ISRAEL, PALESTINE AND ZIONISM

COMPILED

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Israel (country)

I INTRODUCTION

Israel (country), country in southwestern Asia, formed in 1948 as a Jewish state in the historic region of Palestine, and located on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. Israel is bounded on the north by Lebanon, on the northeast by Syria, on the east by Jordan, and on the southwest by Egypt. Its southernmost tip extends to the Gulf of Aqaba, an arm of the Red Sea. Israel's isolated position as a Jewish state surrounded by Arab and predominantly Islamic countries has influenced nearly every aspect of its foreign relations, demography, and economic policy throughout its history.

The origins of the present-day struggle between Israel and Arab nations predate the creation of Israel. Throughout the early 20th century Palestine, as the birthplace of Judaism and site of the ancient Hebrew Kingdom of Israel, became a center of Jewish immigration, encouraged and organized by a movement known as Zionism. Jews clashed with the Palestinian Arab inhabitants of the region throughout the British administration of Palestine from 1918 to 1948. In the years after World War II (1939-1945) the United Nations (UN) developed a plan to partition Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states. The Arabs rejected the plan, but the Jews accepted it, and the independent nation of Israel was created in 1948. Five Arab nations—Egypt, Transjordan (now Jordan), Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq—immediately attacked Israel. In the Arab-Israeli War of 1948-1949 and subsequent wars with its Arab neighbors Israel acquired territory beyond its 1948 boundaries. As a result of the Six-Day War of 1967 Israel took and later annexed the Syrian territory of the Golan Heights, a claim not recognized by most nations. Israel also occupied the West Bank (formerly of Jordan) and the Gaza Strip (formerly of Egypt), areas now partially under Palestinian Arab administration. Even Jerusalem, the city Israel claims as its capital, remains an area of dispute. Predominantly Jewish West Jerusalem has been part of Israel since independence in 1948; Israel captured mostly Arab East Jerusalem in 1967. Israel has since claimed the entire city as its capital. However, the United Nations does not recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

These territorial conflicts, combined with continued Jewish immigration, have caused major changes in population structure since Israel's independence. Much of the Palestinian Arab population in the territory that became Israel fled during the 1948-1949 war and became refugees in surrounding Arab countries. Still more Palestinians fled from the areas captured by Israel in 1967 (known collectively as the Occupied Territories; often referred to in Israel as "administered territories"), and thousands of Jews have settled in these areas. Meanwhile, Jewish immigration continued. By the late 1990s Israel had absorbed 2.1 million immigrants since 1948, four times the Jewish population before independence.

Economically, the twin challenges of national security and immigration have been very costly. The economic burden of the military fosters dependence on foreign economic aid, particularly from the United States. Further, political conflict has severely isolated Israel economically from much of the region. Meanwhile, although the absorption and integration of so many immigrants from all over the world is an immense financial undertaking, the constant influx of people with many different skills and backgrounds also contributes to Israel's economic well-being. Both factors have stimulated the drive to create a successful industrial economy to help pay for necessary infrastructure and services.

II LAND AND RESOURCES

The total area of Israel, based on the frontiers established at the end of the Arab-Israeli War of 1948-1949, is about 20,700 sq km (about 8,000 sq mi). Areas occupied by Israel as a result of the Six-Day War included the West Bank (5,860 sq km/2,263 sq mi), the Gaza Strip (378 sq km/146 sq mi), the Golan Heights (1,250 sq km/483 sq mi), and East Jerusalem (70 sq km/27 sq mi). Because Israel annexed the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem in 1981, the country officially includes them in total area and population figures. The United Nations (UN) and most countries do not recognize these annexations, however. Israel stretches north to south to a maximum length of 420 km (260 mi); from east to west it varies from 16 to 115 km (10 to 70 mi).

A Natural Regions

There are five major geographical regions of Israel. The mountainous Galilee region dominates the northern section of Israel, extending east 40 km (25 mi) from a narrow coastal plain across to the Sea of Galilee (also called Lake Tiberias). Mount Meron (1,208 m/3,963 ft) in central Galilee is the highest point in Israel. South of Galilee lies the Plain of Esdraelon, a densely populated and productive agricultural region 55 km (35 mi) long and 25 km (15 mi) wide. The plain runs across Israel from the vicinity of Haifa on the Mediterranean coast to the Jordan River, which forms Israel's eastern border. The coastal plains, containing most of Israel's large cities, industry, and commerce, extend 195 km (120 mi) along the Mediterranean from just north of Haifa to Gaza. This region ranges in width from less than 1 km (0.6 mi) to 30 km (20 mi). The Judean and Samarian hills run north and south throughout most of Israel. The Negev is a triangular desert region in southern Israel extending north from the Gulf of Aqaba to a line connecting the southern end of the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean, passing to the north of the city of Beersheba.

B Plant and Animal Life

Israel's variety of natural environments—marked by regional differences in elevation, rainfall, topography and soils, and latitude—produces equally varied plant life. Of about 2,500 species of plants, the majority is xerophytic, or capable of enduring prolonged dry spells. Three distinct vegetative regions, each comprising many subregions, cover Israel: Mediterranean in most of the northern reaches, steppe in the northern Negev, and desert in the rest of the Negev. This variety of geographical regions supports a wide range of agricultural products, including citrus fruits, bananas, cotton, tobacco, grapes, dates, figs, olives, almonds, and avocados. Original evergreen forests largely disappeared because of centuries of cultivation and herding. Through a reforestation program millions of trees have been planted, especially in the hilly regions. Today natural woodlands and reforested areas cover 8 percent of the land.

Animal life is similarly varied. About 100 species of mammals inhabit Israel, including wild boars, gazelles, ibexes, jackals, hyenas, wildcats, and badgers. There are about 380 species of birds, including about 100 that migrate seasonally to other areas. Partridges, cuckoos, bustards, sand grouses, and desert larks inhabit the area. A variety of reptiles, fishes, and insects (including locusts) also prevail.

C Rivers, Lakes, and Coastline

The unnavigable Jordan River forms the northern portion of the borders between Israel and Jordan and between the West Bank and Jordan. The river flows through the Sea of Galilee (166 sq km/64 sq mi), which provides many species of fish and supplies more than half of Israel's fresh water. The Jordan empties into the Dead Sea (1,020 sq km/394 sq mi), a highly saline lake supplying many important minerals. Parts of the Dead Sea lie in Israel, Jordan, and the West Bank. The Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea lie below sea level; the shore of the Dead Sea is the lowest point on the

Earth’s surface. Projects by Israel and Jordan to divert water from the Jordan River for irrigation and other uses have caused the level of the Dead Sea to drop. In 1996 the level was 408 m (1,339 ft) below sea level. Other principal rivers are the Yarqon, which runs through Tel Aviv-Yafo, and the Qishon River (Nahr al Muqaṭṭa‘), which reaches the Mediterranean Sea near Haifa.

The coastline of Israel, including the country’s western edge on the Mediterranean Sea and its southern tip on the Red Sea, stretches for 273 km (170 mi). Apart from limited sections of cliffs rising 10 to 40 m (30 to 120 ft), the coast has few headlands or indentations; much of it is low-lying and backed by sand dunes. Haifa, a natural harbor in the northern part of the country, and Ashdod, an artificial deepwater port to the south, serve as the main seaports on the Mediterranean. The port of Elat on the Gulf of Aqaba provides Israel’s only access to the Red Sea, making it extremely important to the country’s shipping interests.

D Natural Resources

Although much of Israel’s desert regions contain poor soils, the northern Negev, the coastal plains, and the interior valleys provide patches of productive soils. An estimated 18 percent of Israel’s land is used for crops or orchards. Most cultivable soils in Israel require irrigation and careful management; of 3,920 sq km (1,514 sq mi) under cultivation, 44 percent is irrigated. The Dead Sea contains valuable minerals such as potash, bromine, and magnesium, all of which are exploited mainly for export. The Negev contains deposits of many minerals, including copper, phosphate, bromine, and clay. Small quantities of oil and natural gas are also mined from areas near the Dead Sea and south of Tel Aviv-Yafo.

E Climate

Israel has a typical Mediterranean climate with cool, rainy winters and warm, dry summers. Temperatures vary considerably with elevation, exposure to the sea, and predominant winds. January is normally the coldest month and August the warmest. In upland regions such as Jerusalem, January temperatures average 9°C (48°F) while August temperatures average 24°C (75°F). In the coastal plains, including Haifa and Tel Aviv-Yafo, January averages 12°C (54°F) and August averages 25°C (77°F). The highest and lowest elevations are subject to extremes: Frost occurs a few days a year in mountainous inland regions, while summer temperatures can reach the upper 30°s C (lower 100°s F) in the Jordan Valley and in southern desert regions.

About 70 percent of annual precipitation falls as rain between November and February. Amounts of rain decrease from north to south and from west to east. The upper Galilee receives about 1,000 mm (about 40 in) of rain annually; the Judean Hills, about 700 mm (about 30 in); and most of the Negev, about 100 mm (about 4 in). Elat, the driest spot in Israel, receives only 25 mm (1 in) annually. Snow falls occasionally in higher parts of the hills during the coldest months. Frequent summer droughts, especially in the southern desert regions, make extensive irrigation a necessity. Heavy rains in these and other areas can cause flooding and erosion.

F Environmental Issues

As a small country experiencing rapid population growth and industrialization, Israel faces serious air and water pollution as well as problems disposing of solid and hazardous waste. The government is taking steps to tackle these problems, such as requiring catalytic converters for vehicles, phasing out the use of leaded gasoline, initiating

rehabilitation programs for polluted streams, conducting environmental impact assessments for industry, and supervising the production, handling, and disposal of hazardous substances.

III PEOPLE AND SOCIETY

The estimated population of Israel in 2008, including residents of the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem, was 6,500,389. Population density, including the area of the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem, was 320 persons per sq km (828 per sq mi). Israel is one of the most urbanized countries in the world. Some 92 percent of the population lives in communities of more than 2,000 people, and over half of Israel's population lives in the metropolitan areas of its three largest cities, Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv-Yafo, and Haifa.

More than one-third of the world's Jewish population lives in Israel, where they make up 82 percent of the people. Arabs, most of whom are Muslims, make up almost the entire remainder of the population. Because the birth rate is greater for Arabs than for Jews, the Arab proportion of the population more than doubled between 1950 and the late 1990s.

A Principal Cities

With a population of 701,512 in 2004, Jerusalem is Israel's largest city. Israel claims that all of Jerusalem is its capital, but Palestinians dispute the claim and the United Nations has not recognized it as such. Arabs make up about 30 percent of the population. Jerusalem's economy depends on governmental administration, light industry, tourism, and higher education.

Tel Aviv-Yafo, with 368,635 residents in 2004, is the center of an urban region stretching along 15 km (9 mi) of the Mediterranean coast and 10 km (6 mi) inland, with a total population of about 2 million. It serves as a commercial and industrial capital and also plays an important role in the cultural and recreational life of modern Israel. Other cities in this urban area include Holon, Petaḫ Tiqwa, and Ramat Gan. Farther north lies Haifa, containing the country's busiest port and main naval base. With a population of 269,417, the city serves as a center of heavy industry as well as religious and educational activities. Beersheba serves as the administrative, industrial, and cultural center of the northern Negev. It had about 184,200 residents in 2004.

B Ethnic Groups

Although Israel's Jewish population shares a common ethnic heritage based on Judaism, it is composed almost entirely of immigrants and descendants of immigrants from all over the world. In 1997 some 38 percent of Israel's Jewish population was born outside of Israel. Foreign-born and native-born Israeli Jews trace their recent roots to more than 100 different countries, providing Israel with extremely diverse cultural influences.

The two main groupings of Jews are Ashkenazim and Sephardim. The Ashkenazim, whose tradition was centered in Germany in the Middle Ages, now include Jews of Central and Eastern European origin. The Sephardim, whose tradition grew in Spain in the Middle Ages, now include Jews with ancestry from the Middle East, North Africa, and the Mediterranean region. Historically the groups differ in religious rite, pronunciation of Hebrew, and social customs. Ashkenazic Jews, who formed a majority at the time of Israeli independence, continue to dominate political life as well as the upper levels of employment and education. Sephardic Jews immigrated rapidly to Israel in the decades after independence. The new state's lack of resources to handle this flood, combined with cultural differences between the

new immigrants and the Ashkenazic establishment, resulted in separate and usually poorer Sephardic communities. The Sephardim continue to struggle for greater economic and political influence. Beginning in the last years of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in the late 1980s and continuing well after its breakup, hundreds of thousands of Ashkenazic Jews immigrated to Israel from the former Soviet Union.

Arabs, those Palestinians who remained in the region after Israel's independence and their descendants, constitute almost all of Israel's non-Jewish population. Following Israel's occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, and Golan Heights in 1967, Arabs in Israel had increased contact, and an increased sense of identity, with fellow Palestinians in those occupied areas. Despite legal equality and increased integration into Israel's economy, for the most part Arabs and Jews live in separate areas, attend separate schools, speak different languages, and follow different cultural traditions. Although constant tension exists between the two groups within Israel, it has been overshadowed in recent years by conflicts involving Israeli occupation and Jewish settlement in Palestinian areas outside of Israel.

C Languages

Hebrew and Arabic are the official languages. The Jewish majority speaks a modernized derivative of the Hebrew language, a biblical Semitic language. Immigrants are given intensive instruction in Hebrew, but many continue to speak their native language at home. Israeli Arabs speak the Arabic language. Both Hebrew and Arabic are taught in schools and used in legal affairs and in the legislature. Many Israelis speak English, Russian, or any of a number of other European languages. Some older Ashkenazic immigrants speak Yiddish, a Germanic language. Radio broadcasts, newspapers, and periodicals use several languages in addition to Hebrew and Arabic.

D Religion

For centuries the region of Palestine has been a focus for three world religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Jerusalem, Hebron, Ẕefat, and Tiberias are the four holy cities of Judaism. Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Nazareth are sacred to Christians, and Jerusalem, as the location of the ascent of the prophet Muhammad to heaven, is also sacred to Islam. Haifa is the world center of the Baha'i religion, although there are few adherents in Israel today. The level of strict religious observance among all religions has declined in recent years, but religious affiliation remains very important socially and politically. Israeli law guarantees religious freedom.

Varying degrees of religious faith and practice exist among Israeli Jews. Ultra-Orthodox Jews (*haredim*) who wish to impose strict religious law on all aspects of life lie at one end of the spectrum. At the other end lie those who observe no religious practices. The majority lie somewhere in between, observing some religious principles some of the time according to personal preferences and ethnic traditions. Orthodox and non-Orthodox groups remain at odds, resulting in occasional violent incidents over observance of the Sabbath, a holy day of rest, and the ways in which it is acceptable for women to pray at Jerusalem's Western Wall, the holiest site of Judaism. In recent years non-Orthodox Jewish groups have struggled against the exclusive rights of the Orthodoxy to perform conversions and other religious rites. Religion plays a significant role in politics, and religious parties hold many seats in the legislature.

About three-quarters of Israel's non-Jewish population follows Sunni Islam. Most of the remainder are Christians or Druze, a distinct religious minority. The largest Christian denominations are Greek Catholic and Greek Orthodox; many other Christian denominations are also represented in Israel.

E Education

The quality of Israel's education system and the high literacy rate of its people reflect the importance of education in the Jewish tradition. Absorption and integration of immigrant Jewish children from many countries and cultures continue as the central challenges. The Compulsory Education Law of 1949 and subsequent amendments provide for free and compulsory schooling for children aged 5 to 16 and additional free but not compulsory education to age 18. In practice about 90 percent of school-age children complete compulsory education. Jewish children attend either state secular or religious schools, both with instruction in Hebrew. Arab and Druze children attend separate schools emphasizing their history, religion, and culture, with instruction in Arabic. Some secondary schools specialize in technological, agricultural, military, or religious studies. There are also private religious schools affiliated with ultra-Orthodox groups and Christian denominations. Literacy rates are very high among youth in both communities and for both sexes.

Postsecondary educational opportunities include universities as well as vocational and other adult education. Most students complete compulsory military service—three years for men and two years for women—before pursuing higher education. Universities, which operate under the authority of the Council for Higher Education, include the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Bar-Ilan University in Ramat Gan, Tel Aviv University, Haifa University, and Ben Gurion University of the Negev in Beersheba. The Open University of Israel, established in 1974 in Tel Aviv-Yafo, allows students to learn through distance education and other forms of self-study. Other forms of adult education are especially important in Israel due to the high number of adult immigrants with varying levels of education in their home countries. Vocational and adult education subjects include nursing, teacher training, architecture, Hebrew language, art, music, and architecture.

F Way of Life

Jews and Arabs of Israel lead largely separate lives, with little social and cultural exchange. Although of varying backgrounds, Israeli Jews share many unifying influences such as Judaic tradition, the Hebrew language, the Holocaust (the murder of millions of Jews in Europe by Nazi Germany), and the socialist ideals of the early Zionist pioneers in Palestine. Furthermore, most Israeli Jews share the formative experience of compulsory military service from age 18 and subsequent years of reserve service for one or two months per year. Nevertheless, lifestyles vary markedly based on such factors as country of origin, length of residence in Israel, level of religious observance, and urban or rural location. In general, family life and religious celebrations play an important role in society. Popular recreational activities include camping, hiking, and going to the beach, as well as use of the country's many sports facilities, libraries, and theaters. Many Israelis also enjoy traveling abroad.

Many of Israel's rural Jews live in two types of cooperative communities, the *kibbutz* and the *moshav*. In a kibbutz, residents own all property collectively and contribute work in exchange for basic necessities. In a moshav, families own separate farms but cooperate in some aspects of agricultural marketing.

Israel's Arab population, although sharing a common language and many other cultural affinities, is divided along religious lines. Muslim Arabs, most of whom are Sunnis, live mainly in small towns and villages and follow many of the traditions of the Islamic world. Within this group, the Bedouins remain culturally distinct. Traditionally nomads with a tribal social framework, many Bedouins now live in permanent settlements in southern Israel. Christian Arabs reside mostly in the cities and follow the various traditions of Eastern or Western Christianity. The Druze, another distinct community residing in villages of northern Israel, hold cultural and religious ties with Druze communities in Lebanon and Syria.

G Social Services

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs supervises a comprehensive welfare system and provides 75 percent of its funding. All workers must contribute to social insurance that provides such services as child allowances, workers' compensation, and care for the elderly. Local authorities are responsible for delivering social services. Workers also pay a health insurance tax, which along with money from the state budget provides basic medical services to all residents of Israel.

IV ARTS

Richness and variety characterize the artistic and cultural life of Israel. Drawing inspiration from Jewish tradition, cultural activity of the Jewish population has been greatly influenced by Israel's struggle for independence and survival and by its rapid social change and state-building. These foundations were enriched by successive waves of immigration from more than 100 countries, each of which brought an element of cultural diversity and a wealth of artistic skills and traditions. Jews have always been prominent in literature, art, and music, but Israeli Jews have made a conscious effort to create a unique artistic tradition. Israeli Arabs maintain a rich heritage of music, theater, dance, and art that draws on traditions of the wider Arab world. Although the majority of Arabs and Jews of Israel remain separated socially and culturally, there has been significant collaboration between Arab and Jewish artists and writers in recent years. For example, a 1994 production of *Romeo and Juliet* by Jewish and Arab actors received international acclaim.

The following sections deal primarily with the arts of the Israeli Jewish population.

A Literature

The most remarkable achievement of Israel's artistic tradition has been the revival and modernization of the Hebrew language after centuries of disuse. Although biblical Hebrew had only about 8,000 words, modern Hebrew uses about 120,000 words. The Academy of the Hebrew Language, founded by the Israeli parliament in 1953, guides the continuing development of the Hebrew language. Hebrew authors have published numerous books of poetry and prose since Israeli independence. Common themes include the promise and problems of the new state, Jewish identity, and loneliness and isolation of the individual. Several Israeli writers have won international recognition, notably Amos Oz, Shmuel Yosef Agnon, A. B. Yehoshua, Aharon Appelfeld, David Shahar, David Grossman, and Meir Shalev. Founded in 1962, the Institute for the Translation of Hebrew Literature has rendered hundreds of Hebrew works of fiction, drama, poetry, and books for children into 40 different languages.

B Performing Arts

Israel is one of the world's most active and progressive centers for music. The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra is world-renowned, as are many Israeli musicians such as Schlomo Mintz, Daniel Barenboim, and Itzhak Perlman. Musicians compose and perform music of every kind for audiences all over Israel, and musical education is taken very seriously. The arrival of more than 600,000 Jews from the former USSR in the 1990s brought a wave of fresh talent and vitality to the musical scene. Opera and dance are also extremely active in Israel. Dance includes distinctive Israeli forms derived from Eastern Europe and elsewhere. Several major professional companies perform choreographed stage

dance. Theater also flourishes in Israel; major theaters are located in Tel Aviv-Yafo (including the national Habima Theater), Jerusalem, Haifa, and Beersheba.

C Visual Arts

In 1906 the Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts was founded in Jerusalem to encourage talented Jews to study art in Palestine. Like the country's writers and performers, Israeli painters, sculptors, and photographers have examined personal and social issues relating to Jewish identity and statehood. Artist studios, galleries, and shops abound in Ẕefat and Yafo. Many Israeli artists and sculptors, including Yaacov Agam, Dani Karavan, and Reuvin Rubin, have gained international recognition for their work. Filmmaking began in Israel in the 1950s and has developed strongly under the Israel Film Center. Cinema exports are growing, and foreign productions are sometimes filmed in Israel.

