

**The Disparity of Infrastructure between the Jewish Settlements and  
Palestinian Villages located in the West Bank**

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## **Abstract**

Why is there such a disparity of infrastructure between the Jewish settlements and Palestinian villages adjacent to one another in the West Bank? Through historical events, agreements, and continuing conflicts, enormous differences have been created between each of these groups that have a direct impact on life today in Israel and the West Bank. My research, coupled with my own recent visit to the West Bank and personal interviews, reveal that Palestinians are repressed by the Israeli government in ways that are undeniable. By examining the infrastructure in the West Bank through this project, the conditions of unhindered transportation, water services, and individual freedom are shown to be lacking and unacceptable today in the West Bank.

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## Chapter I – The Beginning, and the End

“Let sovereignty be granted us over a portion of the earth's surface large enough to satisfy our rightful requirements as a nation. The rest we shall manage for ourselves.”

*-Theodore Herzl*

Israel and Palestine. A region of the Middle East that is divided by occupied territories, green lines, security checkpoints, and security walls. But more tragic is the division of humanity within Israel and Palestine. The division goes much further than the borderlines of the Occupied Territories of Gaza, Golan Heights, and the West Bank. The people living in Israel and Palestine are also separated by religious affiliation, ethnicity, and citizenship. How Israel and Palestine became fiercely conflicted is an extremely complicated story with years of wars, broken agreements, and thousands of deaths. The object of this project is not to assign blame or responsibility for the past or current state of affairs in Israel and Palestine, but to illuminate how the events of the past twenty-five years have given rise to distinctly different qualities of life for populations living in the West Bank.

The focus of this project is the examination of Jewish settlements and Palestinian communities adjacent to one another in the West Bank. The research conducted for this project seeks to understand the disparity in the level of infrastructure between Jewish settlements and Palestinian communities, which are located directly next to one another. In addition, I also sought to discover if the security wall between these communities affects the lives of residents. To summarize the overall objective of my research, I want to answer three questions, why do these neighboring communities of Palestinians and Jewish residents have such differing levels of infrastructure, does the security wall impact resident movements, and why are the systems, which are now in place, in their current state.

Through my personal travels to Israel in December of 2016, in which I observed the infrastructure of Jewish settlements and Palestinian communities, as well as conducted multiple interviews with West Bank residents, I was able to accumulate a large quantity of information about current life in the West Bank. Through this personal experience and research, coupled with a study of scholarly literature, I will argue that because of events and agreements since 1993, the Palestinians living in the West Bank are now living as residents who do not have an agency that can effectively advocate for them, nor to uphold and defend their human rights to live freely.

Even though I argue that the Palestinians live in an environment of suppression, I am not of the opinion that the Israeli government has purposely targeted the Palestinians. Nevertheless, through a continuing administration of laws, UN resolutions, and military power, the end result that I witnessed in the West Bank was a group of people who live with restricted infrastructure, limited freedoms, and borderline apartheid. Within this argument of possible humanitarian violations, it must be recognized that there have there have been hundreds of previous incidents that have displayed violence and hatred toward the Jewish population and Israel by Palestinians, Arabs, and Muslims. Just as violent acts against Israeli citizens have occurred, an argument also can be made for the violent aggression and treatment of Palestinians by the Israeli government and military.

This research project does not present an exhaustive historical timeline of events that occurred in Israel and Palestine from 1900 to 1993, but specifically identifies the events that have affected policies and governance of land, economy, living conditions, and security. The idea of establishing a Jewish state began with Theodore Herzl, a Jewish man, who in 1897 established the World Zionist Organization to raise money and gain support for a movement to create a Jewish state. Herzl argued that Jews needed a state because of the persecution and

aggression towards Jews. Jews felt unwanted and unaccepted wherever they attempted to live in Europe. By 1914, thousands of Jewish immigrants came to live in Palestine under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. In 1915, Britain promised Hussein, the Sharif of Mecca, that they would support an independent Arab kingdom under his rule in return for his mounting an Arab revolt against the Ottoman Empire.<sup>1</sup> In 1916, Britain agreed with France to divide the Middle East, with Palestine under international control, in the event of an Allied victory in World War I. This became known as the Sykes-Picot Agreement. Then on November 2, 1917, the Balfour Declaration was announced by Lord Balfour, Britain's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs who addressed the letter to one of the leaders of British Jews stating, "His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people,.....it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine."<sup>2</sup> This declaration gave a possibility of a future establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, while the British tried to convey to King Hussein and Arabs that no group shall be subject to another in Palestine.

Of course, the Balfour Declaration made the Arab inhabitants who called Palestine their home for generations, wary of the Zionist movement. Arabs would take exception to Lord Balfour's following declaration in 1922, which stated, "Zionism, be it right or wrong, good or bad, is rooted in age-long traditions, in present needs, and future hopes, of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land. In my opinion that is right."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Avi Shlaim. *Israel and Palestine. Reappraisals, Revisions, Refutations.* Verso: London, UK, 2009. p 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p 4-5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p 3.

After the end of World War I, President Woodrow Wilson of the United States, who helped create the League of Nations to resolve conflict peacefully, accepted the British and French control over areas of the Middle East. This was the mandate system set up by Wilson's League of Nations Covenant and Fourteen Points, where the victors of a war could only temporarily control the areas won if they agreed to encourage the development of political, economic, and social institutions.<sup>4</sup> Once the mandated territory was able to self-govern, the mandatory power had to withdraw. After much debate and arguments by the Allied countries of who would have mandates over each Middle East area, it was agreed in April, 1920, that Great Britain would be the mandatory power in Palestine.<sup>5</sup> The mandate was also ratified by the League of Nations which stated that the Balfour Declaration was a binding condition of the mandate that Great Britain had to assist the Jewish population in immigrating to Palestine. Neither the Arabs nor the Jews were totally in favor of the British mandate, and each side believed that the British did not have any obligation to help the other.

Arabs and Jews had lived together as neighbors and friends for years prior to this British mandate. "My family had always enjoyed great relations with Jews and had many Jewish friends. My grandfather, Sheikh Abdallah, had raised his children in a spirit of great tolerance. One of his sons had married a Jewish woman and as a child I often remember hearing of romances developing between various boys in our circle and Jewish girls."<sup>6</sup> While there was a certain degree of economic interdependence, Jews and Arabs in Palestine inhabited two disparate,

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<sup>4</sup> Charles D. Smith. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Bedford/St. Martin's: New York, 2013. p 77-78.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p 79.

<sup>6</sup> Abu Iyad. *My home, my land*. The New York Times Book Co., Inc.: New York, 1981. p 5.

largely disconnected systems of social structure and political organization.<sup>7</sup> Palestine had suffered impoverishment during the war of 1914-18, and the British government was faced with a formidable task in the economic and social fields.<sup>8</sup> Most Palestinian Arabs lived in small villages as part of extended families, their lives defined by the rhythms of subsistence farming.<sup>9</sup>

When the first census was taken in 1922, Palestine had a total population of 752,000, with 84,000 Jews owning approximately 160,000 acres.<sup>10</sup> The census also reported that a third of the Arab farmers were tenant sharecroppers whose average plot was 25 acres who were indebted to their landlords for rent at 30-55% of their crops, and living with five or more children in mud huts with virtually no sanitary facilities.<sup>11</sup> By 1930, 275,000 acres were under Jewish ownership, and roughly 100 rural settlements were established on Jewish land.

The years 1930-1939 saw the completion of some of Palestine's major capital developments and a period of rapid economic expansion, which was even more remarkable by contrast with the depression into which the world as a whole had plunged.<sup>12</sup> In 1935, the Iraq Petroleum Company's pipe-line from Kirkuk had opened, a Jewish enterprise for the extraction

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<sup>7</sup> Jo Roberts. *Contested Land, Contested Memory: Israel's Jews and Arabs and the Ghosts of Catastrophe*. Dundurn: Toronto, Canada, 2013. p 31.

<sup>8</sup> Great Britain. *Political History of Palestine under British Administration*. New York, Reprinted by British Information Services. Provided by J. Michael Goodson Law Library. Duke University School of Law. [www.HeinOnline](#) Accessed on Jan 31, 2017. p 6-7.

<sup>9</sup> Jo Roberts. *Contested Land, Contested Memory: Israel's Jews and Arabs and the Ghosts of Catastrophe*. Dundurn: Toronto, Canada, 2013. p 30.

<sup>10</sup> Great Britain. *Political History of Palestine under British Administration*. New York, Reprinted by British Information Services. Provided by J. Michael Goodson Law Library. Duke University School of Law. [www.HeinOnline](#) Accessed on Jan 31, 2017. p 2.

<sup>11</sup> Howard M. Sachar. *A History of Israel: From the Rise of Zionism to our Time*. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.: New York, 1996. p 167.

<sup>12</sup> Great Britain. *Political History of Palestine under British Administration*. New York, Reprinted by British Information Services. Provided by J. Michael Goodson Law Library. Duke University School of Law. [www.HeinOnline](#) Accessed on Jan 31, 2017. p 15.

of chemicals from the Dead Sea had started, while the Palestine Electric Corporation hydro-electric power station in the Jordan Valley began to operate in 1932.<sup>13</sup> The number of Jewish agricultural settlements rose from 100 in 1927, to 172 in 1936. Diamonds were being cut and polished in Palestine starting in 1939 as an all-Jewish industry, replaced citrus fruits as the country's most valuable export, but the Arab economy remained predominantly agricultural.<sup>14</sup>

The Arabs were increasingly apprehensive about their economic future. As their population numbers were rapidly increasing, there were also signs of rural congestion in the hill villages, and the more fertile land in the plains, which could have been developed to absorb their growing population, instead were being sold into Jewish ownership. The two communities remained economically distinct and lacked fusion between the indigenous Arab and the Jewish populations.<sup>15</sup> These discrepancies were due principally to inequalities in standards of living, but also in some degree to the fact that the Arabs had not developed a trade union organization in any way comparable with the General Federation of Jewish Labor, which had a most powerful influence in the Jewish economic system.<sup>16</sup>

The immigration of European Jews from 1933-1935, the majority coming from Poland and Germany, was having an enormous impact in Palestine. When Hitler became the German chancellor in 1933, he quickly passed many laws that barred Jewish participation in many professional and commercial activities.<sup>17</sup> These laws, along with the passage of the Nuremberg

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<sup>13</sup> Great Britain. *Political History of Palestine under British Administration*. New York, Reprinted by British Information Services. Provided by J. Michael Goodson Law Library. Duke University School of Law. [www.HeinOnline](http://www.HeinOnline) Accessed on Jan 31, 2017. p 15.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p 34.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, p 17.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p 17.

<sup>17</sup> Charles D. Smith. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Bedford/St. Martin's: New York, 2013. p 129.

laws in 1935, triggered an immigration that doubled the Jewish population in Palestine.<sup>18</sup> The mass influx of Jewish immigrants also led to additional pressure placed on the availability of jobs in Palestine. Even though the economy was booming due to the influx of Jewish money and businesses, many of the new jobs were in the growing cities. With the majority of the Arab population dependent on agriculture and land, there were not a growing number of jobs available to Arabs, which led to Arab peasants leaving the farmlands to find jobs in the growing cities. The disappearance of available land was also becoming an issue because Arabs were having to sell their land at times just to survive.<sup>19</sup> To intensify these growing contentions, there was a younger generation of educated Arabs coming of age who were openly defying the British authority that was controlling Palestine. The culmination of unwanted Jewish immigration, a lack of employment for Arabs, and the slow loss of Arab land to Jewish buyers in Palestine resulted in the Arab Revolt from 1936-1939.

In the first half of the revolt, Arabs called for a strike by all Arab workers, government employees, a boycott of Jewish goods, sales to Jews, attacks on Jews and Jewish settlements, and British forces<sup>20</sup> For the most part, the Arab strikes were unsuccessful because the Jewish community supplied Jewish workers to fill in for the absence of striking workers, and Arab attacks against British forces were sporadic at best. Even though 20,000 British troops were brought into Palestine by the fall of 1936 to keep peace in the region, the British Colonial Office

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<sup>18</sup> Charles D. Smith. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Bedford/St. Martin's: New York, 2013 p 129.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, p 131.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, p 134.

only allowed 1,800 Jewish entry permits from October 1936 to March 1937, where as 11,200 where requested by the Jewish Agency.<sup>21</sup>

When the hostilities in Palestine subsided, the Peel Commission was formed by Great Britain to investigate the reasons of conflict between Jews and Arabs. In July, 1937, the Peel Commission published its findings stating that the case was “right against right,” and the situation could only be resolved by a partition of Palestine that would be a compromised of creating separate Arab and Jewish states.<sup>22</sup> About twenty percent of Palestine in the north was the proposed Jewish state, while the remainder was the proposed Arab state with the Mandatory power controlling Jerusalem and Bethlehem.<sup>23</sup> Arabs were opposed to the partition, while the Jewish reaction was mixed, but actually wanting more land before a final decision was made.

