The West Bank: A Portrait

By John P. Richardson

The Middle East Institute
Washington, DC

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Special Study 5

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I should like to thank Peter Gubser and Merle Thorpe, Jr. for assistance in providing photographs relating to the West Bank. Individual photo credits are listed elsewhere.

In the electronic age which has dawned since many of us developed basic skills, this novice discovered to his delight that all the good things said about word processors are true. The unsung hero is my microcomputer, without which there would not have been a book, or at least not for a long time to come.

Washington, D.C.   John P. Richardson
August 1984

INTRODUCTION

The special status and role of the West Bank are reflected in the name itself. Until 1948 and the creation of the state of Israel the term "West Bank" was not used; the area was the eastern portion of Palestine, under a British mandate, and was undifferentiated from the rest of the country. The term "West Bank" came into use following the 1948 Arab-Israeli war and the area's incorporation into the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Even then the term was used informally since the West Bank was the western portion of the Kingdom and had no separate name at the official level. Nonetheless, the name has remained in common use and reflects not only a geographic distinction between the regions lying east and west of the Jordan River but also the perceived differences between the peoples and histories of the two banks.

Since the 1967 war and Israel's occupation of the West Bank (as well as the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, and Golan Heights) the region has become much better known because of its centrality to the Middle East peace process. The tug of war over the West Bank has kept it almost constantly in the news because of its importance to Arabs, to Jews, and to world peace.

In 1984 the West Bank means different things to different people. To some Israelis it is the eastern portion of an expansionist Israel; to other Israelis it is a political trap in which Israel's soul and Jewish personality may be lost. To most Palestinians and many other Arabs the West Bank is the basis for a future, independent Palestinian state; to most Jordanians and many other Arabs it is a region that will yet again be linked with Jordan, albeit with a greater degree of

autonomy and self-government than was the case from 1948-67 when it was part of the Kingdom of Jordan.

The purpose of this book is to provide an introduction to the West Bank in its principal internal and external dimensions, with emphasis on its history and current status. Less attention is given to events in other parts of former Palestine, although much of the narrative about the West Bank prior to 1948 applies to life in all of mandate Palestine since until that date the West Bank was an undivided part of a geographic and cultural whole. Many, perhaps too many, books have been written about different aspects of the Arab-Israel conflict, and most of them are addressed to the specialist. This book is meant to provide the non-specialist and the student with an overview of the West Bank's history and current relations which may serve as the basis for more detailed research.

The Palestinian population of the West Bank remains closely identified with the other Palestinians whether in Israel, the East Bank, or scattered farther afield. Since 1948, however, the political affairs of the West Bank have been directed by two non-Palestinian regimes: the Hashemites in Jordan and currently the government of Israel through military occupation. These experiences have generated many changes within West Bank society in addition to setting parameters for West Bank political options.

This introduction to the West Bank focuses mainly on its Arab personality and culture because the dominant influences in the West Bank for the last millennium and a half have been Arab in language and culture and Islamic in religion. Until the Israeli victory in 1967 and the implantation of Jewish settlements, the West Bank had little Jewish influence despite Zionist immigration and colonization along the coast and in the plains of Palestine. The hill country of eastern Palestine, later to become the West Bank, comprised much of the demographic and cultural heartland of Arab Palestine and was not sought out by the Zionists, in part because its rugged and relatively infertile land was of less

interest than the more desirable coastal regions. The ability of Transjordanian troops to hold the West Bank during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war meant that it would remain in Arab hands for 19 more years.

It is inevitable that changes in demography, settlement patterns, and land use in the West Bank since 1967 will be factors in its future development and configuration. In the coastal plains Zionist settlement preceded sovereignty; in the West Bank the two are being pursued simultaneously. The future of the West Bank is yet to be determined, but the longer the occupation continues, the more difficult it will be to re-establish Arab sovereignty in the context of a negotiated peace settlement.

Part One:

The Historical Setting

BEFORE THE GREAT WAR

The Land and the Climate

The West Bank is an area of some 2,200 square miles (about the size of Delaware) lying slightly inland from the Mediterranean shore. The West Bank is 80 miles long and 34 miles wide, although it is indented sharply in the vicinity of Jerusalem. It is bounded on the North, West, and South by Israel and on the East by the Jordan River and the Kingdom of Jordan. By way of comparison, the town of Ramallah, situated near the center of the West Bank, lies close to the intersection of 32 degrees north latitude (about the same as Savannah, Georgia) and 36 degrees east longitude (about the same as Moscow in the Soviet Union).
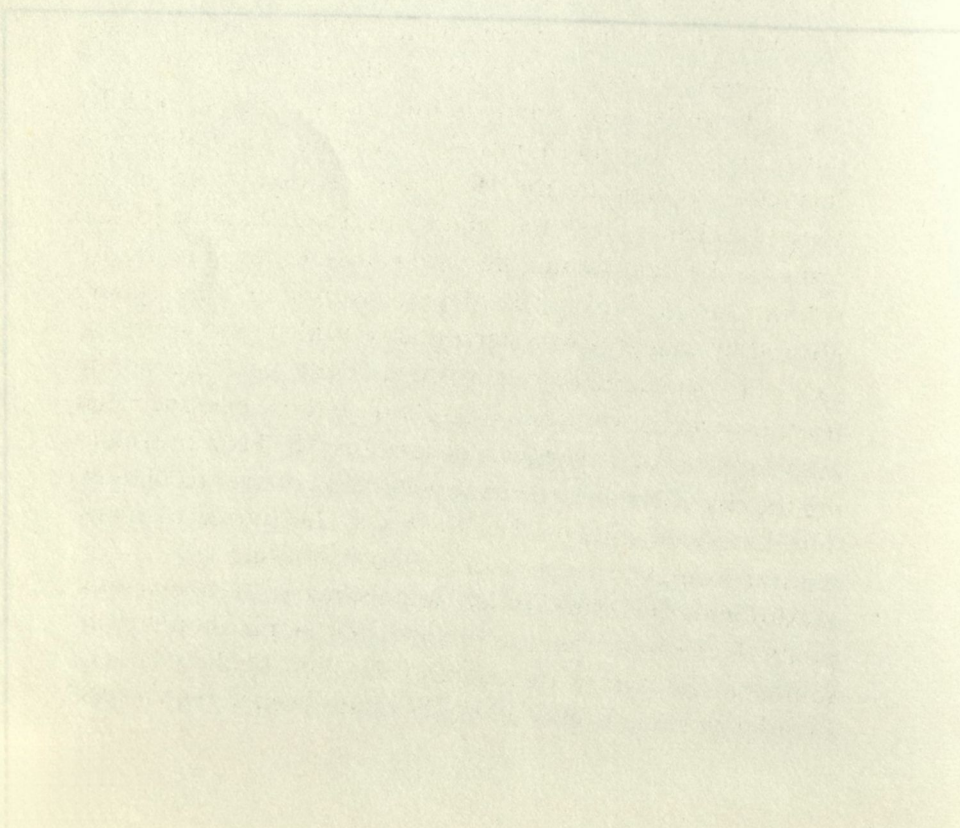
The West Bank is a region of mountains, valleys, and hills, hard country that reluctantly yields a living to its industrious farmers. Geologically the West Bank is dominated in the West by a chain of hills and mountains. In the East the Jordan Valley is the determining physical characteristic. The northern portion of the West Bank features rolling, hilly upland crossed by valleys—from narrow, steep-sided, and gorgelike to rather wide, shallow, and open. Only near Jenin, the northernmost town in the West Bank, is there extended, flat area suitable for larger-scale cultivation. Mt. Ebal, overlooking the city of Nablus, reaches an elevation of over 3,000 feet. The limestone hills of the North are the source of many natural springs resulting from geologic faulting.

Although the terms "Judea" and "Samaria" have taken on political overtones as a result of their application to the southern and northern sections of the West Bank by Israel's Likud government since 1977, they have been in regular use

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by geographers as well as biblical scholars. By general agreement Samaria means the portion of the West Bank north of a line above the city of Jerusalem; the area south of that line is considered Judea.

South of Jerusalem the elevation of the West Bank increases gradually. Jerusalem has an elevation of over 2,500 feet, and the highest point in the West Bank, just north of Hebron, is 3,300 feet. The Judean region is characterized by more gradual, rounded hills than the Nablus area, and the landscape is more bleak and rugged due to the lack of moisture and vegetation.

The Jordan Valley is one of the world's most dramatic geographic features. It is the northern extension of the Great Rift Valley of Africa and is divided by the Jordan River, which has a total length of only 40 miles in the West Bank as the crow flies but which twists and turns over a much greater distance before emptying into the Dead Sea. The valley reaches its lowest point in the Dead Sea Depression at 1,300 feet below sea level. The valley is bordered on the West by a strip of badlands that makes access difficult. Little of the western portion of the Jordan Valley has been developed for agriculture except in the Jericho and Jiftlik (northern) areas. Near the river there is a natural covering of trees and shrubs, including willows, tamarisk, oleander, and aquatic plants. The Jordan River, a powerful spiritual symbol for Christians as well as constituting part of the 1949 armistice line between Israel and Jordan, has a winter flood but is shallow and sluggish most of the time, shrinking to a scant 15 to 20 feet in width in summer at the Allenby Bridge, one of two major crossing points. Israeli water diversions to the North have further decreased the river's flow.

The climate of the West Bank is described by geographer Philip Beaumont as consisting of "extremely arid summers and a winter."[1] The rainy season lasts from November to

1. Beaumont, Philip, Blake, G.H., and Wagstaff, J.M., *The Middle East: A Geographical Study*, London: Wiley, 1976, p.7.

April as moisture-bearing clouds from the Mediterranean are cooled upon reaching the hills of Palestine and drop their moisture as rain. Rainfall in the West Bank averages 27 inches per year, with the highest proportion falling in the West and the Jericho area receiving little. Fortunately, winter rainfall is subject to reduced evaporation, which means that a higher percentage is retained in the soil and can sustain agriculture later in the year. Despite the lack of rainfall in the summer months the higher elevations receive heavy dew which condenses on the ground and replenishes moisture lost to evaporation during the day.

Climatically the West Bank falls in a transition zone between the Mediterranean and the deserts of Asia and Africa.[2] Because of the more than 4,000-foot difference in elevation between the mountains of the West Bank and the floor of the Jordan Valley, there are dramatic differences in temperature and climate at the same time of the year. During the rainy season the weather in the mountains is often cold, with daytime temperatures in the 40 degree (Fahrenheit) range and nights below freezing; snow is not uncommon. At the same time Jericho is like a summer resort, with pleasant, sunny days and cool nights. During the summer the temperature in Jerusalem averages in the low 80s, with nights 20 to 25 degrees cooler. At the same time of year Jericho experiences hot, sunny weather with days above 100 degrees, although the temperature does drop at night like most desert areas.

Agriculture has always been the mainstay of the West Bank economy. There are four different agricultural regions in the West Bank: 1) the extension of the coastal plain, centered on Jenin and Tulkarm in the north; 2) the western uplands; 3) the eastern foothills; and 4) the Jordan Valley.[3] Soils in the West Bank are generally fertile, although more and better application of water and modernized agricultural technique

2. *Ibid.*, p.408.
3. Kahan, David, *Agriculture and Water in the West Bank*, Jerusalem: West Bank Data Base Project, 1983, p.6.

MAP 1   THE WEST BANK (REGIONAL CONTEXT)
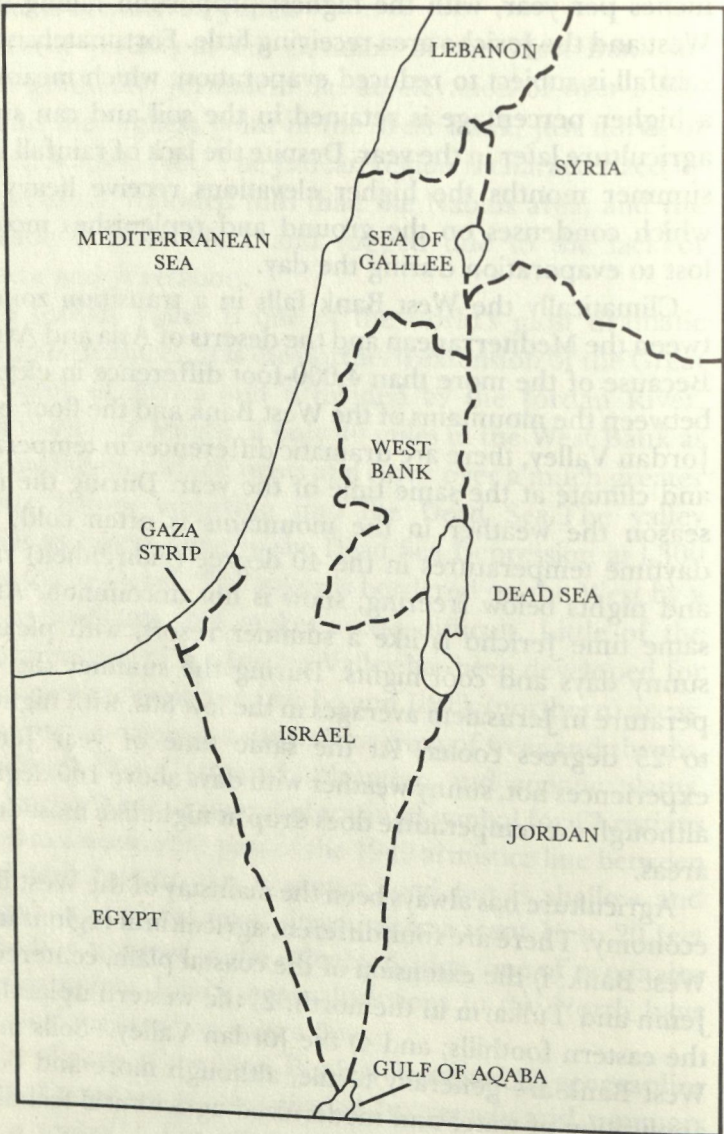
MAP 2   THE WEST BANK
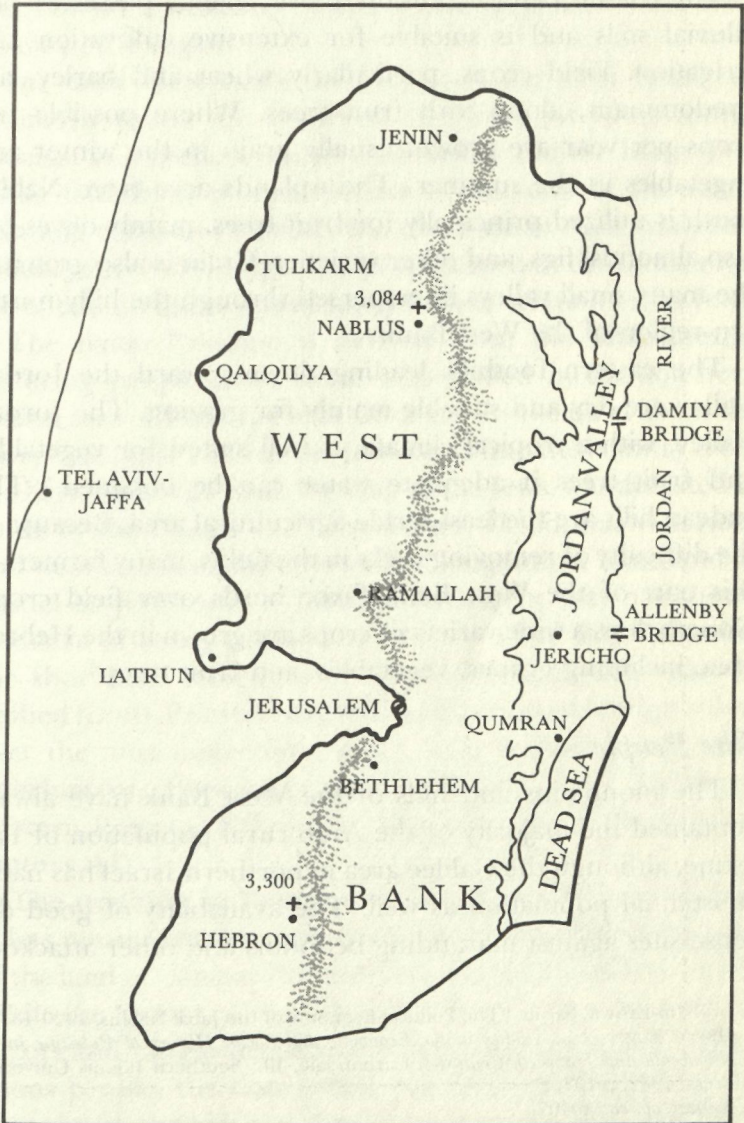
are required in order to improve the yield. Due to the scarcity of water most West Bank agriculture is dry farming. The natural limitations on West Bank agriculture mean that access to available land and water is especially important.[4]

The coastal plain extension above Nablus possesses rich alluvial soils and is suitable for extensive cultivation and irrigation. Field crops, particularly wheat and barley, are predominant, along with fruit trees. Where possible two crops per year are grown, usually grain in the winter and vegetables in the summer. The uplands area from Nablus south is utilized principally for fruit trees, mainly olives but also almonds, figs, and other varieties. Grain is also grown in the many small valleys interspersed through the hilly northern region of the West Bank.

The eastern foothills leading down toward the Jordan Valley are dry and suitable mainly for grazing. The Jordan Valley, with a tropical climate, is well suited for vegetables and fruit trees if adequate water can be obtained.[5] The Judean hills are the least fertile agricultural area. Because of the difficulty of removing rocks in the fields, many farmers in this part of the West Bank favor herds over field crops. Nonetheless, a wide variety of crops are grown in the Hebron area, including grapes, vegetables, and fruit trees.[6]

The People

The mountains and hills of the West Bank have always contained the majority of the Arab rural population of Palestine, although the Galilee area in northern Israel has had a substantial population as well. The availability of good defense sites against marauding bedouins and other attackers,

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4. Graham-Brown, Sarah, "The Political Economy of the Jabal Nablus, 1920-48," in Owen, Roger, ed., *Studies in the Economic and Social History of Palestine in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982, p.107.

5. Kahan, *op. cit.*, p.407.

6. *The West Bank: An Assessment*, Washington, D.C.: The Middle East Institute, 1983 (a draft study in preparation for the Defense Intelligence Agency), p.18 (hereafter MEI).

the ability to build cisterns for storage of water to supplement springs and wells, and the generally more healthful climate in contrast to the coastal plain (where malaria was a serious problem) contributed to earlier and more consistent settlement by the Palestinian Arabs in the West Bank than elsewhere in the region.[7]

For most Westerners the history of the Holy Land has ordinarily meant the history of the Jews, for two reasons: Judaism as a predecessor of Christianity and the Bible. The Bible, told from the perspective of but one of the many invading tribes in Palestine, is a chronicle of their trials and tribulations while indigenous peoples such as the Canaanites are of biblical interest principally in their relation to the Jews.

The name Palestine is derived from the Philistines, a seafaring people from Crete who settled in the southern coastal area of Palestine near Gaza and Ashkelon at about the same time (1,200 BC) as the Jews came into the country from the East. Although Saul, the king of the Jews, was defeated in battle by the Philistines, his successor, David, was victorious and went on to establish the unified kingdom of Israel and its capital at Jerusalem, a Jebusite settlement that has shown evidence of being fortified as early as 1,800 BC. Following the short-lived Kingdom of Israel (less than 100 years in unified form), Palestine experienced a series of foreign rulers over the next millennium and a half, including Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, and Byzantines (eastern Romans) before the Arab conquest in the mid-7th century AD.

The tradition in Palestine of foreign armies and foreign rulers meant that throughout its history the indigenous stock of the land of Canaan/Palestine was in a subordinate position. While the history of the region has been written in terms of victors and vanquished, there is no indication that the indigenous people, the Canaanites, were ever eradicated or deported with the ebb and flow of conquerors. Thus it is likely

7. Beaumont, *op. cit.*, p.407.

that the incoming Arabs provided a new language and a new religion for a people who had been in Palestine for several millennia, absorbing repeated foreign invasions but never abandoning the land.

The Arabs ruled Palestine from 638 AD until the Turks were victorious in 1517, with a gap from 1099 until 1187 when the Crusaders dominated the country. The shifting fortunes of the Arab caliphs confirmed a pattern in Palestine that had been seen many times in the past: a ruler close at hand (*e.g.*, the Ummayad caliphate in Damascus) or rival rulers with Palestine in the middle brought activity and interest, but Palestine as a province of a distant capital (*e.g.*, Baghdad or Constantinople) usually meant the country became a backwater.

The integration of Palestine into the world of the Arabs brought a loosening of ties with the West as the Middle East was substantially converted to Islam, and the struggle with the Christian West became defined in religious terms. The increased alienation between East and West in the Middle East also hastened the decay of Hellenistic civilization long dominant in the area.[8]

Impact of the Ottoman Turks

Like the Muslim Arab conquest in the 7th century, the Ottoman conquest of Palestine in 1517 did not entail large-scale colonization. The Ottoman pattern of rule was to keep the direct involvement of Turks to a minimum, relying on appointed officials and soldiers as well as local Arabs with a vested interest to keep order and to provide taxes and troops for the Turkish army.

Although Christianity did not give a pilgrimage to Jerusalem the importance placed by Muslims on a pilgrimage to Mecca, Jerusalem was the focal point of Western concern about the Holy Land, and the defeat of the Crusaders con-

8. Barbour, Nevill, *Nisi Dominus: A Survey of the Palestine Controversy*, Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1969, p.77.

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tinued to rankle in Europe. European and Russian roles as self-appointed protectors of different Christian denominations in Palestine assured foreign meddling in the affairs of Palestine after the Ottoman Empire began to weaken and lose control of its further provinces by the 18th century. The Holy Land became a proxy arena in which European powers worked out their disputes; Russian assumption of the role of protector of Orthodox Christians in Palestine and attendant leverage on Constantinople led to the Crimean War of 1853-56.

As the Ottoman Empire began to lose internal discipline, security in Palestine deteriorated, providing the opportunity for nomadic bedouin tribes to infiltrate the coastal plains in search of grazing for their flocks. The invaders also preyed on nearby villages, many of which were relatively unprotected and far from the established, better protected towns and villages of the West Bank. Travellers to Palestine in the 18th and 19th centuries reported that the coastal area was deserted and devastated; settled life had withdrawn into the hills and relied on subsistence agriculture. Neglect of springs and streams in the coastal region also led to extension of swampy areas, particularly the Hula Valley in the North, spreading malaria and further discouraging settlement.[9]

Centuries of insecurity and weak central government stimulated the development of "small group autonomy" in the West Bank.[10] The principal characteristics of this phenomenon were the *hamula* (clan) and the leadership role played by a small number of leading families, some of whose ancestors had come to Palestine at the time of the Arab conquest and whose claim to leadership was based in part on that lineage and in part on traditional symbolic functions (*e.g.*, designation as protectors of the Holy Places in Jerusalem). Since the West Bank was poor and an outpost of a

9. Beaumont, *op. cit.*, p.121.
10. Sayigh, Rosemary, *Palestinians: From Peasants to Revolutionaries*, London: Zed Press, 1979, p.41.

foreign empire, wealth and political power were relative.[11]

West Bank villages, poor and threatened by hostile bed-ouin controlling the Jordan Valley, the Esdraelon Valley, and the coastal plain, clung to the household and the *hamula* as the first and often the only sure line of defense against a hostile and uncertain world. The family economy was based on rights to shared agricultural land (*mushaa*) and family-owned plots, on its own labor power, and on social ties convertible to material aid when necessary. The typical house-hold, living adjacent if circumstances did not permit sharing one house, usually consisted of the mother and father, un-married children, and married sons and their wives and children. A common village practice was to take in anyone who would otherwise be alone, thus assuring the integrity of the immediate society.[12]

Palestine's slumber was interrupted in the 1830s by an intrepid adventurer, Ibrahim Pasha, son of Muhammad Ali, who challenged Ottoman authority by seizing power in Cairo and defying the authorities in Constantinople. Ibrahim Pa-sha developed the idea of a kingdom based on Arab nation-ality rather than on religion or tribe in which the links would be cultural and linguistic. He raised armies on two occasions and marched into Palestine, where the Christian minority gave him support but the Muslim majority resisted his call to overthrow the Caliph in Constantinople.[13]

The defeat of Ibrahim Pasha in 1839, in the course of his increasingly successful challenge to the control of the Otto-man authorities in Constantinople, was brought about through Anglo-Austrian intervention since European policy in the 19th century was to maintain the physical integrity of the Ottoman Empire in order to block the southward expan-sion of the Russian Empire through Turkish territory. Even though the Ibrahim Pasha era was short and militarily un-successful, it provided the first political stirrings in Palestine

11. *Ibid.*, p.48.
12. *Ibid.*, p.22.
13. Barbour, *op. cit.*, pp.79-80.

in a long time and added to the pressure for Ottoman reform (*tanzimat*) efforts.

Ottoman Reforms

In Palestine the mid-19th century *tanzimat* era brought important and far-reaching changes in two major areas: land tenure and alliance formation. The principal Ottoman objective was to increase centralization of power by tying subjects more closely to Constantinople, and the changes associated with these two alterations in Ottoman practice in Palestine affected almost every level of society.[14] Changes in land tenure were carried out through laws designed to reduce the periodically redivided, communally held lands (*mushaa*) and to assign them to individual owners with permanent title. From the point of view of social equity the new arrangement hardly succeeded since the agricultural peasant population of the West Bank ended up with only a tiny fraction of the lands distributed under the new system.

In many cases the peasants had difficulty obtaining title deeds from the authorities. Additionally, they feared that loss of relative anonymity through listing on land registers would subject them to more ruthless tax collection and to more efficient conscription of the young men. Accordingly, many peasants agreed to make leading members of the community the "protectors" of the land. This took many forms, from turning over the property deeds to the ostensible protectors, to permitting them to register peasant land in their own names, to failing to take up the offer of title to land in the hope that traditional forms of land use would continue as before if no one made an issue of it. Other turnovers of land title were made in order to pay off the staggering debts that were the normal lot of the West Bank peasant as well as to

14. Divine, Donna R., "The Dialectics of Palestinian Politics," in Migdal, Joel S., *Palestinian Society and Politics*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980, pp.216-17.

remove the burden of responsibility that went with owner-ship.

Major beneficiaries of large amounts of land made available by the Ottoman authorities in the latter decades of the 19th century were the "notable" families, rural and urban. In addition to acquiring all the land to which they were entitled, the notables enriched themselves at the peasants' expense. In some cases the notables simply kept for themselves lands entrusted to their care by the peasants; in other cases they registered it in their own names instead of the peasants'; other times they deeded the land to their descendants, who exercised the claim to title after the original parties to the transaction were gone.

Other beneficiaries of newly available land were the emerging urban bourgeoisie, which included local and absentee landlords, Christians and Jews, Europeans and their protegés, many living in the coastal towns which developed as security increased in the latter part of the 19th century. Another category of land recipients was foreign colonists, mainly Jews and Templars, the institutional descendants of the Knights Templars from the Crusader era.[15] Land was extremely cheap until the end of the 19th century, and foreigners were often those with the money necessary to buy it.

Another far-reaching change introduced into the West Bank by the Ottoman authorities in the second half of the 19th century was a shift in their pattern of local alliances. In earlier times the authorities had established close ties with religious sheikhs whose influence was derived from their religious status, but the new Ottoman policy was to establish links with the growing class of village and urban notables whose power was increased by the large-scale distribution of surplus land. Strong families were given control of municipal affairs, a role that they used to increase their power even further. With increased power and money the notables were

15. Schoelch, Alexander, "European Penetration and the Economic Development of Palestine, 1856-82," in Migdal, *op. cit.*, pp.22-23.

able to provide their sons with education, often in foreign universities, which in turn enabled them to perform more efficiently in municipal life, including the newly-created local administrative councils.[16]

Another important aspect of changed Ottoman practice in the West Bank in the late 19th century was a shift in tax-collecting methods from reliance on the local sheikh to "tax farmers" who won the bidding for the right to collect taxes. In many cases the tax concession was obtained by the notable families, further strengthening their power base. Once the tax farmer had committed himself to providing a certain level of revenue to the authorities, it was his responsibility to apportion the burden among the townspeople.

Development of the Economy

During the 19th century Palestine became an agricultural exporting region based mainly on cereal grains. Major markets were Egypt, Lebanon, and, increasingly, Europe. Egypt purchased fruits, vegetables, soap, and oils; France imported Palestinian cotton, sesame, grain, and oils; England bought wheat, barley, and dura.[17] The principal Palestinian ports were Jaffa for products from southern Palestine and Haifa and Acre for products from the north. Lack of adequate roads from the West Bank to the coast was a problem since the Turks put few resources into building or maintaining roads, preferring railroads, which were useful for moving troops and supplies to the more distant parts of the empire. Proper roads were not built from Jerusalem to Jaffa and from Nablus to Jaffa until the early 20th century, although the Jaffa-Jerusalem railroad was completed in 1892. Europeans were also involved in railroad construction, ostensibly for movement of pilgrims[18] but also supportive of their political and economic objectives in the region.

16. Divine, *op. cit.*, p.217.
17. Schoelch, *op. cit.*, pp.12-13.
18. Graham-Brown, *op. cit.*, pp.111-12.

An important boost to West Bank economic activity was the improved security situation in the coastal plains following Ottoman success in curbing bedouin raiding in the late 19th century. The combination of improved security and distribution by the authorities of large tracts of unused land in the western part of Palestine stimulated extension of peasant settlement from the better-protected hill villages and towns. The standard practice was to erect temporary settlements in the plains called *khirbas* (sing., *khirba*), which were extensions of "parent villages" higher up and were often inhabited on a seasonal basis as security permitted.[19]

Major Towns

Among the major West Bank towns, Nablus was the northernmost and developed its life and personality in an atmosphere more free of European influence than Jerusalem. Sultan Abdul Hamid, who came to power in 1876, was said to have a special affinity for Nablus and encouraged the leading families to send their children to Constantinople for education at his expense.[20] Nablus' prosperity was based on trade and manufacture, as it was one of the few West Bank towns to develop a rudimentary industrial base, principally in olive-related products (oil and soap) and cotton, with cotton gins contributing to export success during the US civil war when southern US cotton was scarce in Europe because of the Union blockade of Confederate ports. Nablus' location at the intersection of North-South and East-West trade routes linking Jerusalem to Damascus and the coast to the interior made it an important regional trading center, with an elaborate bazaar housed in a large trade hall.[21]

Nablus was an attractive town, with a fortified wall surrounding it and the imposing homes of the dominant families giving it an air of charm and dignity. The Nablus aris-

19. *Ibid.*, p.108.
20. MEI, *op. cit.*, p.11.
21. Schoelch, *op. cit.*, p.50.

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tocracy was made up of several landowning and mercantile families, the Abdul Hadis and the Tuqans among the best known. Thanks to numerous springs in the area, Nablus was well-watered, and gardens were in abundance.

Jerusalem occupied a special place in West Bank life because of its religious importance to Muslims, Christians, and Jews. It was not a center for commerce or production but lived off income from the Holy Places, related institutions, and pilgrim-tourists. Jerusalem experienced a surge in economic activity following the Crimean War (1853-56) due in part to the increase in Russian Orthodox pilgrims. Establishment of Jewish residential colonies, the forerunners of large-scale Zionist immigration, also contributed to increased economic activity in the Jerusalem area in the late 19th century. The presence in Jerusalem of so many Europeans, their protegés, and non-Turkish Ottoman subjects played an important role in the development of the town's banking and credit facilities, export-import capability, and land market.[22] Extension of the city outside its Turkish walls (from the early 16th century) was undertaken primarily by non-Palestinian residents seeking more space and larger homes than were available within the walls.

Hebron, the major town in the southern part of the West Bank, was conservative and Muslim in contrast to the more cosmopolitan and religiously diverse Jerusalem. Hebron suffered from an earthquake and sacking by Ibrahim Pasha's and Ottoman troops in the first half of the 19th century and experienced internal power struggles that hampered its growth. Hebron was well known for its glass by the early 19th century and exported large amounts to Europe before development of the European glass industry. Hebron was the principal West Bank producer of grapes, used mainly for juice and fruit rather than wine due to the Islamic prohibition on alcohol. Hebron farmers developed herds and flocks that could make better use of the stony ground than

22. *Ibid.*, pp.27-29.

field crops requiring extensive clearing operations. Hebron also was known for water bags made from animal skins.[23]

Bethlehem, just south of Jerusalem, was a Christian town and built a reputation as a source of religious objects fashioned from olive wood and mother of pearl that were sold to tourists and shipped abroad, particularly to Russia. Bethlehem merchants undertook frequent trade missions to Europe and the Americas, where some of them settled and became the nucleus of expatriate communities. Bethlehem's prosperity began in the mid-19th century and was based largely on the pilgrim trade. Bethlehem farmers were known for their wine and honey.[24]

Inter-city rivalry in the West Bank, always a problem, became more pronounced in the latter part of the 19th century as there were more opportunities to be seized and higher economic gains for winners. In the absence of a national capital, Jerusalem's special status, due to its religious and historical role, was translated into efforts by Jerusalemites to be accorded a more significant political role, a step opposed by the leadership in other towns who feared a corresponding diminution in their own status. The intense rivalry between Jerusalem's two major families, the Husseinis and the Nashashibis, also inhibited progress. As a result Jerusalem lost a potential leadership role in the West Bank.[25]

Under European pressure, the Ottoman authorities agreed to an administrative redivision of Palestine in 1887-88 that resulted in creation of an autonomous *sanjak* (district) of Jerusalem that reported directly to the Sublime Porte in Constantinople. At the time the West Bank was part of the *vilayet* (state) of Beirut. The *sanjak* of Jerusalem also included the town of Hebron. The other principal *sanjak* in the West Bank was Balqa (Nablus after the administrative reforms of 1888), which included the towns of Jenin and Tulkarm. While the change gave Jerusalem more attention than other

23. *Ibid.*, pp.51-52.
24. *Ibid.*, pp.39-40.
25. Divine, *op. cit.*, p.218.

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towns in the West Bank, it also emphasized the hybrid nature of Jerusalem, lacking strong rural links and dependent on the Ottoman authorities, religious endowments, and international charities for its economic viability.[26] Northern Palestine developed an orientation toward its provincial capital, Beirut, while southern and central Palestine was oriented more toward Jerusalem.

The 1914 Ottoman census reported a total population in Palestine of 690,000, with 155,000 in the Nablus region and 400,000 in the Jerusalem area and to the South.[27] The West Bank thus contained four-fifths of the total population of Palestine at a time when a significant shift to the plains and the coast was underway by the Arab population. At the turn of the century the population of Jerusalem was approximately 50,000, Nablus approximately 25,000, and Hebron 15,000.[28]

Although Palestine was a backwater of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the 19th century, the winds of nationalism were beginning to blow there as well as elsewhere. Ironically, a major source of inspiration for budding Arab nationalists in Palestine was Turkish reformers known as the Young Turks, who were pressuring Sultan Abdul Hamid to modernize and liberalize the empire. Arab nationalists inspired by the success of the Young Turks, who deposed Sultan Abdul Hamid in 1908 and at first appeared open-minded about Arab nationalism, were led by West Bank activists including Awni Abdul Hadi of Nablus. He was one of those signing a "call" for the Arab Congress of 1913 in Paris that demanded decentralized government for the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire, Arab representation in Constantinople, and recognition of Arabic as the official language in the Arab parts of the empire. Among the Arab nationalists hanged by

26. Tamari, Salim, "Factionalism and Class Formation in Recent Palestinian History," in Owen, *op. cit.*, pp.189-90; MEI, *op. cit.*, p.4.
27. MEI, *op. cit.*, p.5.
28. Migdal, *op. cit.*, p.16.

the Turks in Beirut and Damascus in 1915-16 were West
Bank leaders, including Ali Omar Nashashibi of Jerusalem.[29]

29. Barbour, *op. cit.*, pp.82,87.

THE MANDATE YEARS

The Great War

World War I was a difficult time for the population of the West Bank, particularly after it became a war theater upon the arrival of General Allenby's British troops in 1917. The war brought epidemics, a locust plague, heavy taxation, denuding of the region's tree cover to provide fuel for Turkish train engines, and "heavy and harsh" rule under Jemal Pasha, the Turkish governor.[1] The population withdrew for self-protection as far as possible into the towns and villages of the West Bank hills, abandoning the *khirbas* (agricultural settlements) that had proved so useful in expanding West Bank agriculture into the plains and coastal areas since the late 19th century. The war also brought a temporary halt to the expansion of the coastal cities of Jaffa, Haifa, and Acre, to which many West Bank entrepreneurs had moved in order to take advantage of growing import-export trade with Europe as well as the increased flow of pilgrims, many from Russia, following the Crimean War.

The British army started its Palestine campaign against the Turkish and German forces in Gaza, working its way north while tribal guerrilla fighters taking part in the Arab Revolt under the leadership of Sherif Hussein of Mecca harassed Turkish supply lines and the Hejaz Railway. The unconventional tactics of T.E. Lawrence assisted the Arab fighters. General Allenby entered Jerusalem as conqueror of Palestine in December 1917, and the British were to be supreme in

1. *The West Bank: An Assessment*, Washington, D.C.: The Middle East Institute, 1983 (a draft study in preparation for the Defense Intelligence Agency), p.12 (hereafter MEI).

Palestine from that day until May 1948 at the end of the mandate.

An important factor in the motivation of the Arabs to join the fight against the Ottoman Turks was encouragement they received from the British for their hope of independence if the Allies won the war. This support was contained in an exchange of letters in 1915-16 between Sherif Hussein of Mecca, an Arab nationalist leader descended from the Prophet Muhammad, and Sir Henry McMahon, British High Commissioner in Egypt. In exchange for aiding the Allies in the war, the British promised the Arabs independence in a wide area ranging from the Arabian Peninsula north to Anatolia.

Old World Politics

The focal point for later Arab charges of betrayal by the British was the Arab argument that Palestine was not part of an area excluded by the British from the promised independent Arab state described as "the two districts of Mersin and Alexandretta and portions of Syria lying to the west of Damascus, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo [which] cannot be said to be purely Arab."[2] It is likely that the British intended to exclude the coastal region (now in Lebanon) sought by the French in order not to damage ties with an important military ally at a time when the war effort in Europe against the Germans was not going well.

An even greater threat to the future of Arab Palestine than the interpretation of British promises in the McMahon-Hussein correspondence was the Balfour Declaration, a British statement in support of creation of a Jewish "national home" in Palestine. The promise, transmitted in the form of a letter from the British Foreign Secretary, Arthur James Balfour, to a prominent British Jew, Lord Rothschild, in November 1917

2. Sir Henry McMahon to Sherif Hussein, Oct. 24, 1915, in Hurewitz, J.C., *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East: A Documentary Record: 1914-1956*, Vol.II, New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1956, p.13.

also contained clauses to safeguard the rights of non-Jews in Palestine as well as Jews living in other countries, but it was received enthusiastically by the Zionist movement spearheading Jewish nationalism because it represented the first official support for Zionist objectives from the most powerful country in the world. The Balfour Declaration became the basis for the Zionist program in Palestine that was to shatter Palestinian life and society 30 years later.

Arab hopes for independence following 400 years of Turkish rule were dashed by French and British insistence on replacing the Turks in Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Transjordan, and Iraq. These intentions had been spelled out in a secret British-French understanding, the Sykes-Picot Agreement, in 1916 anticipating the defeat of Germany and its Turkish allies. The postwar vehicle was the mandate system, characterized as a period of European tutelage for the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire before independence but in practice a subterfuge to continue foreign rule in the Arab world in the face of Wilsonian criticism of colonialism. The San Remo Treaty of April 1920 awarded the mandate for Palestine (along with Iraq) to the British while the French were granted Syria, including contemporary Lebanon. The mandates were not formally approved by the League of Nations until 1923, but they went into effect immediately.

For the Palestinians the mandate document not only confirmed continuation of foreign rule in Palestine; it also incorporated the full text of the Balfour Declaration and charged the mandate authorities with assisting Jewish immigration and settlement, which could not be done without impinging on Arab rights and sensibilities. Thus the conceptual basis of the mandates—preparing populations previously under Ottoman rule for independence—was subverted in the case of the Palestine mandate because the terms contained "contradictory imperatives" favoring Zionist objectives in Palestine that "would hamper the development of a unitary state and lead to severe imbalances in communal

growth."[3] The authorities were committed to encouraging the Jewish sector in its development, including industry, while at the same time attempting to protect the Arab sector by maintaining traditional patterns and practices.[4]

Under the Ottomans the West Bank and the rest of Palestine had undergone administrative changes, but the changes had been internal to the Ottoman Empire. Under the terms of the mandate the British drew boundaries for Palestine for the first time. The initial boundary was drawn to include Transjordan, the region to the East of the Jordan River, but in 1922 the British authorities divided the mandated area at the river in order to create the Emirate of Transjordan for Emir Abdullah, a son of Sherif Hussein of Mecca intent on avenging the removal of his brother Feisal from the Arab throne in Damascus by the French in 1920. The British, wanting no trouble with the French, forestalled Abdullah's threatened march into the French mandate of Syria by acknowledging him as head of the newly created emirate on the East Bank. Emir Abdullah, with ambitions to consolidate and lead the independent Arab state promised by the British in World War I correspondence with his father, urged British Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill to include Transjordan in either Iraq or Palestine but with the proviso that if it were joined to Palestine, the ruler be Arab. Churchill refused both suggestions.[5]

During the mandate years there were many links between the East and West Banks of the Jordan despite their administrative separation. In addition to family ties, educated Palestinians went to the East Bank to assist with administration since the tribes of Transjordan had little formal schooling or

3. Miller, Ylana N., "Administrative Policy in Rural Palestine: The Impact of British Norms on Arab Community Life, 1920-1948," in Migdal, Joel S., *Palestinian Society and Politics*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980, p.124.
4. Graham-Brown, Sarah, "The Political Economy of the Jabal Nablus, 1920-48," in Owen, Roger, ed., *Studies in the Economic and Social History of Palestine in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982, p.98.
5. Seale, Patrick, ed., *The Shaping of an Arab Statesman: Abd al-Hamid Sharaf and the Modern Arab World*, London: Quartet Books, 1983, p.26.

office experience. Nonetheless, the Palestinians were Mediterranean Arabs who looked West; the Transjordanians were a people who looked East and South to the desert and valued their bedouin inheritance. There were significant differences in Arabic dialect between the two banks as well.

