

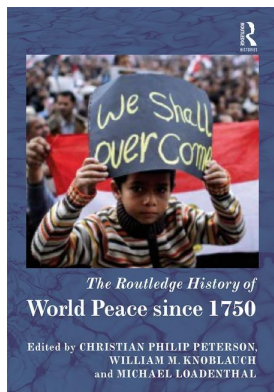
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Christian Philip Peterson, William M. Knoblauch, Michael Loadenthal

### **Israel and the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict**

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Galia Golan

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## ISRAEL AND THE ISRAELI–PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

*Galia Golan*

There have been numerous attempts to resolve the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, particularly since 1967. This chapter will attempt to determine why they have all failed, examining the underlying factors in Israel’s approach and the changes that occurred with regard to the major obstacles or challenges as viewed by Israel. However, any hopes for future breakthroughs in this peace process require an understanding of the tumultuous history of the area of Palestine. The pages that follow are one attempt at providing a usable history that peace studies scholars, social scientists, and humanists alike can use to begin to understand the difficulties at hand and hopefully derive lessons to better formulate strategies moving forward.

The Ottoman Empire (1299–1922) was broken up after World War I and its possessions divided between Britain and France.<sup>1</sup> The League of Nations (forerunner of the UN) accorded Britain a mandate over Palestine, and in 1922 Britain gave part of it, the east bank of the Jordan River, to its protectorate, the Emirate of Transjordan. In 1946 Britain recognized the independence of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The following year, the British returned the Palestine Mandate to the UN which then decided to partition that land for the creation of “an Arab and a Jewish state in Palestine” (UNGA Resolution 181). Civil war broke out in Palestine, followed by the declaration of the Jewish state and an invasion by neighboring Arab states. The ensuing war ended with Jordan holding the west bank of the Jordan River (annexed to Jordan in 1950) and the newly created Israel—which won the war—holding the rest of what had been mandated Palestine. No independent Arab state was created, and more than half of what had been the majority local population during the Mandate (some 700,000 Palestinians who were forced out or in some cases fled during the war) became refugees scattered throughout the region.

As in the case of most conflicts, there are varied characterizations of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict: Ethno-national, religious, territorial, postcolonial, and more. While this may be important for theoreticians or even students of conflict resolution, such characterizations may change over time, particularly in a long-standing conflict such as the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. For those involved, narratives matter, for they frame the ways in which protagonists view the conflict and the possible barriers, or keys, to its resolution. The two narratives in this case juxtapose Israel’s 1948 Independence Day and the Palestinians’ marking of the *Nakba* (catastrophe), each of which relates to matters of identity, history, rights, emotions, fears, and hopes. As such, these narratives touch on the core of the conflict—the claims and rights of each people to this piece of land.

Most Israelis see themselves as the victims in this conflict. They consciously or unconsciously see the present as a continuation—and also response—to centuries of persecution, exclusion, and attempted annihilation of the Jewish people. Various Israeli governments, political parties, and leaders have nourished this attitude, sometimes cynically exploiting it (especially the memory of the Holocaust), although in many cases they sincerely believe it. This attitude translates to: We wanted nothing but peace, coming to our historic homeland not as colonists or conquerors but seeking refuge from persecution, fleeing from the excesses of European nationalism or anti-Semitism. The narrative continues, proclaiming innocence of any unprovoked wrong-doing and defining the problem as one created by the refusal of the other side to live in peace. While some are motivated by ideology, nationalism, or religious fundamentalism, the “peace-loving victim” (with every right to be here) is a deep, even prevalent sentiment in Israel, one instilled and reinforced through various institutions of the state, most notably the education system. It is a sentiment that should not be underestimated, and it can be detected in Israel’s basic approach to “peacemaking” throughout the country’s history, generating, above all, mistrust of the Arabs.

There were different attitudes among various political groups in pre-state and post-1948 Israel, including a left wing that did not totally share the “victimhood” sentiments or mistrust. Nonetheless, almost all Israeli leaders were convinced that Arabs would never make peace with Israel, would never accept the country in the region, or its legitimacy as a state. There were good reasons to believe these predictions, including various outbursts of fighting, the actual war of 1948, and the post-1948 boycott (and secondary boycott of those who dealt with Israel) by the Arab states, which refused even to use the name Israel (opting instead to use “the Zionist entity”). Hostile rhetoric and violent clashes continued throughout the 1950s and early 1960s. While there were, nonetheless, contacts with Arab leaders, and also some attempts by neighboring states to reach agreement, until 1967 the conflict appeared to be a zero-sum game: Palestine *or* Israel on this piece of land. At the same time, the international community viewed the Palestinian issue primarily as one of refugees only—also a zero-sum situation in Israeli eyes, since allowing the return of the refugees was (and still is) viewed by most Israelis as restoring a Palestinian majority that would end Jewish sovereignty.<sup>2</sup> The 1967 war, precipitated by the escalation of tensions between Egypt and Israel, created a new situation. In the course of the war, Israel occupied territories belonging to Egypt, Jordan, and Syria that, presumably, could be returned in exchange for a peace settlement, without abandoning anything of Israel in its *de facto* 1949–1967 borders. Theoretically, there now was even a potential to resolve the Palestinian issue as well, in the form of a mini-state within part of these newly acquired territories. It is arguable that this is not the way either the Arab states or the Palestinians saw the situation, but there were contradictory signs. Changes began to take shape in Jordan, Egypt, and later within the Palestinian Liberation Movement (PLO) that suggested a potential for peace. But for the Israeli leadership, the deep conviction that the Arabs would never make peace persisted.

Immediately after the 1967 war, the Israeli Government considered what to do with its recently acquired territories, or, as ministers admitted, discussed what positions to present at the upcoming UN session; in either case, they assumed that the Arabs would not make peace.<sup>3</sup> The Government decided to return the Golan Heights and the Sinai (but not the Gaza Strip), subject to certain security measures. Apparently these decisions were never transmitted to either Egypt or Syria, and they were officially rescinded the following year. The Government also decided to reunite Jerusalem, keeping (and slightly later expanding and annexing) east Jerusalem, which had been under Jordanian rule since the city’s division

by opposing Jordanian and Israeli forces in the 1948 war.<sup>4</sup> For Israel, Jerusalem, in particular the Old City located in east Jerusalem, held religious and historic importance; it was also a key to legitimacy as a concrete symbol of the Jewish claim—and right—to be in this region. The Government also discussed the refugee issue, including the possibility of moving the large Palestinian refugee population of Gaza to the now captured West Bank or elsewhere.