D Museums and Libraries

The Israel Museum in Jerusalem, founded in 1965 as the national museum, houses collections of Jewish art, modern sculpture, and archaeological artifacts. It also houses the Dead Sea Scrolls, a collection of ancient Hebrew and Aramaic manuscripts. The Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem is dedicated to Jews who died in the Holocaust. Other important museums include the Tel Aviv Museum of Art and the Haifa Museum. Several museums, including the L. A. Mayer Institute for Islamic Art in Jerusalem, display exhibits about the Arab and Islamic traditions of Palestine and Israel. Altogether there are more than 120 museums in Israel, which receive about ten million visitors each year. There are more than 400 libraries in Israel.

V ECONOMY

The challenges of maintaining national security while absorbing and integrating massive waves of immigrants have characterized the economy of Israel throughout its statehood. Defense spending remains one of the world's highest per capita, and immigration strains the availability of jobs and housing. Lack of natural resources and economic isolation from surrounding Arab states add further challenges. In spite of these factors, Israel's economy has grown rapidly, and Israelis enjoy a high standard of living. With a total gross domestic product (GDP) of $140.46 billion in 2006, Israel's per capita GDP of $19,926.90 was one of the highest in the world. Economic diversification, high investment, a skilled and educated workforce, and a commitment to research and development have contributed to Israel's economic success. Nevertheless, a steadily increasing trade deficit, high inflation (averaging 2.1 percent in the period 2006, down from more than 400 percent in 1984), and reliance on foreign loans and aid threatened the economy through the late 1990s. To offset its trade deficit, Israel continues to pursue the export of high-technology products. If lasting peace in the Middle East could be achieved, Israel would undoubtedly benefit from increased trade with its Arab neighbors and less of a need for defense spending. In 1998 Israel proposed a plan to phase out economic aid from the United States over a period of 10 to 12 years beginning in the year 2000.

A Government Role in the Economy

Because of the pressing nature of Israel's economic problems—national security and absorption of immigrants—the government has played a central role in economic policymaking and intervention throughout Israel's history. For example, the government has been heavily involved in planning, subsidizing, and controlling agriculture since independence. The government has also taken decisive action to avert economic crises. For example, in the early

1980s it instituted an emergency program of spending cuts and austerity measures to counter hyperinflation. The government, including government-owned businesses, remains the largest employer, particularly in the public services sector. To reduce government spending and stimulate economic growth, the government began privatizing many of its enterprises in the 1990s.

B Labor

In 2006 Israel's active civilian labor force was 2.8 million, including about 250,000 Israeli Arabs. Women account for 47 percent of the workforce. In descending order, public services, manufacturing, retail and wholesale trade, and financial and business services employed the largest number of workers. Unemployment was 10.7 percent. About 100,000 foreign workers—mainly from Romania, Thailand, and the Philippines—worked in such fields as agriculture and construction, largely replacing Palestinian workers. (After a series of demonstrations, strikes, and riots known as the intifada began in 1987, many Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were prevented from going to their jobs in Israel.) In addition to the civilian labor force, about 180,000 Israelis served in the military.

Founded in 1920, the *Histadrut* (General Federation of Labor) represents most of Israel's labor force. Serving as an umbrella group for separate trade unions, the Histadrut offers health insurance as well as recreational, educational, and other services to its members.

C Agriculture and Fishing

The earliest Zionist settlers in Palestine viewed agriculture as a key ingredient of successful colonization, for meeting food needs and for fostering an ideological bond between Jews and the land. Since independence the Israeli government has promoted agriculture to attain self-sufficiency and to provide new immigrants with food and employment. Between 1948 and the late 1990s the land area under cultivation has almost tripled, in large part because of modern irrigation, mechanization, and other technologies. About 750 kibbutzim and moshavim, although occupied by only 6 percent of the total population, produce a large portion of Israel's crops. While many Israeli Arab farmers have adopted many Israeli farming methods with considerable success, others continue to use less mechanized, more traditional methods.

Because of extensive investment in these methods and technologies, Israel meets most of its food needs through domestic production and grows several crops for export. Industrial crops (groundnuts, sugar beets, cotton), cereals, tomatoes, a wide variety of fruit, dairy products, poultry, and eggs are the main food crops. Primary exports include citrus and other fruit, cotton, avocados, and potatoes. Flowers account for almost a quarter of agricultural exports by value. The majority of Israel's annual fish catch consists of freshwater fish raised in artificial ponds. Although in recent decades the relative importance of agriculture has declined—in terms of GDP, percentage of the population it employs, and percentage of total export revenues—it remains essential to Israel's economy. In 1996 agriculture, including forestry and fishing, accounted for about 2 percent of the GDP and employed about 3 percent of the workforce.

D Mining

The chief assets of the Israeli mining industry are the huge quantities of bromine, potash, magnesium, and other minerals extracted from the salt deposits of the Dead Sea. Israel is the world's largest exporter of bromine. Extensive

quarrying of marble and granite fulfills domestic construction needs. Copper, phosphates, bromine, and clay are mined in the Negev.

E Manufacturing

Despite limited natural resources, Israel's manufacturing sector is the most diversified and most technologically advanced of any country in the Middle East. The needs of the defense industry, together with a desire to boost export earnings, have encouraged government investment in industry, especially in research and development. A skilled and educated workforce, continually renewed by immigration, also aids manufacturing. Israel's industrial output is among the fastest growing in the world. In 1996 the industrial sector, including mining and construction, accounted for 27 percent of GDP and 80 percent of export earnings, and employed 28 percent of the workforce.

Until the 1970s manufacturing was concentrated on traditional branches such as food processing, textiles, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and metal products. Since then Israel has moved into high-technology fields such as medical electronics, telecommunications, computer hardware and software, and diamond polishing. Cut diamonds and electronic equipment are now among Israel's biggest export earners, together with chemical products, textiles, transport equipment, and machinery. The Tel Aviv-Yafo metropolitan area and Haifa serve as the primary manufacturing centers.

F Services

The service sector remains the largest in terms of GDP and percentage of labor force it employs. In the late 1990s it contributed about 60 percent of GDP and employed 69 percent of Israel's workforce. Mainly because of the continuing task of absorbing immigration, public services such as education, health, and welfare remain the primary service industries. Business and financial services, wholesale and retail trade, and transportation, storage, and communication services are also important.

G Tourism

Historical and religious sites as well as the favorable Mediterranean climate make Israel a popular tourist destination. In 2006, 1,825,000 tourists visited Israel, spending $2.8 billion. Tourism tends to decline after terrorist incidents occur or when political unrest intensifies. Western European tourists account for more than half of all visitors, followed by North Americans (20 percent), Eastern Europeans (11 percent), and Asians (10 percent). Many Christian pilgrims visit Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Nazareth, and many Jews come to see Israel's Jewish culture and holy sites. Apart from cultural and religious sites, the Dead Sea region, Elat, and the Mediterranean coast are popular destinations.

H Energy

Imported oil and coal supply almost all of Israel's energy, supplemented by very small amounts of locally extracted oil, natural gas, and oil shale. Egypt and Mexico supply the largest quantities of oil, while coal comes from South Africa, Australia, and the United Kingdom. Israel is a world leader in the development of solar energy production, particularly in the use of solar panels for home water heating. Research continues on alternative sources of energy such as wind power.

I Transportation

Israel's chief means of transportation is its road network, which totaled 17,446 km (10,840 mi) in 2004. Motor vehicle ownership has increased rapidly, reaching 234 passenger vehicles per 1,000 persons in 2004. Traffic congestion and accidents can be serious problems. A national company runs popular, affordable, and frequent bus services in many areas. State-owned railroads operate 899 km (559 mi) of track. Ben Gurion International Airport near Tel Aviv-Yafo serves as the major airport. Israel's national airline, El Al, provides international service, while Arkia provides domestic service. Major ports include Haifa in the north, Ashdod on the central Mediterranean coast, and Elat on the Gulf of Aqaba. Because of boycotts by neighboring Arab nations, Israeli shipping remains vital to Israel's trade with more distant partners by way of the Atlantic and Indian oceans.

J Communications

Israel has well-developed networks for domestic and international communications. On average, houses contain at least two telephones, and there are 1,120 cellular telephones in use for every 1,000 persons. Internet and electronic mail use has grown rapidly. The Communications Ministry controls telecommunications, while the Postal Authority operates mail services. All media enjoy freedom of communication in Israel, and many emphasize news and politics. The Israeli Broadcasting Authority (IBA) is responsible for public radio and television stations. State-run Kol Israel (Voice of Israel) operates several radio stations, broadcasting in 17 languages. The IBA completely ran television broadcasting until 1993, when a law was passed that opened the field to commercial stations. Many Arab households tune into television broadcasts from neighboring states. Israel has 34 daily newspapers; about half are in Hebrew and half in other languages, including Arabic and English. Prominent dailies include *Ha'aretz, Davar, Ma'ariv, Yedioth Ahronoth,* and the *Jerusalem Post*. There are also more than 1,000 periodicals.

K Foreign Trade

The cost of Israel's imports has exceeded the value of its exports every year since 1948. This trade deficit, while growing in dollar amount to $12.8 billion in 1996, is decreasing in relative terms. In 1950 exports financed only 14 percent of imports; in 1996 they financed 71 percent. Grants and loans from the United States and other governments, donations from Jewish fund-raising organizations, bank loans, and funds brought in by immigrants have covered annual deficits. Israel owes the bulk of its external debt to the United States. Expanding exports has been a primary goal of the government throughout Israel's history.

Chief imports include rough diamonds, machinery, chemicals, vehicles, crude petroleum, and consumer goods. Primary sources of imports include the United States, Belgium and Luxembourg (which constitute a single trading entity), Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, and Japan. Main exports include finished diamonds, machinery and parts, chemicals and chemical products, electronic equipment, and agricultural produce (especially citrus fruits). Trading partners for exports include the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Belgium and Luxembourg, and Hong Kong.

Israel is a member of the World Trade Organization and has enjoyed free trade agreements for industrial goods with the European Union (formerly the European Community) since 1975 and the United States since 1985. Israel also participates in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

L Currency and Banking

Israel's currency is the *new Israeli sheqel* (NIS), consisting of 100 *agorot* (4.50 NIS equal U.S.$1; 2006 average). The Bank of Israel (1954) issues currency and handles government banking transactions. There is a flourishing banking sector with many specialized merchant banks, foreign banks, mortgage banks, and banks set up to aid industry and agriculture. A stock exchange is in Tel Aviv-Yafo.

VI GOVERNMENT

Israel is a multiparty parliamentary republic with ultimate authority vested by the people in the legislature, or Knesset. There is no written constitution, but a number of basic laws passed by the parliament over the decades determine government operations and activities. Israel has a unitary, or nonfederalist, system of government; the central government in Jerusalem runs most government functions.

Although Israel achieved independence in 1948, its political system derives from the period of British mandate over Palestine (1922-1948). Under the mandate, awarded by the League of Nations, Britain temporarily governed the area on behalf of its Jewish and Arab inhabitants. The mandate established the Jewish Agency for Palestine, a body that acted as the international diplomatic representative of the Jewish community in Palestine (*Yishuv*). During the mandate period the Yishuv established institutions for self-government, including an assembly that used a system of proportional representation to distribute the assembly's seats after elections. The assembly met annually, electing a council that worked with the Jewish Agency to administer Yishuv affairs between assembly sessions. After the United Nations (UN) adopted a plan to partition Palestine into Jewish and Arab states in 1947, a provisional government consisting of a legislature, a cabinet, and a president was chosen from among the members of the council and the Jewish Agency. This provisional government functioned from the day of independence (May 14, 1948) until February 14, 1949, at which time its authority was transferred to the first Knesset.

The Knesset's first legislative act was to enact a law, often referred to as the Small Constitution, adopting for the new government many of the administrative structures and procedures created during the mandate. Knesset members discussed at length the possibility of drafting a constitution. Many felt that the constantly changing social conditions caused by mass immigration after independence made necessary a delay in drafting a permanent document. Others expressed concern over the relationship between state and religion and how to incorporate the precepts and ideals of Judaism into the proposed document. After more than a year of discussion, the Knesset decided to delay adoption of a formal and comprehensive document. Although Israel remains without a written constitution, over the years the Knesset has passed many laws, known as Basic Laws, defining governmental structure and policy. The Basic Laws are intended to form portions of a comprehensive document in the future.

A Executive

The Knesset elects a president, the head of state, who may serve a maximum of two five-year terms. The president holds little real power but performs such ceremonial functions as opening the first session of a new Knesset and receiving foreign diplomatic representatives.

The president selects the leader of the largest party in the Knesset to become the prime minister, or head of government. At the start of a new term the prime minister forms a cabinet of ministers (known as the government)

with as many as 18 members, at least half of whom must be from the Knesset. As the chief executive officer, the prime minister determines the agenda of cabinet meetings and has the final word in policy decisions.

The establishment of a new government requires a vote of confidence from the Knesset. Because no party has ever held an absolute majority of Knesset seats, Israel's governments have always been coalitions of several political parties. Compromises on policies and positions are central to coalition bargaining. The prime minister and the government may be ousted by a majority vote of no confidence in the parliament. The government's four-year term may also be shortened by its own resignation, by the Knesset's decision to dissolve itself and call for new elections, or by the resignation or death of the prime minister.

B Legislature

The legislature, or Knesset, is a single-chambered body of 120 members serving a term of four years. As the supreme authority in the state, the Knesset's main functions include votes of confidence or no confidence in the government, legislation, participation in formulating national policy, approval of budgets and taxes, election of the president, and general supervision of the administration's activities. The cabinet presents most legislation, although Knesset committees and individual members can initiate bills. Passage of any legislation requires a simple majority of the members present at the vote. An absolute majority is required for the election of the president and for changes in the system of proportional representation and the Basic Laws.

All Israeli citizens 18 or older may vote. Elections are nationwide with the entire country as a single constituency. Citizens vote not for individual candidates but for political parties, which prepare ranked lists of their candidates. Knesset seats are assigned in proportion to each party's percentage of the total vote; parties must receive at least 1.5 percent to gain a seat. The Knesset may dissolve itself and call for new elections before completion of its term.

C Judiciary

The judiciary system consists of both secular and religious courts. The president—upon the recommendation of a nominations committee composed of Supreme Court justices, practicing lawyers, and members of the Knesset and cabinet—appoints judges for both types of courts. Judges hold office until death, resignation, mandatory retirement at age 70, or mandatory removal for violations of the law. As the highest court, the Supreme Court hears appeals from lower courts in civil and criminal cases. It also serves as the primary guardian of fundamental rights of Israeli citizens and protects individuals from arbitrary actions by public officials. The Supreme Court cannot invalidate Knesset legislation, but it may nullify administrative actions and ordinances it regards as contrary to Knesset legislation. Below the Supreme Court are district courts and numerous municipal and magistrate courts. Military courts hear matters involving military establishment and personnel; the highest of these courts is the Military Court of Appeal, which is responsible to the Supreme Court.

Religious courts have jurisdiction over personal status matters such as marriage, divorce, adoption, alimony, guardianship, and inheritance. The High Rabbinical Court of Appeal is the highest Jewish religious court and is overseen by the Ashkenazic and Sephardic chief rabbis. Various Christian denominations, Druze, and Muslim sects operate separate religious courts that handle similar matters.

D Local Government

Israel is divided into 6 administrative districts and 14 subdistricts. The cabinet's interior minister appoints and oversees district officials, who in turn oversee municipal and local councils. Citizens choose mayors and council heads in direct popular elections and other council members through party lists similar to those in national elections. District officials draft legislation pertaining to local government, approve and control local tax rates and budgets, review and approve bylaws and ordinances passed by locally elected councils, approve local public works projects, and distribute grants and loans to local governments. Although local government is highly dependent on the national government for its budget, it acts as an important mechanism for providing services to communities. Adhering to national standards, local governments handle matters of education, culture, health, social welfare, road maintenance, public parks, water, and sanitation.

E Political Parties

Despite a wide range of secular and religious political parties, two parties with origins in the prestate period dominate contemporary Israeli politics. The Israel Labor Party, formed in 1968 when three previous labor parties merged, supports Zionist and socialist policies such as continued Jewish immigration, a social welfare state, and a primarily state-planned and regulated economy. The Labor Party also supports separation of religion and state, equality for minorities, and negotiated settlement between Israel and the Arab states concerning the land seized in the 1967 Six-Day War, known collectively as the Occupied Territories. The other major party, Likud, emerged in 1973 from an alliance of several right-of-center parties. It has focused on retaining the Occupied Territories and privatizing the economy, and it remains strongly nationalist and assertive in foreign and security matters. Whereas neither party has achieved an absolute majority in the Knesset since independence, the Israel Labor Party and its predecessors predominated until 1977, when Likud became the largest party. Labor regained the lead in the Knesset in 1992, but lost it again in 2003, when its coalition, known as One World, won only 19 seats to Likud's 38. The Kadima party was established by former Likud leader Ariel Sharon in 2005. The party was established primarily to support Sharon's decision to withdraw from the Gaza Strip, a decision that was opposed by some within Likud. Sharon took many former Likud supporters with him in forming Kadima. In the 2006 parliamentary elections Kadima won the single largest bloc of seats and set up a coalition with Labor, the Shas Party, and the newly formed Pensioners Party, which is concerned with the rights of the elderly. The remaining supporters of Likud won only 12 seats in the Knesset as opposed to 38 in the previous parliament.

Various other political parties play significant roles and are sometimes pivotal in sustaining or opposing the government in power. Shinui, formed in 1974, is a secular liberal party that opposes the influence of the ultra-Orthodox religious establishment. Meretz was formed in 1992 as a coalition of leftist groups. Formed in 1995, the Third Way supports a centrist alternative to Likud and Labor, combining a willingness to compromise over the Occupied Territories with an insistence on keeping areas deemed vital to Israel's security (especially the Golan Heights) and preserving Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Yisrael Ba'aliya was founded by Natan Sharansky to compete in the 1996 parliamentary elections and to encourage Jewish immigration from the former Soviet Union, while promoting the needs of new immigrants to Israel. In 2003 it merged with Likud. Another party based largely among Russian or former Soviet Union immigrants is Yisrael Beiteinu (Israel Is Our Home), led by Avigdor Lieberman, an immigrant to Israel from Kishinev, Moldova.

Arab political parties have been involved in Israeli politics since independence. The Progressive List for Peace (PLP), an Arab-Jewish party formed in 1984, advocates Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and the creation of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel. The Arab Democratic Party (ADP), made up entirely of Arab candidates, formed in 1988 to support moderate policies more acceptable to Zionists in order to exert influence within the political system. Many Arabs support communist parties, often more as a form of dissent against the establishment than from ideological commitment.

Religious parties generally play a crucial role in forming and maintaining governments. Shas, a party of Orthodox Sephardic Jews stressing ethnic pride and traditional values, maintains a conciliatory position on Middle East peace. United Torah Judaism, a party of Orthodox Ashkenazi Jews, seeks to enhance the role of religion in the state and opposes all forms of secularism. The National Religious Party (NRP) advocates legislation based on Judaic religious law. It promotes rapid Jewish settlement of Israeli-occupied territories based on divine right to inhabit biblical lands.

F Defense

Founded in 1948, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) acts as a unified command over all of Israel's air, land, and sea forces. In 2004 Israel maintained a standing army of 168,300 with an additional 430,000 in reserve forces. Most Israelis are inducted into the army at age 18. Jewish and Druze men serve for three years, and unmarried Jewish women serve for 21 months. Men continue in reserve duty until age 55 for up to 45 days a year (or longer in the event of emergency). Women are rarely called for reserve duty, but technically, unmarried women may be called until age 50. Arabs are exempt but may serve voluntarily. By an agreement dating from the late 1940s, Israel's minister of defense could grant religious Jews exemptions from military service. However, in December 1998 the Supreme Court ruled that this agreement was illegal and instructed the Knesset to pass legislation to regularize the situation within one year. A government-appointed chief of staff heads the IDF and is responsible to the cabinet minister of defense. Although the IDF as an institution has no formal or informal role in the political process, retired senior officers have become significant political figures.

G International Organizations

Israel has been a member of the UN since 1949 and is a member of many other international organizations. It participates in a wide range of UN activities, including nongovernmental organizations addressing issues such as aviation, immigration, communications, meteorology, trade, and the status of women. Israel's relationship with the UN has varied considerably. The UN partition plan created the state, and UN resolutions in 1967 and 1973 called for acknowledgement of Israel's sovereignty by all states in the region. However, Israel has been excluded from regional UN caucusing groups, and hundreds of UN resolutions have been critical of Israeli policies and activities. For example, in 1975 the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution that labeled Zionism as a form of racism; the General Assembly repealed the resolution in 1991. In 1998 the General Assembly passed a resolution acknowledging anti-Semitism (hostility toward Jews) as a form of racism.

Israel is a member of many agencies within the UN, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Israel also participates in other international organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Israel is excluded from many regional organizations uniting surrounding Arab nations, such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which embraces every Middle Eastern nation except Israel and Cyprus, and the Arab League, which promotes the common interests of Middle Eastern and North African Arab states. Through the 1980s most Arab nations did not recognize Israel. After peace talks began in the 1990s, many began tentative diplomatic relations.

VII HISTORY

Although the modern state of Israel came into being in 1948, its history is based on an ancient Jewish connection to the region, a recurrent theme in Jewish tradition and writing since the 2nd millennium BC. King Saul established the first Hebrew state, the Kingdom of Israel, in the region of Palestine in the 11th century BC. Saul's successors, David and Solomon, further consolidated the kingdom. The southern part soon became the independent kingdom of Judah. When both kingdoms were defeated by the 6th century BC, most Jews were exiled from Palestine. The desire of the exiled Jews, known collectively as the Diaspora, to return to their historical homeland is recorded in the Bible and became a universal Jewish theme after Roman rulers destroyed the ancient city of Jerusalem in AD 70. For the history of Palestine before the 19th century, *see* Palestine: *History*.