Mandate West Bank Society

West Bank society at the end of World War I was highly stratified. At the top was a small stratum of large land-owning families. Next was a small middle class composed of urban professionals and businessmen, many—lawyers, merchants, moneylenders, and religious leaders—with an interest in land. Behind them were the rural peasants, tenant farmers, and small landowners who in 1922 made up more than 70 per cent of the population, followed by the bedouin, who totalled some 100,000 in 1922. (Separate from the Palestinian social order was the "metropolitan ruling class" composed of the British administrators and military men who ran the affairs of the country and with whom the West Bank leaders were required to deal on all official matters.)[6]

The first postwar census in Palestine was taken in 1922. It is estimated that the population in what is now the West Bank was 260,000 out of a total Arab Muslim and Christian population of 660,000. Muslims made up 90 per cent and Christians 10 per cent of the Arab total. The Jewish portion of the Palestinian population in 1922 was 83,000, or 13 per cent, residing almost entirely in the coastal area with the exception of communities in Jerusalem and Hebron.[7] The West Bank

6. Peretz, Don, "The Historical Background of Arab Nationalism in Palestine," in Ward, Richard, Peretz, Don, and Wilson, Evan M., *The Palestine State: A Rational Approach*, Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1977, p.6; Sayigh, Rosemary, *From Peasants to Revolutionaries*, London: Zed Press, 1979, pp.40-41; Stein, Kenneth W., "Legal Protection and Circumvention of Rights for Cultivators in Mandatory Palestine," in Migdal, *op. cit.*, p.235.

7. Sabatello, Eitan, "The Populations of the Administered Territories: Some Demographic Trends and Implications," Jerusalem: West Bank Data Base Project, 1983, p.9; Lesch, Ann Mosely, "The Palestine Arab Nationalist Movement under the Mandate," in Quandt, William, Jabber, Paul, and Lesch, Ann M., *The Politics of Palestinian Nationalism*, Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1973, p.56.

population increased to 322,000 by 1931 and to 465,000 by 1946, on the eve of the Arab-Jewish violence that preceded the dispersal of most of the Arabs of Palestine in 1948. The greatest increase in the Arab population of Palestine during the mandate years occurred outside the West Bank, particularly in the coastal cities and in the plains. Nevertheless, the West Bank population experienced an increase of 24 per cent between 1922 and 1931 and 44 per cent from 1922 to 1946.[8]

The urban population of Palestine was approximately 20 per cent of the total at the start of the mandate, rising to some 35 per cent by 1948. Residential patterns in the West Bank differed sharply between Muslims and Christians, with the urban-rural percentages almost reversed. The 90 per cent Muslim majority was composed mainly of peasants living in small villages, whereas the Christians were concentrated in the towns and in urban professions. Usually blocked from competition with Muslims during the Ottoman era, West Bank Christians established links with Europeans in Palestine through foreign-supported schools and employment in European institutions and agencies. In the process West Bank Christians developed familiarity with Western practices that gave them an advantage over their Muslim countrymen once the mandate was established.[9]

There were three prominent towns in the West Bank at the start of the mandate: Nablus, Jerusalem, and Hebron. Nablus led a relatively self-contained existence in mandate Palestine, growing more slowly than Jerusalem and much more slowly than the coastal cities. Nablus became a center of nationalist spirit on the West Bank, helped by its distance from Jerusalem and from the watchful eye of the mandate authorities. Its isolation was increased by the lack of decent roads; trucking came to Nablus only in the 1940s after the British improved roads in order to facilitate the movement of troops following the uprising after the general strike of 1936.

8. Sabatello, *op. cit.*, p.9.
9. Divine, Donna R., "The Dialectics of Palestinian Politics," in Migdal, *op. cit.*, p.219.

Like other West Bank towns, Nablus had internal factions and inter-family quarrels that absorbed a great deal of energy.[10]

Jerusalem was the most prominent city in the West Bank during the mandate period. As the seat of the government, it attracted local and foreign interest and became the cultural center of the West Bank as well. Jerusalem also became the headquarters for the Arab Higher Committee and the Supreme Muslim Council and was the base of the Husseini family, whose leader, Haj Amin Husseini, dominated Palestinian politics for the duration of the mandate, even after he was exiled by the British in 1937. The other most important Jerusalem family was the Nashashibis, who had become powerful through their commercial activities and who were more inclined to develop a modus vivendi with the British than to confront them, as was often the case with the Husseinis.[11] Jerusalem was the center for the best teachers' academies, law schools, and high schools as well as the radio broadcasting station for the mandate.

Jerusalem's special importance to Muslims, Christians, and Jews assured it of major attention under the mandate. The population of Jerusalem in the early days of the mandate was approximately 40 per cent Muslim, 40 per cent Jewish, and 20 per cent Christian. While most of the Christians' problems in Palestine came from disputes among themselves, Muslims and Jews clashed over shared or rival claims to religious sites, particularly the western wall of the Temple Mount/Haram Ash-Sharif in Jerusalem and the Tombs of Abraham and Sarah in Hebron.[12]

Hebron, located just a few miles above the limit of movement of the bedouin of the Beersheba and Negev regions, was poor and rural. It could not compete with either Nablus or Jerusalem in terms of wealth or sophistication, but it had

10. MEI, *op. cit.*, p.24; Graham-Brown, *op. cit.*, p.113.
11. Sofer, Naim, "The Political Status of Jerusalem in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, 1948-67," *Middle Eastern Studies*, January 1976, pp.73-74.
12. Graham-Brown, *op. cit.*, p.104.

a tradition of conservative Muslim practice that was respected.

Political Phases

Ann Mosely Lesch, a major researcher on Palestinian nationalism, has identified four phases in the political life of the mandate. The first, from British entry in 1917 until the mid-1920s, was characterized by limited political mobilization led by the landowners and the urban elites. During this period local leaders thought it possible to persuade the British to change their policy with respect to the Balfour Declaration and Palestinian self-rule. Principal tactics were petitions, boycotts, peaceful demonstrations, and delegations, both in Palestine and in London.

The second phase was rapid mobilization of radical groups, including students, religious leaders, and peasants challenging their traditional leaders, which lasted until the mid-1930s. This period saw a sharp increase in Arab-Jewish violence, in which the 1929 Wailing Wall riots in Jerusalem sparked by Jewish demands for greater access played a major role.

The third phase was marked by rebellion against actions of the British authorities and saw the onset of Palestinian guerrilla activity in which a religious figure, Sheikh Izziddin al-Qassam, attracted many poor Palestinians to his side from the coastal urban slums and carried out raids from the hills around Nablus before he was killed by British security forces in 1935.

The fourth phase of Palestinian political life during the mandate witnessed open revolt triggered by the general strike of 1936 and a subsequent, country-wide uprising that lasted until 1939. The final phase of this period was characterized by disintegration and flight as the British banned most political activity and jailed or exiled political leaders.[13]

13. Lesch, *op. cit.*, pp.25-34 *passim*.

West Bank attempts to create a unified response to the challenge of the mandate were complicated by several factors. The British utilized the Ottoman *millet* system that had organized society into self-governing religious communities through whose spokesmen grievances and requests were channelled to the authorities. In dealing with the mandate authorities the Arabs were unable to form a *millet* because they were made up of two religious groups, Muslims and Christians. Thus the Supreme Muslim Council never became synonymous with the Palestinian nationalist movement. Also the British refused to recognize the major Arab political groupings (the Arab Executive from 1920-34 and the Arab Higher Committee from 1936 on) because they opposed the terms of the mandate (*i.e.*, the Jewish national home) although the stated reason was that the bodies were unelected. The third obstacle was that the Arabs never succeeded in creating a legislative council. It was they who rejected the offer when it was made in 1922-23, but when the Arabs later decided to seek such a council, it was blocked by Zionist opposition in Palestine and in England.[14]

The British assisted the political rise of Haj Amin Husseini, a leading member of a distinguished Jerusalem family, by appointing him Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and facilitating his ascendancy as head of the Supreme Muslim Council, a newly created body with responsibility for overseeing the work of the Muslim courts and the charitable institutions (*awqaf*) as well as being empowered to hire and fire Muslim officials.[15] British objectives were to create obligations on the part of Husseini and to strengthen ties with his large family in the process.

Palestinian politics rapidly became more entangled as leading individuals and families lined up for and against Haj Amin's aggressive consolidation of power. The principal challengers were the Nashashibis, who matched the Husseinis

14. *Ibid.*, pp.20-21.
15. Hurewitz, J.C., *The Struggle for Palestine*, New York: Norton, 1950, p.53.

almost step for step in creating clubs and societies as vehicles for their political ambitions. A major element in the Husseini line was pan-Arabism, and Haj Amin developed important alliances in other Arab countries with leaders who shared his views. The Nashashibis, on the other hand, were more inclined to work within existing constraints, *e.g.*, seeking extension to the Arabs of benefits made available to the Jewish community under the terms of the mandate. A factor working against popular support for the Nashashibis was their dependence on the British for political influence. One of the main battlegrounds between the two major families was the municipal councils, where both factions worked to ensure the election of supporters and to block their opponents. Another arena was control over the finances of the charitable organizations (*awqaf*) and the religious (*sharia*) courts.[16]

By the late 1920s it was clear that no West Bank or Palestinian initiatives to influence the British to rescind the Balfour Declaration or to provide Arab self-rule were working. At the same time as the traditional leaders were being discredited for failed policies, the political mood in the area became hostile. The 1929 Wailing Wall riots triggered attacks on non-Zionist Jews in Hebron, causing the death of more than 50 and injuring more than 60. The rapid escalation in the use of violence by the West Bank Palestinians to express frustration at the course of events led to a hardening of attitudes within the mandate administration and the Jewish community as well.

Local Politics

Palestinian efforts to create institutional barriers to British and Zionist manipulation of the situation in Palestine were hampered by frictions and factionalism within the leadership. The Arab Executive, originally composed of representatives from leading Muslim and Christian families and given permanent status by the Third Palestine Congress in 1920,

16. MEI, *op. cit.*, p.25.

was riven with internal stress and by the end of the 1920s came to be regarded as a tool of the Husseini family. The failure of the Arab Executive to unify the different Palestinian factions helped spawn a number of political parties in the early 1930s, the most important being the Palestine Arab Party (supporters of Haj Amin) and the National Defense Party (supporters of the Nashashibi family). Other parties of the 1930s were the Reform Party (Dr. Hussein Fakhri Khalidi of Jerusalem), the National Bloc (Nablus politicians), and the Istiqlal (Awni Bey Abdul Hadi of Jerusalem, with strong backing in the Nablus/Jenin area). Of all the parties created in this period the Istiqlal most closely resembled a political party with a program. Istiqlal, with roots in a pan-Arab party created in Damascus in 1919, called for full and immediate independence for Palestine but within a Syrian Arab context. The militancy of Istiqlal gained it widespread popular support, particularly among younger Palestinian nationalists.[17]

The 1930s also saw a more militant tendency among young groups in Palestinian society such as the Boy Scouts, Young Muslim Societies, Youth Congress, and the League of Arab Students, who were disenchanted by the exhausting rivalry between the leading families and who demanded a more effective response to the course of events by the political leadership. The politicization of young people reflected the decreasing influence of the older generation as well as the willingness of groups outside the traditional leadership of the West Bank to assert themselves.[18]

The rising level of Palestinian protest (and Zionist institutional progress) took place alongside a generally improving economy and administrative practices instituted by the British. One of the important changes advanced by the British was conversion of the Palestinian economy from a cash-and-barter system to a money economy. The British established a monetary system in which the Palestine pound was tied to the

17. Peretz, *op. cit.*, p.9.
18. *Ibid.*, p.10; MEI, *op. cit.*, pp.27-28.

pound sterling. This facilitated development of a money economy utilizing cash wages and cash tax payments.[19] The money supply in Palestine increased almost three-fold between 1927 and 1944 while foreign trade increased six-fold over the course of the mandate as the Palestinian economy became integrated more fully into the world economy.[20] In Palestine the British were in the process of creating a new geopolitical entity, and they exercised more control over its affairs, including its economy, than they did with the other mandated areas for which they had responsibility. In the main, however, the British administered Palestine much as they did their regular colonies.[21]

Land

Land was one of the most important issues in Palestine under the mandate, the basis of the wealth and influence of the leading West Bank families and the source of the livelihoods of most of the West Bank's majority peasant population. Additionally, land was of paramount importance to the Zionist community in its drive to establish a claim to Palestine that went beyond the Bible or promises made in the Balfour Declaration. Virtually all of the major land transactions between Arabs and Jews took place in the plains and the coastal areas, not in the West Bank. As a result of the Ottoman policy in the late 19th century of selling off unused land as well as settling title on a great deal of the land in use for agriculture, huge tracts had come into the hands of individual owners, many of them absentees living in Lebanon or Syria.

19. Graham-Brown, *op. cit.*, pp.94-96; Taqqu, Rachelle, "Peasants into Workmen: Internal Labor Migration and the Arab Village Community under the Mandate," in Migdal, *op. cit.*, p.263.
20. Garrett, Patricia, "Orphans of Empires: A Case Study of the Palestinian Refugees," unpublished MA thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1970, in Nakhleh, Khalil, and Zureik, Elia, eds., *The Sociology of the Palestinians*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980, p.57.
21. Owen, *op. cit.*, p.4; Graham-Brown, *op. cit.*, p.92.

The British made efforts to rationalize land ownership in Palestine, which had been started by the Ottomans when they began the shift from *mushaa* (communally held) to individually titled land. The British passed a land settlement ordinance in 1928 which gave judges the authority to make final decisions about ownership and end the ambiguity that characterized the issue. Rules were established for issuance of title deeds and determination of ownership based on a new land survey. Unfortunately, the task was far from completed by the end of the mandate, particularly in the southern part of Palestine.[22] As the West Bank economy improved during the mandate years and as new wealth was created by the growing urban middle class (many of whom had an existing role in land ownership), the Arabs converted land into a commodity, preferring to invest in land and buildings rather than industry.[23]

The British felt an obligation to maintain the traditional structure of Palestinian life despite the inherent contradiction in their charge to advance the Jewish national home. One of the authorities' greatest fears was the creation of a large, disaffected, landless peasant mass that could create security problems. Nonetheless, peasant insecurity increased during the mandate. One factor was Jewish land purchases, which caused the eviction of Palestinian peasants because of the Zionist practice of hiring only Jewish laborers to work on Jewish-controlled land. The Johnson-Crosbie Commission, reporting on conditions in Palestine in 1930, stated that an estimated 30 per cent of rural families were landless and that more than one-third of the peasants were living below the subsistence level. The Commission estimated the average peasant debt as equal to a year's income, with annual interest on the debt from 30 per cent up.[24]

West Bank peasants did develop greater mobility in the mandate period, however, due to the push in increasing

22. MEI, *op. cit.*, pp.19-20.
23. Graham-Brown, *op. cit.*, p.105.
24. Peretz, *op. cit.*, p.6; Migdal, *op. cit.*, p.29.

landlessness and the pull of alternative employment in the industrial sector, in the expanding towns, and in the mandate administration, particularly road work and other public works, as the Palestine government became the major employer of Palestinians by 1948.

Economic Development

Although agriculture was the backbone of the West Bank economy, the mandate years saw the development of an industrial sector, albeit small-scale and lacking significant invested capital. Most of the large-scale industrial development occurred in the coastal cities and was concentrated in Jewish hands. A Royal Commission report during the 1936 general strike described a "diversified" Arab industry made up principally of small establishments. The main Arab urban industries were soap, flour, textiles, and construction materials. It has been estimated that between 1920 and 1940 the number of Arab workers in crafts and industries increased three times, the output of such activities increased three times, and the amount of invested capital increased four times.[25] A characteristic of West Bank industrial activity was reluctance of owners to utilize new technology or to experiment with industrial technique. The customary form of business expansion was linear extension of existing functions and technology.

The most modern industry in the West Bank was flour milling, centered in Nablus, which also had factories for cigarettes, matches, and building materials such as bricks, pipes, and tiles. By 1939 there were some 6,000 Palestinians working in 350 enterprises, mainly small shops with several workers and lacking electric power.[26]

The Palestinian labor movement never took hold during the mandate period. The notables and the middle class were

25. Tamari, Salim, "Factionalism and Class Formation in Recent Palestinian History," in Owen, *op. cit.*, p.198; Migdal, *op. cit.*, p.27.
26. MEI, *op. cit.*, pp.20-21.

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hostile to unions, regarding them as a potential challenge to authority. By the end of World War II there were fewer than 20,000 organized Palestinian workers, in contrast to the virtually total organization of Jewish workers by the Histadrut. The nature of the Palestinian work force also hampered union development because the majority were seasonal agricultural workers making extra wages during off-seasons. They were unaccustomed to the concept of trade unions, being more familiar with client relationships to powerful families where they lived, and they were difficult to organize under any circumstances.[27]

By 1936 the Arab population of the West Bank was becoming part of a larger economic and social environment in which Jewish economic activity had stimulated population growth and internal migration and had created an active land market. The resulting strains and internal tensions threatened a common lifestyle. At the same time there were few institutions linking the villagers to the central authorities, and a quality of desperation was overtaking the population, particularly the villagers, who suffered the most from Arab-Jewish as well as internal Arab problems.[28]

The Rebellion

The period of the mandate known as the revolt or rebellion lasted from 1936 to 1939, although by the end it was impotent and virtually leaderless due to the jailing and exile of most of the leaders. The principal feature of the period was the country-wide general strike of 1936, which was set in motion by Arab nationalist pressures for standing up to the British and the Zionists. The Palestinian community understood the gravity of the threat to their land and their hopes for independence represented by the Zionists with official British backing. Two Jews were killed in April, and reprisals

27. Graham-Brown, Sara, *Palestinians and Their Society, 1880-1946: A Photographic Essay*, London: Quartet Books, 1980, p.170; MEI, *op. cit.*, p.22.
28. Miller, *op. cit.*, p.135.

began immediately. The Arab nationalist position hardened, insisting on "yes" to independence and "no" to further negotiations with either Jews or the British. On April 20 a national committee in Nablus called for a general strike until the British accepted the nationalist program. Within a few days a country-wide network of committees had been established to coordinate the strike. Husseini-Nashashibi differences were temporarily shelved in creating a ten-man Arab Higher Committee endorsed by the heads of the five major political parties; Haj Amin Husseini was appointed President of the Committee. Principal demands were an end to Jewish immigration to Palestine, a ban on land sales to Jews, and termination of the mandate, with the substitution of an independent national government responsible to a representative council.

The strike went into effect country-wide, halting virtually all business and transport as well as government operations. Six months of the strike failed to budge the British with regard to the nationalist demands, however. The Zionists also responded to the Arab workers' walkout by ending use of Arab labor and services, a policy which remained in force until the end of the mandate. A new port was built by the Jews at Tel Aviv when the Jaffa port became inoperative. Within a few months the strike became a rebellion, targeting Jewish and British facilities and activities. Trains were derailed; roads were blocked and mined; power lines were downed, and the IPC (Iraq Petroleum Company) pipeline to Haifa was put out of commission.[29] The British response was swift. Emergency regulations were put into effect, permitting arrest and seizure without benefit of warrants. Deportation, curfews, censorship, and collective punishment were all used as tools to quell the rebellion.

As the months went on, leadership of the revolt moved into the hands of individuals and groups lower down on the socio-economic ladder. Losses to businessmen from the strike,

29. MEI, *op. cit.*, pp.29-31.

plus growing demands by the peasant leaders on the towns for financial and political assistance, led to cooling of urban support for the revolt, which soon began to resemble a social revolution as peasant guerrillas occupied towns, decreed a moratorium on debts, and lined up on the side of the poor against the rich. Rebels cancelled rents, warned creditors to stop debt collections, and halted legal actions against debtors. They demanded an end to wearing of the *tarbush*, a symbol of the old order, and its replacement by the *kaffiyeh*, the checked scarf made familiar in recent times by PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat and the Palestinian guerrillas.[30]

Another dimension of the revolt was its utilization as a cover for taking vengeance on one's enemies. Victims of Arab assassination included opponents of the revolt, people resisting the terrorists, and real or alleged collaborators with the British, the Jews, or both. Other victims included individuals who had participated in a court case against supporters of a rebel leader accused of murdering Jewish settlers, opponents of Haj Amin, supporters of Emir Abdullah of Transjordan, and members and friends of the Nashashibi family. (One reason for the Nashashibis being singled out was that Raghib Nashashibi had aligned his National Defense Party against the revolt and had formed "Peace Units" to attack the rebels.)[31] The Husseini-Nashashibi struggle for political supremacy was a sub-plot in the story of mandate Palestine, but it distracted attention and drained resources from Palestinian resistance to the real opponents of their aspirations.

The leadership of the revolt came predominantly from the West Bank despite the fact that in this period national growth and development were taking place mainly to the West and along the coast. Almost half the townsmen serving as officers of the revolt were from either Jerusalem or Nablus; more than 40 per cent of the villagers serving in a leadership

30. *Ibid.*, p.35.
31. Lesch, *op. cit.*, pp.38-39.

capacity were from the West Bank.[32] Despite the fact that the revolt was the culmination of almost 20 years of Palestinian frustration under British rule, with British-protected Zionist political and economic gains more apparent by the day, it was flawed from the start, making it easier for British counter-measures to crush it. The general strike of 1936 had been set off by British rejection of Palestinian political demands, but the conduct of the revolt was almost entirely military. Organization was fragmentary, and there was no coherent plan for the post-fighting phase.[33]

The Reaction

The British stripped Haj Amin Husseini of his post as President of the Supreme Muslim Council and dissolved the Arab Higher Committee. Hundreds of local political figures and Higher Committee members were arrested; Haj Amin and his cousin Jamal, a leading member of the Palestine Arab Party, escaped to Lebanon. The arrest of so many leaders contributed to their replacement by unknowns, but, more important, to the demise of the revolt. Draconian British measures such as fencing the border with Syria (through which arms came on a regular basis) and destruction of homes of suspects helped dry up the supply of weapons and fighters. By the end of 1938 the revolt had largely petered out although sporadic violence continued into 1939.[34] Arab political leadership in the West Bank was scattered and in disarray, and the country was exhausted by the more than two years of continuous violence and disruption. British counter-measures had removed the political leadership at a critical phase in Palestinian history.

The revolt brought many changes in its wake, almost none of which benefited the Palestinians. One result, already mentioned, was further cleavage between the Jewish and Arab

32. MEI, *op. cit.*, p.35.
33. Graham-Brown, *Palestinians and Their Society, op. cit.*, p.171.
34. MEI, *op. cit.*, pp.33-34.

communities in Palestine, utilized by the Zionists to strengthen exclusively Jewish institutions and resources. Another development was the British decision to send an investigating mission to look into the causes of the revolt. The Peel Commission came to the conclusion that the Arab and Jewish communities were mutually exclusive in their political and socio-economic requirements. On this basis the Commission decided that a unitary state in Palestine was not possible and proposed its partition into an Arab and a Jewish state. The Commission conceded the difficulty of drawing satisfactory boundary lines and avoiding displacement of the substantial Arab minority in the area that would be the base for the Jewish state. No part of what became the West Bank was included in the proposed Jewish state.

The Arab reaction to the Peel Commission's partition proposal was mixed. The National Defense Party dissociated itself from the Arab Higher Committee just before release of the report, charging the Grand Mufti (Haj Amin) with intimidation tactics. Husseini supporters countered with a charge of betrayal in the form of a secret plan to accept partition and to bring in Emir Abdullah of Transjordan, who was developing ties with the Nashashibis, as ruler of the Arab state. Publication of the Peel Commission's recommendations helped trigger the second phase of the Arab revolt late in 1937, although the Woodhead Commission, sent as a followup to the Peel Commission, concluded in October 1938 that the partition proposal could not be implemented.[35]

The period between the collapse of the Arab revolt in 1939 and the end of the mandate in 1948 saw Palestine become a relative sideshow because of British preoccupation with the military threat posed by Hitler's Germany in World War II. The British called Zionist and Palestinian leaders together in London in 1939 for unsuccessful round table talks intended to explore a non-violent resolution of the conflict. At the end of the talks the British government circulated copies of a

35. *Ibid.*, pp.32-33.

White Paper based on the talks that reflected a potentially important shift in its Palestine policy in favor of the Arabs. It proposed independence in Palestine within ten years, restrictions on further land sales to Jews, and, perhaps most important, a ceiling on Jewish immigration of 15,000 per year for each of the next five years, with the Arabs to retain a veto on all subsequent Jewish immigration.

The Zionists rejected the White Paper out of hand while the Palestinians gave it a mixed reaction. Haj Amin, although banned from the London talks, was a strong presence nonetheless and called for rejection because the White Paper did not endorse immediate Arab independence in Palestine. Other Palestinian leaders, including the more moderate Nashashibi faction, were guardedly supportive, but at this point (on the eve of the German invasion of Poland) the British were in no position to overcome Zionist opposition on the ground and politically in London, even if the Palestinian Arabs had been enthusiastic about the White Paper.[36]

World War II Contradictions

Perhaps ironically, the World War II years were "boom years" in Palestine. No significant fighting took place in Palestine, although there were Axis sabotage attempts on the Haifa oil refinery and other strategic locations as well as fighting between Vichy and Free French forces in Syria and Lebanon. The German blockade in the Mediterranean meant that Palestinian farmers could sell their produce at much higher prices because of increased demand, and thousands of Palestinian workers were employed in British military facilities in the country. The improved Arab economy in the West Bank during the war made life better for the inhabitants although at the same time political activity degenerated into factionalism and mutually destructive attacks.

The pressures on West Bank Palestinian society as a result of the British mandate and implementation of the Balfour

36. *Ibid.*, p.36.

Declaration proved to be more than it could stand. The Palestinians were caught in an impossible situation during the mandate, unable to achieve political objectives either by persuasion or by coercion. The Palestine problem was rendered more acute as the population observed greater political gains by their Arab neighbors in the same time period with less suffering.[37] The West Bankers and the rest of the Palestinian people were also locked in a struggle with the Zionist movement, which had many advantages over its Palestinian counterpart despite lack of access at the outset to land, which was the Palestinians' greatest asset.

The Zionists were unwilling to accept minority status in Palestine, and the Palestinians were unwilling to accept the legitimacy of Zionist goals. The outcome—dispersion of most of the Palestinian population and physical control by the Zionists over most of Palestine after the 1948 war—was decisive. It was significant for the future of the Arab struggle for Palestine that by 1948 political leadership had so fragmented within the West Bank that the Arab League (created in 1945) had to step in and try to impose order on the feuding Palestinian factions. It is also noteworthy that the classic fault-line in Palestinian politics between those willing to negotiate a compromise and those opposed to any negotiations not guaranteeing results continues to this day.

37. Lesch, *op. cit.*, p.42.

THE HASHEMITE ERA

Creation of the West Bank

The results of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war were so destructive for the Palestinian Arabs as to make the despised British mandate seem almost attractive. The British decision in early 1947 to give up mandatory responsibilities in Palestine no later than May 1948 set in motion events which were to end with the creation of the state of Israel in an area much larger than had been assigned to it by the United Nations General Assembly's partition plan of November 1947. The Palestinian Arabs found themselves with an estimated 28 per cent of the area of mandate Palestine but without the independence intended in the partition plan's call for a Jewish and an Arab state. The Zionists made good on their vow to establish a Jewish state, and the Arabs failed in their vow to assert Arab sovereignty over all of mandate Palestine.

Although the Arab League was technically in charge of the Arab military role in the 1948 Palestine war and although units from several Arab countries were involved, the only Arab military success was that of Transjordan's Arab Legion under the leadership of the British General Sir John Glubb ("Glubb Pasha"). Much has been made of the relation of the Legion's military strategy in the fighting to Emir Abdullah's political ambitions in Palestine, but with the exception of a tiny enclave around Gaza in the southwest, the only portion of mandate Palestine to remain under Arab sovereignty at the end of hostilities was what is now the West Bank, thanks to the determination and skill of the Arab Legion, composed of volunteer, mainly bedouin, troops from the tribes and

small villages of Transjordan. In his autobiography King Hussein has observed apropos of Jordanian retention of the West Bank, "... by this move my grandfather without doubt saved this large area of Palestine from becoming part of Israel."[1]

The 1948 war created the West Bank in the form that it existed from 1948 to 1967, at which point it became and has remained militarily occupied by Israel. The 1948 war also totally changed the situation for the West Bank: for the first time the hilly, upland, eastern portion of Palestine was severed from the plains and coastal areas by a ceasefire line. All the West Bank's trade, commerce, communications, and political links had been with the coast and Galilee (northern Palestine); virtually none were with the East Bank. One description of the new situation portrayed the West Bank as "an island isolated between Israel and the East Bank."[2]

In addition to the dislocations caused by the imposition of ceasefire lines, the West Bank was inundated by a flood of refugees from West Palestine, 350,000 people who had lost their homes and livelihoods and could not return. The Arab West Bankers, totalling more than 450,000, were slightly over half the new population. A major problem for the West Bank was that the ceasefire lines bore little relation to patterns of settlement, with the result that in many cases a village ended up on the West Bank side of the line while the fields on which its farmers depended for their livelihoods were on the other. This anomaly is estimated to have affected 150,000 West Bank villagers and 144 square miles of land (out of 2,200 all told).[3] These villages became destitute because they had lost their ability to feed themselves and to generate income, yet the villagers did not qualify as refugees since they

1. Hussein of Jordan, H.M., *Uneasy Lies the Head*, London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1962, p.103.
2. *The West Bank: An Assessment*, Washington, D.C.: The Middle East Institute, 1983 (a draft study in preparation for the Defense Intelligence Agency), p.36 (hereafter MEI).
3. Mishal, Shaul, *East Bank/West Bank: The Palestinians in Jordan, 1949-67*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978, p.3.

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were still living in their homes. Villagers were sometimes killed or wounded while attempting to harvest a crop from their own fields now on the Israeli side of the armistice line.

Jordanian Consolidation

King Abdullah moved swiftly to consolidate control of the West Bank. At the end of May 1948 he created a West Bank military administration, in part to block anticipated attempts by Haj Amin Husseini, now back from exile in Lebanon, to create a civil administration under his control. The Mufti did convene a meeting in Gaza in September with Egyptian support that created a "Government of all Palestine," but this entity existed only on paper until its formal demise in 1959.[4]

In October Abdullah brought 5,000 West Bank notables to Amman, where they invited him to accept a "protectorate" over the West Bank. Two months later Sheikh Mohammed Ali al-Ja'abari of Hebron convened a meeting of 2,000 West Bank notables in Jericho on behalf of the Arab Congress, which called on Abdullah to unite both banks of the Jordan under his rule. This action, opposed by Haj Amin and his followers, was both the wish of Abdullah and a viable political alternative for the West Bankers, who preferred Jordanian rule to being possibly swallowed up by Israel. Endorsement of Abdullah's role in the West Bank was qualified by reference in the resolutions passed at Jericho to Palestine being "a single unit" and affirmation that any solution which did not involve Palestine as a whole "will not be considered final."[5]

During late 1948 and 1949 Abdullah took a number of steps to institutionalize Jordanian control of the West Bank. All Palestinian bodies active during the 1948 war were dissolved, and all functionaries of Haj Amin Husseini were

4. Migdal, Joel S., *Palestinian Society and Politics*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980, p.36.
5. Peretz, Don, "The Historical Background of Arab Nationalism in Palestine," in Ward, Richard, Peretz, Don, and Wilson, Evan M., *The Palestine State: A Rational Approach*, Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1977, p.36; Seale, *op. cit.*, p.30; Nyrop, Richard F., ed., *Jordan, A Country Study*, Washington, D.C.: Foreign Area Studies, American University, USGPO, 1979, p.12.

ordered to cease their activities. Local issuance of licenses and tax collection were stopped, and the Palestinian irregulars, *al-Jihad al-Maqaddas*, were disbanded. The military administration was converted in March 1949 to civilian status, with three West Bank supporters of the King appointed governors of the Jerusalem, Ramallah and Northern, and Hebron districts under a governor-general responsible to the Jordanian Ministry of the Interior.[6]

In order to maintain continuity for the West Bank population after 1948, King Abdullah retained many of the administrative and bureaucratic practices of the mandate with approximately the same geographic districts and granted all West Bankers Jordanian citizenship. The Jordanian Parliament formed in April 1949 included seven appointed West Bank deputies; the 1949 Jordanian cabinet contained three West Bankers. Integration of the West Bank into Jordanian law and practice continued steadily, with a major step a December 1949 decree officially subordinating all West Bank officials to Amman.[7]

These actions taken by the Jordanian government were preparatory to the formal linking of the East Bank and the West Bank by action of the Jordanian Parliament on April 24, 1950. Parliament had been expanded to include a 20-member, appointed House of Notables with seven West Bankers and a 40-member, elected House of Deputies, half West Bankers and half East Bankers. The "uniting resolution" was careful in stressing Arab rights in Palestine and their defense without prejudice to the ultimate settlement of the Palestine problem while confirming the "complete unity" of the two banks and equality of rights between them.[8]

The uniting resolution was attacked by many Palestinians and the Arab League, whose Political Committee condemned

6. Mishal, *op. cit.*, pp.5-6.
7. *Ibid.*, pp.6,8; MEI, *op. cit.*, pp.40-41.
8. MEI, *op. cit.*, p.41; Seale, Patrick, ed., *The Shaping of an Arab Statesman: Abd al-Hamid Sharaf and the Modern Arab World*, London: Quartet Books, 1983, p.30; Mukhar, Randa, "Israeli Settlements in the West Bank and International Law," unpublished paper, Amman, Jordan, n.d., p.3.

the action a week later. Only the negative votes of Iraq (whose King Feisal was a great-nephew of King Abdullah) and Yemen thwarted Jordan's expulsion from the League over the annexation. West Bank unhappiness stemmed mainly from the fact that with Palestine cut in two, there was no realistic hope of independence. Moreover, even though under King Abdullah the West Bank would have Arab sovereignty, there were no illusions about his personal interest in permanent control.

Heirs to the Arab Revolt

King Abdullah had strong political ambitions. A son of the man who had led the fight for Arab independence in World War I and whose family held a virtual monopoly on claims to pan-Arab leadership, Abdullah was an Arab nationalist determined to establish the British-promised independent Arab state under Hashemite rule. Abdullah viewed Transjordan as a part of Syria, and he had attempted to obtain British acceptance of his rule over Transjordan and Palestine during the mandate. His intermediate goal was to incorporate available regions into the Kingdom of Jordan.[9]

The conflicting political requirements of King Abdullah and most Palestinians established at the outset a framework for uneasy coexistence that has been the case ever since. The new West Bank citizens of Jordan regarded the Palestine conflict as an elemental struggle between Zionist Jews and Palestinian Arabs, with the resources of the Arab world needed to overcome Israeli superiority in education and foreign support. Palestinian resentment of King Abdullah, encouraged by other Arab states, was increased by the prominent role that Britain continued to play in the affairs of Jordan.

On the other hand, the 1948 war significantly increased Abdullah's political and military power while adding territory

9. Nevo, Joseph, "Is There a Jordanian Entity?," *Jerusalem Quarterly*, Summer 1980, p.99; Seale, *op. cit.*, p.28; Mishal, *op. cit.*, p.13.

to his kingdom. Aware of the power imbalance between Israel and Jordan, he regarded negotiations with Israel as a way of easing tensions and rationalizing problems such as those faced by the border villages whose lands were now in Israel. Abdullah also hoped that secret negotiations conducted with Israel in 1949 would result in tangible benefits such as a link to the sea at Haifa that would show the Palestinians that he could produce gains for them. His government proclaimed that one day Arab Palestine would be restored and that the displaced Palestinians would be able to return home. At the same time the government made sure to restrict Palestinian separatism and to maintain its right to speak for the Palestinians.[10]

King Abdullah developed a sophisticated approach in dealing with the West Bank before his assassination by a follower of Haj Amin Husseini in Jerusalem in 1951. He drew the reins of authority tight in Amman but rewarded supporters in the West Bank and encouraged opponents to take advantage of benefits in the form of jobs, appointments, and other opportunities that flowed from cooperation with Amman rather than opposition to it. Abdullah made sure that no West Bank leader developed area-wide support, helped by West Bank social and political divisions that worked against regional cooperation.

West Bankers were rewarded for cooperation primarily with posts concerning Palestinian affairs. Other jobs accessible to Palestinians included economic and foreign trade issues, agriculture, and communications. Few Palestinians achieved high positions in security, defense, or royal palace affairs. King Abdullah included Palestinians in his cabinets, principally in the areas mentioned but also including foreign affairs from time to time. The balancing act between Jordan's citizens of Palestinian origin and indigenous East Bankers also had to be sensitive to the difference between indigenous

10. Seale, *op. cit.*, pp.30-31; Mishal, Shaul, "Conflictual Pressures and Cooperative Interests: Observations on West Bank-Amman Relations, 1949-67," in Migdal, *op. cit.*, p.171; Mishal, *East Bank/West Bank*, *op cit.*, p.13.

West Bankers and refugees from western Palestine. Palestinians who had made their homes in Amman before 1948 were specially favored by the regime.[11]

Demography after the War

The population of the West Bank fluctuated dramatically in the years following the war. The pre-1948 population of 465,000 jumped immediately to 800,000 with the influx of refugees from western Palestine, but due to internal migration (*i.e.*, from West Bank to East Bank) and to out-migration (primarily to the Persian Gulf in search of jobs), the West Bank population at the time of the first official Jordanian census in 1952 was 742,000. The Jerusalem district (including Ramallah and Jericho) listed 300,000, of whom more than 60 per cent were refugees; the Nablus district had 215,000 residents, of whom 55 per cent were refugees; and the Hebron district showed 125,000 residents, of whom 45 per cent were refugees.[12]

The towns and cities of the West Bank underwent major changes after 1948, with Jerusalem the most affected by the new situation. Jerusalem had been the seat of government under the mandate, attracting a cosmopolitan population for this reason as well as for its important religious role for Muslims, Christians, and Jews. The postwar ceasefire line ran right through the city, and its economic "hinterland" as well as its communications links with the coastal region disappeared overnight. From the start all governmental functions that had been based in Jerusalem were transferred to Amman. Despite King Abdullah's special reverence for Jerusalem, the attention given to building up Amman, Jordan's capital, had the effect of making Jerusalem play "second fiddle."

Many Palestinians had assumed, or at least hoped, that Jerusalem would become a "second center," if not the capital

11. MEI, *op. cit.*, pp.46-47; Migdal, *op. cit.*, p.37.
12. MEI, *op. cit.*, p.39.

of Jordan, but Jerusalem found itself increasingly a provincial city, with the lion's share of development and attention going to Amman.[13] In addition to stressing the development of Amman, which had been a dusty desert town of 30,000 residents before 1948, the government had another reason for a conservative approach to Jerusalem: it was the most prominent West Bank city and the home of many of the regime's foremost critics.

Much of the development in the Jerusalem area was in the direction of Ramallah (predominantly Christian) and El-Bireh (predominantly Muslim), adjoining towns just north of Jerusalem. Most of that expansion was concentrated along the main road from Jerusalem to the North, although Jerusalem also grew to the East in the suburbs of Bethany (Azaria) and Abu Dis.

Nablus had a strong agricultural base, and it continued to develop its industry. The refugee camps that formed just outside the city after 1948 became part of the region's building boom. The city's strong sense of individuality helped make it an urbane social, political, and cultural center in the West Bank. By 1967 Nablus was second after Jerusalem in population and influence, with an estimated 40,000 residents.[14] Qalqilya (in the northwest) and El-Bireh graduated to urban status in the Jordan period, with approximately 10,000 residents each.[15]

Hebron remained the poorest and least developed of the West Bank's major towns and cities. Conservative, largely agricultural, and low in applied technology, the town experienced the West Bank's highest rate of migration, with many of its young people moving but remaining in the kingdom; others went to the Persian Gulf looking for work. Their

13. Sofer, Naim, "The Political Status of Jerusalem in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, 1948-67," in *Middle Eastern Studies*, January 1976, p.59; Mishal, *East Bank/West Bank, op. cit.*, p.101.
14. Migdal, *op. cit.*, p.59; Mishal, *East Bank/West Bank, op. cit.*, p.102; Efrat, Elisha, "Changes in the Settlement Pattern of Judea and Samaria during Jordanian Rule," *Middle Eastern Studies*, January 1977, p.110.
15. Efrat, *op. cit.*, pp.102,110.

remittances became a major component of the town's well-being and by 1967 had contributed to increased social mobility within the population. By 1967 the Hebron population was almost 40,000, about the same size as Nablus.[16]

Town development in the Jordanian period was uneven and largely unplanned, with an inadequate industrial base and public institutions. Urban growth included rural people moving into town, which often meant that towns came to resemble overgrown villages. Contrary to the usual trend, the highest population growth in the West Bank during the Jordan period was in rural rather than urban areas. From 1949 to 1967 West Bank urban growth rose by 42 per cent while rural growth was in excess of 110 per cent. A substantial portion of rural growth was due to the influx of peasant refugees who had no skills other than farming and who often "squatted" on land to which they had no claim, scratching out a living and making the arrangement semi-permanent in many cases. By 1967 there were about 400 villages in the West Bank, ranging in population from 100 to 5,000 residents each. Average village size was 875 residents. Villages in the fertile areas near Jenin and Tulkarm in the North were the largest, averaging close to 1,000 persons, while those near Jericho (in the Jordan Valley) averaged fewer than 200 persons.[17]

West Bank society during the Jordan period was still badly scarred from the failure of the Palestinian nationalist movement during the mandate. Although some of the exiled leaders returned after the British left in 1948, they were part of a group that was discredited by the defeat and dispersion of the Palestinians by Israel. As was the case during the mandate, prominent West Bank Palestinians did not find it possible to join forces regardless of circumstances. While under the mandate there had been few incentives to justify a

16. Mishal, *East Bank/West Bank, op. cit.*, pp.102-03; Migdal, *op.cit.*, pp.57-58.
17. Migdal, *op. cit.*, p.56.

pro-British policy, the Jordanian regime went to considerable lengths to engage and win over prominent West Bankers.