In reaction to the proposed Peel Commission plan for partition, Arabs revolted with stronger and more violent actions which started the second stage of the Arab Revolt. There were more attacks on Jews by Arabs, which led to Jewish retaliation against Arabs. In this stage of the revolt, the Jewish and British forces started to cooperate militarily against the Arabs, and the treatment towards Arabs by British forces were harsh. Between 1937 and 1939, the British hanged over one hundred Arabs, dynamited Arab homes, and killed many more as a result of unofficial retribution.<sup>24</sup> By 1938, the revolt had claimed 1,700 Arabs, 292 Jews, and 69 British troops. In 1939, the British crushed the revolt while the partition proposal would never materialize.

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<sup>21</sup> Charles D. Smith. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Bedford/St. Martin's: New York, 2013. p 135.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, p 135.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p 136.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p 138.

There was also an obvious disparity in the educational systems available to both communities. Even though the Government of Palestine provided financial assistance for Arab and Jewish education respectively in proportion to the numbers of school age children in the two communities, the Arab schools were almost entirely dependent on public funds, whereas the Jewish schools obtained no less than 85 per cent of their finances from private Jewish community sources.<sup>25</sup> As a result of the financial effort on the part of the Jewish community, secondary education was well developed, while the Arab schools on the other hand, barely kept pace with population growth even with the added assistance from the government.

Once the Arab Revolt was over and order had been restored, the British re-evaluated their position in Palestine and how it would affect relationships with the neighboring Arab nations. In February, 1939, Britain held the Anglo-Arab-Jewish conference in London in order to seek a resolution between the Arab and Jewish conflict, but the conference failed to produce a resolution. Knowing that one side or the other would be disappointed with by the outcome, Britain released the 1939 White Paper which shocked Zionists, and Arabs were not completely satisfied with this new policy. The 1939 White Paper stated, “His Majesty’s Government therefore now declare unequivocally that it is not part of their policy that Palestine should become a Jewish State.”<sup>26</sup> The policy also indicated that immigration was limited to 15,000 persons per year for the next five years, and would be halted after the five years. The White Paper also stated that in ten years Palestine would be granted independence. Palestinians regarded the policy somewhat as a victory, but wanted a liberated and independent Palestine

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<sup>25</sup> Great Britain. *Political History of Palestine under British Administration*. New York, Reprinted by British Information Services. Provided by J. Michael Goodson Law Library. Duke University School of Law. [www.HeinOnline](http://www.HeinOnline) Accessed on Jan 31, 2017. p 17.

<sup>26</sup> Martin Bunton and William L. Cleveland. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. Westview Press: Boulder, CO, 2013. p 241.

state immediately, while Zionist leaders were outraged by the denial of a future Jewish state and vowed to fight the British until a Jewish nation was created in Palestine.

In February, 1940, the Government announced the Land Transfers Regulations under which the country was divided into three zones. In the largest of these zones, all transfers of land to persons other than Palestinian Arabs were prohibited, except where certain permissions were obtained. In the second zone, Palestinian Arabs were forbidden to transfer their land except to another Palestinian Arab, while no restrictions were placed upon the transfer of land in a third and smaller zone, including a considerable part of the coastal plain and all municipal areas.<sup>27</sup> As would be expected, the Jewish community resented the Land Transfers Regulations and the measures taken against unauthorized immigration.

By 1945, 66 percent of all Jewish land in Palestine was located in the fertile coastal plain and the northern valleys.<sup>28</sup> There have been disagreements over the years as to whether Arabs were coerced or forced into selling their land to Jewish immigrants during this late mandate period, but documents prove that land sales were conducted voluntarily and responsive to high prices offered for the Arab land. Evidence also shows that the only offers declined were because of Zionists institutions claiming a lack of funds for purchasing the land.<sup>29</sup>

After the end of World War II, Jews who fought on the side of the British during the war, violently attacked the British in Palestine because of the feeling that the British were not seeking a gradual developing of a Jewish state in Palestine. Since the British were eliminating Jewish

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<sup>27</sup> Zalman Amit and Daphna Levit. *Israeli Rejectionism A Hidden Agenda in the Middle East Peace Process*. Pluto Press: New York, 2011. p 29.

<sup>28</sup> Jacob Metzger. *The Divided Economy of Mandatory Palestine*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 1998. p 86.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, p 87.

immigration quotas into Palestine, the Zionists decided to make Britain's position untenable by establishing a Jewish state by force.<sup>30</sup> The Zionists had formed multiple military groups, which were illegal under the mandate, that sabotaged British communications and even conducted assassinations of British government officials in Palestine.

From the outset of World War II until its end in 1945, the Palestinian Arab Party had been active in combating the Zionist movement in Palestine, but there continued to be division and leadership disputes among the Arab community. Although the Palestinians agreed that the Jews had been treated inhumanely and murdered by the Nazis, they did not agree that another injustice should be placed on Palestinians in the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. After the end of World War II, Palestinians were fighting the spread of Jewish immigration to Palestine, fighting the British who were progressing the Zionist cause, fighting the creation of a Jewish state making up for the atrocities from the Holocaust, the systematic loss of Arab land in Palestine, and constant conflict and disagreement of Arab leadership who were not representing the Palestinian people.

In February, 1947, Foreign Secretary Bevin of Britain asked the United Nations for help in formulating a solution for the conflict in Palestine which had spiraled out of control. UNSCOP (United Nations Special Committee on Palestine) was formed so that representatives from eleven countries could visit Palestine for five weeks, and submit a proposal for a resolution to the conflict. After the submission of the UNSCOP resolution, the General Assembly voted for partition of Palestine into a Arab state and a Jewish state, with Jerusalem placed under international control. The Zionist leaders supported the vote for partition, while the Arabs

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<sup>30</sup> Martin Bunton and William L. Cleveland. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. Westview Press: Boulder, CO, 2013. p 243.

rejected the partition. “On behalf of the Palestinians, the Arab nations rejected all attempts at compromise, assuring the Arabs of Palestine that they stood ready to defend them militarily, which was a self-deluding posture.”<sup>31</sup>

Just before the vote on the UNSCOP partition in September 26, 1947, the British announced that by May 1948, a complete withdrawal from Palestine would occur in six months because of the inability to properly control the Palestine mandate. Following the announcement of Britain’s withdrawal from Palestine on November 29, 1947, the United Nations voted in favor of Partition, the division of Palestine into two separate states, one for the Jewish population, the other state for the Arabs. The ensuing angry reactions of both the Jewish and Palestinian community from the UN’s decision sparked violence and sent the sides into an Arab-Jewish civil war for the next six months. After months of fighting, the Jews who had previously stockpiled arms and created military organizations prior to the civil war, were successful in winning the civil war. On May 14, 1948, David Ben-Gurion, leader of the Jewish effort in Palestine, proclaimed a declaration of independence and the creation of the State of Israel.<sup>32</sup> The following day, Truman and the United States acknowledged the State of Israel as a legitimate nation. Israelis would call May 14, 1948, their “Day of Independence.” The Palestinians call this day Al Nakba, “a catastrophe.” One group received a wish and promise that had been spoken and written about for thousands of years. While the opposing group felt pain and rejection in losing the land they had lived on for thousands of years.

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<sup>31</sup> Martin Bunton and William L. Cleveland. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. Westview Press: Boulder, CO, 2013. p 246.

<sup>32</sup> Jo Roberts. *Contested Land, Contested Memory. Israel’s Jews and Arabs and the Ghosts of Catastrophe*. Dundurn: Toronto, Canada, 2013. p 39.

## The 1947 UN Partition Plan (Never implemented)



Above map from [www.palmap.org](http://www.palmap.org)

After the Arab-Israeli civil war was over and Israel was successful in establishing the Jewish nation in 1948, the civil war was followed by a conflict with Israel fighting against the surrounding Arab nations. The West Bank, according to the UN Partition plan was going to be assigned as part of the Arab state, but Jordan captured and claimed the West Bank following the civil war, which also included the Old City Jerusalem. To the north, the Golan Heights would become part of the Syrian Arab Republic. And finally, the Gaza Strip would be managed under the military authority of Egypt. Each of these areas would remain in place until the Six Days War in 1967, as the UN Partition Plan would never be implemented because of the independence declared by Israel from the Arab-Israeli civil war.

The Palestinians fled eastward to the Jordan border where they settled in camps that were eventually established by the United Nations. There are many stories and experiences written of how the Palestinians felt they needed to flee for their lives. In 1949, John Luter, a *Time* correspondent, noted after traveling through Israel and writing from the village of Akir, “that many European Jews have taken over the Arab communities, where they now work the land, live in Arab houses and even use Arab cooking utensils.”<sup>33</sup> Palestinians were either driven from their homes, or fled from their homes to escape from the ensuing Israeli military. The city of Jerusalem was still divided with the western half of the city being the capital of Israel, while the eastern half of Jerusalem, the Old City, was controlled by Jordan and still occupied by Palestinians and Arabs. The Palestinians had lost the majority of their homeland, but they still had access to the Old City.

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<sup>33</sup> Jo Roberts. *Contested Land, Contested Memory. Israel's Jews and Arabs and the Ghosts of Catastrophe*. Dundurn: Toronto, Canada, 2013. p 47.

There has been significant tension and controversy concerning the war and events after Israel declared itself a state. Israelis say that the Palestinians fled their homes and land, simply abandoning their property and possessions. The Palestinians contend that they were driven out by the Israeli military, while others maintain that they fled in fear of the impending arrival of military forces. Eyewitness who experienced these events, describe what occurred in Israel over those months in 1948. Dahoud Badr, who grew up in al-Ghabsiya, an Arab village in the Galilee, where the villagers were expelled on May 1, 1948, two weeks before the declaration of the new state of Israel explains, “I was six when the soldiers came. They had guns. We had to leave,”<sup>34</sup> Speaking from his memory as a Palestinian child growing up near the sea coast, Abu Iyad states, “May 3, 1948, is a day that will remain forever engraved in my memory. My family fled Jaffa for refuge in Gaza. We had been under siege; the Zionist forces controlled all the roads leading south. It was under a hail of shells fired from Jewish artillery that my family escaped to the sea.”

And lastly, in a very disturbing account confirmed by Jacques de Reynier, a representative of the International Red Cross who personally conducted the scene investigation on April 8, 1949, the Deir Yassin Massacre had taken place when militants of Menachem Begin’s group, the Irgun Zvai Leumi, stormed the peaceful village west of Jerusalem and killed more than 250 defenseless men, women, and children who were either shot, buried alive, throats slashed, or disemboweled.<sup>35</sup> There are many documented cases of brutality by the hands of the

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<sup>34</sup> Jo Roberts. *Contested Land, Contested Memory. Israel’s Jews and Arabs and the Ghosts of Catastrophe*. Dundurn: Toronto, Canada, 2013. p 27.

<sup>35</sup> Abu Iyad. *My home, my land*. The New York Times Book Co., Inc.: New York, 1981. p 4.

Israeli military that lead many to believe that without a military or arms for protection, the Palestinians had no other choice but to flee in order to save themselves and their families.

In July, 1952, Gamal Abd al-Nasser became the leader of Egypt through a coup. The importance of Nasser is that in the following years up to the Six Days War in 1967, Nasser would try to consolidate the Arab nations as one voice in opposing Israel, and attempt to come to the aid of the Palestinians. Nasser also opposed the Western Powers and their imperialism in a dispute known as the Suez Canal Crisis in which Egypt would be attacked by Israel, France, and Great Britain. Even though Egypt suffered a military defeat in the Suez Canal Crisis, Nasser's defiance greatly enhanced his status as an Arab hero and weakened those who argued for continued reliance on Western pacts.<sup>36</sup>

With the rise to power of Nasser and the spread of Pan-Arabism, Palestinians hopes for independence rose with the popularity of Nasser and the Arab League's sponsorship of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, or PLO in 1964. Even though Nasser's rhetoric was strong and inciteful towards the West and Israel, Nasser privately never wished to provoke anger from the Israelis. But past events had proven that both the West and Middle Eastern Arab nations only protected their own interests, while leaving Palestinians to fend for themselves. Eventually by 1969, Yasser Arafat became the leader of the PLO. He would be the face and authority of the organization for the next thirty-five years. The Palestinians would now have an organization and a voice to defend their people.

