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CHAIRMEN

North America: Europe: Japan:
David Rockefeller Georges Berthoin Takeshi Watanabe

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TRIALOGUE.

Winter 1983

3  Arrigo Levi: The Risks of Peace and the Logic of War
7  Joseph J. Sisco: All Roads Lead to Washington
9  Hideo Kitahara: Middle East Priorities

Voices from the Region:
12  Yitzhak Rabin
17  Crown Prince Hassan
21  Ghassan Tuéni
26  Bassam Shaka
28  Aziz Sidki
30  Ahmed Sidki Dajani
34  Moshe Arens
38  Life After Peace: A Collective Look at the Future

Publisher
Charles B. Heck

Editor
Francois Saussey

Circulation
Peter Witte

Graphic Design
Paola Piglia

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In May 1981, a task force report to the Trilateral Commission was published on “The Middle East and the Trilateral Countries” (The Triangle Papers:22). This report—discussed at the Commission plenary meeting in March 1981—was the result of a year’s teamwork and consultations by its four authors: Garret FitzGerald, then leader of Ireland’s Fine Gael Party and now Prime Minister of Ireland; Hideo Kitahara, former Ambassador of Japan to France and to the United Nations in Geneva; Arrigo Levi, columnist for La Stampa of Turin; and Joseph J. Sisco, former U.S. Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs. In the three opening articles of this Triadogues, Messrs. Levi, Sisco and Kitahara look back at some of their report’s conclusions and at the new realities in the Middle East—after the war in Lebanon, the September 1982 Reagan proposals and Arab summit resolution at Fez, on-going Palestinian-Jordanian talks, and the prevailing Israeli policies in the occupied territories. (Dr. FitzGerald, due to his new responsibilities since assuming for the second time the prime ministership of Ireland in December 1982, was unable to join his former co-authors in this exercise.)

The Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian question carry the dimensions of great tragedy, the complexity and some of the accents of which we have tried to capture in a series of interviews with leading voices from the region, conducted by this editor in Israel, the West Bank, Jordan and Lebanon, as well as in France and the United States. We offer this set of often sharply contradictory views—by no means universally representative or ideally “balanced”—in the hope that it will help inform discussion of the issues at hand.

This is true also of the concluding essay of this Triadogues—one of those rare collective attempts to look at what “life after peace” might be like—by a team which includes, among others, an Israeli, a P.L.O. expert, a Jordanian and a West-Banker. This and all other contributions to this Triadogues are, as always, the sole responsibility of their authors; in no way do they represent Trilateral Commission thinking or agreed positions.
Two years ago our report to the Trilateral Commission on the Middle East (see Editor's note, p. 2) expressed the view that there were two principal approaches for the West Bank and Gaza and for the Arab-Israeli dispute: "indefinite continuation of the Israeli occupation;" and the pursuit of negotiations between all parties, leading through a transitional period of autonomy under Camp David to an eventual solution, which would involve "return of territory as part of a peace agreement."

Our report made a clear choice in favor of the second of these approaches and indicated a number of "requirements for progress," which included: the freezing of any Israeli plans for further settlements "at the outset, so as to leave all future negotiating options open;" the return of the West Bank to Jordan "in substantial measure;" the linking of "territory returned to Jordan to the East Bank, confederally or federally, as part of a Jordanian-Palestinian State under the Hashemite Kingdom;" a commitment by Jordan "to provide the opportunity for the West Bank Palestinian Arabs to exercise the right of self-determination after an appropriate period of years." provided the basic agreement had been tested on the ground "to the satisfaction of Israel and Jordan," and provided that it had been found consistent "with the security interests of both." We also suggested that "a role for the P.L.O. or individual members of the P.L.O. or Palestinian Arabs from the West Bank and Gaza in the negotiating process... be kept under active review in the light of their willingness or unwillingness to recognize Israel's right to exist."

I believe that our report anticipated what has come to be known as the "Jordanian option": it suggested a policy which, in its main aspects, has been adopted by the Reagan Administration since the Summer of 1982 as the main avenue for potential progress towards peace in the Middle East, and which has greatly enlarged the area of agreement and cooperation in the Middle East between the United States and the European nations. Of course the difficulties and obstacles are still all there. But the great and dramatic events of the last two years, including the completion of the Egyptian-Israeli peace agreements and the Lebanon war, have given greater substance and credibility to the "Jordanian option" and to the choices suggested in our report to the Trilateral Commission. When Dr. Kissinger and others say that chances for global peace in the Middle East are today better than they have ever been, what they mean is that the possibility of making progress along the lines suggested above is greater and that obstacles along this road to peace look less insurmountable than they ever did before.

At the time of the writing of this progress report on the Middle East (mid-January 1983), serious efforts are being made in order to get Jordan to join the negotiating process, with the consent of the P.L.O. The Palestinians, including some of the main factions of the P.L.O., seem to be aware that this may be their "last bus" to recovery of territory and it seems possible that they might give a conditional "green light", if not an open mandate, to King Hussein; true, they have also apparently decided to make pressure upon the Begin government by launching again acts of terrorism against Israel—but couldn't the result be the opposite, i.e., strengthen Mr. Begin in his opposition to the new peace initiative and future compromises? King Hussein is obviously keen to get negotiations started; he is aware that any alternative would involve great dangers to his Kingdom in the future. In Israel itself, the Jordanian option, long supported by the Labor opposition, has become politically more relevant since it has received American support; it also seems to have become more attractive to a larger section of the Israeli public, due to a greater awareness, since the Lebanon war and the Sabra and Shatila massacres, of the greater risks of continued warfare and of an increasing isolation of Israel in the world if the alternative "Begin strategy" is pursued.

Arrigo Levi is a columnist for La Stampa in Turin. (Mr. Levi fought with Israeli forces in the 1948 war of independence. -Ed.)
On the whole, there appear to be, at the time of this writing, greater chances for, or fewer obstacles against, the negotiating approach suggested by our report two years ago—in spite of the fact that Premier Begin's opposition to some of the key “requirements for progress” indicated by us at the time remains as firm as ever. This includes, in particular, the Israeli government's fundamental choice on the matter of new Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, a problem which has split the World Zionist movement as well as Israeli public opinion.

While the inquest on the Sabra and Shatila massacres continues it is not possible to assess the impact that the findings of the Commission will have on Mr. Begin's chances of being re-elected, if, as a result of the enquiry, his government coalition were to fall apart and if he decided to call an early election in order to be “absolved” by the Israeli electorate. Nor can we assess the chances of success of the Lebanese-Israeli negotiations which have just started.

However, it is already clear that Mr. Begin, as long as he holds power, will do his best to go ahead with the other “principal approach” indicated in our report. Indeed, if some progress has been made in favor of the “negotiating approach” and the Jordanian option, it must be stressed that in the past two years much progress has also been made, as a result of the determined and consistent actions of the Begin-Sharon government, towards the fulfillment of the plan which we briefly considered under the heading of “indefinite continuation of Israeli occupation.” The Begin strategy, which might be more correctly defined as one of annexation by stages of the occupied territories, has had a number of successes which would be unwise not to recognize, even though one remains convinced that this will in the end prove to be “an untenable alternative,” as we wrote in our report two years ago. To be more precise: I believe that the Begin strategy has made, in the past two years, definite progress towards its stated aims; but in the same period of time the costs of the Begin strategy to Israel and its friends have also become clearer to a larger number of people, including Ronald Reagan and a substantial section of Israeli public opinion. Thus, this alternative has been both strengthened and weakened; it has become more credible but also more “untenable” than it was two years ago.

All we said in our report on this “principal approach” to the Arab-Israeli dispute was contained in one paragraph. It claimed that “indefinite continuation of Israeli occupation of the territories” was “an untenable alternative” because it would “increase the isolation of Sadat,” and would make the Arab world more united against Israel and strengthen Arab radicalism, while weakening American influence in the Arab world. Moreover we felt that “indefinite occupation would not assure Israeli survival and security” because of the “increasing political, economic and social costs of an occupation without end.” We ended by saying that such an approach would ultimately be “a prescription for war, not peace.”

I still entirely subscribe to these views, although I would probably phrase them more forcefully today. It seems clear that this approach, whose aim is Israeli annexation of occupied territories, would not only be “a prescription for war” but does indeed require war as a necessary instrument for achieving its goals. We did not forecast an Israeli war on the P.L.O. in Lebanon; but this turns out to be a necessary first step in the Begin strategy. The enlargement of Israeli territory to include the occupied territories could only be possible after the military defeat and expulsion of the P.L.O. from Lebanon, and the securing of Israel's northern frontier.

While we do not know yet whether the required “Lebanese stage” of the Begin strategy can be completed without further bloodshed, we must admit that it has greater chances of being brought to a successful conclusion than anybody expected when the “Peace in Galilee” operation was launched: suppose Mr. Begin manages to survive the domestic political consequences of the Sabra and Shatila inquest (as of now he still seems to be the more likely winner of new elections, although this might change if the Lebanese negotiations do not permit an early withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon, and if the Commission’s verdict is particularly harmful to Mr. Begin). Then he may succeed in averting the American attempt to start a phase of “Jordanian negotiations,” while going ahead (without undue harm to Israel's relations with the United States) with the “creeping annexation” of occupied territories through his grand new housing projects.

Mr. Begin may further hope that Palestinian reactions, even if they include a new terrorist wave, will not provoke anything similar to a revolt of the population of the occupied territories, and that a new failure will change the order of priorities of Palesti-
nian goals, so that King Hussein, rather than Israel and Mr. Begin, will become the main target—at this stage—for the Palestinian movement. A stronger exodus of Palestinian population from the occupied territories (a development which Mr. Begin has recently indicated as most favorable to his plans; indeed, such an exodus is indispensable in order to avoid turning a "greater Israel" into another South Africa) might then gradually make Mr. Begin's dream of extending Israel's rule to the biblical lands of Judea and Samaria possible.

The consistency and strength of Mr. Begin's strategy must be recognized if one wants to work seriously for peace in the Middle East. In particular, the Palestinians and the Arabs would make a fatal mistake if they lightly dismissed Mr. Begin's strategy as an impossibility. Saying that this strategy is "a prescription for war, not peace," as our report said two years ago and as I still believe to be true, is not the same thing as saying that such a strategy is an impossibility. History tells us that "impossibilities" have often been transformed into reality. The Palestinians, thanks to their foolish policy of refusing to recognize the existence of the State of Israel, have already lost large territories which Israel would have gladly conceded in the past against a peace treaty. There is a serious risk today that they may come to lose all of their territories "West of the Jordan," whose recovery would then become quite difficult to achieve by either diplomatic action or war.

Having said that, having conceded the progress achieved by the Begin approach, it must however be repeated that the way this strategy has developed so far shows how high its costs would be, first of all to Israel itself. It has become quite clear, in my view, that an ever increasing militarization of the state of Israel would be a prerequisite for such a policy. Israel being surrounded by hostile states (peaceful relations with Egypt are already in trouble), the use of force to impose such grand designs would have to continue and increase. And it would be necessary for the Israelis not to be too squeamish about the human costs to others (and to the Israelis themselves) of such violence. While the Sabra and Shatila massacres by Lebanese Christian forces were most certainly not wanted or planned by the Israeli government (indeed, they seriously compromised what might have been otherwise an almost complete success), such "accidents" would be liable to happen again if a policy based on force is continued. And without a massive use of force this policy has no chance of success:

Indeed, it can be readily admitted that, without the Israeli siege of West Beirut and the massive Israeli bombardment of Lebanese towns, Mr. Begin's aim of expelling Yasir Arafat and the P.L.O. from Lebanon could never have been achieved. Violence, with its high human costs, is a necessary element of this strategy; so were the losses of Israeli lives and the continuing costs of the Israeli occupation of Southern Lebanon; so are perhaps future "peace operations" (after "Peace in Galilee," why not one day "Peace in the Golan," or "Peace in Judea and Samaria"?)
beyond Israel's frontiers. It would be foolish not to expect them, considering the disastrous political conditions of Lebanon, Syrian hostility, the fact that Jordan's population is largely Palestinian and that Palestinians continue to live in Lebanon, Syria and a large number of Arab countries.

It is only reasonable to expect that further "mistakes" would be made and that Israel would be involved in various ways in more bloodshed. I repeat: the political successes achieved by Mr. Begin thanks to war in Lebanon have been great, and military force may indeed continue to produce results. But it would be unrealistic not to expect that the human costs of such a policy, leading as well to high political costs to Israel, will also be great.