West Bank Paradoxes

It was of little satisfaction to many West Bankers that as Jordanian citizens they enjoyed more rights and freedoms than their brethren in most other parts of the Arab world at the time. Having been fired in the crucible of nationalist politics for much of the century, Palestinian expectations tended to be higher than those of Arabs who had obtained independence with less sacrifice. Grievances, real and imagined, over Amman's conduct of West Bank affairs were sufficient to fuel discontent.[18]

Despite West Bank and broader Palestinian unhappiness with many aspects of Jordanian policies, there was relatively little manifestation of political separatism on the West Bank, even during periods when plots were hatched to kill King Hussein. The reasons for this anomaly were many and include those mentioned (pan-Arab "responsibility" for the future of Palestine and co-optation of West Bank leaders by Amman). An additional reason was the emphasis placed by King Hussein and the Jordanian leadership on support for Palestinian objectives, the restoration of Arab Palestine, the struggle against colonialism, and the search for Arab unity. By couching the struggle with Israel in terms of the liberation of Palestine rather than Palestinians, the Jordanian leadership, as well as the rest of the Arab world, could not be blamed for policies that avoided a possibly premature and militarily unsuccessful campaign against Israel.[19]

The uniting of the two banks of the Jordan River joined two population groups with different histories and outlooks. As a result of the refugee influx after 1948, the East Bank population became a heterogeneous mixture of Transjordan-

18. Cohen, Amnon, "Does a 'Jordanian Option' Still Exist?," *Jerusalem Quarterly*, #16 (Summer 1980), p.114.
19. Mishal, *East Bank/West Bank, op. cit.*, p.114.

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ians and Palestinians. The West Bank population, however, remained relatively homogeneous despite the fact that the indigenous West Bankers regarded their Palestinian refugee brethren as intruders.

The role of the refugees in Jordanian life is a special one. Almost three-quarter million Palestinians fled western Palestine during the 1947-48 fighting, and most of them left with few belongings. Although all Palestinians share the bitterness of loss of homeland and denial of political independence, the refugees have nursed special grievances over the years and have usually focused them on anyone whom they regard as responsible for the problem or the lack of a satisfactory solution. Often feeling superior to the Transjordanians, most Palestinian refugees found it hard to acknowledge their dependence on Jordanian largesse for survival after the war. The creation of UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees) soon after the war made possible a "cocoon" for the refugees who were in need of food, housing, and other services. The existence of UNRWA, an international organization staffed except at the very top by Palestinians, helped many refugees maintain a society within a society in Jordan buffered from contact with the government by layers of UNRWA programs and program managers. Regarding themselves as victims, many refugees developed a frame of mind that made it difficult for them to function at the political level although they were practical in trying to rebuild their own lives.[20] The refugee paradox was that assimilation in Jordan was to a certain extent the "enemy" of repatriation. King Abdullah and King Hussein understood this reality and helped integrate the Palestinian refugees into Jordanian society without asking them to turn their backs on their heritage.

20. Shamir, Shimon, "West Bank Refugees—Between Camp and Society," in Migdal, *op.cit.*, p.155.

Christian Anxieties

The West Bank's Christian population and the activities of foreign Christian groups in the West Bank were a delicate matter in relations with the Amman government. There has been a Christian minority in the East Bank for centuries, but it has lived as an inconspicuous minority, whereas West Bank Christians have traditionally maintained links with foreign Christian institutions maintaining a presence there. Many foreign Christian groups, having obtained concessions from the Ottoman authorities and having maintained close ties with Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and other sites associated with the life of Christ, regarded their presence in the West Bank more as a matter of right than of privilege. Palestinian Christians had functioned as a *millet* (a self-contained, internally accountable religious community) under the Ottomans, and they expressed concern about the designation of Islam as the official religion of the Hashemite Kingdom. Anxiety about their status increased as a result of the virtual doubling of the West Bank population by the influx of refugees, mostly Muslim, in 1948.

West Bank Christians had traditionally been active in political life. They were an integral part of the intellectual elite and had made significant contributions to the development of Arab nationalism, aided in part by access to superior educational opportunities. Many Christians felt the necessity of demonstrating Arab nationalist credentials to skeptical Muslims and ended up in visible roles. After 1948 politically active West Bank Christians felt that the main issue was Palestine rather than religion and did not hesitate to challenge Amman at the political level.[21]

The Muslim-Christian issue became more complicated during the mid-1950s when, in response to the growing influence of Arab nationalism symbolized by Egypt's President Nasser, legislative steps were taken in Amman to restrict the

21. Tsimhoni, Daphna, "The Christian Communities in Jerusalem and the West Bank, 1948-67," *Middle East Review*, Fall 1976, p.45.

activities of foreign Christian groups, regarded as linked to foreign governments and as having political as well as religious objectives in the West Bank. Laws were passed prohibiting the purchase of land by Christian groups in the vicinity of the Holy Places and restricting activities construable as proselytizing. While the mid-1950s were a period of Muslim sensitivity and self-assertion toward "foreign" influences, relations between West Bank Christians and their Muslim fellow Jordanians have been positive, with both sides working to keep them on an even keel.[22]

Economic Roles

One of the most important sectors of concern to both East Bank and West Bank Jordan after the merger was the economy. The West Bank, with only six per cent of the total land area of Jordan, was initially more advanced in agriculture and industry, providing almost 40 per cent of the nation's gross national product (GNP) in 1965, but the West Bank's relative advantage declined as greater emphasis was placed on development of Amman and the East Bank.

Agriculture was the mainstay of the West Bank economy, employing one-half the total work force. An estimated one-third of the land of the West Bank was farmed, although only two per cent was irrigated. Eighty-five per cent of the farms were fewer than 25 acres in size, utilizing one-third of the cultivated land; large landowners controlled the rest. Because of the ruggedness of the West Bank, only in the rolling and fertile area near Jenin and Tulkarm has it been possible to undertake large-scale agriculture, mainly grains and other field crops.[23]

West Bank agriculture has suffered from a number of problems over the years, including increased pressure on the land as a result of the refugee influx in 1948. One critical

22. *Ibid.*, pp.43-44.
23. Migdal, *op. cit.*, p.54; Bull, Vivian A., *The West Bank—Is It Viable?*, Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1975, p.64.

assessment of West Bank agriculture has identified major problems: l) disjointed interrelationships with other sectors of the economy; 2) low labor productivity; 3) inefficient use of land and water; 4) limited use of middlemen; and 5) excessive reliance on the weather.[24] Several of these criticisms are traceable to the lack of capital available for West Bank agriculture. One result of the small, often patchwork pattern of individual holdings has been difficulty in using efficient farm machinery as well as problems in obtaining the funds necessary for such equipment.

Industry in the West Bank during the Jordan period was composed mainly of small-scale workshops employing fewer than 10 workers each. Principal products included food processing, textiles, furniture, shoes, soap, matches, and items for the tourist trade, particularly in the Jerusalem area, where more than half the West Bank's industry was located. In 1948 the East Bank had almost no industry of any size; immediately after the merger, West Bank industry contributed one-fourth of the kingdom's total industrial product despite industry comprising only seven per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) of the West Bank.[25]

The emphasis on industrial development after the merger of the two banks of the Jordan was in the East Bank, where an oil refinery, potash plant, and other substantial enterprises were established. By 1965 three-fourths of Jordan's industrial output was located in the East Bank. In 1966 the West Bank, with half the country's population, had only 22 per cent of its industry and 16 per cent of its total transportation network.

Major investments in the Yarmouk Dam and the East Ghor Canal (an irrigation project in the Jordan Valley) were in the East Bank. While the 1967 war made it impossible to extend the Ghor canal project to the West Bank as planned, the

24. Coordinator of Government Operations in Judea and Samaria, Gaza District, Sinai, Golan Heights, "A Thirteen-Year Survey (1967-1980)," Ministry of Defense (Israel), January 1981, p.6 (hereafter GOI).
25. MEI, *op. cit.*, p.42.

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government hesitated to make major investments in the West Bank, where they would be hostage to possible Israeli take-over. The West Bank economy came to play a secondary role in the East Bank's dynamism, with Jerusalem-based tourism the major exception. By 1965 the West Bank was importing approximately twice what it was exporting. The overall Jordanian economy boomed, however, averaging eight to ten per cent annual increases, which benefited both banks.[26]

When the Jordanian government committed itself in the 1950s to a national educational system, the Palestinians, including the poorest refugees living in UNRWA camps, took advantage of the opportunity. After the 1948 war and its dislocations, Palestinians realized that personal skills and occupational mobility were the most reliable assets they could develop. As oil-producing countries in the Gulf began to require the services of skilled and semi-skilled workers fluent in Arabic, Palestinians were among the principal applicants.

Rise of Arab Nationalism

Politics in the West Bank meant mainly opposition politics, and the parties that took root shared common ground in criticizing Amman's policies at least some of the time. The government's approach toward political opposition during the early years of the merger was to emphasize persuasion and manipulation over confrontation. The differentiation of roles was straightforward: regime-support activists, wooed by posts, appointments, economic self-interest, and pragmatism, were drawn mainly from the notables' class of large landowners and businessmen. The regime's links to them operated through formal and informal channels. Regime-opposition activists came mainly from professional and intellectual sectors and depended on ideological appeals and outside financial assistance for their impact.[27]

26. Bull, *op. cit.*, p.96; MEI, *op. cit.*, pp.42-43; Van Arkadie, Brian, *Benefits and Burdens: A Report on the West Bank and Gaza Strip Economies since 1967*, New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1977, p.26.
27. Heller, Mark, "Politics and Social Change in the West Bank since 1967," in Migdal, *op. cit.*, pp.209-10.

The political situation confronting Jordan in the Arab world began to change dramatically after the rise of President Nasser in Egypt and his calls for the Arabs to rid themselves of the influence of foreign powers still active in the area. King Hussein had been arguing a historical definition of Arab nationalism that acknowledged existing political divisions and systems but maintained that Arab unity on a "confederal" basis would be greater than the sum of the national parts. President Nasser defined Arab unity to mean organic political unity in the context of nonalignment with the Great Powers.[28] As the force of Arab nationalism grew in the Arab world in the 1950s, political activists in Jordan began to look outside the kingdom for a counterforce to the King's monopoly on political power.

The "hard core" of political opposition to the Hashemite regime consisted of five parties, from political left to political right: 1) the Communist Party, 2) the Ba'ath (Arab Renaissance); 3) the Qawmiyyun al-Arab (Arab Nationalists); 4) the Muslim Brotherhood; and 5) Tahrir (Liberation), another religious party. The Communists and the Muslim Brotherhood antedated Jordanian West Bank rule, but the others were formed in 1951-52. All had a strong Palestinian dimension, both leaders and followers, and the West Bank branches were generally more active than those on the East Bank. They adopted a conspiratorial, clandestine approach and survived, albeit in attenuated and underground form, until the Israeli occupation in 1967. (Among the many Jordanian government records captured by the Israelis in 1967 in Jerusalem were intelligence files on the West Bank opposition, which facilitated Israel's monitoring of potential troublemakers.) All the parties were transnational in outlook, and none used the word Palestine in its name; none is estimated to have enrolled more than 3,500 members at a given time.[29] Radio Cairo, heard throughout the West Bank, carried the

28. Mishal, East *Bank/West Bank, op. cit.*, pp.114-15.
29. Cohen, *op. cit.*, pp.115-16.

appeal of Egypt's President Nasser to many enthusiasts not members of any party.

The Communists, with their effective indoctrination and discipline, had the greatest relative impact of any of the parties, although their primary targets were "intellectuals" (*i.e.*, teachers, clerks, students, and professionals), and the party made little effort to enroll the "masses." The party vacillated between a Marxist internationalist approach and one based on Arab nationalism. Its acceptance of the partition of Palestine and its call for Palestinian-Jordanian solidarity cost it support on the West Bank.[30]

The Muslim Brotherhood and Tahrir were both religious parties although Tahrir, a breakaway from the Brotherhood, was more reactionary in its appeal than the Brotherhood, which was legal under Jordanian law and which was used from time to time by the government to build support for its policies in the Muslim community. The theme of both parties was Muslim unity, with Arab unity as the means although Arab unity could not be equated with Muslim unity. Tahrir rejected all "national" Arab concepts, arguing that the most lasting links were those forged through being Arab rather than through ideas. Most of the time, however, the Islamic forces were not called to accountability for their policies.[31]

The Arab Nationalists (Qawmiyyun) were founded by the radical Palestinian medical doctor, George Habash, among others, while a student at the American University of Beirut. An important part of the Arab Nationalist message was to avenge the Palestine defeat of 1948 and to unite the Arab world under Nasser, overthrowing the Hashemites in the process. The party's West Bank membership is estimated not to have exceeded several hundred members at the most in the late 1950s and early 1960s.[32]

30. Mishal, *East Bank/West Bank, op. cit.*, p.20; Cohen, Amnon, *Political Parties in the West Bank under the Jordanian Regime, 1949-67*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1982, pp.56,76.
31. Mishal, *East Bank/West Bank, op. cit.*, pp.84, 88; Cohen, *Political Parties, op. cit.*, pp.146,210.
32. Cohen, *Political Parties, op. cit.*, pp.95, 108-09, 112.

The Ba'ath Party, founded by two Syrian nationalists in the 1940s, espoused a pan-Arab philosophy that the Amman government argued was contrary to the Jordanian constitution, grounds for justifying its harassment and suppression in addition to the charge of arms smuggling from Syria and Egypt into Jordan with the objective of overthrowing the regime.

Keeping Control

The Jordanian government utilized many tactics for curbing and controlling the opposition parties, from manipulation and infiltration to administrative regulations whose broad interpretation permitted restriction and even banning of their activities, the latter in April 1957 when King Hussein cracked down on political dissension. Prior to that time the government had made a number of concessions to the critics, including giving the Parliament a larger role in approving the budget and treaties, although the King retained a veto on Parliament's actions and could dissolve it.

Jordan went through several political crises in the mid-to-late 1950s, the opposition being led by Arab nationalists aided and abetted by foreign Arab governments. The first crisis was Jordan's attempt at joining the newly created Baghdad Pact in 1955 at British urging backed with promises of substantial economic and military assistance which Jordan needed. The public outcry was such that King Hussein was forced to reverse himself and send the British emissary away empty-handed.

Arab nationalist antagonism to Jordan's close ties to Britain next showed itself in demands that the Jordan Legion be "Arabized" and that the British officer corps headed by Glubb Pasha be dismissed. Glubb was regarded by many Palestinians as having been responsible for the 1948 Legion decision to contest only the West Bank and to concede the rest of Palestine to the Zionists. (Although contingents from several other Arab countries were present in Palestine, their

military incompetence lessened the criticism). King Hussein dismissed Glubb in March 1956, an action which won him praise from his people and anger from the British.

The Arab nationalist wave in 1956 brought a radical government to power following Jordanian elections in the fall. A politician of West Bank origins, Sulaiman Nabulsi, became Prime Minister and set in motion anti-Western policies that aroused popular support. The King's dismissal of the Nabulsi cabinet in April, followed by reports of plotting by Glubb's successor as head of the Jordan Legion, brought imposition of martial law in late April, banning of political parties, and the jailing of hundreds of suspected political activists.

The King's survival was the result of his own courage and political skills, as well as the coming to the fore of a group of politicians prepared to deal harshly with opponents of the government. This group, composed mainly of East Bank Jordanians, was opposed to growing Arab nationalist influence in East Bank affairs, and some argued for severing ties with the West Bank. The result of this trend, symbolized by Wasfi Tel, the Prime Minister who favored "Jordanization" of the East Bank, was not severance of links but rather a decrease in the Palestinian role and influence in the kingdom in favor of East Bankers and tried and true supporters of Palestinian origin.[33]

The Palestinian political idea remained alive in the minds of most Palestinians, however, particularly refugees from the areas that became Israel in 1948 who maintained an often tenuous existence in Arab countries other than Jordan. In the late 1950s the concept of a "Palestinian entity" began to circulate and with it the idea that a specifically Palestinian focus might be required to address Palestinian political needs. Certainly none of the Arab states vocal on behalf of the Palestinians could point to success from their attempted destabilization of Jordan or ritual assurances of leading the return of the Palestinians to Palestine.

33. Nevo, *op. cit.*, pp.106-07.

A significant development in the Palestinian arena was the creation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1964 at the behest of President Nasser and the Arab League, who felt the need to give room to Palestinian nationalism while making sure that it remained under establishment control. Despite its endorsement of the PLO's creation at a meeting in Jerusalem, the Jordanian government saw little about which to be encouraged. Not only would a focused Palestinian activity erode efforts to make Jordan's Palestinians into Jordanians; it would also encourage political disruption in the West Bank and run the risk of Israeli reprisals should Palestinian rhetoric be converted into raids into Israel.

Despite efforts by the government in many areas involving the West Bank (such as implementation of a national economic plan, civil service reforms giving local governors more authority over their areas, and a generally more liberal approach), the creation of the PLO and the increasing level of tension on the Israeli border undermined much of the progress that was made in improving East Bank-West Bank relations in the 1960s. A major Israeli raid on the West Bank town of Samu' (Hebron district) in November 1966 supported by tanks and aircraft dramatically increased demands by the PLO to "arm and mobilize" the border villages.

The situation on the West Bank remained troubled up to the June 1967 war, in which Israel invaded and occupied the West Bank. In the final analysis, Jordan's efforts to integrate the West Bank into the Jordanian system were only partially successful because of the distinctive Palestinian identity, pressures in the East Bank to keep the West Bank at arm's length, and the continuing influence of wider Arab politics on the West Bank population.[34]

34. MEI, *op. cit.*, p.55; Mishal, *East Bank/West Bank*, *op. cit.*, p.64.

Part Two:

Life Under
Occupation

THE WAR AND
INTERNATIONAL LAW

Dark Days

King Hussein entered into a joint military pact with President Nasser only days before the Israeli air force started the war by bombing Egyptian airfields on June 5. The King honored his part of the pact by opening hostilities on the eastern front, but within two days Israeli troops had made a swift paratroop landing to the east of Jerusalem, secured Mount Scopus (containing the old Hadassah Hospital and Hebrew University buildings), and seized control of the Old City after driving through St. Stephen's Gate. Many Jordanian officials, including most of the West Bank's Arab policemen, crossed over to the East Bank.

After the 1948 war the West Bank population, accustomed to dealing mainly with the coastal region of Palestine, had found its access cut off by the Jewish state and its social and economic structure redirected toward the East Bank. The 1967 war wrenched the West Bank in the opposite direction, as the Israel-Jordan ceasefire line was established at the Jordan River and the West Bank population again came under the control of a political entity stretching from the Mediterranean coast to the Jordan River. The events of 1948 had brought about the dispersion of the Palestinian Arabs, but Israel's conquest of the West Bank in 1967 amounted to an involuntary "ingathering" of the Arabs within the former boundaries of Palestine (Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip) who had been unable to maintain contact with one another in the intervening years.

During and after the 1967 fighting, however, almost 300,000 West Bank residents fled or were driven from their

homes and sought safety on the East Bank. Many were residents of the two large UNRWA camps near Jericho, refugees from the 1948 war. For the most part poor, landless, and previously uprooted by war, these people had little incentive to remain and take their chances, particularly since their eligibility for UNRWA assistance would go with them to the East Bank. Refugees from West Bank towns experiencing heavy fighting were also on the road toward the river, which came close to the Jericho refugee camps and increased anxiety among the residents.

Unlike 1948, however, two-thirds of the West Bank population stayed put in 1967, electing to take their chances under new and difficult circumstances rather than to trade uncertainty on their own land for a different kind of uncertainty elsewhere. The West Bank Palestinians in 1967 understood that the only hope of maintaining Arab Palestine was to stay on the land; departure in 1948 had brought alienation of the land and the denial of return.

The 1967 war brought Israeli destruction of Palestinian towns and homes and the forced dispersal of their population, mainly in areas adjacent to the "green line" separating pre-1967 Israel and the West Bank. The three villages of Yalu, Beit Nuba, and Imwas in the "Latrun Salient" (the finger of Jordanian territory jutting into Israel near the Latrun monastery and the road to Jerusalem) were bulldozed into rubble and their residents scattered. Parts of Tulkarm and Qalqilya, two northern West Bank towns near the Israeli border, were also destroyed after the fighting stopped.

Stunned by the swiftness of the Israeli victory, the West Bank population was quiescent in the aftermath of the war. The Israeli government and armed forces moved quickly to consolidate their victory and their hold on the West Bank (as well as the Sinai Peninsula, the Golan Heights, and the Gaza Strip) by extending the activities of the respective ministries to corresponding sectors in the West Bank. Basic services were resumed, although certain activities, including the bank-

ing system, did not resume their former roles under the occupation.

Interpreting the Law

As soon as the Israeli occupation was a *fait accompli*, questions were raised at the United Nations and in major political capitals about Israel's obligations toward the occupied territories under international law. The Geneva Civilians Convention, adopted in 1949 in the wake of Nazi atrocities against civilian populations in occupied areas during World War II, was explicit in its application "to all cases of belligerent conflict" and "all cases of partial or total occupation of the territory of a High Contracting Party," Israel being a signer of the convention.[1]

Israel challenged not only Jordan's legal title to the West Bank but also the characterization of Israel's role as aggressor in the war. The Israeli argument is that Jordan's absorption of the West Bank in 1948 was illegal and had been recognized by only two nations, Great Britain and Pakistan. Therefore, according to this argument, Jordan was not the "legitimate sovereign" in the West Bank as of June 4, 1967, and Israel cannot be the "belligerent occupant" since it did not replace a "legitimate sovereign." Since Israel is not a "belligerent occupant," so this argument goes, the Geneva Conventions do not apply to Israel's role in the West Bank.[2] The Israeli defense is further embellished by the claim that the occupation was the result of a "defensive conquest" and that the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) "liberated" rather than occupied the West Bank. (The latter argument in more recent years became the standard interpretation by the government of Menachem Begin of the Israeli occupation in 1967.)

The Jordanian legal view of the situation is quite different. The terms of the Jordan-Israel Armistice agreement in 1949

1. Quoted in Metzger, Jan, Orth, Martin, and Sterzing, Christian, *This Land Is Our Land: The West Bank Under Israeli Occupation*, London: Zed Press, 1983, p.62.
2. *Ibid.*, p.62.

stated that its sole basis was the military situation and that the lines drawn were to have no influence on the future status of Palestine, which was to be determined by a final peace treaty. Jordan argues that since the terms of the mandate were grounded in international law, no part of Palestine could be considered *terra nullius*, or unowned land. Jordan maintains that since the West Bank was not part of Israel at any point prior to 1967, its presence thereafter could be considered only that of belligerent occupant.[3] The Israeli annexation of Jordanian Jerusalem has not been recognized by any foreign government to date.

The Jordanian position is that the Geneva Civilians Convention is fully applicable to the West Bank. Israeli recognition of the Jordanian citizenship of West Bank residents and of the applicability of Jordanian law in the West Bank supports the argument that Israeli actions are governed by international statutes on belligerent occupation.[4] Israel's rejection of the applicability of the Civilians Convention in the West Bank deprives the inhabitants of vital international legal protections.[5]

The position of the US government on the Civilians Convention issue is that it is applicable in the occupied territories and that the sovereign status of the previous occupier is not at issue. The Department of State's Legal Advisor told the Congress in April 1978 that "Protecting the reversionary interest of an ousted sovereign is not their sole or essential purpose."[6] The purpose of the Conventions is to protect civilians against governments and not vice versa.

One reason for the controversy over Israeli obligations under international law with respect to the West Bank con-

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3. Bin Talal, Hassan, *Palestinian Self-Determination: A Study of the West Bank and Gaza Strip*, London: Quartet Books, 1981, pp.64-65.
4. *Ibid.*, pp.75-76.
5. Mallison, Sally V. and W. Thomas, "Settlements and the Law: A Juridical Analysis of the Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territories," Washington: American Educational Trust, 1982, pp.16-17.
6. Laipson, Ellen, "Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territory: Israeli, Arab, and American Perspectives," Washington: Congressional Research Service/Library of Congress, 1983, p.8.

cerns the introduction of Israeli settlers into the area with the intention of remaining there permanently. Article 49 of the Conventions prohibits an occupying power from "deporting or transferring any of its own civilian population to the occupied territories."[7] The Israeli response has been that only transfers that displace indigenous occupants are illegal, basing this interpretation on a German plan during the Nazi era to replace Poles with German nationals in certain areas. Article 49 makes no mention of displacement of local population in the course of transfer of one's own population, leaving the Israeli interpretation open to continuing legal challenge.

The uncertainties generated by the Israeli legal interpretation of the occupation of the West Bank in 1967 are increased by Israel's insistence that it is not "occupying" the West Bank but rather "administering" it until its final status is determined. Israel has also maintained that although it is listed in international documents as a signatory of the Geneva Conventions, albeit with reservations, it never ratified the Conventions and therefore is not bound by them.[8]

7. Quoted in Metzger, *op. cit.*, p.64.
8. Laipson, *op. cit.*, p.8.

THE FIRST DECADE

Spoils of War

Israel found itself with a dramatically altered territorial situation at the close of the 1967 fighting. It had captured Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, Syria's Golan Heights, the Egyptian-administered Gaza Strip, and Jordan's West Bank. Israeli-controlled territory now represented a six-fold increase over its June 4, 1967 boundaries. The Sinai Peninsula provided "strategic depth" for Israel, lacking special religious or sentimental appeal. The Golan Heights were both a strategic and emotional gain, since heavy Syrian guns on the heights had shelled targets in Israel for many years. The West Bank, however, was the "epicenter" of Jewish associations with Palestine, focused on East Jerusalem.

East Jerusalem was considered special in every respect, and from the outset of the occupation there was near-unanimity in Israel on retention of Jerusalem regardless of what kind of peace might be negotiated with the Arabs. Legislation was approved in the Knesset on June 19, 1967 annexing East Jerusalem to the Israeli portion of the city. Thenceforth Arab residents of East Jerusalem were regarded as residents, though not citizens, of Israel. The statistics Israel compiles and publishes on the occupied areas do not include East Jerusalem, which is subsumed in statistical summaries for Israel proper.

Decisions about what to do with the West Bank became a subject of intense debate and discussion within the Israeli government and populace. Although the Labor Party was the leader of the government coalition, the government had been broadened prior to the 1967 war to a "national unity

government" that included the National Religious Party (NRP) and the Gahal faction (composed of Herut and the Liberals) of Menachem Begin, who had been opposition leader since the creation of the state. Both the NRP and Gahal were opposed to return of any portion of "Eretz Yisrael" (the historic land of Israel) to Arab control. The Labor Party was committed to the principle of Israel as a Jewish state, and many of its members regarded retention of the occupied territories as jeopardizing the Jewishness of Israel even though the new lands could provide a buffer with Israel's neighbors and cheap labor for the Israeli economy. Menachem Begin's Herut/Gahal regarded the territories as part of Eretz Yisrael and therefore an end in themselves. [1]

As a member of the national unity government with higher political status than ever before, Begin was able to use his government position to argue for a hard line on the occupied territories. Gahal's resignation from the government in 1970 was in protest against the government's acceptance of US Secretary of State William Rogers' peace proposals, which were based on United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 of November 1967 and committed Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories in the context of a peace agreement with the Arabs. Begin and his followers maintained that Israel's original acceptance of the United Nations partition resolution was wrong and that what had been gained on the battlefield must not be given away afterwards. [2]

Defense Minister Moshe Dayan was the most important influence in the development of Israel's policy toward the West Bank during the first decade of occupation. Dayan developed an approach that was hard-line in the sense of insisting that the West Bank not revert to Arab sovereignty but pragmatic in the sense that West Bank residents should maintain and benefit from Jordanian citizenship. Consistent

1. Sandler, Shmuel, and Frisch, Hillel, *Israel, the Palestinians, and the West Bank: A Study in Intercommunal Conflict*, Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books (D.C. Heath), 1984, p.106.
2. *Ibid.* p.118.

with this approach, Dayan encouraged resumption of trade and other links between the West Bank and the East Bank, with the "open bridges" policy to permit West Bank interaction with Jordan and the rest of the outside world.

Developing the Policy

In the early period following the 1967 war the Israeli government maintained an official posture of willingness to negotiate a peace treaty with the Arabs based on the Security Council Resolution 242 formula of exchanging "peace for territory," although from the start Israel excluded East Jerusalem from areas to be returned. The Arab Summit meeting in Khartoum, Sudan, in September 1967 adopted the "three no's" that ruled out peace with Israel: "no" negotiations, "no" peace treaty, and "no" recognition.[3] The collective Arab position served to discourage those in Israel hoping for normalization with the Arabs through the "peace for territory" formula in which they saw Jordan's King Hussein as the principal Arab negotiating partner. The Arab position encouraged those in Israel who regarded the newly-acquired territories as a windfall and whose unwillingness to return them was overshadowed by Arab unwillingness to develop a negotiating framework for peace with Israel.

The Israeli government moved swiftly to establish the legal underpinnings of its occupation of the West Bank. Proclamation No. 2 of the Israeli military commander of the West Bank, effective June 7, 1967, stated, "All powers of government, legislation, appointment, and administration shall henceforth be vested in me alone and shall be exercised by me or whoever shall be appointed by me to that end or acting on my behalf."[4]

3. *The West Bank: An Assessment*, Washington, D.C.: The Middle East Institute, 1983 (a draft study in preparation for the Defense Intelligence Agency), p.59 (hereafter MEI).
4. Cited in Benvenisti, Meron, "The West Bank and Gaza Strip Data Base Project Interim Report #1," Jerusalem: West Bank Data Base Project, 1982, p.100.

There was a tug of war in the Israeli government over who would exercise control in the West Bank. Originally three levels of government were involved: the Cabinet, with the Prime Minister at the head, overseeing the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Coordination of Activities in the Territories; the Director General's Committee for Economic Affairs; and the Defense Minister's Unit for Coordination of Activities in the Territories. The first level dealt principally with security and political problems, the second with economic matters, and the third with other non-military issues.[5] Throughout the process, however, the West Bank Military Governor has maintained legislative and executive authority, represented by the more than 1,000 Military Orders issued since the start of the occupation.

In a published summary of the first 13 years of occupation, the Military Government described its goals in the West Bank as "the early achievement of normalization in all walks of life, based on the economic and social well-being of the area's inhabitants" and "the guarantee of personal and civic freedoms." The report described the "heavy stress" placed by the Military Government on "local participation" in "every aspect" of daily life in the West Bank, with personal and civic freedoms "limited only by the necessity to maintain law and order and protect the lives and property of local inhabitants." It characterized Israeli policy as based on "non-intervention and minimal interference" except "in matters that might adversely affect Israel's security."[6]

Government by Fiat

Former Jerusalem Deputy Mayor Meron Benvenisti, an Israeli analyst and critic of the occupation, has argued that the Military Government possesses "unlimited powers" and faces "almost no checks and balances" in its operations. His

5. MEI, *op. cit.*, p.99.
6. Coordinator of Government Operations in Judea and Samaria, Gaza District, Sinai, Golan Heights, "A Thirteen-Year Survey (1967-1980)," Jerusalem: Ministry of Defense (Israel), January 1981, pp.l,18 (hereafter GOI).

thesis is that the sum of Israeli legislative enactments, judicial changes, and administrative arrangements in the West Bank has created a system of government that bypasses not only the Geneva Conventions but also the Israeli High Court of Justice, which has consistently ruled that the Military Government is limited to such changes under occupation as are required for the maintenance of law and order, changes which must be "intrinsically temporary."[7] Benvenisti points out that whereas the Military Government describes all the Military Orders as being security-related, most deal with civilian economic, judicial, and administrative matters. "Each [Military Order] is equivalent to a new law," and "the total is...an impressive record of legislation which many a Parliament should envy."[8]

Whereas in theory any resident of the West Bank is authorized to petition the Israeli High Court for satisfaction of a grievance, the High Court reviews only a handful of the Military Orders. The Defense Minister is the only Cabinet Minister directly accountable to the Knesset concerning actions in the occupied territories, and he has "negligible" political input, which means that the Knesset has little day-to-day information about what is happening in the West Bank.[9]

Raja Shehadeh, a West Bank lawyer who has studied the legal basis of the Israeli occupation, shares many of Benvenisti's assessments and has concluded that after the first three years, Israel realized that "control of close to a million Arabs in the occupied territories was easier and more manageable than they had expected" and that the western world "had become convinced of the benevolence of the occupation and its compliance with international conventions." Nonetheless, there was still Jordanian law, which the Israeli government has acknowledged still applies in the West Bank.[10]

7. Benvenisti, *op. cit.*, p.33.
8. *Ibid.*, pp.33-34.
9. *Ibid.*, p.33.
10. Shehadeh, Raja, *The West Bank and the Rule of Law*, Geneva: International

Were Israeli law to be applied in the West Bank, it would be tantamount to annexation. A common practice has been for the Military Government to find a Jordanian law that corresponds more or less to an Israeli objective and then to amend the law to suit Israeli needs, often changing the original law beyond recognition but maintaining technical compliance. Shehadeh notes that "all attempts to challenge [Military Orders] in the civil or military courts of the West Bank or in the High Court of Justice in Israel have proved unsuccessful."[11]

Settlements and Settlers

The most dramatic and provocative aspect of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank has been the establishment of Jewish settlements, the population of which now exceeds 25,000 (exclusive of East Jerusalem) and represents every sector of Israeli society. Settlement in Palestine was an integral part of Zionist strategy beginning in the 19th century and took place under the Ottomans, the British, and the Israelis themselves once the state was established. One of the lessons for Israel of the Zionist-Palestinian struggle in 1947-48 was that the boundaries of the Jewish state proposed in the UN partition plan were drawn in such a way as to include almost every area where Jews had established settlements, an exception being the Etzion Bloc near Bethlehem, one of the first to be reestablished following the fighting in 1967.

The initial Israeli view following occupation of the West Bank was that the occupied territories would serve as bargaining chips in peace negotiations with the Arabs, but Arab resistance to negotiations and Israeli internal imperatives provided reasons for increasing the areas that Israel intended to retain under any circumstances. Shortly after the war 160 Arab homes in the Moughrabiya Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem adjacent to the Western ("Wailing") Wall of

11. *Ibid.*, p.103. Commission of Jurists,1980, p.102.

the Temple Mount were destroyed in order to clear a large area in front of the wall. Next to go were some 600 Arab-owned homes in the former Jewish Quarter of the Old City. Most visible to observers were the first sections of the ring around Arab East Jerusalem of neighborhoods of multi-story apartment buildings for Jewish settlers on French Hill and in Ramat Eshkol.[12] At about the same time as these official actions of the government, private Israeli groups established the foundations for Jewish settlements in Syria's Golan Heights, in the Etzion Bloc on the West Bank, and in Hebron (where the tombs of Abraham and Sarah are located).

During the early years of the occupation Israel's Labor government sanctioned settlements mainly in the Jerusalem area and in cultivable sections of the Jordan Valley. Labor Minister Yigal Allon developed a plan that envisioned Israeli settlement in and retention of a security strip along the western side of the Jordan River as well as a ring of settlements around major areas of Arab urban concentration centered on Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah, and the Etzion Bloc near Bethlehem. A principal objective of the Allon Plan was to maintain Israeli strategic control of the West Bank with minimal interference in the daily lives of the inhabitants. Politically, Allon anticipated the return to Arab sovereignty of the heavily populated Arab areas of the West Bank to some form of Jordanian-Palestinian entity.[13] The plan, never formally adopted by the government, nonetheless had wide support in the Labor Party and remains the basis of Labor's negotiating position for a comprehensive peace.

Success in establishing Jewish settlements in the West Bank required a strategy for obtaining land. Israeli techniques for breaking Palestinian control of West Bank land and then justifying Israeli utilization of it are numerous. It has been

12. Lesch, Ann Mosely, "Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territories, 1967-77," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Autumn 1977, pp.27-29.
13. MEI, *op. cit.*, pp.59-60; Matar, Ibrahim, "Israeli Settlements and Palestinian Rights," in Aruri, Naseer, ed., *Occupation: Israel over Palestine*, Belmont, Mass.: Association of Arab-American University Graduates, 1983, p.121; Ryan, Sheila, "Plans to Regularize the Occupation," in Aruri, *op. cit.*, p.340.

estimated that only one-third of the total 5.8 million *dunums* (one *dunum* equals one-fourth acre) of land in the West Bank were registered with clear title in 1967. The Ottomans had begun the process of land registration in Palestine late in the 19th century, the British had continued the effort during the Mandate period, and the Jordanians had pursued it as well, but the task was immense, in part because of the tradition of communal land use in Palestine that saw many farmers cultivating inherited land although they had no documents to back their claims.

The Disappearing Land

Meron Benvenisti has summarized the principal methods[14] other than purchase by which Arab land in the West Bank is appropriated and brought under the control of Israeli institutions, public and private:

1) *Absentee Property*

This appropriation method utilizes Israel's law governing absentee property, which in the West Bank is defined as any property whose owner left the West Bank before, on, or after June 7, 1967. Land obtained in this way is officially held by a custodian pending final resolution, but it moves under Israeli control and is leased, not sold.

2) *Jordanian State Lands*

Exact statistics about land are difficult to obtain, but one analyst has estimated that of the two-thirds of West Bank land not registered at the time of the 1967 war, close to one-half may belong to the Hashemite Kingdom;[15] other estimates are much lower, by a factor of 50 per cent and more. The Israeli authorities do not sell Jordanian state lands but offer 49-year renewable leases to Jewish settlers only.

3) *Military Purposes*

Land taken in this manner is theoretically for military purposes which need not be defined. Even though it is under

14. Benvenisti, *op. cit.*, p.10.
15. Demant, Peter, "Israeli Settlement Policy Today," in Aruri, *op. cit.*, pp.24-25.

Israeli control and for its use, it is regarded by the Military Government as the property of the owner of record.

4) *"Closed" Land*

This method of military requisition is not different in practice from No.3 (above) but is utilized in cases such as the construction of the settlement outside Hebron called Kiryat Arba, where the military authorities gave in to militant Jewish settlers despite official opposition to the settlement at the time.

5) *Jewish Land*

These lands were registered in the names of Jews before 1948 and have been administered by a Jordanian land custodian since then.

6) *Public Purposes*

The Israeli authorities reserve the right to condemn land for public purposes such as schools and roads, including roads leading to settlements. Militant settler groups such as Gush Emunim ("Bloc of the Faithful") have allegedly chosen isolated, distant sites for settlements in order to require the government to condemn the maximum possible Palestinian land for access roads.

While Israeli land appropriation techniques have become more sophisticated and the tempo has increased since 1979, the deck has been "stacked" against the Palestinian owners ever since the occupation began. Land registry documents are often non-existent, lost, or unclear. Public access to land registers has been blocked since 1967, providing an advantage to the Israelis over those seeking to develop counter-strategies. Acquisition justifications cite one or more of several overlapping land codes, including the Ottoman Land Code (1859), the British Emergency Defense Regulations (1945), Israel's waste land law (1949), or the Israeli Absentee Property Law (1950).[16] If one tactic is unsuccessful, another one is utilized, and sometimes in combination (*e.g.*, a success-

16. Laipson, Ellen, "Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territory: Israeli, Arab, and American Perspectives," Washington:Congressional Research Service/Library of Congress, 1983, p.10.

ful defense by an owner against attempts to deny him his land may generate a military closure or seizure of the land, to be turned over later to those seeking it in the first place).

Labor Adjusts Its Policies

By the time of the 1969 Israeli national elections, the position of the Labor Party had moved closer to the annexationists although the official hope remained that Jordan would become the principal Arab negotiating partner and that a territorial compromise could be reached on the West Bank. What came to be known as Labor's "Oral Law" was articulated during the 1969 elections: Israel must keep Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip, Sharm el-Sheikh (at the southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula) plus a corridor connecting it with Israel, and a security strip in the Jordan Valley; there must never again be an Arab army in the West Bank. The Allon Plan gave both the minimalists and the maximalists leeway to justify associating themselves with the Labor position. Minimalists could present it as an open negotiating stance once the Arabs came forward, and the maximalists could say that nothing in the Labor Party position ruled out retention of the West Bank, particularly if no Arab negotiating partner came forward.[17]

Israel's ruling Labor coalition moved away from policies likely to accommodate to a serious Arab peace proposal based on the formula of peace for territory. The party raised the stakes in August 1973 by endorsement of a formulation by a government minister, Israel Galili. The Galili Plan was a four-year program that included Israeli development of West Bank infrastructure, investment in and assistance to Israeli businesses willing to set up there, and creation of an industrial zone in the Qalqilya-Tulkarm area. The Israel Land Authority would be empowered to acquire West Bank real estate "through every effective means," and for the first time

17. Ryan, op. cit., pp.353,360.

private citizens would be permitted to purchase land, although not for speculation.[18]

The 1973 party platform marked a new stage in Israeli thinking about the West Bank, particularly in light of the encouragement it gave to land purchase by private citizens. The plan generated publicity and debate in Israel and is said to have been a factor in Egyptian President Sadat's decision to launch the October war two months later, since he realized that the occupation was becoming permanent and there was no evidence of outside determination to change it.