The Six Day War which occurred between June 5 to June 10, 1967, was a war that was unplanned and unanticipated. The Soviet Union erroneously communicated to Egypt and Syria that Israel was gathering troops for a military attack to the north. This spurred the United

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<sup>36</sup> Charles D. Smith. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Bedford/St. Martin's: New York, 2013. p 247.

A Map of the 1949 Armistice



Above map from [www.palmap.org](http://www.palmap.org)

Nations to withdraw its forces from Israel, and Jordan signed a defense agreement with Egypt. Israel reacted to these threats as acts of aggression, and within hours destroyed the entire Egyptian air force on the ground, and the Syrian and Jordanian air forces shortly thereafter. Jordan then started shelling West Jerusalem and the Ramat David air base. Israel responded, eventually taking East Jerusalem and the West Bank, which had been under Jordanian control since 1948.<sup>37</sup> As a result of this short war, Israel now had control of the entire city of Jerusalem after defeating the Jordanians, and would call this the reunified capital of Israel. Also captured by Israel was the Golan Heights with the defeat of Syria, and the Gaza Strip from the defeat of the Egyptians. Yet again, the Palestinian hopes for autonomy were quickly crushed with the defeat of the all the Arab nation's militaries at the hands of Israel.

On June 11, 1967, the Mugraby neighborhood adjacent to the Wailing Wall was evacuated, and in a proposal to the cabinet on the same day Alon recommended the immediate rebuilding and settlement of the Jewish quarter in East Jerusalem. He suggested surrounding Jerusalem with Jewish neighborhoods so that Jerusalem could never be separated from Israel.<sup>38</sup> Alon's proposal was backed by Dayan and approved by the cabinet. The nation of Israel celebrated with jubilation that the city of Jerusalem was united as the capital of Israel. As for the Palestinians, deep sadness came with the loss of Jordanian control of the Old City of Jerusalem.

Immediately following the Six Day War, Yigal Allon of the Settlement Department, submitted to the Israeli cabinet the Allon Plan in July, 1967. Instead of annexing territory, Allon suggested redrawing Israel's borders. Allon proposed to the cabinet that Israel should establish

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<sup>37</sup> Cary Nelson. *Dreams Deferred: A Concise Guide to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict & the Movement to Boycott Israel*. MLA Members for Scholar's Rights & Indiana University Press: Bloomington, IN, 2016. p 292.

<sup>38</sup> Zalman Amit and Daphna Levit. *Israeli Rejectionism A Hidden Agenda in the Middle East Peace Process*. Pluto Press: New York, 2011. p 71-72.

settlements “camouflaged as military strongpoints,” if need be, until annexation was completed.<sup>39</sup> On August 27, 1967, the cabinet “simply approved working the land in Golan Heights” and also ratified a proposal to operate an experimental agricultural station left behind by the Egyptians in northern Sinai.<sup>40</sup> The cabinet’s decision was kept out of the meeting minutes in order to keep the sensitive nature of the issue a secret. The main problem facing the Israeli government at this time was the key provision in international law of the Fourth Geneva Convention which states that an “Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies.”<sup>41</sup> But the Israeli government and its leadership was quietly allowing Israelis to return “home” in the occupied territories, while denying to the international community there was of any type of organized effort of settlements.

Slowly and methodically, the Israeli government infiltrated the occupied territories by stating that the cabinet agreed on establishing military settlement outposts, and planned to establish additional connecting outposts to support some of the main military points. The Israeli officials knew they would receive harsh criticism from the United Nations and the international community, but were willing to accept rebukes in order to establish the settlements. To avoid allegations that the military outposts were actual settlements, the Israeli government ordered that military post signs be visible at the gate of each area. While Jewish citizens slowly filtered into these settlements, Levi Eshkol publicly announced on October 30, 1967, to the Knesset that Israel was remaining still until all of the Six Days War peace accords were agreed upon. On the same day Eshkol spoke to the Knesset, he sent written instructions to the head of

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<sup>39</sup> Gershom Gorenberg. *The Accidental Empire: Israel and the Birth of the Settlements, 1967-1977*. Times Books: New York, 2006. p 81.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, p 97.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, p 101.

the his ministry's cartography department redrawing new borders and stating that "the mandatory borders and armistice lines will not be printed."<sup>42</sup>

In January of 1968, Yigal Allon proposed a settlement in a populated area just outside the city of Hebron. A group of Gush Emunim (Block of the Faithful) members, an extremist settler organization that grew out of the religious Zionist youth movement Bnei Akiva, were led by Rabbi Moshe Levinger. They were initially given a permit to celebrate the Passover Seder for one day in a hotel outside Hebron, but they never left.<sup>43</sup> The Jewish presence in Hebron has expanded ever since.

During a Labor Party meeting that took place three months after the war, Levi Eshkol, Israel's prime minister in 1967, discussed the consequences of Israel's military victory when he turned to Golda Meir, who was then the party's general secretary, and said: 'I understand...you covet the dowry, but not the bride,' the dowry was the land that Israel occupied in June 1967, and the bride was the Palestinian population.<sup>44</sup>

After the end of the Six Days War, Palestinian groups such as Fatah, led by Yasser Arafat, advocated a war of liberation in July, 1967 from Israel's occupation of the West Bank. This failed due to the strength of Israel's military and the unwillingness of Palestinians to participate in the fight.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Gershom Gorenberg. *The Accidental Empire: Israel and the Birth of the Settlements, 1967-1977*. Times Books: New York, 2006. p 124.

<sup>43</sup> Zalman Amit and Daphna Levit. *Israeli Rejectionism A Hidden Agenda in the Middle East Peace Process*. Pluto Press: New York, 2011. p 72-73.

<sup>44</sup> Neve Gordon (2008) *From Colonization to Separation: exploring the structure of Israel's occupation*, Third World Quarterly, 29:1, 25-44, DOI: 10.1080/01436590701726442. p 29.

<sup>45</sup> Charles D. Smith. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Bedford/St. Martin's: New York, 2013. p 307.

A map of Israel and Palestine after the 1967 War



Above map from <http://www.theocracywatch.org>

The main force behind the PLO stressed in its 1968 charter that armed struggle through commando actions was the only means to liberate Palestine, and armed struggle was a long-term strategy, not a tactic to be discarded if diplomacy seemed preferable.<sup>46</sup> An additional change in the PLO also occurred in 1968, when the PLO charter revised the document language to stress “Palestinian nationalism and identity, instead of Pan-Arabism and Arab unity.”<sup>47</sup> This statement clarified the reliance of future Palestinian independence on themselves. In 1969, after many disputes and the forced resignations of PLO leadership, Yasser Arafat was elected head of the PLO. Arafat would lead the Palestinian fight using violence.

Already in 1968, one year after the war, 6% of the Palestinian labor force had found jobs in Israel. By 1974, 69,400 Palestinians worked in Israel, comprising 33% of the workforce, and by the eve of the first intifada in 1987, a Palestinian workforce of 108,900 were employed in Israel.<sup>48</sup> The Palestinians who worked in Israel earned anywhere from 10% to 100% more than they would have if they had worked in the territories, depending on their occupation. Even though these increased wages were a significant boost to the individual Palestinian families, the resultant dependence and reliance on comfortable living would have its consequences.

The influx of Palestinian laborers into the Israeli workforce created major social gaps in West Bank villages that ultimately weakened the traditional village leadership, since those who worked in Israel became economically independent and were demanding a say in local politics. While Palestinian laborers became dependent on Israel for their livelihood, Israel used this

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<sup>46</sup> Charles D. Smith. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Bedford/St. Martin's: New York, 2013. p 309.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid, p 309.

<sup>48</sup> Neve Gordon (2008) *From Colonization to Separation: exploring the structure of Israel's occupation*, *Third World Quarterly*, 29:1, 25-44, DOI: 10.1080/01436590701726442. p 30.

dependence to expand its control over them.<sup>49</sup> Settlements also became a volatile issue. The Palestinians came to realize that the settlements threatened the hope of establishing a Palestinian state in the future.<sup>50</sup> The taking of Palestinian land little by little, the infiltration of Jewish settlements, and the constant pressure imposed by the Israeli military fueled the Palestinian resistance movement within the Occupied Territories. All of which helps explain the eruption of the First Intifada.

By 1987, Palestinian frustration with the Israeli military erupted in a mass uprising called “Intifada.” The word intifada means “to shake off” in Arabic, which is a key concept in the idea of an uprising against oppression in the Arab culture. The intifada was a mass uprising of the Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza Strip hoping to bring an end to the Israeli occupation and establish an independent Palestinian state.<sup>51</sup> The intifada was sparked by an incident involving the Israeli military and Palestinians in Gaza Strip on December 9, 1987. The event occurred when an Israeli military vehicle killed four Palestinians along a road, and some demonstrators who came out to protest the deadly accident were shot and killed by the Israeli military.<sup>52</sup> After a few short days, the revolt in Gaza Strip had also spurred uprisings in the West Bank. This First Intifada would last four years in the Occupied Territories and by the end of 1992, approximately 1,800 Palestinians had died due to the uprising and violence.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Neve Gordon (2008) *From Colonization to Separation: exploring the structure of Israel's occupation*, Third World Quarterly, 29:1, 25-44, DOI: 10.1080/01436590701726442. p 33.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, p 34.

<sup>51</sup> Martin Bunton and William L. Cleveland. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. Westview Press: Boulder, CO, 2013. p 441.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, p 442.

<sup>53</sup> Zalman Amit and Daphna Levit. *Israeli Rejectionism A Hidden Agenda in the Middle East Peace Process*. Pluto Press: New York, 2011. p 166.

When the First Intifada began in 1987, the PLO leadership was headquartered in Tunisia. The PLO had been forced to flee and move for two decades because of its violent actions. After a civil war fought with Jordan in 1970-1971 during which thousands of Palestinians were killed by the Jordanian Army, Jordan expelled the PLO leadership which fled to Lebanon.<sup>54</sup> The PLO set up their headquarters in Lebanon until 1982 when Israel invaded Lebanon, where it was forced to flee yet again to Tunisia until 1991. With the PLO leadership consistently out of Palestine and unable to lead the Palestinian community and their efforts, the growth of Palestinian institutions suffered greatly from a lack of leadership. Rashid Khalidi writes, “Most of the leaders of the PLO, from Arafat on down, had spent their entire careers in the atmosphere of a clandestine, underground liberation movement, and proved to be poorly suited for the task of state building, for transparent governance, or for a stable structure of governance based on law.”<sup>55</sup> Arafat and the PLO would eventually be able to move back to the Middle East in 1991 to adequately represent the Palestinians.

From the time that Yasser Arafat became the leader of the PLO in 1969 until 1993, the Palestinian Liberation Organization was considered a terrorist organization. For years, the PLO resorted to violence and secret military actions by trying to force their will on Israel and the international community in order to carve out a nation of their own in the Middle East. The use of violence, coupled with bad decision making led to actions with fatal consequences over the years by the hands of the PLO. Some acts perpetrated by the PLO included: in 1972, a group killed eleven Israel athletes and officials at the Olympic games in Munich, Germany. In 1974, a

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<sup>54</sup> Cary Nelson. *Dreams Deferred: A Concise Guide to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict & the Movement to Boycott Israel*. MLA Members for Scholar's Rights & Indiana University Press: Bloomington, IN, 2016. p 252.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, p 252-253.

Palestinian group killed 26 students and adults on a school bus in Israel; in 1975, Palestinians killed eight hostages and three soldiers at a Tel Aviv hotel; in 1978, a PLO group hijacked a bus and killed thirty-seven passengers; and in 1985, four Palestinians hijacked an Italian ocean ship and killed a Jewish-Armenian man. Under the leadership of Yasser Arafat during the first half of his tenure, it was understandable that international leaders and countries could not trust him, or sit down at the negotiating table to work out a peace plan.