This is even clearer today than it was two years ago because the next stages of the Begin strategy have also been more clearly defined. This strategy explicitly leads to the setting up of Jordan as the Palestinian State. And while it also demands that the number of Palestinians under Israeli rule be reduced, thanks to the continuing exodus of Palestinians from the occupied territories or other events, it cannot be expected that the Arab presence inside this new, larger Israel will suddenly wither away. Thus, the most likely condition for a long period of time would be the following: A greater Israel would include an Arab population of nearly the same size as its Jewish population, the Arabs possibly becoming a majority after a number of years. This Arab population would include both Israeli citizens and a larger body of Palestinians living under Israeli rule in what are today the "occupied territories," but holding Jordanian or Palestinian-Jordanian citizenship and enjoying in the territories where they live only limited administrative rights. They would obviously resist and resent such an inferior condition. Sooner or later, Jordan would become a Palestinian State. It is only reasonable to expect that it would have as its national goal an "irredentist" policy for the recovery of territories under Israeli rule and for helping its "oppressed brothers" in Israel. Such a Palestinian-Jordanian State, a much greater threat to Israel than Lebanon ever was, would be strongly supported by the Arab world and, of course, by the Soviet Union. One must also expect that America's influence in the Arab world (supposing that the U.S. were to finally bow to the results of the Begin strategy, not being in a position to "abandon Israel"), would by that time have largely withered away. The unity of countries belonging to the trilateral world would not easily survive these stresses, since Japan and at least some European countries would find it difficult not to support the Palestinians against Israel.

The inevitable result would therefore be the one we forecast: more wars. In the same period of time, the political conditions of life in Israel would change greatly. Only a militaristic Israel, intolerant of dissent, could hope to be able to stand up to the great trials involved and survive. This would certainly be strenuously resisted by many Israelis; there would be serious political conflicts inside Israel, as well as between Israel and the Jewish diaspora and among the Jews of the world. These conflicts are already apparent: They do not deal with tactical choices, they concern such fundamental matters as the survival of Israel, the historical aims of Zionism, the identity of Israel and Judaism. This is what, even now, makes political tensions and debates in Israel so dramatically different in kind from political conflict in any other country.

This is, in my view, what is ultimately involved in that alternative approach to the Arab-Israeli dispute which we defined as "indefinite continuation of Israeli occupation." I, for one, have searched at length with much anguish my own mind and have interrogated many thoughtful people in order to try to understand whether this "approach" might be pursued by an Israeli government without provoking the sequel of events which I have just described. I have regretfully come to the conclusion that these are the consequences which it is reasonable to expect; worse things than I have forecast might happen, sooner than I at present expect. And I do not think that it would be wise to describe the choices now confronting Israel, the Palestinians and, to some extent, the Trilateral countries, in lighter tones.

Of course, I know quite well that the alternative approach, the one we suggested, through negotiations and compromises, is also full of very serious risks for Israel and peace: I do not at all underestimate the depth of the Arabs' and Palestinians' hate for the state of Israel, and I do not trust at all the P.L.O.'s aims. But the greater these fears are, the more they apply to both alternatives, and even more so to the situation which would be created by Israel's creeping annexation and continued occupation of Palestinian territory. Risks are in either case unavoidable. The choice is between two alternative sets of risks, as well as between alternative visions and moral choices.
War and violence dominated the Middle East and Gulf in 1982 with diplomacy largely reactive and devoted to crises management and securing cease-fires. 1983 augurs to be a year of enhanced opportunity for diplomacy in a region changed by major developments during this past year. And more than ever, the main roads lead to Washington as the only power acceptable to both sides.

On the whole, the outlook is more promising than it has been for some time. The U.S. must be prepared for an extended and sustained period of diplomatic effort not only because of the intractability of the problems, but also because it has embarked on a peace policy designed to produce a more positive political environment and receptivity both in Israel and in the Arab world to its fresh approach as embodied in President Reagan's initiative of September 1, 1982 calling for a West Bank and Gaza linked to Jordan. The major importance of the Reagan proposal is that it has added political yeast to the area affecting attitudes on both sides.

In the Middle East, past is prologue. Five major developments dominated in 1982.

First, Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai was completed in April and Egypt became the first Arab country to regain its territory by peaceful means. Normalization of relations between Egypt and Israel was at a standstill, autonomy talks languished and then were suspended, but both sides continued to carry out their treaty obligations scrupulously. The completion of Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai led the U.S. to turn, somewhat belatedly, to the peace process and away from its near exclusive preoccupation with developing a strategic consensus in the area.

Secondly, the sputtering war between Iraq and Iran continued in stalemate. A potentially stronger Iran succeeded in pushing virtually all Iraqi forces from its territory, but it became less likely that

[Joseph J. Sisco was U.S. Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs from 1974 to 1976, and Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East and South Asia from 1969 to 1974.]

Iranian forces could achieve a decisive military breakthrough. The Ayatollah Khomeini failed to achieve an overturn of Saddam Hussein and in establishing a more friendly Islamic fundamentalist regime in Baghdad. The war was costly to both countries. Arab oil-producing nations continued to help Iraq financially out of fear that an Iranian military victory would further de-stabilize the Gulf and become a serious threat to the conservative monarchies. Efforts by an Islamic mediation group to end the war and settle differences peacefully were spurred by Iraq but spurned by Iran.

Third, the military stand-off between Soviet occupying forces in Afghanistan and the freedom fighting Mujahedeen continued. Preliminary efforts by a United Nations negotiator opened no new significant approaches for a settlement that would meet the requirements of the USSR, the U.S., Pakistan and the Afghan people. With no opportunity to restore its relationship with Iran, and basically unchanged in its view that the Soviet military position in Afghanistan was a potential threat to the Gulf, the U.S. consolidated further its relations with a Pakistan which housed over 2.7 million Afghan refugees, provided a haven and support for the Afghan resistance fighters, and had no interest in a permanent Soviet military toehold in the area adjacent to its North West Frontier Province.

Fourth, war in Lebanon was the major event of the year, its end brought about primarily by U.S. diplomacy spearheaded by the professional and indefatigable efforts of Ambassador Philip Habib. For Israel, its military intervention brought the likelihood of a more secure northern border for the indefinite future, but its political goals were largely unachieved. For Lebanon, the elimination of the P.L.O. from Beirut gave the Amin Gemayel government an opportunity to press for removal of all remaining extraneous forces and to begin the long, arduous, and difficult process of internal reconciliation. For the Arabs, it provided a challenge to lessen its political divisions, to recognize the unfeasibility of the mili-
tary option, and to adopt an attitude towards the Palestinian issue which took account of the new realities in the aftermath of developments in Lebanon. For the P.L.O., it meant weakness militarily and politically, dispersal to nine Arab countries, and an uncertain future, if any.

Fifth, the changed circumstances and conditions in the area stimulated the U.S. to re-start peace negotiations. Building on the Camp David framework and consistent with U.N. Security resolutions 242 of 1967 and 338 of 1973, President Reagan called for a self-governing West Bank and Gaza under Palestinian Arab leadership residing there ultimately to be associated with Jordan. The President also called for a freeze on settlements. He made clear the Administration was opposed to Israeli annexation of the territories and an independent Palestinian state. He left unchanged U.S. policy towards the P.L.O., that no dialogue or negotiations would be undertaken as long as the P.L.O. failed to recognize Israel’s existence. President Reagan’s proposals bought limited time to secure a broadened peace effort and shifted the focus from Egypt to Jordan.

King Hussein is seeking support from at least those moderate Arab leaderships committed to the principle of co-existence and “live and let live” with Israel. He is keenly aware that failure to grasp the opportunity provided by the Reagan initiative could result in events on the ground overcoming diplomatic opportunities. He is likely to have to decide whether to move forward in a context of neither explicit approval or disapproval from key Arab states and the Palestinians largely because of the on-going schism within the Arab world.

In Israel, the body politic will be focusing on two main policy questions: the timing, circumstances and conditions of Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, and whether to continue the Begin policy of increased Israeli control of the West Bank and Gaza or turn toward a territorial compromise with Amman should King Hussein opt for negotiations. This critical debate is likely to come in the difficult environment of the Commission of Inquiry’s report expected in February; to be time consuming, it is unlikely to be consummated without elections sometime in 1983, and the outcome is uncertain. Yet the hope is that should Hussein ultimately move affirmatively for negotiations, no Israeli government can take on the onus for preventing them from being started and pursued seriously.

The developments in the area once again confirmed the centrality of the U.S. role. Noteworthy was the relative inactivity of the USSR during this period, despite its substantial military power in the area. The Soviets were not in a position to produce political results, and the Arabs despite a sense of frustration over their inability to affect the war in Lebanon, continued to look to the U.S. as the only realistic power to re-start the momentum of a peace process that had languished for over two years. The maintenance of this favored political position of the U.S. in Middle East diplomacy would depend ultimately on whether Washington could bring both sides to the negotiating table focusing on the Palestinian issue realistically and whether it could produce positive results. In this continuing effort, support from Western European and Japanese allies would be an important reinforcement for Washington.
In our February 1981 report “The Middle East and The Trilateral Countries”, we presented our views on (1) the Arab-Israeli conflict, particularly the Palestinian question, (2) the world’s dependence on oil and stability in the Gulf, and (3) policy to attain détente through containment of Soviet actions in the Middle East and the Gulf area.

In retrospect, the situation has improved in all three aspects since our publication of the report. On the Arab-Israeli question, although autonomy as agreed at Camp David is yet to be realized, the Sinai Peninsula has been duly returned to Egypt. More recently, upon withdrawal of Palestinian guerrillas from Lebanon, President Reagan made a comprehensive peace proposal on September 1st, 1982. To break the impasse in the Middle East peace negotiations, the proposal called for the self-government by Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories in association with Jordan as well as an immediate freeze on the establishment of Jewish settlements on the West Bank. As for the present oil situation, the supply squeeze has been reversed with the Gulf members of OPEC announcing in early February 1983 their plan to cut crude oil price by four dollars subject to approval by other OPEC members. Unfortunately, the Iran-Iraq war drags on. However, the overall situation in the Middle East, particularly in the Gulf area, has improved remarkably compared to two years ago.

What strikes me most in reviewing the changes that have taken place in the area over the last two years is their inextricable relationship to the evolution of U.S. Policy. While it cannot be said that the U.S. is almighty on all issues in this area, the U.S. Government is unquestionably the sole intermediary for the overall peace settlement negotiations. In this context, the Reagan proposal made in September is epoch-making. Until then, the U.S. Government had been rather reluctant to present a concrete proposal on the peace settlement.

In our report, we urged the Trilateral Countries to take mutually supportive and complementary approaches as well as to promote close consultations. It continues to be our sincere hope that the U.S., recognizing its leading role in these issues, would try to maintain appropriate balance between its ally, Israel, and the “moderate” arab countries for peace and stability in this region. Only through such balanced policy on the part of the U.S. could the complementary approach we suggested be fully effective.

Reagan Proposal

President Reagan, from the inception of his administration, took a more “pro-Israel” policy relative to former administrations. Mr. Begin, therefore, felt he could go ahead with an active external policy. The invasion of Lebanon, for instance, was possible only because Israel was able to expect tacit support from the U.S. However, Israel went too far. President Reagan’s September proposal must have been made with due consideration of these developments as well as the position of Arab “moderate” countries. It was indeed the first proposal in which the U.S. president took a clear position on the future status of the occupied territories. As the development of Arab-Israeli negotiations will be much affected by American policies, the responsibility placed on the U.S. is very heavy. While gaps still exist between what the Arab countries expect and what Reagan’s Peace plan proposes, the proposal is sufficiently specific and can serve as a basis for the overall peace negotiations in the future. The proposal, though denying the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, calls for self-government by Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza in association with Jordan, as well as the immediate freeze of Israeli settlements. It is truly a significant step forward and can well serve as a basis of negotiations for a “just and lasting peace” in the Middle East.
What is important at this point is to pursue expeditiously the negotiations along the line of President Reagan's peace proposal by making the best use of the opportunity resulting from the fact that the military strength of the P.L.O. in Lebanon has been virtually shattered. Otherwise, time would run counter to the proposal. There could be no question of Reagan's major diplomatic victory if the Palestinian question makes progress toward settlement on the basis of this proposal.

Debate continues as to whether the Soviet Union should participate in overall peace negotiations. However, given the present situation in the Middle East, negotiations between Israelis and the Arabs under powerful U.S. mediations seems more appropriate. It is noteworthy that some of the Arab "moderates" are apprehensive that a Geneva-style negotiation between the Soviet Union and the United States would result in a "new Yalta." All our efforts should be concentrated on promoting the Reagan proposal at this very time, when the strength of Arab "radicals" has eroded. The trilateral countries should also have common recognition of the need to cooperate towards this purpose, even if they differ on the ultimate picture of the settlement of the problems.

Withdrawal Of Forces From Lebanon

I do not agree that withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon and strengthening of the Lebanese government are prerequisites to a peace settlement. Rather, improvement in the more fundamental Palestinian question itself is more essential and will facilitate the move toward withdrawal of forces from Lebanon. As these two problems are intricately related, negotiations for withdrawal of troops from Lebanon and the negotiations for the peace settlement should be simultaneously promoted. Any attempt to solve the problem unrealistically by forcing withdrawal from Lebanon would be potentially dangerous.