By the time of the Israeli general election in late 1973, following a war which shook the state because of its surprise element and the difficulty the IDF (Israel Defense Forces) had in regaining the initiative, the Galili Plan had been toned down, with emphasis on the interim nature of the proposals. While Galili publicly challenged anyone in the Israeli government to say that the plan had been repudiated, attention shifted to the "shuttle diplomacy" of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and it was not considered politic in Israel to be unduly provocative with the Americans.

Zealots Emerge

A major Israeli development in the mid-1970s was emergence of the Gush Emunim ("Bloc of the Faithful"), composed mainly of young religious zealots dedicated to retention of the West Bank as part of Eretz Yisrael who were prepared to put their philosophy into action through establishment of settlements in the West Bank. The youth movement of the National Religious Party (NRP) became the political base for the Gush and used its leverage within the party to threaten to pull out of the government if its settlement demands were not met. The Gush had the open support of Menachem Begin and other right-wing politicians in Israel who were unhappy with the self-imposed constraints of the Labor Party concerning settlement and retention of the

18. MEI, *op. cit.*, p.61.

West Bank. Thanks in part to the action commitment of the Gush, supported by a growing percentage of the Israeli electorate, there were 25 Jewish settlements in the West Bank exclusive of the ring around East Jerusalem by the time of the Likud victory in 1977.

Resisting

On the Arab side the basic patterns of West Bank society remained intact after the 1967 war. Notables with strong links to Jordan had the most to lose from severing the link with the East Bank and were in the forefront of those protesting the Israeli occupation. An early offer by 30 West Bank personalities to urge compliance with the occupation in exchange for assurances of support for a West Bank state was rebuffed by the Israelis, and the group suffered a loss of prestige as a result.[19]

Other early attempts in the West Bank to counter the Israeli occupation included the formation of an Islamic Committee under the sponsorship of the highest-ranking Muslim administrator in the West Bank, which sent a joint letter at the end of June to the Military Governor protesting the annexation of East Jerusalem. A National Guidance Committee was formed which encouraged the creation of local committees to resist the occupation. There were a number of strikes and demonstrations, with the well organized Communist Party taking the lead. Israeli crackdowns on political activity and deportation in December 1967 of several distinguished West Bank personalities reduced the initial level of Palestinian activism.[20]

19. Heller, Mark, "Politics and Social Change in the West Bank since 1967," in Migdal, Joel S., *Palestinian Society and Politics*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980, p.200.
20. Sandler, *op. cit.*, pp.68-69; Lesch, *op. cit.*, p.32; Dakkak, Ibrahim, "Back to Square One: A Study in the Re-Emergence of the Palestinian Identity in the West Bank 1967-80," in Schoelch, Alexander, ed., *Palestinians over the Green Line: Studies on the Relations between Palestinians on Both Sides of the 1949 Armistice Line since 1967*, London: Ithaca Press, 1983, pp.70-71.

The West Bank remained relatively quiet in the early years of occupation as the residents began to realize that the Israeli presence would not end quickly. Almost all West Bankers were encouraged by Yasir Arafat's success in establishing the PLO as a pragmatic, determined organization relatively independent of the Arab regimes. The confrontation between the PLO and the Jordanian government in 1969 and 1970 was a source of anguish in the West Bank, however, as the West Bankers felt they must choose between the familiar if not universally admired Hashemite government and the unfamiliar but glamorous Palestinian movement which grew phoenix-like from the ashes of the Arab rout in the 1967 war.

The Jordanian army's crackdown on the commandos in September 1970 and their departure under duress from the country the next spring "devastated" the West Bankers. Hostility toward King Hussein increased, along with the recognition that the PLO was no match for the Jordanian army on the ground. The searing experience of watching Palestinians and Jordanians fighting one another on the East Bank in 1970 began a trend toward thinking about a West Bank state (rather than a secular democratic state in all of Palestine), although early journalistic efforts to float the idea were attacked as defeatist.[21]

Appearances of Normalcy

The Israelis decided to hold municipal elections on the West Bank in 1972 in order to demonstrate the normalcy of life under occupation. Most Arabs regarded the elections as an Israeli attempt at political cooptation, and the Jordanian government initially tried to discourage its supporters on the West Bank from taking part. The government endorsed participation in the elections when it realized that victory by pro-Jordanian local officials would strengthen its position in a period of rising support for the PLO.

21. Lesch, *op. cit.*

Several weeks prior to the spring 1972 elections King Hussein unveiled a plan for a United Arab Kingdom to be comprised of the East Bank and the West Bank after Israeli withdrawal. The plan called for two largely autonomous regions, each maintaining its own Parliament and bureaucracy, with the King responsible for the defense and foreign affairs of both banks. The pro-Jordanian element on the West Bank praised the plan while the PLO and the left denounced it. In the elections that followed, traditional leaders won in almost all the municipalities with the exception of Ramallah and Tulkarm, both of which elected mayors running on Palestinian nationalist platforms.[22] Israel was pleased by evidence of its policy of "non-intervention" in West Bank affairs, and Jordan was pleased that most of its supporters won the municipal elections.

A significant political development in the West Bank was the January 1973 creation by the Palestinian "parliament," the Palestine National Council, of the Palestine National Front (PNF), a clandestine coalition of West Bank opposition groups, with Communists and PLO supporters playing a key role. The PNF surfaced in the West Bank in August 1973, two months before the October War. The PNF's political line opposed the Allon Plan, the proposed United Arab Kingdom, and a separate Palestinian entity on the West Bank.[23]

Politics Gets Complicated

The October War hurt King Hussein's prestige in the West Bank because Jordan was not a major participant in the one war in which the Arabs made a respectable showing against Israel on the battlefield. The war served as a catalyst on the West Bank as it did elsewhere in the Arab world, giving a sense of confidence and realism to Arab political discussion. At the Arab summit conference in Algiers after the war, the Supreme Muslim Council, at the behest of the PNF, endorsed

22. Metzger, *op. cit.*, pp.156-157.
23. *Ibid.*, pp.159-161; Lesch, *op. cit.*, pp.52-54.

recognition of the PLO, which upset King Hussein, who had been counting on the Muslim group to help him reestablish his authority on the West Bank.[24]

The Arab summit conference at Rabat, Morocco in October 1974 was a watershed in Jordanian-Palestinian relations. Appreciative of the growing influence of the PLO, King Hussein sought to be designated the official negotiator for the future of the West Bank Palestinians. A petition signed by almost 200 West Bank personalities circulated at Rabat called for the PLO to be designated the "sole legitimate representative" of the Palestinians. This petition had a great impact on the meeting, which decided to set aside King Hussein's claim and to substitute the PLO as the spokesman for West Bank Palestinians. Yasir Arafat's appearance before the United Nations General Assembly a month later set off a new round of demonstrations on the West Bank, where the population was strongly supportive of the Rabat decision.[25] As time was to tell, the events of fall 1974 were in many respects the highwater point of PLO international prestige and influence, since the Lebanese civil war started the next spring, devouring its Lebanese and Palestinian participants. In 1975 the United States put into effect a prohibition on recognition of or negotiation with the PLO until it accepted United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 and acknowledged Israel's right to exist—a prohibition that remains in force to this day.

The fall and winter of 1975-76 were a time of civil disobedience on the West Bank. In October, Prime Minister Rabin unveiled an autonomy plan for the West Bank that called for the local population to take charge of their affairs while Israel would handle foreign affairs and security matters. Most West Bank opinion urged the PLO to involve itself more directly in the peace process, but the Beirut-based PLO was unable or unwilling to do so. Repressive measures by the

24. Lesch, op. cit., pp.55-58.
25. Ibid., pp.59-60.

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occupation authorities against the West Bank population included shutdowns of municipal government and attacks by soldiers on schools to put down demonstrations. After several years of relative quiet it seemed to the outside world that the West Bank was beginning to show signs of violent resistance to the occupation.[26]

The Military Government was still committed to holding municipal elections scheduled for spring 1976 although it hoped to dilute growing pro-PLO voting power by extending the suffrage to women and to men without property. After hesitation the PLO decided that the National Front should try to win as many town elections as possible in order to eliminate pro-Hashemite figures and those regarded as moderate by the Israelis.

The New Breed of Mayors

The 1976 municipal elections on the West Bank constituted a setback both for the occupying authorities and for the supporters of King Hussein. Following the decision of the Arab summit meeting in Rabat in October 1974 to designate the PLO the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians, King Hussein had refrained from speaking on behalf of West Bank affairs. As the time of the elections came nearer, it was clear that major political changes were in the offing in the West Bank. Nearly 600 candidates presented themselves for 205 municipal offices, and the group included many candidates with professional and technical backgrounds on the political scene. The Military Government was concerned about "radical" elements gaining power and intervened crudely in pre-election maneuvering, including deporting a leading candidate for mayor of Hebron.

The election results were a sweeping victory for the "new breed" of officials, almost all of whom ran on an avowedly pro-PLO platform. The only holdover from the more conservative group of pro-Hashemite mayors was Elias Freij of

26. Lesch, *op. cit.*, pp.67-68.

Bethlehem, who chose a nationalist figure as his Deputy Mayor. The new West Bank mayors were different more in their ideas than in terms of social standing, however, since most were members of or allied with leading families in their communities. What was different was their declared intention to work together for their communities under the banner of Palestinian nationalism. Among the more prominent winners was Karim Khalaf of Ramallah, a wealthy businessman with strong pro-PLO ties, who had been elected in 1972 and returned in 1976. Bassam Shaka'a of Nablus was also a wealthy businessman and pro-PLO. Fahd Qawasmeh of Hebron was an agronomist who had previously worked for the Israeli agricultural service on the West Bank. Muhammad Milhem of Halhoul was a former teacher who had worked in Saudi Arabia for Aramco, the former US oil firm.

One result of the 1976 West Bank elections was a further decline in Jordanian influence since all but one of its traditional supporters (Mayor Freij of Bethlehem) were defeated. The King's role in the West Bank, weakened by the events of 1970 and further diminished by the designation in 1974 of the PLO as spokesman for West Bank Palestinian affairs, was at a low point following the 1976 municipal elections. One indicator of the changed political fulcrum for Palestinians was the preferred place of residence for West Bank deportees: prior to the 1973 war most had gone to Amman to live, but after 1973 most went to Beirut, where they associated themselves with the PLO.[27]

27. MEI, op. cit., pp.133-134.

SOCIETY UNDER STRESS

Change and Continuity

Despite the multiple pressures of military occupation the people of the West Bank have worked hard since 1967 to maintain their society and to live as normally as circumstances permit.

While much of the commentary and analysis of the West Bank situation deals with the occupation and its impact, it is important to keep sight of the character of the society under occupation. The West Bank lost almost one-third of its population in 1967, falling from approximately 900,000 to approximately 600,000 in the course of a summer. Since then the West Bank has had a high birth rate, yet the population grew at an annual rate of only 1.4 per cent in the period 1967-80.[1] The principal cause of the discrepancy is out-migration of the West Bank's population, principally to find employment but also for political reasons, voluntarily or involuntarily. An estimated 100,000 West Bankers have left the area since the exodus of 1967, many of them since 1974, when the Israeli economy went into recession and job opportunities for Palestinians decreased in Israel.[2]

During the occupation there has been a population shift in the West Bank to the southern towns and sub-districts centered on Jerusalem because of employment prospects. The majority of Palestinian workers in Jerusalem now live in the Ramallah, Bethlehem, Hebron, and Jericho area. Major West Bank urban concentrations include East Jerusalem (85,000), Nablus (75,000), Hebron (70,000), and Ramallah-Bireh

1. Benvenisti, Meron, "The West Bank and Gaza Strip Data Base Project Interim Report #1," Jerusalem: West Bank Data Base Project, 1982, p.1.
2. *Ibid.*, p.2.

(25,000). Palestinian refugees living in camps number 73,000, or approximately 10 per cent of the total population. [3]

Two West Bank demographic analysts have forecast a gloomy future for the area:

1) Out-migration is likely to continue and even increase since the portion of the population in the 20 to 30 year age group will increase over the next five years;

2) Jewish settlement will increase, putting further pressure on Palestinian land and opportunity;

3) Job opportunities for Palestinians in Israeli-associated enterprises will continue to be the lowest paid.

One potential brake on out-migration would be a decline in job opportunities outside the West Bank whether for economic or political reasons, but "considered together, these three factors clearly predict that within the next five years the Arab population of the West Bank will begin to decrease."[4] Voluntary Arab out-migration is keeping the rate of increase of the population low without the application to date of drastic Israeli measures such as mass expulsion.

West Bank society has been buffeted by wars and by dramatic population shifts (doubling due to incoming refugees in 1948, shrinking in 1967), but in many respects it has maintained the same characteristics as always. The West Bank's upper class, the traditional landowning and urban professional group, has maintained status under occupation but at a cost. The presence of foreign occupiers in the West Bank superimposes an external authority group on the society, much as the British mandate administration did between the two world wars, whereas during the Jordanian period most of the King's representatives in the West Bank were from the area. The West Bank upper class has always functioned as an interlocutor between government and governed, yet the role of the upper class under occupation is

3. Metzger, Jan, Orth, Martin, and Sterzing, Christian, *This Land Is Our Land: The West Bank under Israeli Occupation*, London: Zed Press, 1983, pp.16-17.
4. Ishaq, Jad, and Smith, C., "Demography of the Palestinians: Part One, The West Bank," privately printed, 1982, pp.52-53.

compromised because of its inability to block the erosion of the Palestinian land birthright, a loss which affects it as well. The inability of big landowners to find sufficient numbers of fieldhands means that the value of land as a source of income has declined, which has in turn decreased the power of the owners.

The open bridges policy to the East Bank has helped sustain the West Bank status quo by permitting financial and political links to be maintained, but over the 17 years of the occupation the pro-Jordanian leadership group in the West Bank has aged, and younger leaders have matured under different political conditions. This has resulted in a situation in which the pro-Jordan leadership group has been more or less limited to a group that was active and involved at the time of the 1967 war and that has seen its influence reduced over the course of the occupation. One consideration favoring remaining traditional leaders, however, has been attrition of the leadership class as a result of deportations and out-migration, which has provided a greater than normal degree of influence to those who have remained on the West Bank. Another factor has been the ability of traditional leaders to argue that as long as the occupation continues, it is "unpatriotic" to engage in "family quarrels" that distract attention from resisting the occupation.

The sense of political vulnerability in the West Bank makes many residents loath to take public political stands. They have seen the rise and more recent decline of the PLO in international standing, and the future role of Jordan in West Bank affairs is uncertain. Despite differences in personal loyalties toward the PLO and Jordan among West Bank leaders, all are opposed to the occupation while acknowledging the likelihood of its continuation.

Wages Bring Changes

One of the most significant social and economic changes in West Bank society since 1967 has been the impact of wage

earnings on West Bank Palestinians employed in Israel or working for the Israelis. The West Bank prior to 1967 had a high rural unemployment rate and relatively limited cash income outside of the towns. Job opportunities for unskilled and semi-skilled West Bankers became available after the occupation at the same time that white-collar and professional West Bankers found their incomes reduced. The improved social status of wage-earning, lower-class Palestinians has eroded the old dependency relationships on which much of the upper class's influence was based. In the villages from which many of the workers come, the leadership class has utilized shifting arguments in order to reduce the status demands of the newly-monied workers. As money has become more available, village leaders have attempted to maintain status by emphasizing the importance of knowledge, often represented by their own sons away at school or blocked from returning at the time of the 1967 war.[5] The Israeli preference for working with traditional West Bank leaders also exacerbates the generational issue because the Israelis are more frequently in touch with them than with the newer, younger leaders.

Social response patterns have varied from one district to another in the West Bank. Hebron, one of the poorest and most traditional of the West Bank towns, has developed a generational cleavage due to the experiences of the young in seeing liberated, mobile Israeli youth. Long symbolized by former Mayor Mohammed Ali al-Ja'abari, the epitome of an old-style politician, Hebron elected a progressive agronomist, Fahd Qawasmeh (since deported), in 1976.

Nablus has proved a more flexible society than Hebron and has more successfully negotiated the generational and other issues sharply drawn under occupation. The Nablus economy has been able to offer returning sons more work opportunities than Hebron, which has reinforced the tra-

5. Migdal, Joel S., *Palestinian Society and Politics*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980, p.69.

ditional deference of the young. At the same time Bassam Shaka'a, the mayor elected in 1976 (since maimed in a bomb attack and deposed by Israel in 1982), became a symbol of militant Palestinian nationalism, which served to bridge the generational gap at another level. Tactics of accommodation and cooptation by the political leadership in Nablus have also helped ease the strains of the situation.

Villages in the Jerusalem-Ramallah area have showed evidence of high social stratification, with sons of village leaders often sent away for school and many not yet able to return. In these villages the elders have continued to function on a caretaker basis for their sons, and the practice has been to defer major challenges to the existing power structure.[6]

Apropos of dealing with the occupation, West Bank lawyer Raja Shehadeh has observed, "The Palestinians have been inflexible in their adherence to formality and in their attitudes and reactions to Israel's policies. The rigidity of the Palestinians' position as a group and as individuals has rendered their reactions predictable. This has made it easier for Israel to plan its actions and has allowed it to take positions which implied readiness for more compromise than it was in fact ready to make."[7]

The occupation has subjected West Bank society to more strains than a sophisticated, developed society could absorb and survive intact. It forces individuals to make choices that would not be required under normal circumstances, such as weighing personal and family considerations against larger political issues. One response by West Bank society to these strains has been *sumood* (Arabic for "steadfastness"). Initially *sumood* meant passive resistance, but the term has taken on more positive connotations of perseverance and determination. *Sumood* has replaced political alternatives, a situation

6. *Ibid.*, pp.72-76.
7. Shehadeh, Raja, "The Changing Juridical Status of Palestinian Areas under Occupation: Land Holdings and Settlements," in Aruri, Naseer, ed., *Occupation: Israel over Palestine*, Belmont, Mass.: Association of Arab-American University Graduates, 1983, p.98.

which the West Bank has had to accept since the mid-1970s, when none of its external champions had proved equal to the task of rescuing the area from Israeli occupation.[8]

Educating the Young

As a society under pressure and with relatively few ways to respond to Israeli military occupation, the West Bank has placed a high value on education, particularly higher education. The West Bankers appreciate the role education has played in the ability of Palestinians to make their way in foreign countries and under difficult circumstances. With a constant outflow from the West Bank of skilled manpower, it has been imperative for the area to develop and pursue high standards in education.

General education in the West Bank operates on a multi-track basis: the private schools cater mainly to Christians and to better-off Muslim families; the state-supported school system educates the majority of poorer, mainly Muslim, families; and UNRWA takes care of the children of the refugees. As a society one-third of whose total population is of school age, the West Bank has a large task in providing education for its young people. After 1967 private school enrollment surged in East Jerusalem since only the public schools were forced to adopt the Israeli Arab curriculum. In the West Bank public (tax-supported) schools make up 77 per cent of the total; private schools represent 14 per cent, and UNRWA schools makes up the remaining nine per cent. School attendance is compulsory for nine years and is free (in government institutions) through high school.

The Israeli occupation produces a continuing conflict with the educational system. The Israeli Attorney-General observed apropos of a hearing about the 1980 closing of a school near Jerusalem following a demonstration, "...where

8. Sandler, Shmuel, and Frisch, Hillel, *Israel, the Palestinians, and the West Bank: A Study in Intercommunal Conflict*, Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books (D.C. Heath), 1984, pp.69-70.

there are schools, there will be demonstrations, stone-throwings, raising of flags, and therefore a threat to security."[9]

Textbooks are a point of contention between the Israeli authorities and the West Bankers. While the Military Government maintains that it has disallowed the use of only 14 textbooks from Jordan and 23 from Egypt since 1967, Palestinian observers tell a different story, in which references to Palestine or Palestinians, cultural and/or national allusions, and Palestinian sentiment or history must be expunged or the books are not permitted to be used.[10] Officials associated with West Bank schools provide numerous accounts of Israeli authorities prohibiting the use of a given text because of references which have nothing to do with Jews or Zionism but which portray Palestine or Palestinian history in a positive light.

Although violent incidents are fewer today, West Bank schools and school children have been the targets of assaults by Israeli soldiers quelling a demonstration, pursuing an individual, or engaging in preemptive harassment. Since a vital element in Israel's policy of maintaining control over the West Bank has been to forestall trouble wherever possible rather than respond to it, such tactics are considered valuable by the authorities. School closings often have the same effect since if the children themselves are not opposed, the parents realize the loss in valuable class time whenever schools are not in session.

Some of the problems associated with general education in the West Bank are generated inadvertently. One weakness is the high number of days when schools are closed due to student pressure in order to protest occupation policy or to share in an event of political significance whether it occurred inside or outside the West Bank. One university educator has

9. Quoted in Shehadeh, Raja, *The West Bank and the Rule of Law*, Geneva: International Commission of Jurists, 1980, p.98.
10. Coordinator of Government Operations in Judea and Samaria, Gaza District, Sinai, Golan Heights, "A Thirteen-year Survey (1967-1980)," Jerusalem: Ministry of Defense (Israel), January 1981, p.20 (hereafter GOI); Fasheh, Munir, "Impact on Education," in Aruri, *op. cit.*, p.300.

noted that such student-generated "holidays" are almost as great an obstacle to academic continuity as those forced by the authorities. Another problem is the appeal, particularly to boys, of paid work in Israel, which is causing many younger teenagers to foresake their education and take menial jobs in Israel. Yet another problem is that due to the scarcity of professional and technical jobs for West Bankers in the West Bank, a growing number of university graduates are leaving the area in order to find challenging employment. A study of Bir Zeit University graduates in the 1970s showed that one-third (of 112 respondents) were still in the West Bank while two-thirds had left.[11]

Two-thirds of West Bank high school students concentrate in the humanities and social sciences, subjects of importance to national identity but of little demand in the job market. Students concentrating in the social sciences who score poorly in the *tawjihi* (university-qualifying exam) find themselves with neither university acceptance nor skills that can bring a respectable income in the job market.[12] They are then forced either to take a lower-paying job or to leave the West Bank in search of work elsewhere. Only an estimated four per cent of high school students are enrolled in vocational education, learning skills that can demand higher wages than those offered to unskilled West Bankers by the Israelis.

A Few Flowers Bloom

The Palestinian commitment to higher education is nowhere more evident than in the West Bank, where there are now three major universities and several small postgraduate institutes. While the Military Government notes with satisfaction that "until 1967 no institution for higher education existed in the Administered Territories,"[13] it had not been for lack of trying. The first attempts to establish a university

11. Graham-Brown, Sarah, "Impact on the Social Structure of Palestinian Society," in Aruri, *op. cit.*, p.248.
12. Sandler, *op. cit.*, p.65.
13. GOI, *op. cit.*, p.21.

in Jerusalem during the mandate period were rejected by the British, and the Jordanian government gave priority to establishing Jordan's first university in Amman.

Bir Zeit University, a well-regarded private high school near Ramallah, added a freshman year of college in 1951 and a sophomore year a decade later. Bir Zeit was recognized by the American University of Beirut, and graduates were accepted for completion of their undergraduate studies in Beirut. Bir Zeit expanded to add a third university year in 1972 and graduated its first BA and BS students in 1976. Bir Zeit's connections with the American University of Beirut, its extensive course offerings in English, and the prominence of the founding Nasir family helped the school attract talent and foreign financial support.

The second West Bank university is Bethlehem University, which grew out of the Fréres (Brothers) School in Bethlehem run by a Catholic order of monks. The university began in 1973 in buildings formerly housing the school and has expanded its campus since then with help from the Catholic Church. Reflecting the traditional importance of the tourist trade in the West Bank, Bethlehem University offers a program in hotel management.

Najah National University in Nablus was established in 1975, growing out of a government teachers' college and still housed there. Whereas both Bir Zeit University and Bethlehem University have a strong foreign and English-language component, Najah looks more to the local culture for its orientation. In the academic year 1982-83 enrollments at these institutions were as follows: Bir Zeit University, 2,000 students; Najah University, 3,200 students; and Bethlehem University, 1,800 students.[14]

Other post-secondary institutions in the West Bank include an Islamic College and Polytechnic in Hebron, a Nursing School in El-Bireh, a Scientific Institute in Abu Dis (outside Jerusalem),

14. Unpublished, undated analysis of Military Order #854, London, p.4.

and a college for religious and Islamic studies in Beit Hanina (outside Jerusalem).[15] A Council for Higher Education in the West Bank was established in the late 1970s to coordinate curricula and programs, but between internal problems and Israeli opposition to any entity established on a West Bank-wide basis, the Council is yet to become a force in higher education in the area.

Post-secondary institutions in the West Bank are under constant pressure by the occupation authorities. Not only are university students seen as potential threats to Israeli security; the universities themselves are regarded as breeding grounds for "radicalism and terrorism." The Military Government has described the problem this way: "Unfortunately, political elements have been exploiting these institutions to advance their own political aims and, in some cases, have used them to foment unrest among the students, who are incited to carry on political activities hostile to Israel."[16] In part because of the absence of customary national institutions such as government and national sports teams, universities in the West Bank do play a symbolic role which makes them even more suspect to the Israeli authorities.

Troubles in Academe

The universities' problems cover the gamut of institutional requirements and activities. Foreign periodicals arrive late or incomplete if at all; purchases are taxed, unlike in Israeli institutions, which receive a rebate at the end of each year for taxes paid; most research project requests are denied by the Military Government; academic calendars are uncertain; all books must be cleared by the censor; cultural programs and other activities dealing with the Palestinian national heritage are blocked, harassed, or delayed; and attempts are made by the Israeli authorities to recruit students and faculty as in-

15. Fasheh, *op. cit.*, pp.308-309.
16. GOI, *op. cit.*, p.21.

formers, particularly those whose work requires them to travel abroad and who require permits in order to do so.[17]

Higher education in the West Bank received a blow in 1980 with the issuance of Military Order No.854, which altered the basis on which universities may function. As described by the Military Government, No.854 came about since "on the basis of Israel's obligations under international law to ensure public order and safety, considerations of public order were added to the criteria for granting licenses for the establishment of educational institutions."[18]

Military Order No.854 gives the Military Government the following authority vis-a-vis West Bank universities:

1) Setting of curricula

2) Overseeing textbook choice and use

3) Issuing of teaching certificates

4) Authority to prohibit teachers from being members of political parties or participating in political activities

5) Requiring written approval for all faculty by the Military Governor in order to teach

6) Requiring the same for students in order to study

7) Licensing of institutions

8) Cancelling teaching approval for anyone convicted of a security offense or placed under administrative detention.[19]

A committee of faculty at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem was created to look into the condition of universities in the occupied territories, and its 1981 report was critical of the Military Government's policies toward West Bank universities, including a recommendation that No.854 be rescinded. Concerning the allegation that the universities were departing from their stated purposes in order to serve a future Palestinian state, the Israeli professors observed that serving one's community is what universities are all about. Dr. Gabi Baramki, Acting President of Bir Zeit University, commented concerning No.854 that whereas it had been

17. Conversations with Bir Zeit University faculty, December 1983.
18. *Ibid.*, p.226.
19. #854 Analysis, *op. cit.*, pp.5-6.

previous Israeli policy to "interfere" in university affairs, the Military Government had now taken its interference to the point of becoming "responsible" for them. A Palestinian-American academician has a made the following judgment with regard to policies of the Military Government toward West Bank universities: "The crippling restrictions imposed on Palestinian universities are part of a systematic effort to hamper the development of Palestinian community organizations. [The restrictions] are an integral part of the more general repressive atmosphere of daily life under military occupation...Yet more specifically, they destabilize higher education, which is one of the key resources of the Palestinian people."[20]

Forces in Society

In the course of the 17 years of the occupation West Bank municipalities have gone from relative unimportance to the focal point of local and international attention—and back again. Traditionally the municipalities received limited attention from both government and citizens because of the minimal role they played in the lives of the residents.

During the Jordanian period West Bank mayors were usually the candidates for municipal councils receiving the most votes, although appointments were subject to government confirmation. The post of mayor received greater attention during the 1972 elections, the first under military occupation and a political test of Jordan's ability to demonstrate its influence in the West Bank through election of pro-Jordan candidates. The 1976 elections generated even more interest because of the strong nationalist tenor of most of the candidates and because of the commitment of PLO prestige, as well as that of Jordan, to the outcome. The election of a slate of articulate, outspoken, nationalist mayors on the West Bank attracted a great deal of attention and constituted a

20. Aruri, Naseer, "Universities under Occupation: Another Front in the War Against Palestine," in Aruri, *op. cit.*, pp.330-335.

challenge to the occupation authorities. Within a few years of that heady period, however, the municipalities were in disarray in the wake of deportations, unsolved bomb attacks that maimed the mayors of Ramallah and Nablus, dismissals of most of the rest of the mayors, and the appointment of Israeli Jews to manage local affairs in the absence of Palestinian officials. The municipalities had the potential for becoming the nucleus of a network of nationalistic, reformist local leaders, and for this reason the Israelis dismantled the network over a period of a few years. At this juncture it is unlikely that it will be permitted to be reconstituted as long as Israel maintains a physical presence in the West Bank. The loss to the West Bankers in terms of leadership and morale is incalculable. The vacuum thus created contributes to the decline of the West Bank as a society confident of its institutions and optimistic about its future.

One of the most significant and least publicized institutions functioning in the West Bank is UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, which was established after the 1948 Palestine war to meet the needs of destitute Palestinian refugees. As of the end of 1982, 340,000 out of the total West Bank population of 710,000 (exclusive of East Jerusalem) were refugees registered with UNRWA and entitled to services depending on need.[21] Politically, UNRWA is an anomaly since its mandate from the United Nations General Assembly, whose members provide its operating revenue from voluntary annual donations, presupposed a short-term period of refugee need following which the agency would be disbanded, as was the case with most relief and resettlement programs in Europe after World War II. UNRWA, on the other hand, has remained in operation since after the 1948 Palestine war with the same mandate, expanded in 1967 to include temporary relief to non-eligible West Bankers who fled to the East Bank.

21. *The West Bank: An Assessment*, Washington, D.C.: The Middle East Institute, 1983 (a draft study in preparation for the Defense Intelligence Agency), p.157 (hereafter MEI).

Although many of those served by UNRWA are in better financial condition than they (or their parents) were after 1948, UNRWA continues in existence in large part because of its symbolic acknowledgement of international responsibility for resolution of the Palestine problem, Israel's creation having been sanctioned by the United Nations partition resolution in 1947. The pressure to maintain UNRWA is influenced in part by the fact that UNRWA assistance to refugees in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip relieves governments of some degree of social responsibility for maintaining costly programs. Israel, critical of UNRWA when it occupied the West Bank in 1967, came to appreciate the quality of UNRWA programs and the fact that UNRWA relieves Israel of part of its social welfare burden in the West Bank.

Of additional significance is UNRWA's professional staff, almost all of whom are Palestinian Arabs functioning as international civil servants in a highly structured and efficient bureaucracy. The Palestinian doctors, teachers, engineers, social workers, and office staff who administer UNRWA programs in the West Bank have transferrable skills that could be applied under different political circumstances.

The West Bank is served by a wide range of private charitable and philanthropic organizations, indigenous and international, whose staffs are entirely or mainly composed of West Bankers. The indigenous groups, approximately 100 in number, are members of the Federation of Charitable Societies and divided into three regional sections (Nablus, Jerusalem, Hebron). Activities include youth, education, social services, and health programs. In addition, there are some 20 foreign charitable groups operating in the West Bank, including American organizations such as CARE, ANERA (American Near East Refugee Aid), American Friends Service Committee, and the Mennonite Central Committee. While supporting programs parallel to those of the indigenous organizations, the foreign groups tackle additional areas such

as economic development (ANERA) and legal aid (AFSC).[22] All the US groups are subject to an Israeli veto on projects despite the fact that the US Congress provides grants to several of the groups to assist West Bank institutions. A consistent pattern in Israeli project decisions on the West Bank has been approval of those in the social welfare category and disapproval of those intended to contribute to economic self-sufficiency, which would interfere with Israel's policy of tightening the West Bank-Israel connection.

The Military Government has replaced the Jordanian government's previous role in the fields of health, education, and social welfare other than that provided by private agencies. While there is disagreement between supporters and critics of the Israeli role regarding its adequacy, there has been improvement in the areas of sanitation, health training, and public health in the West Bank under occupation. Health insurance plans initiated in 1973 and 1978 now cover 300,000 West Bank residents.[23]

Pervasive Intrusion

The Israeli occupation of the West Bank is an intrusive phenomenon in the lives of the Palestinian Arabs despite the Military Government's officially upbeat view of the situation: "Since 1967, area Arabs [sic] have enjoyed freedom of expression to a degree previously unknown to them or to the citizens of any Arab state to this very day."[24] The Israeli occupation of the West Bank may benefit by comparison with more violent and brutal occupations, but documentation by local and foreign observers since 1967 makes it clear that the Israeli face turned to the outside world and the one turned toward the West Bank are different. An Israeli critic of practices on the West Bank has observed, "...an occupation is

22. Nakhleh, Emile A., *The West Bank and Gaza: Toward the Making of a Palestinian State*, Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1979, pp.29,31,35.
23. MEI, *op. cit.*, pp.145-146.
24. GOI, *op. cit.*, p.22e.

an occupation, and each and every Palestinian in the occupied territories lives under full occupation," noting that Palestinian rights and status are protected "only insofar as they do not contradict or conflict with the interests of the occupiers."[25] The Israeli comparative argument, to the effect that Arab governments often deny personal or political freedoms, is of little encouragement to the West Bankers.

West Bank lawyer Raja Shehadeh has documented many of the intrusions into the daily lives of West Bank residents in an International Commission of Jurists publication, *The West Bank and the Rule of Law*:

Freedom of Movement

The entire West Bank has been designated a "closed area," which means that no one can leave without a permit without forfeiting the right to return. For those who need to travel abroad, the ability to obtain exit permits is crucial, and Israeli ability to give, delay giving, or deny a permit provides a means of leverage on the leadership class. Curfews, frequently imposed in the aftermath of a security incident and virtually permanently in effect in certain areas (*e.g.*, Jalazon refugee camp), are a form of collective punishment, and road blocks are a routine form of harassment as well as movement control. House or town arrest is imposed on members of the leadership class whom the Israelis wish to restrict but whom they hesitate to imprison or deport. Bassam Shaka'a, former mayor of Nablus, is under town arrest. He reports that while he has no written confirmation of his status, he has driven out of Nablus on numerous occasions, only to be stopped at a point just outside the town limits and forced to return.

Confiscation of identity cards is an effective form of control since every West Bank resident must carry an ID card at all times. ID cards are collected from individuals near any security incident, and anyone is liable to arrest if caught without his ID even if he has not been charged with an offense.

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25. Tsemel, Lea, "Personal Status and Rights," in Aruri, *op. cit.*, p.57.

Collective Punishment

Collective punishment, outlawed by the Geneva Conventions, takes many forms on the West Bank. The home of a security suspect may be blown up; if the family lives in a connected flat, the building may be blown up, with suffering caused to the landlord and the other tenants. Neighbors of suspects may have their houses sealed up, and shops nearby have also met the same fate.

In a dramatic case following a 1980 attack in Hebron on Jewish settlers, a one-month curfew was imposed on the entire town, during which crops were ruined and businesses failed. The mayor, Fahd Qawasmeh, was deported, Hebron residents were denied travel permits for some time, and no outside visitors were allowed into the town. Telephone service was cut for 45 days, no Hebron produce was allowed to be exported to Jordan for the same period, and checkpoints were maintained outside the town for all drivers for several months; Hebron residents were harassed at checkpoints elsewhere in the West Bank as well. Violent house searches were made, with destruction of furniture and belongings, and males were subjected to frequent interrogations and beatings, often forced to wait for long periods of time at Israeli demand.

Freedom of Speech

All printed matter in the West Bank is subject to censorship, and the sale, distribution, or possession of banned literature makes one liable to punishment. All Arab-owned newspapers are required to obtain annual licenses in order to publish. There are three regular Arab papers in East Jerusalem, *Al-Fajr*, *Al-Sha'ab*, and *Al-Quds*, and while all oppose the occupation and support Palestinian self-determination, the first two papers have been subjected to more harassment than *Al-Quds*, which has been associated in the past with a pro-Jordanian point of view. The papers are not permitted to leave blank spaces to show where stories or parts of stories were censored, so editors must maintain a supply of filler

items to replace the ones denied. Censorship extends to even the most innocent-seeming topics of culture and art.

Freedom of Assembly

Under occupation regulations a permit is required if ten or more people gather for an activity when it is possible to hear a political talk or discussion of a subject which could be considered political. An Israeli judge in Ramallah ruled that even a large family gathering where politics is discussed could be illegal. A silent student sit-in to protest the closing of a school in Abu Dis (near Jerusalem) was ruled illegal even though no words were spoken.

Another threat under which the West Bank population lives is deportation, which has been used mainly on the leadership class and has included educators, doctors, lawyers, journalists, and political figures. During the first decade of occupation an estimated 1,000 West Bank residents were deported, mainly on the grounds of "agitation" or "refusal to cooperate" with the authorities. Some of the deportees were in prison at the time, but most were picked up at their homes, blindfolded, transported to either the Jordanian or the Lebanese border, and told to walk. Some deportees were given a token legal hearing before being expelled. In the early days of the occupation most of the deportees were members of the pro-Jordanian notables' group, but in more recent years they have been mainly West Bankers who identified themselves with the Palestinian national movement.[26]

Deportation has served two major purposes for Israelis: it has helped eliminate the political leadership of the West Bank, and it has inhibited political activities by others who see themselves as potential victims of deportation.[27] Palestinian observers have also pointed out that although the occupying authorities have professed to encourage "moderate" leadership in the West Bank with whom they could deal, the deportees have been mainly "moderate" individuals, and

26. Shehadeh, *West Bank*, *op. cit.*, pp.71-87 *passim*.
27. Metzger, *op. cit.*, pp.67-68.

their departure leaves the West Bank with fewer known personalities and potential spokesmen.

Treatment of detainees has drawn attention during the occupation, with charges of Israeli torture the most serious. In the mid-1970s an official of the US Consulate-General in Jerusalem researched allegations of torture of applicants for US visas and documented 29 cases of ill treatment, including torture, in detention. She reported her findings to the Department of State, including "the possibility that the use of brutality in the interrogation of Arab prisoners is a systematic practice, involving the use of trained personnel, backed up by far-reaching administrative support, and protected by standard methods of suppressing complaints and blocking their investigation."[28] An Amnesty International report citing this documentation indicated that the government of Israel did not make a "substantive" response to the charge. Although the use of torture appears to have lessened sharply if not to have been abandoned altogether since that period, there are few effective safeguards for Palestinians arrested by the occupation authorities.

Israeli practice stipulates that no one may be held for more than 18 days without access to a lawyer, yet in many cases when a lawyer does get to see a detainee, another 18-day period may go by before another visit is permitted. Detainees are kept isolated from outside visits during the period of interrogation, in the course of which a confession is almost invariably obtained.[29] Experience has shown that even when the contents of a confession are called into question in the course of a trial, the confession made during interrogation is accepted by the court. Confessions in the West Bank are usually taken down in Hebrew, a language unknown to most Palestinian Arabs, and then are signed by the detainee.

There is no action by a West Banker that escapes potential scrutiny and prohibition on the all-embracing grounds of

28. Quoted in "Report and Recommendations of an Amnesty International Mission to the Government of the State of Israel, 3-7 June 1979," n.d.,p.8.
29. Tsemel, *op. cit.*, p.59.

"security." While the entire population remains vulnerable, the principal targets of Israeli harassment today are "...schools and universities, power companies, labor unions, mayors and municipal councils, economic enterprises, social clubs, artists, musicians, and journalists—in sum, any possible component of a future Palestinian state or development and expression of Palestinian culture."[30]

Seeking Answers through Faith

A recent social phenomenon in the West Bank is an upsurge in Islamic fundamentalism. Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran is well regarded by many West Bank fundamentalists despite widespread criticism of the Iran-Iraq war and the fact that almost all of the West Bank's Muslim majority belong to the Sunni branch rather than the Shia branch as in Iran. Although much of the Muslim world has shown its symptoms, Islamic resurgence in the West Bank occurs under special circumstances because of the occupation. The sense of frustration and helplessness on the West Bank in the face of the 17-year occupation has increased the appeal of the argument that current problems are due to people having turned away from God and pursued false (*i.e.*, Western and secular) goals. The call for a return to the Koran and rejection of non-Muslim influences is heard in Friday mosque sermons and printed in Muslim publications, surprisingly free of Israeli harassment despite the fact that denunciation of the occupation is a major theme.

One explanation of the Israeli tactic is that despite its potential for social and political unrest, Islamic resurgence serves to heighten inter-communal tension in a society with a long history of internal divisiveness, thus making it more difficult for the population to coalesce against the occupation. Other explanations of Israeli tolerance include two contradictory theses, the first that the authorities hope to discredit the fundamentalists by encouraging their excesses and the

30. Aruri, *op. cit.*, p.336.

second that they see the fundamentalists as a counterpoise to the secular nationalists (*e.g.*, many PLO supporters).

The potential political impact of Islamic fundamentalism in the West Bank is hard to gauge, but local observers suggest that it could become more significant as the occupation drags on. So far it has manifested itself principally in student politics at the area's universities, where fundamentalist candidates have won elections and where the issue has sparked campus violence, and in West Bank organizational leadership positions.

LIKUD BRINGS CHANGE

The Outs Become Ins

At the time of the national elections in Israel in 1977 the ruling Labor Party had been in power from before the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. All the major political figures in Israeli history had been associated with Labor, and the history of the state was in many respects the history of the Labor Party. By 1977, however, the Labor Party was tired, and malaise had set in. The image of Israeli military invincibility had been badly damaged in the 1973 war, and the population wanted a change.