Despite all these ideas, what they neglected to decide was the disposition of the West Bank itself, save one decision: The Jordan River was to be Israel's eastern border, with Israeli sovereignty over the adjacent Jordan Rift Valley. Both decisions would be deal breakers in subsequent initiatives from Jordan, initiatives that began in fact as early as July 2, 1967. Mistrust of Arab intentions led then Prime Minister Levi Eshkol and his successor Golda Meir to maintain that even if an agreement were signed, the Arabs would not keep it. Therefore, Israel must hold on to the Jordan Valley, for the possibility that even a third army would try to penetrate that border and cross the 60 kilometers of the West Bank to attack Israel at its narrow waist (just 15 miles between the pre-1967 line and the Mediterranean Sea). In essence, Israel preferred security over peace, since it did not believe the Arabs would make “genuine peace.”<sup>5</sup>

Generally Israel focused on the Arab states rather than the Palestinians. This choice was strategic, as only the neighboring states were deemed an existential threat to Israel. Nonetheless, in the summer after the 1967 war, the Israeli government considered handing over parts of the West Bank to local Palestinians, but only for autonomy or a limited type of statehood. Israel would keep control of the Jordan Valley and other areas within the West Bank (e.g., around Jerusalem) with the Jordan River becoming Israel's eastern border.<sup>6</sup> Thus, the proposed Palestinian state would consist of enclaves totally surrounded by Israel.<sup>7</sup> Unsurprisingly, discussions with leading local Palestinians found no takers, and the idea was dropped in favor of “the Jordanian option,” that is, returning some of the land to Jordan. In September 1967, Israel began Jewish settlement building in areas to be kept. This preference for security measures over peace continued in subsequent peace efforts with Egypt and Syria. Israeli rejection of peace proposals from Egyptian leader Anwar Sadat (in 1971 and early 1973) were due to the same mistrust, as were later demands in talks with Syria; Israel refused to forego the security measures it believed the territories accorded.

The short-lived proposal in the summer of 1967 for a limited Palestinian State demonstrated that Israeli leaders understood that the Palestinian issue needed to be treated as one of national self-determination. Nonetheless, the idea was dropped, references to a Palestinian “people” or national rights became anathema, at least in public statements and official policy. UNSC Resolution 242, proposed after the 1967 war, called for the return of “territories occupied in the recent conflict” and “the right of every state in the area . . . to live within secure and recognized borders,” but it also reflected the old approach, treating the Palestinians as refugees rather than a people. However, the emergence of the PLO by 1969 as an internationally prominent force shifted the focus back to national rights and demands for statehood. Due to dramatic terrorist operations and growing Soviet backing, the PLO succeeded in injecting the Palestinian national struggle into the international arena; for example, the 1975 UNGA “Zionism is Racism” resolution, that hardened Israel's positions and heightened its concerns. The international campaign, along with PLO terrorist attacks inside Israel, reinforced the Israeli public's conviction that the PLO charter's call for destruction of the state was an immediate and operative policy of the Palestinians. The Israeli government sought to cripple the PLO inside as well as outside the occupied territories, imprisoning or deporting not only radical groups but also Fatah operatives—including early

supporters of a two-state solution, thereby indirectly (if not directly) strengthening Fatah's major rivals, the Islamists.

While the Government continued settlement building, Israeli citizens debated returning the occupied territories to the neighboring Arab states, with majority opinion generally favoring the *status quo*—that is, holding on to most or all of the territory.<sup>8</sup> Israel's major political parties (Labor and the Likud in their various alignments and names) both treated the territories as “ours.” As then Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin explained in 1974, the only difference was that Labor was willing to give up some of them; thus, Labor's declared policy was “land for peace,” although just how much land was greatly limited. Moreover, Jordan, as distinct from Palestine, was the only partner to be considered. The PLO, with its demands for national rights and its use of terrorism, was viewed by Rabin, his party, and the public, as determined to destroy Israel and create a Palestinian state in its place. That is how demands for Palestinian national rights or a state, or calls for a “comprehensive settlement” that included the Palestinian issue, were interpreted.<sup>9</sup> This is why Israel extracted from US President Gerald Ford a commitment that Washington “will not recognize or negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organization so long as the Palestine Liberation Organization does not recognize Israel's right to exist and does not accept Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.”<sup>10</sup>

In fact, such an interpretation led, indirectly, to the Israeli–Egyptian peace agreement of 1979. In the 1973 (Yom Kippur) war, Israel suffered large losses from joint Egyptian and Syrian surprise attacks. Protesting Israeli unpreparedness, postwar demonstrations eventually led to the removal of Labor from power in the elections of 1977. For the first time, the right wing assumed power, under an ideologically and nationalistically motivated leadership dedicated to the greater land of Israel or the term for ancient Israel: *Eretz Israel*. Explicitly rejecting “land for peace,” Likud Prime Minister Menachem Begin spoke only of “peace for peace,” eventually undertaking a massive settlement campaign in the West Bank (including east Jerusalem) and Gaza. However, newly elected US President Jimmy Carter spoke of a Palestinian need for a Palestinian “homeland.”<sup>11</sup> Moreover, Carter sought to convene an international conference for a *comprehensive* settlement of the Israeli–Arab conflict, meaning one that would deal with the West Bank and the Palestinian issue (and rights). Begin was open to trying for an agreement with Syria or Egypt, which he did not consider *eretz Israel*, but his main concern became the possibility of losing the West Bank. Evidence of this concern could be found in his sharp reaction to the US–Soviet Communiqué of October 1, 1977 that spoke of the “legitimate rights of the Palestinians,” and his efforts to avoid an international conference. Indeed, Begin went on to give up the whole of Sinai in a separate peace agreement with Egypt as a means of relieving pressure regarding the West Bank.<sup>12</sup> Sadat too had preferred bilateral talks to get Egyptian territory back, rather than be hamstrung by a comprehensive conference on all the issues. His dramatic visit to Jerusalem and the opening of bilateral talks with Israel at Camp David in 1978 ended the international conference idea.