Israel's Position

Israel presently enjoys the most comfortable position in its history. They feel no external threat whatsoever at the moment. Mr. Begin probably has dreamt of attaining such a "peace" for a long time. But the Begin cabinet would be naive to assume that this is a permanent situation. Given this comfortable "peace", they should now consider current serious developments such as the confrontation between Begin and the Labor Party over the continuation of the war, the massacre in Beirut, the continuing resistance by Palestinians in the occupied territories, etc. While there might be a good reason for Mr. Begin to believe that instability over Israel in this area works for the security of Israel, one would be wrong to seek one's security only through military strength. It is all the more important to make diplomatic and political efforts at the very time one enjoys military superiority.

Palestinians And The P.L.O.

In the Arab countries, what prospect exists for the dispersed and disarmed P.L.O.? What is their next step? For the time being, the Palestinians have no other option but political activities. That is precisely why the initiation of negotiations over the Palestinian question is of vital concern to the moderate groups of the P.L.O. If the P.L.O. efforts are to be forgotten and discarded, even the moderates could run in a more radical direction. The worst scenario is that they might become sources of social instabilities in the Gulf countries, or they could well be affected by the Arab fundamentalists.

The most urgent task for the overall Palestinian question is to reach some kind of settlement of the Palestinian refugee problem. Many Palestinians now living in Lebanon may be driven out sooner or later. In order to cope with such a situation and minimize subsequent eruptions, a homeland for the Palestinians which could give them hope for their future should be created. If the Palestinians could be given a secure homeland, they would be politically more stable and thus contribute greatly to the stability of the region. This step does no more than promote President Reagan's proposal. All those concerned should realize that self-government by the Palestinians in association with Jordan is the most satisfactory short cut for the materialization of the Palestinian ideal under the present circumstances.

Jordan

King Hussein holds the cards for the implementation of President Reagan's proposal. He explicitly supported the proposal in an interview on the BBC television on September 13. With more than one million Palestinians residing in Jordan, a good majority of the country, King Hussein and his government clearly need their support for the survival of the regime. It is thus in the interest of King Hussein to contribute to the solution of the Palestinian question. The time is truly opportune. King Abdullah, King Hussein's grandfather, had insisted on a peaceful coexistence of Israelis and Arabs. King Hussein is
thus destined to carry on and realize his grandfather's wish. The Arab "moderate" countries should support his position both explicitly and implicitly for the overall peace of the region.

The need for complementary approaches and close consultations finally lead me to reiterate the conclusion we made in our report of 1981.

Although the Trilateral Countries do not completely share the same perception of the problems in the Middle East, more comprehensive coordination to complement each other's role is of utmost necessity. The Trilateral Countries are responsible for providing meaningful consultations among themselves as the absence of a concerted policy would be fatal.

Thus, as we noted in our earlier report, I call again for establishing regular consultation mechanisms among the responsible members of the foreign ministries of the Trilateral Countries to deal with Middle East issues.
Yitzhak Rabin

The Peace Process After Lebanon: What Priorities?

First, we must start with the peace process based on the Camp David accords: For the time being, the only agreement and the process that came after it was signed which really paved the road to the first peace treaty between an Arab country and Israel are the Camp David accords. They brought about tremendous political and strategic change in relations between the Arab world and Israel; and they have reduced tremendously the threat of war in the region. During the last almost thirty-five years, without Egypt leading the Arab world into a war there was no war. Egypt was thus, on the one hand, the leading Arab country in bringing about war, but also in bringing hope, through negotiations. Unfortunately, no Arab country followed Egypt when it decided to put an end to the war and to establish peaceful relations with Israel. The opposite happened: The Arab world—the Arab League—boycotted Egypt, ousted it from all inter-Arab organizations, cut diplomatic relations, and severed all financial assistance. Yet Egypt continued to stick to its commitment to peace. However, especially after the change of leadership that came about as a result of the assassination of President Sadat, I cannot see much hope in the continuation of the peace process on the basis of the three original parties that brought it about—i.e., Egypt, Israel and the United States. Clearly, the continuation of the peace process is now completely dependent on others joining it.

This, specifically, means Jordan. I cannot visualize any peace on the eastern borders of Israel, wherever they may be in the future, without peace with Jordan: Jordan is the partner for peace on these eastern borders, and I cannot see any substitute for Jordan in the peace process in the future. Thus, we now have to look first and foremost at what the prospects are of Jordan joining the peace process;

1983: New Opportunities for Peace

and we have to look at the war that took place in Lebanon in its two aspects: security for Israel; and its far wider implications for the overall situation in the Middle East.

The political struggle for the future of Lebanon and its relations with all its neighbors is only at a beginning. I hope that an agreement will be reached in which, first, all foreign forces—P.L.O., Syria and Israel—will withdraw from Lebanon on the basis of an agreed-upon plan and timetable. This, for me, is the key issue, for without such an agreement there is not even the slightest hope for a solution to the Lebanese problem.

Then, for Israel, the two other issues are 1) to reach an agreement between the Israeli and Lebanese governments about effective security arrangements in what we call the security belt of 40 to 50 kilometers north of the Lebanese-Israeli border, and 2) to change the international legal basis of the relations between Lebanon and Israel. Until 1967, from Israel’s point of view, that basis was the armistice agreement signed in 1949, and Lebanon continued to stick to it as the basis. I do not believe today that any Israeli will accept its continuation as the sole legal basis for our relations. Therefore, there is a need for some sort of declaration by our two governments to the effect that no state of war exists between Israel and Lebanon. The government of Israel is also trying to bring about an agreement about normalization of relations. I prefer de facto normalization rather than an agreement, because such an agreement offers no guarantee that it will be maintained: With Egypt, we have a peace treaty; yet, at the same time, Egypt has frozen the continuation of normalization of relations.

Turning to the wider aspect of the war in Lebanon, I think that, clearly, the United States came out of this war as the dominant superpower in the Middle East. Even for the P.L.O., when it wanted to bring about through negotiations an evacuation of its forces from West Beirut, the address was the United States, not the Soviet Union. And if there is any hope to bring about an agreement for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from

Yitzhak Rabin was Prime Minister of Israel from 1974 to 1977. This interview was conducted in Tel Aviv on January 2, 1983.
Lebanon, we will undoubtedly be in need of the good offices of the United States. On the whole, the United States did gain politically—and it gained in terms of prestige, as American weapons used by Israel proved to be far superior to the Soviet weapons used by the Syrians.

Another result of Lebanon is that the P.L.O. suffered a tremendous set-back—militarily, no doubt, but also politically. The mere fact that Jordan's King Hussein can now feel free to talk, to participate in negotiations, to explore the possibility of joining the peace process, was made possible by the decline of the power of the P.L.O. Unfortunately, the United States, in its effort to resume the peace process, forgot two facts: First, in the Middle East, you have to try, as a matter of priority, to diffuse any situation that threatens an imminent resumption of hostilities before you can turn to an overall peace process. Only a few days after completion of the withdrawal of P.L.O. and Syrian forces from West Beirut, the U.S. decided to pull back the multinational force instead of maintaining it for a while and pursuing the success of the negotiations—expanding them to cover the withdrawal of all foreign forces, bringing about indirect negotiations with all the factors that had to be involved, and bringing about agreement on and implementation of the withdrawal of foreign forces. Rather, the U.S. shifted focus and came up with the so-called Reagan plan, the new American initiative designed to bring about the resumption of the wider peace process.

Second, the Reagan plan was basically aimed at bringing Jordan into the peace process, and the rest of this initiative can only be its success in bringing Jordan into the negotiations. I must admit I don't believe that Dr. Kissinger, as Secretary of State, would have allowed the President of the United States to come up publically with such a statement without knowing that within three to seven days Jordan would join. For once the statement was made, and it did not bring about the expected results nor fulfill the key purpose of this initiative, it lost momentum. Later on, no doubt, the tragic events in Lebanon overshadowed quite naturally the whole importance of this initiative.

One of the results was, of course, the summit meeting resolution of the leaders of the Arab countries assembled at Fez. The essence of this resolution contradicts 180 degrees the major principles of the Reagan plan. Most importantly, it practically forbids Jordan to join the negotiations, whereas the main purpose of the Reagan plan was to bring Jordan in. I'm afraid, therefore, that we have not exploited those who are really interested in the continuation of the peace process; those who realize that, without Jordan joining, there is very little chance, if any, to resume the negotiations. All in all, we have not used effectively the new realities that were created by the war in Lebanon.

This does not mean that one has to give up. I would suggest the following priorities for our diplomatic efforts:

First, we have to focus on achieving an agreement on Lebanon. As long as the Israeli army is in Lebanon, I don't see Egypt deciding to take the risk to renew its participation in the negotiations. Nor do I see Jordan even making a decision about joining the negotiations. This is why the United States and Israel have to focus now, first and foremost, on accelerating the pace of their action to end the problem of Lebanon—to the extent that it can be achieved by agreement. Once again, this should include, in my view, an effective bilateral security arrangement; a change in the legal basis of our relations from Armistice to "no state of war;" and, on the multilateral level, an agreement on simultaneous withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon. If this is not achieved, I see us facing preliminary obstacles that are not even related to the real issues that have to be tackled to bring Jordan in. This, for me, is the essential preliminary diplomatic effort that must be concluded successfully before we can move on.

Second, once this is achieved, I believe that all efforts must be directed to bringing Jordan in while the political power of the P.L.O. is still reduced. Here, the United States must use its relations with Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and other "moderate" Arab countries—"moderate" for the United States, not so much for Israel!—to enlist their help in encouraging Jordan to join, rather than practically opposing it as they now do. After all, this is why King Hussein turned to the P.L.O. leader, Mr. Arafat, to try to reach an agreement with him, realizing that all the other so-called moderate Arab leaders are cowards who would not do anything in contradiction to Mr. Arafat's wishes.

But I repeat: I believe that the United States cannot now push King Hussein before clearing the
Lebanese minefields, because he will not join (nor will Egypt agree to resume the negotiations).

Third, I believe that the government of Israel has to come up with a clear-cut declaration, stating that if King Hussein decides to join the negotiations—clearly on the basis of the Camp David accords, and with the explicit knowledge of the American interpretation of them as formulated in the Reagan plan—Israel will freeze the building of new settlements for a limited period of time, let us say six months. There was a precedent to that, when Prime Minister Begin’s government agreed at Camp David to freeze settlements for three months in order to facilitate reaching an agreement between Egypt and Israel that would lead to the signing of the peace treaty. I will oppose freezing settlements now in advance—I do not believe it would serve King Hussein’s case for joining the negotiations: If a freeze is given freely, why join the negotiations? If settlements are indeed the problem that bothers so much the Arab world, let us make it possible for him to say, “Look, if I join, I will get a freeze on any new settlements for six months” or any given period; and once the negotiations start, once we see what the chances of the process are, then the future of the settlements will be decided.

To recapitulate: First, we have to clear the minefield of Lebanon. Second, we have to focus on getting Jordan to join in the negotiations—on the basis of Camp David, and knowing the American position and interpretation of those accords. To facilitate this, the United States has to use its influence with certain quarters in the Arab world; and Israel has to adjust its position on the question of readiness to freeze the building of new settlements for a given period once King Hussein decides to join. Without these two steps—a Lebanese settlement and bringing in Jordan—I see practically a deadlock in the peace process.

The “Jordanian Option”: What Modalities?

As I have said, without Jordan there will be no peace treaty or agreement on our Eastern front. There are a number of issues to solve: the Palestinian problem, boundaries, Jerusalem, security arrangements, etc… I believe all this must be solved by negotiations with Jordan as the main partner. There is no doubt in my mind that, once Jordan joins the negotiations, there will be a need for representation of the Palestinians who reside in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. At present, I do not see much hope that they will come: They need an Arab backing. Egypt’s backing was found insufficient; but I believe that once Jordan joins, knowing what is going on now in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, mainly as a result of the decline of the influence of the P.L.O. in the aftermath of the war in Lebanon, there is a good chance that serious, moderate leaders of the Palestinians will join the negotiations.

I personally believe that the Camp David accords really offer, for the first time in the history of the Palestinians, a possibility to elect by themselves and for themselves—I refer to those who reside in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip—their leadership. For the first time they will be allowed to run 80% of their affairs with the exception of foreign policy and security for the transitional period, and to be equal partners with Jordan as well as Egypt and the United States in negotiating the ultimate solution, the permanent solution, to come not later than three years after autonomy is established.