After the beginning of the First Intifada in 1988, the Palestinian National Congress, which meet in Algiers in November, 1988, proclaimed its readiness to negotiate peace by accepting UN Resolutions 242 and 338, under the conditions that Israel accept Palestinian rights, while Palestinians accepted the right of Israel to exist. Following this announcement in December, 1988, Arafat was able to gain international recognition when the United States agreed that by renouncing terrorism and accepting Resolution 242, Arafat had met the conditions to begin US brokered peace talks in Madrid.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Charles D. Smith. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Bedford/St. Martin's: New York, 2013. p 414.

## Chapter II – To the Oslo Peace Agreements, and Beyond?

-“What this agreement does is lay the foundations of a Palestinian state. This very fact is, in itself, a good reason to reject it in its entirety.”

-*Benjamin Netanyahu to the Knesset on  
the Oslo Accords Declaration of Principles  
-September 23, 1993-*

At a certain point during the first Intifada, Israel also realized that the colonization principle could no longer be used as the basic logic informing its control of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and began looking for a new principle that would allow it to uphold the occupation.<sup>57</sup> The colonization principle is a process whereby the colonizer has authority over the inhabitants of the colonized area and expropriates the territories most valuable resources for its own uses. After Israel’s victory in the 1967 war, Israel was responsible for the inhabitants of the occupied territories and the institutions that supported the residents. Simultaneously, Israel also began confiscating Palestinian land and water, the most important natural resources in the region.<sup>58</sup> The confiscation of the resource rich West Bank by Israel for the expansion of Jewish settlements continues to be a serious area of contention by Palestinians and the international community.

The Israeli settlements were an outgrowth from the areas gained as a result of the Six Days War. The settlement explosion in the occupied territories came after the end of the war in 1967. Multiple reasons are given to justify the building of settlements in the West Bank, even though according to international law, it is illegal for Israelis to inhabit the West Bank. One reason Israel gives to explain how they can build settlements in the occupied territories is because Israel views these areas as “disputed,” which means Israel does not agree and recognize

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<sup>57</sup> Neve Gordon (2008) *From Colonization to Separation: exploring the structure of Israel's occupation*, Third World Quarterly, 29:1, 25-44, DOI: 10.1080/01436590701726442. p 34.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, p 28.

these areas as the legitimate lines of the United Nation resolution. Another reason Israel states why settlements are built in the West Bank is because as God's chosen people according to the Jewish religion, God said that the Jews will occupy and rule over all of Israel. Jews and Israeli officials often refer to the West Bank as Judea and Samaria, which are the ancient names for the Jewish kingdoms.<sup>59</sup>

A third reason stated for settlements in the West Bank is for the needed security of Israel proper against attacks by hostile Arab enemies of Israel. Israeli government officials contend that in order to protect Israel, the additional land buffer is needed to repel enemy invasions. The security of Israel would become a dominating area of contention in the future by the building of security walls, checkpoints, and the capabilities of rockets and missiles used by opposing groups.

The results of the Israeli settlements have been anger and retaliation by the Palestinians because according to the United Nations, the West Bank area was for Palestinian occupation, while the Israelis are supposed to be unable to establish dwellings in the West Bank. Palestinians also feel that Palestine is their homeland, where they have lived for over two thousand years. Another reason for Palestinian retaliation is that Israeli military has administered changes wherever deemed needed in Palestine, which is illegal and the international community fails to hold Israel accountable for these actions. A final area of contention has been the religious differences between Palestinians and Israelis, along with Palestinians losing the freedom of visiting and worshipping at the Holy Sites as needed. Many of the shared Holy Sites of the Jewish and Muslim religions have daily security in order that peaceful visitations can occur.

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<sup>59</sup> Cary Nelson. *Dreams Deferred: A Concise Guide to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict & the Movement to Boycott Israel*. MLA Members for Scholar's Rights & Indiana University Press: Bloomington, IN, 2016. p 280.

But after Egypt and Israel signed the Camp David peace treaty in March of 1979 with help of President Jimmy Carter, Israel expedited the accrual of land in the West Bank under the leadership of Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin. The Israeli prime minister was an ex-military leader during the days when Israel was fighting Britain for independence, and also an ardent supporter of Zionism. When Jimmy Carter recalled in asking Begin during the Camp David talks how much freedom the Palestinians would have, “Begin had repeatedly promised full autonomy for the West Bank Palestinians.”<sup>60</sup> Within days after the Camp David talks, Begin reminded his colleagues that, “this government was formed in order to preserve the Land of Israel,” and he would never abandon that mandate.<sup>61</sup>

Israel and Egypt were to complete the Camp David agreement within one year by May, 1980. But even though Begin stated repeatedly he was authentic to the agreement, on June, 1980, Begin and the Knesset declared both Jerusalem and Israel to be one, and indivisible. Carter was able to convince Sadat of Egypt to return to the talks multiple times, but Israel would not budge and the agreement never materialized. Israel had avoided an agreement for peace for land, and Begin further accelerated the expropriation of the Occupied Territory.

There were many techniques used by Israel to promote settlement starting in 1979. One technique was to encircle Arab land with Jewish outposts which would be followed by the migration of Jewish settlers to these areas. A second way, was by imposing restrictions on Arab water use by assessing restrictions of well drilling near the Green Line, with heavy penalties for

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<sup>60</sup> Howard M. Sachar. *A History of Israel: From the Rise of Zionism to our Time*. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.: New York, 1996. p 863.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, p 864.

overuse.<sup>62</sup> But the most blatant technique in acquiring new land was for Israel to exercise the governments “right” in acquiring large tracts of Arab farming land for “security purposes.”

Eventually two more alternative tactics were used to acquire land. The first being that 8,000 acres in the West Bank were owned by Jews prior to 1948, so this acreage would be reclaimed by Israel. Another avenue of acquisition was found through a loophole in the Hague Convention which stated that private land could be seized as being “state” land.<sup>63</sup> The Begin administration then redefined and would rewrite the definition of “state” land in order that open tracts of private land could be seized by Israel. Through these final two tactics, by late 1981 Israel acquired not less than thirty-one percent of the West Bank’s total land area.<sup>64</sup> In the spring of 1981, the Israeli government commenced a \$100 million infrastructure campaign towards the new land acquisitions in the West Bank that led to roads being built, linking electrical grids, controlling, and sometimes diverting water supplies.<sup>65</sup> The idea of Israel eventually vacating the West Bank in the future for the creation of a Palestinian state did not match the expropriation activities that were executed by Begin from 1979-1981. By 1983, there would be 103 settlements built and in use in the West Bank. By 1985, the West bank settlements would require \$1.5 billion per year in Israeli public funds, while over the previous forty years, the United States had given Israel \$23 billion in aid and grants.<sup>66</sup> Even though the vast amount of settlements resulted in a

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<sup>62</sup> Howard M. Sachar. *A History of Israel: From the Rise of Zionism to our Time*. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.: New York, 1996. p 867.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, p 868.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, p 868.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, p 869.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, p 869.

significant investment on the Israeli government, the effort continued to create a chain of continuity of Israeli control that showed no signs of future Palestinian statehood.

Israel's expansion efforts included construction designed to protect the settlers and to facilitate their daily life: an entire network of bypass road and tunnels were built. Even in Palestinian areas, the settlers could move about freely. For the sake of these roads, fences, and tunnels, hundreds of Palestinian homes and agricultural areas had to be demolished. And the roads had to be protected and monitored by means of a network of military checkpoints maintained throughout the occupied territories by Israeli soldiers.<sup>67</sup>

During the time that the First Intifada was occurring, the Gulf War Crisis starting in 1990 involving the United States, Iraq, and Kuwait also erupted. Additionally, the Intifada and the Palestinian cause also received a boost of legitimacy when on July 31, 1988, King Hussein announced Jordan would relinquish all claims to the West Bank and would instead honor a Palestinian State.<sup>68</sup> With the eruption of violence from the Intifada, what also came was doubt in the minds of Palestinians that the PLO leadership would eventually produce any positive result for their cause.

A cause for concern for the PLO was the creation of a radical Palestinian group named Hamas that originated from the Muslim Brotherhood Movement in Egypt in 1988, but was officially founded in 1992. Entrenched in radical Islam, Hamas produced violence and terrorism, while it opposed the PLO for recognizing and negotiating with Israel. The Hamas founding charter from August 18, 1988, stated in the Introduction, "Israel will exist and will continue to

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<sup>67</sup> Zalman Amit and Daphna Levit. *Israeli Rejectionism A Hidden Agenda in the Middle East Peace Process*. Pluto Press: New York, 2011. p 115.

<sup>68</sup> Cary Nelson. *Dreams Deferred: A Concise Guide to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict & the Movement to Boycott Israel*. MLA Members for Scholar's Rights & Indiana University Press: Bloomington, IN, 2016. p 167.

exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others.”<sup>69</sup> Over the next fifteen years, Hamas had built up arms and self-propelled rocket stocks in order to carry out some of their violent acts against Israel, which has hurt the PLO’s ability to broker peace with Israel.

The problem existed that Hamas would incite violence in the West Bank, which only cemented the idea into Israeli security that violence would always be at risk whether or not Hamas is present in the West Bank. With the risk increasing of losing the Palestinian people’s support to Hamas, Arafat and the PLO had to gain further support from the people in Palestine and the international community, especially since the PLO leadership was outside the territories in Tunisia. Palestinians viewed Arafat as part of an elite who lived outside the territories, instead of in the territory as they did. What made matters worse for Arafat was the fact that the PLO supported Saddam Hussein of Iraq in the Gulf War, and lost. Arafat needed to get back into the good graces of the United States for the sake of the peace process, as well as the fact that the PLO needed finances to survive. Support would be easier to obtain alongside the United States, than against the world by supporting Saddam Hussein. Arafat therefore would choose to adhere to the policies and restrictions laid out by the United States government.

After the Gulf War had ended, US Secretary of State, James Baker began a new effort to restart talks on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Arab countries such as Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan agreed to the coordination of talks by the United States and Soviet Union, to resolve the myriad of differences with Israel.<sup>70</sup> In 1991, the Madrid Conference took place, brokered by the Bush Administration of the United States and the Soviet Union. The conference was really only a

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<sup>69</sup> Cary Nelson. *Dreams Deferred: A Concise Guide to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict & the Movement to Boycott Israel*. MLA Members for Scholar’s Rights & Indiana University Press: Bloomington, IN, 2016. p 146.

<sup>70</sup> Charles D. Smith. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Bedford/St. Martin’s: New York, 2013. p 419.

precursor to future peace talks, intended to establish and agree on key elements of peace before continuing into the deeper issues.

The Madrid Conferences in 1991 were landmark talks on many differing points. Yasser Arafat would not be present at the peace talks, but the Palestinians were part of a joint delegation led by Jordan, not as PLO officials. The Palestinian delegation wore modern business suits, not traditional Arabic clothing and thoroughly impressed officials at Madrid. The Palestinian delegation was composed of “insiders”- that is, Palestinians who lived and worked in the occupied territories, unlike Arafat, who resided outside the territories in Tunisia.<sup>71</sup> The professional and moderate tone of the Palestinians instead of past harsh rhetoric, quickly helped the United States lean in the direction of helping the Palestinians, while noticeably drifting apart from Prime Minister Shamir and the Israelis.<sup>72</sup>

Commencing talks between the Palestinians and the Israelis was a major step in continuing the peace process. Another major sticking point was that the United States wanted Israel to temporarily halt building new settlements in the West Bank so that talks could progress without this continuing conflict. In June of 1992, Israelis elected the more moderate Rabin as prime minister, who was welcomed by US officials over the hard-lined Shamir. Immediately after Rabin formed his government, he announced a partial freeze on settlement construction, which also released the \$10 Billion loan guarantee to Israel by the US.<sup>73</sup> Although far from a

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<sup>71</sup> William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. Westview Press: Boulder, CO, 2013. p 464.

<sup>72</sup> Avi Shlaim. *Israel and Palestine. Reappraisals, Revisions, Refutations*. Verso: London, UK, 2009. p 164.

<sup>73</sup> William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. Westview Press: Boulder, CO, 2013. p 465.

perfect peace process, the Madrid Conference showed enormous promise and set in place continued talks between Israel and the Palestinians.