The modern concept of a Jewish homeland in Palestine began in the late 19th century, when the region was part of the Ottoman Empire. In 1880 Palestine had a Jewish population of about 25,000, composing about 5 percent of the total population in the predominantly Arab region. Jews resided primarily in Jerusalem and in other holy cities such as Ẕefat, Tiberias, and Hebron. In the early 1880s Eastern European Jews, primarily from Russia and Poland, began to immigrate to the region to escape persecution (*see* Pogrom). Beginning in the mid-1890s Zionism, the movement to unite Jews of the Diaspora and settle them in Palestine, further bolstered immigration. In his book *The Jewish State* (1896), Hungarian-born Jewish journalist Theodor Herzl analyzed the causes of anti-Semitism and proposed as a solution the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. In 1897 Herzl convened the first Zionist Congress, representing Jewish communities and organizations throughout the world, in Basel, Switzerland. The congress formulated the Basel Program, which defined Zionism's goal: "to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law." The congress also established the movement's administrative body, the World Zionist Organization (WZO).

By 1914 the Jewish population of Palestine had grown to about 85,000, or about 12 percent of the total population. In 1917, during World War I, the British government issued the Balfour Declaration, which expressed Britain's support for the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. By issuing the declaration Britain apparently hoped to generate support from both American and Russian Jews for the Allied war effort and to preempt efforts by its rival, Germany, to win Jewish support by issuing a similar declaration. Britain's main long-term goal was to retain Palestine as a strategic territory after the war. Despite these underlying motives, the Zionist movement saw the declaration as an important achievement promoting Jewish settlement and development in Palestine. However, the British had already made two previous agreements to others in the region. In the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 Britain had agreed to split the Ottoman lands into British, French, and Russian areas of control upon defeating the Ottomans. The British had also made vague promises in 1915 and 1916 to support Arab independence in the lands of the former Ottoman Empire in return for Arab support of British forces against the Ottomans. Aided by the Arabs, the British captured Palestine from the Ottomans in 1917 and 1918.

A The British Mandate Period

In July 1922 the League of Nations, an alliance of world powers formed in 1920 to preserve peace, issued a mandate granting control over Palestine to Britain, entrusting it to facilitate the establishment of a Jewish national home. Encouraged by British support of the Zionist cause, waves of Jewish immigrants arrived in Palestine between 1919 and 1939, each contributing to the developing Jewish community (*Yishuv*). About 35,000 came between 1919 and 1923, mainly from Russia. These pioneers laid the foundations of a comprehensive social and economic infrastructure, developed agriculture, established kibbutzim and moshavim, and provided labor for construction of housing and roads. Another 60,000 Jews, primarily from Poland, arrived between 1924 and 1932. This group developed and enriched urban life. These immigrants settled and established businesses in Tel Aviv (now part of Tel Aviv-Yafo),

Haifa, and Jerusalem. As German dictator Adolf Hitler and his Nazi Party rose to power, about 144,000 Jews, primarily from Germany, immigrated to Palestine in the early 1930s to escape increasingly ruthless persecution. Increased momentum internationally of the Zionist movement, combined with economic recession in Europe, brought thousands more Jews from elsewhere in Western and Central Europe to Palestine in the late 1930s. Many were professionals and academics whose education, skills, and experience raised business standards, improved urban and rural life, and broadened the community's cultural life.

The mandate authorities allowed Jewish and Arab communities to run their own internal affairs. The Jewish community elected a self-governing assembly, which in turn elected a council to implement its policies and programs. Financed by local resources and funds raised by worldwide Jewish organizations, these bodies developed and maintained a network of educational, religious, health, and social services for the Jewish population. Meanwhile the Jewish Agency, established by the mandate, handled matters of immigration, settlement, and economic development. The Arab Executive, a coalition of leading Muslim and Christian Arabs against Zionism, handled political, administrative, and economic affairs of the Arab community until 1934, when more activist groups emerged.

Through the 1920s and 1930s economic and cultural development of the country gained momentum. Yishuv leaders expanded agriculture, established factories, set up hydroelectric facilities on the Jordan River, built new roads throughout the country, and began tapping the mineral resources of the Dead Sea. The *Histadrut* (General Federation of Labor) advanced workers' welfare and provided employment by setting up cooperative industrial enterprises and marketing services for the communal agricultural settlements. Art, music, theater, and dance developed gradually with the establishment of professional schools and studios. Galleries and halls were set up for exhibitions and performances. The Hebrew language became one of three official languages of the mandated area; it was used for documents, coins and stamps, and radio broadcasts. Publishing and Hebrew literary activity flourished.

During the mandate the British realized that their World War I promises to the Jews and Arabs had led to conflicting expectations of the two communities in Palestine: Each community felt entitled to the territory. Anti-Jewish attacks occurred in Jerusalem and elsewhere in the 1920s. Attempting to placate both communities, Britain issued periodic policy statements that reaffirmed support for a Jewish national home but also limited Jewish immigration and land purchases. But the Arabs, viewing any British support of Jewish statehood as a threat to Arab independence, continued demonstrations, protests, and attacks on the Jewish community. Arab resistance culminated in a full-scale revolt between 1936 and 1939. Britain issued a policy statement called a White Paper in 1939 imposing drastic restrictions on Jewish immigration and providing for the establishment within ten years of a single independent state with Jewish and Arab government participation in proportion to the population. Zionists, who saw the White Paper as a reversal of the Balfour Declaration and a denial of mandate obligations, emphatically rejected the document.

During World War II (1939-1945) the Nazi regime carried out a systemic plan to murder the European Jewish population. As German armies swept through Europe, Jews were herded into ghettos and eventually transported to concentration camps. Experts estimate that between 5.6 million and 5.9 million Jews had died at the hands of the Nazis (*see* Holocaust) by the end of the war. During the war the United States became a center of Zionist activity. A Zionist conference in New York in May 1942 resulted in the Biltmore Program, which rejected British restrictions, called for the fulfillment of the Balfour Declaration and the mandate, and urged the establishment of Palestine as a Jewish commonwealth. Nevertheless, British restrictions on Jewish immigration continued throughout the war and intensified in the years after. The Jewish community responded by instituting a network of illegal immigration activities. Between 1945 and 1948 about 85,000 Holocaust survivors were brought to Palestine by secret immigration routes.

Exhausted by the war, Britain sought to reassess its position and policy in Palestine and other locations in the mid-1940s. After efforts to negotiate with the Arabs and the Zionists, the British government referred the Palestine issue to the United Nations in February 1947. After extensive evaluation of the situation, the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) proposed that the territory of the British mandate west of the Jordan River be partitioned into Jewish and Arab states with Jerusalem under international control. On November 29, 1947, the UN adopted a partition plan. Both the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics voted in favor, while Britain abstained. Zionists reluctantly accepted the plan as the best resolution they could expect given political circumstances, but the Arab world denounced and rejected it. The Arabs felt that the UN had no right to make such a decision and that Arabs should not be made to pay for Europe's crimes against the Jews. Fighting in Palestine escalated rapidly in the months after the plan was adopted.

B Independence and War

On May 14, 1948, when the British mandate over Palestine expired, Jewish authorities declared the establishment of the State of Israel. The declaration recalled the religious and spiritual connections of the Jewish people to the land of Israel, without mention of specific boundaries; guaranteed "freedom of religion and conscience, of language, education, and culture"; provided a framework for a democratic Jewish state founded on liberty, justice, and peace; and called for peaceful relations with Arab neighbors. The state declared itself open for Jewish immigration. A provisional government was established, with Jewish Agency chairman David Ben-Gurion as prime minister and former Jewish Agency president Chaim Weizmann as president. The United States and the USSR, along with many other states, quickly recognized the new government.

The Arab League declared war on the new state, and Egypt, Transjordan (now Jordan), Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq announced that their armies would enter the area to restore order. The newly established Israel Defense Forces (IDF), formed from prestate defense organizations, successfully repelled Arab forces. Fighting continued into early 1949, when Israel and each of the bordering states signed truce agreements that established the borders of the new state. Iraq, which shared no borders with Israel, did not sign any agreements.

The agreements left Israel in control of territory beyond what the partition plan allocated to it. Portions of territory that the UN plan had allocated to Palestinian Arabs came under Egyptian and Jordanian control (Egypt took over Gaza Strip, and Jordan gained control of the West Bank). Jerusalem was divided between Israel and Jordan. Several hundred thousand Arabs fled Israel for more secure areas in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and in neighboring Arab states. Of the original Arab population in Palestine only about 160,000 remained in the territory that was now Israel. Permanent peace negotiations were supposed to follow the armistice agreements but did not. The Arabs refused to recognize or negotiate with Israel.

C The Postwar Period

With the end of hostilities, Israel soon moved to function as a regular state. In elections in early 1949, Israelis chose the first Knesset, which replaced the provisional government. The Zionist labor party Mapai emerged as the largest party in the Knesset, and Ben-Gurion, its leader, formed a coalition government with religious and centrist parties. Ben-Gurion and Weizmann retained their positions as prime minister and president. Israel became the 59th member of the UN in May 1949.

Israel affirmed the right of every Jew to live in Israel and promoted unrestricted immigration by drafting the Law of Return in 1950. In the first four months of independence, about 50,000 immigrants, mainly Holocaust survivors,

arrived in Israel. By the end of 1951 about 687,000 had arrived—including more than 300,000 refugees from Arab lands such as Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya—doubling the Jewish population. Meanwhile a small number of Arabs returned to Israel to be reunited with family members who had chosen to remain in the country, bringing the total Arab population to about 167,000.

This mass immigration compounded the economic strain caused by the 1948-1949 war. The government was hard-pressed to feed, house, and find employment for the new immigrants. It implemented austerity programs and accepted substantial aid from abroad, particularly from the United States and Jewish communities worldwide. In 1952, after bitter political controversy, Israel negotiated agreements providing reparation payments from the West German government to the state and to individual victims as partial restitution for Nazi theft of Jewish property during World War II. The massive amount of aid made it possible for Israel to maintain a strong army while initiating economic and social development projects, including many new agricultural settlements for recent immigrants.

Israeli politics remained relatively stable through the 1950s. Ben-Gurion remained prime minister until 1953, when he temporarily retired from politics to work on a kibbutz in the Negev to serve as an example to Israeli youth. He returned to the post of prime minister in 1955. Weizmann died in 1952 and was replaced by Itzhak Ben-Zvi, a veteran Mapai leader, who served until his death in 1963.

D The Suez Crisis

The lack of comprehensive peace settlements between Israel and the bordering states after the 1949 armistice agreements caused continual tensions in the region. The Arab states continued to regard the establishment of Israel as an injustice and sustained a political and economic boycott on the new state. Egypt refused Israel access to the Suez Canal, which connects the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea, and in 1951 Egypt blockaded the Strait of Tiran, Israel's only direct access to the Red Sea. Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip began raiding Israeli communities near the borders. Israel held Jordan and Egypt responsible for these attacks and launched retaliatory raids. Further conflicts arose over control of demilitarized zones along the border and over Israeli use of water from the Jordan River—which borders Israel, Jordan, and the West Bank—for domestic development. Syria soon became involved as well.

In February 1955 Israel launched a raid against an Egyptian army base in the Gaza Strip. In response Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt organized further Palestinian guerrilla operations against Israel, and he intensified military buildup. In September Egypt concluded an arms deal with the Communist government of Czechoslovakia (acting for the USSR). Israel found these developments, along with Nasser's emergence as the leader of a new Arab nationalist movement, threatening and began to prepare for war. In July 1956 Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal, transferring ownership of the company that controlled its daily operations from British and French shareholders to the Egyptian government. Through secret negotiations with Britain and France, who sought to regain control of the canal and topple the Nasser regime, Israel planned a military offensive against Egypt.

In October 1956 Israel invaded the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula, quickly capturing these areas and advancing toward the Suez Canal. As planned in the meetings with Israel, the British and the French issued an ultimatum demanding withdrawal of both Israeli and Egyptian forces from the canal. When Nasser refused, British and French forces bombed Egyptian bases. The United States and the USSR demanded an immediate cease-fire, and a UN resolution soon forced the British, French, and Israelis to withdraw from Egyptian territory. The United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) stationed troops on the frontier between Israel and Egypt, which helped ensure quiet along the border for the next decade. The Egyptian government reopened the canal, and Israel gained access to the Strait

of Tiran. However, no comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace talks followed the Suez Crisis, and sporadic border incidents continued.

In a period of relative peace in the decade after the 1956 war, Israel's economy developed rapidly. Industrial and agricultural development allowed the government to end its austerity measures, unemployment almost disappeared, and living standards gradually improved. Exports doubled and the gross domestic product increased dramatically. Israel now manufactured previously imported items such as paper, tires, radios, and refrigerators. The most rapid growth occurred in the manufacture of metals, machinery, chemicals, and electronics. Farms began to grow a larger variety of crops for the food-processing industry and fresh produce for export. To handle the increased volume of trade, a deep-water port was built on the Mediterranean coast at Ashdod.

Foreign relations expanded steadily. Israel developed ties with the United States, the British Commonwealth countries, most Western European nations, and nearly all the countries of Latin America and Africa. Hundreds of Israeli experts and specialists shared their knowledge and experience with people in other developing countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Israel strengthened its military and political cooperation with France, the United States agreed to supply Israel with arms in 1962, and West Germany continued to provide economic and military aid. In 1965 Israel exchanged ambassadors with West Germany, a move that had been delayed because of bitter memories of the Holocaust.

Ben-Gurion resigned as prime minister in 1963 and was succeeded by his minister of finance, Levi Eshkol. Two years later Ben-Gurion formed a new opposition party, Rafi, to distance himself and his followers from the old guard of Mapai. Many prominent members of Mapai, including Moshe Dayan and Shimon Peres, joined the new party.

E The Six-Day War

Unresolved issues from previous conflicts caused continual tension between Israel and the Arabs, which flared up yet again in the mid-1960s. Israeli and Syrian efforts to divert water from the Jordan River and disputes over the use of the demilitarized zone between the two nations led to numerous border incidents. In 1964 the Arab League created the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to promote Palestinian nationalist activities and sought to coordinate Arab military efforts. In 1965 Palestinians began armed attacks against Israel; Israel responded with raids against Syria and Jordan. Border incidents became progressively more serious, inspiring nationalistic fervor throughout the Arab world. In May 1967 Nasser called for the removal of UN forces from the Suez Canal region. He also organized a military alliance with Syria, Jordan, and Iraq and moved Egyptian troops and equipment into the Sinai Peninsula. In addition, Nasser closed the Strait of Tiran to Israeli shipping.

After efforts at mediation by the UN and the Western powers failed, Israel launched a preemptive military strike against Egypt in early June. Jordan, Syria, and Iraq joined the fighting against Israel. The Egyptian air force was destroyed on the ground within hours of the start of the Six-Day War, and Israeli forces quickly seized the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula. Israel also took East Jerusalem and the West Bank from Jordan and the Golan Heights from Syria. Many Arabs fled these areas, which became known as the Occupied Territories. Israel placed the 1 million who remained under military administration. The USSR, which had supported the Arab alliance, and its allies immediately severed diplomatic relations with Israel.

In November 1967 the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 242, which called for Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied in the recent conflict in return for Arab recognition of Israel's independence, peace, and secure borders. Although neither side met these demands, the trade of "land for peace" has been the central concept of all subsequent peace efforts.

Although Israel's victory inaugurated another period of economic growth and prosperity, it also politically polarized citizens into two groups: those who favored withdrawal from the Occupied Territories and peace with the Arabs, and those who sought Jewish settlement and annexation. Others favored positions in between, and most supported the annexation of East Jerusalem; the government formally united both parts of Jerusalem a few days after the war ended. Despite the merger of Mapai and other labor parties to form the Israel Labor Party in 1968, as well as the election of its secretary general, Golda Meir, as prime minister in 1969, the party's dominance gradually broke down from failure to reach a consensus on the peace issue. The controversy also led in 1973 to the formation of Likud, a coalition of parties opposed to Israel's withdrawal from the Occupied Territories.

In 1969 President Nasser of Egypt launched the War of Attrition against Israel along the Suez Canal in an effort to continue the conflict and wear down the enemy. The USSR provided Egypt with advanced military equipment, advisers, and pilots. Israel responded with air and artillery attacks against Egypt. The conflict was ended by a cease-fire sponsored by the United States in August 1970, but there was no substantial movement toward peace.

F The War of 1973

Nasser died in 1970; soon after, newly elected Egyptian president Anwar al-Sadat attempted to regain the Sinai Peninsula from Israel through diplomatic means. Negotiations to resolve the dispute failed, and on October 6, 1973, Egyptian and Syrian military forces launched a surprise attack on Israeli positions along the Suez Canal and in the Golan Heights. Despite initial Egyptian and Syrian advances, Israel pushed Syria back beyond the 1967 cease-fire line and crossed the Suez Canal to take a portion of its west bank in Egypt. During the fighting, the USSR supplied arms to Egypt and Syria, and the United States provided arms to Israel. The Arab-Israeli War of 1973 (called the Yom Kippur War by Israel and the Ramadan War by Arabs) ended with a cease-fire in late October. Israel suffered heavy losses in the fighting despite its ultimate military successes. Parliamentary elections were postponed until December. The Labor Party remained in power, and Golda Meir retained her position as prime minister.

Traveling back and forth between the countries in a process known as *shuttle diplomacy,* U.S. secretary of state Henry Kissinger helped negotiate a military disengagement between Israeli and Egyptian forces in January 1974 and another between Israel and Syria in May. Kissinger arranged a second agreement between Egypt and Israel in 1975. A tense but relatively peaceful stalemate resulted. Israel agreed to withdraw from the canal zone, and Israel and Syria returned to the 1967 cease-fire boundaries.

The costly war caused increased unrest in Israel and growing criticism of the country's leaders. The government appointed a commission of Supreme Court justices, the state comptroller, and two former military chiefs to investigate Israel's lack of preparedness for the Arab strike. The commission's report was highly critical of the military. Meir resigned following the report in the spring of 1974 and was replaced by Yitzhak Rabin, a member of her cabinet. Economic problems and turmoil within the Labor Party undermined Rabin's tenure. The 1977 Knesset elections brought the Likud bloc to power and Menachem Begin to the office of prime minister, ending almost three decades of Labor Party dominance. Begin attracted strong support from Sephardic Jews who resented the treatment they had received under the Labor establishment.

G Peace with Egypt

In 1977 Sadat announced his willingness to meet with Israel publicly and openly to discuss peace. In November he arrived in Israel to address the Knesset, calling on Begin to negotiate peace. After nearly a year of stalled negotiations, U.S. president Jimmy Carter brought the parties together at Camp David, Maryland, in September 1978

to break the stalemate. Carter, Begin, and Sadat concluded the Camp David Accords, agreements that provided the outline and basis for a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel and for a comprehensive Middle East peace focusing on the Palestinian issues and the future of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In March 1979 Egypt and Israel signed a peace treaty calling for Israel's gradual withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula and the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Egypt and Israel opened their borders, established direct communication links, opened embassies, and exchanged ambassadors in 1980. Israel completed its Sinai withdrawal in 1982. The treaty eliminated the threat of Israel's primary Arab adversary with the largest military capacity. It also led to increased U.S. economic and military assistance to both Israel and Egypt. However, it failed to bring about a comprehensive Middle Eastern peace. On the contrary, the Arab League condemned Egypt and suspended its membership.

Despite peace with Egypt, hostilities continued between Israel and other Arab nations. In June 1981 Begin sent Israel's air force to destroy an Iraqi nuclear reactor near Baghdād, claiming it was being used for development of nuclear weapons. Later that year Israel effectively annexed the Golan Heights by extending Israeli civil law to the region; Syria refused to recognize Israel's authority. Begin continued to push for Israeli settlement in all of the Occupied Territories, heightening tensions in those regions.

H Invasion of Lebanon

The Lebanon border, which had been relatively quiet through the preceding Arab-Israeli wars, became the focus of Israeli security concerns in the early 1980s. Tensions between Lebanese Muslims and Christians had been heightened when the PLO, which had been expelled from Jordan in 1970, arrived in Lebanon. The situation was further complicated by the presence since 1976 of Syrian forces, who had originally intervened on behalf of Christians but soon allied with the PLO and other Muslims. PLO raids from Lebanon into Israel and the presence of Syrian missiles in Lebanon since early 1981 prompted Israel to launch a major military action, called "Operation Peace for Galilee," into southern Lebanon in June 1982. The objectives of the raid were to ensure security for northern Israel and to destroy PLO infrastructure in Lebanon. Israel allied with Lebanese Christians, who also sought to expel the PLO. Under orders from Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, the Israeli military pushed north to Beirut, defeating PLO and Syrian forces. United States envoy Philip Habib negotiated a cease-fire, and the PLO withdrew its forces from Lebanon in August 1982.

After the cease-fire, Bashir Gemayel, leader of a Maronite Christian party, was elected president of Lebanon but was assassinated on September 14. Subsequently, right-wing Lebanese Christian militiamen entered Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila near Beirut and massacred hundreds of Palestinians in the camps. The Israeli government established a commission of inquiry to investigate events pertaining to the massacre and to determine whether Israel held any responsibility for it. The commission's report, issued in early 1983, found Israeli military leaders indirectly responsible for failing to anticipate or prevent the massacre. It recommended the resignation of Sharon and other military leaders. In May 1983 Israel and Lebanon signed an agreement confirming that "the states of war" between them had been terminated. However, under pressure from Syria, which held considerable political and military influence in Lebanon, Lebanese president Amin Gemayel nullified the agreement in March 1984. Israel withdrew most of its forces from Lebanon in 1985, leaving a small force in the south to maintain security along the border.