This web of issues east of Israel is the most complicated one. It includes the most complicated political problem: the Palestinian problem; the most sensitive issue for the security of Israel: the location of our eastern boundaries; and the most emotional religious problem for the two sides: Jerusalem and its holy places. Any attempt to tackle this web of issues with one stroke is a major mistake that will lead nowhere. This is why there is a lot of wisdom in the Camp David approach: Let’s tackle it in two phases. First, let’s build a situation in which there is representation of the Palestinians at issue—to be elected by themselves and for themselves. For example, take the two mayors that were fired by the Israeli military government in the territories—I refer to Bassam Shaka, the former mayor of Nablus and Karim Halaf, the former mayor of Ramallah: If they are elected to the self-governing authority of the Palestinians, we will accept them. It is up to them to elect who they want; we will have no right to say that they are not entitled to run for election and to be elected. The limitation is that they must be from the territories and elected by the people from the territories. (By the way, there is a reference in the Camp David accords that others might join, but only by agreement of all the parties to the accords.)

I believe that this two-phased approach—leaving to the future what cannot be solved today, hoping that the new realities gradually reduce suspicion—will develop more confidence and encourage the
kind of relations between Jordan, the Palestinians and Israel that will later on facilitate those solutions that are not attainable at present.

**Jordan and the P.L.O.**

I believe that King Hussein, realizing that the leaders of the countries of the Arab League are cowards and that he would not get anything from them (witness the Fez refusal to give him any right to negotiate), is trying to reach an agreement, knowing the weakness of Mr. Arafat, realizing that now is the time to get a concession from him—that is to say, at least a tacit agreement to negotiate. This is what King Hussein is after, which shows that he is interested. Otherwise, why should he dance this kind of political ballet with Mr. Arafat? After all, there is no love lost between the two of them; everybody remembers the Black September of 1970, and how King Hussein crushed (and rightly so) the P.L.O. which had established a state within the state of Jordan and was practically on the verge of overthrowing the King and his regime; the P.L.O. then moved to Lebanon where it tried to do the same thing and Israel practically finished it...

**Negotiating with a Jordanian Delegation Including P.L.O.?**

No—well, not Arafat. But if there are Palestinians who do not reside in the territories and are not the leaders of the P.L.O., I don’t see any problem, as long as the negotiation is with Jordan as the main partner with which we have to reach an agreement. Yet, if we talk of Palestinian representation, I would prefer that those represented be those whose future is at stake in the negotiation—namely the Palestinians who live in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip: Let *their* leaders be there.

**Exchanging “Territories for Peace”: What Support in Israel?**

Since 1977, the Labor Party has supported the Allon plan, that is, the concept of territorial compromise. Speaking for myself, I say now that we are ready to give back roughly 65% of the territory of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip where over 80% of the population now resides; the area in which we are mainly interested has to do with Israel’s security—the Jordan Valley and the eastern slopes of the Judea and Samaria hills, thus securing the Jordan River which is the defense line of Israel to the east, with the exception of a corridor through Jericho that will link the bulk of the West Bank to Jordan under one single territorial sovereignty.

I believe that today Israeli public opinion would be split roughly 50-50 on such an outline. But once it looks possible and feasible, there will be more and
more Israelis in favor of such a compromise. If we speak of a proposal that the public can look at as a concrete one, I'm sure that the majority will support it. Today, since it is hypothetical, the public can say: why not start with the utmost?...

On the subject of settlements, we in the Labor Party do not oppose, in principle, settlements in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, but we are against them in territories that are densely populated. In accordance with the Allon plan, we are ready to give back the latter, therefore there is no purpose for building settlements there. At the same time, we are in favor of certain settlements in the Jordan Valley, the greater Jerusalem area, Gush Etzion and the southern part of the Gaza Strip.

What is the solution to the facts that have been created on the ground by now, or might be created in the future? My answer is very simple: I believe that we will have to work out a solution with Jordan whereby there will be Israeli settlements in which Israelis live under foreign sovereignty—under Jordanian-Palestinian sovereignty. At the same time, we will allow the same in Israel. At present, for example, there are, in eastern Jerusalem, between eighty thousand and one hundred thousand Palestinians who even today maintain their Jordanian citizenship; while they are residents of Jerusalem, they are not citizens of Israel. Thus, on a mutual basis, Jordan and Israel could agree to have Israeli citizens living under Jordanian sovereignty and vice-versa. After all, we are talking in a context of peace, the essence of which must be the kind of interrelationships, economic and otherwise, that have been established in the meantime. I do not believe that the idea of up-rooting people from where they live, for a short time or for a long time, is feasible.

In practice, what I have in mind is what Mr. Begin's government proposed to the Egyptians in the Sinai. The Egyptians refused. But there was no mutuality between Egypt and Israel; there were no Egyptian citizens on Israeli soil, whereas in the case of Jordan the whole situation is much more interwoven. In the long run, I believe that, once peace is achieved, we have to think in terms of much closer ties between Israel and what will be east of Israel, on both sides of the Jordan River. On this, there are no differences among most Israelis. We would like to see a confederation between two sovereign states in which economic problems, labor relations, and many other aspects of life will be worked out togethether. But this is, of course, still a dream for the future.

Waiting for Syria?

Unfortunately, Syria is taking the most extreme position vis-à-vis Israel. Even the P.L.O. today is not extreme enough to please President Assad of Syria. If we decide to wait with our efforts to continue the peace process until Syria joins, it would amount to rewarding the "refuseniks", those who refuse to have peace.

I believe that if the Lebanese problem is solved, new realities will be created there; Israel and Egypt exist; the P.L.O. is down; Jordan will join. We might create the conditions which I have always believed to be essential for the continuation of the peace process. That is to say that those Arab countries that are closer to the West, to the United States, and Israel will build the structure of peace, and will thereby force the extreme Arab countries—often those who are closer to the Soviet Union, like Syria, Libya, Southern Yemen—either to face realities and to bring about change in their attitude or to be isolated.

Unfortunately, Soviet policy in the Middle East is contradictory to peace and hostile to Israel. They will do the utmost within their capacity to block the road to peace, to prevent the peace process to develop. Only the United States as a superpower can lead the peace process, neutralizing the Soviets and the countries that cooperate with them. I do not believe that an Arab country that has close ties with the Soviet Union can be a real partner for peace in the Middle East.

In Conclusion...

I believe that much of what I have outlined is still attainable. Very much is needed from the United States. Unfortunately, I must say, the Reagan Administration, in its first one and a half years, did very little to encourage the peace process. When the war in Lebanon started, I believe they did not find a way to pursue a policy to use the new openings—which unfortunately only war made possible—in the correct order of priorities: Lebanon first, then use the change that took place there, the setback to the P.L.O., to the Soviet Union, to the Syrians. Plus the fact that Iraq is pinned down by the war there with Iran... There is a coincidence of events that must be exploited, and can be exploited wisely if the United States will form a firmer, more clear-cut policy.
Crown Prince Hassan

The Stakes in the Arab World: Centrism vs. Populism

After the Reagan Proposal

The principles enunciated by the Reagan initiative are basically the very principles of United Nations Resolution 242 of fifteen years ago. They restate the notion—in which we believe—of the exchange of territory for peace. And for the first time in several years, we feel that the international community, and the United States in particular, is basing its policies on people rather than having resources alone matter in this region. The meetings that took place in Washington in January [between King Hussein and the American Administration], were deliberately low-key—they were working meetings, in which the position of the Arab world was further elaborated upon by His Majesty, who had completed his tour of Paris, Moscow, and Peking in his capacity as head of the Fez Summit negotiating team. Unfortunately, in the case of the United States as well as the United Kingdom, P.L.O. representation [in the Fez delegation] appears to have been unacceptable. However, it is quite clear from our ongoing meetings and cooperation with the P.L.O. that this cooperation is conceptual in nature, and not just mundane, with regard to our persistent concern with the Israelization of the occupied territories.

This conceptual quality of our cooperation with the P.L.O was, in turn, made quite clear to the Americans: Palestinian-Jordanian relations are, as we see them, an intra-family issue; furthermore, whereas the Reagan initiative calls for clearly defined links between Jordan and the West Bank, we feel that these links in the event of peace can only be a natural development.

I think the most important aspect of the Washington meetings had to do with what one Israeli commentator on developments on the West Bank recently described as a "five-minutes-to-midnight" sense of urgency over the fact that the Israelis con-

This interview with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan was conducted in Amman on January 9, 1983.

trol over 50% of the land; that up to 100,000 Arabs have been forced to emigrate during the past decade; and that, even more clearly since the occupation of Lebanon, Israel is effectively redrawing the map of the area with its settlement policy as well as with its invitation of an ethnic and populist break-up of the Middle East.


The Fez resolution, of course, empowered a seven-man team, including both Jordan and the P.L.O., to explore further the position of the members of the U.N. Security Council on the next step in the "coming phase." The Security Council members obviously differ in opinion—from the view held by the European countries that a wider peace process as enunciated in the Venice declaration should evolve, including recognition of the Palestinians, to the more specific reference to the Palestinians and to the P.L.O. made by both Moscow and Peking. Obviously, the coming phase is going to be one of discussion of how such Palestinian participation can develop. And I think it is quite clear that the three main points in Israeli President Navon’s recent statements in Washington—namely: no division of Jerusalem as the "eternal" capital of Israel, no return to the 1967 borders, and no dealings with the P.L.O—are parameters that will inevitably affect our ongoing discussions. In terms of the present and future relationships, these aspects are reflected in Jordan’s readiness to discuss any formula acceptable to the Palestinians. We are, however, emphasizing that the call for an independent Palestinian state, to which the Arab world and the majority of the international community of states is committed, may at this juncture effectively not obviate the prime necessity which is, after all, the withdrawal of the occupying forces from the land which they occupy at this stage.

Thus, our ongoing discussions are basically focused on how a peace process is to be engaged on the Arab side. Egypt, of course, has welcomed the
participation of the Palestinians and has called for self-determination for them—in a sense, I think, Egypt is being somewhat self-critical for having achieved so little in this respect on the West Bank between 1978 and 1982. Our other overwhelming problem and concern is, of course, Lebanon. Quite clearly, one of the issues that will be strongly questioned (and legitimately so) by the P.L.O. prior to the forthcoming meetings of the Palestinian National Council is that of the credibility of the United States and, for that matter, the U.N. Security Council, in guaranteeing the future of peace in this region—peace not for a militarily predominant Israel but for all states of the region. This is particularly relevant since, in the case of Lebanon, David has become Goliath: Will a sovereign Lebanon be able to exercise its responsibilities in the coming phase? Peace for us is obviously a question of reciprocal arrangements and guarantees, not a question of submission.

Therefore, I think that our discussions come at a very critical moment. We have before us the Fez Summit resolutions and the Reagan initiative; the Luxembourg meeting's desire to evolve a European position; a restatement by Security Council members of the need for détente and entente; and, if one looks at the [Warsaw Pact] Prague statement for instance, an obvious desire to emphasize non-interference in the affairs of others. All of this presages, it seems to me, the possibility of a new phase of sorts, broadly speaking. But this new phase obviously has to be one where all states in this vital region—and particularly those countries associated with one or the other of the superpowers—realize that stability can only be achieved through the promotion of a centrist Arab identity. I think this is basically what we and the P.L.O. will be discussing—how this centrist Arab identity can articulate itself in an already polarized Middle East.

Reactivating the Arab Identity

We had the old phase—it was one of “Camp David or nothing.” That, in essence, meant participation in a process about which we were not consulted and about which we expressed our very severe reservations. I would like to remind you that we never criticized President Sadat’s speech to the Israeli Knesset; rather, our problem was with the tremendous short-fall between that initiative and the achievements on the ground. Hardly had the ink of Camp David dried when Begin referred to the West Bank as Judea and Samaria, and so on and so forth.

This next phase, with the Reagan initiative—the first Presidential initiative since the Camp David process—seems to emphasize quite clearly once again a special concept in the context of U.N. Resolution 242, and a geopolitical need for the revitalization of the Arab identity, of the West Bank and Gaza. Certainly, a moratorium on settlements and on change through land acquisition and the expropriation of resources in the occupied territories would be an essential first step—a confidence-building measure—for any Arab belief in U.S. credibility or, indeed, in the credibility of the peace process as such. In that sense, it is not Jordan’s role per se which is under discussion, although naturally Jordan plays an important and pivotal role as an ancillary or auxiliary to the Palestinian aspiration of turning the corner of this “five-minutes-before-midnight” situation.

My personal view of the concept of self-determination has been that self-determination is an aggregate of rights. With the settlement process at the present time, it is not a question of actually, physically, stopping further building, but rather a question of disentangling the Israeli involvement to a point where that aggregate of rights can be possible—economic rights, social rights, cultural rights, political self-expression have been gradually suffocated in the occupied territories to the point where, today, you have a sui-generis form of occupation unparalleled by any concept of dependent statehood, autonomous statehood, related statehood, in the world—not even in the African bantustans.