To avoid the appearance of making a separate peace with Israel at Camp David, Sadat insisted upon an autonomy plan for the West Bank, in addition to the Israeli–Egyptian peace agreement. At Begin's insistence, the autonomy plan included only local Palestinians (not the PLO) within a Jordanian delegation to work with Israel and Egypt during an interim period of autonomy until eventual negotiations on the final status of the West Bank. Begin was careful to use the term “Arabs of Palestine” rather than Palestinians, and he insisted upon side letters to the Americans clarifying Jerusalem as “one city, the indivisible capital”

of Israel. Most importantly for Begin, linkage between the Israel–Egypt peace agreement and the Autonomy agreement was not conditional. Bilateral peace could (and did) proceed without implementation of the Autonomy plan that was in fact allowed to fade away after desultory preliminary talks. This may have been Begin’s intention all along.

No real change in Israel’s policy or attitude regarding the Palestinians occurred for many more years. Israel’s involvement in the Lebanese civil war and, in particular, its 1982 invasion of the county was designed by Begin’s Defense Minister Ariel Sharon to strike a decisive blow to the PLO in Lebanon, thereby weakening the organization in the occupied territories. Even the PLO’s momentous decision in 1988 to accept UN resolutions 181 and 242, essentially accepting a two-state solution (in the creation of a Palestinian state limited to the West Bank and Gaza, that is 22 percent of pre-1948 Palestine) did not change the basic mistrust that guided Israeli policy. In contrast, the leading peace movement, Peace Now, held a massive demonstration in Tel Aviv demanding that the Likud government speak with the PLO. But it was only when the Labor party, leading a left-wing coalition government, returned to power in 1992 that a peace process would begin with the PLO.

Rabin had once vowed never to speak with the PLO, which he regarded as a terrorist organization out to destroy the state of Israel; on another occasion he called its leader, Yasser Arafat, a liar. Why then did he to decide to enter a peace process with this sworn enemy?<sup>13</sup> Rabin actually preferred to try first for an agreement with Syria, but when talks with the Syrians, conducted jointly with Americans, appeared to falter in the summer of 1993, Rabin approved the agreement reached in secret talks with the PLO in Oslo—talks initially authorized by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres some months earlier. Whatever the cause, Rabin’s speeches and comments indicate that he perceived a changed reality, and this new opportunity combined with an urgent need to end the conflict. The Soviet Union had collapsed, leaving the United States as the only global superpower. This fact not only weakened Israel’s Arab opponents, including the PLO; it also prompted them to seek a path through the Americans—a development helpful to Israel. Moreover, the PLO itself had been additionally weakened by its loss of Saudi financing after its support for Saddam Hussein in the 1991 Gulf War.

Changes had also taken place inside Israel, in large part due to the Palestinian uprising (termed “Intifada”) that began in the occupied territories in December 1987. While previous opinion polls had indicated majority Israeli support for the status quo, that is, holding on to the territories, the public now saw that the situation was in fact dynamic and not necessarily conducive to their personal security. Polls taken during what became known as the First Intifada showed Israelis’ increased willingness to compromise and relinquish some or all of the territories.<sup>14</sup> Judging from the reactions of the Israeli public to the Intifada, and also to the Iraqi SCUD missile attacks on Tel Aviv during the Gulf War, Rabin was concerned that the society of the 1990s was less resilient than the Israel of his youth, possibly less willing or able to withstand the challenges of continued conflict.<sup>15</sup> Israeli society had undergone changes, especially due to globalization and the move from a welfare state, with its collective ethos, to a neoliberal economy based on competition and individualism. Now, rather than solidarity, average Israelis wanted simply to get ahead. Finally, one last aspect of this situation was the growing threat of Islamism in the region and, in addition, Iran’s effort to create nuclear weapons (of which Israeli intelligence was aware by 1989). Rabin wanted to end the conflict and thereby remove Israel as a target of these regional developments. Thus, he spoke of a window of opportunity that might not last beyond five or seven years.<sup>16</sup>

Previously, Rabin had argued that “no Arab leader would ever make genuine peace or normal relations with Israel” although he acknowledged that this could change. It would take time, and Israel would have to test the other side. Thus, the Oslo Accords were *interim* agreements spread over a five-year period in which the adversary could be tested and trust presumably built. More specifically, the Oslo Declaration of Principles, signed on the White House lawn on September 13, 1993—alongside a number of subsequent agreements (e.g., economic matters) together known as the Oslo Accords—called for staggered (but not delineated) withdrawals of the Israeli military, election of a Palestinian Authority for self-rule, and talks on the final status of the territories set to begin no later than three years from the start of the withdrawals and end within five years. The main topics left for the final status talks were: Borders, security, refugees, settlements, and Jerusalem (the last was explicitly excluded from the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority). However, the Accords did state that “nothing done or agreed upon during the interim period should prejudice or preempt the outcome of the final status talks.”<sup>17</sup> Since Israel had refused to discuss settlement building prior to the final status talks, the Palestinians interpreted this clause to mean that new settlements should not be built.

Another important principle asserted in the Accords was that the West Bank and the Gaza Strip be considered “a single territorial unit.” Any disputes that might arise were to be resolved through negotiation, arbitration, or other agreed upon means. A second major agreement, the 1995 Oslo II Accord, added details to all the interim arrangements, but still referred to Israeli withdrawals as redeployments to unspecified military locations. It outlined a schedule for three remaining withdrawals (over an 18-month period). Pending these withdrawals, three types of control were created according to areas temporarily designated as areas A, B, and C within the West Bank. Area A would be under full Palestinian civil and security control; Area B would be under Palestinian civil control but Israeli security control; Area C would be under full Israeli civil and security control. There were to be gradual shifts of parts of Area C to B and from B to A. The delineation of permanent Israeli or Palestinian control, namely the final borders, were to be determined in the final status talks. With the halting of the Oslo process before implementation of all of the scheduled withdrawals, these areas became, and remain today, fixed in time; thus today Israel still has full control over Area C which consists of 60 percent of the West Bank. Israel also maintains control of security and movement outside the Palestinian cities (these cities are Area A, that is, theoretically, under full Palestinian security and civil control).<sup>18</sup>

Perhaps the most important part of the Oslo Accords were the letters of mutual recognition that accompanied the Declaration of Principles. According to Arafat’s letter, “the PLO recognizes the right of the State of Israel to exist in peace and security . . . and renounces the use of terrorism and other acts of violence,” along with a commitment to remove the PLO Charter’s references to the destruction of Israel. Rabin appeared to offer far less; he merely recognized the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Regardless, this was the first time Israel officially acknowledged that there *was* a Palestinian people, a stark contrast to the Israeli ban (by law) on contacts with the PLO and previous Israeli efforts to find alternative partners to the PLO, locally, or with Jordan. This exchange of letters demonstrated the magnitude of the Oslo breakthrough, accompanied as it was by the return of Arafat and thousands of PLO people to Gaza and the West Bank in the summer of 1994.

