, but, like various Christian "Born Again," "Tea Party," Evangelist and Creationist movements, it is broader than religion: today's Islamic Fundamentalism is a militant populist movement.

Today, as in the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries, many Muslims see an appeal to arms as the only means to defend Islam against the impact of the West. We see this in the *Ikhwanu'l-Muslimin* (Egypt and elsewhere) *HAMAS* (Gaza), *Hizbullah* (Lebanon), ISIS, IS or ISIL (Syria and Iraq), *Mujahidin* and *Taliban* (Afghanistan and Pakistan), Islamic Courts Union or *Itihadu'l-Muhakim al-Islamiya, and Ash-Shabab* (Somalia), the Moro Front and *Abu Sayyaf* (the Philippines); *al-Qaida* (Yemen) and others throughout Asia and Africa. Most of these groups have either cast off or subordinated "nationalism" in their campaigns.

From today's vantage point, it is arguable that Gamal Abdul Nasser, who more or less embodied the Arab nationalist movement, was already in the 1960s fighting a rearguard action against the Islamic challenge. While he and his close associates earlier on flirted with the Muslim Brotherhood, he and the Brotherhood came to recognize one another as deadly enemies. It was Nasser who first outlawed the Brotherhood and hanged its leading theologian, Sayyid Qutub. His successor, Anwar Sadat, briefly flirted with the Brotherhood and tried to use them against his Leftist opponents, but after he signed a peace treaty with Israel, he was assassinated by a member of one of its offshoots, the *Tanzimu' l-jihad* ("Organizing the Struggle"). Sadat's successor, Husni Mubarak, also briefly sought to identify with the Brotherhood but then cracked down on them when their strength was revealed in the elections of 2005. They went on to win the Egyptian presidential elections of 2012 and held power until overthrown in a military *coup d'état* on July 3, 2013.

Meanwhile, in Iraq, Saddam Husain dominated the completely secular, Baath-inspired government until overthrown by the American invasion. The Bush administration then installed a Shia Muslim regime. That Shia virtual theocracy is now engaged in a deadly struggle with a violent Sunni theocracy. In Syria, the Baath government has been at war since 2011 with a variety of fundamentalist movements,

The various Muslim revival or fundamentalist groups regard the nationalists as their worst enemies. In a recent pamphlet which was probably issued by ISIS, we read:

> As for the [the Middle Eastern] nationalists, the Baathists, and the democrats, they have afflicted the Islamic community [Arabic: the *Ummah*] by corrupting religion and by the ghastly destruction of souls. That which Saddam [Husain], [Hafez al-] Asad, [Husni] Mubarak, [Saudi King] Fahd, the Socialist Party in Yemen, and others did with regards to this destruction of souls alone surpasses those killed in all of the wars of the *jihadis* in this century...[25]

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[25]   I have dealt with this in "Sayyid Qutub's Fundamentalism and Abu Bakr Naji's *Jihadism."* It is posted on my website www.williampolk.com.

Almost everywhere the secular nationalists are in retreat and are being challenged or even replaced by *Salafi* organizations. Among the Palestinians, HAMAS is the standard bearer.[26] In Gaza, Israel covertly helped HAMAS[27] in orderto weaken the PLO while HAMAS accepted support for its own purposes. Their objectives were incompatible. HAMAS was violently opposed to the Oslo Accords which Israel sponsored. As the Israelis began to realize the dangers of the Fundamentalist challenge, they attempted to murder the HAMAS leader, Khalid Mashaal in September 1997. Other "targeted killings" followed and were "avenged" by the August 2001 blowing up of an Israeli restaurant in Jerusalem. Tit for tat, other killings would follow.

But in January 2004, HAMAS leaders, Shaikh Ahmad Yasin and Abdul Aziz ar-Rantisi offered formulas to end the confrontations and murders. They offered to put aside the refugee " right of return" and to end "resistance" during a 10-year truce in exchange for Israeli recognition of the state of Palestine pre-1967-war boundaries. Israel rejected these offers as a subterfuge, killed both men in 2004 and carried out a number of attacks on Gaza. Then in 2005, it withdrew its troops from Gaza but kept control of the air and sea portals.

HAMAS won the Palestine legislative election on January 25, 2006 and after a brief rapprochement with FATAH took over the government of Gaza in the spring of 2007. Almost immediately, Israel, the EU and the US froze all Palestinian accounts (mainly derived from taxes) and cut off all other funding. Then, Israel prepared to attack Gaza which it did in what is known as "Operation Cast Lead" on December 27, 2008. That campaign was followed in 2012 by "Operation Pillar of Defense" and in 2014 by "Operation Protective Edge."