This caricature occupation simply must cease. Either it will cease by an expression of will by the Israeli body politic to create out of the West Bank a vital Arab contributor to stability in this region. Or it will finally be annexed, as has been suggested by even the most moderate of Israeli voices, if change is not arrested during the coming 36 months. Our fear is that annexation, in terms of Arab public opinion, will mean a definite drift towards the left. When I say “the left,” I do not mean the Communist ideological left, but the populist left, which today is intimidating the silent majority of the occupied territories—e.g. demonstrations, physical assaults on West Bank leaders and so forth...

Hope for the West Bank

The World Zionist Organization makes no secret of the fact that, by 1985, it intends to reduce the
Arabs to minority status. When you consider the Meron Benvenisti report, it is quite clear that 50% of the West Bank labor engaged in the occupied territories would tilt industry and trade towards Israel, toward the coastal trade; and that the Israelis intend to create out of the West Bank, or have virtually created a satellite economic organization.

What we feel, east of the river, is that this area should evolve a distinct identity of its own, an Arab identity, which is not a springboard for further Israeli expansion. Thus, it may appear to be too late, and certainly, up to this summer with the Lebanon invasion, one felt extremely depressed. But since the two Reagan initiatives–on Lebanon and on the occupied territories–I think there is still room for hope.

Negotiations with Jordan as Main Partner, as Some in the Israeli Opposition Suggest?

Let me remind you that it was the same Labor alignment that, in 1974, when in power, discredited Jordan’s role by refusing the idea of partial withdrawals from the river. This was followed in 1974 by the famous Rabat decision. The reason I carefully chose the word “auxiliary” role for Jordan–though I think it is a more precise and specific role than that of any other Arab country, for obvious reasons of proximity–is that I want to dispel, even at this stage, any suggestion that Jordan has any ambitions in the occupied territories other than achieving the withdrawal of Israeli forces and final peace. In that sense, obviously Jordan would be an “outer-perimeter” contributor to peace and security in this region.

One hopes, of course, that those committed to peace in the Israeli body politic would be able to dispel the present hard and firm conviction, particularly among the influential members of the Israeli cabinet, that the occupied territories are non-negotiable, or that, as recently suggested by some who are sympathetic to Israel and possibly critical of the lack of realism of American initiatives, the alternative for the Palestinians could be Lebanon, Jordan, and the Gulf states. I think that this particular concept is the beginning of an Israeli military commitment to a new map of the area, and possibly new alliances in the area as well, as we have seen in the case of Lebanon, where Israeli intelligence officers were obviously playing a very influential role in pitting the different sets of groupings against one another.

Thus, while we appreciate the warmth of the commitment of those interested in peace and realize that such a commitment is bipartisan (or should be so) in all the countries in the region, we still face this problem of a very hard line on the part of leaders committed to biblical claims and to the non-negotiability of the territory.

The Choice Facing the Region

In view of the nature of the developments in the region, particularly in Lebanon, and, of course, of the fact that after fifteen years of occupation so much damage has been done, one cannot be overly optimistic on the fate of the occupied territories. But at the same time, I think that the situation is so bleak that change has to evolve, with us or without us–or despite us… It is either a change for the worst in terms of a populist breakup of the Middle East–Jacobo Timmerman made this point quite clearly in his recent reference to populist movements in Israel; and we can see populist movements in Lebanon and Iran as well. Or possibly a rapid change towards a more centrist identity for the countries of the region, appreciating that east is east and west is west and that the countries of the region should–in concert, I think, with the European community–choose a centrist path. That may lead us to “turning the corner,” to a possible shift away from confrontation. Let me add that it would be very interesting to see what Japan’s role could become in this context; His Majesty recently traveled to Tokyo and was under the impression that Japan has a very important role, possibly as important as Europe’s, to play in defusing global polarization and helping a more centrist outlook prevail.
**The Ongoing "Tripartite" Negotiations: What Prospects?**

The way the negotiations are developing now [January 10, 1983] is far from reassuring. If one were to review the few months since September, when the principle of direct negotiation was accepted, one would soon discover that a lot of time has been lost on matters of form and procedure. Granted, those questions are important—they are pregnant with symbols, they are the very manner of testing each other, of approaching each other, or as some say, getting to know each other. But in relation to the time-frame within which we were hoping to move and the results that should be expected from those negotiations, one cannot help being frustrated. The fact that five meetings so far—five full dress meetings, five full days with the direct participation of a delegation representing the U.S. government—should have been lost drafting an agenda is in itself a negative sign. There are, of course, many examples of similar negotiations where agendas have consumed more time; but the conditions here, on the terrain, and what is at stake, render the time spent on the agenda totally incommensurate with the results expected from this agenda. Not to mention the fact that, whilst no negotiations are possible without good faith, open-mindedness, and a certain measure of diplomacy, here the attitude of Israel is basically self-defeating: The Israelis have stated three major conditions for their withdrawal, and some of those conditions are so incompatible that one rapidly reaches the conclusion that they may not really intend to withdraw.

Specifically, the conditions for withdrawal of the Lebanese-Israeli-U.S. negotiations in the cabinet of President Amin Gemayel. The publisher of the newspaper *An-Nahar*, he also served as Lebanon's Permanent Representative to the United Nations until the end of September 1982. This interview was conducted in Beirut on January 10, 1983.

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**Peace (and U.S. Credibility) in the Middle East: Start in Lebanon**

Israeli forces are the following: 1) security arrangements between Israel and Lebanon guaranteeing peace in Israel, to which we are not insensitive—we are prepared to discuss it; 2) the withdrawal of Syrian and Palestinian forces, which we want for our own reasons; and 3) normalization. We are not Egypt, we are not 60 million Arabs, we are far from enjoying the degree of invulnerability that Anwar Sadat enjoyed before Camp David. The moment we normalize, or start the process of normalization, we will lose the very possibility of negotiating any Syrian or P.L.O. withdrawal, lose our Arab credentials, and find ourselves in a position of Arab isolation similar to the one Sadat himself was in after Camp David. Sadat then could afford this—he may not have survived it personally in the end, but Egypt did survive this isolation... (and normalization isn't doing so well in Egypt anyway!) In Lebanon, the net result would be that the Syrians and the P.L.O. would not withdraw—and they are still in a position to de-stabilize Lebanon. The Israelis would then be entitled to tell us that they are not prepared to withdraw since the Syrians and the P.L.O. have not withdrawn, and what we would be left with is a process of normalization with the presence of the Syrians and the presence of the P.L.O. and the presence of the Israelis, to say nothing of the de-stabilization that would ensue. It makes one wonder whether all this is serious.

We believe, however, that the U.S. should, and will, intervene (and it may have intervened by the time this *Triad* still appears). It is totally inconceivable for us that the U.S., with its weight and the investment it has made in sorting the Lebanese question, should have been kept by Israel in the ignorance of the potential results in the Arab world of embarking on normalization. I think the U.S. needs a lot of good will on the part of the Saudis; and it is entertaining relations that are not necessarily negative with the Syrians, despite the fact that Syria is classified as a rather pro-Soviet state, if not a Soviet client state. What the U.S. is doing
with Saudi Arabia, and what it is doing with Jordan, and with the Palestinians in general, would be imperilled or totally jeopardized if the impression were created that it is under U.S. influence that Lebanon has had to follow the normalization process, lose its Arab credentials, and find itself unable to withdraw Arab armies and the Israeli army from its territory.

The Reagan Initiative

The chances of success of the Reagan initiative depend on success in Lebanon. We must say this very clearly and unequivocally: without it, no credibility whatsoever will be left to this initiative—no U.S. credibility with the Arabs if the U.S. is unable to secure the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon. No Arab will trust that the U.S. is capable of helping an Israeli withdrawal from, say, Nablus or Hebron if the U.S. has been unable to withdraw the Israelis from the Shuf or southern Lebanon. Here, we are not negotiating with history, we are not negotiating the Bible, as is so often the case with Mr. Begin; here Israel has no claims—no biblical claims, no political claims, no economic claims, or so Israel says. It is therefore perfectly legitimate for the U.S. to just tell Israel that it has to withdraw.

One more thing: The Israeli invasion of Lebanon was an operation named “Peace for Galilee.” It was a punitive operation, directed against the P.L.O. and designed to protect northern Israel, namely Galilee, against “terrorist” incursions. Israel now claims that it has destroyed the P.L.O.’s military structures, which it probably has. Today, the Israelis enjoy control in South Lebanon, as well as in Beirut. Israel has achieved, therefore, its proclaimed military and political objectives.

Why, then, should Israel impose on Lebanon by diktat—because any treaty signed under occupation is a diktat—conditions for its withdrawal, whilst Lebanon has not been an active party in the hostilities against Israel? We were not fighting Israel; and Israel claims that it was not fighting Lebanon, but that it was fighting the Palestinians on Lebanese territory. Assuming that we have to accept this logic (and maybe we should, at least for the sake of argument), why then does Israel want to negotiate normalization with Lebanon? And why does Israel make its withdrawal from Lebanon contingent upon Lebanon accepting normalization? The U.S. must know that, the U.S. does know that, and I think that this is the logic the U.S. should impose on Israel. Lebanon is asked to pay a price for an operation which was not considered an operation against Lebanon. It is asked to pay a price for a war as if this war was waged against Lebanon. Lebanon has paid a very dear price—it has lost some $12 billion in material destruction, not to speak of the destruction of society, etc. etc … We are not prepared to pay more. And we think that today the attitude of Israel is counterproductive and contradicts Israel’s logic as well as the logic for peace.

The Costs of a Continuing Stalemate

The stalemate can last eternally, if measured by our capacity to push the Israelis out militarily. Will the U.S. use pressure, and what sort of pressure, to force the Israelis to withdraw? I don’t know, but there have not been too many such precedents either. I think, however, that the situation in Lebanon is now endangering the situation inside Israel. It is becoming a very costly enterprise; Israel is in a quagmire here, and it is paying a heavy toll. All this is counterproductive for peace. There is war in Lebanon today—in the Shuf and in Tripoli, in the north and part of the Bekaa valley … and this continuing war in Lebanon (like a Vietnam with multiple dimensions) is becoming a danger to the whole Middle East. Without claiming to be a prophet, I foresee that the Arab states, in their present positive bent of mind and having responded positively to the Reagan initiative, will be telling Washington at not too distant a date that something has to be done, for every single moderate regime in the area is threatened today by the situation in Lebanon. I do not think we’re going to take much more of that.

The Palestine Question and the Gulf Conflict: What Interaction?

I think that the relationship between the Iran-Iraq war and the Arab-Israeli conflict is direct, and more real than some would admit. First, one must remember that we had a pre-Khomeni-ism in Lebanon; the first Khomeni revolution did not take place in Iran but in Lebanon. You find in Lebanon the ideal social-political-economic-cultural context for the eruption of this type of movement. Therefore, turbulence in Lebanon, the development of terrorism in Lebanon, or the presence of objective conditions for terrorism in Lebanon, let alone various intellectual currents to which the state of non-government that prevails here is conducive—all these factors have radiations beyond Lebanon. And in-
asmuch as those radiations—political, economic, cultural, ideological, etc.—affect the stable states of the Gulf, they may tip the balance of power and endanger this or that government which I shall not name. To say nothing of the fact that Syrian involvement, both here and in Iran, is a major strategic factor that requires careful scrutiny.

Lebanon is a microcosm; it has been the mirror-image of every single war in the Arab world; it was the arena where every war was fought. If we do not stabilize Lebanon, encourage the creation of a strong government, see to it that foreign forces are evacuated and a strong Lebanese army is built, if we do not restore law and order in Lebanon—and this is possible and not costly—then Lebanon will remain what the French would call a foyer, a constant abscess that will necessarily prevent stability everywhere else in this area.

The Arab world has been in a state of flux for over fifty years because of the Palestinian question. Now we have this new problem which has not replaced the Palestinian question, but is, rather, added to the Palestinian question, which is still unsolved; and it is twice as potent and twice as dangerous as the Palestinian question.

**Palestinians and the P.L.O.: What Future Course?**

I want to be very harsh and very fair: I think the Israeli operation may have been a blessing in disguise for the Palestinians and hence counterproductive for the Israelis. The Israelis have achieved military results, but like every other time, they have somehow been unable to translate their military successes into political achievements or victories. I don't mean this polemically: I think this war in Lebanon came at a time when the Palestinians needed to be forced to choose courses. They had developed a military machine which they were not using and were unable to use in a manner commensurate with its strength. It had become a danger to themselves and to Lebanon. They should have either waged war on Israel—which they have not done—and allowed Israel to wage war on them and crush them; or they should have used force without the use of force—i.e., used force as a diplomatic instrument, which they were somehow unable to do successfully. They have imperilled Lebanon and its security in a manner which we saw coming: the Israeli invasion came as a surprise to none, least of all to the Palestinians. Politically, however, they were unable, because of the weight of their military machine and because they were hostages to some of their slogans, to elevate themselves above their military thinking and into a diplomatic frame. I think, in a way, that they may feel liberated today from the compulsion to wage war on Israel in the manner in which they would have had to if they had continued with this extremely heavy, yet almost useless, military machine. Will they be able, therefore, to recycle, as everybody says, assume a diplomatic cloak? I think they will; I think they stand greater chances today of being effective in obtaining a specific settlement than they would if they were still weighed down with an almost useless military machine.