The Israeli leadership was feeling the pressure to seek some sort of a peace agreement with the Palestinians. After enduring the tension from the Gulf War Crisis, the Madrid Talks commenced in order to alleviate hostilities in the Middle East. While minor agreements remained were achieved between Israel and Jordan, the differences of the Palestinians and Israelis were miles away from one another. Prime Minister Yitzak Shamir made Israel's position vividly clear when leaving office in June of 1992, stating "the [intent] was to drag out talks on Palestinian self-rule for 10 years while attempting to settle hundreds of thousands of Jews in the occupied territories."<sup>74</sup> This rigid stance by Israel would not go on without consequences from the international community, especially the United States.

By February, 1992, the US government under the Bush Administration imposed sanctions on Israel for the continued building of settlements. The United States government withheld the \$10 billion in loan guarantees promised during the Gulf War because the Israelis built 18,000 new housing units in the occupied territories. The US also made an effort to undermine the Likud Party, so that the Labor Party would win the 1992 political elections.<sup>75</sup> The Labor Party of Israel was more supportive of the idea of peace between Israel and the Palestinians under the leadership of Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin and his Foreign Minister, Shimon Peres. After the talks in Madrid ended, Washington continued to foster dialogue in the United States between both sides, but the peace negotiations were stalled at this point. Although Arafat was Rabin's arch-enemy, Rabin was certain that an agreement would not be able to be

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<sup>74</sup> Charles D. Smith. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Bedford/St. Martin's: New York, 2013. p 421.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid, p 421.

accomplished with Palestinian representatives, but only through meetings with Arafat himself. Rabin knew that Foreign Secretary Peres had previously established a secret back channel avenue in speaking with the PLO with officials from Norway, and Rabin decided to seize the opportunity. Especially since the PLO was bankrupt, Rabin thought the Palestinians would be ready to accept considerably less in the negotiations to achieve a settlement. In the course of eight months and 15 sessions, an agreement was reached on mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO, and limited Palestinian self-government in Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho.<sup>76</sup> Although far from a perfect agreement, this accord displayed the possibility of movement forward in the conflict.

With an agreement in place, the Oslo Accord gave rise to talks between Israel and Palestinians, which started on September 13, 1993. There were significant barriers that amazingly both sides agreed to remove from the Oslo talks. The main barriers were: that the Palestinians agreed to talk about a peace settlement by recognizing Israel as a nation without any clear commitments by the Israelis, and a five-year transition period would be part of the peace settlement agreement.<sup>77</sup> In previous peace discussions, the Palestinians would not discuss peace unless there was an immediate execution of the agreement, while Israel would only discuss peace agreements if the Palestinians first agreed to a transition period in the event of an agreement. In return, the Israeli government agreed to continue the process of peace talks, and recognized the PLO as the official governing agency of the Palestinian people, with which Israel would commence negotiations.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Avi Shlaim. *Israel and Palestine: Reappraisals, Revisions, Refutations*. Verso: New York, 2010. p 184-185.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, p 194.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid, p 193.

Finally, the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements established a firm time-table that within two months of the signing ceremony, the Israeli military would start withdrawing from the Gaza Strip and Jericho, a process that would be completed in four months after the signing. In nine months, the Palestinians would hold elections in Gaza and the West Bank to create a Palestinian Council. Within two years, Israel and the Palestinians were to commence negotiations on the final status of the territories, and at the end of five years the permanent settlement was to come into force.<sup>79</sup>

For Israel, an enormous step in the Oslo Accords was the PLO's recognition of Israel as a nation, which would help other Arab nations in following the PLO's lead in accepting Israel in the Middle East. Also, advantageous for the Israelis was the fact that the Declaration of Principles did not state any type of commitment to a Palestinian state, nor any limitations to the expansion of settlements in the West Bank.

The agreement to continue the peace process by which each side remarkably recognized the legitimacy of one another drew anger from hard-lined conservatives on both sides. The far-right conservative Likud Party of Israel was especially furious with Rabin, accusing him of abandoning the 120,000 Jewish settlers in the occupied territories, while going against Israel's long-time commitment to never negotiate with the PLO.<sup>80</sup> The Jewish settlers were very committed to living in the West Bank and many times were radical in their defense of living in the occupied territory. The Jewish settlers became increasingly violent in the defense of their homes, whether defending themselves against Palestinian pressure or Israeli defense forces trying to remove them from their land. On the other side, Arafat drew the ire of Hamas and other

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<sup>79</sup> Avi Shlaim. *Israel and Palestine: Reappraisals, Revisions, Refutations*. Verso: New York, 2010. p 191.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*, p 195.

radical Palestinian groups for the recognition of Israel as a nation, and because Arafat had not delivered an immediate establishment of a Palestinian state, but only a minimal, gradual promise of autonomy.

Although the Oslo peace process was welcomed throughout the world, especially since the PLO denounced the use of violence and terrorism, the attempt was viciously attacked by the far-right conservatives and the Likud Party. In 1993, heading the opposition to Yitzhak Rabin's government, Benjamin Netanyahu assumed the leadership of the Likud Party and spoke out strongly against the Oslo Agreement as soon as it was revealed. In a level of hostility that Netanyahu continued as he came to power he said to the Knesset, "What this agreement does is lay the foundations of a Palestinian state. This very fact is, in itself, a good reason to reject it in its entirety."<sup>81</sup> Netanyahu and conservatives of the Israeli government continued to publicly rail against the Rabin-led Oslo Accords.

Even though there would be occurring violence and terrorist attacks launched by Islamic Jihadists and Hamas to deter the peace talks, along with opposition from Jewish settlers in the West Bank, the majority of Israelis and Palestinians welcomed the beginning of peace and the commencement of the Oslo Accord arrangements taking place in the territories. After a year of intense negotiations, the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip was signed in Washington by Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat on September 28, 1995, better known as Oslo II.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Ahmed Qurie. *Beyond Oslo, The Struggle for Palestine: Inside the Middle East Peace Process from Rabin's Death to Camp David*. I.B. Tauris Publishers: New York, 2008. p 18.

<sup>82</sup> Avi Shlaim. *Israel and Palestine: Reappraisals, Revisions, Refutations*. Verso: New York, 2010. p 201.

On Saturday, 4 November, a youthful Jewish extremist named Yigal Amir, not some social misfit, but a member of the elite Golani Unit of the Israeli army, murdered Rabin with three shots fired at close quarters after a peace rally at Tel Aviv's Kings of Israel Square.<sup>83</sup> Rabin's negotiating position and attempt to establish a peace plan with the PLO was detested by conservative, right-wing fanatics, and extremist settlers in the occupied territories. Even though Rabin seemed to have made too many enemies, Simon Peres, Rabin's previous foreign minister and predecessor, believed that he would be able to lead Israel into a peaceful agreement and coexistence with the Palestinians. The Israeli right wing, on the other hand, accused him of exposing the Jewish state and its settlement program to the real possibility of catastrophe, arguing that the peace option disregarded Israel's vital interests and amounted virtually to treason.<sup>84</sup>

With a surprising victory on May, 28, 1996, Netanyahu defeated Shimon Peres in the election in Israel for the position of Prime Minister. Netanyahu was an ideologue and politician of the extreme right, implacably opposed to the Oslo Accord, which he had described as a catastrophe.<sup>85</sup> The conservative rightists and the Likud Party wanted nothing more than to crush any Palestinian hopes of a permanent state. The rhetoric became so harsh after the Oslo II talks that both Likud members Ariel Sharon and Benjamin Netanyahu participated in rallies with posters portraying Yitzak Rabin as a Nazi, accompanied by calls for Rabin's assassination from

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<sup>83</sup> Ahmed Qurie. *Beyond Oslo, The Struggle for Palestine: Inside the Middle East Peace Process from Rabin's Death to Camp David*. I.B. Tauris Publishers: New York, 2008. p 2.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, p 10-11.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, p 13.

Rabbis in Brooklyn, as well as the West Bank.<sup>86</sup> The condemnation of the Oslo Accords by the Likud Party would continue into the beginning of the new millennia.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Netanyahu, there has been everything except consistency in the decision-making process of the Israeli government. In one instant, Netanyahu would follow a hard-line position, the next minute, maybe due to American or international pressure, the prime minister would make a 180 degree turn and agree to discuss a certain issue with the Palestinians. Regardless of Netanyahu's reasons, there are a vast number of policies and directives inside of Israel that Netanyahu had implemented to make life difficult for Palestinians, while at the same time, gaining the upper hand in acquiring land and power in a passive-aggressive manner.

From 1996-1999, Netanyahu administered restrictions which were believed to make life more difficult for a Palestinian with an average income. To create division between Jerusalem and the remainder of the Palestinian territories, Netanyahu closed down various Palestinian businesses in the city on the pretense that they were linked to the Palestinian Authority, which was not allowed to operate there.<sup>87</sup> Though the main concentration of Netanyahu's settlement policy was on Jerusalem and surrounds, he also confiscated thousands of acres of land in the West Bank, either to make way for new settlements or expand existing ones, which was the case in the area known as Kassarat, between Tulkarem and Qalqilya.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Louise Fawcett. *International Relations of the Middle East*. Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK, 2013. p 261.

<sup>87</sup> Ahmed Qurie. *Beyond Oslo, The Struggle for Palestine: Inside the Middle East Peace Process from Rabin's Death to Camp David*. I.B. Tauris Publishers: New York, 2008. p 23.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, p 23.

In May 1999, Ehud Barak of the Labour Party won a landslide victory for prime minister. Barak claimed that he would continue the peace process with the Palestinians that Rabin had started. Even though settlement activity had continued during each prime minister's tenure regardless of the political party he was affiliated with, the expansion of settlements heavily increased during Barak's term. Settlements were not included in the language of the Oslo Accords, but the increase in expansion of Israeli settlements adversely affected the peace process.

Barak continued to take a hardline in the peace negotiations with Arafat, especially since the final agreement in the Oslo Accords needed to be solidified. During July of 2000, both sides would meet for fourteen days at Camp David II in Washington, D.C. Barak offered about eighty percent of the West Bank to the Palestinians, half of the City of Jerusalem, and only family members of refugees had the right of return to Palestine at the rate of 500 per year.<sup>89</sup> Barak laid out his offer in a take it or leave it fashion, which did not help the spirit of the negotiations. Barak also wanted a formal announcement after an agreement was reached that the conflict was over, that Palestinians would have no further claims against the State of Israel.<sup>90</sup> Even though Arafat rejected the proposal based on the factors of restricted Palestinian return and less than full West Bank area authority, Arafat failed to propose a counter-offer. Arafat would return home as hero for rejecting the less than perfect settlement, but would be blamed for the failed talks by Clinton and Barak, as well as empty-handed.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Avi Shlaim. *Israel and Palestine: Reappraisals, Revisions, Refutations*. Verso: New York, 2010. p 206.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, p 206.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, p 207.

On September 28, 2000, Ariel Sharon, the leader of the Likud Party at the time, decided to make a public display that would eventually spark the anger of Palestinians and Muslims in Israel. Sharon chose to stage a publicized appearance at al-Aqsa, or what Jews call the Temple Mount. Flanked by a thousand security men and in deliberate disregard for the sensitivity of the Muslim worshippers, Sharon walked into the sanctuary.<sup>92</sup> This gross attempt at inciting a reaction from the Palestinians succeeded immediately following the Sharon walk-through. Not only did this act spark immediate outrage among Muslims, but in fact triggered the Second Intifada in Israel.

The Second Intifada was not only triggered by Sharon's provocative visit to al-Aqsa, but was also the result of flaring symptoms among the Palestinian people such as the feeling of a lack of competent leadership and governance by Arafat and the Palestinian Authority. The uprising was also the result increasingly oppressive Israeli occupation of the West Bank, the confiscation of Palestinian land leading to the expansion of Jewish settlements, and the unwillingness of the international community to stop any of these events.<sup>93</sup>

Protests and demonstrations broke out immediately after Sharon's visit in the various West Bank areas, accompanied by the support of some Israeli Arabs. The Israeli military descended swiftly upon the demonstrators with deadly force, at times shooting into crowds of people, killing a total of 31 people.<sup>94</sup> The Second Intifada did prompt US President Bill Clinton to make a final surge before his exit in office which would have given Palestinian refugees a

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<sup>92</sup> Louise Fawcett. *International Relations of the Middle East*. Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK, 2013. p 282.