Most Israelis and Palestinians greeted the accords warmly, with a reported 65 percent in favor on both sides. In fact, grassroots support was quite strong, as evidenced by joint

activities, dialogues, and businesses that appeared spontaneously. Initial optimism was boosted by the large number of countries that opened, or resumed, diplomatic relations with Israel, along with the increased tourism and international praise following the signing of the Accords. Yet, there was also stiff opposition to Oslo, increasingly virulent on the part of the settlers and their right-wing supporters. There was also a good deal of latent mistrust, which Rabin sought to dissipate with rhetoric about the changed situation in the world, the fact that Israel (and by implication the Jewish people) was no longer alone and weak; that the enemy had also undergone a change, and that peace was indeed possible. Eventually, he spoke about what may have been the main factor motivating him to seek an agreement: The demographic issue. If Israel were to continue to control the occupied territories, Jews would soon be outnumbered in the area between the sea and the Jordan River. If Israel were to remain a democracy, the Palestinians in the occupied territories must be given citizenship; if that were to happen, Jews would soon become a minority in what would be a bi-national state, an eventuality that stood in contradiction to the Zionist dream of a state for the Jewish people.

Opposition came from extremists on the Palestinian side as well. From almost the first days of the Accords, Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, based mainly in Gaza, launched terror attacks inside Israel. These became more deadly in the form of suicide bombings that Arafat appeared unable, or perhaps unwilling, to control.<sup>19</sup> At the same time, Israeli opponents became increasingly threatening and occasionally violent both in the occupied territories and inside Israel, culminating in the assassination of Rabin at the end of a massive peace demonstration held under the slogan “no to violence, yes to peace.” His assassin was a religiously observant Israeli law student. Many scholars consider Rabin’s assassination to have ended Oslo. Rabin’s successor, Shimon Peres, made some progress in keeping Oslo alive, but Peres did not have Rabin’s security credentials; after a series of mistakes he was voted out of office, albeit by a slim majority. A particularly deadly series of terrorist attacks by Hamas and the Islamic Jihad contributed to his defeat, bringing the Likud under Binyamin Netanyahu to power in May 1996. Netanyahu had little interest in continuing the peace process, doing only the very minimum pressed upon him by the Americans. Oslo came to a virtual halt, with only a minor revival when Labor returned to power under the leadership of Ehud Barak in May 1999.

Oslo failed in that it was not fully implemented. From the outset there were delays, problems, and violations—all quickly exploited, if not actually initiated, by Oslo’s opponents. The absence of a monitoring system for implementation was one of the flaws in the Accords. Additionally, there were spoilers on both sides, but Islamist acts of terrorism indirectly bolstered the spoilers on the Israeli side, as the interim period for building trust turned hostile. Israel continued its expropriation of land and settlement building and neglected to implement promised prisoner releases. Israel also maintained responsibility for settlers’ safety, leading to bypass roads for settlers and increased checkpoints controlling Palestinian movement to and from areas vacated by the Israeli army. Beyond acts of violence, there were Palestinian violations as well, such as the arming of their police beyond the agreed upon number of weapons allowed.<sup>20</sup>

The Accords themselves contained major flaws. First, the extended period of the agreement allowed time for spoilers to organize and mobilize opposition. Second, the Accord was open-ended in nature. If there had been a clear goal, such as the creation of a Palestinian state and the end of the conflict, hardships or perceived sacrifices might have been rendered more tolerable in the eyes of potential spoilers. Instead, such outcomes appeared even farther away



as violence mounted. While Rabin said he would continue the peace process despite the terror attacks, he himself appeared to hesitate when he said (in his last speech to the Knesset before the assassination) that he envisioned Israel remaining in the Jordan Valley and “*a Palestinian entity that is less than a state.*” He added that Israel’s security border would be in the Jordan Rift Valley, the same deal-breaking demand Israel had presented to Jordan in 1967, and—despite Rabin’s admission to US President Bill Clinton that the lesson of the Gulf War was that missile warfare proved that land no longer offered a security buffer.<sup>21</sup>

After three years of an unpopular Netanyahu government (mainly due to domestic issues), Barak led Labor back to power in 1999 with promises to reach an agreement with the Palestinians within a year and a half. But Barak made two tactical errors. First, he chose to deal first with Syria (to secure the Israeli–Lebanese border after his intended withdrawal of Israeli troops from southern Lebanon), and second, he skipped the still remaining West Bank withdrawals, claiming that it was unwise to give up “assets” without getting something in return.<sup>22</sup> He initiated quiet lower-level talks on final status issues—talks that progressed beyond, possibly, what Barak himself favored. As the end of President Clinton’s term approached, and Barak himself faced defections from his coalition, he pressed for a summit, believing that Arafat needed to be forced to make decisions. Arafat objected that talks were still premature, but Clinton agreed to an effort to reach a final accord at a three-way summit.

The story of the July 2000 Camp David summit is a complicated one, and given the absence of an official record it has been interpreted differently even by the participants themselves.<sup>23</sup> Two lasting, negative results of the meeting were Israel’s proclaimed conclusions (echoed by Clinton) that Barak had made a most generous offer, and that there was no partner for Israel on the other side.<sup>24</sup> Barak did raise several proposals at Camp David, but notably he sought to hold on to parts of the West Bank (8–13 percent) to accommodate some 80 percent of the settlers. Moreover, Israel would keep the Jordan Valley for at least ten years, plus access roads to that region and Israeli early warning sites nearby. The proposals were, indeed, more generous than any previous Israeli leader had ever offered. Still, Palestinians realized that they would receive less than the area of the West Bank (and Gaza) for their state, while the Israeli presence in the Jordan Valley (i.e., Palestine’s eastern border with Jordan), meant not only a Palestinian state surrounded territorially by Israel, but one cut into enclaves by two bisecting roads and Israeli positions. At times, Barak seemed (unexpectedly) willing to concede parts of east Jerusalem, although his positions varied. In the end, the meeting collapsed over the Temple Mount/Harm al-Sharif issue (namely, sovereignty over this major holy site in east Jerusalem).<sup>25</sup> It did not help that Arafat denied Israel’s attachment to the city, claiming that the ancient Jewish temple had not even been located in Jerusalem.<sup>26</sup>