What they have done to Lebanon now belongs to history. I do not think it serves anybody's purpose to try to establish a balance sheet. Were they accountable? Were we responsible? It is a long story, and it is too early for history and too late for political accounting. The fact is that if we are not hostage to the Palestinians and the Syrians, the Lebanese can probably do more within what we hope will be a reasonable and positive framework of dialogue with the Israelis. Within this framework, the Lebanese would probably be able to do more for peace between the Palestinians and the Israelis than they were in the past. The Lebanese want to become again an active agent, an active subject, in solving the problems in the Middle East. There will be no peace in the Middle East—we have said that so often—without peace for the Palestinians; and there will be, today, no peace for the Palestinians if there is no peace in Lebanon; and there will be no peace for Israel.

Israel is discovering—witness articles by the wisest of Israelis—that it is quagmired today in a Lebanese war which is assuming proportions that are not what Israel had expected. I think this is a military adventure that has already started to be very costly and tremendously counterproductive. If Israel wants peace, Israel must have the courage to withdraw and to place its relations with Lebanon and with the Arabs on a different “wavelength”—to dialogue not as a victor, but to dialogue as a potential partner in peace. The Lebanese will be the most effective respondents in such a dialogue with Israel; but they will only be a dead weight if Israel wants to practice amateur imperialism in Lebanon.
Non domandarci la formula che mondi possa aprirti, si qualche storta sillaba e secca come un ramo. Codesto solo oggi possiamo dirti, ciò che non siamo, ciò che non vogliamo.

Eugenio Montale
(from Ossi di Seppia: 1920-27)

Do not demand of us a formula which opens worlds, but a mere syllable, as brittle and taut as a branch. Today all we can say is this: what we are not, what we do not want.
**After the Reagan Plan: Hope for the Future?**

There is no clear sign for the future. All I can say is that the near future looks very, very dark as the Israeli government’s policy against us becomes more and more aggressive, more and more clearly annexationist. Whenever the world shows more interest in the Palestinians and comes up with new initiatives for peace, the Israelis respond invariably with more aggressive policies here against us: It is as if they were racing against the world and world opinion with ever more “facts” created on the ground. Their policies are heavier on us than ever before; I can say that there is not one of us Palestinians here, not one of our families, that does not have a special problem or a special affliction as a result of their aggressive military actions, against our rights and against our bodies. Please imagine: There is not one single detail in our daily lives—from water and electricity supply down to the most natural gathering at the street corner—that does not remind us of our occupied, oppressed status. And wherever we turn, we do not see sufficient reaction against all this. It is *de facto* this and *de facto* that—and no reaction.

Bassam Shaka was Mayor of Nablus, the largest city in the West Bank, until 1982, when he was ousted by the Israeli military government, some two years after he had fallen victim (together with other West Bank mayors) of a car bomb attack which cost him his legs. The above is excerpted from an interview conducted on January 12, 1983 in his Nablus home, where he has been living under intermittent house arrest.

They commit daily crimes, but the international determination for justice seems to have stopped. Reagan speaks—but there is no action. The crime goes on, the aggressors kill, maim, take, steal and everybody keeps talking of “negotiations”. Between who? Between the victim and the criminal.

I do not see this as a time for “negotiations”: Nothing is coming from the Israeli side, and the Reagan plan brings no direct action. Reagan did not get “in touch” with the facts of the problem. Personally I did not find any positive element in that plan, quite the contrary. The plan speaks of Jordan and Israel first of all; if it speaks of the Palestinian cause, it is only as a human cause, not as a national cause. Everything of substance—land, borders, settlements—is left to some vague “negotiation” between parties. In truth, that plan’s main philosophy is based on Israeli security concerns and the Israeli-U.S. strategic relationship. All for the strength of Israel, nothing for the Palestinians’ rights: this is the attitude which we have seen in action in Lebanon and which continues, step by step, to obtain results at the expense of the Palestinians. As I see it from here, there is nothing that we can do except maintain our unity, keep on with our struggle to defend our rights, and look for the future, with the thought of all those throughout the world, and even in Israel itself, who do live and look for peace: This is our optimism.

**Relations with Jordan**

We, Palestinians of the West Bank, struggle as Palestinians; we have our leader and our representatives, and we look at any relationship with others through the prism of our unity—through our leader and representatives. As Palestinians, we want to establish relations with Jordan, and with any Arab country, for our struggle to get our rights, our independent state, and to make peace. For the danger extends to all Arab lands—witness what happened to Lebanon, or in earlier days to Syria, and even to Egypt. Therefore, we have common interests, because we all face the threat of Israeli policies. Thus, it is through and for our struggle that we look at relations with others—Jordan, for example—determined as we are to build our independent state behind our leader, the P.L.O. That struggle and what serves it is the criteria for any relationship.

There has been a lot of propaganda lately. I, and the other Palestinians here, did not know enough about the negotiations between Jordan and our leaders. Some have said that they were directed towards some sort of “union”, without an independent state for the Palestinians; or that our leaders would give King Hussein the mandate of representation. All this is propaganda. The Palestinian cause is the central cause in the region, and the Palestinians do not put themselves behind anybody or any other state, Arab or otherwise. It is through our own struggle that our cause and the cause of peace began to capture the world’s interest—our people know that and will always know it.

**After Beirut: A Changed Struggle?**

In Lebanon, Israel was determined to destroy us, to finish us. It did not succeed. The P.L.O. still exists, and its fight inside Lebanon was a source
of great encouragement and pride. I believe that our people is today more united behind the P.L.O. as its representative than ever before. Far from being finished, we feel politically stronger, with more support and greater stature in the world. On the other hand, the Israelis lost many things with their war in Lebanon. We lost citizens, many of them, whom we mourn every instant. This is a stage in our struggle—and not the final one...

We wish everything could be done by political means—anybody would prefer to obtain his rights through political action. Unfortunately, until now we have not been able to depend on this as our main line of action to obtain results. The future is problematic, and largely out of our hands. For the Israelis, everything is focused on military power, military action, military oppression. We do not believe that military action is everything. Yet, the bottom line is that we have rights and we are determined to get these rights. We shall struggle to defend them, hoping that the world will at last wake up to the need for peace and exert the necessary pressure to ensure these rights of ours and peace.

**Negotiate Before it is “Too Late”?**

Some have suggested that, unless we hurry to take up the Reagan plan and start “negotiating”, it may be too late and we will lose everything. They are isolated, they speak from a special point of view and are in no way representative. They would want us to lose our determination. We have lost our land, but we have our determination—if we lose it, then we lose everything. This is why our people reject these types of arguments.

Such arguments are fundamentally wrong. For we know that Israel’s policy is not a reaction to what we do; quite independently from what we do or do not do, this policy comes straight out of the long-standing ideology of Zionism. Imagine we say “yes” to Mr. Begin, what does he say? He has said that if the P.L.O. recognizes Israel, he will not recognize the P.L.O. nor the Palestinians’ rights. Some Israelis have difficulties recognizing that the Palestinians exist as all as living beings. For them, the Palestinians here are some sort of inanimate things. What interests them is to take the land and settle on it. Some day, they will take all the population out, like these stones outside that you displace and throw away with machines. They did it—in 1976, for instance, when they destroyed these three villages near Ramallah: They razed the houses and deported all the people from the area. They consider us as something “natural”, not human. I would not find it strange to see machines driven into Nablus and the population taken away. That’s how they consider us...

Now, “negotiate,” some say, “or it will be the end.” I admit it, that potential exists. For myself, I do not know what will happen to me at any moment. They are very strong and careless, they can do everything. But if we accept—what will follow in terms of real action? King Hussein accepts the Reagan plan; all of our people wonder “Why does he accept?”—for they find nothing concretely positive in the plan. And they look at Israel: Israel rejected the Reagan plan and carried on with its policies, oppressing us further, taking more lives, pressuring more people to move out... We may not have machines and technology, but our people is an old, civilized people; we know many things, and our suffering has made us sensitive. Ask our people: “What has Camp David achieved? What came out of Lebanon?” We shall wait and see what happens to the negotiations there. America wants Israel to withdraw—and what happens? Israel stays there, continues its occupation, encourages the Lebanese to fight against each other. And we also remember what came of the agreement with the P.L.O. in Beirut—how America left, how Israel attacked West Beirut, how its army surrounded the camps of Sabra and Shatila and let the Kataeb [Christian militias] attack and kill. When we look at these examples, how can our people listen and believe there is something positive to look for in the present directions?
The Lessons of Camp David

Camp David attempted to find some sort of settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute in general, and of the Egyptian-Israeli part of that dispute in particular—i.e., the issue of Sinai. Hence the two parts of the accord: One concerns Egypt, the other concerns the Palestinian question. In this respect, I am against the way Camp David was fashioned. If it had been signed in all sincerity by the Israelis, perhaps it would be different; yet, it turned out to be an obvious effort to split the Arab world in two by getting the Egyptians out of the battle, thereby leaving all the other Arab countries vulnerable to whatever Israel wants to do—and this is precisely what has happened. Egypt, having signed these accords, could not do a thing; and our turn would have come later anyway...

There are two parts to be considered in judging Camp David: The first concerns the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai. On that part, I was in full agreement with Sadat. In all my discussions with Arab leaders—Qaddafi, Yasser Arafat, Saddam Hussein—I raised this point openly. Yes, I did sign the proclamation against Sadat on the issue of normalization of relations with Israel; but that does not mean I was opposed to the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai. No Egyptian could object to that. This withdrawal is now completed; it is a fact, I welcome it. Should I say, "I refuse Camp David, let the Israelis come back?" Of course not; and no other Arab country has the right to question me on this: This is my land, and I have retrieved it.

But there is a second part to these accords, like the other side of a coin: Who gave us the right to talk in the name of the Palestinians? We assumed we had that right, although from the very beginning everybody else, particularly the Palestinians, denied that right. Indeed, Sadat knew he could not talk in the name of the Palestinians. Yet, the Americans thought that they could bring about an agreement with Egypt and Israel, they would be able to bring the rest of us in line, which is just what they are now trying to do with King Hussein. This is a silly notion. What is King Hussein? What is Sadat? What about the Arab people? Sadat was turned into a saint in the West. Yet, remember his end, and how few Egyptians were aggrieved by it! This was the judgement of the people. No ruler can force upon the people what it definitely and absolutely rejects. What leaders can do is help convince people to accept some compromises as part of an overall reasonable solution—i.e., an agreement where nobody gets 100% of what he wants, where there is compromise on both sides. But what is happening now? Israel wants its "100%" and the Americans seem to think that, by exerting pressure on some Arab leaders, they will convince them to accept that 100%. They forgot the lesson of Sadat's death. And they should thank God that he was replaced by Hosni Mubarak; for he could very well have been replaced by a radical who would have made things very difficult for America in the region.

Fundamentals of a Solution

I am not against the United States; nor am I against the Soviet Union, for that matter, as long as these countries deal with us on equal terms. I am not against anybody who can help us achieve what we want, that is, the kind of solution and peace that allows us to turn to our most important and urgent objectives: to build our country; to raise the standard of living of our people; to cure our many, many problems. It will be impossible for us to achieve these goals as long as the current situation in the Middle East remains unsolved.

In this respect, I am afraid we are not nearer to a solution than we were before the 1973 war. In fact, the situation has worsened. What has happened in Lebanon could not have happened in 1973. Instead of discussing the effects of the 1967 war, we now have to discuss withdrawal from Lebanon. Thus, things are getting more complicated. Why? Because we are losing time.

[In my view, there are three points that are crucial to a true settlement: America's credibility; Israel's sincerity; Arab realism.]

—Does the United States want a solution in the Middle East, and is it capable of bringing it about? The "Reagan proposal" is, in essence, not bad. It contains some positive elements—maybe not enough; yet, if it is presented to us not as a "take-it-or-leave-it" option, but as a "proposal to be discussed," we will take it up and a compromise may be worked out, because the basis is not bad. But, here, the question of America's cred-
After Beirut: Two Roads

What we have just gone through is truly extraordinary: first, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the siege, all the killing; the departure of the P.L.O. leadership; the bravery of the Palestinians throughout the ordeal and their responsible and flexible attitude, their readiness to negotiate. Then, to our surprise, the multinational force is withdrawn less than one month after its arrival, and the Israelis abruptly violate the agreement on three points: by entering West Beirut (an action with profound significance for us, for the people of Beirut and for the Arabs as a whole); by entering the refugee camps, whereupon the massacres occurred; and by actually taking civilians in the Beirut area. All three of these points were clearly mentioned with specific guarantees in the agreement that had been reached and its accompanying letters. I let you imagine the impact of these events on us.