In the fall of 1983 Begin resigned from office. Affected by the death of his wife and the costs and continuing casualties to Israel of the war in Lebanon, Begin apparently believed that he could no longer perform his tasks as he felt he should. He was replaced by his foreign minister, Yitzhak Shamir. In the 1984 Knesset elections no party achieved a clear victory. The major parties agreed to the formation of a national unity government made up of the

two major political blocs, Likud and Labor. The arrangement provided for the rotation of the leaders—Shamir for Likud and Shimon Peres for Labor—in the positions of prime minister and foreign minister, which each would hold for 25 months, beginning with Peres as prime minister. The government withdrew Israel's forces from Lebanon, leaving a small component in a security zone along the Lebanon-Israel border. It also acted to control inflation, which had risen to more than 400 percent per year, by imposing cuts in government expenditures and freezing wages and the exchange rate. It then worked to smooth the way for economic growth, entering a free trade agreement with the United States in 1985 that improved Israel's international trade position.

The Intifada and the Persian Gulf War

The relative quiet in the West Bank and Gaza Strip ended in December 1987 when a series of widespread demonstrations, strikes, riots, and violence known collectively as the intifada broke out. Encompassing the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, the intifada began as a spontaneous expression of frustration and resentment at 20 years of Israeli rule and Jewish settlement in the Occupied Territories. As the movement expanded and became more violent, Israel responded with increasingly harsh reprisals, which drew international criticism. Efforts by Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin to stop the riots and demonstrations failed, as did an attempt by U.S. secretary of state George Shultz to initiate peace negotiations. The United States excluded the PLO from negotiations as long as the PLO refused to accept Israel's right to exist, and Palestinians would not participate in negotiations that excluded the PLO. The PLO's claim to be the representative of the Palestinian people was further strengthened when Jordan ceded to the PLO its territorial claim to the West Bank in July 1988.

The 1988 Israeli elections were again inconclusive, and a new national unity government was installed, but this time Shamir was to remain as prime minister throughout the tenure of the government. Peres became finance minister while Rabin remained as defense minister. At this time PLO chairman Yasir Arafat acknowledged Israel's right to exist by accepting UN Security Council Resolution 242 (originally adopted by the UN in 1967), and Arafat renounced terrorism. As a result the United States and the PLO began a formal dialogue. In the spring of 1989 the Israeli government proposed a comprehensive peace initiative, but efforts to work out the details soon failed. Negotiations suffered a further setback when the United States suspended its dialogue with the PLO following Arafat's refusal to condemn a terrorist raid on a beach near Tel Aviv by a group affiliated with the PLO.

In March 1990 the Knesset terminated the Shamir government with a vote of no confidence, the first such successful vote in Israel's history. After efforts by former Finance Minister Peres to form a government failed, Shamir succeeded in establishing a coalition of Likud and several right-wing and religious parties in June 1990. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 and the subsequent Persian Gulf War in 1991 further postponed efforts to seek an Arab-Israeli peace. During the war the United States and other members of an international coalition against Iraq excluded Israel from participation so as not to alienate the coalition's Arab members. Soon after hostilities broke out in January 1991, Iraq fired Scud missiles at Israel and Saudi Arabia in an effort to split the coalition by diverting Arab attention from its anti-Iraqi stance to its opposition to Israel. The plan failed because Israel, at the request of the United States, did not retaliate.

Another area of international affairs also affected Israel dramatically during this period. Beginning in 1989, when the Soviets relaxed restrictions on Jewish emigration, a massive wave of immigrants arrived in Israel. Between 1989 and 1998 more than 700,000 Jews emigrated from the Soviet Union (and, after the breakup of the Soviet Union in late 1991, parts of the former Soviet Union). Successfully absorbing newcomers into all facets of the country's life once again became one of the main challenges facing Israeli society. Many of these immigrants were highly educated and trained, enhancing Israel's skill base.

J The Peace Process

The end of the Cold War, a 45-year period of tense relations between the United States and the USSR, and the success of the Gulf War coalition suggested new possibilities in the quest for an Arab-Israeli peace. After months of shuttle diplomacy by U.S. secretary of state James Baker, the United States and the USSR issued invitations to Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and the Palestinians to a peace conference in Madrid, Spain, in the fall of 1991. Israel continued to exclude the PLO, insisting on meeting instead with a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

The Madrid conference convened in October 1991 and was followed by bilateral negotiations in Washington, D.C., several months later. Despite months of negotiations between Israel and the Lebanese, Syrian, and Jordanian-Palestinian delegations, no agreements emerged. Nevertheless, the conference was an important step on the road to peace because it involved direct, bilateral, public, and official peace negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbors on the central political issues of the conflict.

In the midst of the Washington sessions, Labor emerged as the leading party in the Knesset elections in June 1992. As prime minister, Labor leader Yitzhak Rabin formed a coalition government of center and leftist parties. As the Washington sessions continued, Israel and the PLO began secret negotiations in Oslo, Norway, resulting in a breakthrough in the peace process. In 1993 the parties reached several important agreements and exchanged letters in which the PLO affirmed Israel's right to exist in peace and security, and Israel recognized the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people. The PLO renounced the use of terrorism and other forms of violence and committed itself to resolve the conflict with Israel through peaceful negotiations.

On September 13, 1993, Rabin and Arafat witnessed the signing of a historic accord between Israel and the PLO at the White House in Washington. This Declaration of Principles (DOP), outlined a proposal for limited Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank town of Jericho. It also stated that within five years the two sides were to reach a comprehensive peace settlement regarding all remaining issues in dispute, including the status of Jerusalem. The agreement also set the stage for the establishment of an interim body, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), to administer these regions. Despite the general euphoric mood created by the agreement, right-wing Israeli parties and dissident Palestinian groups expressed dissent, sometimes in the form of terrorist attacks.

Shortly after the signing of the Declaration of Principles, Israel and Jordan entered into separate negotiations that led to the signing of a peace treaty in October 1994. The treaty addressed security, boundary demarcations and border crossings, control of water resources, police cooperation, environmental issues, and the establishment of normalized relations. Both parties agreed not to join, aid, or cooperate with any party intending to attack the other side and to prohibit military forces or equipment that could harm the other side from entering their territories. They pledged to cooperate in combating terrorism and to solve the problem of Palestinian refugees. They also agreed to cooperate on economic matters, including trade, development, and tourism. Finally, Israel recognized Jordan's special role as guardian of Muslim holy places in Jerusalem, which angered Palestinians because it undermined their agreement with Israel to negotiate the status of Jerusalem at a later date.

Amid this initial progress toward peace, Israel was able to forge new diplomatic and trade relations with a large number of states in Africa and Asia, including China and India. Israel became more acceptable to the international community, and foreign trade grew dramatically, producing greater prosperity and an improved standard of living.

Meanwhile, Israeli-Palestinian negotiations continued. After reaching further agreements with the PLO concerning transfer of much of the Gaza Strip and Jericho to PNA administration, Israel completed its withdrawal from these areas in May 1994. The PNA, which was headed by Arafat and staffed primarily by PLO members, assumed control of

civil matters in the Gaza Strip and Jericho and deployed a Palestinian police force to maintain internal security. Israel retained control over Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip as well as over security of the region's borders. An interim agreement in September 1995 focused on Israeli withdrawals from the remaining Palestinian towns and cities in the West Bank and set the date of elections for the PNA's president and its legislature, the Palestinian Legislative Council. The agreement also stated that after PNA elections, Israel would redeploy from Palestinian rural areas of the West Bank. Israel was to retain control over Jewish settlements and military installations until final status negotiations—including discussion of the status of Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, borders, and security arrangements—were completed.

K Assassination of Rabin and Election of Netanyahu

In November 1995 Yigal Amir, an Israeli student who opposed the peace process, assassinated Rabin at a peace rally in Tel Aviv, claiming it was his religious duty to prevent the return of biblical lands to the Arabs. Shimon Peres, who as foreign minister under Rabin had been instrumental in peace negotiations, became Labor leader and prime minister. Peres proclaimed his desire to continue the peace process and carried out the terms of the interim agreement. Over the next several months Israel turned over civil administration of all other West Bank cities and most Palestinian towns and villages to the PNA, thus ending Israeli administration, established after the Six-Day War in 1967, over most of the Palestinian residents in the West Bank. In the cities, the PNA also assumed responsibility for internal security. The exception was Hebron, sacred to Jews as the site of King David's capital prior to Jerusalem and the burial place of the Jewish patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Negotiations concerning Israel's withdrawal from Hebron continued for another year. In Palestinian towns and villages, security came under joint control of a Palestinian police force and Israeli troops, with Israel's authority predominant. As in the Gaza Strip, Israel retained control over Jewish settlements and over security of the West Bank's borders, as well as over the travel routes between Palestinian settlements. In January 1996 Palestinians elected Yasir Arafat as president of the PNA and chose the members of the Palestinian Legislative Council.

Despite Rabin's assassination it appeared that the peace process was progressing as planned. However, terrorist attacks against Israel in early 1996, including suicide bombings by Palestinian militants, helped sway Israeli public opinion toward a position of fewer compromises. In May Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu became Israel's first popularly elected prime minister and formed a coalition government determined to assure security for Israel. The government insisted that the PNA meet its obligations to prevent terrorism before Israel would make any more withdrawals. The peace process stalled despite efforts by the United States and others to restart it.

Negotiations between Israel and Syria, which had continued sporadically since the 1991 Madrid conference, were also affected by Likud's return to power. Syrian president Hafez al-Assad believed progress had been made in the mid-1990s and wished to continue negotiations from where he and Israel's former leaders had left off. However, Netanyahu and his coalition partners sought to reassess the situation and renegotiate the central issues, and the process stalled.

Although peace negotiations under the new Likud government had stalled, an agreement involving Hebron was completed and signed in January 1997. Israel withdrew from 80 percent of the city, maintaining control over Jewish settlements there. However, Israel decided the following month to proceed with a Jewish housing project in eastern Jerusalem, which the Palestinians viewed as a violation of preceding agreements. Negotiations again deadlocked. Terrorist attacks by Islamic groups, particularly by the Palestinian group Hamas, prompted Israel to demand more action by Palestinian leaders against terrorism. In September Mossad, Israel's intelligence agency, attempted unsuccessfully to assassinate Hamas political leader Khaled Meshal in Jordan's capital. The action strained Israeli-Jordanian relations.

Terrorist attacks by Islamic groups from Lebanon on the security zone and into northern Israel also plagued Israel. In 1998 Israel offered to withdraw from its security zone in southern Lebanon, which Israel had maintained since 1985, in return for Lebanon's guarantee to prevent attacks on northern Israel by terrorist groups. Lebanon refused the offer, calling for an unconditional withdrawal.

By mid-1998 Netanyahu faced increasing criticism in the Knesset from both the right and the left. In October he signed a U.S.-brokered accord providing for Israeli withdrawals from an additional 13 percent of the West Bank. In return, the Palestinian leadership promised to improve security to prevent attacks on Israelis by Palestinian terrorist groups, and to remove from their national charter the clauses calling for the destruction of Israel. Netanyahu's action drew harsh criticism from members of Likud and others opposed to land-for-peace agreements.

In December 1998, after the first Israeli withdrawal, Netanyahu froze the accord, citing Palestinian violations and placing new conditions on further withdrawals. This angered Labor and other parties that sought to move forward with the peace process. Netanyahu also faced defections of key coalition partners. That month the Knesset voted to call for elections in May 1999, a year before Netanyahu's term was due to expire. In these elections, 15 parties, including 6 new parties, won seats. Labor, which had formed a coalition known as One Israel, won the largest number of seats, and Likud came in second. However, both parties wound up with fewer seats than they had held before the elections. Shas, a religious party consisting primarily of Sephardic Jews, came in third, while Meretz, a strongly pro-peace leftist party, placed fourth. Ehud Barak, leader of the Labor Party and the One Israel bloc, defeated Netanyahu in elections for prime minister.

Barak's Tenure

Barak took office in July 1999 and created a broad center-left coalition government. He pledged to take "bold steps" to help forge a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. He focused his attention on negotiations with the Palestinians, but he also expressed eagerness to reach a peace agreement with Syria. In addition, he promised to withdraw Israeli troops from southern Lebanon within one year.

These steps led to increased optimism regarding the peace process. Barak transferred some West Bank territory to the authority of the PNA and also hinted that he might return virtually all of the Golan Heights to Syria in exchange for peace. Barak met with U.S. president Bill Clinton in July 1999 and set a 15-month deadline for a final peace settlement with the Palestinians. Negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians began in November 1999 but soon bogged down over further transfers of land in the West Bank to Palestinian control.

In December 1999 Israel and Syria agreed to resume peace negotiations. Talks held in January 2000 were inconclusive, however, and a summit meeting between Assad and Clinton in April of that year failed to end the stalemate.

Exasperated by the failure of the Syrian talks and concurring with growing Israeli dismay with further casualties in southern Lebanon, Barak unilaterally ordered the withdrawal of all Israeli forces from Lebanon to the countries' international border as confirmed by the United Nations. The withdrawal was completed by June 2000.

In an effort to move the Israeli-Palestinian peace process forward, the United States convened a summit at Camp David, Maryland, in the summer of 2000, at which Clinton, Barak, and Arafat focused on a comprehensive peace agreement. Despite intense efforts and some areas of accord, no ultimate agreement was reached. The failure of the summit led to the outbreak of a second intifada (known as the Al Aqsa intifada, after the holy Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem) in September 2000. Violent clashes between Palestinians and Israelis rocked Israel. The failure of the

Camp David summit and the ensuing violence brought the peace process to a halt and eroded Barak's political support. Barak suddenly resigned as prime minister in December 2000, and called for a new election for prime minister in February 2001.

Sharon Becomes Prime Minister

In the February 2001 election, voters were presented with a choice between Barak and Ariel Sharon of Likud for the post of prime minister. Leading up to the election, Sharon's campaign stressed two factors: first, that the security of Israelis would be his administration's paramount concern; and second, that the peace process initiated in Oslo in 1993 was "dead." Sharon stated unequivocally that the violence must stop before the negotiations could continue, and that negotiations should then not be restricted by the agreements reached in Oslo. Sharon won the election by an overwhelming margin, reflecting the growing pessimism among Israelis regarding the peace process and Arafat's power to curtail violence.

Sharon assembled a broad-based government that included people with differing views on the peace process. Several noted Labor figures were appointed to cabinet positions, including Shimon Peres as foreign minister. The government's clear first objective was to stop the violence and restore security to the average Israeli. However, violence continued across the country.

Israeli-Palestinian relations were further soured in January 2002 when Israeli forces seized a large shipment of weaponry allegedly purchased by a high-ranking Palestinian official. The peace process seemed to be moving in reverse as Palestinian terrorist attacks on Israeli civilians, and Israeli military responses to these attacks, continued to grow in severity and lethality.

In response to mounting Israeli death tolls from Palestinian suicide bombings, in 2002 Israeli forces swept into the West Bank and occupied key urban centers. During the operation, which was vehemently denounced by Palestinian leaders, Israeli forces arrested hundreds of alleged terrorists and seized or destroyed large quantities of weapons. Violence escalated in late 2002. In October the Labor Party withdrew from the government when funds were allocated to Jewish settlements in the West Bank in the government's 2003 budget.

After the 2001 election the Knesset voted to revert to Israel's pre-1996 system of having the leader of the party with the most parliamentary seats named prime minister. In January 2003 parliamentary elections, Likud emerged as the dominant party, and Sharon retained the post of prime minister.

In the spring of 2003 U.S. president George W. Bush unveiled what was referred to as a "road map" toward the goal of independent Israeli and Palestinian states living side by side in peace and security. The PNA and, eventually, Israel accepted the road map, and Hamas agreed to a cease-fire. Summit meetings followed. However, violence surged in August with a bloody Palestinian suicide bombing in Jerusalem followed by Israeli missile strikes against top Hamas leaders.

In late 2003 Sharon announced that Israel would take unilateral steps to ensure the country's security in the perceived absence of a Palestinian partner for peace. These steps included a unilateral Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the dismantling of Gaza Strip settlements. Israel continued to build a fence, sometimes referred to as a security barrier, to separate Israel from the West Bank. Israel has been criticized by Palestinians and international organizations for building the barrier within West Bank territory in some stretches. Palestinian terrorist attacks against Israel continued and Israeli forces also continued to target Hamas leadership. An Israeli missile strike in March 2004 killed Hamas founder Ahmed Yassin, and another strike killed the new Hamas leader the following month.

In early 2005 the Labor Party formed a coalition with Likud after Likud lost support from coalition members who opposed the planned withdrawal from Gaza. Labor Party leader Peres assumed the position of deputy premier under Sharon.

N Formation of Kadima and 2006 Elections

In August 2005 Israel evacuated about 9,000 settlers from all 21 Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip and some others from 4 settlements in the northern West Bank. The evacuation met with opposition from a minority of Israelis. Some settlers from Gaza and the northern West Bank had to be forcibly removed. Former prime minister Netanyahu opposed the pullout. He resigned from his position as finance minister and announced that he would challenge Sharon for leadership of the Likud Party. The Israeli troop withdrawal from Gaza was largely completed by October. In November Peres lost the leadership of the Labor Party to Amir Peretz, the head of Israel's trade union federation. Peretz pledged to withdraw Labor from the Likud coalition. The same month Sharon, frustrated by opposition from within Likud to the Gaza withdrawal, resigned from the party and formed a new centrist party, known as the Kadima party. Netanyahu became the leader of Likud, and Peres joined Kadima. The Knesset dissolved itself, paving the way for parliamentary elections in the spring of 2006.

In January 2006 Sharon suffered an extensive stroke. His powers as prime minister were transferred to Deputy Premier Ehud Olmert, who also became the leader of Kadima.

In the March 2006 parliamentary elections, the newly established Kadima party, under Olmert's leadership, won the single largest number of seats, 29, but fell short of a majority in the Knesset, as have all parties throughout Israel's history. Labor, led by the Moroccan-born Peretz, won 19 seats to come in second. Likud suffered a significant setback, securing only 12 seats. Israel's right-wing parties did not do well enough to form an opposition coalition that could block Olmert's plan for continued Israeli withdrawal from the Occupied Territories. In May Olmert formed a coalition with Labor, the ultra-Orthodox Shas Party, and the newly formed Pensioners Party to control 67 of the 120 seats in the Knesset. As part of the coalition agreement, Olmert became the prime minister, and Labor secured a number of Cabinet positions, including the defense ministry to be headed by Peretz.

Olmert reportedly regarded the elections as a referendum on his plans to establish permanent borders for Israel, either through negotiations with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) or by withdrawing unilaterally from parts of the West Bank. Several factors complicated a withdrawal, however. The Labor Party favored a negotiated settlement, but Olmert refused to negotiate with Hamas, the militant Islamic group. Hamas does not recognize Israel's right to exist, calls for Israel's replacement by an Islamic Palestinian state, and refuses to renounce terrorism**.** Although Mahmoud Abbas remained president of the PNA, Hamas won the Palestinian legislative elections in the West Bank and Gaza in January 2006 and established the PNA's Cabinet in March 2006.

O Conflict with Lebanon

The lack of movement in the Arab-Israeli peace process and continued tensions along Israel's borders with Lebanon and the Gaza Strip was replaced in the summer of 2006 by conflict. On June 26, Palestinians tunneled under the international border between Israel and Gaza, attacked an Israeli patrol, killed two soldiers, and kidnapped a third one. Israel responded by attacking a series of terrorist and infrastructure targets in the Gaza Strip, but the kidnapped Israeli soldier remained in captivity somewhere in Palestinian territory.

In July 2006 Hezbollah militia fighters crossed the internationally recognized border from Lebanon into Israel, attacked and killed eight Israeli soldiers, and kidnapped two others. Prime Minister Olmert called this an "act of war," and Israeli forces launched an attack on targets in Lebanon. Israel bombed Hezbollah strongholds in southern Lebanon, destroying the organization's headquarters. To prevent any supply of arms from Syria and Iran from reaching Hezbollah, Israel launched air attacks against Beirut's airport and major land routes, while a naval blockade prevented shipping from entering or leaving the ports. Thousands of foreign nationals eventually were evacuated from the war zone.

Israeli attacked Hezbollah targets, including weapons storehouses and missile launching points, across the country. Meanwhile, Hezbollah responded with rocket attacks on northern Israeli cities, including attacks on Haifa. Israel called up reservists, and a military incursion led to the taking of villages and towns south of the Līṭānī River, but Israeli forces met fierce resistance from Hezbollah fighters entrenched in underground tunnels and caves and armed with sophisticated antitank weapons that appeared to have been supplied by Iran and Syria.

The fighting lasted for 34 days until a UN Security Council resolution achieved a ceasefire on August 14, 2006, and an agreement was reached for a "robust" version of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to be installed in southern Lebanon to prevent Hezbollah from reestablishing itself there and using the area to attack Israel.

Estimates of the number of Lebanese killed varied from about 850 to 1,200. The number of Israelis killed was put at 43 civilians and 117 soldiers between July 12 and August 14, with more than 4,000 wounded. UN officials estimated that a million Lebanese and 300,000 Israelis had been displaced by the fighting. More than a million Israelis were forced to live in shelters as some 4,000 rockets landed on Israel. Israel's army completed its withdrawal from Lebanon on October 1, 2006.

As with previous wars that ended without overwhelming success for Israel, there developed a series of problems within Israel concerning performance and outcomes. When the war ended, the captured Israeli soldiers remained in their captors' hands, and the image of Israel as an overwhelmingly successful military power seemed diminished. This led to protests and demonstrations, calls for commissions to evaluate the handling of the conflict, and for a reevaluation of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and Israel's political leadership. Some called for change in the government, while others demanded changes at the top of the IDF leadership.