Menachem Begin, a terrorist leader during the British Mandate period and permanent leader of the opposition in the Knesset since the creation of the state, was the beneficiary of the situation although most Israeli voters were more interested in getting rid of Labor than in offering the government to Begin and Likud. Begin had been philosophically and politically consistent throughout his career, opposing acceptance of partition by the Jewish Agency (on the basis that all of Eretz Yisrael belonged to the Jews and that they should accept nothing less) and standing foursquare in opposition to return of any of the occupied territories to Arab sovereignty after 1967. Brought into the national unity government just before the 1967 war, Begin found himself with a national platform from which he proceeded to rally support for a hard line on the terms of peace with the Arabs.

The Likud Party was an expansion of Begin's Herut Party, which was rooted in the Irgun Zvai Leumi, the terrorist group founded and headed by Begin during the mandate. Begin was the principal disciple of Vladimir Jabotinsky, the

founder of revisionist Zionism, whose dogmatic policy called for bringing all of Eretz Yisrael under Israeli control through armed struggle.

A fundamental objective of the new Israeli government under Menachem Begin in 1977 was to make it impossible for the West Bank to be detached from Israel. Likud leaders saw a fleeting opportunity to change the situation permanently and sought out all possible allies in support of their goal. One of the first objectives was to set aside the Allon Plan by a dramatic increase in the number and reach of West Bank settlements; government would become a partner rather than the occasional adversary of settlers and settlements.[1]

In December 1977 Begin presented a 26-point "autonomy plan" for the West Bank to the Knesset. Central to the plan was "personal autonomy" for the West Bankers, a concept employed in Eastern Europe early in the 20th century to define the status of minorities, including Jews, in a way that left sovereignty of the residential areas of the minorities in the hands of the central government. Begin's autonomy plan was explicit in stating that the West Bank itself was irreversibly Israeli, although the people residing in it would be given certain rights as long as they remained. Over and over again Begin and other Likud spokesmen made the point that Israel was not in occupation of the West Bank since one cannot occupy one's own land.[2] (A corollary of this theme was that never again would "foreign [i.e., Arab] rule" be permitted in the West Bank.)

Settlements Are Stepped Up

The name of the new game was settlements, including a land acquisition policy to secure the real estate base for those settlements. Israeli Energy Minister Mordechai Zippori

1. *The West Bank: An Assessment*, Washington, D.C.: The Middle East Institute, 1983 (a draft study in preparation for the Defense Intelligence Agency), pp.67-68 (hereafter MEI).
2. *Ibid.*, pp.71-72.

summed up the view of the government and many Israelis in a 1982 speech:

> The continuation of settlement is the backbone of the Zionist movement in the West Bank and it is the only means to defeat any peace initiative which is intended to bring foreign rule to Judea and Samaria...The presence of an Arab majority in the West Bank should not prevent the Israeli authorities from accelerating the settlement process in the occupied territories...I was born in Petah Tikva, which was surrounded by many Arab villages such as Kufr Anna, Abu Kisheh, and Khayriyeh...and no trace has been left of those villages today, but Petah Tikva remained.[3]

The key to success with Jewish settlements in the West Bank lay in obtaining land, directly when possible but if necessary indirectly through a process of first denying it to the West Bankers and then making it available to Israelis for their purposes. Central to the process was the Military Government, the final authority in matters pertaining to the West Bank. Ariel Sharon, the former Agriculture Minister who became Israeli Defense Minister in 1980 following Ezer Weizmann's resignation in protest against the government's settlement policy, was a major player in the alienation of Arab land on the West Bank, encouraging the Military Government to play an aggressive, supportive role.

Military orders closed land; military tribunals made excessive documentation requirements for Arabs; Nahals (paramilitary settlements) were often established with military justification and later turned over to civilian settlers; "field seminaries" for Orthodox Jews permitted them to combine religious and military functions in West Bank settlements; and in 1980 the IDF allowed the settlers to be organized into local defense units, provided with weapons and training by

3. Quoted in Matar, Ibrahim, "Israeli Settlements and Palestinian Rights," in Aruri, Naseer, ed., *Occupation: Israel over Palestine*, Belmont, Mass.: Association of Arab-American University Graduates, 1983, p.120.

the IDF, and permitted to undertake their obligatory military service in the settlements.[4]

Direct purchase of West Bank land has been the preferred method, but relatively little land has changed hands in this manner because of Palestinian resistance to selling land to the Israelis, reinforced by a Jordanian law making it a capital crime to do so. Nonetheless, through a variety of techniques developed by the Israelis, Palestinians willing to sell land are able to do so in ways that provide anonymity for the sale. Israeli regulations complicating land inheritance have been enacted to encourage Arab land sales.[5]

Land Sleight of Hand

In 1979 the Israeli government revamped its land classification, licensing, and planning policy. Central to the change was a creative application of the 19th century Ottoman land code dealing with *mawat* ("dead") land that officially belonged to the Sultan. Traditionally this "vacant, rocky, stony" land could be cultivated by nearby villagers, but the new Israeli policy laid the government hand on the West Bank's *mawat* land, which makes up an estimated 55 per cent of the total area, reversing the government's post-1948 policy that lands near a village were part of the village patrimony even if not titled. Under the new policy all lands not registered in the name of the village or its members were to be considered state land and therefore denied to the villagers.[6]

Attendant changes in land planning and urban development in the West Bank have restricted development of Arab towns to "existing built-up areas," which bottles up the Arab towns and assures a free hand for Jewish settlers in the vicinity. Since ribbon development (*i.e.*, along major roadways) has been a characteristic of Arab town growth, Israeli

4. MEI, op. cit., pp.78-79.
5. Shehadeh, Raja, "The Changing Juridical Status of Palestinian Areas under Occupation: Land Holdings and Settlements," in Aruri, *op. cit.*, p.101.
6. Benvenisti, Meron, "The West Bank and Gaza Strip Data Base Project Interim Report #1," Jerusalem: West Bank Data Base Project, 1982, pp.28-29.

planners now require rights of way 100 to 150 yards wide so as to discourage Arab builders, who have to make their own roads in order to reach the main roadway.[7] The wide rights of way also jeopardize agriculture in steep or narrow valleys where fields abut the roadway.

Other aids in Israeli land acquisition in the West Bank include utilization of "abandoned" land belonging to West Bank owners who for any reason were not in the West Bank on June 7, 1967, the date when the abandoned land ordinance went into effect. The Israel Lands Administration serves as custodian of West Bank "abandoned" land and negotiates its transfer to Jewish users.

Israeli occupation critic Meron Benvenisti has estimated that between 27 per cent and 64 per cent of the total West Bank land area of 5.8 million *dunums* (a *dunum* = one-fourth acre) has come under Israeli control since 1967. (The wide range in the estimate is a reflection of the difficulty in establishing with certainty the point when acquisition is a *fait accompli*, since multiple steps and authorities are involved.) He asserts, "The combination of land acquisition, closure of areas for military purposes, and land use planning, roads, and infrastructure development, has already insured complete Israeli control over space in the West Bank."[8]

More than anything else, settlements in the West Bank have become the international symbol of the government of Menachem Begin and his successor, Yitzhak Shamir, who is equally committed to Israeli retention of the West Bank and expanded settlement in this portion of Eretz Yisrael. Over the 17 years of the occupation there has been a deepening Israeli determination to hold on to the West Bank, starting with the Labor government in 1967 and accelerating following each of the two national elections won by Menachem Begin's Likud party in 1977 and 1981.

7. MEI, *op. cit.*, p.87.
8. Benvenisti, *op. cit.*, pp.30-31.

The Likud Philosophy

Likud settlement policy is philosophically different from its Labor predecessors because its premise is the inalienable right of Jews to settle anywhere in Eretz Yisrael; settlements are the confirmation of that right, which is based more on religious and mystical grounds than on security or economics. Likud theory is concerned with security but defines it as interlocking of Arabs and Jews so as to preclude excision of the Jewish West Bank presence in the context of a peace treaty. Likud settlement policy, following on the changed approach toward acquisition of West Bank land discussed in the last section, is to establish settlements throughout the West Bank since the major concentrations are within commuting distance of the major urban areas of Israel and since efforts are being made to develop non-agricultural, "high tech" industry that can provide jobs at more remote locations. The crisscrossing networks of roads and electricity grids serving the settlements also bind the West Bank closer to Israel itself.

Likud settlement policy has also been to move in close to existing Arab towns and villages in order to take their land and block their expansion, even at the risk of confrontation. The expanded role in recent years of the Military Government as the settlers' friend in the West Bank has encouraged settlers to take risks, while at the same time settler "vigilantism" has increased and has caused physical harm to many West Bankers, who have no recourse when the policeman is the ally of the bully. Hard-line Israelis speak openly of their expectation that under sufficient pressure over time, most West Bank Palestinians will leave of their own accord.

Israeli settlement policy involves a wide range of institutional actors, of whom the principal figures are 1) government agencies, 2) national institutions affiliated with the World Zionist Organization (WZO), 3) settler groups, and 4) private sector business firms.[9] All four have undertaken settlement

9. MEI, *op. cit.*, p.75.

activity with or without consultation with the others. In the late 1970s, however, Matityahu Drobles, head of the Settlement Department of the WZO, drew up a master plan for Israeli settlements in "Judea and Samaria" that has become accepted as a national guideline and updated periodically. The WZO plan set a goal of 120,000 Jewish settlers in the West Bank by 1985 and 1.4 million in the occupied territories within the next 30 years; there are more than 25,000 settlers and 100 settlements in the West Bank (exclusive of East Jerusalem) at the present time. The Drobles plan laid out the preferred gradation of types of settlements (*e.g.*, rural/urban, regional centers, industrial centers, etc.). Plans are to house 300 to 1,000 families in settlement blocks of two to ten, with a goal of 150 settlements in the West Bank and 12 in the Jerusalem area. As a general rule the WZO initiates and submits settlement plans to the Israel government, whose committees make final decisions. Israel's two major political parties, Labor and Likud, have played critical roles in sustaining the settlement development process.

Estimating Costs

It is difficult to obtain precise figures for the cost of West Bank settlements because of the multiple institutional participants involved, the fact that some settlement costs are buried in the Israeli defense budget, and that additional costs are hidden because the Israeli government regards the West Bank as integrated into Israel for calculation of infrastructure needs. One US government analysis has estimated that the Israeli government pays 60 per cent of the total settlement bill, representing six per cent of Israel's non-defense budget. Total annual settlement cost estimates range from $100 million to $610 million, but authoritative Israeli sources put the annual figure at $400 million.[10]

10. Laipson, Ellen, "Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territory: Israeli, Arab, and American Perspectives," Washington: Congressional Research Service/Library of Congress, 1983, pp.4-5; Thorpe, Merle, *Israel's West Bank Settlement Policy: The Critical Issue to Israeli-Palestinian Peace*, Washington, D.C.: Foundation for Middle East Peace, 1984, p.III-6.

Even though the government of Israel, non-governmental Israeli agencies, and the US government (due to the fungibility of US aid) are paying a high cost for the establishment of Jewish settlements on the West Bank, one group for whom settlements are cheap is the settlers. All infrastructure and basic services (electricity, water, sewer, etc.) are provided free of charge by the government. Up to 80 per cent of the cost of a house is available as a long-term government loan, often on a "never never" basis (*i.e.*, not required to be repaid if the owner remains in the house), and down payments are not required in many cases. The land is often provided free of charge when individuals build their own homes. Most house or apartment purchases are insured against Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories. Spacious new housing in the West Bank is available to Israeli families at a cost of one-third to one-half of what it would be within Israel itself.[11]

Business loans and subsidies are also available to attract commercial development in the West Bank. In addition to the construction companies erecting the settlements (who often obtain the land on which they build at five per cent of cost, if any), businesses prepared to invest in the West Bank are exempted from 1) national insurance premiums for their West Bank workers, 2) real estate taxes, 3) the 1973 "war tax," and 4) certain service taxes, plus exemption from personal income taxes for Jewish workers on the theory that the West Bank is still part of a foreign country.[12]

Settlements as Suburbs

One of the most significant changes in Israeli settlement policy in recent years has been the shift from self-sufficient rural settlements to "bedroom" settlements dependent on easy access to jobs in Israel's major urban areas. This policy has brought many changes, not the least being that "one can now be a pioneer without being rich and a speculator without

11. Benvenisti, *op. cit.*, pp.51-52.
12. MEI, *op. cit.*, pp.82-83.

embarrassment," according to one Israeli critic.[13] Instead of the religious, even fanatic, Israelis who populated the far-flung Gush Emunim settlements in earlier years, typical settlers of today in the bedroom settlements within commuting distance of Israeli cities are young married couples, many of whom have children and may feel no political or religious attachment to the West Bank but want to move out of a cramped Tel Aviv or Jerusalem apartment and give their families more room in which to grow, all at low cost. Motivation of such settlers has been captured in the wry observation that "idealism is inversely proportionate to the distance of the settlement from the nearest main conurbation."[14]

The new orientation of the Israeli West Bank settlement program has produced an anomaly in that the most ideological and religious government yet to run the state of Israel has created a settlement program that also appeals to the least ideological and religious sectors of the population. What the shift has done, however, is to enlarge the settlement "lobby" within the Israeli populace numerically as well as sociologically, joining religious and right-wing Israelis with secular and left-wing fellow citizens.

The Settlement Lobby

An additional part of the lobby consists of the "Association of Jewish Councils in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza," comprised of six regional councils created by the Military Government, funded by the Ministry of Interior, and reflecting the political views of the Gush Emunim. Established at the behest of then Defense Minister Sharon in 1979, the original three councils functioned on the basis of legislation identical to that governing regional councils in Israel proper. Two years later five "local councils" were established on a basis parallel to

13. *Ibid.*, p.53.
14. *Ibid.*, p.48.

their Israeli counterparts. Originally intended to include only built-up areas containing settlements, the regional councils now embrace all "state" lands incorporated into Israeli West Bank planning following the 1979 change in land policy. The councils provide state services and participate in major decisions concerning the West Bank.[15]

Increasingly, the regional councils function as an arm of the Israeli system in the West Bank since they carry out responsibilities delegated from the Interior Ministry and the Military Government concerning zoning, judicial, and tax matters. Arab affairs outside the settlements are not yet included in council responsibilities, but it is likely that they will be included at some point. The councils have heightened the "differentness" of the settlers, who are under neither Jordanian nor Military Government rule but rather under "extra-territorial" status within the Israeli legal system.[16]

The councils' role is likely to increase as the Israeli government moves toward a system of services for settlers in the West Bank completely separate from the indigenous population. The following services are already provided on a settlers-only basis: post and telegraph, water (partially), roads (partially), electricity (partially), industrial and agricultural marketing, school buses, and vehicle licensing.[17]

At the current rate of construction 3,000 apartment units per year are becoming available on the West Bank for Jewish settlers, meaning housing for a potential annual increase of 12,000-15,000 people, or 100,000 West Bank settlers by 1987. The ability of Israel to sustain this pace will require the ability to complete an extensive north-south and east-west road network, create numerous new jobs through new industry, and curtail Arab urban growth.[18]

15. *Ibid.*, pp.35-38.
16. MEI, *op. cit.*, p.81.
17. Benvenisti, *op. cit.*, p.54.
18. *Ibid.*, p.53; Hochstein, Annette, "Metropolitan Links Between Israel and the West Bank," Jerusalem: West Bank Data Base Project, 1983, p.2.

The West Bank settlement program is not without its critics inside and outside Israel, but official US criticism is ignored, and opposition in Israel lacks political force. The major components of Israeli opposition to settlements are liberals (mainly Labor Party supporters of European descent) who regard the settlements as foreclosing possibilities for a "territory for peace" exchange with the Arabs; political leftists opposed on ideological grounds of "racism and colonialism" perpetrated against Arabs under Israeli control; and some Sephardic (Eastern/Arab) Jews who maintain that heavy government subsidization of West Bank settlements drains scarce resources from services for poor urban Jews, mostly of Sephardic origin.[19]

Water, Water Not Everywhere

The success of the West Bank settlement program also depends on Israeli success in obtaining adequate supplies of sweet water to meet the settlements' domestic and industrial/agricultural requirements. On a per capita basis the settlers already consume water at a rate eight times that of the indigenous West Bankers. This means that the settlements, containing two to three per cent of the West Bank population, use up almost 20 per cent of its water. The problem is made more complex by the fact that the West Bank and Israel share a common aquifer system and that an estimated one-third of the water consumed in Israel originates in the West Bank (rain falling on the West Bank hills drains East or West depending on which side of the watershed it hits).[20]

The Military Government acknowledges that "the water potential of the area between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River is almost fully exploited" and urges that Jordan complete construction of the Makarin Dam (an East Bank project on the Yarmouk River) "in the context of regional

19. Laipson, *op. cit.*, pp.15-17.
20. MEI, *op. cit.*, p.84.

agreement and cooperation" and share it with the West Bank.[21]

Water consumption by the West Bankers is almost entirely for domestic purposes, and extension of Arab West Bank land under irrigation since 1967 has been achieved with almost no increase in the total amount of water used for irrigation but rather with more efficient utilization of the same amount through techniques such as drip irrigation. The Military Government closely monitors West Bank water consumption, and Arab villagers and farmers face a situation in which Jewish settlements in the West Bank are provided with abundant fresh water, including swimming pools made possible by new, deep wells, while the Arabs remain restricted to low levels of water supply that are occasionally reduced as a result of new settlers' wells in the vicinity.

The Military as Civilians

The most important recent change in West Bank occupation policy was the shift from Military Government to Civilian Administration in 1981, ostensibly in conformity with the requirements of the Camp David Accords concerning establishment of a "self-governing [Palestinian] authority" on the West Bank and attendant "withdrawal" of the Military Government. Menachem Begin was re-elected to head the Israeli government in the summer of 1981, and his victory became the starting point for an aggressive policy aimed at eliminating all vestiges of pro-PLO sentiment and action in the West Bank.

Military Order No.947 of November 1981 created a Civilian Administration to supervise West Bank affairs in place of the Military Government. The order detached military and security affairs from civilian ones although most of the changes were more superficial than real. The IDF com-

21. Coordinator of Government Operations in Judea and Samaria, Gaza District, Sinai, Golan Heights, "A Thirteen-Year Survey (1967-1980)," Jerusalem: Ministry of Defense (Israel), January 1981, pp.13-14 (hereafter GOI).

mander in the West Bank appointed the civilian head of government, whose powers were to include all those pertaining to "local" [*i.e.*, Jordanian] law and the civilian powers in the 1,000 plus military orders. The new civilian local role was to be subordinate in all respects to the Military Government.[22]

The Israeli government interpreted Military Order No. 947 as the first phase in its compliance with the provisions of the Camp David Accords concerning the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and publicity generated by the government emphasized the political significance of the move in the context of Camp David.

Creation of the civilian administration was described by Israeli officials as consistent with the Camp David commitment to "withdrawal" (as distinct from abolition) of the military government in the occupied areas. Despite the undiminished authority and reach of the military government, Military Order No. 947 created a new governing structure for the West Bank without prior warning or consultation with the inhabitants.

As if to underscore the transparency of the shift from military to civilian authority in the West Bank, the appointee as first civilian head in the West Bank was Professor Menachem Milson, a Hebrew University specialist in Arabic literature who had previously served as the Military Government's advisor on Arab affairs. Milson caught the eye of Defense Minister Sharon with an article in an American magazine in which he argued that Israeli occupation policy was making a mistake by permitting the pro-PLO urban leadership in the West Bank to become dominant. Milson maintained that the towns had traditionally been nationalist and anti-regime but that the villages and rural areas often resented town attitudes and should be strengthened as a political counterforce.

22. Benvenisti, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.

Milson set about putting his theories into practice, cracking down on demonstrations and potential political activity, resulting in more violence and unrest in the West Bank than at any time since 1967. Funds for West Bank development and municipal projects that had been coming from the joint Jordanian-Palestinian fund in Amman were halted; schools and students were challenged at every point; and punishments, including deportations, were stepped up.[23]

Villages in League

One of the early applications of Milson's theories was support for the Village Leagues, which had been established in 1978 under the leadership of Mustafa Dudin, who had once served briefly as a Cabinet Minister in Jordan. Dudin professed to see issues of local, rural concern in the West Bank being overridden by town issues, which fitted Professor Milson's theories. Dudin's first effort in the Village League field was in Dura, a small town near Hebron.

Within a short time the Village Leagues (rapidly expanded to seven) became a vehicle for anticipated development funds, family reunion permissions, return of impounded identity cards, and summer visit licenses, as well as a shift of power away from town councils. After two League officials were assassinated, the Israelis began distributing weapons to League officials, who often had Israeli military escorts as they went about their business. Despite these difficulties it was not long before Village Leagues were established in villages neighboring the following West Bank towns: Bethlehem, Ramallah, Jenin, Nablus, Qabatiya, and Habla.[24]

The West Bank reaction to the liaison between the Israelis and the Village Leagues was swift and negative. The West Bank assessment was that Dudin and the Leagues were little better than "Quislings," and on this issue both the PLO and

23. MEI, *op. cit.*, pp.106-107.
24. Sandler, Shmuel, and Frisch, Hillel, *Israel, the Palestinians, and the West Bank: A Study in Intercommunal Conflict*, Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books (D.C. Heath), 1984, p.152.

the Jordanian government were in agreement. Israeli critics were numerous, arguing that the occupation authorities had provided a golden opportunity for PLO-Jordanian rapprochement, hardly a welcome development to the Israelis. (In the face of West Bank hostility, the Village Leagues have begun to distance themselves from their Israeli backers and to stress their Palestinian credentials, although they remain highly suspect to most of the population.)

To Professor Milson, however, destruction of pro-PLO influence in the West Bank was the sine qua non for his plans in the West Bank.[25] In March 1982 dismissals of pro-PLO mayors in the West Bank began. Fahd Qawasmeh of Hebron and Muhammad Milhem of Halhoul had already been deported, and Bassam Shaka'a of Nablus and Karim Khalaf of Ramallah had already been maimed by terrorist bomb attacks. On March 11 the National Guidance Committee was outlawed, and a week later Ibrahim Tawil, mayor of Bireh, was dismissed for refusing to meet with Milson. A week after that both Shaka'a and Khalaf were dismissed after a three-day strike by the municipalities. Five more mayors were fired in the next several months, with Israelis substituting for Arab elected officials in several towns.[26]

The June 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon has been a topic of debate in Israel and in the United States ever since. It was the personal project of Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, whose objective was not only to establish a *cordon sanitaire* just north of Israel's border in order to insure the safety of Israel's northern towns from rocket attacks from South Lebanon; he drove straight on to Beirut, which Israeli troops besieged until the PLO fighters trapped within the city were assured a safe conduct by US and European troops hurriedly detached to Lebanon for the purpose. The general assessment of Sharon's motivation was that he was convinced that as long as the PLO was strong in Lebanon, there was no hope

25. *Ibid.*, p.153.
26. *Ibid.*, p.154.

of "pacifying" the West Bank and persuading the residents to abandon the PLO as a source of political leadership and inspiration.

Home-Grown Terrorists

The political situation in the West Bank has continued to deteriorate, with relatively little international attention due to the Iran-Iraq war and nonstop violence in Lebanon. Terrorist acts in the West Bank against the local population since 1982 have pointed to Jewish extremists although no arrests were made following the bomb attacks on three West Bank mayors in 1982. In the spring of 1984 it was announced in Israel that 27 suspected Jewish terrorists had been arrested in conjunction with attacks on Arab West Bankers, including the incidents involving the mayors. Those arrested included army officers, religious figures, and prominent members of the settler movement. Trials began in mid-1984.

There was speculation about why the arrests had been made, since it was assumed that Israeli authorities had long had sufficient evidence in hand if they wanted to move. A number of theories were aired in the press, along with observations about the contrast between the speed and efficiency of Israeli police in apprehending Arab suspects and the previous inability of the police to apprehend any Israelis for equally violent actions. One theory was growing concern by the Israeli authorities at development of a "state within a state" in the form of a settler movement protected by but effectively outside the law. In some respects the most intriguing theory for the arrests was that whereas settler aggressiveness in seizing Arab land and terrorizing West Bank inhabitants had once been welcomed by the authorities as a means of establishing a Jewish presence in the West Bank, such activities had now become an embarrassment to Israel because the settlement program was well established and did not require vigilantes to make it work.
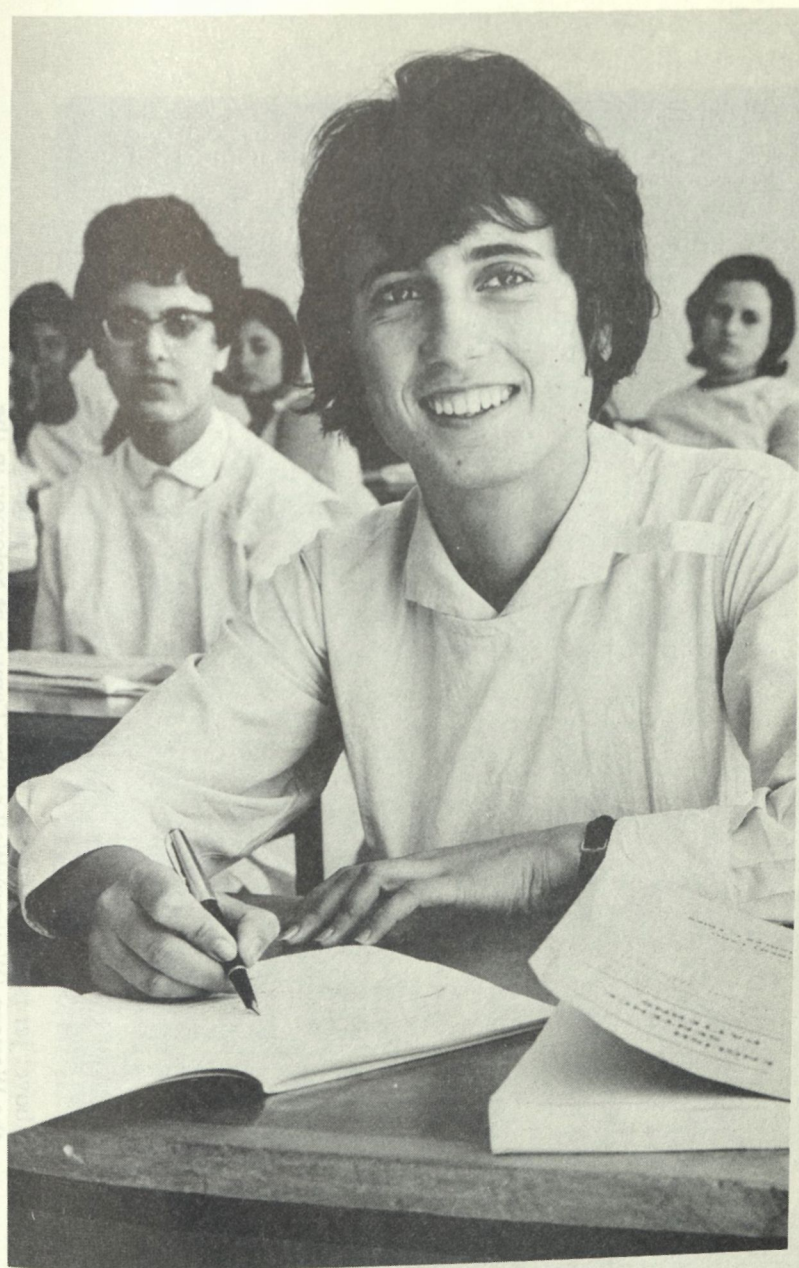
Palestinian student in a teacher-training course on the West Bank.

UNRWA photo by Kay Brennan
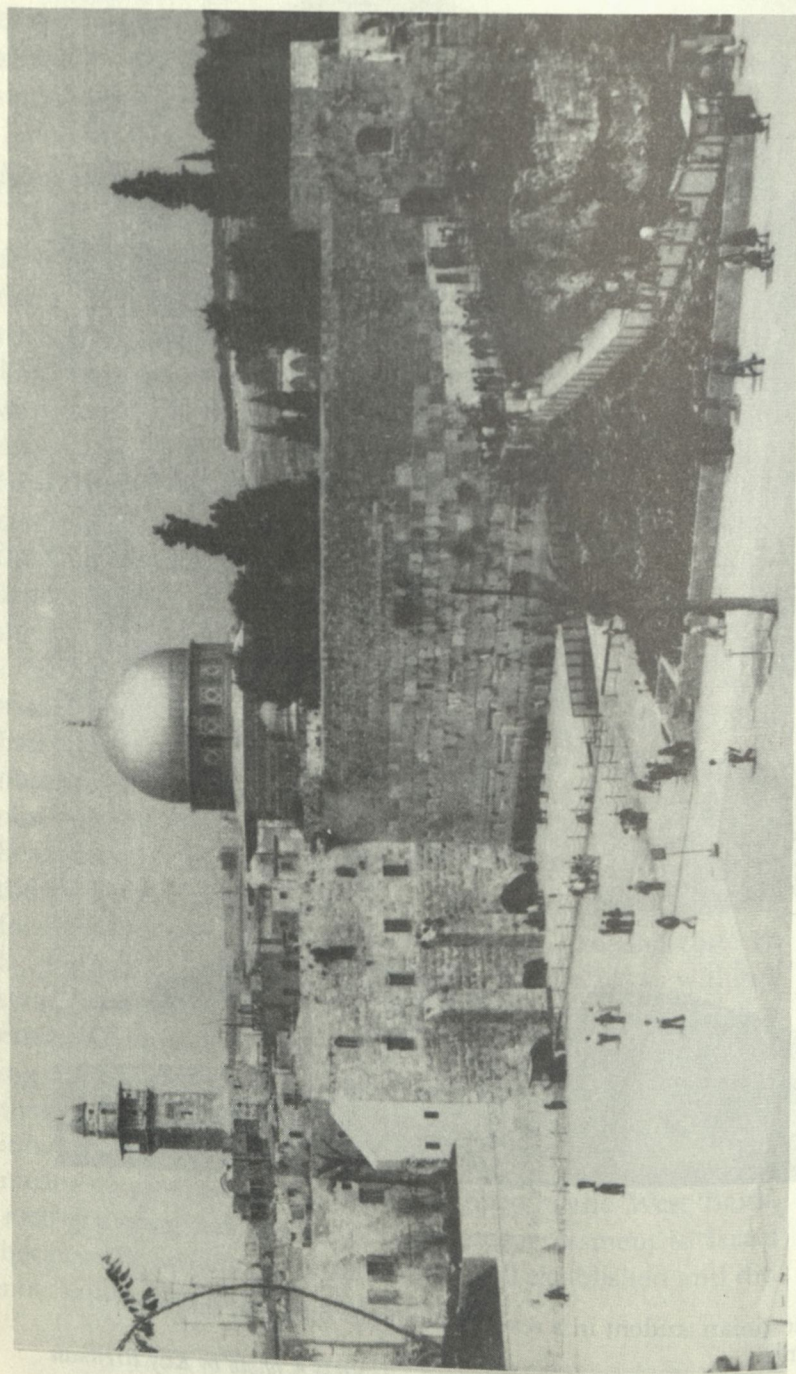
Above: Jerusalem's principal mosque, the Dome of the Rock, with the Western (Wailing) Wall of the Temple of Solomon in the foreground.

Photo by Sara Gentry.

Below: View overlooking Nablus.

Photo by Peter Gubser.
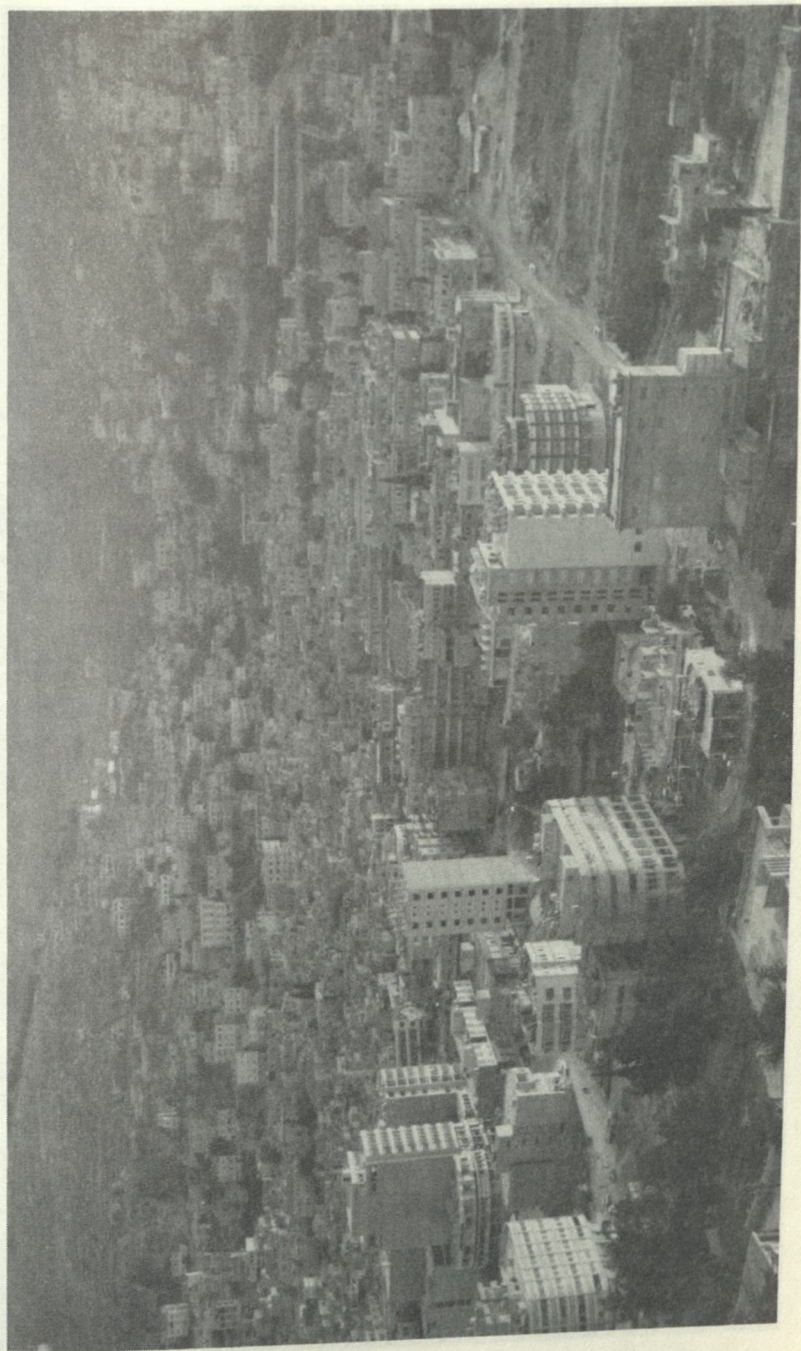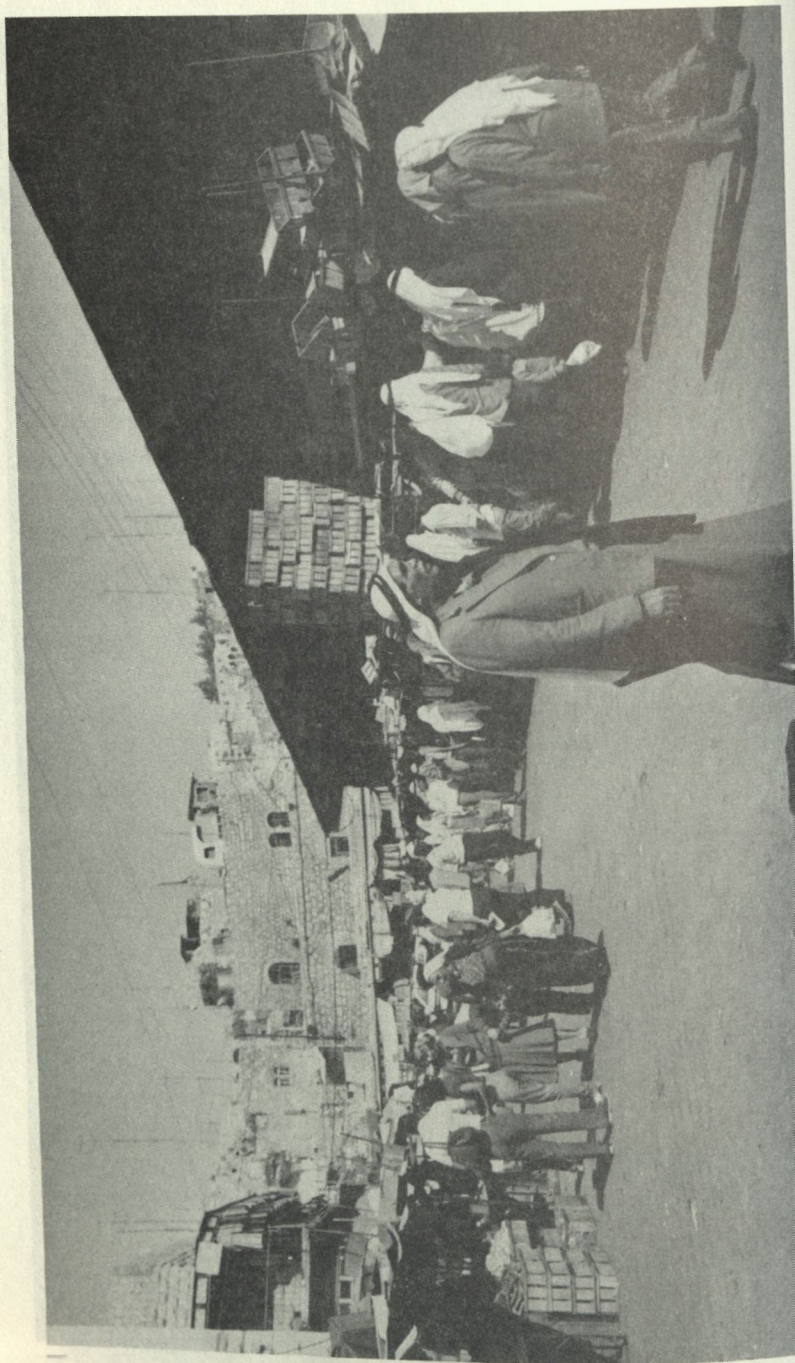
Below: Gilo, an Israeli settlement on the West Bank.
Photo by Merle Thorpe, Jr.
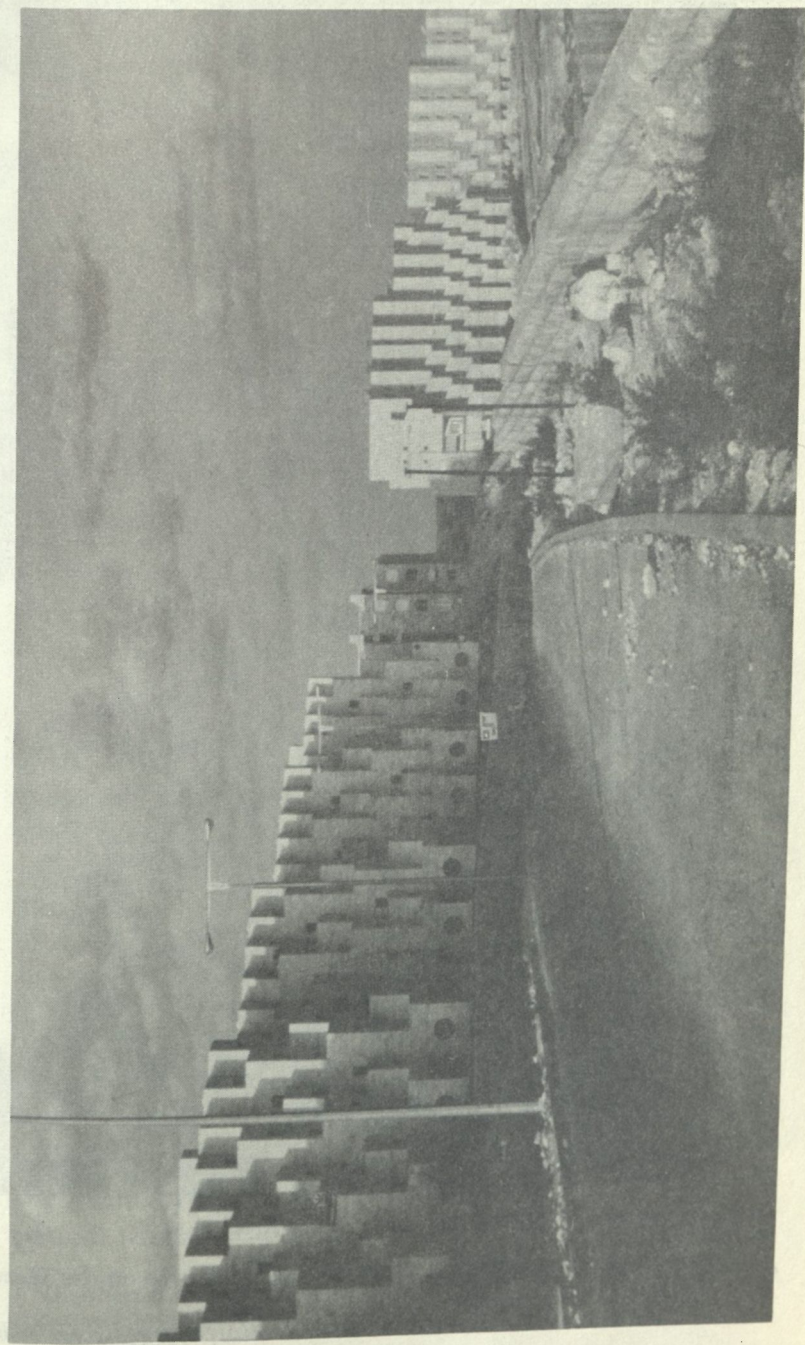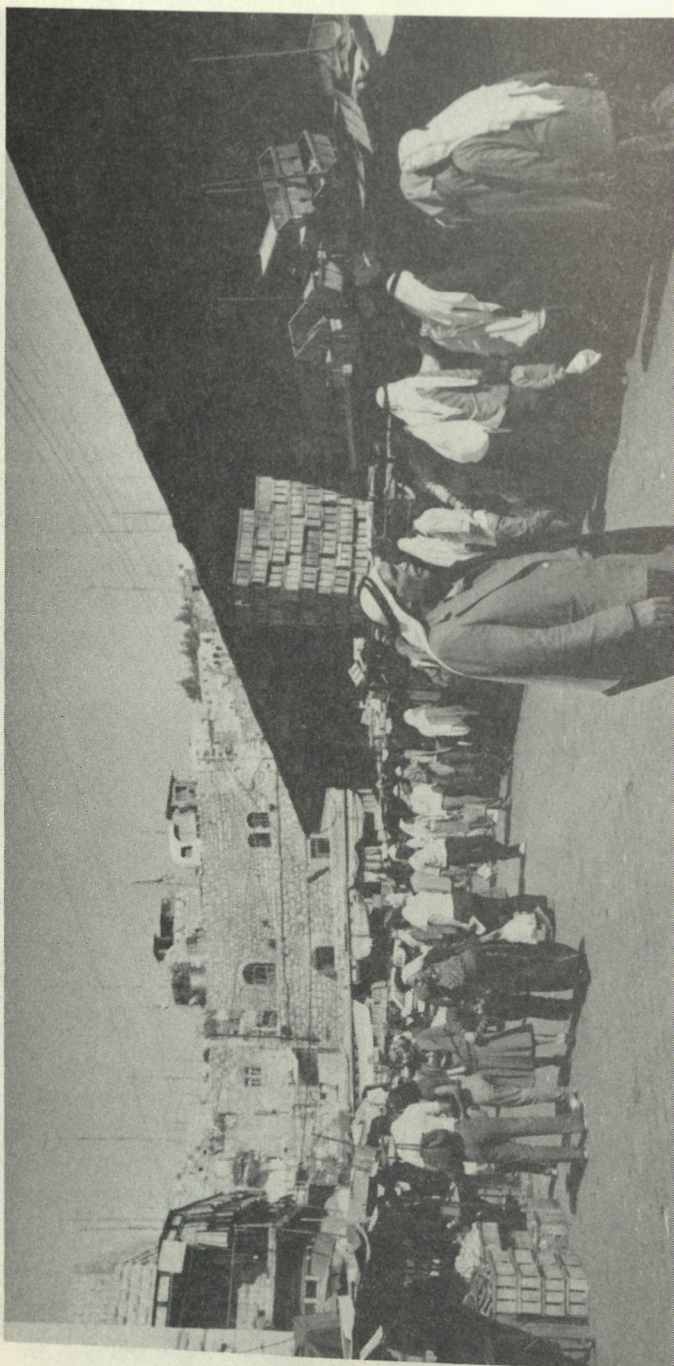
Below: Gilo, an Israeli settlement on the West Bank.
Photo by Merle Thorpe, Jr.
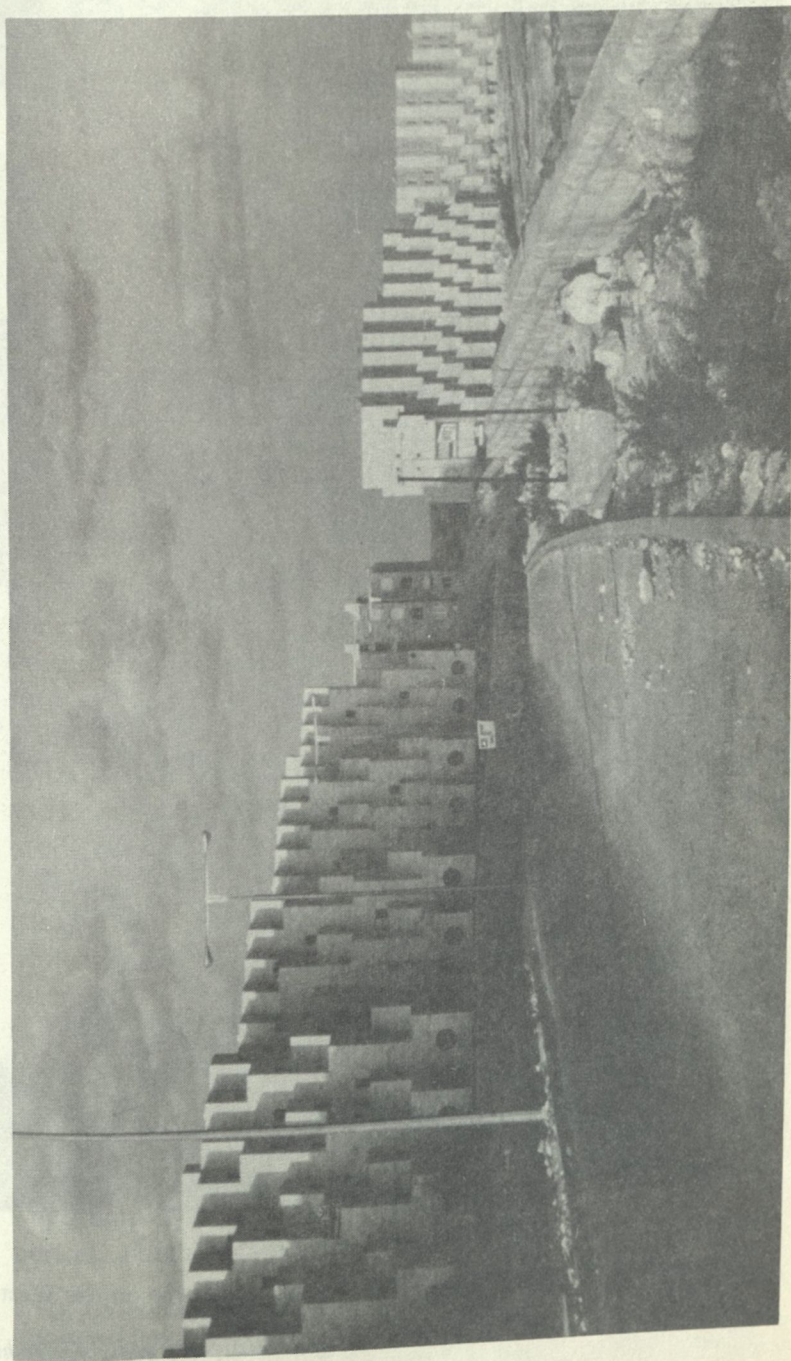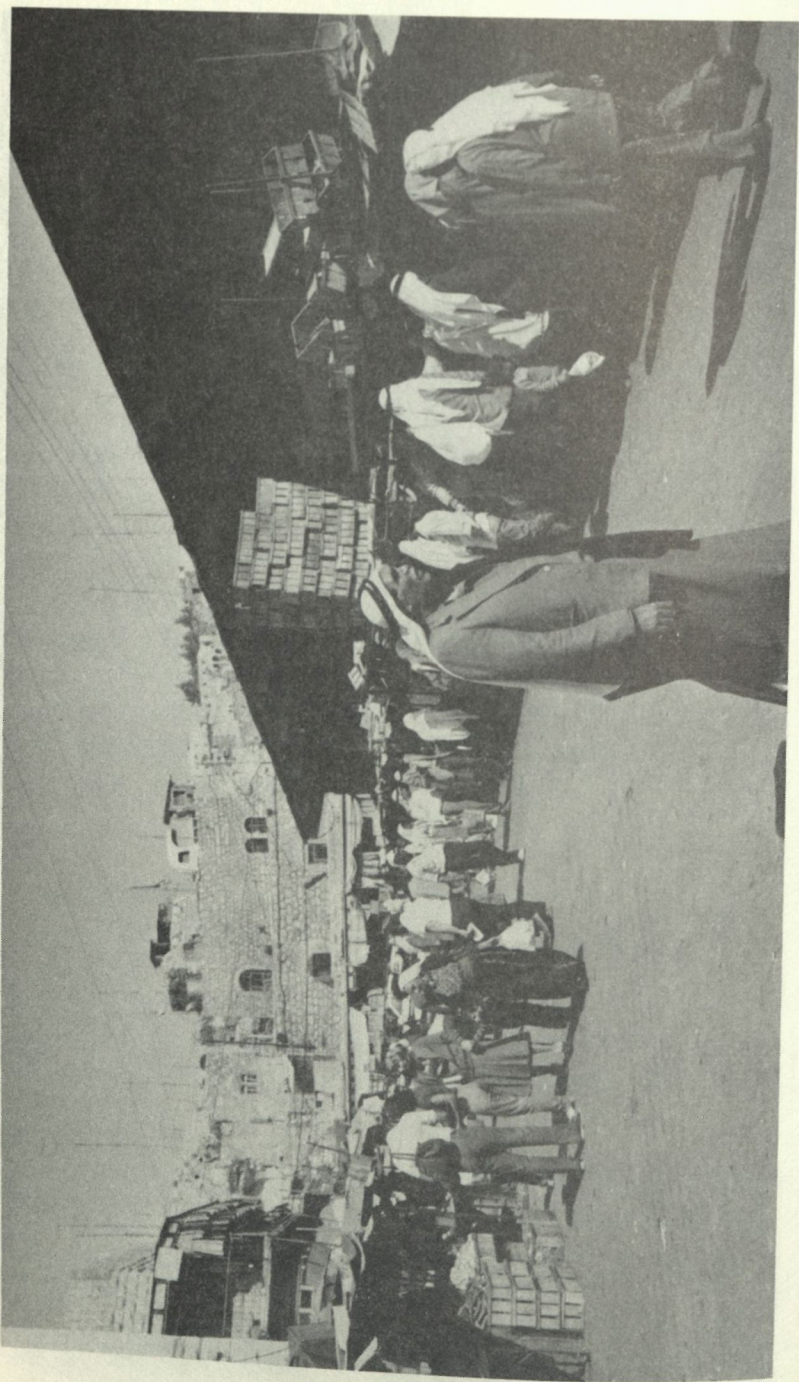
Above: The municipal fruit and vegetable market in Hebron.
Photo by Merle Thorpe, Jr.