From there, I see two possible roads—one leading to more wars, the other to peace. In a climate like today’s, some may be tempted to follow the road of war—and I can understand their reasons, their desire for vengeance, their impression that moderation has failed... Yet, for those who know their responsibility towards the dead, and towards the living who must be spared and saved, there is the road to peace, just peace: It is clear, I think, that we have chosen that road. We have proven it many times—just recently in Beirut.

The above is excerpted from an interview with Dr. Dajani, a member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, conducted in New York City on December 11, 1982.

and, one year before, when we signed the August 1981 agreement engineered by Philip Habib. Although there are still those in the U.S. who close their ears and do not want to hear our cry for peace nor acknowledge our attitude of readiness, it is clear that our leadership has long proven its choice for just peace. And after Beirut, the Fez resolution offered a clear Arab peace plan where you will find all the principles for a just and comprehensive peace.

The problem is that the other party—Israel—seems to follow the first road, that which leads to ever more wars, ever more killing. We see many proofs of this—of the settlements’ policy for one thing; or, beyond the Sabra and Shatila massacres, in the attempt to erase our identity and our very culture, as witnessed in their policies towards universities and their actions against our offices, against our Research Center in Beirut (where they took all the books and told the Lebanese, “the Palestinians are barbarians, they do not read, why do they need books?...”) Obviously, the other side is still thinking of war and mass-murder.

A Weakened P.L.O.?

Clearly, some of our European and American friends—particularly in the media—are deceived by some of the slogans used by the Israelis. In truth, I feel sometimes that they do not know very well our people, our case, our unique circumstances. To say that the P.L.O. is weaker than before is totally wrong. The P.L.O. is scattered, some argue. But the P.L.O. was always scattered before; although we had our main offices in Beirut, we had other offices here and there. My office, for instance, was in Cairo until 1979; it was then transferred to Beirut. Other colleagues of mine in the field of education had offices in Damascus and, before then, in Amman. We believe that this is actually an element of our strength. As to our unity, I think it is stronger than ever. Is the leadership strong enough to make difficult decisions, we are often asked. My answer is unequivocal: Our leadership is strong, and we will make the decisions that have to be made in due time and when they are right, when the other parties are ready to support us and act with us. The P.L.O. may suffer in the aftermath of Beirut for a few days or a few weeks—but the organization is there, the institutions are there, and “the wheel continues to turn” independently of this or that personality. This is why to claim that the infrastructure of the P.L.O. has been destroyed, as Begin and Sharon do, or to bet on the disappearance of the P.L.O. is preposterous.

Indeed, I would say that our continued unity and strength offers to all the parties concerned who really want a settlement and a just peace a unique opportunity: the chance to deal with a leadership which represents all the Palestinians. The people of the West Bank and Gaza are part of the Palestinian people, and they are also part of the P.L.O.; the so-called “Israeli Arabs” in Galilee and elsewhere are also part of the Palestinians—they share in our experience, but they cannot represent us as a whole. And the same goes for those Palestinians in the outside. But the P.L.O. includes all these parts. This is why the United States, instead of refusing to talk to the P.L.O. as it has done for ten years, should seize this opportunity to deal with this repre-
sentative, truly the sole and legitimate one, of the Palestinians.

The Role of the United States

We know what the role of the United States can be in reaching a just peace—we have seen it in the past, in 1956 for instance during the Eisenhower presidency. Yet, since 1967, U.S. policy has seemed to us to be a policy of “negative use of power,” one that is reminiscent of nineteenth century realpolitik and of the Congress of Vienna when Metternich was doing everything to dam the current of history. The U.S. may have succeeded in preventing a solution which would serve all parties, but it has not succeeded in finding solutions. You can say that you will not deal with the P.L.O., or that there is no Palestinian people, or that you can “handle them.” Yet, the Palestinian people exists; it has rights, and will struggle for these rights. If you look at the outcome of the prevailing “negative” policy, you see three wars in fifteen years (1967, 1973, 1982), plus, in the intervals, the “war of attrition” in 1968-69, and the war of 1978 when Israel first entered Lebanon and bombed the south of Lebanon daily. Not to mention the role played by American weapons in these wars—the incredibly sophisticated and destructive and cruel arms which we saw with our own eyes being used against us in Beirut (I remember hearing from Chairman Arafat the chilling details of the effects of some of these new bombs on the bodies and the brains of our people). All these things are hard to forget.

The initiative of President Reagan is clearly insufficient. Yet, it does represent something new, something to which we have to respond—that is, of course, as long as it is not presented to us as a “take-it-or-leave-it” proposition. What is needed is a true dialogue to find a way to come to a conclusion—and, clearly, we want such a dialogue with the U.S.

What Relations with Jordan?

After the 1974 Rabat resolution referring to the P.L.O as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, it was clear to the P.L.O. and Jordanian leaderships that they had to find ways to cooperate. When we met in our own councils in ’74, in ’77, in ’79—we always mentioned in our resolutions that we had a “distinctive” relationship with Jordan, a unique and different one. This reflected the fact that many Palestinians live in Jordan and look forward to continuing their lives there. Hence the particular strength of West Bank-East Bank relations. Most importantly, although we insist on a Palestinian state because we need our identity, we seek at the same time to have relations and a sort of “unity” with other Arab countries. We do believe in the importance of unity among Arabs, but after everyone’s identity has been ensured.

Intra-Arab relations have not always been good in the recent past; differences exist between this and that region, this and that country. Yet, Jordan is very close to us, and we have insisted in previous years to have cooperation with Jordan in one field at least: the backing of our people in the occupied territories. A joint committee created to that effect has worked successfully for at least four years. Then came Beirut and Chairman Arafat’s first visit to Jordan after the P.L.O. leadership had left the Lebanese capital: This is when he mentioned the possibility of a “confederation” for the first time. Clearly, what we have in mind is a confederation between two states. Why? Because the Palestinians need first and foremost to be given back their identity as Palestinians—they need it very, very badly, after 34 years of disaster; when they have it, then they will be fully responsible for, and fully in a position of, establishing relations with their Arab brothers. This is why the Palestinian state is the only solution for Palestinians everywhere.

The joint P.L.O.-Jordanian committee which is presently at work deals, most importantly, with two issues: Looking at future relations, we have started to think about the possible details of such a “confederation”—economic relations, defense, interior matters, passports, flags, etc. Second, our task is also to discuss the current situation in the region and how we can move towards a peace settlement, taking into consideration the Fez resolution and addressing other ideas which are raised here and there, especially the Reagan initiative.
Sidki

ibility and "staying power" is vital. Even Yasser Arafat did not refuse to negotiate. The Israelis rejected the proposal out of hand—and the Americans said they could not force Israel to accept it. Instead of backing off immediately, the United States should have pushed ahead with its initiative—it was a golden chance to achieve progress. Yet, it always seems that we have to wait "until the next elections are over..." The same goes for the question of Israeli settlements: Their freeze was one of the conditions included in Reagan's very proposal; yet, nothing was done about it. How can I trust the United States with the rest of the conditions put forth in its proposal? How can I be asked to sit at a table and discuss it when I know that, when one of the conditions was violated by the other side, the author of the proposal did not know what to do? For if we arrive at a resolution at the table and the other side violates it, who is the guarantor—the United States? If the United States claims that it is vitally interested in bringing about a settlement, let it prove its credibility.

The Israelis have to show that they sincerely want a settlement. If they do not, we are simply playing a worthless game. And it is up to America to put them to a test.

The Arabs have to recognize the facts of life. Basically, we considered that Israel had no right to exist, because this was an Arab land. This was 1948. Now the Arabs are willing to accept Israel as a state and to live with it in peace—and whatever Israel says, I think the Arabs have now proved again and again that they are willing to accept that. But we also have a right to ask for the Palestinians to have their own state. If the Jews ask for a state for Israel, why deny the same right to a state to those who originally lived in that area?

What is needed is an agreement on these major points: Then we can sit at the table and I am confident compromises will be reached on the details to make it workable for both parties. But without such an agreement on fundamentals, what good can negotiations do?

**An Appeal to Europe**

I think Europe has a very important and influential role to play in helping us reach a settlement—a role from which they should not shy away from, and which we should encourage them to play at this crucial time.

At one time, the Soviets had a major role; they could not help. Now the United States has a bigger role; it does not seem to be succeeding. Why? Because, to be very frank, each of the two superpowers has, first and foremost, its own interests in mind in trying to force a solution. Europe does not have that kind of attitude. It would serve Europe's many interests in the region to see peace reign again, and I would welcome it if the European Community were to play the major role that it deserves in reaching a true settlement. On the Arab side, there are those who are not willing to deal with the United States; and there are those who would not deal with the Soviet Union. But all parties would welcome dealing with the European Community.

The expansion of Europe's role has been delayed to some extent by the fact that the United States has tried to monopolize the action. Yet, I think the Americans, unable as they are apparently to break the deadlock, should bring the Europeans in to help. And above all, I think the time has come for Europe to realize that it is in its interest to play a major role. The logic for such a role is obvious if you place it in the global context—one that is characterized by world-wide economic crisis, recession in the West, production that needs new markets, etc. This is not the time for "everyone-for-himself," restrictive policies in pursuit of narrow, purely selfish interests; by "seeing bigger" on an international scale, by finding a new and more adequate allocation of production, by helping the developing countries develop themselves, the West can solve its problems. Similarly, some in Europe may be tempted to shy away from the difficult central problem in the Middle East and prefer to pursue relations with the Arab world in other, more immediately profitable, fields. They are deluding themselves: Solving the political situation is to pave the way for the proper establishment of flourishing relations in all other fields. The time has come for Europe—within the Euro-Arab dialogue and through all other possible avenues—to take its share of the responsibility in promoting a settlement in our region.
The West Bank Today: “Five Minutes to Midnight”?  
In my view, the expression “five minutes to midnight” bears no relationship at all to a realistic, objective perception of the situation by anyone who would like to see an accommodation between Jews and Arabs and a peaceful settlement in the area. “Five minutes to midnight,” first of all, would seem to indicate that a great deal of time was lost before we reached this “minus-five-minutes” point; and since the implication is that it is Israel that is driving this clock, it also implies, of course, that Israel has somehow wasted this time and that peace could have been achieved earlier. Those who know the historical realities of the Middle East know that Israel has now been in existence for thirty five years. For nineteen years the West Bank—Judea and Samaria—was under Jordanian control. Incidentally, during those years the Jordanians destroyed all Jewish settlements, killed most of the people in those settlements, and never gave the slightest indication that they were interested in negotiating a peace settlement with Israel. Quite to the contrary, in June of 1967, from that very area the Jordanian army invaded Israel, in coalition with Nasser in Egypt, in the expectation of destroying Israel totally. Since then, fifteen years have gone by, and for ten of those years Israel was run by a Labor government.

Moshe Arens, Israel’s Ambassador to the United States, was appointed Minister of Defense as this issue of Triologue went to press. This interview was conducted in Washington, D.C. on January 27, 1983.

During that time, King Hussein never gave any indication that he was interested in negotiating peace with Israel. Then we had the Camp David process and the Begin-Sadat meeting. King Hussein was invited to join it and never came. Thus, I would say, first of all, that the implicit assumption in that expression—that all this time was wasted by Israel not wanting to make peace—is totally incorrect.

The dominant assumption in that expression is, of course, that Israel has taken certain actions which, if they are to be pursued for another “five minutes”—or another few months—will mean that there will no longer be anything to be negotiated. What is meant, presumably, is that if there are thirty, forty, or fifty thousand Jews living in Judea and Samaria, a point will have been reached where Israel and Jordan will no longer be able to sign a peace treaty and there will be nothing more to talk about. At present there are seven hundred thousand Palestinian Arabs living in Judea and Samaria; and the estimate is that there may be thirty thousand Jews, i.e., maybe 4% of the population. If the latter figure were to rise to fifty thousand or even seventy thousand Jews—i.e., some 10% of the population—does it follow that there is nothing more to talk about and that peace cannot reign between Israel and Jordan? Whoever makes that suggestion implies that Israel and Jordan can only live in peace if not a single Jew is allowed to live in territory controlled by Jordan. This, by the way, is the situation in Jordan today, and was for nineteen years the situation in the West Bank when Jordan controlled it. It is my view, and probably the view of any person who believes in the values that are dear to Western society, that a situation where a Jew is not allowed to live across the line up to which Israeli sovereignty extends is not a “peaceful” situation.