Israeli positions at Camp David reflected the long-held mistrust that, as in the past, propelled security related demands but also positions linked to legitimacy (for example, regrading Jerusalem). These positions also reflected a newer, political consideration: The large settler population. There were also strong cultural and personal differences between the two leaders, but there were other subjective problems in the negotiations as well. As distinct from an interest-based approach, the Israeli attitude was that the territories were “ours” exclusively and thus any concession was an act of generosity—one clearly contradicting the Palestinians’ sense of rights. Moreover, Israeli negotiators adopted a false symmetry in suggesting that Israeli compromises be met with Palestinian ones, whereas the Palestinians believed they had already made their “historic compromise” when the PLO opted for a mini state in the West Bank and Gaza, just 22 percent of mandated Palestine.

After Camp David, negotiations continued quietly between the two parties until opposition leader Ariel Sharon's provocative September 28, 2000 visit to the Temple Mount. Called by the Palestinians Haram el-Sherif, this is the highly sensitive location of the al-Aqsa mosque that Muslims often view as under physical threat by Israel. Palestinian violence immediately erupted, as Arafat had warned Prime Minister Barak would happen if Israel allowed the visit.<sup>27</sup> A strong Israeli military response followed, ushering in the second Intifada. Unlike the first Intifada, the Palestinians now had weapons, and the second Intifada became an armed confrontation between the two peoples, with some 3,000 Palestinians and 1,000 Israelis killed, mainly civilians. Almost daily Palestinian terror attacks throughout Israel solidified the "no-partner" thesis among Israelis, while harsh Israeli reprisals, including military reoccupation of many areas of the West Bank and the imposition of stringent security measures fed extremist elements on the other side. As the Intifada raged, and just before elections that Barak was slated to lose, bilateral talks were held in Taba, producing virtually no results. Before his own exit from office, Clinton presented both parties with a set of Parameters for an agreement, demanding a response within a few days.<sup>28</sup> Barak responded positively, albeit with reservations, while Arafat expressed specific objections without rejecting or accepting (until a year after Clinton was no longer in office). But the Parameters remained a model for years to come.

The Likud reassumed power in February 2001, and under the leadership of Ariel Sharon, violence continued. Yet, both Israeli and Palestinian public opinion polls showed majority support for a two-state solution and negotiations, although there was a decline in the belief that a solution could be achieved.<sup>29</sup> There were a number of outside attempts to stop the violence, including a "Road Map" designed by a newly formed Quartet (US, Russia, the UN, and the European Union) and promulgated by US President George W. Bush. The plan called for very clear stages of reciprocal concessions. The first stage was to include democratization of the Palestinian authority, an end to terrorism, Israeli withdrawal to the pre-Intifada lines, and the halt of settlement construction. In the second stage, there was the option of creating a Palestinian state in temporary borders, an option rejected by the Palestinians, and in the third stage, an international conference to reach a final agreement for the creation of a Palestinian state with permanent borders. Israel officially accepted the Road Map, with fourteen resolutions that would have greatly altered it. The Road Map, however, was never implemented, for Sharon insisted that *first* there be a total end of Palestinian violence and what he termed the dismantling of the "infrastructure" of terrorism.

There was, however, significant domestic pressure on Sharon, especially from military and former security sources at the highest echelons, to move towards peace. Also pressing him to action was the Geneva Initiative, a detailed peace plan that had been unofficially negotiated between leading Israeli and Palestinian figures. Sharon cited this as an example of negative plans that might be forced upon Israel.<sup>30</sup> In this context he also referred to the Arab Peace Initiative (API), adopted by the Arab League in February 2002. The API offered Israel peace, normal relations, and end of conflict, all in exchange for withdrawal to the June 4, 1967 lines, the creation of a Palestinian state with its capital in east Jerusalem, and an agreed upon just solution to the refugee problem in accordance with UNGA resolution 194.<sup>31</sup> In response to all of this, Sharon announced a plan for unilateral Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, including the dismantling of the settlements there and four small settlements in the West Bank.

This Disengagement Plan, implemented in August 2005, was unilateral since Sharon refused to deal with the Palestinian leadership so long as any violence continued. But uni-

lateralism meant that there was no security agreement to regulate post-withdrawal relations and prevent future attacks. Instead Israel would maintain control of all access to the area.<sup>32</sup> It is not clear what Sharon's intentions were, but a significant reversal had in fact occurred in Israeli policy. In September 2001 Sharon expressed support for the creation of a Palestinian state, which he reiterated in a press conference with Bush and accepted in the preamble of the Road Map of May 2003. It is not clear how withdrawal from Gaza would affect such a state, but the idea may have been motivated by the demographic issue: By leaving Gaza, Israel would ostensibly be ending the occupation of 1.3 million Palestinians. Alternatively, Sharon may have simply been trying to reduce American pressure on Israel, a possibility suggested by the addition of the four West Bank settlements to be evacuated (as suggested by the Americans).<sup>33</sup> Sharon claimed that the disengagement was only a beginning, and there is some evidence to suggest his intention to withdraw further from the West Bank. Unprecedented for a Likud prime minister, in May 2003 Sharon publicly spoke of the "occupation" in a speech to his Knesset faction, saying: "We don't like the word, but this is occupation. To keep 3.5 million Palestinians under occupation is bad for Israel and the Palestinians. Do you want to stay forever in Jenin, in Nablus, in Ramallah, in Bethlehem?"<sup>34</sup> He reportedly examined the possibility of removing more, even all, Israeli settlements from the West Bank.<sup>35</sup> It is therefore possible that Sharon, like Rabin before him, was motivated by the fear of the emergence of a bi-national state should Israel continue to hold on to the occupied territories—as he, himself, implied.