These massive attacks pulverized Gaza, killing thousands of people and wounding tens of thousands more. The last campaign, "Operation Protective Edge," that started on July 7, 2014, is now under investigation by a new UNHRC team. I will await its findings before further comments. In the meantime, the UN Office of Humanitarian Affairs tells us that Gaza now contains 1.8 million people, over half of whom are children and about half of whose housing was destroyed. Roughly 7 in each 10 Gazans go to sleep each night hungry. Somewhat over 100,000 were pushed out of their area when Israel closed off a 3 kilometer wide area along its frontier. See map below:

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[26] As the then-*New York Times* correspondent Chris Hedges wrote (*Foreign Affairs,* January/February 2001), Palestinian mobs burned shops and hotels selling alcohol -- owned by Arafat's corrupt and despised Palestinian Authority."

[27] *Wall Street Journal,* January 24, 2009, Andrew Higgins, "How Israel Helped to Spawn Hamas."

X   Postscript: A Possible Future

Speculation on the future beyond the following few months is more a parlor game than a serious undertaking, but it can contribute the basis for a judgment on what is probable or even possible. Here is how I see the main elements for the foreseeable future:

First, Israel is today and will remain far more unified, determined and strong than the Palestinians and all their sometimes allies.

Second, what do the two sides want?

• Israel has always aimed to establish the Jewish state, the *Judenstaat,* on all of Biblical Palestine. As the early Zionist leaders drew their map, Biblical Palestine included what is today Israel, parts of southern Lebanon and Syria (which it understood were the main sources of the water it realized it would need) and most of the relatively fertile land of what was then Transjordan.
• The Palestinians took much longer to articulate their objectives. As I have suggested, they had to spend their "time in the wilderness" before they did. Today, their objective is to "return"[28] to the area defined, variously, as the status quo of 1919, 1950 or 1967 and thereupon to establish their state.

Third, what are the chances for either of the two sides to accomplish its objective?

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[28]   I put "return" in quote marks to alert the reader that there is really nothing to which the refugees can return. Most of those now alive never knew Palestine and those who do remember their childhoods there would no longer be able to find what they remember: villages have been plowed under, neighborhoods rebuilt, picnic sites paved over. In memory, every tree has become a forest, every house a palace, every village a city.

- Israel will continue to have overwhelming advantages. The discovery of what appears to be a major gas field off the coast will further enhance Israel's economy, probably making possible conversion of salt water for the irrigation of more land. Israel will continue to be aided by the foreign Jewish communities and foreign governments, and such aid will become less crucial to Israel as its already strong economy continues to grow. Therefore it will be less susceptible to foreign pressure or guidance. Israel's army and air force, supported by its own military-industrial complex, will remain overwhelming, but in the new HAMAS and Hizbullah forms of asymmetrical warfare, their ability to "conquer" has diminished. They will continue to win battles but will not be able to establish a lasting "victory." Thus, Israelis must expect a troubled and probably increasingly violent future.

- The Palestinians will not be able to force their way back into what is now Israel, but they will endure. As a chief of the Israeli general staff put it, a military victory over them is not possible; the only alternatives are "genocide, expulsion or peace." They now number about 5 million people of whom roughly half are children. Within a few more years, the population will double again. Current events suggest that Israeli peace advocates, a tiny minority already, and European and American liberals, eventually, may increase pressure on Israel to allow the Palestinians at least marginally more scope. But this will be insufficient to enable them to accomplish their objective.

Fourth, is a compromise between what each side wants politically possible? I think the short answer is "yes, but…" The key elements are these:

- While Israel has always been determined to expand into all of "Biblical Palestine" and settle it with Jews, it has varied its tactics to work within what was feasible at any given time. I believe that will continue to be its policy. The policy of creating "facts on the ground" through the West Bank settlement policy has not only impacted upon the Palestinians but also narrowed the scope for the Israeli government. Consequently, while it might agree to allow some measure of Palestinian autonomy or even independence, the amount politically feasible would be limited. The Palestinian tactics of resistance and terrorism have further limited what any elected government can afford to do. Thus, any Israeli government would advertise any compromise as, at best, an interim measure. I doubt that any conceivable Israeli government, given Israel's wealth and power, will go further.

- The Palestinian leadership in recent years has shown (secretly) a willingness to compromise. That is, in part, the reason for the decline of support among Palestinians for the PLO as an organization and personally for Yasir Arafat and Mahmoud Abbas. There are recent indications that a more respected political movement, known as "The Future" (Arabic: al-Mustaqbal) which is inspired by Marwan Barghouti may make some form of compromise acceptable to the Palestinian public. Barghouti has been called in the Israeli press the Palestinian Nelson Mandela. Like Mandella he has spent much of his life -- 18 years -- in prison and a further 7 years in exile in Jordan. Barghouti has announced that he has been seeking "peaceful coexistence between the equal and independent countries of Israel and Palestine based on full withdrawal from Palestinian territories occupied in 1967."[29] What we do not know are two crucial things: first, would enough Israelis find this attract to shift the government's position and Israel's long-term strategy. Second, can even a Palestinian Mandela overcome the deep sense of hatred, shame and nostalgia among his people. I think it is likely that the Palestinians would rather suffer

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[29]   *The Washington Post,* January 16, 2002,W

more than give up their dream. As some have said, "we can afford to lose more blood. We have more blood. And we are more ready to lose it than the Israelis."