Internationally, Israel came under criticism for its use of cluster bombs in populated areas of Lebanon. Although cluster bombs are not an outlawed weapon, critics of their use in populated areas note that children can easily mistake them for harmless objects. The United Nations emergency relief coordinator, Jan Egeland, condemned Israel's use of cluster bombs as "completely immoral." In January 2007 Israeli deputy prime minister Shimon Peres said the use of cluster bombs was a regrettable mistake and apparently occurred without the prior knowledge of the IDF's chief-of-staff.

Within Israel the Olmert government came under harsh criticism for its handling of the conflict and the related diplomacy. Many Israelis believed the government responded ineptly to the Hezbollah attacks by relying almost solely on air power at the beginning of the fighting, rather than launching a full-scale invasion into southern Lebanon. Critics of the government cited the lack of military experience of both Olmert and the newly appointed defense minister, Amir Peretz, the leader of the Labor Party. The Olmert government called for an investigation into the military response, but the inquiry itself, known as the Winograd Commission, came under challenge because it was not an official state inquiry. Discontent and concern lingered into the winter.

On October 30, 2006, Prime Minister Olmert won approval of Israel's cabinet for the parliamentary faction Yisrael Beiteinu (Israel Our Home) to join the government. Led by Avigdor Lieberman, Israel Our Home is a right-wing party

that advocates annexation of parts of the West Bank and the transfer of some Arab towns in Israel to a future Palestinian state. By inviting Israel Our Home into the government, Olmert increased to 78 (out of 120) the number of legislators supporting the coalition, giving it a substantial majority. The move also suggested a more rightward and hardline shift for Israel in the wake of the Hamas and Hezbollah attacks. With Hezbollah being supported by Syria and Iran, many Israelis were reminded of statements by Iran's president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who has organized conferences within Iran denying the existence of the Holocaust and opposing Zionism.

In January 2007 the head of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), Lieutenant General Dan Halutz, resigned just weeks before the Winograd Commission was due to issue an interim report. Halutz became the third Israeli general to resign in the wake of the war against Hezbollah. He had been criticized in particular for taking the time to sell stock during the first hours of the war. Peretz, too, took the brunt of much of the criticism and resigned as defense minister. He was replaced by former prime minister and Labor Party leader Ehud Barak. When the Winograd Commission issued its final report in January 2008, it placed most of the blame for Israel's losses in the fighting with Hezbollah on the IDF and largely exonerated Olmert.

P Clashes with Hamas over Gaza

Meanwhile, Israel continued to struggle with Hamas and the smaller Islamic Jihad Party, which continued to launch rocket attacks from the Gaza Strip on the Israeli southern border town of Sederot. Hamas had won the Palestinian Legislative Council elections in 2006 and ever since Israel had attempted to undercut its growing popularity among Palestinians, especially in Gaza. Soon after the elections, Israel withheld tax revenues that it continued to collect for the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), apparently in the hope of undermining Hamas. Instead, Hamas appeared to secure its hold on Gaza, even staging a coup and ousting Fatah from Gaza in June 2007.

An informal ceasefire that had existed between Hamas and Israel broke down. Israel resumed its policy of targeted assassinations against Hamas and Islamic Jihad militants after Hamas reportedly failed to control rocket attacks by Islamic Jihad on southern Israel and then began to initiate its own attacks. The relatively small and inaccurate Qassam rockets were responsible for only two Israeli deaths in 2007 but they made life miserable for the residents of Sederot who bore the brunt of thousands of rocket attacks.

In September 2007 Israel declared Gaza a "hostile territory." Israel began to impose sanctions such as cutting off fuel and electricity and making it more difficult for Gazans to cross the borders into Israel or Egypt.

Bernard Reich contributed the Government and History sections of this article.

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Kingdom of Israel

Kingdom of Israel, ancient Hebrew state that at its greatest extent included present-day Israel, with parts of Jordan and southern Syria. It came into existence under King Saul in the 11th century BC, and reached its height under his successors, David and Solomon. After Solomon's death in 922 BC, the country was divided into two parts. The name Israel was retained by the northern kingdom, with its capital at Samaria, near modern Nābulus. It was destroyed by the Assyrians in 722 BC. The southern kingdom, known as Judah, continued to exist until the 6th century BC.

Zionism

I INTRODUCTION

Zionism, movement to unite the Jewish people of the Diaspora (exile) and settle them in Palestine; it arose in the late 19th century and culminated in 1948 in the establishment of the state of Israel. The movement's name is derived from Zion, the hill on which the Temple of Jerusalem was located and which later came to symbolize Jerusalem itself. The term Zionism was first applied to this movement in 1890 by the Austrian Jewish philosopher Nathan Birnbaum.

II HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Zionism as an organized political movement originated in the 19th century, but its roots go back to the 6th century BC, when the Jews were carried off to captivity in Babylon and their prophets encouraged them to believe that one day God would allow them to return to Palestine, or Eretz Israel (the Land of Israel). Over the centuries, the Jews of the Diaspora associated the hope of the return with the coming of the Messiah, a savior whom God would send to deliver them. Individual Jews often migrated to Palestine to join the Jewish communities that continued to exist there, but they remained a small minority among a largely Arab population.

A The Haskalah and the Move to Assimilate

A secular Zionism could not emerge until Jewish life itself was to some extent secularized. This process began in the 18th century with the Haskalah (Hebrew, "enlightenment"), a movement inspired by the European Enlightenment and initiated by the German Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn. The Haskalah marked the beginning of a move away from traditional religious orthodoxy and created a need for Jewish national feeling to replace religion as a unifying force. Initially, however, the trend was toward assimilation into European society. The liberal Jewish reform movement in Germany sought to reduce Judaism to a religious denomination, allowing Jews to adopt German culture. The achievement of political equality by European Jewry began in revolutionary France in 1791 and spread over most of Europe during the next few decades.

B The Rise of Modern Anti-Semitism

Political emancipation, however, proved to be a false dawn. In the second half of the 19th century organized anti-Semitic parties emerged in Germany and Austria-Hungary. In Russia, where the emancipation had in any case been superficial, the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881 unleashed a wave of nationalist feeling, and anti-Jewish

riots (pogroms) spread across the country. The 1881 pogroms were as much a turning point for Russian Jewry as the French Revolution had been for French and Western European Jewry.

To escape persecution, large numbers of Russian Jews migrated to the West, primarily to the United States. A smaller number, believing that Jews living in the Diaspora were destined for the eternal role of scapegoat, and that their only security lay in a homeland of their own, went to Palestine, which was then under Turkish rule. They were given financial support by the French Jewish philanthropist Baron Edmond de Rothschild, but many did not persevere, and this early Jewish immigration was insignificant.

III PRECURSORS OF ZIONISM

In the mid-19th century, two European Orthodox rabbis, Jehuda Alkalai and Zevi Hirsch Kalischer, adapted the traditional belief in a Messiah to modern conditions by teaching that Jews themselves must lay the groundwork for his coming. In 1862 the German Jewish socialist Moses Hess, inspired by the Italian nationalist movement, published *Rome and Jerusalem* (trans. 1918), a book in which he rejected the idea of assimilation into European society, insisting that the essence of the Jews' problem was their lack of a national home.

IV THE FOUNDATION OF THE ZIONIST MOVEMENT

In 1896 Theodor Herzl, a Hungarian born Jewish journalist, published a short book aptly called *The Jewish State,* in which he analyzed the causes of anti-Semitism and proposed its cure, the creation of a Jewish state. Although Herzl secured audiences with the German emperor William II and Sultan Abd al-Hamid II of Turkey, he was unable to secure their support. Nor would the wealthy among the Jews put up the money to back his project.

In 1897 Herzl organized the first Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland. Attended by nearly 200 delegates, the congress formulated the Basel Program, which remained the basic platform of the Zionist movement. The program defined Zionism's goal as the creation "for the Jewish people of a home in Palestine secured by public law." The congress also founded a permanent World Zionist Organization (WZO) and authorized it to establish branches in every country with a substantial Jewish population.

When Herzl failed to obtain a charter from the Turkish sultan, he directed his diplomacy toward Britain, but the British offer to investigate the possibility of Jewish colonization in East Africa—the so-called Uganda scheme—nearly split the Zionist movement. The Russian Zionists accused Herzl of betraying the Zionist program. Although Herzl was reconciled with his detractors, he died soon after, a broken man. When the 7th Zionist Congress (1905) rejected the East Africa scheme, Israel Zangwill formed the Jewish Territorial Organization, the goal of which was to seek territory anywhere suitable for Jewish colonization. Zangwill's organization, however, never attracted a large following and faded after his death.

V VARIETIES OF ZIONISM

Zionism has spawned a profusion of different ideas and ideologies. The cultural Zionists, whose chief spokesman was the Russian journalist Ahad Ha-am, emphasized the importance of making Palestine a center for the spiritual and cultural growth of the Jewish people. Another variety of Zionism was elaborated by A. D. Gordon, who wrote and practiced the "religion of labor," a Tolstoyan concept that conceived the bonding of people and land through working the soil.

Socialist Zionists tried to give a Marxist justification for Zionism. The Jews needed a territory of their own in which to set up a normally stratified society, where they could then engage in class struggle and thus hasten the revolution. Social experiments in cooperative agriculture led to a uniquely Zionist creation, the kibbutz (Hebrew, "collective"), which provided the political, cultural, and military backbone of the *Yishuv* (Hebrew, "settlement," the Jewish community in Palestine) before the state of Israel was established and for many years thereafter.

Religious Zionists saw their goal as steering the Jews' national regeneration onto more traditional paths, but those religious parties that shared political authority have been criticized for compromising their beliefs in return for the material trappings of power.

VI ZIONISM IN THE 20TH CENTURY

The two greatest achievements of Zionism in this century are the commitment made by the British government in the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and the establishment of Israel in 1948.

During World War I, the British wooed the Zionists in order to secure strategic control over Palestine and to gain the support of world Jewry for the Allied cause. The declaration, contained in a letter from Foreign Secretary Arthur J. Balfour to a British Zionist leader, approved the establishment in Palestine of a "national home for the Jewish people." As Palestine had passed from Turkish to British control, this provided the Zionists with the charter they had been seeking.

A The Interwar Period

After the war Zionism faced two critical setbacks. Russian Jewry, the traditional source of Zionist migration, was sealed off by the new Soviet regime. In addition, a dispute arose between the leader of American Zionism, Judge Louis Brandeis, and Dr. Chaim Weizmann, the man credited with obtaining the Balfour Declaration. The dispute involved both personal issues and an ideological debate over the future of Zionism. Weizmann's "synthetic Zionism," which advocated both political struggle and colonization, won out over Brandeis's pragmatic approach, which concentrated on colonization without reference to future nationhood. Weizmann emerged as unchallenged leader, but Brandeis and his group seceded, and until World War II, American Jews directed the major part of their philanthropy to the relief of European Jews rather than to Palestine.

In 1929, Weizmann set up the wider Jewish Agency, a body that harnessed the financial support of Jews who were willing to aid their brethren in Palestine but did not subscribe to the political goals of Zionism.

During the period of the British mandate (1922-48), the *Yishuv* grew from 50,000 to 600,000 people. Most of the new immigrants were refugees from Nazi persecution in Europe. In 1935 a revisionist group led by Ze'ev Vladimir Jabotinsky seceded from the Zionist movement and formed the New Zionist party. During the late 1930s, Jabotinsky, who advocated a Jewish state on both sides of the Jordan River, devoted himself to a fruitless campaign to arrange for the mass evacuation of European Jews to Palestine.

Coexistence with the Arabs of Palestine became an increasingly intractable problem. Recurrent riots in the 1920s culminated in full-scale rebellion from 1936 to 1939. The Zionist movement adopted various approaches, including that of Judah L. Magnes, president of the Hebrew University, who advocated the foundation of a joint Arab-Jewish state, and that of future Israeli prime minister David Ben-Gurion, who argued that accommodation with the Arabs could come only from a position of Jewish strength, after the *Yishuv* had become a majority. For Socialist-Zionists,

unresolvable conflict arose between the ideal of class cooperation with Arab workers and the higher national goal of consolidating a new Jewish working class in Palestine.

B The White Paper

On the eve of World War II, the British government changed its Palestine policy, in an effort to appease the Arab world. The White Paper of May 1939 terminated Britain's commitment to Zionism and provided for the establishment of a Palestinian state within ten years. The Arab majority in Palestine was guaranteed by a clause that provided for the further immigration of 75,000 Jews during the following five years, after which additional entry would depend on Arab consent.

The 1939 White Paper broke the traditional Anglo-Zionist alliance and provoked many in the *Yishuv* to violent protest. In May 1942, Zionist leaders meeting at the Biltmore Hotel in New York City demanded a Jewish Democratic Commonwealth—that is, a state—in all of western Palestine as part of the new world order after the war. This "Biltmore program" marked a radical departure in Zionist policy. The Holocaust, the systematic murder of European Jews by the Nazis, finally convinced Western Jewry of the need for a Jewish state. In 1944, the Irgun Zvai Leumi (National Military Organization), a Zionist guerrilla force led by the future Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin, began an armed revolt against British rule in Palestine.

C The State of Israel

On May 14, 1948, at midnight, the British mandate over Palestine ended, and the Jews declared their independence in the new state of Israel. Israel owed its existence to a unique set of circumstances: Western sympathy for Jewish suffering; the political influence of American Jews in securing the support of President Harry S. Truman; Britain's loss of will to continue its rule in Palestine; and, perhaps above all, the *Yishuv*'s determination and ability to establish and hold on to its own state.

The purpose of Zionism during the first years of statehood seemed clear—to consolidate and defend Israel, to explain and justify its existence. Relations between the new state and the Zionists, however, proved problematic. Israel's first prime minister, Ben-Gurion, insisted that Zionist leaders who elected to remain in the Diaspora would have no say in Israel's policy decisions, even though Israel may have owed its existence to their influence. Ben-Gurion also insisted that, now that the Jewish state was in existence, the sole purpose of Zionism must be personal *aliya* (Hebrew, "going up," or settling in Israel).

Nahum Goldmann, head of the WZO from 1951 to 1968, argued that Zionism must also nurture and preserve Jewish life in the Diaspora. American Zionists, notably Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, founder of the Reconstructionist movement, have urged a redefinition of Judaism and have warned against the dangers of creating a schism between Israel and Diaspora Jewry. In 1968 the Jerusalem Program (adopted by the Zionist Congress held in Jerusalem that year), made *aliya* the condition for membership of any Zionist group, but the new program has brought little practical change.

During the 1970s, much Zionist activity focused on Soviet Jewry, who were finally allowed to emigrate in restricted numbers. Again, differences arose between Zionist and Jewish relief agencies over whether immigration to Israel should be the only option offered to Soviet Jews. A massive wave of immigration by Soviet Jews to Israel began in the late 1980s.

Zionism has been repeatedly denounced by the Arab nations and their supporters as a "tool of imperialism." In 1975, the UN adopted a resolution equating Zionism with racism; in 1991, the General Assembly voted 111 to 25 for repeal. For their part Zionists have emphasized that their movement has never rejected Arab self-determination and that the fundamental meaning of Zionism has been the national liberation of the Jewish people. Zionism today is based on the unequivocal support of two basic principles—the autonomy and safety of the state of Israel and the right of any Jew to settle there (the Law of Return)—which together provide the guarantee of a Jewish nationality to any Jew in need of it.

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Modern Palestine

I INTRODUCTION

Modern Palestine, a region in southwestern Asia extending from the southeast shore of the Mediterranean eastward to the Jordan River and from Lebanon in the north to the Sinai Peninsula of Egypt in the south.

During the first half of the 20th century the name Palestine applied to a political entity that lasted for three decades, starting in 1917, when the region west of the Jordan—together with Transjordan, across the river—passed from Turkish rule to British rule. By this time nationalism was well established among the predominantly Arab population. But the Zionist movement in Europe, which had established a number of Jewish colonies in Palestine, had been advocating the establishment of a Jewish homeland there. After 1917 the Zionist settlements in Palestine continued with British protection, despite Palestinian Arab resistance.

The Jewish population rose from 85,000 in 1914, or 12 percent of the 687,000 inhabitants then in Palestine, to more than 600,000, or nearly 35 percent of a population of almost 1.9 million in 1947. In 1947 the United Nations (UN) decided that Palestine should be partitioned between a Palestinian Arab state and a Jewish state, with Jerusalem to be under international control. The Zionists agreed to the partition plan and established Israel as a Jewish state in May 1948.

The Palestinian Arabs, 65 percent of the population, rejected the partition plan. As a result of their rejectionist stance, the Arab defeat in the Arab-Israeli War of 1948-1949, and actions by Israel, Jordan, and the United Kingdom, the Palestinian Arabs did not achieve nationhood in any of Palestine. Israel annexed part of Jerusalem (the New City) and nearly half of the area allotted to the Palestinian Arab state. Transjordan—an independent country since 1946 (later renamed Jordan)—annexed the Old City of Jerusalem (East Jerusalem) and what remained of the West Bank of the Jordan River. Egypt occupied the Gaza Strip, along the coast. In 1967 in the so-called Six-Day War, Israeli troops conquered and occupied the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. *See also* Arab-Israeli Conflict.

The Zionist and Israeli victories resulted in the wholesale displacement of the Arabs of Palestine. From 1947 to 1949 the mass expulsion and panic-induced flight of more than 700,000 Palestinians reduced the Arab population of Israel to only 160,000 in 1949. By 1993 less than 45 percent of the world's nearly 6 million Palestinians lived in what had

been Palestine. Demographic trends in the 21st century, however, began to show a significant increase in the Palestinian population, especially in the occupied territories. By the end of 2006, the Palestinian population worldwide was 10.1 million**.** More than 1 million Palestinians were citizens of Israel, representing almost 20 percent of Israel's resident citizens. More than 3.9 million Palestinians lived in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. More than 5 million Palestinians lived in exile, mostly in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and other Arab countries.

Despite the military defeats that Palestinians suffered from 1948 through 1967, the spirit of nationalism among Palestinians continued to grow. At the end of 1987 much of the Palestinian population of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip rose in revolt. On July 31, 1988, Jordan gave up its claim—and severed its remaining ties—to the West Bank. On November 15, 1988, the Palestine National Council declared the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip an independent state, with Jerusalem its capital. On September 13, 1993, a peace agreement known as the Oslo Accords, which called for limited Palestinian self-government in the Gaza Strip and a small West Bank district, was signed by Yasir Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin. Self-government was implemented in May 1994, and talks continued for a two-state solution. However, by 2007 the peace process was at a standstill, and the future of the Oslo Accords was in doubt. This article traces the history of Palestine and Palestinian nationalism from the time of Ottoman Turkish rule to the present.

II PALESTINE BEFORE 1948

A Muslim Conquest and Ottoman Turkish Rule

Ancient Philistia—the name from which Palestine derives—was conquered by Muslim armies coming from Arabia following victories in battles at Ajnadain in AD 634 and Yarmuk in 636. Two years later, the second caliph, Umar (Omar), built a mosque on the site of the ancient Jewish Temple, which the Romans had destroyed. In 691, the ninth caliph, Abd al-Malik, built the still-existing Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque in its place. After the 7th-century Arab conquest most of the population was Arabized in culture and language and a majority converted to Islam; some remained Christians, mostly in Jerusalem and the coastal towns of Ramla, Lydda, and Jaffa. In 1099 Crusaders from western Europe captured Jerusalem and set up a Christian kingdom, but a century later the country was retaken by Muslims, under the Ayyubid sultan, Saladin of Egypt, and his Mamluk successors. In 1517 Palestine was conquered by the Ottoman Turks, and it remained part of the Ottoman Turkish Empire for 400 years.

The modernization of Palestine began after its conquest, in 1832, by Ibrahim Pasha, son of Viceroy Muhammad Ali, who earlier in the 19th century had made Egypt autonomous under Ottoman sovereignty. As his father had done in Egypt, Ibrahim in the 1830s introduced secular schools and civil rights for Christians and Jews alongside Muslims in Palestine. However, the population rebelled against Ibrahim, in reaction to high taxes and military conscription. The European powers forced Ibrahim to withdraw in 1840, after which Ottoman authority was reimposed.

In 1858 an Ottoman land law was enacted that provided for the registration of state-owned communal lands in the villages as private property. It promoted the accumulation of land by urban notables and absentee landlords. Sultan Abdul-Hamid, by strengthening Ottoman control over the far-flung empire, further encouraged the rise of landed estates and private property in Palestine and other Arab lands.

Even more important were the privileges, or Capitulations, the Ottoman government had been forced to grant to European powers in an effort to stave off bankruptcy. European consuls, who had been admitted to Jerusalem in the 1830s, were now admitted to the coastal cities of Gaza, Jaffa, and Haifa. There they promoted sales of European goods through a growing clientele of Christian Arab merchants, some of whom became wealthy. The sultan was also forced to give European powers more control over the Holy Places in Jerusalem and to allow more European

settlement and land acquisition in Palestine. Few Christian Europeans came, but, starting in the 1880s, there was a major influx of, and land acquisition by, Jews.

B Jewish Colonization

In 1881 there were still only 24,000 Jews in Palestine. Prior to the 1880s most Jewish immigrants had settled in Jerusalem, Hebron, Safad, or Tiberias, usually to engage in religious studies and to live a full religious life.

In 1870, however, the Alliance Israélite Universelle, at the initiative of a group of Jews from Russia, had founded an agricultural school for Jews on some land near Jaffa donated by the Ottoman government. In 1878 two English Christians—the Earl of Shaftesbury and Laurence Oliphant—had helped a group of Jews from Jerusalem to acquire land and found a colony near Jaffa.