Because his own party, Likud, had been split over the Disengagement Plan, Sharon left and created a new centrist party named Kadima (Forward), composed of people from the Likud, Labor, and other parties. New elections were scheduled for March 2006, but at the beginning of January Sharon had a stroke and fell into what became a prolonged, ultimately fatal coma. Deputy Prime Minister Ehud Olmert became interim prime minister, subsequently elected in his own right when Kadima won the March elections. Initially, Olmert advocated a continuation of unilateral withdrawal from the West Bank, but he soon decided to pursue a peace accord in bilateral talks with Mohammed Abbas, who had replaced Arafat after the latter's death in 2004.<sup>36</sup> Pressed primarily by US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Olmert agreed to an international conference, held at Annapolis in December 2007 with the participation of over a dozen Arab countries. However, Olmert then resumed the bilateral track, preferring to build trust with the Palestinian leader on a personal basis. Meeting separately, sometimes in the presence of Rice, and parallel to more formal talks between Israeli, Palestinian, and American teams, Olmert and Abbas actually came quite close to a settlement of the conflict.

According to numerous speeches and interviews by both leaders, Olmert proposed Israeli annexation of 6.3 percent of the West Bank (including 5.8 percent in land swaps) while Abbas spoke of 1.9 percent. The two appeared to agree on the earlier Clinton Parameters regarding east Jerusalem: The Arab neighborhoods under Palestinian sovereignty, the Jewish neighborhoods of east Jerusalem (actually settlements) to be under Israeli sovereignty (Abbas excluded Har Homa, a settlement built after Oslo). The controversial holy areas were to be under a trusteeship of Israel, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and the United States. The refugee issue remained unresolved, with Olmert speaking of allowing some 15,000 refugees to return over a ten-year period. Abbas spoke to the Americans about approximately 60,000 refugees but also was reportedly thinking of 150,000, often declaring his intention not to change the character [read Jewish] of the state of Israel.<sup>37</sup> The one topic finalized was security. Olmert agreed that the border with Jordan including the adjacent Jordan Valley be protected

by an international force, NATO, under US command. Thus, for the first time Israel gave up its 1967 demand to control the Jordan River border that would have meant Israel territorially surrounding the Palestinian state, controlling all land exits and entrances.<sup>38</sup>

While Abbas, like Olmert, subsequently said that the two were close to a final agreement on all the issues, in fact Abbas did not respond to Olmert's proposal when presented to him on September 16, 2009, leaving commentators to speculate as to why. The reason may have been the fact that Olmert had already announced his resignation due to corruption charges about to be brought against him, leaving him a lame duck leader.<sup>39</sup> Still, Olmert came closer to a peace agreement with the Palestinians than any previous Israeli leader. His willingness to compromise on the matter of the Jordan Valley or Jerusalem, for example, was no longer a matter of trust or mistrust as it had been for so many Israeli leaders before. Rather, the motivation of Olmert, the son of a well-known right-wing political family, was similar to that of Rabin: Namely, a concern over demographics. Many on the right had come to grasp Labor's traditional dichotomous claim: Democracy and a bi-national state (in which Jews become a minority, possibly a persecuted minority) or continued occupation and *de facto* apartheid. According to Olmert, other factors also played a role, in particular the violence of the second Intifada, during which Olmert, as mayor of Jerusalem, had eulogized many victims. This is not to say that the moral issue of continued rule over another people was not a factor, for Olmert or Rabin or others. But most importantly for Olmert, as for Rabin, and possibly even for Sharon, was the conviction that continued occupation was a greater threat to Israel's future existence than the risks of peace.<sup>40</sup>

Netanyahu's center and increasingly religious right coalitions succeeded Olmert, winning the 2009, 2013, and 2015 elections. The election of US President Barack Obama brought pressure for a resumption of talks, which may have been the reason for Netanyahu's surprising 2009 speech supporting a two state solution.<sup>41</sup> Netanyahu spelled this out as a demilitarized state (not a new demand), reviving both the positions that Jerusalem must remain the undivided capital of Israel and that Israel must maintain a military presence in the Jordan Valley. He added that Israel would not accept any refugees, and he introduced a demand: That the Palestinians recognize Israel as "the homeland of the Jewish people," rephrased later as "the nation-state of the Jewish people."<sup>42</sup> This rhetoric was not completely new, but such language had not been used in agreements with either Egypt or Jordan. Inasmuch as the PLO had already officially recognized Israel's right to exist within secure and recognized borders, many considered this new demand a tactic designed to fail or further impede negotiations.

Obama insisted upon a ten-month freeze on settlement building for a period of negotiations. However, the freeze allowed for completion of some 3,000 construction sites as well as the construction of public buildings and houses in east Jerusalem. This led Abbas to balk at negotiating, and Netanyahu refused to extend the freeze when the ten months ended in September 2010. The result was that only indirect, sporadic negotiations took place, with virtually no progress. As usual, Israel insisted upon speaking primarily of security arrangements, and the Palestinians primarily of borders. Two years later the Americans initiated another set of talks under Secretary of State John Kerry, promising to reach an agreement by mid-2014. These were indirect negotiations, as Kerry met with each leader, after certain concessions were made by each side. Wary of international pressure, Israel demanded and received a Palestinian agreement to suspend PLO membership applications to organizations such as the International Criminal Court; in exchange Israel agreed to complete prisoner releases promised in the Oslo Accords, albeit in four stages over the period

of the talks. After achieving little progress, Kerry lowered his sights to obtaining a Framework Agreement rather than a peace treaty. As Kerry's deadline approached, Netanyahu faced vociferous right-wing opposition to releasing Palestinian prisoners who were citizens of Israel; he announced a delay of the scheduled final prisoner release, followed by an announcement of 700 new housing units to be built in east Jerusalem. In response, Abbas submitted applications for admission to fifteen international bodies. With that, the Kerry initiative came to an end.