<sup>93</sup> William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. Westview Press: Boulder, CO, 2013. p 478.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*, p 478.

possibility of a right to return, as well as getting 94-96 percent of the West Bank for a future Palestinian state, all of which was temporarily agreed upon in 2001 in Taba, Egypt by both negotiating teams.<sup>95</sup> But with the increasing violence by both sides on the ground and the office terms of President Clinton and Prime Minister Barak coming to an end, the tentative agreement fell apart and was rendered dead. With the election of right-wing conservative Ariel Sharon in February 2001, any agreements from the talks in Taba, Egypt, would be quickly eliminated by the incoming prime minister.

The reasons why the Likud Party deplored the Oslo II Accords were many. The Oslo II agreement signed in Washington in September, 1995, established a framework for Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza, which were scheduled to begin in May, 1996, and finish by May, 1999. The working agreement was to divide Palestinian land into areas A, B, and C. In Area A, the Palestinian authority had complete autonomy over administrative and security issues. In area B, the Palestinians had civil responsibilities; in Area C, Israel had full control. Further subsequent agreements resulted in future withdrawals of Israeli military forces, which expanded the area under Palestinian control. Some 95 percent of the West Bank and Gaza should have come under Palestinian control 18 months after the inauguration of the newly established Palestinian Legislative Council. But this did not happen. By March, 2000, just 18.2 percent of the territory was under effective Palestinian control, while Israel proceeded with its expropriation of Palestinian land for building settlements and by-pass roads.<sup>96</sup> According to

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<sup>95</sup> William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. Westview Press: Boulder, CO, 2013. p 478-479.

<sup>96</sup> Jad Isaac and Majed Rizik. "The Viability of the Palestinian State and Israel's Settlement Policy." *Palestine Israel Journal of Politics, Economics, and Culture* 9, no. 4 (Nov 30, 2002): 76, <http://proxy.lib.duke.edu> (accessed February 7, 2017).

Israeli data in 2002, there were 140 settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. However, satellite images show 282 built-up Jewish areas in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.<sup>97</sup>

Through Sharon and the Likud party, the lack of adhering to the terms of Oslo II were not the only items of contention in the occupied territories. Between April and November, 2002, Sharon's government renewed its policy of unilateral segregation between the West Bank and Israeli-controlled territories when the steering committee dealing with the Security Wall called for an immediate start to construction of the wall in the northern West Bank and the Jerusalem area.<sup>98</sup> The first phase of the wall would be approximately 115 km long and include electric fences, trenches, cameras, and security patrols, while more than two percent of the West Bank will be expropriated to Israel proper, and at least 30 villages will lose part or all of their lands during this phase.<sup>99</sup>

When Ariel Sharon was elected Prime Minister in 2001, suicide bombings by Palestinians against Israelis were becoming more and more frequent. The suicide bombings were the main reason and justification for building the security wall, with a total of 2,000 Palestinian attacks occurring against settlements in the territories as well as inside Israel.<sup>100</sup> There is no doubt that something needed to be implemented in order to stop the deadly attacks of suicide bombings occurring in Israel and against Israeli citizens. The one glaring fact was that deadly attacks were also occurring towards Palestinians in this time as well. From September 28, 2000,

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<sup>97</sup> Jad Isaac and Majed Rizik. *"The Viability of the Palestinian State and Israel's Settlement Policy."* Palestine Israel Journal of Politics, Economics, and Culture 9, no. 4 (Nov 30, 2002): 76, <http://proxy.lib.duke.edu> (accessed February 7, 2017).

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Charles D. Smith. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Bedford/St. Martin's: New York, 2013. p 500.

to early 2006, approximately 1,030 Israelis and foreigners had been killed by Palestinians or Israeli Arabs. During the same time, over 3,300 Palestinians and foreigners had been killed by Israeli troops or security forces.<sup>101</sup> There is absolutely no doubt that the security wall was successful in curbing the number of suicide attacks against Israelis, which depending on various sources which cannot agree with one another, is as low as a sixty percent decline in attacks, with some sources claiming upwards of a ninety percent decline in suicide bombings because of the installation of the security wall. Regardless of the exact reduction in suicide bombings, that numbers clearly indicate that three times as many Palestinians were killed by Israelis, than vice-versa.

The terrorist attacks may have declined because of the security wall measures, but other devastating issues were also created by the installation of the security wall which started in July, 2003. A major concern and serious violation is the non-compliance of Israel in following the Green Line “pre-1967 borders” that established the line creating the boundary between Israel and the West Bank. Some of the security wall Israel has installed is located east of the Green Line, creating a “seam zone” between the security wall and the Green Line. A seam zone is an area created further east of the Green Line using land from the West Bank territory, therefore creating additional area for the Israeli government to use, even though it is truly part of the West Bank. When the wall started to be constructed, the Israeli government first stated that the security wall, or separation barrier as it is often called, “is a temporary security measure that does not reflect a political or other kind of border.”<sup>102</sup> Israel deemed the wall necessary for a temporary deterrent to terrorist attacks.

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid, p 504.

<sup>102</sup> Israeli Cabinet Decision 883, Section B.2; Cabinet Decision 2077, Section B.4, on October 1, 2003.

As the construction of the security wall continued, the wall was creating more “seam zones,” which ultimately took almost ten percent of the West Bank territory and is now part of Israel.<sup>103</sup> Within this seam zone were twenty-one Palestinian villages. After legal presentations started to contest the Israeli government’s right to construct the wall east of the Green Line, Israel then publicly maintained that the seam zone was to establish a warning space or buffer zone. As stated by Justice Dorit Beinisch in a High Court decision, “The seam zone is intended to block suicide terrorists and other terrorist from crossing into the State of Israel...the purpose of the barrier is to delay infiltration into Israel for a period of time that will enable forces to reach the area of infiltration, ...before they enter the state’s territory.”<sup>104</sup> The security wall definition now progressed from a barrier, to a buffer zone in order to create space to stop infiltrators. The area to be used for this buffer zone was Palestinian villages and farmland, not land located in Israel.

But what really transpired in the seam zone was the establishment of Jewish settlements in these areas to expand Israeli territory, and sometimes placing the settlements in order to control the water resources needed for the growing population. Palestinians do not have resources in order to contest the taking of their land from the security wall location. Because the West Bank is an Occupied Territory, it is illegal for the Palestinians to have arms or an army to fight Israel. The PLO has tried negotiations and pleas to the UN, but there are not any countries willing to sanction or stop Israel from this expansion. Some European countries have donated money to help the Palestinians, but the United States and its allies have only given Israel verbal

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<sup>103</sup> Bimkom and B’Tselem. *Under the Guise of Security: Routing the Separation Barrier to Enable the Expansion of the Israeli Settlements in the West Bank*. ISSN0793-520X. December, 2005. p 5.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, p 15-16.

rebukes while the United States has also denied the delivery of USAID funds for the Palestinians for various reasons.

In hearing that the Israelis expanded settlements in the West Bank that individuals built a home far inside Palestinian territory, one becomes curious as to why an Israeli would want to live in an area of such conflict, rather than within the relative security inside Israel proper. The one significant reason to live east of the Green Line in the West Bank was because of financial incentives that were available to those who would choose to live in the West Bank. In 2003, the following incentives were provided to new settlers in the West Bank:

- 1.) Settlers receive a seven percent income tax exemption in the West Bank.
- 2.) Every settler is granted around NIS 80,000 by the Ministry of Housing.
- 3.) The Israeli government provides NIS 8.55 billion from its budget for settlements.
- 4.) The Jewish National Fund is provides NIS 172.4 million for land seizure.
- 5.) The Ministry of Transport will use NIS 253.5 million from Israeli taxes to pave roads.
- 6.) The Ministry of Defense will open new by-pass roads at a cost of NIS 228 million.
- 7.) The Ministry of Commerce and Industry will provide between NIS 22.3 million and NIS 51.9 million to the settlements.
- 8.) The Ministry of Housing gives NIS 76,800 as loans for each person who wants to buy a new apartment, NIS 16,800 of which are grants.
- 9.) The Ministry of Religious Affairs gives NIS 50 million (30 percent of its budget) to build synagogues inside settlements.
- 10.) The Ministry of Education offers free education to children and free university studies to teachers working in settlements schools, at a cost of NIS 30 million.

11.) The Ministry of Infrastructure is provides NIS 9.7 million for water projects.<sup>105</sup>

These extensive and far reaching incentives clearly signify that the Israeli government has a large program to expand the population of Israeli citizens living in the West Bank.

Since September 11, 2001, and the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., the United States and the Western world has been consumed with the fight against Al Qaeda and ISIS terrorism, the removal of Saddam Hussein and rebuilding of Iraq, and the conflict of Iranian nuclear armament. These indirect events have a significant impact in the security of Israel in the eyes of the United States because Americans view Israel as the only true democracy in the Middle East, while it also is linked by Judaism and Christian theology. During the past fifteen years, there has not been any attempt of serious negotiations between Israel and the PLO regarding the conflict.

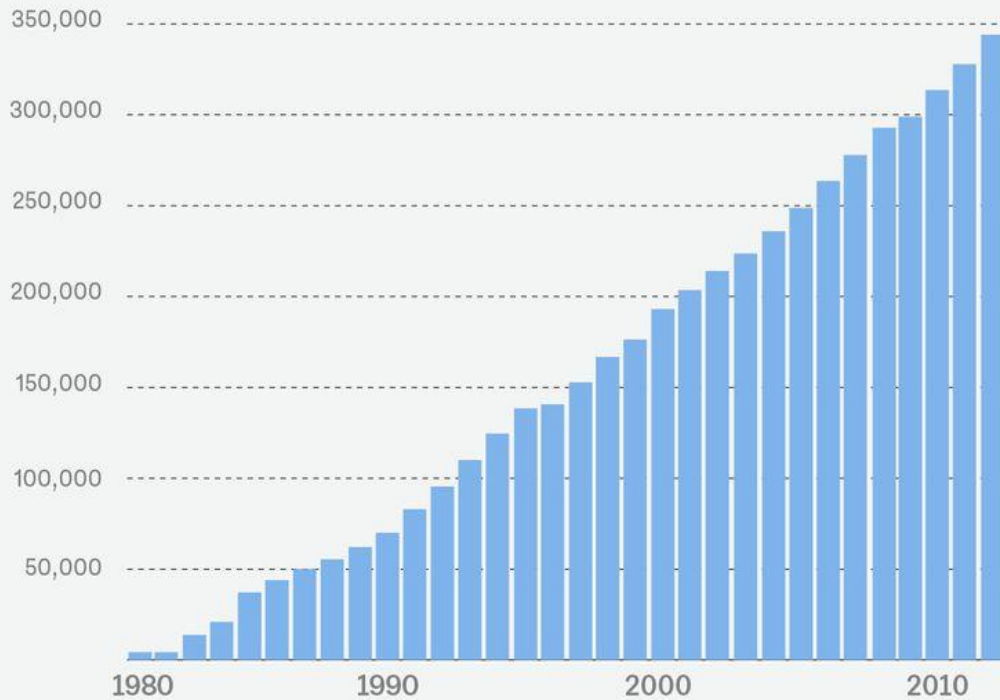
There has been continuing expansion of the settlements in the West Bank, along with sporadic confrontations and deadly encounters from radical Israeli settlers in the far reaches of the West Bank, and violence by radical Palestinians towards the Israeli military. Since the building of settlements is visible and public, foreign companies such as Veolia out of France have come under fire for working in the settlements, building water infrastructure, rail lines, and trash removal industries. But the building continues with only some rebukes from the Obama Administration, which carried very adversarial tones between President Obama and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, who has been in office under the Likud party since 2009.

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<sup>105</sup> Jad Isaac and Majed Rizik. "The Viability of the Palestinian State and Israel's Settlement Policy." *Palestine Israel Journal of Politics, Economics, and Culture* 9, no. 4 (Nov 30, 2002): 76, <http://proxy.lib.duke.edu> (accessed February 7, 2017).

## Settler population in the West Bank

(excluding East Jerusalem)



SOURCE: IDMC, Americans for Peace Now, based on data from Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics

**Vox**

Chart from [www.peacenow.org](http://www.peacenow.org) Americans for Peace Now.