Below: Gilo, an Israeli settlement on the West Bank.
Photo by Merle Thorpe, Jr.
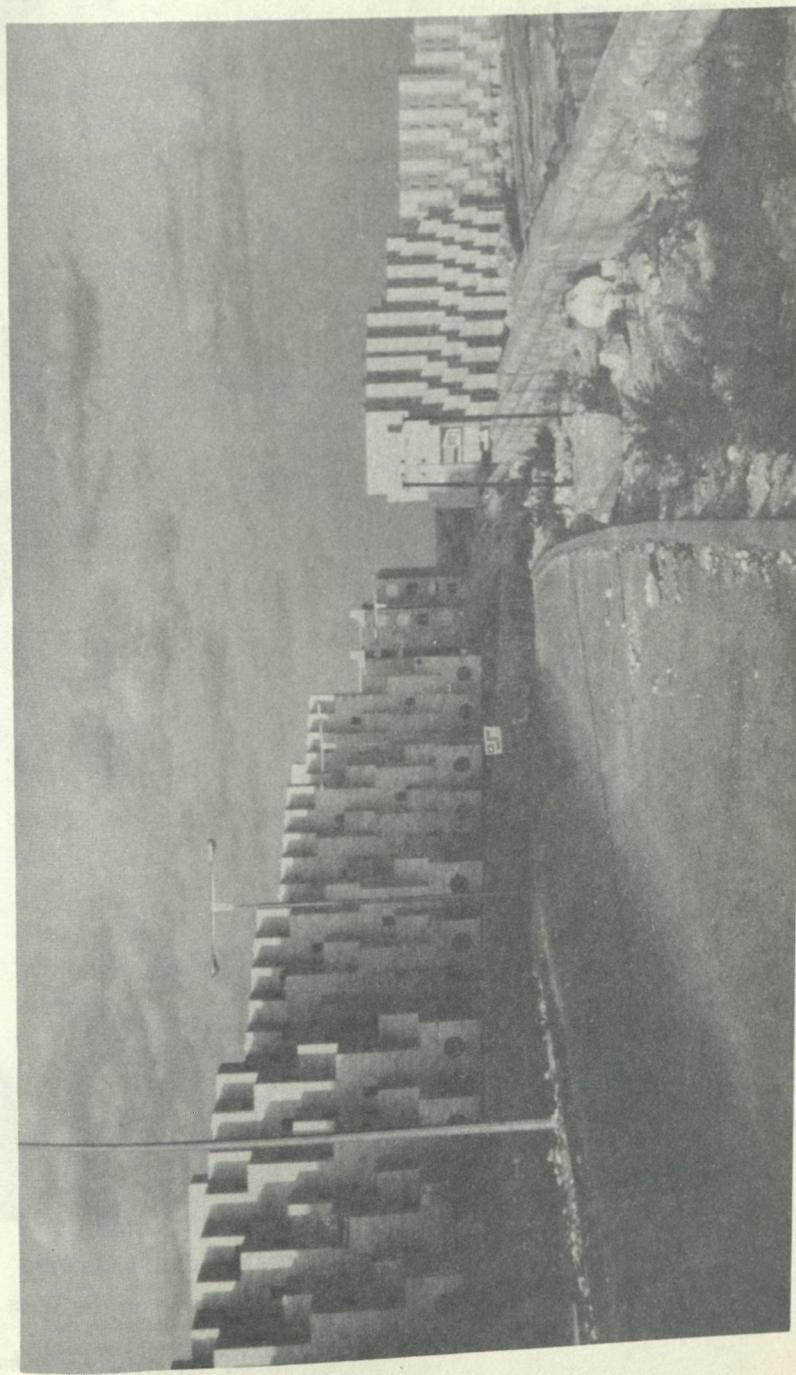
Palestinian student in a plumbers-training course on the West Bank.

UNRWA photo by George Nehmeh.

THE ECONOMY

Colonial Economics

The economy of the West Bank has become in effect an extension of the economy of the state of Israel during the 17 years of occupation. The conversion has been continuous and deliberate, and the West Bank population has had no say in the decision-making process. The principal criteria for Israeli decisions regarding the West Bank economy have been to strengthen the Israeli economy and to support Israeli political objectives. In strictly economic terms there has been some short-term benefit to the West Bank in the process, mainly wage employment for the West Bank rural population, with an attendant rise in the standard of living. By contrast with the healthy and diversified economy of the East Bank, however, the West Bank looks distorted and artificial, befitting its role as a supporting actor for Israeli needs.

Interpretation of economic developments in the West Bank has been facilitated because statistical data have become plentiful since the occupation began, but virtually all have been assembled by the occupation authorities, an interested party in the impression created by the data. There are statistical problems as well: the West Bank economy, possessing "substantial agricultural, handicraft, and service activities," is difficult to gauge and interpret, particularly when it is undergoing a shift from peasant, "semi-subsistence" agriculture to wage employment.[1] The baseline data from the 1967 war period, which became the basis of Israel's economic assess-

1. Van Arkadie, Bryan, *Benefits and Burdens: A Report on the West Bank and Gaza Strip Economies Since 1967*, New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1977, pp.116-117.

ments of the West Bank, are unreliable for the following reasons: 1) pre-1967 information is limited, and the West Bank was not differentiated from the East Bank in Jordanian calculations; 2) almost one-third of the West Bank population left at the time of the war, and the atmosphere surrounding the 1967 West Bank census conducted by the Israelis was hardly confidence-inspiring for the residents and therefore unlikely to produce full and accurate information; 3) East Jerusalem has been excluded from West Bank statistics since its annexation by Israel in June 1967; 4) there was a sharp rise in prices on the West Bank as a result of the war and shortages caused by the disruption of supplies from the East Bank.[2]

One example of the difficulties of interpreting economic data concerning the West Bank since the occupation is the annual economic growth rate. Official Israeli statistics showed an annual 18 per cent increase overall and a 15 per cent increase in per capita income through 1975; a European economist working with the same figures has estimated that for the same time period the real rates, while still impressive, were closer to nine per cent overall and six to seven per cent per capita, fairly close to the performance of the Jordanian economy at the same time. The second, lower set of figures takes into account the fact that "somewhere around one-half" the total economic increase for the West Bank resulted from employment outside the West Bank, including Israel, during the time period in question. The same analyst has observed, "Growth performance in itself...will tell us nothing about the political acceptability of the existing situation in principle or about underlying political stability."[3]

The West Bank economy in 1967 was predominantly rural (only 30 per cent of the population lived in the major towns and cities) with the small upper class group composed of

2. *Ibid.*, p.117; Graham-Brown, Sarah, "The Economic Consequences of the Occupation," in Aruri, Naseer, ed., *Occupation: Israel over Palestine*, Belmont, Mass.: Association of Arab-American University Graduates, 1983, pp.169-70.
3. Van Arkadie, *op. cit.*, pp.116,118,122.

medium- and large-scale landowners plus a merchant and small industrialist class in the urban centers. Agriculture was the principal occupation for over half the West Bank work force even though it contributed only one-fourth of the region's income. The West Bank had become dependent on remittances from residents working outside, who contributed an estimated 18 per cent of the West Bank's income in 1967.[4]

Two Israeli economic requirements concerning the West Bank—that it not be a financial burden and that its economy not be permitted to compete with Israel's own—were instituted from the outset of the occupation. The exodus of West Bank residents as a result of the fighting created a huge potential agricultural surplus for crops ripening at the same time, but the ingenuity of West Bank farmers in making contact with East Bank markets by fording the Jordan River with their trucks was encouraged once the bridges across the Jordan were rebuilt.

Guest Workers

One of the most significant changes in the West Bank's economic and social structure since the occupation has been the employment of West Bank workers in the Israeli economy, either within the "Green Line" (the previous Israel-Jordan armistice line) or in the West Bank for Israeli employers. Starting in 1967 with 5,000 West Bank workers, the number rose to 63,500 in 1982, of whom 43,500 were registered, not including 15,000 from East Jerusalem or 15,000 working in the West Bank in subcontracting work for Israeli employers.[5] The "boom" years in Israel lasted until 1974, but employment patterns were well established by then, and the relative turndown in the economy has not had a major impact on the West Bank worker situation.

4. Graham-Brown, *op. cit.*, p.223.
5. Hochstein, Annette, "Metropolitan Links between Israel and the West Bank," Jerusalem: West Bank Data Base Project, 1983, p.41.

More than half of the West Bank workers in Israel are in construction, with approximately 20 per cent in industry. They make up several categories, the first of which includes those officially employed, many of whom have been working for the same employer for more than ten years. These workers, who receive some social benefits from the system, are usually landless and often from West Bank refugee camps. The second category is groups of workers that are engaged through a local labor contractor, usually an Arab who handles the negotiations with employers on behalf of the group. These groups often stay together and move from job to job, having little personal contact with Israelis in the process. Some of these workers have farm land which they must tend during growing periods and for which they must be able to take time off from their jobs in Israel. They are unwilling to tie themselves down to a single job in Israel if it means that they can't take care of their crops. The third category is the informal labor market for day workers that has developed as West Bank residents gather at customary locations in the towns, often before dawn, and await the arrival of Israeli van and pickup truck drivers who call out their worker needs and choose from among the many Palestinians available.[6]

West Bank workers are not permitted to join Histadrut, the all-embracing Israeli labor union, although those that are officially registered as workers in Israel are entitled to medical and other benefits. Despite the fact that Israeli employers collect the full range of employee benefit deductions from the West Bankers' pay checks, only a tiny fraction of those entitled to pensions have received them, and a large sum of money representing unpaid benefits has built up in Israel and has apparently been utilized for benefits to Israeli workers. Only in recent times has the proposal been made that the funds be put to work in the West Bank to benefit those from whose wages they were deducted. "Casual" workers in Israel

6. Graham-Brown, *op. cit.*, pp.209-210.

receive neither social benefits nor wages equal to their registered fellow Palestinians, who in turn receive a lower rate of pay than Israelis engaged in the same activity. (West Bank workers do participate in labor unions in the West Bank, however. At present there are an estimated 25 unions with a membership of 40,000.)[7]

West Bank workers in Israel hold the menial jobs that Israelis are ever more reluctant to take. This situation puts the West Bankers at the bottom of the social and economic scale in Israel. Israeli regulations prohibit West Bankers from staying overnight in Israel, but many do so whether because of the distance they must commute or employer preference. In either case their living arrangements are usually rough and lacking in amenities, often filthy and even dangerous since some employers lock them in at night to avoid detection. Fires in rooms locked from the outside have taken the lives of several West Bank workers in Israel in recent years.[8]

Although West Bank workers make up less than five per cent of the Israeli work force, they represent almost 20 per cent of the total in the construction industry.[9] Many Israelis are uneasy about the social and political implications for Israel of becoming dependent on an exploited class of non-Jewish workers, but few are willing to pursue measures that would keep the two societies economically separate. So far the short-term benefits to both employer and employee have been such as to insure continuation of the arrangement.

Improvement on the Surface

The employment of West Bank workers in Israel has had dramatic and far-reaching effects in the West Bank, however. By opening up opportunities for wage employment for many of the underemployed or unemployed, it virtually wiped out both problems in the West Bank by 1974. The money it put

7. Metzger, Jan, Orth, Martin, and Sterzing, Christian, *This Land Is Our Land: The West Bank under Israeli Occupation*, London: Zed Press, 1983, p.132.
8. Graham-Brown, *op. cit.*, pp.205-206.
9. Hochstein, *op. cit.*, p.43.

into workers' hands has created a consumption splurge that still goes on. Increases in durable household goods since 1967 (expressed in percentages of households) tell this part of the story:

Stoves	—5 per cent	('67)	to	73 per cent	('79)
Refrigerators	—5 per cent	"	"	73 per cent	"
Washing Machines	—5 per cent	"	"	73 per cent	"
Televisions	—2 per cent	"	"	73 per cent	"

There were 7,500 cars on the West Bank in 1968, up to 33,000 by 1979; 6,300 residents had connected telephone service in 1967, up to 19,000 by 1980.[10]

Another significant impact, albeit of a different nature, of the new economic security of a large part of the West Bank underclass has been a reduction in the influence of the traditional landowning class that often employed, advanced credit to, and helped arrange affairs for the workers. This change has been reflected as well in the demand for a greater say in village affairs by workers whose economic base is now outside the village.

The increase in individual standards of living for many rural West Bank workers through jobs in Israel since the occupation has often been at the expense of community well-being because farm hands have not been available to tend the crops. As a result of the shift many villages and individual farmers have abandoned their fields and now have to purchase agricultural commodities previously grown at home. Increases in lower-class spending power on the West Bank look less impressive when compared with post-1967 changes in the East Bank economy, which had to rebuild after the West Bank was occupied and cut off but which has surged ahead in recent years and now requires an estimated 100,000 foreign workers to meet job demand.

10. Coordinator of Government Operations in Judea and Samaria, Gaza District, Sinai, Golan Heights, "A Thirteen-Year Survey (1967-1980)," Jerusalem: Ministry of Defense (Israel), January 1981, pp.3-4 (hereafter GOI).

While the occupation has proved an economic benefit to the lower social and economic classes in the West Bank, it has been a economic burden to many of the rest, particularly the professional classes and small industrialists who have been swamped by the flood of Israeli imported goods that came with the Israeli occupation and now represent 90 per cent of the West Bank's imports. Importers who served as agents for many western-made products obtained through Amman have seen their business taken over by Israeli agents for the same products and have been forced to change suppliers, often to Eastern Bloc exporters whose products, while cheaper, are less preferred by the West Bankers. Civil servants, particularly teachers, have fared better under the occupation since most of those jobs have continued, and the government of Jordan has kept on paying salaries for an estimated three-fourths of the total.[11]

The economy of the West Bank has undergone not one but two 180-degree turns since World War II, being wrenched away from the Mediterranean coast toward Amman in 1948 and then back again toward the coast by the Israeli occupation in 1967. The import-export figures tell much of the story: Israel provided 88 per cent of the West Bank's imports in 1980 and purchased 60 per cent of its exports. In the same year Jordan took 39 per cent of West Bank exports and provided less than two per cent of its imports. The relative importance of Israel and Jordan as the West Bank's two main trading partners has been moving in favor of Israel since 1967. Ten per cent of Israel's total exports now go to the West Bank, which has become a "totally closed and protected outlet" for Israeli consumer goods.[12] The West Bank maintains a negative trade balance and depends on external transfers, mainly remittances from West Bankers working outside, to pay for its import surplus.[13]

11. Graham-Brown, *op. cit.*, p.215.
12. Benvenisti, Meron, *The West Bank Data Project: A Survey of Israel's Policies*, Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1984, p.10.
13. Benvenisti, Meron, "The West Bank and Gaza Strip Data Base Project Interim

Growing Things

Agriculture continues to be a major factor in the economy of the West Bank, experiencing a simultaneous increase in its fraction of the area's GNP and decrease in its fraction of the work force. Agriculture provided 24 per cent of West Bank GNP in 1967, rising to 34.4 per cent in 1976, and reaching 37 per cent in 1980.[14] The increased share of West Bank GNP attributable to agriculture has less to do with the expansion of agriculture than it does with the shrinking of other sectors of the economy such as services (including tourism) which have declined since the occupation.

West Bank agriculture prior to 1967 emphasized tree crops (such as olives and fruits) and field crops (such as melons) that were also in demand elsewhere in the Arab world. Despite the open bridges policy, exports over the bridges are uncertain, owing in most cases to Israeli closure following security problems but occasionally to a closure by Jordan. Following the occupation West Bank crop selection, growing techniques, and markets all became heavily influenced by Israeli decisions of both an economic and political nature.

West Bank agriculture is not sophisticated, being hampered by low utilization of capital, irrigation, mechanization, and acreage per farmer. Israeli agricultural experts have been active in the West Bank since 1967 to insure noncompetition with Israeli agriculture but also to provide suggestions for improvements in seeds, cultivation, irrigation, pest control, and fertilizers. Despite these changes, however, much West Bank agriculture remains substantially the same as it was before the occupation began. It is still largely dependent on rainfall, which makes farmers with limited capital reluctant to invest in new equipment or wages. The percentage of West Bank agriculture utilizing new techniques such as growing under plastic and drip irrigation is small, and the increase

Report #1," Jerusalem: West Bank Data Base Project, 1982, p. 13.
14. *Ibid.*, p.10.

in irrigated crops has been accomplished with almost no increase in the amount of water used, meaning greater efficiency with the limited amount of water available rather than increased access to water.

Nevertheless, there has been a shift toward produce that is preservable and less dependent on quick marketing in order to realize a profit, such as beans, sesame, and cotton. Some of these items are now exported by the Israeli agricultural marketing organization. Production per land unit of field crops, orchard fruits, and vegetables has doubled, reflecting the impact of many of the changes.[15]

Overall, however, West Bank agricultural changes under the occupation have been determined by Israeli needs rather than those of the West Bank population; in the case of a potential conflict the needs of the occupier take precedence. West Bank agriculture is not permitted to compete with Israeli agriculture, which is heavily subsidized and whose products have unimpeded access to the West Bank, where they are frequently able to undersell an equivalent Palestinian item. West Bank products, on the other hand, often face tariff or quota barriers to marketing in Israel. Agricultural warfare is frequently waged by the Israelis against the West Bank, including "dumping" of an Israeli product at a critical time in the development cycle of a similar West Bank product or process. As a result of Israeli policy and West Bank agricultural self-defense tactics, West Bank agriculture has evolved into a system that complements Israeli agriculture rather competing with it, although a certain amount of overlap continues.

Perhaps the most significant change of all in West Bank agriculture since the occupation is the drop in the number and percentage of West Bank workers it employs. The principal reason for the change has been the employment of farm hands in the Israeli economy, although the establishment of

15. *The West Bank: An Assessment*, Washington, D.C.: The Middle East Institute, 1983 (a draft study in preparation for the Defense Intelligence Agency), p.157 (hereafter MEI).

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Jewish settlements and the closure of large tracts of West Bank land by the military authorities have exacerbated the problem.[16] The results of this phenomenon are many and include the removal of large areas of West Bank agricultural land from cultivation, the utilization of women and children in the fields to a greater extent than ever before, and a shift by many growers away from labor-intensive crops to those that require fewer workers.[17]

Problems from Absence

Other sectors of the West Bank economy are equally un-der-nourished. A major problem was created when the West Bank branches of Jordanian banks were closed by Israeli order after the 1967 war, a precondition of reopening being severance of ties with the Central Bank of Jordan. None were willing to do so, and all have remained closed to this day.[18] Branches of several Israeli banks have opened up in the West Bank, but few Palestinians are willing to use them except for small-scale transactions. The Jordanian *dinar* is accepted as legal tender in the West Bank (though not in East Jerusalem), and since Israeli banks are prohibited from handling *dinars*, this virtually rules out Arab business. A change in the rules in 1977 to permit holding of foreign-currency accounts has brought the Israeli banks little additional Arab business.

The absence of a modern, comprehensive banking and credit system on the West Bank is a major obstacle to development of any sector of the economy dealing primarily in money. Almost all West Bankers maintain their principal accounts in Amman, which means that capital flows toward the East Bank and is unavailable for investment in the West Bank. The establishment of the Jordanian stock exchange in 1979 in Amman has also made it attractive for West Bank residents to invest excess capital in the market.[19]

16. Graham-Brown, *op. cit.*, pp.171,184.
17. MEI, *op. cit.*, pp.158-159; Van Arkadie, *op. cit.*, p.133.
18. Graham-Brown, Sarah, *op. cit.*, p.198.
19. *Ibid.*, pp.198-199; Sandler, Shmuel, and Frisch, Hillel, *Israel, the Palestinians, and*

The absence of a banking and credit system in the West Bank has forced the West Bank to function largely on cash and a "shadow" banking system through insurance agents and moneychangers who negotiate major transfers. All public sector monetary activity is financed from local income and tax-generated transfers from the Israeli government, plus approved subsidies received through the Jordanian-Palestinian Joint Committee in Amman and foreign philanthropy.[20]

There is little capital formation in the West Bank today, reflecting traditional practices compounded by the difficulties created by the occupation. Many Arab, including Palestinian, capitalists limit their investments to land, commerce, and urban real estate, which means that industry and infrastructure are neglected. This pattern is apparent on the West Bank, where most people with money to spend put it into house building and consumption. The unusually high rate of consumption is an alternative to investment and a reaction to the uncertain political situation.[21]

Needed: An Industrial Policy

West Bank industry is no better off than it was before the occupation and probably worse due to uncertainty about the future. It currently contributes less than 10 per cent of the area's GNP and engages less than 15 per cent of the work force. A recent survey showed that workers in two-thirds of the area's 2,587 enterprises are in garages, carpentry workshops, quarries, and small factories; one-third are engaged in textiles, plastics, leather, and food. Only three establishments employ more than 100 workers. Most West Bank industrial establishments are small-scale, low-productivity, labor-intensive operations.[22]

the West Bank: A Study in Intercommunal Conflict, Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books (D.C. Heath), 1984, p.57.
20. MEI, op. cit., pp.156-157.
21. Ibid., pp.153,155; Graham-Brown, op. cit., p.198.
22. Benvenisti, "Interim Report," op. cit., p.12.

The main reasons for this state of affairs are the lack of invested capital, Israeli obstacles, Jordanian restrictions on manufactured imports from the West Bank, restrictions on West Bank equipment and raw materials imports, and marginal Israeli government investment in infrastructure useful to West Bank industry.[23] Jordanian import curbs intended to protect East Bank industries contribute to the problems facing West Bank industries since only goods from industrial enterprises using raw materials from the West Bank or purchased in Jordan are eligible for import licenses. Representative items purchased from the West Bank include building stone, olive oil, and dairy products.[24]

Tourism was a thriving industry in the West Bank during the Jordanian period, when most visitors to the Old City of Jerusalem and to other West Bank Holy Places arrived by way of Amman. Prior to 1967 tourism provided one-third of Jordan's current account export income. The West Bank hotel occupancy rate fell from 50 per cent before the 1967 war to 15 per cent in 1969 and has not gone much above 30 per cent since then. The drop in tourism became even a sharper blow for the West Bank since it came at a time of increasing Arab disposable income as a result of the rise in oil prices. With control over East Jerusalem and the West Bank Holy Places, Israel reoriented major transport via Israel to the outside world. It provided subsidies to its own tourist industry, whose competitive position vis-a-vis East Jerusalem *hoteliers* was improved by lower political and security risks and proximity to the more cosmospolitan western, Jewish part of Jerusalem.[25] Other West Bank towns, Ramallah in particular, that had traditionally attracted visitors from the Arab world have lost their tourist business altogether.

The most significant characteristic of Israeli-West Bank economic linkage is that the West Bank has become a source of cheap labor for and a major consumer of commodities

23. *Ibid.*, p.12.
24. MEI, *op.cit.*, p.163.
25. Van Arkadie, *op. cit.*, pp.125-126; Sandler, *op. cit.*, p.57.

from Israel. In the short run the occupation has benefitted the lowest rungs on the West Bank socio-economic ladder at the expense of those higher up, creating in the process a "proletarianized" West Bank labor force that does Israel's menial jobs cheaper and more readily than Israelis are willing to do them. Since the onset of the occupation, Israeli policy has worked against any attempt to help create an independent economic base in the West Bank. A microcosm of this problem has been the relationship of the Military Government with foreign voluntary organizations seeking to underwrite small-scale economic self-help projects in West Bank Palestinian communities. Delays and turndowns in this area of program activity are routine, whereas almost any proposal in the field of social welfare or relief is accepted by the authorities.

It is likely that in the absence of major steps to strengthen institutional activities like banking and credit, the West Bank economy will continue its deterioration unchecked. While an unchanged situation would create certain problems for Israel, they would be minor compared with the problems for the West Bank economy, leaving it in a shambles that might take years to repair.

Part Three:

The West Bank and the World

US POLICY BEFORE CARTER

The status of the West Bank, like that of the rest of Palestine and the surrounding area, has always been influenced by forces external to the region. Local actors benefit from or are burdened by what happens, but the power to make changes, if not the inspiration for them, frequently originates elsewhere.

No two foreign parts of the world have been more important to 20th century developments regarding the West Bank than Western Europe and, more recently, the United States. Among Western European powers Great Britain has been most closely identified with West Bank affairs as holder of the mandate for Palestine after World War I and the mainstay of Jordan's political independence and financial stability from its creation in 1921 through addition of the West Bank following the 1948 Arab-Israeli war.

The United States regarded the Middle East as a British sphere of influence until the Suez War in October 1956, when Britain, France, and Israel invaded Egypt intent, albeit for different reasons, on overthrowing President Nasser. The mismanaged and unsuccessful military operation wrote finis to Europe's leading role in Middle Eastern affairs and elevated that of the United States when President Eisenhower rebuked France and Britain and forced Israeli troops to evacuate the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip.

From that time forward the United States was to play an important role in Jordanian affairs, developing a close working relationship with King Hussein and providing financial support for government operations as well as for the development of the country. Although the relationship has been

cool for several years, the United States remains Jordan's most powerful foreign supporter.

The US in the Near East

The United States has become an actor in Middle East diplomacy relatively recently and with some reluctance. President Wilson dispatched an investigating mission to Palestine under the leadership of Henry Churchill King and Charles R. Crane in 1919 to determine the wishes of the population regarding its political future, and the principal finding of the mission was that the population of Palestine, then 90 per cent Arab Christian and Muslim, had a deep desire for political independence. The King-Crane Commission was an anomaly, despite its sincerity and professionalism, and the problem was captured in Winston Churchill's trenchant observation that

> the nations concerned would not stand so long at the footstool of undecided power, and of all the processes likely to rouse their passion, none was more apt than the peripatetic Commission of Inquiry making a roving progress in search of truth through all the powder magazines of the Middle East with a notebook in one hand and a lighted cigarette in the other.[1]

The United States had entered World War I to insure the defeat of the Central Powers and to preserve the democracies of Western Europe. Isolationist sentiment was stronger than President Wilson had calculated, and Senate rejection in 1919 of United States participation in the League of Nations reflected popular sentiment distrustful of the schemes of Old Europe as well as Congress-Administration differences.

The United States remained on the periphery of the Palestine issue in the period between the World Wars, although the Congress made periodic statements in support of the

1. Churchill, Winston S., *The Aftermath: Being a Sequel to the World Crisis*, London:Macmillan, 1941, pp.362-363.

Balfour Declaration and Zionist goals in Palestine, and Presidential confidants such as Judge Louis Brandeis (with Wilson) and lawyer Felix Frankfurter (with Franklin Roosevelt) provided pro-Zionist views at the highest levels of the US government. World War II saw increased attention by the United States to the Middle East as a war theater and as a major source of oil for the future. High-level military strategy conferences in Tehran, Casablanca, and Cairo helped make the Middle East more real to the top policymakers.

Political pressures in the United States in support of a Jewish state in Palestine mounted following development of the Biltmore Program in 1942, named after the New York Hotel where a major Zionist gathering was held to step up the campaign in the United States, likely to emerge as the dominant world power when the war came to an end. Once the war was over in 1945 and the destruction of the European Jewish community became known, many American Jews who had been unreceptive to Zionism became advocates of a Jewish state in Palestine to provide a refuge for the survivors of the Holocaust as well as a safe haven in the event of future outbreaks of anti-semitism.

Groping toward Partition

The decision by Great Britain early in 1947 to refer the Palestine problem to the United Nations triggered a US proposal to create a special UN committee to discuss the problem. Despite opposition by the six Arab members of the UN at the time, UNSCOP (United Nations Special Committee on Palestine) was created and charged with the task of recommending a course of action once the British withdrew from Palestine. The committee produced two reports, a majority and a minority report, both drafted by Dr. Ralph Bunche, the American staff advisor to the Committee. Because of disagreements within the committee right up to presentation of the reports, Dr. Bunche and his staff had time only to draw rough proposed boundaries on maps in colored

pencils, which inadvertently contributed to the separation of Arab villages from their lands at the time of the armistice agreements in 1949.[2]

Within the US government both the Department of State and the Department of Defense were opposed to the proposal in the UNSCOP majority report of partitioning Palestine into Arab and Jewish states due to the apparent inability of finding a solution that would reconcile the demands of both communities for independence. A September 22, 1947 memorandum prepared by Loy Henderson, the senior State Department official responsible for Near Eastern affairs, spelled out the main objections to partition: it would undermine relations with the Arab and Muslim worlds; it would involve the United States too deeply in implementation of the plan; it was unworkable; its adoption would not solve the Palestine problem; and it was against the UN charter and US principles.[3]

On October 11, 1947 the US government announced its support for the partition of Palestine, and by the November 22 General Assembly vote on the UNSCOP recommendation sufficient pressure had been exerted on key states—Liberia, Haiti, and the Philippines in particular—either opposed to partition or straddling the fence to assure United Nations approval of the partition resolution. The plan called for creation of an Arab state approximately where the West Bank is today, a Jewish state in much of the rest of Palestine, internationalization of Jerusalem, and an economic union between the two states, with Great Britain to supervise the transition within a two-year period from passage of the resolution.[4]

In the spring of 1948 attempts were made within the Truman Administration to substitute trusteeship in Palestine for the partition plan approved the previous fall, but a

2. Wilson, Evan M., *Decision on Palestine: How the United States Came to Recognize Israel*, Stanford, Calif.:Hoover Institution Press, 1979, p.112.
3. *Ibid.*, p.117.
4. *Ibid.*, pp.111,125.

political gap between the White House and the Department of State widened as President Truman came under increased pressure from American Jews to support partition.

The situation on the ground in Palestine was deteriorating while the diplomats negotiated in New York and Washington. Arab irregulars were infiltrating into Palestine during the spring of 1948 and attacking Jewish targets while Jewish forces were mounting campaigns to bring as much of Palestine as possible under Jewish control when the British departed as scheduled on May 15. Menachem Begin's terrorist group, the Irgun Zvai Leumi, contributed a crucial element to the flight of Palestinians from their homes by the massacre in April of more than 250 men, women, and children in the village of Deir Yassin on the outskirts of Jerusalem. As word of the massacre and attendant rumors spread throughout the countryside, a terrified peasantry began to flee their homes in large numbers. By the conclusion of the fighting later that year, more than 750,000 Palestinians found themselves on the side of the ceasefire lines held by Jordan's Arab Legion and blocked by Israeli soldiers from returning to their homes.

Early in May 1948 the US government asked the British to urge King Abdullah not to introduce Arab Legion troops into the West Bank, to no avail.[5] The orders given to General Glubb by King Abdullah, Glubb's interpretation of those orders, and the battlefield decisions during the fighting remain controversial among Palestinians who charge that Legion troops never intended to contest Jewish forces beyond the proposed partition lines. The Palestinian case does not take into account the fact that because of their own incapacity the Palestinians were forced to depend on the efforts of others, and among those others the Arab Legion alone was militarily successful. It is likely that without the Legion's success there would have been no Arab sovereignty in the West Bank following 1948.

5. *Ibid.*, p.141.

The US and Jordan

The United States opened diplomatic relations with Jordan in 1948, establishing a legation in Amman in February and installing a minister a year later. Formal recognition of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan occurred in January 1949, at the same time that the United States upgraded its recognition of Israel from *de facto* to *de jure*. The United States did not, however, extend *de jure* recognition to Jordan's absorption of the West Bank. A full-fledged US embassy in Amman was established in August 1952.[6]

US-Jordanian relations have gone through several stages since that time. One writer has identified three such phases: l) from 1948-57 the United States played a modest role, deferring to the British, who held the dominant western position in Jordan; 2) from 1957-67 the United States was Jordan's "principal source of political, economic, and military support;" and 3) since 1967 the US and Jordan have maintained reasonably close ties, although they have come under strain in the absence of movement in the peace process.[7] The United States launched its assistance to Jordan with a small-scale military assistance program in 1950, adding an economic assistance program in 1953 of less than $2 million annually.