The Kerry talks were marked by mutual mistrust which in part was fueled by Netanyahu's continued insistence upon Palestinian recognition of Israel as the nation state of the Jewish people. Netanyahu also played on domestic public opinion, manipulating traditional fears that the Palestinians would deny the very legitimacy of the state or Jews' rights to self-determination. Indeed, the failure of Oslo, and especially the violence of the second Intifada, went a long way toward strengthening this argument and the "no partner" claim. While a majority of Israelis continued to support the two-state solution, a large majority also believed that it would never happen. Continued rocket fire from Gaza by Islamist groups and Hamas convinced many Israelis that the Palestinians opposed not just the occupation but the very existence of Israel. Indeed, a poll in 2016 indicated that 71 percent of Jewish Israelis did not think the situation even in the West Bank should be described as an "occupation." Playing on fears, Netanyahu blurred the differences between Hamas and the PLO. Hamas, which had taken over Gaza, was unwilling to recognize Israel, while the PLO had in fact repeatedly recognized Israel's right to exist in secure and recognized borders. He also focused on the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement as a Palestinian de-legitimization campaign against Israel's right to exist. More immediately, Netanyahu increasingly invoked the danger of radical Islam, specifically ISIS, as the reason Israel must control all of the West Bank "for the foreseeable future."<sup>43</sup>

Today Israelis generally ignore (and deny) the occupation. The majority are concerned with daily life and would prefer to see the conflict end, mainly so that they could continue to get on with their lives without periodic wars or terror attacks. Thus, opinion polls have shown that if the Government were to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians, along the lines of the Clinton Parameters (including land swaps to accommodate most of the settlers), there would be majority public support. Evacuating settlements, that is, moving thousands of settlers, plus actions by right-wing religious spoilers, would all be problems, as would the growing numbers of Islamist extremists on the Palestinian side. But Israelis generally want an agreement, and if they were convinced that it would end the conflict, meaning also a belief that there was a Palestinian leadership that could make an agreement stick, there is reason to believe the obstacles could be overcome.

The deep mistrust that characterized Israel's early governments dominated Israeli positions regarding the conflict leading to a preference for deal-breaking security demands for many years. Peace was viewed as too great a risk. Only a change in threat perception produced a shift in the Israeli approach to the conflict with the Palestinians. For Rabin and later Olmert, the demographic issue posed a greater threat than peace for Israel's future. Once Jews were outnumbered in the area, either continued occupation would lead to an apartheid situation or a bi-national state would emerge, in which Jews would be a minority. An end to the occupation in the form of the two-state solution was the only way to prevent either eventuality. Netanyahu, whether out of the old element of mistrust, or his party's traditional ideological attachment to "greater Israel," has joined forces with the messianic religious right. Given such a coalition, Israel's approach to the conflict can but strengthen the more extreme

elements on the Palestinian side, further distancing the chances for peace. To forestall these forces there must be support for a leadership, on both sides, that will return to and complete the task of ending the conflict. Past failures have taught us that monitoring and international forces may replace the need for trust, but, most of all, spoilers must be dealt with; pragmatic interests rather than conflicting narratives must guide negotiations, and the goal, to be reached without delay, must be clear: Securing independence and freedom for both Israelis and Palestinians.

### Notes

- 1 The Sykes-Picot agreements were one of the results, adjusted and applied at the San Remo Conference 1922. During the war the British had made various promises to both Jews and Arabs regarding the future disposition of the Turkish Empire; one of these was the Balfour Declaration in favor of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, confirmed at the San Remo Conference.
- 2 See Elie Podeh, *Chances for Peace* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2015), 18–78.
- 3 Galia Golan, *Israeli Peacemaking since 1967: The Factors Behind the Breakthroughs and Failures* (London: Routledge Publishers, 2014), 10–28; Israel State Archives (ISA), (Hebrew), Documents 1–6: a-8164/7; a-8164/8; a-8164/9; a-7634/5 (Government Publications, Periodic History, *Stenographic Minutes of Meetings of the Government 18 and 19 June 1967*).
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 As later Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was to say in 1974. For quote, see Yitzhak Rabin, *The Rabin Memoires* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996), 250.
- 6 ISA, *Minutes*; Avi Raz, *The Bride and the Dowry: Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinians in the Aftermath of the June 1967 War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), 26–37.
- 7 Reuven Pedatzur, *Embarrassing Victory: The Eshkok Government Policy in the Territories after the Six Day War* (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv: Bitan, 1996), 41–42; Raz, 2012, 26–30; Tom Segev, *1967: Israel, the War, and the Year that Transformed the Middle East* (New York: Metropolitan, 2007), 502–522.
- 8 Jacob Shamir and Michal Shamir, *The Anatomy of Public Opinion* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 168–174.
- 9 See conversation between Yitzhak Rabin, then Israeli ambassador to Washington, with then National Security Advisor to the President Henry Kissinger in *Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS) XXV, Doc.23, “Memorandum of Conversation,” February 22, 1973.
- 10 Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 112, “Israel–United States Memorandum of Understanding,” Volume 3: 1974–1977, September 1, 1975; Resolution 338 ended the 1973 War, invoking UNSC 242 and calling for peace negotiations.
- 11 American Presidency Project, President Jimmy Carter, Clinton, Massachusetts Remarks and a Question-and Answer Session at the Clinton Town Meeting, accessed March 16, 1977, [www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=7180](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=7180).
- 12 See accounts: William Quandt, *Camp David*, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1986; Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoires of a President* (New York: Bantam, 1982); Galia Golan, “Sadat and Begin, Successful Diplomacy to Peace,” in *Foreign Policy Breakthroughs*, ed. Robert Hutchings and Jeremy Suri (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 121–147.
- 13 Rabin speech, *Protocol, The One Hundred Twenty-ninth Session of the Thirteenth Knesset*, Tuesday, September 21, 1993; comments to Dennis Ross in Dennis Ross, *The Missing Peace* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004), 91.
- 14 Shamir and Shamir, *The Anatomy of Public Opinion*, 171; Hanna Levinsohn and Elihu Katz, “The Intifada is not a War: Jewish Public Opinion on the Israel–Arab Conflict,” in *Framing the Intifada: People and Media*, eds. Akiva Cohen and Gadi Wolfsfeld (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1993), 53–61; Polls also indicated a greater belief in the possibility of peace, perhaps because of the Madrid Conference (of Israel, the Arab states and local—not PLO—Palestinians) that the Americans had promised the Arab states on the eve of the Gulf War and forced on the right-wing government of Shamir in October 1991. The Madrid Conference produced bilateral talks that made little progress, generating the decision to hold the unofficial track-two talks with the PLO in Oslo.