The main influx of European Jews started in 1882 when a society of Russian Jews, Hovevei Zion (The Lovers of Zion), seeking to escape a wave of terrible pogroms against Jews in Russia, began establishing Jewish agricultural colonies in Palestine. Some depended for survival on the charity of Baron Edmond de Rothschild. By 1914 there were 44 Jewish agricultural colonies with 12,000 residents, constituting 14 percent of the 85,000 Jews then in Palestine. The Arab population then numbered more than 600,000.

This new emphasis on land reflected a change in the purposes of Jewish immigration, which was now rooted less in the traditional religious attachment to the Land of Israel than in Zionism, a secular ideology that aimed to establish a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine.

In 1896, as colonial projects were launched all over the world, Theodor Herzl began to forge Zionism into a modern political movement. He first approached Sultan Abdul-Hamid with a request that he cede Palestine to the Jews for the purpose of establishing "an aristocratic republic" of Jews, in return for financial help from the Zionist Organization, then being set up in Europe and Russia. The sultan, however, would not consider any proposal that might possibly lead to the separation of Palestine from the Ottoman Empire.

In 1902 Herzl turned instead to Great Britain. The British government was under pressure to restrict the entry of a growing flood of poor Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, and it was looking to match its European rivals—particularly France and Russia—in their influence over the Holy Places in Jerusalem.

Herzl held talks with the British colonial secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, on possible interim solutions, including the establishment of a Jewish homeland in British-controlled Cyprus, and in 1903 Chamberlain offered British-ruled Uganda. This proposal, favored by Herzl, split the Zionist movement and was finally rejected by it in 1905. After Herzl's death in 1904, Chaim Weizmann recruited additional British supporters for the Zionist cause, including David Lloyd George, Arthur Balfour, and Sir Herbert Samuel. In December 1916, two years after the start of World War I (1914-1918), Balfour became foreign secretary in a government headed by Lloyd George, and on November 2, 1917, while British and Arab forces were fighting to wrest Palestine from the Turks, the Zionists obtained a promise, published in the form of a letter from Balfour to Lord Rothschild, that the British government would support "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people." The promise became known as the Balfour Declaration.

C Arab Nationalism

Within Palestine the Arab majority had been developing its own nationalist ideas. These mainly related to the growing current of Arabism, which held that the Arabs were a distinct people with a glorious history and a relationship with one another based on their shared language, Arabic. In Palestine, as in other Arabic-speaking lands of the Ottoman Empire, this current developed particularly among the urban elite, together with a sense of local patriotism focused on Palestine itself. This was visible in such things as the name of the newspaper, *Filastin* (Palestine), founded in Jaffa in 1911.

The revolution of the Young Turks in 1908 and the ouster from power of Sultan Abdul-Hamid in 1909 led to increased nationalism among both Turks and Arabs. Questions of language, particularly in education, as well as issues of autonomy for the Arab provinces, became matters of contention between many Arabs and the Ottoman government. In 1913 an Arab congress, supported by most of the notable families of Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine, assembled in Paris and called for "decentralized government for the Arab provinces … and recognition of Arabic as the official language."

After World War I began, the Turks reacted harshly to manifestations of Arab nationalism. In September 1915, 11 Arab nationalist leaders were hanged in Beirut. In May 1916 another 20 Arab leaders, including 2 from Palestine—Ali Umar Nashashibi of Jerusalem and Muhammad Shanti of Jaffa—were hanged for their participation in an attempted Arab revolt that had been encouraged by Britain.

D World War I

Ottoman Turkey's entry into World War I on the side of Germany and Austria-Hungary in 1914 had drawn Britain closer to the Arabs, as well as to the Zionists. For Britain, the encouragement of anti-Ottoman Arab nationalism was a way to weaken its Turkish enemy. Many Arabs felt that by aiding Britain they could bolster their claim to independence if Britain won the war. On October 24, 1915, Sir Henry McMahon, British high commissioner in Egypt, wrote to the sharif of Mecca, Hussein ibn-Ali, promising, on Britain's behalf, the independence of all Arab-populated areas of the Turkish Empire except "the portions of Syria lying to the west of the districts of Damascus, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo," in return for an uprising—the Arab revolt—led by the sharif. The Arabs argued after the war that the exception did not apply to Palestine, which lies south rather than west of Damascus, but Britain later maintained that the exception specifically referred to Palestine, on the ground that two of its districts were administered as part of the administrative district of Beirut.

In June 1916 the sharif, in accordance with promises made to McMahon, declared war on behalf of the Arabs against Turkey. Arab forces then conquered many Turkish outposts in Arabia, harassed Turkish communications throughout the Hejaz and Syria, and, in 1917, supported General Edmund Allenby in his invasion of Palestine. On December 9, 1917, Allenby received an enthusiastic welcome from the Arabs of Jerusalem, who thought Arab independence was at hand. They did not know that negotiators for Britain and France had already, in May 1916, decided on a different fate for the Arabs. The Sykes-Picot agreement—a secret agreement between Britain, France, and Russia and kept secret until revealed by the Bolsheviks in 1917—gave France a free hand in Lebanon and Syria, and Britain a free hand in Iraq and Transjordan. The Sykes-Picot agreement, named after its negotiators, provided for Palestine to be under international administration until the European victors held a peace conference to decide its fate.

E The British Mandate

In the peace conferences after World War I formal provision was made for Britain and France to administer the Arab provinces as "mandates," under nominal supervision of the new League of Nations. Britain received the mandate for Iraq, and France got another for Syria (including Lebanon). On April 25, 1920, the conference of European powers at San Remo allotted the mandate for Palestine (including Transjordan) to Britain, and on July 1 the British military government was replaced by a British civil administration headed by Sir Herbert Samuel, a Zionist sympathizer. The Palestine mandate was ratified by the League of Nations on July 24, 1922, and came into formal operation on September 29, 1923. Although Transjordan was included within the administrative framework of the Palestine mandate, it was recognized as autonomous under its own emir and was excluded from provisions of the mandate that called for a Jewish national home in Palestine.

F The Jewish National Home

The preamble of the mandate had included sections of the Balfour Declaration calling for a Jewish national home in Palestine. Article 4 called for recognition of an "appropriate Jewish Agency" to advise the British administration in Palestine. The mandate also included parts of the Balfour Declaration stating that nothing would be done that might "prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities." But it did not recognize the Arab community or its institutions. In Arab eyes, the mandate violated the Covenant of the League of Nations and the principle of self-determination that it enshrined. In particular, as Arabs saw it, the mandate violated the Covenant's article 22, which provisionally recognized Palestine and other Arab regions as "independent nations," pending the extension of assistance by a mandatory power. The Arabs never wavered in their rejection of the mandate.

G Growth of the Jewish Settlements

In 1919 Arabs were still more than 90 percent of the population. Under the mandate, however, the Jewish Agency (which was finally set up in 1929) controlled immigration. The British government in Palestine determined the number of immigrants to be allowed into Palestine, but until 1939 set no serious limit. Meanwhile the Jewish Agency allocated the visas.

As a result of this policy and anti-Semitic conditions in Europe, the number of Jewish immigrants rose from 5,514 in 1920 to 33,801 in 1925. Jewish immigration slowed in the later 1920s, but it soared starting in 1933, when Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany, and reached 61,854 in 1935. From 1920 to 1945 there were 401,149 legal immigrants, including 367,845 Jews. There were also many illegal Jewish immigrants after 1933 and in the 1940s as refugees from the Holocaust sought their way to Palestine, or ended up there after being refused entry to the West. In 1944 the Jewish Agency estimated that there were 565,000 Jews in Palestine, compared with a government figure of 528,702. By 1944 according to government figures, Jews accounted for 31.6 percent of a total population of 1,673,071, while 1,130,271 Arabs accounted for 67.5 percent.

Jewish landownership also increased, at the expense of Arab cultivators. To facilitate the purchase of land, the Zionist Organization had set up the Jewish National Fund in 1907. During the mandate years the fund spent $75 million to purchase land in Palestine, mainly from Syrian and Lebanese absentee landowners in the 1920s and, increasingly in the 1930s, from Palestinian Arab holders as well. The landlords in many cases were descendants of those who had managed in the wake of the 1858 Ottoman land law to register communally owned village property in their names.

Most of the land transfers to the Zionists resulted in the dispossession of Arab tenant cultivators, who went to swell the ranks of the landless poor in the cities. Often the peasants realized that they had lost their land only when they were expelled from it after its sale by absentee landlords to Jews. Jewish ownership of land in Palestine rose from

60,000 hectares (150,000 acres) in 1920 to 146,000 hectares (365,000 acres) in 1945, about one fourth of the cultivable area.

During the 1920s and 1930s the Zionists built up a separate Jewish economy in Palestine. A Jewish labor federation known as Histadrut was founded in 1920 and by 1936 represented 75 percent of the Jewish labor force. Some Zionists urged Jews to boycott Arab labor and Arab farm produce. The Zionists put pressure on the British administration to apportion government contracts on the basis of relative taxes paid by Jews rather than relative population size.

For most of the mandate period the *Yishuv* (the Jewish community in Palestine) was run by the Jewish Agency, which was the *de facto* executive organ in Palestine of the Zionist Organization, and a National Council. An armed force, the *Haganah*, was established in 1920-1921, initially to defend settlements, later as the nucleus of what became the Israeli army. The Revisionist Zionists, followers of Vladimir Jabotinsky, complained that the official Zionists were not demanding enough; they contested the exclusion of Transjordan from the Jewish national home, and they espoused Jewish colonization of all of mandated Palestine and the use of armed struggle against the Arabs and the British. They founded the paramilitary Irgun Zvai Leumi in 1931 and its offshoot the Stern Gang in 1940.

H The Arab Community

While the mainstream Zionist organizations had quasi-governmental status, the British refused to recognize a separate Arab existence in Palestine, referring to the Palestinian Arab majority only as "non-Jews" or by their religion, as Christians or Muslims. Early in 1923 Britain's colonial secretary, Winston Churchill, issued a "white paper," or official policy statement, calling for the establishment of an elected legislative council representing Muslims, Jews, and Christians, and with veto power in the hands of Britain. It was never created because of objections by Arab leaders, who continued to demand self-determination and independence and to object to the mandate and its provisions for turning their homeland into the national home of another people. As a result, official Arab representation was limited to the community's religious leaders—the *mufti* (an expert on Islamic law) of Jerusalem, who was an Arab nationalist, and the various Christian patriarchs.

In 1922 the British set up a Supreme Muslim Council to administer Islamic institutions. It consisted of the mufti, Hajj Amin al-Husseini, as president and four other appointed members. Elections were held in 1926 for the other four members but were annulled to keep more Arab nationalists off the council. As an appointed body dependent on government funding, it could usually be pressured into compliance with the government's wishes until the mid-1930s. In 1937, because of the mufti's encouragement of a widespread Arab revolt that had begun in 1936, he was exiled from Palestine, and the council became inoperative.

Muslim Arabs cooperated with Christian Arabs in the secular Arab opposition to the mandate and to Zionism. A Muslim-Christian Association had been formed in 1919 and at first espoused a wider Arab nationalism. It sent delegates to the General Syrian Congress, held at Damascus in June 1919, which denounced the Balfour Declaration and called for a halt to Jewish immigration into Palestine.

In December 1920 the Muslim-Christian Association convened a meeting at Haifa, the first Palestine Arab Congress, which demanded a national government in Palestine that represented, and was elected by, all "Arabic-speaking people living in Palestine." The congress set up a 24-member Arab Executive, which was headed by Musa Kazim Pasha al-Husseini until his death in 1934. It convened subsequent Palestine Arab congresses, and they continued to plead the Palestinian Arab cause until 1936.

The Palestinian leaders all called for an end to the mandate, especially its provisions for establishing a Jewish national home in Palestine; for an end to Jewish immigration and land sales to Jews; and for self-government and independence for Palestine. But by the mid-1930s, there were also deepening divisions among them. These partly reflected family rivalries, especially between the Nashashibi and Husseini clans.

In December 1934 the Nashashibis had formed the National Defense Party under the presidency of Raghib Bey Nashashibi. It called for Palestinian independence but was relatively favorable to the British. In May 1935 the Husseinis helped found the Palestine Arab Party, which called for Palestinian independence and termination of the mandate. Its president was Jamal al-Husseini, the mufti's cousin, while its vice president was Alfred Roch, a Roman Catholic citrus grower from Jaffa. The Arab Reform Party was formed in August 1935. It called for self-government and was supported by the Khalidi clan and other intellectuals. The National Bloc was formed in July 1935 by Abdul Latif Bey Salah, a lawyer and former member of the Ottoman senate in Istanbul. Its influence was limited to the Nablus and Jaffa areas.

While these parties were centered on a personality or clan, the Istiqlal (Independence) Party represented a class, the newly emergent merchants and entrepreneurs. It was formed in Damascus in 1920 by followers of Emir Faisal, son of the sharif of Mecca. Its general secretary was Auni Bey Abdul Hadi, a Jerusalem lawyer. This group, like the other Arab nationalist parties, had moved from a policy espousing a single independent Arab nation to one calling for the independence of Palestine from Britain. But, in contrast to the others, it saw the British as the main enemy and viewed Zionist settlement as an offshoot of British imperialism that would end when the British withdrew.

In April 1936 the main political parties except Istiqlal formed an Arab Higher Committee, headed by the mufti of Jerusalem, to coordinate their demands for an end to Jewish immigration and an end to land sales to the Jews and to provide leadership for a spreading Arab revolt. In April 1937 it was banned and most of its members were arrested and deported to the Seychelle Islands. The mufti escaped to Lebanon. During World War II (1939-1945) political party activity in Palestine was banned. A Second Arab Higher Committee resumed operations after the war, in November 1945, with Tawfiq Saleh al-Husseini as acting chairman

The Arab Revolt of 1936-1939

Arab resistance to the British occupation of Palestine and the mandate had from the beginning been expressed through rioting and small-scale attacks on British installations and Jewish settlements. Riots on Easter Sunday in April 1920, when a group of Arabs attacked Jewish property in Jerusalem, resulted in the deaths of five Jews and four Arabs. A British commission of inquiry blamed the riots on "Arab disappointment at the non-fulfillment of the promises of independence" and the "Arab belief that the Balfour Declaration implied a denial of the right of self-determination."

Disorders in May 1921 in Jaffa left 47 Jews and 48 Arabs killed. A commission of inquiry headed by Sir Thomas Haycraft reported the cause to be Arab discontent with Jewish immigration "and with Zionist policy." The Churchill white paper of 1923 declared that the number of immigrants should "not exceed the economic capacity of the country … to accept new arrivals." Nonetheless, Jewish immigration was allowed to grow in the 1920s and to surge in the 1930s.

As Jewish colonies expanded the outbreaks intensified. A series of Arab attacks that began with clashes in August 1929 at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem and then spread to Jewish settlements in Hebron, Safad, Jerusalem, and Jaffa left 133 Jews and 116 Arabs dead. This time a commission led by Sir Walter Shaw reiterated the findings of Haycraft, citing Arab "disappointment of their political and national aspirations and fear for their economic future," and went on

to recommend a curb on "excessive [Jewish] immigration" and better means for the "safeguarding of the rights of the non-Jewish communities."

In October 1930 a specially commissioned report from Sir John Hope-Simpson found that even if all the cultivable land in Palestine were divided among the Arab farm families there would not be enough to provide every family with a decent livelihood. The report recommended a halt to immigration and Jewish settlement. Simultaneously, a new British policy statement, the Passfield white paper, declared that British obligations to the Jews and the Arabs were "of equal weight," that there was "no margin of land available for agricultural settlement by new immigrants," and that there should be stricter controls on immigration and land sales to Jews.

However, in February 1931 British prime minister Ramsay MacDonald yielded to Zionist protests and in a public letter to Chaim Weizmann, the Zionist leader, stated that the British government had no intention of tightening controls on Jewish immigration or prohibiting land sales to the Jews. This further angered and frustrated the Arabs, who saw their country slipping away from them as the British aided the Zionists.

With the surge of Jewish immigration that began after the coming to power of the National Socialists (Nazis) in Germany in 1933 and with the deepening worldwide depression of the 1930s, tensions mounted and by 1936 were ready to explode. Early in 1936 the British Parliament refused to respond to the demands of the Palestinian Arab political parties for an elected legislative assembly with real powers, an end to Jewish immigration, and a halt to the eviction of Arab tenants living on land sold to Jews. Then, in April, a minor incident led to severe rioting in Tel Aviv and Jaffa. The British authorities imposed a curfew and declared a state of emergency throughout the country.

The Arab Higher Committee called for a general strike, and Arab workers, already suffering from the curtailment of exports to the Depression-hit West and from the failure of the local citrus crop in 1935, responded. By July 1936 the strikers were being supported by armed bands of Arab peasants. Operating out of Galilee and in the central hills, they sabotaged oil pipelines, mined roads, and bombed police stations, railroad tracks, and other government installations. The British counterattacked with planes and light tanks.

In 1937, in response to Arab terrorist attacks on Jewish settlements, armed Jewish settlers of the Irgun began terrorist counterattacks against Arabs. The Arab Higher Committee had yielded to requests from Arab monarchs and called off the strike in October 1936. However, the rebels continued to be supported by Arab peasants and by unemployed Arabs in urban areas, where, as a result of natural population growth, the land shortage, the expulsion of Arab cultivators from land purchased by the Zionists, and the collective punishments imposed on Arab villagers by British troops, there was a large and growing class of Arabs without regular jobs.

The Arab Revolt was eventually quelled by massive British military force, but not until 1939. By the end of 1937 an estimated 1,000 Arab insurgents had been killed. British military and police costs in Palestine had more than doubled since 1935, but the revolt was continuing. By the autumn of 1938 the rebels were in effective control of the countryside outside the main urban areas. There, they abolished rents and taxes, canceled all debts to landowners (Arab and Jewish), and prohibited the sale of land to Jews. As time went on, the superior power of the 80,000 troops that Britain brought in prevailed. Palestinian losses were enormous: about 5,000 Arabs killed and many thousands wounded, more than 5,000 men detained, and great damage to property in British demolitions of villages where the insurgents took refuge.

With the start of the Arab Revolt yet another commission had been assigned to investigate Arab grievances. In June 1937 the Peel Commission reiterated earlier findings and proposed that Palestine be partitioned into a Jewish state and an Arab state. The Jewish state would comprise the hills of Galilee in the north and the coastal plain down to south of Jaffa. The Arab state would comprise Transjordan, the hilly central region of Palestine, and the Negev. The

Peel Commission also proposed a British zone including Jerusalem and Bethlehem, a corridor to the coast near Jaffa, and Nazareth. The Arabs rejected the partition proposal, while the Zionists accepted it.

In November 1938, however, the Partition Commission, which was supposed to decide on boundaries, said the proposal was unworkable. Two of its four members recommended that the entire north, from Galilee to the coast, and the Negev, along with the Bethlehem-Jerusalem-Jaffa corridor, remain under the mandate; and that the rest of central Palestine be divided between a Jewish state, confined to the coastal area around and above Tel Aviv, and an Arab state. The British government thereupon rejected the principle of partition altogether and in February 1939 convened a meeting in London of representatives of the Arab and Jewish communities and of the neighboring Arab states. When they were unable to come to any agreement, the government, anxious to prevent the Arab rulers from siding with Germany in the approaching world war, issued the white paper of 1939 calling for an end to immigration of Jews except for a total of 75,000 over the next five years and for an "independent Palestine state" within ten years.

The Yishuv, reacting to Britain's new tilt toward the Arabs, called an immediate general strike. The Irgun began attacking British installations. The limit on immigration, Jewish leaders felt, was intolerable given the worsening condition of Jews in Europe. The Arab Higher Committee also rejected the 1939 white paper, on the ground that Britain had reserved the right to postpone independence. Only the National Defense Party, led by the Nashashibis, accepted its general proposals. When World War II broke out in September 1939, British control over the Arabs had been restored. The Irgun attacks on the British were suspended. But Palestine was still in a mood of civil war.

] World War II and the Establishment of Israel

During the war British emergency measures prohibited political activity. However, the Arab and Jewish communities both secretly armed themselves for a resumption of conflict when the war ended. The British provided military training to elite regiments of the Haganah that volunteered to fight with the Allies. Revisionist Zionists who objected to the Irgun's truce with the British formed a separate paramilitary organization in June 1940, and it continued to fight the British until the capture and execution of its leader, Avraham Stern, in February 1942.

In May 1942 the Zionists met in New York City at the Biltmore Hotel and agreed on the so-called Biltmore Program, calling for an end to the mandate and the immediate establishment of a Jewish "commonwealth" in all of Palestine west of the Jordan. In 1944 the Stern Gang (whose leaders now included Yitzhak Shamir) and the Irgun (led by Menachem Begin) resumed their attacks on government installations and British police and army posts. In November the British minister of state, Lord Moyne, was assassinated in Cairo by two members of the Stern Gang. The Haganah avoided such tactics during the war, but afterward it formed for a brief time a secret association with the Irgun and the Stern Gang and took part in the armed violence that was intended to drive the British out.

After the war, as the world learned of the Nazi murder of some 6 million European Jews, the Zionist demands for a revision of the 1939 white paper received unprecedented sympathy. In the United States, President Harry Truman and leading members of Congress called for an immediate end to restrictions on Jewish immigration and for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine in order to provide permanent refuge for the several hundred thousand stateless European Jews who had survived the Holocaust (many of whom were held in displaced persons camps as countries in Europe and North and South America refused to admit them).