Allies against Communism

The spring of 1957 was a critical period for King Hussein, who had to deal with the militant pan-Arabism of the Premier, Sulaiman Nabulsi, and with an unstable situation in the Jordanian armed forces. A series of US moves took place following promulgation of the Eisenhower Doctrine, which pledged US military support to any country in the region

6. Stookey, Robert W., "Jordan's Relations with the United States," in Sinai, Anne, and Pollack, Allen, eds., *The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the West Bank: A Handbook*, New York: American Academic Association for Peace in the Middle East, 1977, p.159; Shwadran, Benjamin, *Jordan A State of Tension*, New York: Council for Middle Eastern Affairs Press, 1959, p.291.
7. Stookey, *op. cit.*, p.159.

seeking help against a threat from "international Communism." King Hussein, a committed anti-Communist, saw these forces mingled with radical elements in Jordan, and the White House was responsive.

Secretary of State John Foster Dulles told a press conference on April 24, 1957 of the US intention to "hold up the hands of King Hussein." Sixth Fleet ships were moved out of their home port in Italy to positions in the eastern Mediterranean, and the King was assured of an immediate $10 million in economic aid. Buoyed by these expressions of US concern, the King dismissed the Nabulsi cabinet and declared martial law in Jordan, rounding up and jailing hundreds of suspected troublemakers.[8]

King Hussein soon became a popular and familiar figure in the United States. He made his first visit to this country in 1959, combining speeches around the country with talks in Washington. The King's image of moderation and anti-communism in the face of radicalism and unrest fitted well with the mood in the United States during the Eisenhower years. As a result US foreign aid to Jordan steadily increased. In addition to budgetary support, American aid underwrote development of roads, electricity, education, technical training, and other aspects of national infrastructure. The East Ghor canal project, designed to irrigate lands in the Jordan Valley on the East side of the Jordan River, became a showcase in the relationship. US assistance to the Jordanian armed forces grew steadily, totalling more than $67 million by the time of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.[9]

US policy toward the West Bank was part of its policy toward Jordan in the period between establishment of US-Jordanian relations in 1949 and the 1967 war. During that period US Middle East diplomacy did not concern itself with the Palestinian national question, focusing rather on the Palestinians as refugees and/or as Jordanian citizens. The

8. *Ibid.*, p.162.
9. *Ibid.*, pp.162-63.

Palestinians were scattered, their leadership discredited, and their cause subordinated to the Arab nationalist goal of fewer, larger Arab political entities. Emphasis was on recovery of all of pre-1948 Palestine by the Arabs; the annexation by Jordan was regarded by many Palestinians and Arab nationalists of the period as a phase which would be superseded by "liberation" of the whole country.

US policy on Jerusalem remained that adopted at the time of US support for the UN partition plan in 1947: the Old City of Jerusalem was to become a "corpus separatum," an international enclave under United Nations jurisdiction reflecting its special status for Muslims, Christians, and Jews. Since Jordan's capital was Amman, the issue of embassy location was not a problem for US diplomats as was the case in Israel, which declared Jerusalem (the western part of the city, which it held and expanded during the 1948 war) its capital. The US embassy in Israel has been maintained in Tel Aviv since diplomatic relations were first established, although there has been pressure from the American Jewish community and the US Congress in recent times to move the embassy to Jerusalem. At mid-year 1984 legislation was pending in the Congress to move the embassy, but President Reagan had promised a veto should binding language be approved.

Six Days in June

The June 1967 war was a watershed in the Middle East and the start of a process of engagement of the United States in Middle East diplomacy that continues to this day. The Administration was engaged in diplomacy to head off the war right up to the Israeli attack on Egyptian and other Arab airfields Monday, June 5. President Nasser charged, and King Hussein repeated the charge, that the swift and total destruction of the Arab air forces could not possibly have been accomplished by the Israeli air force on its own and that carrier-based US aircraft had taken part in the attacks. This allegation proved to be false, but in light of the speed of the

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total Arab military collapse, it was widely accepted in the Middle East at the time, and most of the Arab states (Jordan not among them) broke diplomatic relations with the United States.

In the aftermath of the war the Johnson Administration was "determined not to adopt the same strategy [as the Eisenhower Administration in 1956] of forcing Israel to withdraw from conquered territories in return for little in the way of Arab concessions."[10] (At this point the Administration was taking at face value Israeli assurances that Israel had no territorial ambitions in the war.) The Administration strategy was to establish a framework for diplomacy and then wait for the Arabs to negotiate, insuring that the military balance not tip against Israel in the meantime.[11] The Administration's formula was set out in a speech given by President Johnson on June 19, 1967 on the eve of his meeting with Soviet Premier Kosygin at Glassboro State Teachers College in New Jersey, in which he laid the blame for the war on Egypt's closing of the Strait of Tiran and indicated that the United States would not press Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories in the absence of peace. The speech contained the major themes that were later incorporated into United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 in November: political and territorial integrity for the nations of the area; the right of innocent maritime passage (*e.g.*, through the Suez Canal); limitation of the arms race in the Middle East; a just settlement of the Palestinian refugee issue; and the right to national life.[12]

Dr. William Quandt, an experienced analyst of US Middle East policy, has argued that the US position with regard to pullout of Israeli forces from the occupied territories changed between June and November 1967, when UN Security Council Resolution 242 was passed. Initially the United States was

10. Quandt, William B., *Decade of Decisions: American Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1967-76*, Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1977, p.63.
11. *Ibid.*, p.64.
12. *Ibid.*, p.64.

prepared to back a Latin American resolution calling on Israel to withdraw "all its forces from all territories occupied by it as a result of the recent conflict."[13] The US position was influenced both by actions taken by Israel (*e.g.*, annexation of Jerusalem at the end of June) and by the hardening Arab political line at the fall Arab summit conference in Khartoum in the form of the "three no's:" (no recognition of Israel, no peace treaty with Israel, and no negotiations with Israel). Promised subsidies for the states that had suffered loss of territory to Israel helped insure unanimous Arab endorsement of this position; Saudi Arabia, Libya, and Kuwait pledged $112 million per year in budgetary payments to Jordan until the West Bank was recovered.[14]

Building a Foundation for Peace

UN Security Council Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967 became the basis on which the Middle East peace process has been conducted by the international community ever since. The British representative, Lord Caradon, was presiding over the Security Council at the time and is given credit for being the principal author of the resolution. The document established a broad framework for peace in the Middle East, yet critical portions contained "constructive ambiguity" that may have reflected the political maximum attainable at the time but sowed seeds of contention that have complicated the peace process.

The West Bank is a major element in the Resolution 242 controversy. The preamble to the resolution cited "the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war,"[15] which would appear to rule out Israeli retention of the West Bank since the injunction was intended to apply to all the substantive sections of the resolution. By the time of the passage of

13. Quoted in Quandt, *op. cit.*, p.65.
14. Stookey, *op. cit.*, p.164.
15. Quoted in *The Search for Peace in the Middle East: Documents and Statements, 1967-79*, Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress/Congressional Research Service, 1980, p.93.

the resolution by unanimous vote of the Security Council, the United States had shrunk its own commitment on Israeli withdrawal to the resolution's call for "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict,"[16] which when linked with a reference in the next section to the right of every state in the area to live "within secure and recognized boundaries"[17] could be argued to require less than full Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank. (Lord Caradon has addressed the question of the intent of the withdrawal language in speeches and writings since 1967, and he is emphatic in his assertion that the preambular language about "the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war" means exactly that.)

Another section of Resolution 242 that has generated controversy is its implied reference to the Palestinians only in the context of a "just settlement of the refugee problem."[18] Ever since the PLO began to build strength in the years following the 1967 war, the principal reason given by Palestinians for refusing to accept the terms of the resolution has been its apparent exclusion of the Palestinians as a party to the conflict, and efforts to obtain PLO endorsement of the resolution with qualifications have been unsuccessful. Attempts to create a substitute or expanded Resolution 242 have not gone forward for fear of undermining the one generally accepted basis for the peace process.

The June War strained relations between the United States and Jordan. King Hussein publicly accused the United States and Great Britain of taking part in the Israeli attacks, and US military aid to Jordan was halted for the next three years. Jordan did endorse Resolution 242, however, encouraged by UN Ambassador Arthur Goldberg's assurances that the United States was committed to helping achieve the return of the West Bank to Jordan, with minor border adjustments, as well as helping Jordan obtain a political role in Jerusalem

16. *Ibid.*, p.93.
17. *Ibid.*, p.93.
18. *Ibid.*, p.93.

should it remain under Israeli control.[19] Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger has observed in his memoirs apropos of this assurance that "since there were no negotiations going on, the promise was meaningless."[20]

Arms talks were held in January 1968 between President Johnson and Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, prior to which there was internal Administration debate over using Israel's desire to obtain F-4 Phantom jets as leverage to force its full withdrawal from the West Bank in order, as Dr. Quandt has described, "to reverse Israel's growing appetite for territory."[21] This proposal was rejected, however, and the sale of 50 F-4s and 100 A-4s was approved in the fall.

Evenhandedness Makes an Appearance

President Nixon entered office determined to play an activist role in the Middle East peace process. Prior to his inauguration he had sent former Pennsylvania Governor William Scranton to the Middle East to report back with recommendations for US Middle East policy. Upon his return, Governor Scranton indicated US intention to pursue an "evenhanded" policy toward the region, which some in the United States regarded as a code word for lessening US support for Israel. The uproar that followed did not deter the new Administration, which set its basic approach to the Middle East problem in a meeting of the National Security Council within two weeks of the inauguration in January 1969.

Israeli withdrawal and the nature of the peace process were to be the most important elements of the new policy. The West Bank was to be returned to King Hussein "with only minor border changes." Jerusalem was to remain "uni-

19. Stephens, Robert, "Jordan and the Powers," in Seale, Patrick, ed., *The Shaping of an Arab Statesman: Abd al-Hamid Sharaf and the Modern Arab World*, London: Quartet Books, 1983, p.26.
20. Quoted in Stephens, *op. cit.*, p.54.
21. Quandt, *op. cit.*, p.67. The principal source for the summary of U.S. policy toward the West Bank in the period 1968-1976 is Quandt's *Decade of Decisions*, unless otherwise indicated.

fied," but Jordan was to have a "civilian and religious role" in its affairs. Participation of the Soviet Union in the peace process was to be included if it proved possible to identify areas of common ground.

King Hussein, concerned about the lack of progress in implementation of Resolution 242, visited the United States for talks in April 1969. In a speech before the National Press Club on April 10 that had President Nasser's blessing, he told the audience that both Jordan and Egypt were prepared to end the state of belligerency with Israel, commit themselves to respect for the rights of all states in the Middle East, guarantee freedom of navigation, and work for a just settlement of the refugee question—in return for Israeli withdrawal from all territories occupied in 1967.[22] The Administration was encouraged by this and other indications of Jordanian-Egyptian willingness to go against Syrian wishes if necessary (Syria not having accepted Resolution 242 and being opposed to a negotiated settlement of the Arab-Israel issue).

The Rogers Plan

The Administration also developed a "parallel" plan dealing with the West Bank that it was hoped would strengthen the hand of King Hussein at the upcoming Arab summit meeting on December 19, 1968. In discussing the issue of Israeli troop withdrawal in a public presentation on December 9, Secretary Rogers said, "...any changes in the preexisting [armistice] lines should not reflect the weight of conquest and should be confined to insubstantial alterations required for mutual security. We do not support expansionism."[23] So that there might be no doubt about the US position, the Rogers speech made repeated references to US support for the "nonacquisition of territory by war," the language used in the preamble of Resolution 242.

22. *Ibid.*, pp.82-83.
23. Quoted in *Documents and Statements, op. cit.*, p.296.

The speech also made special reference to the need to provide a just settlement of the (Palestine) refugee problem, but the terms of reference were limited to humanitarian and educational considerations rather than the politicized Palestinian role symbolized by the PLO. Jerusalem was to remain "unified" (an Israeli term adopted after the seizure and annexation of East Jerusalem in 1967), but the text called for "roles for both Israel and Jordan in the civic, economic, and religious life of the city."[24] King Hussein was reportedly pleased with the substance of the Rogers Plan although nothing came of it for Jordan. Henry Kissinger observed in his memoirs, "It was a misfortune that the strength of Hussein's bargaining position did not match his moderation and that his available options were not equal to his good will. He thus had the capacity neither for independent action nor for blackmail, which are the stuff of Middle East politics."[25]

The Palestinian Challenge

Ever since the June 1967 war the Palestinian movement had been growing in strength and popularity in the Arab World. Presenting itself as a people's liberation movement utilizing armed struggle as the vehicle to liberate Palestine, the PLO grew more bold in challenging Jordanian authority over Palestinian actions. Although the PLO Chairman, Yasir Arafat, wanted to avoid a confrontation with King Hussein because it would divert attention from the main task, his hand was forced by more radical groups who argued that liberation of Palestine must be preceded by "liberation" of conservative Arab regimes.

The gauntlet was thrown down in front of King Hussein when the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) engineered the summer 1970 hijacking of three foreign airliners to a deserted landing field in Jordan, where they were held with their passengers as hostages. The PFLP de-

24. *Ibid.*, pp.296-297.
25. Quoted in Stephens, *op. cit.*, p.126.

manded release of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails in exchange for the passengers' release, but most observers regarded King Hussein as the target of the intended humiliation, as well as the hope that Iraqi troops stationed in eastern Jordan would participate in overthrowing the monarchy.

King Hussein made a calculated, low-key response to the commando challenges during the spring and summer, not wishing to create more hostility to himself and more support for the commandos among East Bank Jordanians of Palestinian origin, but the hijackings were the last straw.

President Nixon and his National Security Affairs Advisor, Henry Kissinger, were concerned about the impact of the internal situation in Jordan on regional stability. To provide evidence of support for the King at a time of great stress, the Administration made a number of visible responses, including putting the 82nd Airborne on "semi-alert" at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, flying C-130s from Europe to Turkey for possible evacuation of Americans from Amman, and moving ships of the Sixth Fleet into the eastern Mediterranean. Following receipt of word that King Hussein was going to move against the commandos, President Nixon told a group of Chicago newspaper editors of US readiness to intervene should Syria or Iraq become involved. Nixon described King Hussein's survival as essential for the Middle East peace process.

The next eight days were critical for Jordan. Syria launched an armored probe with tanks hastily painted over with Palestinian markings. King Hussein asked US Ambassador L.Dean Brown for outside assistance against a Syrian invasion. By this time Nixon and Kissinger were running US Middle East policy from the White House, and in addition to preparing US units they were also lining up possible Israeli intervention in light of the proximity of Israeli air and armored capabilities to the potential scene of fighting.

After a tension-filled period that brought a blunt warning by the United States to the Soviet Union for transmittal to the

Syrians, King Hussein launched his small air force against the invading Syrians, the tanks were called back, and the crisis was over.[26] A ceasefire was arranged by President Nasser, who called King Hussein and the commando leaders to Cairo. Shortly after saying goodbye to his visitors, Nasser suffered what proved to be a fatal heart attack. By the middle of 1971 King Hussein had eliminated the commando presence in Jordan, driving the remaining fighters out of the Ajlun area, most of them eventually regrouping in Lebanon.

The Jordanian crisis put US Middle East policy firmly in the White House under the joint control of Nixon and Kissinger, who regarded the successful resolution of the Jordanian crisis of September 1970 as vindication of their strategic approach to Middle East issues, mingling willingness to use military power with exclusion of the Soviets and close coordination with the Israelis. One outcome of the crisis was reinstatement of substantial US military assistance to Jordan suspended since the 1967 war.

The conclusion of the Jordan crisis bred complacency, however, and underestimation of the significance of local political considerations in the Middle East as opposed to East-West considerations. The result was that for the better part of the next two years arms transfers and closer ties with Israel took first place, and little attention was paid to other issues in the region, including the growing power of the oil producers and Egyptian frustration at the lack of movement in the peace process.[27]

Oil Enters the Picture

King Hussein visited the United States in February 1973, and both Nixon and Kissinger showed interest in his goal to recover the West Bank despite a general lack of enthusiasm for the Kings's "United Arab Kingdom" proposal of the

26. Nyrop, Richard F. *et al.*, *Area Handbook for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1974, p.170.
27. Quandt, *op. cit.*, p.126.

previous year.[28] Growing Saudi uneasiness about the paralysis of diplomatic movement in the Middle East caused King Faisal to send his oil minister to Washington in the spring with the message that in the event of another Middle East conflict involving Israel it might become impossible for the Saudis not to utilize the "oil weapon" (*i.e.*, oil as a source of political leverage on the West). The climate in Washington was such, however, that the message was given little attention and attributed to Arab hyperbole. The summer was enlivened by another attempt at Soviet-US agreement on principles, this time rejected by the Americans. On October 6, Egyptian troops crossed the Suez Canal, overrunning Israeli positions and changing the political face of the Middle East.

The 1973 war and Arab oil embargo had a dramatic effect on US attitudes toward the Middle East. Assumptions that a strong Israel could serve as the region's "policeman," that the Arabs were incapable of decisive or surprise military action, and that they would never employ the "oil weapon" were swept away. The war galvanized Washington into action, and Henry Kissinger, recently elevated from National Security Affairs Advisor to Secretary of State, was the principal architect of the new American strategy.

Jordan Offstage

Once again, however, the focus was on the Egyptian-Israeli front. Jordan was not a major participant in the fighting, although it did send a contingent of troops to Syria. The emphasis in the postwar diplomacy was on disengagement of the forces of the two principal Arab actors, Egypt and Syria, and Israel, with the Jordanian role to follow. Kissinger flew to Jordan in November to urge King Hussein to participate in the peace talks, but at this point Kissinger's principal interest was elsewhere. Jordan took part in the brief Geneva Conference in December under joint US-Soviet chairmanship, which recessed almost immediately after being convened.

28. *Ibid.*, p.154.

Kissinger visited Amman in January 1974, following completion of the Egyptian-Israeli disengagement agreement, but Kissinger's next target was a Syrian-Israeli disengagement, and Jordan would have to wait its turn. As Dr. Quandt has pointed out, it was impossible to arrange a Jordanian-Israeli troop disengagement agreement since the two armies were not engaged. Kissinger indicated Israel's unwillingness to withdraw from the Jordan River, preferring that Jordan establish "administrative responsibility" over populated areas of the West Bank without an Israeli withdrawal. King Hussein insisted on a territorial pullback by Israel of at least 8-12 kilometers from the river in order to demonstrate that Jordan had obtained territorial concessions as Egypt had and Syria soon would. Much of Kissinger's interest focused on blocking PLO progress, however, since it was gaining in influence, particularly among the Arab states.

Kissinger and King Hussein met again in March 1974. The previous month Arab leaders meeting in Algiers had endorsed the creation of a Palestinian state under Yasir Arafat. Kissinger assured the King that the United States would not recognize a Palestinian government-in-exile should one be created. The King said that it would be necessary for Jordan to recover all of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and that if Israel were unwilling to withdraw, it might be better if Jordan stepped aside and let Israel deal with the PLO. King Hussein followed up with a visit to Washington in mid-March and pressed for an increase in aid, which was forthcoming.

Jordan's impatience with the lack of movement on the West Bank issue and the lack of US attention to Jordan's problems was increased by the rise in PLO influence as a rival to Jordan in speaking on behalf of the Palestinians in the West Bank. Jordan began to replace the former "special link" with the United States by diversifying its international contacts, including purchase of military equipment. Mirage aircraft were obtained from France, and foreign trade was

increased with Western Europe, the Soviet Union, and China; India became the principal purchaser of Jordanian phosphate, the country's largest single export item.[29]

The Nixon Administration was being engulfed by the Watergate controversy in 1974, and Nixon made a dramatic visit to the Middle East in June to divert attention at home and to remind Americans of his skill in foreign affairs. While in Amman Nixon invited King Hussein to visit Washington in late July, but by the time the King arrived in Washington later in 1974, Nixon had resigned and Gerald Ford was President.

In Washington King Hussein was assured of the support of the Administration for an Israeli-Jordanian agreement, although Israel's rejection of withdrawal from the Jordan River had been made formal by Israeli Cabinet action in July. The King was unenthusiastic about a token pullback from Jericho or the Nablus area if Israeli troops remained on the Jordan River. Kissinger subsequently visited the Middle East and urged Sadat to support King Hussein at the upcoming Arab summit conference, where a decision was to be made whether the PLO should be substituted for Jordan in matters concerning the Palestinians in the occupied territories. In Amman Kissinger reviewed the situation with King Hussein, who indicated that in the event of such a decision he was not inclined to make a challenge and would build such alliances in the Arab world as were available rather than sign an agreement with Israel for which he would be denounced in the Arab world.[30]

Henry Kissinger's world view played a major role in his handling of the Palestinian question. He took what one scholar has called a "formalistic" attitude toward the international system in which the actors are nation-states.[31] Whatever the PLO and the Palestinians were, they were not a

29. Stephens, *op. cit.*, p.41.
30. Quandt, *op. cit.*, pp.256-257.
31. Polk, William R., *The Arab World*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980, p.357.

nation-state. Additionally, Kissinger was aware that no work-able answers had yet been given to the Palestinian problem, and he had no intention of derailing the peace process by insisting on a frontal approach that was sure to be rejected by Israel. Speaking with a group of Jewish leaders in New York in 1975 about the post-1973 war period, Kissinger said, "I have left the Palestinian question alone in order to work on the frontier questions, hoping eventually to isolate the Palestinians," adding that "Israel must realize it must deal with the Arab governments if it does not want to deal with the Palestinians.[32]

Conflicting Messages about Palestine

The fall of 1975 saw apparently contradictory "messages" being sent by the United States concerning the Palestinian question. First and perhaps most important was an originally secret commitment made by Kissinger to the Israelis in the September Sinai II agreement that the United States "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."[33] The other US action concerning the Palestinians that fall was a remarkable statement by Assistant Secretary of State Harold Saunders to a congressional subcommittee which addressed the change in the Palestinian role from that of refugees needing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinians "collectively [as] a political factor which must be dealt with" if there were to be peace in the Middle East.[34] Kissinger had reviewed the Saunders statement and checked it out with President Ford, but following a negative reaction from the Israelis, Kissinger distanced himself from the statement, which, according to

32. Quoted in *The Middle East*, London, October 1982, p.34.
33. Quoted in *Documents and Statements, op. cit.*, p.15.
34. *Ibid.*, p.305.

Quandt, represented "no real substance" behind the "symbolic shift."[35]

Outside government circles a study group convened by the Brookings Institution published a report in late 1975 that called for a return to the pre-June 5, 1967 Arab-Israel boundary lines "with only such modifications as are mutually accepted." The report also endorsed "Palestinian self-determination subject to Palestinian acceptance of the sovereignty and integrity of Israel within agreed boundaries. This might take the form either of an independent Palestinian state accepting the obligations and commitments of the peace agreements or of a Palestinian entity voluntarily federated with Jordan but exercising extensive political autonomy."[36] What made the Brookings study group of particular interest was that two of its members were Zbigniew Brzezinski, who became National Security Affairs Advisor under President Carter, and William Quandt, who became the NSC Middle East staff specialist under Brzezinski.

35. Quandt. *op. cit.*, pp.277-278.
36. Quoted in *Documents and Statements, op. cit.*, p.156.

THE CARTER-REAGAN YEARS

The election of Jimmy Carter to the Presidency changed the White House approach to world affairs. The Nixon-Kissinger view (carried over into the Ford years) was global and strategic, with emphasis on the Soviet role, while the Carter era placed more emphasis on human rights and moral values as objectives in themselves.

Talk of a Homeland

The first indication of a new Middle East direction from the Carter Administration came in a "town meeting" in which Carter participated in Clinton, Massachusetts on March 16, 1977, two months after his inauguration. In response to a question about the new Administration's intentions regarding the Middle East, Carter listed the familiar topics and then said, "There has to be a homeland provided for the Palestinian refugees who have suffered for many, many years."[1] Use of the term "homeland," which had not appeared in previous US statements on the Palestinian dimension of the Middle East situation, was provocative to American Jews since the Balfour Declaration had used the same term in 1917 to express the British government's support of Zionist objectives in Palestine. Carter followed up with remarks at a May 12 press conference in which he referred to "the degree of independence of the Palestine entity" as one of the Middle East items to be resolved "among the parties involved."[2]

1. Quoted in *The Search for Peace in the Middle East: Documents and Statements, 1967-79*, Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress/Congressional Research Service, 1980, p.311.
2. Tillman, Seth P. *The United States in the Middle East: Interests and Obstacles*, Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1982, p.220.

During 1977 Carter made several efforts to encourage the Palestinians to become involved in the peace process. The new Administration considered itself bound by the Kissinger promise to the Israelis in 1975 concerning the PLO, but in August Carter went to the extent of stating publicly, "If the Palestinians should say, 'We recognize UN Resolution 242 in its entirety, but we think the Palestinians have additional status other than refugees,' that would suit us okay."[3] A month later Carter repeated the offer, adding that with even a qualified acceptance of Resolution 242 in hand, "We would then begin to meet with and to work with the PLO."[4] Even this virtual invitation to the PLO did not bear fruit, however, due to PLO suspicions and Syrian pressure. Then-Crown Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia carried Carter's message personally to Arafat and reported to Carter Arafat's acceptance in principle, but the PLO Executive Committee, meeting in Damascus, vetoed the idea.

One of the major goals of the early Carter Administration was to reconvene the Geneva Conference in order to develop a comprehensive approach toward Middle East peace rather than the "step by step" approach that had been pursued by the Nixon and Ford Administrations. A sticking point was Palestinian representation, since Israel would boycott the meeting if the PLO were present and since it would be impossible to include all concerned parties without the Palestinians. Despite efforts by the Americans and others, it proved impossible to devise a Palestinian representation formula that would meet minimum Arab political requirements without driving the Israelis away.

Another part of the early Carter Administration's efforts was to involve the Soviet Union in the Middle East peace process. After a series of secret exchanges of drafts the US and the Soviet Union published a joint communiqué on October 1, 1977 in their capacities as co-chairmen of the

3. *Ibid.*, p.224.
4. *Ibid.*, p.225.

Geneva Conference. While the text of the communiqué[5] was by and large unexceptionable, inclusion of a reference to "the legitimate rights of the Palestinians" and the fact that it appeared without advance warning after a long period in which US Middle East policy had excluded the USSR made it burst like a bombshell on Washington. Under intense domestic and Israeli pressure the Administration "buried" the communiqué, which was not heard of again.

By November 1977 the Administration, determined to tackle the Middle East issue on a comprehensive basis and to include the Palestinians in the process, had little to show for its troubles. The Israelis were alienated, the PLO was still on the sidelines, the Soviets saw unofficial American pressure nullify an important bilateral policy statement, the Geneva Conference was going nowhere (in part because of Syrian obstruction), and Egypt's Anwar Sadat, who had invested so much in responding to US urging to dissociate himself from the Soviet Union, saw the United States inviting the Soviets back into the process.

Sadat into the Breach

In this time of uncertainty Anwar Sadat accepted an Israeli invitation and went to Jerusalem in November 1977, once again changing the dynamics of the Middle East and focusing attention on Egyptian-Israeli relations rather than on the fate of the occupied West Bank. The Carter Administration, caught off guard by the Sadat trip, made no early comment and then belatedly expressed its endorsement and committed itself to backing the Egyptian-Israeli peace effort that had been set in motion. The trip captured the imagination of the entire world and created an image of Sadat that was almost bigger than life. The trip was the most dramatic single step for Middle East peace that had yet been taken by an Arab leader, and it created an overnight pro-Sadat lobby in the

5. Text in *Documents and Statements, op. cit.*, p.156.

United States that included Congress, the press, the Jewish community, and the general public.

With nothing to show on the Palestinian-Israeli front and with a dramatic new initiative in Egyptian-Israeli relations, Carter changed his attitude toward the PLO. At a press conference December 15 just before seeing a delegation of Arab-Americans at the White House, Carter described the PLO as having been "entirely negative," and within the same month he commented apropos of a Palestinian state that it would be best for peace "if there is not a fairly radical, new independent nation in the heart of the Middle East."[6] At about the same time Dr. Brzezinski gave an interview to *Paris Match* magazine in which he reportedly used the phrase, "Bye Bye, PLO."

Despite the optimism generated by Sadat's Jerusalem visit in November, relations with Begin deteriorated, Sadat complaining about Begin's legalistic, hair-splitting mentality when he was trying to work with broad principles. A meeting at Ismailia, Egypt in late December 1977 did not go well, with the impasse generated by different approaches to the West Bank issue, Sadat insisting on a Palestinian state and Begin insisting on "administrative autonomy." It was agreed to establish committees to work together on key elements in the peace process, however.

Carter made a flying visit to Egypt and Israel in January 1978 to try to find a formula that would permit the peace process to go forward. Since neither the US nor the Israeli government was willing to endorse Palestinian self-determination, Sadat and Carter came up with a formula during their meeting at Aswan "[to] enable the Palestinians to participate in the determination of their own future." Developments during 1978 concerning the West Bank were not promising, however, as Israel and Egypt remained far apart in their prescriptions for the future. Partly in order to demonstrate leadership by a faltering Administration and partly

6. Tillman, *op. cit.*, p.220.

to rescue a failing Middle East peace effort, Carter invited Sadat and Begin to the United States in September 1978 to hammer out a peace settlement.

A Rustic Camp in the Woods

Carter, Sadat, Begin, and their principal advisors met from September 5-17, 1978 at the Presidential retreat, Camp David, near the town of Thurmont in the mountains of Maryland. While Begin spoke on behalf of Israel, Sadat's role was multifaceted. Empowered to negotiate on matters involving Egypt, Sadat at Camp David also negotiated on behalf of the Palestinians in the occupied territories as well as for King Hussein of Jordan, although he had no mandate to do so and had no contact with either of those parties during the talks except for one telephone conversation with King Hussein on an open line with reportedly such a bad connection that little of substance was achieved. Sadat gave Carter a letter at the completion of the Camp David talks stating that Egypt was "prepared to assume the Arab role" with reference to the Palestinian dimension of the accords "following discussion with Jordan and the representatives of the Palestinian people."[7]

The Camp David Accords, a document signed by Carter, Sadat, and Begin at the White House on September 17, 1978 after return to Washington by the participants that day, were composed of two sections, each of which stood alone although both Carter and Sadat regarded them as linked in spirit. One section, straightforward and explicit, dealt with Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Sinai Peninsula in exchange for an Egyptian commitment to sign a peace treaty and establish normal relations with Israel.

The second section of the Camp David Accords dealt in the main with the West Bank, although Gaza was a part of its provisions. In contrast to the clarity and precision of the

7. In *Documents and Statements, op. cit.* All references to the Camp David accords and attendant documents are found on pp.20-29.

Egyptian-Israeli section, the "framework for peace" was full of qualifications and conditions that would have required the best will in the world to implement. The text included references to the United Nations Charter and to UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 "in all their parts" as the operative context for the accords, whose stated objective was to lead to "the conclusion of peace treaties."

"Full autonomy" for the West Bank inhabitants (although, as it turned out, not for their land or water resources) was to be assured by creation of a "self-governing authority" which Begin insisted be an "administrative council" rather than a legislative body. (In the autonomy plan which Begin outlined to the Knesset in December 1977 and which became the basis of the Camp David formula, legislative representation was to be through the votes of the residents for the Jordanian Parliament or, if they obtained Israeli citizenship, the Israeli Knesset). A five-year "transitional period" during which the "final status" of the West Bank would be determined was to begin once the "self-governing authority" was established and inaugurated. Negotiations on the West Bank's final status were to begin no later than the third year of the transitional period.

Jordan was mentioned frequently in the text as being a party to the arrangements to be negotiated, along with "the representatives of the Palestinians, Egypt, and Israel," all of whom were entitled to a veto. A peace treaty was to be negotiated between Jordan and Israel by the end of the transitional period, facilitated by a committee made up of Jordanian, Israeli, and West Bank/Gaza representatives.

The anticipated solution "must also recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and their just requirements." The Palestinians would "participate in the determination of their own future" by having "representatives of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza" involved in negotiations on the final status of these occupied territories along with Israel and Jordan and by their involvement with the self-

governing authority. The self-governing authority would also participate in all discussions pertaining to the return to the West Bank of residents displaced in 1967.

On the issue of the Israeli presence in the West Bank, the accords stated that "the Israeli military government and its civilian administration will be withdrawn" once a "freely-elected" self-governing authority had been created. As part of the interim discussion process "a withdrawal of Israeli armed forces will take place and there will be a redeployment of the remaining Israeli security forces into specified security locations."

The Camp David Accords made no mention of Jerusalem or of Israeli settlements in the West Bank. Jerusalem was addressed in separate letters to Carter from Sadat and Begin stating the respective countries' positions. The future of the West Bank settlements became a subject of recrimination between Begin on the one hand and Carter and Sadat on the other. Carter has stated in his memoirs that he was "misled" by Begin since he understood that Begin's commitment to a moratorium on settlements was to cover the entire negotiating period, whereas Begin maintained, and stated publicly immediately after Camp David, that he had committed himself only for a three-month period preceding negotiations on the self-governing authority.

The Arabs Withhold Applause

It was a shock to Carter when both Jordan and Saudi Arabia not only rejected the accords but also lined up with the "radical" Arab states to ostracize Sadat and Egypt. King Hussein described the accords as a separate peace between Egypt and Israel and disavowed any "legal or moral commitments" on the part of Jordan to play the role assigned to it since Jordan "played no part in discussing, formulating, or approving" the text. The King was quoted in a spring 1979 *New York Times* article to the effect that the role Jordan was expected to play in the West Bank would mean "safeguard-

ing the security of the occupying forces against the people under occupation."[8]

The Carter Administration went to work to defend and explain the Camp David Accords, but the lines were drawn quickly and little headway was made in the Arab world, including the West Bank itself, where the reaction was generally hostile; only a small number of residents would agree to meet with Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Harold Saunders, whose remarks to the group about the potential for self-determination in the accords angered the Israelis. At several meetings in the West Bank following the accords, petitions and denunciations of the accords were drafted, with the theme that the accords were little more than a cover for permanent Israeli occupation. The nationalist mayors who came to office in 1976 were unanimous in their rejection, and Mayor Elias Freij of Bethlehem, one of the more conservative and pro-Jordanian mayors, said that he could see the accords as workable only under conditions that did not then exist.[9]

The Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty signed in March 1979 received a negative Arab political reaction culminating in an Arab League summit meeting in Baghdad, participated in by Jordan and Saudi Arabia, which expelled Egypt from the Arab League. Egypt was soon thereafter expelled from the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the umbrella organization of Islamic states, although it has been reinstated recently.

While the treaty consummated the Egyptian-Israeli portion of the Camp David Accords, it shifted attention to the West Bank/Gaza portion, for which long-time Democratic Party political activist Robert Strauss was picked to be special Middle East Negotiator with responsibility for autonomy talks, to begin one month after the treaty, May 1980 being the target date for completion of the self-governing authority

8. Tillman, *op. cit.*, pp.201,207.
9. *Ibid.*, p.204.

(SGA). Strauss stayed with his assignment until November 1979, when he was replaced by Sol Linowitz.

Despite official optimism, the autonomy talks never went anywhere because the Egyptian and Israeli views on the objective were so far apart. Begin reissued the December 1977 autonomy plan before the talks began, and the Egyptian government stated its position in an official communiqué: "Full Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza is the first step toward independence and a transitional stage before the Palestinian people claim their full right to self-determination."[10] The Sadat government was less vocal about but also supported the concept of a West Bank entity linked to Jordan.

The Carter Administration was active on a number of fronts to produce movement on the Camp David process. The US Ambassador to the United Nations, former Congressman Andrew Young of Georgia, explored ways to involve the Palestinians in the process through an expanded Resolution 242 that would acknowledge their political as well as refugee role. Israeli espionage revealed talks held between Ambassador Young and the PLO UN Representative during Young's tenure as President of the UN Security Council in the summer of 1979, costing him his job because of the apparent violation of the Kissinger prohibition on dealing with the PLO in advance of its accepting 242 and recognizing Israel's right to exist.

Carter reiterated his opposition to an independent Palestinian state, stating in August 1979, "I am against any creation of a separate Palestinian state. I don't think it would be good for the Palestinians. I don't think it would be good for Israel. I don't think it would be good for the Arab neighbors of such a state."[11]

As the autonomy talks stagnated and Israeli settlement activity on the West Bank increased in tempo, there began to

10. *Ibid.*, p.34.
11. In Polk, William R., *The Arab World*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980, p.374.

be talk about a "Jordanian option" involving an Israeli-Jordanian negotiation based on the Resolution 242 concept of territory for peace. This could have led at best to repartition of the West Bank since Israeli policy had moved well to the right of the Allon Plan, which called for Israeli retention of territory along the western side of the Jordan River, an idea which King Hussein had already indicated was unacceptable. The King repeatedly and forcefully rejected the so-called Jordanian Option.

Unhappiness over Settlements

Opposition to Israel's settlements in the occupied territories was one subject on which the Carter Administration was consistent and vocal. Carter was inaugurated just a few months prior to Begin's election in the summer of 1977 and had witnessed the dramatic upturn in land expropriation and settlement construction. In the period following the 1967 war the occupation and changes in the status of Jerusalem had been the focal points of US attention. Settlements did not become a major political issue until the 1970s, when their numbers and placement became more contentious. In a March 1976 speech, UN Ambassador William Scranton denounced Israeli settlements as "illegal" and an "obstacle to the success...of negotiations."[12] The next several years saw a steady stream of statements critical of the settlements, but no concrete action was ever taken by the Administration to put its words into action.

The Carter Administration criticized the settlements on the same two grounds because they appeared to prejudge long-term Israeli intentions with regard to the occupied territories. The impact of this policy was weakened, however, by periodic assurances by the Administration that it would "never" attempt to use aid to Israel as "leverage" in bringing

12. Laipson, Ellen, "Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territory: Israeli, Arab, and American Perspectives," Washington: Library of Congress/Congressional Research Service, 1983, p.28.

about a change in Israeli policies. The Israeli government, therefore, could move ahead with settlement construction confident that it would be politically cost-free.

Congress, a bulwark of support for Israel's wishes in the US government, was not supine on the issue of settlements although most members expressed unhappiness privately if at all. In October 1979 a Senate motion proposed reducing aid to Israel by $100 million to reflect displeasure at Israel's settlements policy and spring 1978 invasion of Lebanon. The measure was defeated, 78-7.[13] In December 1978 Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.) returned from an official trip to the Middle East on behalf of the Administration and suggested that Congress might be unwilling to continue approving large expenditures for aid to Israel if it persisted in building settlements and denying the Palestinians under occupation full autonomy.[14]

One Senator's Challenge

The most dramatic congressional attempt to link aid to Israel with its settlements program took the form of an amendment to the foreign aid bill offered by Senator Adlai Stevenson III (D-Ill.) in June 1980. The key sentence in the amendment said, "...$150 million shall be withheld from obligation and expenditure until the President finds that Israel has ceased the expansion of its settlements in the West Bank and other occupied territories and has ceased planning for additional settlements in the West Bank and such territories."[15] Stevenson pointed out that Israel, a country with one-tenth of one per cent of the world's population, received almost half of US security assistance worldwide. The gist of Stevenson's argument was that "the United States is subsidizing a settlements policy which undermines the peace process it authored." He concluded that "[Israel] should not be

13. *Ibid.*, p.30.
14. Tillman, *op. cit.*, p.29.
15. *The Congressional Record*, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, June 17, 1980, p.S-7161.

rewarded for defying US interests."[16] In the floor debate every speaker opposed the amendment although more than one indicated personal opposition to settlements; the final vote was 85-7 against.

The Carter Administration caused itself major embarrassment in March 1980 when the United States voted in favor of a UN Security Council resolution condemning settlements, only to have the White House "disavow" the vote the next day. The *ex post facto* explanation dealt with the resolution's references to settlements in East Jerusalem, but a potentially larger factor was the New York presidential primary only a few days away in which Ted Kennedy presented a serious challenge to Carter, and Carter realized that in New York a vote construable as "anti-Israel" could cost him the victory. (As it turned out, he lost the primary as well as giving the impression that the Administration did not know what it was doing).

Nineteen-eighty saw many signs of trouble in the Middle East and a President little prepared to deal with it. In addition to the upcoming presidential election, Carter was preoccupied by the seizure of American hostages in Tehran the previous November. Syria signed a 20-year friendship treaty with the Soviet Union; Iraq invaded Iran, with Jordan associating itself publicly with Iraq; Israel's Knesset annexed East Jerusalem; Sadat suspended the autonomy talks in response; and the PLO and Syria refused to attend the Arab Summit meeting held in Amman. The defeat of Jimmy Carter in November signaled another kind of change as Ronald Reagan, a man with a political philosophy dramatically different from Carter's, prepared to enter the White House.

A Change at the Helm

The Reagan Administration was determined to set US foreign policy on a plane that emphasized the primacy of the

16. *Ibid.*, p.S-7162.

strategic relationship with the Soviet Union and grouped other issues accordingly. The view of the new group of advisors was that the Carter Administration had been remiss in elevating specific issues (*e.g.*, human rights, the Middle East) without reference to their impact on the US-Soviet relationship.

While professing support for the Camp David process, the new Administration's first major effort in the Middle East was an attempt to create a "strategic consensus" among nations in the region in opposition to Soviet adventurism. Egypt, Israel, and Saudi Arabia were to be the chosen instruments of this policy, and the expectation was that their political differences could be submerged in an alliance based on their mutual concern about Soviet intrusion into the Middle East. This policy proved a failure because it did not give proper weight to how the nations involved felt about each other. Secretary of State Alexander Haig was to learn to his dismay that Jordan and Saudi Arabia, while understandably concerned about the Soviet Union, regarded Israel as a greater danger despite the recent Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan.

Much of 1981 was taken up with this practical lesson although the introduction of Soviet SAM missiles into Syria in April, the Israeli raid on the Iraqi nuclear reactor in June, the congressional fight over sale of AWACS aircraft to Saudi Arabia in the summer and fall, and Israel's annexation of the Golan Heights in December gave hints of things to come.[17]

The stunning Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982 focused attention on Lebanon and pushed the West Bank off the news pages. The war, which dramatically altered the cast of characters and power relationships in the Middle East, also galvanized the Reagan Administration into action and provided the backdrop against which Secretary of State George

17. Rubin, Barry, "U.S. Policy on the Middle East Since Camp David," in Freedman, Robert O., ed., *The Middle East Since Camp David*, Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1984, p.72.