# Growth of settlements and outposts in the West Bank

■ Settlement ■ Outpost

1970



1980



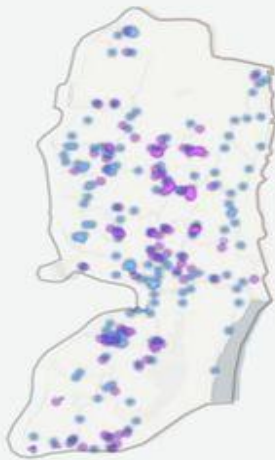
1990



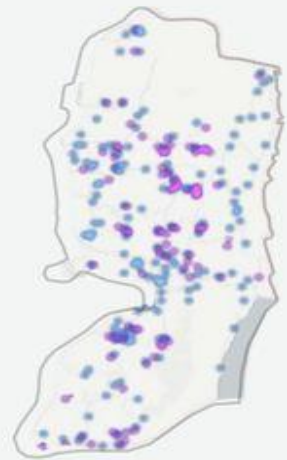
2000



2010



2016



SOURCE: Americans for Peace Now

**Vox**

Chart from [www.peacenow.org](http://www.peacenow.org), Americans for Peace Now.

### **Chapter III – The West Bank Today**

The day after Christmas, 2016, I had the opportunity to travel to Israel and the West Bank for eleven days. My sole purpose in this trip was to observe, evaluate, and study the infrastructure of the Jewish settlements and Palestinian villages adjacent to one another in the West Bank. I also would be interviewing residents living in these settlements and villages so that I could evaluate everyday life and obstacles that may be encountered. During my stay, I lodged in Bethlehem, Palestine, and traveled by car and bus from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, Ramallah, Beit Jala, and Qalandyia. I was able to visit four Jewish settlements and four Palestinian camps/villages, as well as visiting Jerusalem and the Old City multiple times. My travels included going through multiple security checkpoints, interacting with both Israeli and Palestinian security forces, as well as a visit to the United Nations field office in Jerusalem to speak with refugee camp workers.

What I observed a few months ago with my own eyes in the West Bank confirmed much of what I had researched about Israeli settlements and water restrictions in the West Bank. Issues that I observed which were much more concerning but never conveyed through research involved the impact of transportation due to security checkpoints and identification control, as well as a lack of electricity and municipal services in the West Bank. In the following pages of this chapter, I will describe the infrastructure I observed in the West Bank today that has produced the current state of conditions which are a direct result of the failure of Israel and Palestine to live with one another.

Israel claims that security is one of the most important issues for their safety, as I will discuss this condition first. After arriving in Jerusalem by shuttle at 11:30 pm, I was



Photo above by Len Piechocki on Dec 28, 2016, at Qalandiya Checkpoint, West Bank.



Photo above by Len Piechocki on Dec 28, 2016, just south of the Qalandiya Refugee Camp.

immediately faced with how a check point worked when I needed to drive from Jerusalem to Bethlehem via checkpoint #300. Since I was lodging in Bethlehem during my stay with a Christian Palestinian family, the only person who could travel through the checkpoint to pick me up on the Israeli side was the wife of the family, who happened to be a Latvian citizen.

Palestinians who do not have an Israeli citizenship ID card cannot drive, or ride in a motorized vehicle through a checkpoint. Palestinians have to park and get out of their vehicle to walk through a security building to scan their fingerprint and their ID card to continue into Israel or Israeli controlled territory. After a Palestinian has successfully been identified without being a wanted person, he or she can proceed into Israel by walking, taxi, or bus. One's vehicle is left on the Palestinian side of the checkpoint. This is the only way possible for Palestinians to travel into Israel today.

The procedure and experience for me traveling through an Israeli checkpoint is totally different than for Palestinians. As an American with a valid passport, I can travel quickly through the checkpoint driving my rented vehicle, stopping momentarily to display my passport, and leaving exchanging pleasantries with Israeli military personnel that man the checkpoint. Exchanging greetings between Israeli soldiers and Palestinians does not occur during these encounters, much less even speaking to one another. Most conversation I witnessed between a soldier and a Palestinian at a checkpoint were one or two word commands, most times only a head nod. This is normal conversing that occurs between Israelis and Palestinians, barely communicating when absolutely necessary, whether at checkpoint or otherwise.

The first area of infrastructure I will describe is in transportation. The roadways with the various checkpoints are one type of hardship, while air travel and identification cards pose additional obstructions for Palestinians. Identification cards started to be issued after the 1967

war, but the strict administration and adherence to ID regulations under Israeli law came after the 1993 Oslo Accords. There are four variations of identification cards; West Bank Palestinian, Jerusalem Palestinian, Palestinian 'Arab' Israeli and Jewish Israeli. Palestinians living in the West Bank carry ID cards with orange covers (issued by the Israeli authorities) or green covers (issued by the Palestinian Authority) with an ID number on the PA cards which are essential to regulate access and movement, and is linked with the Israeli computer system.<sup>106</sup>

During my recent trip to the West Bank, I interviewed two Palestinians on the facts of these ID cards, and what information comes in relation with each holder. The first Palestinian was an older gentlemen, who was fluent in both English and Arabic. He stated that after the Oslo I Accords, the ID cards were absolutely required for Palestinians to move about in the West Bank and into Jerusalem. The cards have all the information such as an American driver's license, but is also linked to the Israeli computer system with an accompanying fingerprint which is corroborated each time with the ID card. The cards also hold computer information of political affiliations and criminal activity, which can be used to reject entrance to the intended destination.

Also, linked to the ID cards, whether you are an Israeli citizen or a Palestinian, is the licensing of your vehicle, color of your license plates, and where you are able to drive. Each of these items have an impact on your driving privileges. If you are a Palestinian living in the West Bank, you will be issued a driver's license and white license plates designating that you are Palestinian. With a very large and visible white license plate you cannot drive through a checkpoint, or into Jerusalem. If your car is registered in Israel, you have a large and visible yellow license plate that allows you to be able to drive in Israel, or through security checkpoints into the West Bank, if you are an Israeli citizen or a foreigner with an Israeli visa. To further

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<sup>106</sup> [http://osaarchivum.org/galeria/the\\_divide/cpt09files/jm\\_part4](http://osaarchivum.org/galeria/the_divide/cpt09files/jm_part4). Accessed on 12/31/2016.

complicate the driving logistics in Israel and Palestine, if you are able to drive in either Israel or Palestine, your vehicle has to have yellow license plates along with automobile insurance covering both the West Bank and Israel, which are separate coverages. To drive in either area, I had to find a Palestinian company to issue the coverage I needed to drive during my stay because Israeli companies do not offer coverage to anyone going into Palestine.

Even the GPS needed to drive in Israel and the West Bank required two different carriers. The MEMaps (Middle East Maps) GPS had both Palestine and Israel maps that were extremely accurate. But I had to have another smartphone with an Arab mobile phone carrier to use this GPS application. If I used Google Maps through my main cell phone, the GPS worked only through an Israeli mobile phone systems that did not recognize or publish West Bank roads. No matter who I interviewed during my stay, their answer for separate GPS, mobile phone carriers, auto licensing, and driving restrictions was for the purpose of security, according to the Israeli government. As an American visiting with a visa, I found that driving was exhausting, every day traveling through checkpoints, driving around security walls for miles. However, I was able to smoothly get through security without leaving my car. It would normally take me one hour to drive from Bethlehem to Old City Jerusalem which was only thirteen miles. On two separate occasions, I was delayed one hour and one and a half hours at the security gate because of heavy traffic volume. Additional guards were never brought in to alleviate the delays at the checkpoint, only one guard and one car at a time through the checkpoint. This displayed to me that checkpoints were made to be a severe obstruction in maneuverability which never could be trusted for dependable access times.

## An Identification Card Chart for Israelis and Palestinians

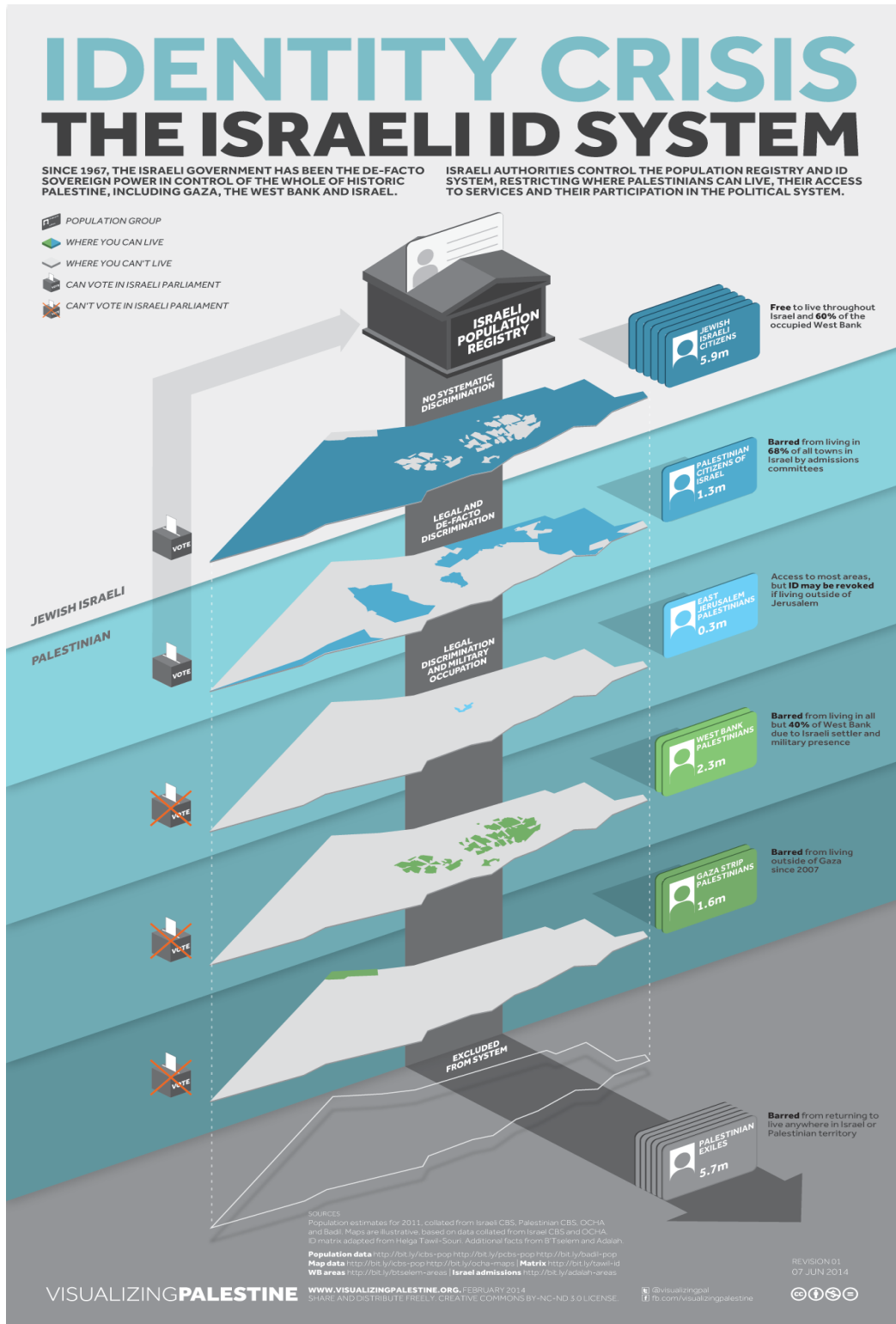


Chart above from [www.visualizingpalestine.org](http://www.visualizingpalestine.org)

A final note pertaining to travel was flying out of Palestine or Israel, where the only airport in Israel or Palestine is in Tel Aviv, Israel. Unless a Palestinian has a special permit issued by the Israeli government, Palestinians have to embark on a ninety-mile journey, that takes 8-10 hours to Amman, Jordan, to fly to their intended destination. The reason this journey takes so long is because of the time required to complete the security check at one of two bridges crossing into Jordan. Each person stated that you need to allow 6-8 hours for the hold up of security at the Jordanian border. By chance if you are issued a special permit to fly out of Tel Aviv, the Israeli government normally notifies you only 24 to 48 hours in advance of your travel date. This obviously makes it virtually impossible to purchase tickets in advance to fly out of Tel Aviv without forfeiting your money, because you are unable to fly out of your scheduled departing airport. A Palestinian whom I interviewed working for an NGO that has privileges to special permits because of working for a peace organization stated that only 1 in 10,000 Palestinians are issued a permit to fly from Tel Aviv.