In 1946 a joint Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry called for the immediate granting of 100,000 immigration certificates to European Jewish refugees and the lifting of restrictions on land sales to Jews, with the continuation of British rule in Palestine. But in February 1947 the British government, stymied by the relentless political and military

offensive of the Zionists and the continued refusal of the Arabs to relinquish Palestine to them, decided to let the newly formed United Nations settle the Palestine conflict.

In November 1947 a two-thirds majority of the UN General Assembly, including both the United States and the Soviet Union, passed a resolution calling for an end to the British mandate and for the partition of Palestine into two states, one Jewish and one Arab, with Jerusalem to be placed under international administration. The Arabs rejected partition, arguing that the UN had no right to give more than half of Palestine to a minority of the population and that they should not be forced to pay for Europe's crimes against the Jews.

The Zionist leaders accepted the plan but retained hopes that the borders of the Jewish state might be extended in the future, an eventuality that they prepared for in secret negotiations with King Abdullah of Transjordan, who shared with them an opposition to the creation of an independent Palestinian state. On May 14, 1948, the National Council of the Yishuv proclaimed the establishment of the Jewish state of Israel, and on May 15 the last British troops sailed out of Haifa.

K Palestinian Civil War and Arab-Israeli War

Fighting between Arabs and Jews in Palestine broke out almost immediately after the UN resolution on partition. The Palestinian Arabs, however, had not yet recovered from the harsh British suppression of their 1936-1939 revolt, and within a few months the Zionists had won the upper hand. By the end of April 1948 the Zionists had put into operation their plan for a general offensive, Plan Dalet, to conquer the Arab city of Jaffa and the mixed-population cities of Haifa and Tiberias and dozens of Arab villages in their environs and near Jerusalem, most of which were in territory allotted to the Palestinian Arab state under the partition plan.

Neighboring Arab states, which had helped set up the Arab League in 1945, formed a joint Arab military command to support Palestinian irregulars organized by the Second Arab Higher Committee, but its help was sporadic and ineffective. In April 1948 the joint Arab military command drew up an invasion plan for the regular armies of Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq. It was put into effect on May 15. However, the joint command was divided by rivalries among the Arab rulers, with most of them suspicious that King Abdullah of Transjordan wanted to dominate Palestine. As a result, Israeli forces were able to repel the Arab armies and make further important territorial gains that expanded the frontiers of the Jewish state well beyond those demarcated in the partition plan, and beyond the areas the Zionists had already seized from Palestinians before May 15.

During the earlier fighting in the spring of 1948, Zionist attacks on Arab cities and towns provoked an exodus of the Palestinian civilian population. The slaughter of 256 Palestinians by Irgun troops in the village of Deir Yassin in April 1948 became emblematic of the war, terrorizing tens of thousands of Palestinians who believed they might be the next victims. The exodus continued into the summer, as the Israeli army pushed back the Arab armies. In some areas, such as Ramla, Lydda, and parts of Galilee, Israeli troops forcibly expelled the Palestinians. By the time of the armistice in 1949, this combination of forcible expulsions, psychological warfare, and panic had forced more than 700,000 Palestinians to flee to Arab-controlled parts of Palestine or neighboring Arab states.

The Arab Legion of Transjordan, led by a British officer, took control of central Palestine in accordance with a plan negotiated secretly between Transjordan's King Abdullah and the Israeli leaders with the acquiescence of the British government. Egyptian troops held the Negev for a time but were pushed back to the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula.

Armistice agreements between Israel and Transjordan, Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria were negotiated under UN auspices between February and July 1949. In 1950 King Abdullah formally annexed the Old City of Jerusalem (East Jerusalem) and central Palestine, which became known as the West Bank, and renamed his kingdom Jordan. Egypt retained military control of the Gaza Strip. Israel, which under the UN partition plan had been allotted 56 percent of Palestine, kept control of additional areas in Galilee and other parts of the north, center, and south of the country that had been allocated to the Arab state, as well as the New City of Jerusalem. As a result, Israel, with less than one-third of the population, now held more than three-fourths of the land area of Palestine. Only 160,000 Arabs remained in the Israeli-held area. The name Palestine had disappeared from the map, and the Palestinians were dispersed or living under foreign rule.

III PALESTINIANS SINCE 1948

A Results of the 1947-1949 War

The Arab state of Palestine called for in the UN partition plan never came into being. Instead, after the Palestine War ended, Israel held 77 percent of Palestine, while Jordan occupied and annexed the West Bank and Egypt controlled the Gaza Strip.

Although some Palestinian leaders tried to form an "All-Palestine Government" in Gaza immediately after the war, they lacked territory, legitimacy, and popular support. They also faced many enemies. Israel and Jordan, both beneficiaries of the Arab-Israeli War, were hostile to the idea of Palestinian independence. Indeed, King Abdullah of Jordan and the leaders of the Jewish Agency had quietly agreed on preventing the emergence of the Palestinian state called for in the UN partition plan. In spite of some Arab sentiment in favor of the Gaza government, it soon faded away.

B Palestinian Refugees and Palestinian Diaspora

Palestinians first had to confront the catastrophic effects of their expulsion and dispersal, and of the destruction of the prewar fabric of their society. Out of about 1,300,000 Palestinians in 1948, 726,000 had been made refugees by the war. Of these, more than 400,000 had been driven from the areas allotted to the Jewish state under the UN partition plan. The remainder had been forced out of cities and towns like Jaffa, Lydda, Ramla, Isdud (Ashdod), Majdal, and Bir al-Sabe (Beersheba), and from villages in Galilee, the triangle region, and the southern coastal areas, all of which were supposed to have been part of the Arab state called for in the partition plan. About 160,000 Palestinians remained within the expanded frontiers of Israel. Within the expanded state, 385 abandoned Arab villages were destroyed or taken over to house new Jewish immigrants, and land owned by Arabs in these villages was confiscated.

The Palestinian refugees originally from the southern coastal regions found themselves in the Gaza Strip; the refugees from Ramla, Lydda, and other areas adjoining the West Bank fled there; refugees from Galilee and from Haifa and Jaffa ended up in Lebanon and Syria. A fundamental demographic shift had taken place. The Palestinians were still located largely within the frontiers of their homeland, but were now concentrated in the hilly regions of central Palestine, in the Gaza Strip, and, inside Israel, in Galilee. Many Palestinians were outside of Palestine, and the number and proportion were to increase as the search for education and jobs drew many Palestinians to the oil-producing states of Arabia and other parts of the Arab world. Further expulsions in 1967, when Israeli troops occupied the West Bank and Gaza, and afterward increased the number of refugees. By the early 21st century more than 55 percent of the almost 6 million Palestinians lived outside their ancestral homeland.

Significantly, over this period the proportion of Palestinians living in refugee camps declined drastically as Palestinians acquired education and skills and moved out of the camps. In 1949 one in two Palestinians was in a refugee camp. By the early 1990s fewer than 1 in 6 of the almost 6 million Palestinians still lived in camps, mostly in Gaza (where 70 percent of the around 600,000 Palestinians remained in camps), the West Bank (less than 15 percent out of almost a million), and Lebanon (about 100,000 to 150,000). From a refugee camp population with recent rural roots and a low rate of literacy, the Palestinians transformed themselves into a literate, educated, skilled, highly mobile, urban population. These changes did not diminish Palestinian nationalism, however, and in many ways they enhanced it.

C Palestinian Nationalism, 1948-1968

The desperation born of the refugee camps played a crucial role in shaping Palestinian nationalism after 1948. The difficult early years from 1948 to 1968 were crucial in the genesis of the political formations that have continued to dominate Palestinian politics. These two decades saw the creation of Fatah and of the Movement of Arab Nationalists (MAN); the birth in 1964 of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), initially as an instrument of the Arab governments; and the takeover of the PLO in 1968 by independent Palestinians. During these years the relationship between the Palestinians and the Arab host governments was defined. During this period the old Palestinian leadership was finally eclipsed and replaced by a new one.

C1 The Arab Regimes and the Palestinians

The gulf between the Arab regimes' rhetoric and their practice, and between the Palestinians and these regimes, was already wide by 1948. While publicly bound to aid their beleaguered Palestinian Arab brethren, most Arab governments were reluctant to commit their small armies and risk their fledgling independence to an uncertain contest in distant Palestine and in a generally hostile international atmosphere. Egypt, Syria, and Iraq did so nevertheless, under intense pressure from domestic public opinion and out of fear of the ambitions of Abdullah, the ruler of Transjordan—who had been engaged in secret negotiations with the Zionists since the 1920s and who had long-standing hopes of expanding his tiny state. But most Arab governments were not enthusiastic about the conflict. This was shown by their ready acceptance of two UN truces in 1948 and of the 1949 armistice agreements with Israel and by their willingness to explore peace with Israel in talks held under UN auspices at Lausanne in 1949.

Until 1948 these regimes had felt pressure from public opinion in their own countries to do something about Palestine, and the Palestinian national movement, weak though it was, could hold them accountable. The Arab regimes thus became prisoners of the Palestinian conflict, dragged by the Palestinians into the 1948 war in Palestine, although all their general staffs told them emphatically they had no hope of winning it.

After the Arab defeat the old Palestinian political leadership collapsed, more than half of their Palestinian constituency was expelled, and the West Bank was annexed by Transjordan, whose ruler, Abdullah, was a longtime foe of the Palestinian national movement. The Arab states could therefore maneuver without having to worry about organized Palestinian nationalist opposition. Eventually, however, the gap between the Arab regimes' rhetoric over Palestine and their performance became a crucial issue in their relations with the Palestinians and in Arab domestic politics, playing a role in numerous upheavals. For even as the Arab regimes tried to accommodate or ignore Israel, the Palestinians—the biggest losers in the fighting of 1947-1949—grew more embittered. Sooner or later, a clash between the Arab governments and the Palestinians was inevitable.

C2 The Old Palestinian Leadership

Before 1948 the Palestinian national movement had suffered for many years from having leaders drawn almost entirely from the upper classes, uneasy with mass politics, internally divided, and after 1937 hobbled by British repression. Largely because of the weakness of this leadership and the lingering effects of Britain's defeat of their 1936-1939 revolt, Palestinians were poorly placed for their final battle to hold on to Palestine in the months before May 15, 1948. The defeats and expulsions of the Palestinians by the Zionists before they declared the independence of the new Jewish state of Israel were more important for Palestinian history than the better-chronicled war over Palestine that followed between the Arab armies and Israel.

As the Palestinian military resistance crumbled in the spring of 1948 and hundreds of thousands of Palestinians fled into exile, the influence of the traditional political leaders, rooted in the upper classes, was dissolved. They were from a generation reared under the Ottomans and marked by World War I and the mandates. This generation had remained dominant in the Arab world by espousing, sometimes uneasily, a populist nationalism; forming alliances with middle-class elements; and accommodating the Western powers just enough to deflect their ire, without alienating their own Arab constituency.

Frayed by British repression of the 1936-1939 Palestinian Arab Revolt, the resiliency of the old leadership snapped irrevocably in the debacle of 1947-1948. The old leadership was discredited, discouraged, scattered, and driven into bitter retirement. Elements remained as clients of the Jordanian regime on the West and East banks until 1967, and some leaders survived longer. But the traditional leadership was finished as a dominant political elite in 1948.

C3 New Social Classes and New Leadership

The old upper-class Palestinian political leaders were eventually replaced by new leaders drawn primarily from the middle and lower classes. Important changes in Palestinian society after 1948 paved the way for the emergence of the new generation of leaders.

Before 1948 the Palestinians were still overwhelmingly rural. By 1967 most were no longer involved in agriculture or living in their home villages; they were in urban or semi-urban environments. The uprooting of people from their villages eroded traditional social relations. These were further affected by educational and occupational changes. Before 1948, of a school-age population of 330,000, 150,000 were in school. Well over half the population was illiterate. By 1967 an entire generation of Palestinians had been exposed to more than six years of compulsory education, mostly in UN schools, and an overwhelming majority of Palestinians was literate.

With this rise in basic literacy went a marked increase in higher education and a shift from agriculture to artisanal, industrial, and white-collar jobs. By the late 1960s the traditional social underpinning of Palestinian society was gone, along with the economic base that had been shattered in 1947-1948. By the late 1960s the Palestinian people included a rapidly growing and increasingly wealthy bourgeoisie and large numbers of trained professionals. There were also more skilled artisans, laborers, and white-collar workers. The Palestinians were filling jobs and playing a crucial role in the economies of the Arab oil-producing states on the Persian Gulf, in Lebanon, and in other parts of the Arab world.

The new social strata were important among all groupings of the Palestinian people. But they were more numerous in the more distant parts of the diaspora, where Palestinians were freer of the economic and social stagnation and the political repression that characterized the Hashemite regime in Jordan and the Jordanian-annexed West Bank, the

Egyptian military administration in the Gaza Strip, and the Israeli government's rule over Palestinians within Israel's frontiers.

C4 Transnational Movements

For more than a decade after 1948 a new generation of Palestinian activists poured their shared patriotism and desire for a return to their homeland into a disparate array of transnational parties and movements, hoping thereby to align the Arab world with them in their conflict with Israel. Virtually all of these were initially antiregime movements, whether the Baath Party, the Movement of Arab Nationalists (MAN), the Communists, the Muslim Brothers, Hizb al-Tahrir al-Islami (the Islamic Liberation Party), the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, or the Nasserist movements in Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria.

The involvement of the mass of young educated Palestinian nationalists in a plethora of competing transnational parties led to clashes among Palestinian patriots with the same long-range objectives. In the 1950s and 1960s, as some of these parties came into power, they disillusioned their Palestinian supporters, who had expected behavior different from that of the old regimes that had failed to save Palestine in 1948.

C5 New Nationalist Organizations

The unwillingness of most Arab regimes to act to change the status quo in Palestine gave the impetus to the first significant post-1948 Palestinian nationalist formations. These were the Movement of Arab Nationalists (MAN), which later gave birth to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and other groups; and an organization known originally by the title of its publication, *Filastinuna* (Our Palestine), which revealed itself in 1965 as Fatah (a reverse acronym of the Arabic for Palestinian National Liberation Movement).

Both MAN and Fatah were founded in the early 1950s. The MAN and Fatah and their offshoots dominated post-1948 Palestinian nationalist politics for most of the period until the early 21st century. These groups worked covertly at first, in the context of the struggle for control of such early forums for Palestinian political activity as the Union of Palestinian Students in Egypt in the early 1950s, and then overtly after the 1960s. The MAN was founded by the charismatic Dr. George Habash and a group of fellow students at the American University of Beirut as an Arab nationalist group dedicated to drawing the Arab world more effectively into the struggle to liberate Palestine. Although it had influential branches in several Arab countries, the MAN's greatest impact was on Palestinian politics.

Unlike the MAN, Fatah initially drew its followers largely from the refugee population of the Gaza Strip and from the Palestinian diaspora in Egypt and Kuwait. It was more narrowly Palestinian nationalist than its main rival and was led from the outset by a tightly knit core group, which continued to function as its top leadership for more than three decades. This inner leadership had roots in a variety of movements, including the Muslim Brothers, the Baath, the Communists, and Hizb al-Tahrir al-Islami. The dominant figure was an engineer educated at Cairo University, Yasir Arafat. The Algerian struggle for liberation from France, which finally succeeded in 1962, strongly influenced Fatah's core leadership. The Fatah leadership was also profoundly influenced by radical elements of the Syrian wing of the Baath Party.

The Baath Party provided crucial support for Palestinian nationalist activity after it came to power in Syria in February 1966. It was the second Arab government, after that of Algeria, to give the Palestinians wholehearted support. But, unlike Algeria, Syria had bordered on Palestine and could provide bases for Palestinian attacks on Israel.

Growing Palestinian activism in the early 1960s influenced the convening of the first summit conference of Arab leaders in 1964, to plan a unified response to Israeli plans to divert some of the waters of the Jordan River. This activism influenced the decision, made at that conference, to create the PLO. It also precipitated the slide of the Arab states into the June 1967 Six-Day War with Israel. In the mid-1960s the Arab regimes were again haunted by a force they had not had to deal with since 1948—a Palestinian nationalist movement that, in spite of being divided into several underground groups, could exert great pressure on them by playing on public opinion and inter-Arab pressures.

During the early and middle 1960s dissatisfaction with the Arab status quo fueled the growth and activism of Palestinian nationalist groups. Most successful was Fatah, which began military operations against Israel on January 1, 1965, with an attack on the Israeli national water carrier project to transfer water from the Jordan River to the south of Israel. Although little more than pinpricks to the Israelis, these attacks were enormously effective propaganda in the Palestinians' political offensive to force the Arab regimes, notably Egypt under Gamal Abdel Nasser, to practice what they preached regarding Palestine.

The first target chosen by Fatah was particularly symbolic, since none of the Arab summit meetings called to deal with Israel's Jordan River water diversion had taken any concrete action. This pattern of armed propaganda continued to characterize Palestinian armed attacks. It was aimed at winning Palestinian opinion over to Fatah and at convincing Arab public opinion of the feasibility of direct action against Israel.

C6 The June 1967 War

By the mid-1960s Fatah and its Arab backers had put the Arab-Israeli conflict at the top of the Arab agenda, after nearly a decade of dormancy following the 1956 invasion of Egypt by Israel, Britain, and France. The resulting pressures on the Arab regimes launched a cycle of provocation, retaliation, threat, and escalation that culminated in June 1967 in a new war between Israel and the Arab states. The war ended in a disastrous defeat for the Arabs and especially for the Palestinians.

In fighting that lasted just six days Israel conquered the entire West Bank and the Gaza Strip, plus the Golan Heights of southern Syria and the Sinai Peninsula of Egypt. Palestine was thus reunited but under Israeli rule. East Jerusalem was annexed, and all the rest of Palestine was opened for further settlement by Jews. The Arab defeat in the June 1967 war in turn discredited the Arab radical nationalist regimes that had failed before the might of Israel, the Arab nationalism that had failed to bring the Arabs together to face their common enemy, and Fatah's opponents in the MAN who had long been aligned with Nasser and who now hastened to form their own guerrilla group.

D The Rebirth of an Independent Palestinian Movement

The June 1967 war was a watershed that led to the rebirth of a Palestinian national movement with a strong separate identity. The rebirth occurred in several stages. The first was winning a crucial victory in the battle of Karameh in the Jordan River valley in March 1968, where outnumbered Palestinian guerrillas, backed by Jordanian artillery, stood up to Israeli armored forces. The importance of this battle lay not in the relatively limited Israeli losses, but in the fact that the Israelis appeared to have been driven back by Palestinian irregulars only nine months after the rout of three Arab regular armies in 1967. During the next stage, also in 1968, the Palestinian guerrilla groups, who called themselves *fedayeen*, or self-sacrificers, seized control of the PLO from the leadership that had been installed by Nasser in 1964.

These successes ushered in a new phase for Palestinian nationalism, characterized by conflict on two fronts: with Israel and with Arab regimes that resented having to follow the lead of the Palestinian movement and feared its popularity. These regimes had been dragged into a war with Israel in 1967 that they did not want and were not ready for, had lost face as well as large sections of territory, and now faced the specter of a popular Palestinian commando movement that sought to draw them into further conflict with Israel.

The Palestinian commandos, with their bases in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, had embarked on a perilous course. Although they had massive Arab popular support as the saviors of Arab honor in the wake of the humiliation of 1967, they also faced the hostility of important forces in each key Arab country. In Lebanon and Jordan, despite mass support, the guerrillas were resented by the government and the upper classes. In Syria and Egypt the professional army officers who controlled both countries' governments looked askance on the idea that Palestinian guerrillas should dictate to them Arab strategy against Israel.

D1 Black September

Feeling threatened by the growing power of the Palestinian commandos in Jordan, King Hussein I and the Jordanian army moved against them in September 1970. The move came after the PFLP had embarrassed and provoked the Jordanian regime by hijacking several Western airliners to a desert field in Jordan. In the conflict known as "Black September" the power of the commandos was crushed in Jordan. Neither Syria nor Egypt intervened in their behalf. After five years of success, the Palestinians lost the initiative in the Arab front aligned against Israel and could no longer dictate its agenda. After a period from 1967 until 1970, when they had begun to mount a serious guerrilla campaign against Israel along the Jordan River valley, the guerrillas were again reduced to employing attacks on Israel as armed propaganda.

D2 New Thinking and New Objectives

As the Palestinian commandos, along with a large proportion of the political, educational, and other mass institutions of Palestinian national life, withdrew from Jordan in 1970-1971 to bases in Syria and Lebanon, new thinking began about the objectives of the Palestinian struggle. The early ideas, held when Fatah and the MAN were launched, were enshrined in the wording of the Palestine National Covenant, a document drawn up by the PLO in 1964 when it was still controlled by traditional politicians installed by the Arab governments. Essentially, the covenant declared the establishment of Israel null and void and declared that only those Jews who had arrived before 1917—the year of the Balfour Declaration—would have the right to remain in a liberated Arab Palestine.

The first shifts from this thinking came in 1969, when the PLO's "parliament in exile," the Palestine National Council (PNC), put forth the idea of a "secular democratic state" in Palestine. Although this would have meant the dismantling of the Jewish state, it recognized the right of all Israelis to live in Palestine, in full partnership with the Palestinians, within the context of a secular democratic state. It thus represented a radical departure from the ideas in the PLO covenant, although it did not appeal to most Israelis.

In the early 1970s even more radical departures from the traditional Palestinian political orthodoxy were debated. Notable among them was the idea of a Palestinian state alongside Israel in only part of Palestine. The idea of separate Palestinian and Israeli states was first put forward by the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), another MAN offshoot. It soon became apparent that this idea was also backed by the leadership of Fatah, which by then dominated the PLO under Arafat's leadership. In 1974 the PNC adopted a ten-point program that included this objective, although it was hedged with conditions and reservations needed to obtain the approval of a majority.