- 15 Yitzhak Rabin, *Memoirs* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996), 366–367; *Haaretz*, July 20, 1993; Eitan Haber interview, History Channel, Israel Television, April 16, 2013; Shlomo Ben Ami, *Scars of War, Wounds of Peace* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 203, 208.
- 16 *Haaretz*, August 17, 2012; Rabin’s presentation of his government, July 13, 1992, (MFA), Rabin Speeches, Vol. 1314: 1992–1994; Yitzhak Rabin, “Nitzul Pesek Ha-zman,” [“Exploiting the Time Out”], *Politika*, 44 (March), 1992, 28.
- 17 Texts of the DOP and exchange of letters, including my quotations, can be found in Galia Golan, *Israel and Palestine: Peace Plans and Proposals from Oslo to Disengagement* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Weiner, 2008), 169–188.
- 18 See the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs online at: [www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/peace/guide/pages/the%20israeli-palestinian%20interim%20agreement%20-%20annex%20i.aspx](http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/peace/guide/pages/the%20israeli-palestinian%20interim%20agreement%20-%20annex%20i.aspx) (accessed December 20, 2017).
- 19 These began after an Israeli settler opened fire on Palestinians at prayer in Hebron in February 1994, killing 29.
- 20 While the total number is not known, Israel repeatedly claimed that the Palestinian police had more than the 15,000 light weapons allowed by Oslo. This became particularly evident during the Second Intifada (2000–2005).
- 21 Bill Clinton, *My Life* (New York: Vintage Books, 2005), 545.
- 22 Protocol, The Twenty-sixth Session of the Fifteenth Knesset, Wednesday, September 8, 1999; see also, Gilead Sher, *The Israeli–Palestinian Peace Negotiations, 1999–2001* (London: Routledge, 2006), 2.
- 23 Participants’ books include: Gilead Sher, *The Israeli–Palestinian Peace Negotiations, 1999–2001* (London: Routledge, 2006); Clinton, *My Life*, 936–946; Dennis Ross, *The Missing Peace* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004); Martin Indyk, *Innocent Abroad* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2009); Aaron David Miller, *The Much Too Promised Land* (New York: Bantam Books, 2008); Madeline Albright, *Madame Secretary* (New York: Harper Collins, 2003); Mahmud Abbas (Abu Mazen), *Through Secret Channels* (Reading: Garnet, 1995); Ahmed Qurie (Abu Ala), *From Oslo to Jerusalem* (London: Tauris, 2006).
- 24 The *Peace Index* (Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research, Tel Aviv University) at the end of July 2000 asked: “Do you feel that the positions presented by Barak at Camp David for the final stage of the peace process were too tough, too conciliatory, or appropriate, meaning not too harsh and not too yielding?” The majority, 44 percent, replied that they were too conciliatory; only 9 percent deemed Barak’s positions too harsh, and 35 percent felt they were appropriate. Fewer women (40 percent) than men (48 percent) believed Barak was too conciliatory.
- 25 Ross, *op.cit.*, 718.
- 26 Martin Indyk, *Innocent Abroad*, 313–325.
- 27 Albright, *Madame Secretary*, 494.
- 28 Some 3 percent annexation but with an equal swap of Israeli land to Palestine; resettlement of refugees including some to Israel as well as Palestine and other states; division of Jerusalem according to the populations in each neighborhood and joint or international control of the holy places; and an international force in the Jordan Valley.
- 29 For polls, see Asher Arian, *Israel Public Opinion on National Security*, Memorandum no. 60, INSS, August 2001; “Focus Section: Public Opinion,” *Palestine–Israel Journal*, 11(3–4), 2004/5 and the *Peace Index*, monthly 2000–2002.
- 30 For example, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Knesset Speech by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on the Disengagement Plan,” March 15, 2004. The Geneva Initiative ([www.geneva-accord.org](http://www.geneva-accord.org)) followed closely the Clinton Parameters that allowed for a Palestinian state in 95–97 percent of the occupied Palestinian territory, an international presence in the Jordan Valley, Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem to be under Palestinian sovereignty, Jewish neighborhoods under Israel with division or sharing of the holy places, and four options for refugees: Stay in place, go to third country, go to Palestinian state, go to Israel—all with numbers acceptable to the hosts.
- 31 Agence France Presse (AFP), March 28, 2002.
- 32 In time control of the western entrance to Gaza was handed over to Egypt but Israel kept a siege on air and land entrances and exits.
- 33 Condoleezza Rice, *No Higher Honor* (New York: Crown, 2011), 382–383; Dov Weisglas, *Arik Sharon—A Prime Minister: Personal Account* (Tel Aviv: Yedioth Aharonot-Sifriat Hemed, 2012), 212–217.

- 34 Kadima Party, “The Background to the Disengagement,” (Hebrew), December 11, 2012, accessed April 2, 2018, [www.yallakadima.co.il/fullArticleDetails.aspx?id=4148](http://www.yallakadima.co.il/fullArticleDetails.aspx?id=4148). Kadima Party 2012; *Washington Post*, May 27, 2003.
- 35 Sharon speech, Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Knesset Speech by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on the Disengagement Plan,” March 15, 2004; both Dov Weisglas, Sharon’s bureau chief, and Brig. Gen. Eival Gilady, deputy head of the IDF Planning Branch, said that Sharon considered ultimate withdrawal up to the security barrier—a move that would add roughly 10 percent of the West Bank to Israel, although an additional 15 percent in the Jordan Rift Valley was projected. See David Landau, *Arik: The Life of Ariel Sharon* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2014), 451.
- 36 Hizballah aggressiveness leading to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 2006 was seen by many as the result of Barak’s unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000, discrediting the idea of withdrawing without security agreements.
- 37 Olmert interview, Ben Birnbaum, “It’s Just a Matter of Time,” *New Republic*, March 19, 2013; Abbas on Israel Television, Channel 1, November 1, 2012.
- 38 Rabin and Barak had been willing to discuss limiting the Israeli presence—30 to 10 years (respectively).
- 39 There were also reports that people around his successor, Tzipi Livny, had suggested Abbas wait for her. See Rice, *No Higher Honor*, 713; Olmert cited from a *Jerusalem Post* conference in New York (*Jerusalem Post*, August 2, 2013); see also *Jerusalem Post*, *Sof Hashevua* and *UPI*, all on May 24, 2013 in which Olmert said Barak as well as Livny had sent such messages to Abbas.
- 40 On the Olmert–Abu Mazen agreements (or near agreements), see Galia Golan, *Israeli Peacemaking Since 1967: Factors Behind the Breakthroughs and Failures* (London: Routledge, 2014), 179–183.
- 41 *Haaretz*, June 14, 2009.
- 42 *Ibid.*
- 43 *Haaretz*, October 26, 2015.