Fifth, Discussion for years has focused on the "one state" and "two states" proposed solutions." I find it difficult to believe either will work. Here is why:

- In the "one state," the Palestinians would be a subjugated minority with few rights and little security — they will be the "Jews" of an Israeli Germany or an Israeli Imperial Russia, subject to pogroms, cooped up in ghettos, imprisoned or driven into exile. Even those who think of themselves as "Israeli Arabs" will remain, in the eyes of the real Israelis, just Arabs. They, their children and their grandchildren are likely to be drawn into the struggle and along with the other Palestinians will probably come to be thought of as subversive.   If they resist, their resistance will call forth reprisal. Peace or even stability is unlikely in that direction.
- In the "two states," those living in Palestine (the remnants of the West Bank and Gaza) would be condemned to perpetual poverty. They will have almost no usable agricultural land and virtually no water. They would be cut off from markets for what little they could produce. They could have no hope of manufacturing because they would have little access to energy. Even the limited money they could earn would continue to be closely controlled and often blocked by the Israeli Central Bank as it now is. They will have limited access to health facilities, educational institutions and even contact with one another. segregated as they are and will be (for security reasons) by restricted zones, walls, roadways and check points, they will be constantly humiliated and infuriated.   They too would periodically resist or strike out in fury and so draw upon themselves reprisals. And so too the cycle of violence would continue or even escalate.

Sixth, if both of these "solutions" are unlikely, what is likely?

- The first is "no state" This is what the Israelis really want. This would require that the remaining Palestinians leave what is left of the West Bank and Gaza. To go where? To refugee camps or wherever, the Israelis don't care. A reading of all Israeli actions underlines the Israeli intention to make life as unattractive for the Palestinians as world opinion allows. It has not so far worked. There are more Palestinians in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza today than there were in 1947.   But some Israelis see this as an even more urgent reason to press harder.
- The second alternative, which of course many Palestinians want, is to recreate Palestine as a full-fledged state. This would require that the Israelis "to go back where they came from." The Arabs day-dream of their relations with the Israelis in parallel to the Crusades. The Crusaders stayed a long time but finally left. The more recent parallel is to the "French" (many of whom were not French at all) *pieds noirs* in Algeria. It took a century but they too finally left.   As I have said, while it is likely that some, even many, Israelis will return to Europe or go to America -- New York is said to have a larger Jewish or joint Israel-American population that Jerusalem -- the ones who stay behind will be absolutely determined to remain.   The Palestinian dream is just that, a dream.
- The third alternative is a continuation of events of the last half century -- periodic warfare interspersed with rebuilding as the population of the two societies grows. Israel has demonstrated the capacity to inflict massive pain on the Palestinians; sooner or later, the Palestinians will learn how to inflict substantial pain on the Israelis. But, my hunch is that few will look ahead to more than just living with the discomfort.

Consequently, I conclude that, barring unforeseen events or the unlikely advent of a new will to peace and a new understanding of what is required to achieve it, the future is likely to be a continuation of the past: periodic warfare, resistance and repression, ceasefires but no peace, lives on both sides of fragile and disputed frontiers full of fear and hatred.

We would be prudent to prepare for more and worse Gazas.

William R. Polk
September 26, 2014

William R. Polk, MA (Oxford) PhD (Harvard) was teaching at Harvard when President Kennedy invited him to become a Member of the Policy Planning Council, responsible for North Africa, the Middle East and West Asia He served for 4 years under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, During that time he was a member of the three-men Crisis Management Committee during the Cuban Missile Crisis and head of the interdepartmental task force that helped to end the Franco-Algerian war. From 1965 he was Professor of History at the University of Chicago, founding director of the Middle Eastern Studies Center and Founder and President of the Adlai Stevenson Institute of International Affairs. At the request of Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir, he negotiated with President Gamal Abdul Nasser the cease fire that ended Israeli-Egyptian fighting on the Suez Canal in 1970. He is the author of some 17 books on world affairs, including *The United States and the Arab World; The Elusive Peace, the Middle East in the Twentieth Century; Understanding Iraq; Out of Iraq* (with Senator George McGovern); *Understanding Iran; Violent Politics: A History of Insurgency and Terrorism; Neighbors and Strangers: The Fundamentals of Foreign Affairs* and numerous articles in *Foreign Affairs, The Atlantic, Harpers, The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists and Le Monde Diplomatique*. He has lectured at many universities and at the Council on Foreign Relations, Chatham House, Sciences Po, the Soviet Academy of Sciences and has appeared frequently on NPR, the BBC, CBS and other networks. His most recent books, both available on Amazon, are *Humpty Dumpty: The Fate of Regime Change* and *Distant Thunder: Reflections on the Dangers of Our Times*.