In the late 1970s and the 1980s the PNC shifted from considering armed struggle the only means to liberate Palestine to seeing it as one of several means toward that end, to dropping mention of it at the 19th PNC in November 1988. The PNC accepted the principle of a negotiated solution to the conflict with Israel, which it had bitterly opposed in the 1960s and early 1970s. Even PLO opposition to UN Security Council resolution 242, which called for Israeli withdrawal from Arab territories occupied in 1967 in exchange for peace, but which referred to the Palestinians only in the context of "a just resolution of the refugee problem," softened over time. Formerly rejected outright, it was later held unacceptable by the PLO only because it failed to deal with the Palestine problem except as a question of refugees and did not acknowledge the Palestinian right of self-determination. In 1988 it was explicitly accepted as a basis for negotiation by the 19th PNC and became the official basis for peace talks held in Madrid, Spain, in 1991.

E The PLO in the Later 1970s and the 1980s

From 1970 until 1982 the PLO built up a parastate apparatus that had *de facto* control over large areas of Lebanon and offered social, health, and educational services both to Palestinians and to many Lebanese. The PLO structure eventually became bureaucratized and was affected in some measure by corruption. But it provided a focus for the loyalties and aspirations of Palestinians not only in Lebanon but also those in the rest of the diaspora and in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. The virtually unanimous Palestinian acceptance of PLO leadership persisted even after the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon smashed most of the PLO military and social infrastructure there and forced the headquarters to move to Tunis, the capital of Tunisia, and in spite of a debilitating split in the movement from 1983 to 1987.

Throughout, Palestinian attacks on Israel continued, although several features of them changed. After the early 1970s, the mainstream PLO groups—Fatah, the PFLP, and DFLP—almost exclusively concentrated their attacks on targets in Israel and the occupied territories, while dissident factions, generally backed by Arab regimes at odds with the PLO, carried out bloody attacks against Israeli, Jewish, and other civilian targets in Europe and elsewhere. Such attacks, launched by the Abu Nidal group and similar shadowy underground factions, were designed both to implicate the PLO and to discredit it. These same groups also attacked PLO leaders and representatives abroad known for their moderation.

More serious for the PLO were Israel's attacks on Palestinian military bases, refugee camps, headquarters, and leaders. These were initially justified as—and sometimes were—retaliation for Palestinian attacks. But under the governments of Menachem Begin, starting in the late 1970s, and Yitzhak Shamir and Shimon Peres, in the middle and late 1980s, the attacks became preemptive and were often punishing in terms of casualties inflicted, particularly on civilians. Israel also bombed PLO headquarters in Beirut in 1981 and repeatedly in 1982, and in Tunis in 1985, and asassinated numerous PLO leaders, including Khalil al-Wazir (known as Abu Jihad), one of the founding members of Fatah, in Tunis in 1988.

F The Palestinian Mass Uprising

By the late 1980s the focus of the Palestinian struggle had shifted to the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. There, resistance to the occupation had long taken the form of intermittent demonstrations, strikes, boycotts, and occasional violence. At the end of 1987 a sharp escalation of these tactics, combined with a new self-reliance and new forms of organization, turned the Palestinian resistance into a mass uprising—the *intifada* in Arabic. It quickly involved virtually the entire population and continued to do so even two years later despite an Israeli response that resulted in hundreds of Palestinian deaths and thousands of detentions.

The uprising was the work of a generation that remembered neither the mandate nor Jordanian and Egyptian rule, a generation brought up under Israeli control. By the late 1980s, two out of three Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip had either not been born or were less than five years old when the Israeli occupation began. For two decades the people had had no control over their own lives, and their future was becoming increasingly unsure because of creeping annexation of land by the Israeli occupation authorities and the establishment of Israeli settlements on the confiscated lands.

By 1993 more than 60 percent of the West Bank land and about 50 percent of the land of the overcrowded Gaza Strip had been appropriated by Israel. Some of it was destined for Jewish settlements, inhabited in many cases by militant right-wing settlers seeking Israeli annexation of these areas. The settlements were meant to establish "facts on the ground," and thus to make Israeli control irrevocable. The presence of these settlers seriously exacerbated the tensions between occupier and occupied.

For two decades Israel had done much to prevent independent economic or social development and to subordinate the West Bank and Gaza Strip to the needs of the Israeli economy. These areas became the second-largest market for Israeli exports, provided a pool of cheap labor for Israel, and offered a field for lucrative Israeli investment. West Bank and Gaza Strip workers had to pay part of their low salaries into the Israeli social security fund, but could not receive benefits. All residents were heavily taxed, yet received in return services far inferior to those provided to Israelis, to the point that the occupation not only paid for itself but became fiscally profitable to the Israeli state.

Labor unions were heavily restricted, and social and educational institutions operated under stringent limitations. Nevertheless, the Palestinians eventually established a network of universities—including Bir Zeit, al-Najah, and Bethlehem universities—in spite of Israeli obstructions such as bans on new construction, repeated closures, and interference with the academic hiring process. The Palestinians also established their own daycare centers, nursery schools, orphanages, and social welfare centers, and created a network of thoroughly politicized nationalist mass organizations.

Over the years the Israeli occupation authorities deported more than 1,700 Palestinians for political offenses. They punished the families of many suspects (often later found innocent) by demolishing their homes. They arrested and detained many thousands of Palestinians, often by means of administrative detentions without trial that bypassed even the military justice system. Eventually so many people had been harmed by the occupation in one way or another that a large proportion of Palestinians apparently felt that they had nothing left to lose.

What resulted, starting on December 9, 1987, was clearly a popular uprising. It included children, teenagers, adults, and old people, men and women, every class of the population from laborers to wealthy merchants, and every region from the cities and towns to the refugee camps to isolated villages. Medical relief committees, food distribution cooperatives, local agricultural production initiatives, educational committees, and other ad hoc local groups sprang up to sustain the uprising.

The uprising was led in each locality by a committee representing all the areas' political forces—generally the three or four main groups composing the PLO plus an Islamic grouping called Hamas in some areas. A similar leadership formed at higher regional levels, and it was topped by an underground coordinating group that signed its periodic communiqués "PLO—Unified National Leadership of the Uprising in the Occupied Territories." As members of the leadership were detained by the Israelis—who after 18 months had detained more than 20,000 people—their places were taken by others.

The uprising shattered the barrier of fear of the occupier, strengthened the sense of self-reliance, and in general empowered a population that had been systematically deprived of control over its destiny during two decades of

Israeli occupation, and before that for 19 years under Jordanian and Egyptian rule. The resiliency of the uprising in spite of varied forms of Israeli repression over many months showed that the Palestinians had learned well how to rely on themselves and on institutions that they created. And while many demonstrators often threw rocks and gasoline bombs, they generally avoided more lethal weapons and tactics. The uprising helped crystallize a new and much younger leadership, and marked the beginning of a new phase of the Palestinian national movement.

The uprising provoked intense sympathy in the Arab world and galvanized Palestinians everywhere, bringing their cause to the attention of the world. Palestinians inside Israel carried out sympathy demonstrations and strikes. A growing number of Jews in Israel voiced doubts about Israeli policy. As a direct result of domestic and other pressures sparked by the uprising, Jordan's King Hussein, on July 31, 1988, severed his country's links with the West Bank and renounced Jordan's sovereignty over it, thereby reversing nearly 40 years of Jordanian policy.

Under the impact of the uprising the Palestine National Council (PNC) held its 19th meeting in Algiers in November 1988. On November 15 it adopted a Palestinian Declaration of Independence and a new political program.

The independence declaration explicitly grounded the Palestinian people's right to statehood in Article 22 of the League Covenant and in the UN partition resolution of 1947, thereby for the first time accepting the principle of partition of Palestine into an Arab state and a Jewish state. The declaration stated that the Palestinian state would be a parliamentary democracy guaranteeing freedom of expression; the rights of minorities; equality and nondiscrimination with respect to race, religion, color, and sex; the rule of law; and an independent judiciary.

The political program adopted by the 19th PNC was the first to omit all mention of the Palestine National Covenant, the document drawn up by the PLO in 1964 when it was still controlled by the Arab governments, taking as its basis instead the just-adopted Declaration of Independence. In another departure, the new political program omitted all mention of armed struggle and of Palestinian operations against Israel from Lebanon. The new program stressed the PLO's commitment to settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict by peaceful means, via an international conference based on UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.

The 1988 initiative paved the way for new relations with the international community, especially with the United States. In December 1988 Yasir Arafat addressed a special session of the UN General Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland. His statement was carefully framed to meet long-standing U.S. preconditions for official ties with the PLO. Low-level talks between U.S. and PLO representatives ensued, but they were soon broken off by the U.S. side.

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, and the resulting Persian Gulf War in early 1991, had damaging consequences for the Palestinians, who had enthusiastically applauded Saddam Hussein's missile bombardment of Israel. The PLO's political and financial backers in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf emirates condemned it, and Arafat personally, for the PLO's failure unequivocally to denounce the invasion of Kuwait and for Palestinian sympathy for the Iraqis during the hostilities. They cut off essential financial support to West Bank and Gaza institutions, while the expulsion of 300,000 Palestinian workers from Kuwait deprived their families in the occupied territories of a crucial part of their money income.

The Persian Gulf War, combined with the disappearance of the counterweight to U.S. influence formerly provided by the Soviet Union, deprived the Palestine question of its place as a central unifying factor among Middle Eastern Arab states. Conditions for Palestinian participation in the new "peace process" initiated by the U.S. secretary of state, James Baker, were dictated to the PLO. These conditions included demands that Palestinian delegates would have to form a joint delegation with Jordanians; they would have to be residents of Gaza or the West Bank excluding Jerusalem; and they would not be allowed to adhere officially to the PLO or represent it.

The PNC met in August 1991 to consider whether the Palestinian national cause would be more damaged by participation under these terms or by rejection and thus even worse international isolation. The vote was overwhelmingly in favor of participation, provided that certain conditions, chief among them a freeze on new Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, were met. Even though none of these conditions were in fact met, a Palestinian delegation selected by and accountable to the PLO went to the opening of talks in Madrid, Spain, in October 1991.

The conference provided a valuable opportunity for Hannan Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the delegation, to address world public opinion directly. But successive sessions brought no change in conditions for Palestinians living under occupation—human rights abuses worsened, settlement-building continued, and the Likud government of Israel openly treated the talks as a mere delaying tactic.

The stalemate continued even after the relatively moderate Labor Party took over the Israeli government in mid-1992. In December 1992, after the killing of three policemen and a border guard, Israel expelled 413 Palestinian Islamist militants to a barren hilltop in southern Lebanon. Despite UN condemnation, the Israelis refused to rescind the expulsions, and a short Palestinian boycott of the talks was ineffective. Pressure increased when the Israeli government sealed off the occupied territories. The loss of employment caused great hardship, while schools were closed as teachers and students were unable to cross between the territories and Jerusalem.

G The Oslo Accords

Due in part to the intifada, Israeli policy began to change at the end of March 1993, when Ezer Weizman, a strong advocate of a "land for peace" solution and of direct Israel-PLO negotiation, was elected president of Israel. While the tenth round of the peace talks, which began in May 1993, was making no more progress than earlier rounds, Yasir Arafat began publicly to use former French president Charles de Gaulle's phrase "Peace of the Brave," and hints of a "Gaza and Jericho first" solution were reported. In fact, direct negotiations between Israel and the PLO were secretly under way in Oslo, Norway.

The Oslo talks culminated in a draft peace agreement, which was approved by the Israeli cabinet on August 31, 1993. Formal mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO followed on September 10. On September 13, 1993, the agreement was signed on the White House lawn under the sponsorship of the administration of President Bill Clinton and sealed by a handshake between Arafat and Israeli premier Yitzhak Rabin.

The agreement called for the election of a council to administer Palestinian self-government for an interim period of five years (residents of East Jerusalem would take part in the elections) and to negotiate a permanent settlement based on UN resolutions 242 and 338. Self-government would begin in the Gaza Strip and a district (of unspecified size) around the West Bank town of Jericho. The Israeli military would "withdraw" from those areas within four months and be replaced by a "strong Palestinian police force," but Palestinian authority would not extend to Israeli citizens or settlements, and the Israelis would continue to use roads freely within those areas. The most important questions, notably the Israeli settlements, the return of exiles from the 1948 and 1967 wars, water rights, and the future status of East Jerusalem were left for the final phase of negotiations, between two and five years in the future.

The agreement's success was understood to require large-scale economic assistance to the Palestinians. An international donors' conference on October 1, 1993, resulted in pledges of about $2 billion, to be paid over several years primarily from the United States, the European Community (present-day European Union), Japan, and Saudi Arabia, for infrastructure and economic development. Much of the economic framework called for joint Israeli-Palestinian initiatives, causing concern that Israeli interests might stifle Palestinian development.

Clear majorities of Israelis and Palestinians supported the plan. Its most vehement opponents were Israeli rightists (including most of the Likud) and Syrian-based Palestinian "rejectionists," who carried out terrorist acts against both PLO militants and Israeli civilians. Some Islamists were unwilling to abandon the dream of an Islamic state in all of historic Palestine, but much more numerous were skeptical Palestinians, who doubted that the asymmetry of power institutionalized in the agreement would lead to the goal of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel in the West Bank and Gaza and having its capital in East Jerusalem. Nevertheless, despite the doubts and a series of delays, limited Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area was implemented in May 1994 under the newly created Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

In September 1995 the PLO and Israel signed a second peace accord, expanding limited Palestinian self-rule to almost all Palestinian towns and refugee camps in the West Bank. Under the agreements, 70 percent of the West Bank remained entirely under Israeli control. Only 3 percent of the land, comprising the major Palestinian cities, was to be under full Palestinian control. Israel maintained the right to send armed forces into Palestinian areas and control the areas between Palestinian enclaves.

The Oslo Accords envisioned an eventual two-state solution, in which Israel would be secure in its borders and Palestine would be recognized as a state. The PLO recognized Israel's right to exist and removed from its charter a clause calling for the elimination of the state of Israel. Disputed **"**final status**"** issues to be resolved by negotiations included the fixing of borders**,** the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes in Israel, the withdrawal of Israeli settlements from the West Bank and Gaza, and the prospect of a Palestinian capital in Jerusalem.

G1 The Assassination of Rabin

In 1995 Rabin was assassinated by a right-wing Israeli opposed to the peace agreement. The next government**,** led by Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu, rejected the idea of a Palestinian state and showed little interest in continuing the peace process with the PNA, which Arafat now headed. Under increasing U.S. pressure, the peace process was renewed by the subsequent Labor government of Ehud Barak. However, in July 2000 Israeli and PLO negotiators at Camp David, Maryland, failed to reach an agreement.

Some political observers believed that an Israeli proposal put forward at the Camp David talks, which Clinton mediated, was the best offer that Israel had made. But the offer did not adhere to guarantees promised to Palestinians in previous UN resolutions. Among these was UN Resolution 194, passed in 1948, which guaranteed the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes. As a result the Palestinians objected. The proposal would have continued Israeli control of Palestine's borders and airspace. It also would have approved Israel's annexation of large swaths of territory where 80 percent of Israeli settlers live, and it would have given Israel authority over walls, roads, bridges, and tunnels. In effect this would have divided the West Bank into dozens of truncated and disconnected cantons. Finally, the Israeli proposal would have maintained Israeli sovereignty over most of the inner neighborhoods of Arab East Jerusalem, as well as the Haram al-Sharif, a Muslim holy site. The new state that would have emerged, according to Palestinians, would have been neither viable nor sovereign, instead resembling South Africa's bantustans.

G2 Collapse of the Peace Process

After the collapse of the Camp David talks in September 2000**,** a second intifida began in the West Bank and Gaza. Under a new right-wing government led by Ariel Sharon**,** Israel continued to expand settlements in the West Bank and in 2002 reoccupied a number of cities in the West Bank. The peace process ground to a halt.

In 2002 Israel began construction of a separation wall in the West Bank. Israeli officials stated that the wall was designed to prevent suicide bombers from entering Israel from the West Bank. But the route of the wall did not follow the "Green Line" border between the West Bank and Israel, instead curving far east into the West Bank. The UN estimated that the wall cut off at least 15 percent of West Bank land. International opposition rose, and in 2004 the UN's International Court of Justice ruled that the wall was illegal. The ruling found that "Israel is under an obligation to terminate its breaches of international law; it is under an obligation to cease forthwith the works of construction of the wall being built in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, to dismantle forthwith the structure therein situated, and to repeal or render ineffective forthwith all legislative and regulatory acts relating thereto.' Israel ignored the UN court's ruling. Israeli officials, including the soon-to-be foreign minister Tzipi Livni, later admitted that they intended the route of the wall to become the future unilaterally imposed border of an expanded Israeli state.

In April 2004 in an exchange of letters with Sharon, U.S. president George W. Bush agreed to back Israel's annexation of West Bank lands and its official rejection of the Palestinians' internationally mandated right of return as a quid pro quo for Sharon's plan to "disengage" from Gaza. Later that same year Arafat died. He was succeeded as PLO chairman by Mahmoud Abbas. Palestinians elected Abbas president of the Palestinian National Authority in July 2005. Abbas ran as the candidate of Fatah, the dominant political group in the PLO. Also in 2005 the Israeli government unilaterally withdrew Israeli forces and settlements from the Gaza Strip**,** while retaining control of all Gazan airspace, coastal waters, and entry and exit points. The same year Israel returned control of some West Bank cities to the PNA. Sharon's pullout from Gaza angered the right wing of the Likud Party, and Sharon found that his former supporters were attempting to block his initiatives. He bolted from Likud and formed his own centrist party, known as Kadima, but soon after he suffered a massive stroke that ended his political career. Formal peace negotiations remained suspended.

In January 2006 a militant Islamist organization, Hamas, won decisively in the elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council. Hamas was not part of the PLO and unlike the PLO and Fatah did not accept a two-state solution because it implied Israel's right to exist. Many political observers believed the Hamas victory was due mainly to frustrations with the lack of progress in peace negotiations, the expansion of Israeli settlements, increased Israeli control of Palestinian life in the occupied territories, and anger over PNA corruption and incompetence, rather than the rejection of a two-state solution, which polls showed most Palestinians still supported. The legislative council selected Ismail Haniyeh of Hamas as the PNA's prime minister responsible for the administration of the PNA. In an uneasy partnership Abbas continued to function as the president, which gave him responsibility for peace negotiations and relations with Israel.

Israel was now under the government of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, who succeeded Sharon as leader of Kadima and formed a coalition government following March 2006 parliamentary elections. Olmert decided to withhold tax and customs revenues owed to the PNA unless Hamas recognized Israel and renounced violence. As part of the Oslo Accords, Israel retained the authority to collect tax and customs receipts. The European Union (EU) and the United States also imposed financial sanctions on the Hamas-led government by withholding aid. Faced with the prospect of no aid or tax revenue, Hamas grew closer to the Islamic government of Iran, which began to provide financial assistance. Abbas called for new elections, a move that was rejected by Hamas.

In December 2006 Haniyeh was denied entry to Gaza after returning from a trip to Iran. He was eventually allowed in but was unable to bring the millions in aid that he had collected from the Iranian government. Hamas officials also charged that an altercation at the border in which some of Haniyeh's bodyguards were killed was actually an attempt by Fatah to assassinate Haniyeh. Fatah officials likewise accused Hamas of an attempt on the life of Abbas. Armed clashes began to break out between Fatah and Hamas. Further complicating the situation was the fact that Hamas still held an Israeli soldier who had been taken prisoner earlier in 2006. In retaliation Israel had carried out what

Palestinians described as a number of acts of collective punishment in Gaza, including destroying Gaza's only electrical generating plant during the heat of summer. Israel had also arrested and imprisoned nearly a third of the Palestinian Legislative Council for belonging to an illegal organization. Of the 41 legislators arrested, 37 were members of Hamas.

G3 Palestinian Unity Government

As 2007 began, Hamas and Fatah tried to forge a lasting ceasefire. In February Saudi Arabia brought the two sides together at a meeting in Mecca. As a result of the talks an agreement was reached to end the fighting and form a unity government. The agreement also stated that the new unity government would "respect" past agreements with Israel, a concession by Hamas, which had previously refused to honor the PLO's agreements with Israel. The language was designed to help restore aid from the so-called Quartet—the U.S., EU, Russia, and the UN—which had cut off aid because of Hamas's participation in the government.

In March the unity government was formally created even though the legislators arrested by Israel remained in Israeli jails. Key positions in the Cabinet of the unity government that involved dealings with representatives of the Quartet were given to Fatah supporters so that no representatives of the Quartet would have to meet with members of Hamas. Abbas simultaneously sought to renew peace talks with Israel.

Both Israel and the United States refused to recognize the unity government, however, and continued to withhold aid. In early June 2007 renewed street fighting between Hamas and Fatah forces led to a Hamas takeover in the Gaza Strip. Fatah's security forces there ceased to operate openly, and many Fatah activists sought refuge in the West Bank. In mid-June Abbas formed an emergency, caretaker government in the West Bank that excluded Hamas. Abbas named Palestinian economist Salam Fayyad, who was well regarded in the West, as prime minister, foreign minister, and finance minister in the new Cabinet.

Hamas refused to recognize the legitimacy of the new government, and it was on the threshold of being further isolated as Israel cut off supplies from reaching Gaza. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) was forced to halt building projects under way in Gaza due to a lack of construction material, worsening the region's already high unemployment and its deteriorating infrastructure. Israel, the European Union, and the United States, however, did recognize the Abbas-led government and indicated that renewed aid to the PNA would be forthcoming.

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