Two areas of infrastructure that I observed and conducted interviews about were sanitary sewer systems and telecommunications. After visits to many Palestinian and refugee camps, I came to the conclusion that in the most of the West Bank the sewer systems are adequately operating and contained. I also did not witness any type of improper disposal of sanitary sewer waste onto the land or into water. Another infrastructure system I was able to deem adequate was the access to telephone and internet within the West Bank. I was able to use and navigate the telephone and internet systems while visiting without any problems. In interviews, Palestinians stated that if you wanted internet and telephone services, they could be acquired if you wanted to pay the monthly charges. Most villages have had the usage of internet for the past four to five years. Wifi was also available in many places of business throughout the West Bank.

Starting in 1950, United Nations formed relief camps for the displaced Palestinians after the Israeli declaration of independence. There are nineteen of these camps in the West Bank, occupied by a few thousand residents, to twenty-five thousand residents. Because of time constraints and dangerous security risks, I was unable to travel to Palestinian camps and villages to the far north and south of the West bank, where UN workers that I interviewed have witnessed poor sanitary sewer conditions when heavy rains occur in these areas. The camps I was able to visit were more centrally located in the West Bank. All of the UNRWA (United Nation Relief Worker Agency) are either Palestinian or foreigners. There are not any Jewish workers within the organization. When I was interviewing an employee who lives in the UNRWA Qalandiya Refugee Camp, he stated, “Only Palestinians and a few foreigners work as relief aid workers, never an Israeli citizen, they do wish to help the Palestinians in the camps.”

I also had the opportunity to interview an elderly Palestinian woman living in the Dheisheh Camp, located close to Bethlehem. When I asked her how long she had lived in the camp, she stated, “My husband and I came to this camp in 1949, fifty-eight years ago. For the first eight years we lived in a tent, until UNRWA started building permanent structures. By then we had three children, which meant we could live in a two-room structure. There were only one room or two room homes that were built.” She and her husband eventual raised five children at this camp where she still resides by herself. Even though she was extremely poor, she still offered us milk and cookies during our visit. She also eloquently repeated many times that she refused be bitter about her path in life, but grateful that she was alive and raised a wonderful family.

One area of infrastructure I did not research with great attention was electricity, but what I witnessed during interviews and visits with Palestinians is worth mentioning. Visiting during the winter months to the West Bank and Israel is much cooler. During my interviews, only one business and one residential home had a small, electric radiant heater. Everyone always had to wear a sweater or jacket in the homes because the owners and residents told me that the electrical systems are not strong enough to support a larger heater. A larger heater either dims the lights that are on, or the circuit breaker will trip from becoming too hot. This was the case when interviewing a family of five at the Beit Jibrin Camp. The family was extremely hospitable and invited me to have dinner with them. We sat in their home with our winter jackets on, and a small radiant heater burning in the middle of the room. At one point during the dinner, I finally looked off to my one side and the couple's one and a half year old daughter was sleeping in a bed of blankets on the floor. This was her bed where she had been sick for the past week.

I felt very fortunate to live in the comfort I am afforded in the United States. There were many times during my stay that the warmth of a sunny afternoon with a high of fifty degrees, was warmer than inside most homes in the West Bank. One last note, when I visited one shop in Bethlehem, the owner would cut off most of the lights in the shop when no one was in there momentarily, or had just left the shop. This was to save on the expense of electricity.

The last area of infrastructure observed and examined was water. As previously described in this paper, the expropriation of water resources started after the Six Days War, under Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin. Since the Oslo Accords I and II, water resources have been at the forefront of contention between the Israeli government and Palestinians. A major part of the water problem is explained through the following 2014 article. "The Palestinians would not have been forced to buy water from Israel if it were not an occupying power which controls their

natural resource, and if it were not for the Oslo II Accords, which limit the volume of water they can produce, as well as the development and maintenance of their water infrastructure. This 1995 interim agreement was supposed to lead to a permanent arrangement after five years. The Palestinian negotiators deluded themselves that they would gain sovereignty and thus control over their water resources.”<sup>107</sup> The power that Israel holds as the occupying nation in relationship to water resources is far reaching, and still holds to many of the agreements of Oslo II in 1995 that have never resulted in a permanent arrangement. Because the permanent agreement was never finalized, Israel continues to control and coordinate the drilling of wells, the amount of water Palestinians are allowed to use, and even expropriates water resources in the West Bank to use in Israel.

Conditions I observed and witnessed myself by lodging in the West Bank during my recent visit gave me first hand insight to everyday usage, which also was supported through my interviews with Palestinian villagers. During my interviews and observations in four different Palestinian villages, I noticed the rooftops were littered with large, black plastic tanks on every roof of the West Bank. I soon found out through my interviews that Palestinian camps and villages only have a pumped, pressurized water supply for 3-4 days every week, while the remainder days are supplied by the black reserve tanks on the roofs. Israeli water municipalities control when the water is turned on and off. Residents say the water is pumped consistently on the same days, but they are very restricted on the amount of usage. When staying in Palestine, you can hear the water being pumped out of the reserve tanks when needed, then stopping when the water spigot is closed. The same process is also used for hot water. You have to turn the hot water tank on about 30 minutes before taking a shower or washing dishes, then as you are using

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<sup>107</sup> <http://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/> Accessed on February 9, 2017.

the hot water, you can hear the pump pushing the hot water through the pipes. This system on one hand did not seem totally absurd, until I observed the Jewish settlements adjacent to the Palestinian villages.

The absurdity was very evident once I drove through the four Jewish settlements adjacent to the Palestinian villages because there were not black tanks on their rooftops, these communities had water supplies that were never shut off, and always pressurized. All of the settlements I observed had green, lush grass areas in small parks, along with hot water tanks on the roofs with solar panels to heat their hot water supply.

The Jewish settlements are very similar to the planned subdivision communities in the United States. All of the streets are clean, with bus stops located every half-mile within the settlement, along with multiple small, green area parks. These settlements are also located on hilltops that command beautiful views out over the countryside. Also, there is currently a light rail transit that runs north and south on the east side of Jerusalem, which serves as transportation from Jerusalem to many settlements. Finally, I also observed the settlements having malls and conveniently located Western chain stores nearby, and new community centers.

Politically, newly elected President Trump of the United States has taken a softer tone with Israel, as he and Benjamin Netanyahu have enjoyed a previous friendship. But since taking office in January, 2017, President Trump has publicly stated that new settlement construction in the West Bank is not helpful for the peace process. These tactics are eerily similar to the expropriation techniques used during the Begin era. The Israeli building announcements have drawn condemnations from many of Israel's closest allies. The European Union, as well as Britain, Germany and France, have all spoken out against the settlements. Since Trump took



Above photo of Pisgat Ze`ev Jewish Settlement on January, 2017 by Len Piechocki, - No Tanks



Above photo of Qalandiya Refugee Camp – taken January, 2017, by Len Piechocki

Photo showing the black water reserve tanks on the roofs used when water is not being pumped.

office, Israel has approved plans to build more than 6,000 new homes in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.<sup>108</sup>

As history always tends to repeat itself, three very distinct statements have appeared in this article of a struggle with the ownership of land in Palestine. First, as we have heard in the past from previous Israeli attempts at land expropriation, Israel is introducing a new law, a new technique to acquire land in the West Bank. Second, the United States, the EU, and UN condemn this attempt to acquire land in Palestine. Lastly, Israel continues to expand settlements in Palestine illegally, whether there are peace talks in process or not. This cycle has occurred consistently since the end of the Six Days War in 1967, starting under Yigal Allon, and continues under the leadership of Prime Netanyahu today.

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

## **Chapter IV – Conclusion**

Since I have returned from my visit to Israel and Palestine just a few months ago, I have had time to think and examine what has previously occurred in this long conflict with what I witnessed with my own eyes. Personally, as a conservative, Christian man from the United States, most people would assume I would favor the position of Israel and its autonomy as a nation, while opposing Palestinian wants and desires as a people without a state. I do believe that Israel should continue as an internationally recognized country, but I also believe that a Palestinian state should also be established and recognized internationally in the West Bank.

The conclusions I have come to accept after my visit have been that neither the Israelis, nor the Palestinians wish to live at this time with one another. A one-state solution with both groups living amongst one another would never work. Why it will never work is that Israel would only agree to a one-state solution if they were in complete control and governance. The control would be exactly the same as occurs now in the West Bank with Israel currently controlling Palestine against international law. The divisions go much deeper than can be read or researched.

The division between Palestinians and Israelis is not only in culture, religion, identity, and heritage, but as a drastic, visible opinion of the other. When I was driving around Jerusalem, I would travel from street to street, neighborhood to neighborhood, constantly switching back and forth from Arab named streets and communities, to Jewish named streets and communities. Each of these areas are under the possession and governance of Israel. The Jewish streets and communities were kept in perfect condition with nice sidewalks, streets, and signs, while the Arab streets and communities were dirty with trash, potholes in the streets, and left unmaintained

as if there was not any funding to repair and clean these areas. All of the streets are the responsibility of Israel, who took control of entire City of Jerusalem as the unified capital of the nation of Israel on June 10, 1967. The only conclusion left from this visible neglect is the unwillingness to care for anything that was not created for the sake of Israel. This is not a Jewish ideology, but a creation and fostered mindset instilled by Zionist principles that the leadership of the Likud Party have ingrained into the fabric of Israeli society. I can freely express these statements in regards to Zionist views because in the Tel Aviv airport, and in areas of Jerusalem, there are large banners that say, “Zionism, Our tradition and heritage for over 115 years!” Tragically, the Jewish community receives the brunt of violence and hatred as the cause for the conflict and division in Palestine.

What I have witnessed in Israel is a government of Zionist politicians who lead their nation with adversarial views, while the Israeli public wishes to live in peace with whoever is living in Israel or Palestine. Palestinians and Israelis want to live and conduct normal lives in this land. The disparity of infrastructure, level of housing and businesses, along with not having the ability for commerce to maneuver throughout the land has significantly hampered life in the West Bank for Palestinians, which does not appear to be changing any time in the near future. The only way that Palestinians and Israelis can live side by side in neighboring countries is if the United States plays a significant role in protecting not only Israel, but the right of Palestinians to govern themselves without Israeli influence, retaliation, or control of any aspect in the West Bank. Until then, Palestinians in the West Bank will live in oppressed conditions until the international community demands a change.

## Chronology

1897 – World Zionist Organization founded  
1914 – World War I started  
1917 – Balfour Declaration  
1920 – British Mandate over Palestine begins  
1933 – Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany  
1936- Arab Revolt begins  
1939 – British White Paper is released  
1939 – World War II begins  
1945 – World War II ends  
1946 – Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry report is issued  
1947 – UNSCOP visits Palestine in June/July, recommends Partition  
1947 – November, UN approves Partition plan  
May 14, 1948 – Proclamation of the State of Israel by David Ben-Gurion  
1948 – Arab-Israeli civil war  
1956 – Nasser nationalizes Suez Canal  
1964 – Palestinian Liberation Organization  
1964 – Israel initializes national water carrier system  
June 5-10, 1967 – Six Days War  
November, 1967 – UN passes Resolution 242.  
February, 1969 – Yasser Arafat elected Head of PLO  
1977 – Menachem Begin becomes prime minister of Israel  
March, 1979 – Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty  
December, 1987 – First Intifada begins  
February, 1988 – Hamas founded  
1991 – First Gulf War  
October, 1991 – Madrid Conference  
July, 1992 – Yitzak Rabin elected prime minister of Israel  
September, 1993 – Oslo I Accord signed  
1994 – Palestinian National Authority established as interim governing body per Oslo I  
May, 1994 – Palestinian self-rule begins in Jericho and the Gaza Strip  
September, 1995 – Oslo II Accord is signed  
November, 1995 – Prime Minister Rabin is assassinated  
May, 1996- Netanyahu elected prime minister of Israel  
May, 1999 – Ehud Barak elected prime minister of Israel  
July, 2000 – Camp David II summit in Washington, D.C.  
September, 2000 – Ariel Sharon visit to al-Aqsa sparks the Second Intifada  
February, 2001 – Sharon elected prime minister of Israel  
July, 2003 – Israel starts constructing security wall  
November, 2004 – Arafat dies, Mahmoud Abbas elected chairman of PLO  
August, 2005 – Israel withdraws from the Gaza Strip and dismantles settlements  
January, 2006 – Hamas wins parliamentary elections in the Gaza Strip  
March, 2009 – Netanyahu becomes prime minister of Israel

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