Shultz developed what came to be President Reagan's Middle East initiative.

Reagan Takes Center Stage

The plan, announced in the form of a speech by President Reagan from the White House on September 1, 1982, was the most far-reaching Presidential effort on the Middle East since Camp David. The most significant aspect of the plan was that it moved from the Carter Administration's insistence on functioning as an "honest broker" between the major parties in the Middle East conflict to spelling out what the Reagan Administration thought constituted a fair and achievable political/territorial result in the region. In this respect the Reagan initiative reflected kinship to the Venice Declaration of the European Economic Community (EEC) of June 1980, which defined its view of an equitable Middle East settlement in territorial and political terms.

In contrast to the daily preoccupation with the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the Reagan initiative addressed itself primarily to the Palestinian-Israeli relationship, with the West Bank a major focus. The plan said that lasting peace could be based neither on Israeli sovereignty nor on an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank, calling instead for "self-government by the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza in association with Jordan."[18] Concerning settlements, the language was explicit:

> The United States will not support the use of any additional land for the purpose of settlements during the transitional period. Indeed, the immediate adoption of a settlements freeze by Israel, more than any other action, could create the confidence for wider participation in those talks. Further settlement activity is in no way necessary for the security of

18. In Kreczko, Alan J., "Support Reagan's Initiative," *Foreign Policy*, #49, Winter 1982/83, p.144.

Israel and only diminishes the confidence of the Arabs that a final outcome can be freely and fairly negotiated. [19]

In addition to the text of the initiative, on the eve of the public address the Reagan Administration circulated what it called "talking points" to the Middle Eastern states involved. The paper expressed a commitment to "real authority for the West Bankers over themselves, the land and its resources, subject to safeguards on water."[20] While it endorsed the right of participation by East Jerusalem Arab residents in the election for the West Bank self-governing authority, it also supported the right of Jews to live in the West Bank subject to the authority of whatever local government might emerge.[21]

The reaction in the Middle East to the Reagan Initiative was mixed. Prime Minister Begin denounced the plan within a day of its announcement, and the Israeli government expressed anger at the extent to which King Hussein was consulted and encouraged prior to September 1, while Israel maintained that it had little advance information. King Hussein's support for the plan was regarded as critical by the Administration, and for this reason Assistant Secretary of State Nicholas Veliotes, former Ambassador to Jordan, made several trips to Amman before September 1 to determine the King's position and to urge his involvement.

King Hussein and the PLO's Yasir Arafat both were cautiously supportive, praising the plan's "positive elements," while other elements in the PLO denounced it for proposing "association" between the West Bank and Jordan following Israeli withdrawal. The Arab Summit conference at Fez, Morocco in October denied King Hussein a mandate to negotiate on behalf of the West Bank and approved a

19. In Laipson, *op. cit.*, pp.31-32.
20. *The Middle East* (London), Ocyober 1982, p.15.
21. Kreczko, *op. cit.*, p.148.

watered-down version of Prince Fahd's 1981 Plan* which endorsed a Palestinian state and security for all states in the region to be guaranteed by the UN Security Council, a qualification that had not been in the earlier version of the Fahd Plan. The Fez communiqué did not even refer to the Reagan Plan, disappointing many in the Administration who had hoped for a positive response from the Arabs to the most forthright US statement to date.

Things Fly Apart

The Administration had anticipated a negative Israeli response to the Reagan plan and was counting on a positive reaction from King Hussein in the form of discussions with Yasir Arafat which would authorize the King to enter into peace talks on behalf of Jordan and the PLO regarding the future of the West Bank. King Hussein and Arafat did hold talks, but Arafat was unable to obtain support from his own organization, which was under heavy Syrian pressure to block Jordan's efforts, and King Hussein announced the collapse of the talks in April 1983. Because the Administration regarded a positive Jordanian-Palestinian response as the sine qua non for progress in implementing the plan, the King's decision in April 1983 not to proceed without a mandate from the PLO meant the end of the effort which Israel had rejected outright seven months previously.

President Reagan, who had come into office with the view that Israeli settlements in the occupied territories were "not illegal," endorsed a tough position in the September 1, 1982 Middle East plan. In the period following announcement of the plan, there were several "harsh" exchanges between the two governments over new Israeli settlement announcements,

*In August 1981 Saudi Arabian Crown Prince (now King) Fahd proposed an eight-point Middle East peace plan whose seventh point stated the right of all states in the Middle East to live in peace. Disagreement over this item because of its implied acceptance of Israel broke up the 1981 Fez Arab summit meeting soon after publication of the plan. A year later the diluted text was approved at the Fez Arab summit meeting.

but at the same time Reagan made it clear that aid to Israel would not be employed as a sanction in the event that settlements continued.[22] Both Egypt's President Mubarak and King Hussein had urged US insistence on a settlements freeze; the King in particular viewed action on this topic as a key indicator of US intentions.

Secretary of State Shultz, on the eve of his departure for a Middle East trip in April 1983, expressed the view that Jewish settlers should be permitted to remain in place following Israeli withdrawal provided they accepted the political jurisdiction that was eventually established. A month later President Reagan said that he didn't consider the settlements an obstacle to peace, and in August the United States vetoed a UN Security Council resolution condemning settlements and calling for their dismantling. In a speech explaining the US position, the Deputy US Representative at the United Nations said that the United States regarded Israeli settlement activity as "an obstacle to a fair and lasting settlement," but he criticized the resolution's description of settlements as illegal and its call for their dismantling. A month later President Reagan reiterated the "obstacle to peace" argument and said that outstanding issues of contention could be addressed only in the context of "direct negotiations between the parties to the conflict."[23]

Uncle Sam on the West Bank

US-funded activities assisting Palestinians in the West Bank have generated friction between the Israeli and US governments in recent months because of Israeli attempts to gain control over the program and expressions of concern by the Administration about the "quality of life" of the Palestinians under occupation. The debate has been sustained by publication of a recent analysis by former Jerusalem Deputy Mayor Meron Benvenisti of AID-funded projects in the West

22. Laipson, *op. cit.*, p.32.
23. *Ibid.*, pp.33-34.

Bank and Gaza Strip from 1977-83. Under Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger told a public audience in January 1984:

> I cannot speak to you today about the Palestinian problem without mentioning the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza. Their well-being and desire for a greater voice in determining their own destiny must be another issue of moral concern for us, even as we continue to seek a negotiated solution to the status of the occupied territories. If the acceptance by the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza of a peaceful future is to be nurtured, they must be given a stake in that future by greater opportunities for economic development, fairer administrative practices, and greater concern for the quality of their life.[24]

The AID-funded West Bank/Gaza program has been regarded by the Israeli government as a source of funds that permits it to spend its monies elsewhere as well as a thorn in its side because of the public image of the program as having the blessing of the US government for activities intended to strengthen institutional and other capabilities of the population under occupation. From the Israeli point of view the two aspects of the program can be synthesized if Israeli control can be achieved. While increasing strictures are being applied, the US private voluntary organizations (PVOs) channeling the funds are conscious of their obligation to maintain the congressionally-mandated, bilateral, American-Palestinian character of the program and their institutional integrity as well.

The Benvenisti study has identified the potential contradiction in the meaning of the phrase "quality of life:" "It may be interpreted as an attempt to help create a viable and independent Palestinian sector, through the development of infrastructure, expansion of a Palestinian resource base, and

24. In Benvenisti, Meron, "U.S. Government Funded Projects in the West Bank and Gaza (1977-1983) (Palestinian Sector)," Jerusalem: West Bank Data Base Project, 1984, p.1.

income earning enterprises...[thus] conforming with stated US positions...[The phrase]may [also] be interpreted as an admission of failure to achieve a comprehensive solution to the problem, and a sign that the US is abandoning the attempt to terminate Israeli dominion over the territories."[25]

The study argues that the Israeli policy of permitting individual prosperity in the West Bank while stunting community development carries potential for making the AID-supported program a "pacification" program used to reward "cooperative" institutions and communities. PVOs active in the West Bank have documented Israeli attempts to steer assistance toward cooperative groups (*e.g.*, the Village Leagues) and away from those resisting Israeli pressures (*e.g.*, Bir Zeit University). A recent Department of State response to a press inquiry on the Benvenisti report said, "In general terms, we share the concern that Israel has not been forthcoming in allowing [economic development] activities to go forward."[26] Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens flew to London in mid-June 1984 to complain to Secretary of State Shultz about the US sale of "Stinger" missiles to Saudi Arabia and in turn was told by Shultz that Israel must change its policy of blocking economic development projects in the West Bank funded by the United States.[27]

25. *Ibid.*, pp.1-2.
26. *Washington Post*, April 12, 1984.
27. *Newsweek*, June 18, 1984.

THE EUROPEAN CONNECTION

Anglo-French Rivalries

The vehicle for most European Middle East peace efforts since 1973 has been the European Economic Community (EEC), dominated by France and Great Britain, the two European countries traditionally most involved in Middle Eastern affairs. France and Great Britain have been rivals for influence in the Middle East for several centuries, and mutual suspicions about the other's intentions have tended to reduce cooperation to this day.

France had the principal European position in the affairs of Syria and Lebanon from the end of World War I until the 1956 war, first through the mandate for those areas and later by cultural affinity. Following World War II the principal French concern in the Arabic-speaking world was Algeria, which had been under French control since 1830. Arab support for the Algerian rebels following the start of the Algerian revolution in 1954 was led by Egyptian President Nasser, who earned French enmity that was to become the principal motivation for French participation in the 1956 invasion of Suez. Once the Algerian war was ended with the Evian Agreements in 1962, French relations with the Arab world improved despite massive, partly secret, French support for Israel's military buildup, including its nuclear reactor program.

The 1967 war was a turning point for French Middle East policy. President DeGaulle warned the nations of the region in the spring of 1967 that France would boycott arms transfers to any aggressor nation. When Israel launched the 1967 war, this policy was put into effect, and France shifted to a

pro-Arab policy that has lasted more or less to this day, although President Francois Mitterrand has taken steps to improve the tenor of the Franco-Israeli relationship.

Great Britain had a virtual monopoly on foreign influence in the West Bank until 1956, although relations with the United States became strained as the mandate drew to a close after World War II and American political support for a Jewish state clashed with British efforts to protect Palestinian interests or at least to effect an orderly withdrawal. British anger at President Nasser's outspoken Arab nationalism, with its strongly anti-European content, was a factor in the British decision to participate in the invasion of Suez in 1956 following Egyptian nationalization of the canal, which had been British controlled since the late 19th century.

The Anglo-Jordanian treaty of 1948, annulled by the nationalist government of Jordan in 1957, had permitted Great Britain special privileges in Jordan, and British subsidies plus underwriting of the cost of maintaining the Jordan Legion also provided political influence. A major British effort to enroll Jordan in the Baghdad Pact in the fall of 1955 was blocked by public outcry and cabinet opposition in Amman. The last direct British intervention in Jordanian affairs was when paratroopers were sent to Jordan in the summer of 1958 at the time of the overthrow of the Hashemite regime in Iraq; American Marines went to Lebanon at the same time.

Europe Feels a Chill

The October 1973 war and embargo by Arab oil producers put into effect at the time of the US military resupply airlift to Israel had a shock effect on Western Europe even though only one EEC nation, the Netherlands, was included along with the United States as an "unfriendly" state in the judgment of OAPEC (Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries), which instituted and managed the boycott. The result of these events was heightened European interest in the Arab-Israeli conflict and a growing commitment on the

part of the EEC to a political role for the Palestinians in the peace process.

The EEC as an institution was not intended to address political topics, but since the Treaty of Rome in 1957 that launched the EEC there had been growing interest in finding a way to incorporate political issues of concern to the members. EPC (European Political Cooperation) began in 1970 with agreement that there should be four annual meetings of the EEC foreign ministers other than the periodic "summit" meetings. The two topics identified as having priority were the Middle East and what became the CSCE (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), which was intended not to include the Middle East.

A report of the EEC Political Committee in May 1971 on the Middle East generated mixed reactions at home and criticism from the United States and Israel in its call for Israeli withdrawal, with minor border adjustments, from "the" territories occupied in 1967. Criticisms included the view that Europe lacked the political strength to make a difference in the Middle East and that European reliance on Middle Eastern oil implied a pro-Arab position.[1]

The events at the time of the October 1973 war also defined and enlarged differences between Europe and the United States over the Middle East. The Europeans were not consulted about the worldwide nuclear alert by the United States at the end of the war, saw themselves excluded by the United States and the Soviet Union from a role in the Geneva Conference (limited to the two co-sponsors and the regional states involved), and heard Henry Kissinger distinguish between US "global" and European "regional" interests.[2]

The first formal EEC reaction to the October War and the oil embargo was a statement issued at a meeting of the

1. Steinbach, Udo, "The European Community and the United States in the Arab World—Political Competition or Partnership?," in Shaked, Haim, and Rabinovich, Itamar, eds., *The United States and the Middle East: Perceptions and Policies*, New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1980, p.124.
2. Steinbach, *op. cit.*, p.125.

foreign ministers in Brussels on November 6, 1973 listing four requirements for peace in the Middle East: the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, an end to the Israeli occupation, security for all the states of the Middle East, and acknowledgement of the "legitimate rights" of the Palestinians. The Arab League, meeting in Algiers later that month, made a favorable response to the EEC statement and cited the linkages between the Arab world and Europe by way of "affinities of civilization and...vital interests."[3]

The Arabs Pay a Call

The EEC meeting of heads of state and government in Copenhagen in December 1973 had uninvited visitors in the form of four Arab ministers who were allowed to address the group and spoke of interest by the Arabs in cooperating with Europe on a wide variety of issues. The final communiqué of the meeting took the intervention into sympathetic account and indicated a role for the EEC "in the search for and in the guaranteeing of a settlement" in the Middle East.[4] The EEC also decided to establish a "Euro-Arab Dialogue" to further European-Arab cooperation, although as a result of pressure from Secretary Kissinger the EEC agreed to exclude discussion of oil and the Arab-Israel conflict. The "European Coordinating Group" was established as the official EPC-EEC negotiating partner with the Arabs.[5]

The widening split between the United States and Western Europe over the Middle East issue was perhaps inevitable. In many ways it represented a reversal of roles from the 1940s and 1950s, when Europe was the colonial, interventionist power in the Middle East and the United States was the critic. Now it seemed that the United States had become the status quo power in the region backing the dominant state, Israel, and opposing self-determination for the Palestinians while

3. Quoted in Richardson, John P., "Europe and the Arabs: A Developing Relationship," *Link* (New York), January-March 1981, p.6.
4. *Ibid.*, p.6.
5. Steinbach, *op. cit.*, p.131.

Europe was in a much weaker position and seeking political accommodation.

Europe by 1973 found itself with a "double dependency" on Arab suppliers for most of its oil and on the United States for its security against the Soviet Union.[6] From the point of view of many Europeans the continent's need for imported oil must be met even if it upset the United States, which could hardly abandon the defense of Western Europe, even if it didn't like what the Europeans were doing.

Trouble in the Alliance

From the US perspective the adoption by America's European allies of a policy toward the Middle East potentially opposed to that of the United States seemed an act of ingratitude if not folly. Ingratitude could be seen in Europe's breaking ranks with its principal protector on a complex issue which in the long run only the United States could help to resolve. Breaking ranks suggested a "free ride," with Europe secure in the knowledge that its detour would ultimately be forgiven by its patron. Folly could be seen in the potential for European separateness giving a false sense of encouragement to forces in the Arab world unwilling to reach accommodation with Israel, delaying the peace process and perhaps encouraging the radicals to hold out in the expectation that the West would eventually come to them rather than the other way around. In such a situation Israel could be demoralized, risking a spectacular outbreak of violence from either side.

The European political stance on the Middle East following the 1973 war also cut across the US Administration's efforts to create a "consumers' cartel" as a counter to OPEC and OAPEC, the oil producer cartels. The intention of Western Europe to find a way to accommodate Arab concerns rather than to confront them jeopardized Kissinger's deter-

6. Garfinkle, Adam M., *Western Europe's Middle East Diplomacy and the United States*, Philadelphia, Pa.: Foreign Policy Research Institute, 1983, p.1.

mination to challenge the producers with consumer solidarity at a time of crisis.

An important if less quantifiable factor in the split between the allies in 1973 had to do with US leadership in the alliance, which had been taken for granted ever since the end of World War II. There was now the spectacle of Western Europe defying US attempts to define how the Western world should react to the events of the fall of 1973; even the challenge eroded the image of US leadership of the "free world." Many Europeans argued that European dependence on the US "nuclear umbrella" did not require European endorsement of whatever Washington decreed. On the contrary, if the Western alliance were to have meaning, it required the willingness of its participants to air differences and to persuade the others.

European leaders maintained that the US approach to the Middle East question was skewed to such an extent that it could be considered balanced only in the special political environment of the United States, which possessed a powerful and effective domestic lobby that kept US Middle East policy responsive to Israel's needs and wishes at all cost. The European argument was that Middle East peace and Europe's energy lifeline to the Middle East could not be assured as long as the marching orders came only from Washington.

Dialogue

The Euro-Arab Dialogue was established in 1974, although from the start the two delegations had objectives that never were resolved and that dogged the discussions. The Europeans were primarily interested in insuring the reliability of oil supplies at reasonable prices and in markets in the Arab world in which to sell goods to pay for the oil. The Arabs were interested in a broad range of subjects, including technology transfer, migratory labor, and protection of investments, but above all in a forum for influence on the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Arab participants involved in the Euro-

Arab Dialogue were candid in the view that the major attraction of the Europeans was their potential influence with the United States and that the Arabs expected the Europeans to exercise that influence if the Dialogue were to succeed.

Official statements by the EEC became more supportive of the Palestinian issue during the 1970s. Although the West German representative at the United Nations in 1974 was the first to call for exercise of the Palestinian right to self-determination (with comparison to the right of self-determination in a divided Germany), most of the European leadership from 1973-80 on Middle East issues came from either France or Great Britain although frequently expressed by a representative of the EEC member state then serving as president of the EEC. A statement on behalf of the EEC at the United Nations in the fall of 1976 expressed Palestinian rights in terms of territory and antedated by a few months President Carter's use of the term "homeland" in his Clinton, Massachusetts speech. A June 1977 EEC communiqué also used the term "homeland" with reference to Palestinian rights.

The EEC reaction to President Sadat's Jerusalem trip in November 1977 was cautious and reiterated the need for a comprehensive peace, citing the June EEC communiqué. EEC and US policies began to diverge significantly at this point, with the respective policy differences defined by the Camp David Accords (1978) for the US and the Venice Declaration (1980) for the EEC. The Europeans resisted efforts by the Carter Administration to utilize the EEC as a channel for financial assistance to Egypt and Israel following the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. For a brief period the US and the EEC worked together at the United Nations in the summer of 1979 to achieve an expanded version of Resolution 242 that would accommodate a political role for the Palestinians, but the US abandoned the effort following Ambassador Young's resignation and Egyptian and Israeli criticism of the proposal. The French and the British continued to work for such a resolution, the French later on in

coordination with the Egyptians after a change in Egyptian policy on the subject.

By early 1980 European leaders felt that the time had come to advance the Middle East process another step, in part because of concern over several aspects of the situation: 1) the growing impression that the Carter Administration could no longer conduct a coherent foreign policy, epitomized by the March 1, 1980 Security Council vote "disavowal;" 2) passing of the May 1980 deadline for installation of the West Bank Self-Governing Authority, with no indication of when if ever it would take place; and 3) general paralysis of US Middle East policy during a presidential election year when both parties court Jewish votes and finances.

Declarations at Venice

The culmination of the European effort was a declaration issued at the EEC summit meeting in Venice, Italy in the second week of June 1980 that constituted the most advanced Western position to date on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The statement identified two principles "universally accepted" by the international community: "the right to existence and to security of all the states in the region, including Israel, and justice for all the peoples, which implies the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people." The statement went on to affirm the Palestinians' "right to self-determination" and endorsed PLO "association" with peace negotiations. A separate document affirmed EEC support for the Euro-Arab Dialogue "in all fields" and "the need to develop its political dimension."[7]

The Venice Declaration seemed to inspire none of the parties to whom it was addressed. Prime Minister Begin said, "These proposals...could threaten the existence of Israel and...the future of our people." In the Knesset he denounced Europe for its treatment of the Jews during World War II

7. Richardson, *op. cit.*, p.11.

and publicly thanked the United States for its intention of blocking the EEC initiative.[8] Nor was the PLO response enthusiastic, since the declaration included neither of the PLO's two most important public goals: endorsement of a Palestinian state and of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians. Despite the foregoing, the PLO statement on the Venice Declaration "welcomed" the move and urged the EEC to free itself from "US blackmail." Elsewhere in the Arab world, Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia gave cautious approval.[9]

EEC strategy for advancing the Venice Declaration depended on several events occurring in sequence. One was that Great Britain would take the reins of the EEC for the second half of calendar year 1981, and the activist British Foreign Minister, Lord Carrington, was determined to advance the Middle East peace process as he had done successfully with regard to Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. On other counts, however, things did not turn out as anticipated: 1) Jimmy Carter unexpectedly lost the US Presidential race to Ronald Reagan, an unknown quantity to the Europeans; 2) Francois Mitterrand unexpectedly won the French Presidential election; and 3) Menachem Begin was unexpectedly re-elected in Israel. The confusion sown in EEC Middle East plans by these three events doomed an initiative whose prospects had been marginal at best.

EEC leaders understood that Europe had almost no credibility with Israel because of its apparent pro-Arab "tilt" since 1973. They also understood that because of much greater potential US political influence with the parties to the Middle East conflict, Europe would have to demonstrate its bona fides in order to be taken seriously by the United States. Since influence with Israel was out of the question, a European role had to demonstrate influence with the Arabs. The British strategy, looking to Great Britain's Presidency of the EEC in

8. *Ibid.*, p.12.
9. *Ibid.*, pp.11-12; Garfinkle, *op. cit.*, p.35.

the second half of 1981, was to persuade the PLO to make a public gesture (such as acceptance of Resolution 242) that would show Europe's ability to "deliver" in the Middle East peace game. While the theory was sound, the PLO would have none of it, and British representatives trying to elicit a public statement from the PLO were sent packing.

EEC nations did make several gestures in the Middle East that were well received by the United States, including participation by troops from EEC member states in helping police the Sinai Peninsula following Israel's withdrawal and contributing troops to the multinational force in Beirut separating the sides following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982. Less publicized but important nevertheless has been EEC assistance to West Bank development projects coordinated through EEC member embassies in Amman.

By 1982 the European initiative had come to an embarrassing halt, and the Reagan plan in September helped the EEC by providing Europe with an American effort with which it could associate itself while at the same time maintaining that it had not abandoned the Venice principles. It seemed unlikely that the EEC would launch another independent Middle East initiative unless it was more confident of being able to link means and ends. European leaders serious about the Middle East continued to face a dilemma, however: Europe, while willing, seemed unable to apply leverage on any of the participants in the Middle East conflict, while the United States, potentially able, seemed unwilling to do so if it required taking a tough line with Israel.

THE ARAB CONTEXT

Arab Theory and Practice

The relationship between the West Bank and the Arab world is permanent, long-standing, and affected by political considerations in the Arab world that may have little to do with the needs of the West Bank and its population. At the level of political theory there is a paradox yet to be resolved: the contradiction between the needs of the *umma* (the Arab community as a whole) and the system of nation-states that has emerged, largely since World War II, in every part of the Arab world except pre-1948 Palestine. One Arab scholar has defined the Arab state system as "first and foremost a 'Pan' system" in which the loss of Palestine is "a violation of the principles of the unity and integrity of Arab soil, an affront to the dignity of the Nation."[1]

Although Egypt managed the affairs of the Gaza Strip from 1948-1967 (with a brief interlude during the Israeli occupation in 1956-57), its relationship was that of administrator rather than sovereign. The role of Jordan in the West Bank from 1948-1967 was that of sovereign and has been a factor in Jordan's differences with the Palestinians and, from time to time, with other Arab states. As King Hussein said in an interview with an Arabic-language magazine in 1979:

> Our association with the West Bank was to protect it, and for many years there was parliamentary life there, in which all participated with the greatest freedom and exercised their rights as citizens. Whatever is said about the shortcomings of this experiment, it was the most successful experiment in

1. Khalidi, Walid, "Thinking the Unthinkable: A Sovereign Palestinian State," *Foreign Affairs*, July 1978, pp.695-96.

Arab unity that has ever taken place in the Arab World.[2]

In an interview in March 1974 King Hussein explained:

For us the Palestine question is a question of life or death, a cause of right, an Arab cause which we had the honor to defend and to be soldiers in the great Arab revolution [*i.e.*, during World War I under King Hussein's great-grandfather, Sherif Hussein] which countered Zionist plans aimed at Palestine and then at the Arab nation.[3]

The Palestine problem has shaped the post-World War II foreign policies of the Arab states to a greater extent than any other issue. In addition to the "affront" to the inviolability of Arab territory symbolized by the creation of Israel, it is also regarded as an affront to Islam, whose political precepts do not distinguish between church and state. Because of the high emotional content of the Palestine issue in the Arab world, political leaders have made use of it for their own purposes but at the same time have been forced to appear in the forefront of the fight against Zionism because of the potential for manipulation of the issue by political opponents and/or popular pressure. One writer has pointed out that in societies either politically unstable or fighting against foreign influence, moderation can be equated with treason, and the result is often a "race to militancy" rather than the practice in stable systems of politicians attempting to capture the broad center.[4]

The contest for Arab political control over the West Bank has been waged principally by the Palestinians and by the Hashemite rulers of Jordan, with other Arab states involved. In a sense the struggle between Haj Amin Husseini, the dominant Palestinian political figure of the mandate period, and Emir (later King) Abdullah of Jordan has been trans-

2. Interview of King Hussein, *Al-Hadawith* (Beirut), April 13, 1979, in *Journal of*
3. Interview of King Hussein by Jordanian Television, March 7, 1984, Washington, D.C.: Jordan Information Bureau, 1984.
4. Rubin, Barry, *The Arab States and the Palestine Conflict*, Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1981, p.xv.

ferred in more recent times to one between PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat and King Hussein. The Hashemite claim to the West Bank now rests primarily on the union of the two banks of the Jordan between 1948 and 1967, but it has much deeper roots. King Hussein's reference in the quoted interview to the "great Arab revolution" reflects a deeply held belief in the special role of the family in 20th century Arab history.

The Center Cannot Hold

The Reagan Middle East initiative of September 1, 1982 was based on the assumption that Jordan would become a participant in the peace process. A State Department official who talked on several occasions with King Hussein about the plan and Jordan's role reported that the King was confident of being able to generate sufficient PLO support for his participation. As matters turned out, talks between King Hussein and Yasir Arafat during the winter of 1982-83 collapsed in April 1983 when Arafat agreed to terms with the King but then did not return to Amman as promised after taking further soundings in the Arab world, instead sending an emissary to propose new terms to the King. The King made the announcement on April 13, 1983 of the talks' collapse, adding, "...we leave it to the PLO and the Palestinian people to choose the ways and means for the salvation of themselves and their land."[5]

A year later, in January 1984, King Hussein reconvened the Jordanian Parliament in response to growing demands in Jordan for political participation because the Parliament had not sat after being dismissed following the Rabat decision in 1974. Some observers interpreted the parliamentary move as positioning the King to play a more active role in West Bank affairs should the opportunity present itself, but that interpretation was rejected in Amman. Nonetheless, by a formula which permitted the appointment of a certain number of

5. In *Great Decisions '84*, New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1983, p.64.

West Bank delegates and the appointment of the remainder of the original West Bank delegation following by-elections on the East Bank, the King was in a position to argue that Jordan was still the only place in the world where Palestinians participated as Palestinians in the parliament of a state.

King Hussein and PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat held five days of talks in Amman at the end of February 1984 that ended inconclusively. The King said in a subsequent interview that the two men "were in complete agreement on the analysis," and the final communiqué reaffirmed their support for the 1982 Fez Plan and pledged to seek international support for Middle East peace, especially from the European Community. No mention was made of the Reagan Plan, a victory for Arafat, who had previously rejected it as a basis of Middle East peace.[6] While the Amman talks appeared successful in bridging the gap created by Arafat's reversal the previous April when he went back on an apparent commitment to King Hussein concerning the King's entering Middle East peace negotiations, there was no evidence that the most recent round of talks had advanced the critical subject of how to proceed.

In mid-March 1984 King Hussein gave an interview to *The New York Times* in which he was quoted as saying that the United States "has chosen to disqualify itself as the sole force in the area that could help us all move toward a just and durable peace." He said that since the United States has "chosen" Israel, "there is no hope of achieving anything." Asked which nation or nations could serve as "honest brokers" in the Middle East peace process, King Hussein replied, "Least of all the United States."[7] The King's remarks, which reflected a deep sense of frustration, appeared to have been triggered by letters just received from the White House denying the King's request for US pressure on Israel to permit West Bank members to attend a scheduled Palestine

6. Jordan Television Interview, *op. cit.*; *Washington Post*, March 2, 1984.
7. *New York Times*, March 15, 1984.

National Council meeting where their presence might make the voting difference in supporting a moderate PLO line, and refusing to register a negative vote at the UN concerning Israeli settlements. The interview's timing was not helpful, since the previous day President Reagan had argued before an American Jewish audience that it was important to push ahead with arms sales to Jordan despite congressional and Jewish criticism. Shortly thereafter, the Administration withdrew the request to Congress for approval of the sale.

Saying Lines Offstage

On the Palestinian side the issues surrounding the West Bank are more complex than on the Jordanian side, where the Hashemite claim to rule the West Bank is rooted in the family's Arab nationalist credentials and sense of "manifest destiny" to play a larger role in Arab political life than has been possible to date. Palestinian scholar Walid Khalidi has addressed a question asked by many:

> If it is wondered why it was that throughout the period 1948-67 no one talked of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the answer is simple: Palestinian and Arab opinion was not prepared for it. It aspired to the recovery of the whole of Palestine or the establishment of a secular democratic state in it. Acceptance of partition or a state on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip was treason. In some Palestinian and Arab quarters, it still is.[8]

The story of the PLO and the West Bank is one of strong links coupled with mutual frustration. Whereas Jordanian rule had provided mixed blessings for the Palestinians, the military occupation of the West Bank by Israel in 1967 was a shock almost more painful than the creation of Israel in 1948, since there was no longer even a rump Palestine under Arab sovereignty. The tragedy for Palestinians of the occupation of the West Bank was balanced to a certain degree by

8. Khalidi, *op. cit.*, p.702.

the swift rise of the PLO to a prominent role in Palestinian and Arab affairs after and partly as a result of the war.

In dealing with the West Bank, the PLO had a number of advantages, including popular support because of the PLO's success in forcing world opinion to see the Palestinians as a people with political aspirations rather than as a scattered refugee population. Other factors in the PLO's popularity on the West Bank included its attractiveness as a potential alternative to King Hussein, particularly after 1970, as well as providing an answer to the traditional problem of West Bank society in accepting political leaders at more than the local level: the PLO, most of whose principals were not originally from the West Bank and none of whom now lived in the West Bank, was easier to agree on. By delegating political authority to a distant PLO, however, the West Bank population relinquished the right to take their affairs into their own hands and bypassed the spokesman acceptable to the West and to Israel (King Hussein) with one that was unacceptable.

Following creation in 1973 of the Palestine National Front (PNF) in the West Bank, the PLO took the radical (for it) step in June 1974 of endorsing establishment of an "independent combatant national authority for the people over every part of Palestinian territory that is liberated." In plain language, this resolution meant acceptance of a Palestinian mini-state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip following Israeli withdrawal despite phrases before and after the one quoted which circumscribed and potentially negated the mini-state concept (*e.g.*, continued emphasis on armed struggle and rejection of recognition of Israel, should that be the price for the mini-state).[9] At the heart of that debate was the important philosophical issue for many Palestinians of whether the mini-state would become a substitute for the restitution of all of Palestine rather than an interim stage along the way.

9. Palestine National Council Political Program, June 9, 1974, in *Documents and Statements, op. cit.*, p.242.

Separate polls taken on the West Bank in the fall of 1983 indicated that despite the heavy blows suffered by the PLO—and perhaps in part because of them—West Bank backing for Yasir Arafat and the PLO remained as strong as ever. A late November poll showed 95 per cent of the West Bankers endorsing the leadership of Yasir Arafat, with 70 per cent supporting resumption of the Jordanian-Palestinian dialogue and 25 per cent opposing it. Majorities in the 60 per cent range endorsed Egyptian-Jordanian-PLO dialogue on a peace strategy, although a plurality (47 per cent to 43 per cent) opposed using Resolution 242 and the Reagan Plan as the basis for peace.[10]

The members of the Arab League other than Jordan and the PLO have long been involved in the Palestine/West Bank issue. The public positions taken by the Arab states with regard to the West Bank are couched in terms of Arab nationalism and/or Islamic imperatives, although the policies are propelled by domestic politics as well as by alliances with and against other members of the League. The principal international issue confronting the Arab world in the 20th century has been the struggle against foreign, mainly Western, domination. In Arab eyes Palestine is both the symbol of that struggle and an ever-present reminder of the failure of the Arab world to achieve its goal.

After the Fall

The 1948 Palestine war was one of the most devastating episodes in modern Arab history, since it not only revealed the impotence of the combined forces of the region against the Zionist army but also implanted the state of Israel in the Arab heartland. Dr. Constantine Zurayk, a distinguished Arab historian at the American University of Beirut, described it this way in his landmark treatise, *The Meaning of the Disaster*:

10. *Al-Fajr-Jerusalem Palestinian Weekly*, December 9, 1983.

Seven Arab states declare war on Zionism in Palestine, stop impotent before it, and turn on their heels. The representatives of the Arabs deliver fiery speeches in the highest international forums, warning what the Arab states and peoples will do if this or that decision be enacted. Declarations fall like bombs from the mouths of officials at the meetings of the Arab League, but when action becomes necessary, the fire is still and quiet, and steel and iron are rusted and twisted, quick to bend and distintegrate.[11]

The Arab regimes that failed to hold Palestine for the Arabs and Islam had been based mainly on Western parliamentary models, and the 1948 war set in motion a process that would bring most of them down within four years of the creation of Israel. The successor regimes understood the domestic political power of the Palestine issue, but it was a power that cut both ways. Because of the intensity of feeling, no leader could afford to be seen as lacking in zeal to right the wrong and restore Palestine to the Arab fold.

Several Arab political groupings emerged after the 1948 Palestine war. One was based on Hashemite family ties linking Jordan and Iraq, although each saw itself as the natural leader of, on the one hand, a "Greater Syria," and on the other a "Fertile Crescent" grouping. Another Arab political axis was fashioned between Egypt and Saudi Arabia, although for different reasons. The Saud family, which had defeated the Hashemites in the Hejaz region of the peninsula, was suspicious of Hashemite attempts to regain what the Sauds had taken from them. For Egypt the motivation was to check the creation of a Hashemite-dominated political mass that would block Egyptian influence in the Asian land mass.[12]

Following the June 1967 war the focus of Arab state policies concerning the West Bank changed in degree but not in kind. Egypt and Syria, along with Jordan, had lost territory

11. Quoted in Rubin, *op. cit.*, p.7.
12. Dishon, Daniel, "Jordan's Place in the Arab World," in Sinai, Anne, and Pollack, Allen, eds., *The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the West Bank: A Handbook*, New York: American Academic Council for Peace in the Middle East, 1977, p.148.

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to Israel, and the return of that territory preoccupied them, with the difference that Egypt and Jordan expressed a strong preference for a negotiated settlement while Syria took a hard line. As the PLO grew stronger against the backdrop of Arab impotence vis-à-vis Israel, almost all the Arab states sought to be associated with the PLO if not to control it for their own purposes. As the Arafat leadership asserted its independence after removing Ahmed Shuqairy (Egypt's original selection) in 1969, Syria and Iraq funded and directed commando groups loyal to them while these countries and the others sought to develop channels to the leadership that would generate compatible policies. Syria worked most diligently of all the Arab countries to dominate the PLO in the name of Arab nationalism and the fight against imperialism and Zionism.

Palestine as Paradox

The Arab states have pursued a paradoxical policy toward Palestine and the Palestinians. On the one hand Palestine as an issue has functioned as the most effective rallying cry in a region usually unsuccessful in finding practical bases on which to work together. On the other hand most Arab states regard Palestinians as a potentially destabilizing element, particularly in but not limited to the conservative sheikhdoms of the Persian Gulf. Syria, one of the most aggressive supporters of the Palestinian cause, went to war in Lebanon in 1976 in order to block a leftist-PLO victory and maintains tight control over Palestinian political and commando activity within and from Syria.

A leading Arab analyst in the West of Arab politics has concluded that Pan-Arabism has effectively given way to Arab state politics although many of the symbols and aspirations associated with Pan-Arabism remain. With regard to the Palestinians, he has written, "...it is believed that the best way of taming Palestinian radicalism is to contain the Palestinians within their own state, either autonomous or linked to Jordan,

and only then will the Arab system of states be effectively normalized...All of the crucial or affected Arab states see in the resolution of the Palestinian question an enhancement of their own sovereignty."[13]

The relationship between the West Bank and the rest of the Arab world remains complex and deeply rooted in Arab state politics as well as in Arab nationalism and Islam. The most intimate Arab political and social relationship of the West Bank is with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and is likely to remain so regardless of what kind of successor system replaces the current Israeli military occupation. Apropos of external relations of a future Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, a scholar has said that

> [its] most intimate relations are likely to be with Jordan. Consanguinity, historical ties, and common economic interests would all demand this. Jordan would be the nearest Arab neighbor, the gateway to the Arab World and the sea. Naturally, relations with Jordan would have to be on an inter-state basis of equality. But this does not preclude a consensual evolution of relations toward greater intimacy.[14]

Accepting Realities

King Hussein of Jordan has honored the decision of the 1974 Rabat Arab summit by deferring to the PLO in matters concerning Palestinians in the West Bank and elsewhere outside the East Bank. With Jordanians of Palestinian extraction comprising approximately half the population of the East Bank and integrated into its economic, social, and political life, the Jordanian-Palestinian link is organic. In spite of the frustration of nationalist aspirations still unfulfilled, many Palestinians acknowledge the observation of an analyst of the contemporary scene: "In a history of uncertainty and turbulence, the Jordanian monarchy has provided the Pal-

13. Ajami, Fouad, "The End of Pan-Arabism," *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1978/79, p.371.
14. Khalidi, *op. cit.*, p.703.

estinians with a desperately needed sense of continuity and order."[15]

Despite King Hussein's adherence to the Rabat decision on the West Bank and his commitment to honor Palestinian self-determination, one American student of Jordanian affairs has written, "It should be made clear...that advocating self-determination and calling the PLO the legitimate representative of the Palestinians is not the same as advocating the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank (and Gaza). Rather this position is much more an advocacy of giving the Palestinians some form of choice as to their future."[16]

What the People Want

The people of the West Bank want above all to be out from under the Israeli occupation. Their preference is for an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but if the only choice were between continued occupation and restoration of Jordanian sovereignty, they would opt for the latter. Whether because of or in spite of never having known political independence, the West Bank population has developed a commitment to self-determination, heightened as they watch the departure of many of the best and brightest West Bankers who would be logical candidates for political leadership.

In the short run, however, there is little about which to be encouraged. West Bank leaders say on the one hand that it is important for the population to take its political future into its own hands but on the other that it is unthinkable for the West Bank to take such steps without the support of the PLO and other key Arab sectors. They also say that they see little prospect of near-term external deliverance and even less prospect of successful local initiative. The current atmos-

15. Ajami, Fouad, "The Arab Road" *Foreign Policy*, #47, Summer 1982, p.13.
16. Gubser, Peter, *Jordan: Crossroads of Middle Eastern Events,* Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1983, p.86.

phere in the West Bank has a strong element of determination on the part of the West Bankers to stay in their homes and on the land, but also an undercurrent of despair that doing so delays, but may not be sufficient to avoid, depopulation of the West Bank in order to satisfy Israeli plans for its absorption without its Palestinian inhabitants. In the absence of what one American writer has described as "Israeli incentive, American will, and Arab power,"[17] there is little likelihood of positive change on the West Bank in the foreseeable future.

17. Viorst, Milton, "Is It All Over on the West Bank?," *Washington Post*, April 29, 1984.

EPILOGUE

The July 1984 Israeli national elections were described by many observers in advance as a referendum on what kind of policy the Israeli body politic wanted its government to pursue in the future, including dealing with the West Bank. Israel's economic crisis and the internal divisiveness of Israel's military occupation of southern Lebanon required a government able to make difficult decisions. Likud, headed by Prime Minister Itzhak Shamir, stated its intention to retain the West Bank and to maintain an active settlement policy. Labor, headed by Shimon Peres, expressed cautious interest in a territorial compromise in the context of a peace settlement and indicated opposition to further settlement activity.

The election results did not provide the vital answers from the Israeli electorate. On the contrary, they made matters potentially worse by a fairly close if unimpressive result for the two major parties and an increase in the vote for small parties of both left and right that represented narrow issues. These parties would be expected to extract maximum concessions in order to join a coalition government, tying the hands of whichever party formed it.

As of early August, Shimon Peres and Labor had been charged by Israeli President Chaim Herzog with the task of forming a government, but no early result was expected since more than one of the necessary coalition partners had stated that it would join a Labor-led coalition only if it were a "national unity" government that included Likud.

Hopes by some observers that a Labor-led government would mean a more flexible approach toward the West Bank than under Likud were diminished by the likelihood that concessions by Labor as a precondition of inclusion of smaller

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parties would restrict the government's flexibility. This would make it unable to respond adequately in the event that a Jordanian-Palestinian rapprochement authorized Arab representatives to open discussions with Israel about the future of the West Bank.

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