I would even go beyond that: Until such time as the Jordanians and the Arab populations in these areas recognize the necessity for Jews and Arabs to live together, I do not think that we are going to have real peace in the area. Unfortunately, that may take some time—in fact, quite a bit more than five minutes. And I think we have quite a bit more than five minutes. The peace process in the area is essentially a slow one; it took thirty years for Sadat to come to Jerusalem. I do not mean to imply that we should expect it will take another thirty years before Hussein comes to Jerusalem, or before the next Arab leader comes to talk peace; but I think it is unfortunately going to take a little time (although I wish it could happen in an instant).

Settlements negate the notion of a compromise involving an exchange of territories for peace only if you accept the premise that whatever territory will eventually end up under Arab sovereignty rather than Israeli sovereignty must be territory in which no Jew is allowed to live. Not only is this premise not accepted in Israel, but it is totally inconsistent with the very concept of peace. And if it is the intention of the Jordanians, in whatever territory they will gain control of in peace negotiations, to expel or kill the Jews living in the area, then it is clearly not the kind of peace we want.
What Next Steps?
The pattern for peace-making in the Middle East has been set, by Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat—namely, direct, face-to-face negotiations without any preconditions. The present negotiations between Israel and Lebanon are direct, face-to-face negotiations without preconditions. I hope that Lebanon will be the second country to sign a peace treaty with Israel; I think many people do not give the Israelis and the Lebanese sufficient credit and do not attach sufficient importance to a process that would have been quite inconceivable a year ago. Beyond this, I would say that the next step is for either King Hussein or President Assad of Syria to come forward as Sadat did and say, “We are ready to come to Jerusalem” or, “We are ready to invite Menachem Begin to come to Amman or Damascus and we want to start negotiating peace.” Until such time, nothing is going to happen, just as nothing really happened between Israel and Egypt until Sadat was ready to take up Menachem Begin’s invitation.

We have a signed agreement between Israel and Egypt that relates to Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip. It is an overall package which involved very significant concessions on Israel’s part; it is not a package that we are ready to unravel, and I would not suggest that anybody try to unravel it, because it really is “the only game in town”, the only agreement around. We must continue to build on it. Furthermore, Israel, Egypt, and the United States have committed themselves to continue working within the framework of that agreement. Thus, if we look towards Jordan as the next potential partner, the next necessary step is for Hussein to come forward and say that he is ready to join the Camp David process.

What Autonomy—and What Palestinian Representation?
More important than everything, in the final analysis, are those Palestinians that would be democratically elected to the self-governing authority that is envisaged by the Camp David agreement—Palestinians that would not be hand-picked or sifted by somebody, but would be elected by the people living in the area.

It is stated quite clearly in the Camp David agreements that the self-governing authority that will be exercising autonomy in Judea, Samaria and Gaza will not have jurisdiction over foreign affairs and defense. It will have jurisdiction over most other things. Whether we agree or not on this or that particular function to be carried out by the authority is, in the end, not terribly important (after all, we are only talking about a 5-year period). The most important thing in that autonomy is the fact that the people of Judea, Samaria and Gaza will democratically elect an authority that will represent them: an elected body that will be recognized by everyone—including Israel—as representing the population living there. That, I think, is the most important achievement from the Palestinian point of view and for the Arab cause. Everything else seems really secondary, and those who try to focus attention on such secondary matters are perhaps not really interested in any kind of agreement. I have heard people say that King Hussein may be concerned about having such democratic elections next door to him, and worried that this virus might be transferred from the West Bank to those Palestinians who live on the East Bank. I do not know if it is so; but, clearly, there is some apprehension in certain quarters at the prospect of this process actually taking place.

The P.L.O. After Lebanon
There is no question that the P.L.O. has been greatly weakened as a result of Israel’s military operation. A year ago, the kind of “baller”—or, is it not, rather, shadow-boxing?—now going on between King Hussein and Yasir Arafat would probably have ended up with one of them shooting the other. And I wouldn’t be surprised at all if, even at this stage of the game, they each carried a dagger or a gun in their pocket. All of us who know the Arab world know that they are rivals competing essentially for the very same position—i.e., for the leadership of the Palestinian Arabs. That rivalry came to the fore in what the P.L.O. calls the Black September of 1970, when they tried to take over Jordan and bring King Hussein down. I suppose they have not abandoned these ambitions to this very day. But it is only the weakening of their position, the destruction of their infrastructure in Lebanon, that brought them to the point where Arafat must eat humble pie and negotiate with King Hussein—and negotiate what, if not, in effect, giving the King the mandate to speak for the Palestinian cause?

But I don’t know that you can interpret this as a show of real moderation on their part. Any moderation on the part of the P.L.O. really
means the disappearance of the P.L.O., with King Hussein in effect becoming again, as he was in the past, the spokesman for the Palestinian cause. What has differentiated them from King Hussein, of course, is their much more extreme attitude—the fact that they did not have a moderate role, that they were the most extreme element in the Arab world. Once they abandon that, then I would say that they really have nothing more to talk about.

**Normalization and Withdrawal in Lebanon**

Israel wants a peace treaty with Lebanon. If we talk today of normalization, it is only because we have deferred to the United States’ suggestion that the peace treaty be delayed. My own opinion was that it should have been the first step and one on which we should not defer. To accept today the argument that Lebanon cannot and will not sign a peace treaty with Israel because of what this would do to its relationship with other Arab countries is like saying, in effect, that there will not be peace in the area: Such an argument can be put forth in the name of any Arab country—maybe in Syria’s name tomorrow, and maybe even in Egypt’s the day after tomorrow… I suppose some Egyptians put forth this argument to Sadat before he came to Jerusalem, and I suppose there are today some Egyptians who feel that it is not good for Egypt and its relations with other Arab countries to be at peace with Israel. Those of us who believe in peace in the area cannot and will not accept that argument. Because, in effect, it amounts to giving the most extreme elements in the Arab world a right of veto on the relationship of everybody else with Israel. Under such conditions, there can never be peace.

On the subject of Syria’s withdrawal from Lebanon, let us remember first of all that if we or the Lebanese are in a position to talk about such withdrawal at all at the present time, it is only as a result of Israel’s military operation. Nobody seriously talked about the Syrian army withdrawing from Lebanon a year ago or eight months ago, or five years ago. The Syrian army has now left some important areas which it occupied in Lebanon—Beirut, part of the Bekaa Valley, part of the road that links Beirut to the Bekaa Valley—and it has done so under direct military pressure from the Israeli army; and quite a number of Israeli soldiers fell in battle exerting that pressure. I think it is quite clear that, if the Syrians are to leave the roughly 40% of Lebanon they still occupy, it will certainly be in part because of the potential Israeli pressure, be it political or even military—a pressure to be exercised, we hope, in alliance with the United States and with the Lebanese government. Such joint action may well create the conditions for the Syrians to decide that they are better off getting out. Their withdrawal will not come of their own free will, and therefore I feel it has no connection at all with the issue of whether or not Lebanon signs a peace treaty with Israel—quite to the contrary: I think that if the Syrians realize that the Lebanese and the Israelis are working in concert, and that the United States is supporting their position, then there is a chance that they will leave. Otherwise, they will stay there for a long time.

**Why I Voted Against Camp David**

Any observer coming from a democratic society would have been surprised if the Camp David treaty had been unanimously ratified by the Israeli legislature. That would not have happened in any other democratic country (the Panama Canal Treaty, for instance, was not ratified unanimously by the United States Senate; in fact, a sizable minority opposed that treaty). Nobody could have expected that every last Israeli, and every last Israeli member of the Knesset, would approve. In reality, the reason I voted against the treaty had to do, of course, with some of the terms of the treaty, not its principle: I think it is true to say that not a single Israeli, and certainly not a single member of the Israeli legislature, was opposed to peace between Israel and Egypt.

The questions some of us had were, to mention but a few: Should we give up all of the Sinai, or only 90% of it? Should we, rather than demolish and abandon air bases, have an exchange of territory, so that we could retain the use of some of the bases we had built? Or should we have an exchange of territory so that we could continue to have our settlers instead of pulling them out? What should the arrangements be in return for Israel turning oil wells over to the Egyptians? Should an Egyptian oil-supply commitment to Israel in future years be part and parcel of the peace treaty? Should the Israeli withdrawal be spread over five years rather than three years? In short, what was at issue was a difference of opinion on the terms of the treaty and, as I look back on it today,
I still feel that we should have gotten better terms.

Needless to say, Israel being a country with a tradition of adherence to the international commitments that it undertakes, once such commitments are made by the majority of the people, by the majority of the Israeli legislature, they are binding on all Israelis and all Knesset members, whether or not they supported these commitments at the time. I would go one step further and say that, now that we have paid the price of the ticket, even though some people like myself felt that it was an excessive price, we want to be sure that we get to the final destination—namely, a permanent and stable peace between Israel and Egypt.
Life After Peace

The 1982/83 Middle East team of the Institute for East-West Security Studies is composed of the following fellows: Major General (Ret.) Yousef Kawash (Jordan); Dr. Eva Novotny, Counsel at the Austrian Mission to the United Nations (Austria); Mr. Leon Hadar, correspondent for The Jerusalem Post, on leave (Israel); Colonel Bror-Johan Geijer, Military Advisor to the Swedish Mission to the United Nations (Sweden); Ms. Noha Tadros, Senior Member of the Office of the Chairman (Palestine Liberation Organization); and Mr. Gabriel Ghanoum, former Lebanese Consular Officer in New York (Lebanon). These fellows, together with six European Security specialists from East and West, are in residence at the Institute for East-West Security Studies in New York for this academic year.

Introduction

The Middle East Fellows of the Institute for East-West Security Studies are currently engaged in a one-year study of the implications for Palestinians and Israelis in the Middle East region and the Great Powers, including Europe and Japan, of the two most frequently discussed approaches toward resolution of the Palestinian question: an independent Palestinian state, or a Palestinian entity in association with Jordan. This project is predicated on the belief that it is necessary to begin open-ended explorations of the impact of proposed comprehensive solutions to the conflict. The Institutes' Middle East Fellows—Arab and Israeli—have explored in prolonged team interactions and discussions two possible approaches which are surveyed in this paper. Other approaches might include some form of Israeli-Jordanian-Palestinian-Lebanese federation; a single democratic secular state; return to the 1947 partition plan; or permanent Israeli control over the occupied territories. The two choices explored in this paper are those most frequently discussed by the international community as ultimate solutions. Such explorations may lead to useful insights; an improved understanding of the perceived and actual fears and dilemmas of the parties involved; and new thinking regarding proposals frequently discussed by the world community for resolution of the core problem of the Arab-Israeli conflict. If its resolution is to be achieved, both sides must show a willingness to recognize one another and deal with their respective legitimate concerns and issues. A resolution of this conflict necessitates the active participation of the community of nations, in particular the United States and to some degree the Soviet Union, the European powers, and Japan. The Fellows engage in research, drafting papers, and continuous dialogue in New York with one another and with outside guests from the region, Europe, the United States, and the Soviet Union. Work at the Institute is academic, not political. There is no effort to force consensus among the team members. The starting point for the work of this team was a set of working hypotheses formulated for this project:

1) Israel and the Palestinian community (including the P.L.O.), publicly and without reservation, recognize the inalienable rights of the other to live at peace and within secure borders. The borders are defined as pre-1967 for Israel, and the West Bank and Gaza territories occupied by Israel for an independent Palestinian state or a Palestinian entity in association with Jordan.

2) Through a process to be determined, such as an expanded Camp David process, the movement toward self-determination of the Palestinian people is likely to lead to a transitional arrangement which would result in the establishment of Palestinian self-rule in areas of the West Bank and Gaza which may choose to become independent or unite in an association with Jordan.

3) The other states along Israel's borders (Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, and Egypt) will participate in the settlement process.

4) The United States, the Soviet Union, Europe and Japan have specific interests in the areas affected by a settlement of the Palestinian question and a desire to play a role in the settlement process. The U.S. is, however, in an unquestionably stronger position to serve as peacemaker than either the Soviet Union or the European states.

Based upon these working hypotheses, the team's discussions regarding a resolution of the Palestinian question are channeled toward a review of the impact
of a Palestinian state or a Palestinian entity in association with Jordan. Any solution to the Palestinian-Israeli problem, the heart of this conflict, must explore the impact on the people of the area; as well as the impact on the security of Israel, the Palestinian state (or entity in association with Jordan); as well as the impact on the economy and the possibilities for cooperation among all the aforementioned peoples.

This article is intended to be a conceptual survey prepared for *Triad* readers. The views represent a sampling of the thinking and discussions which have taken place at the Institute’s team on this subject since September 1982. In addition, the Institute has asked its Israeli and Palestinian Fellows to present their individual approaches to a discussion of the future.

**A Palestinian Association with Jordan or an Independent State?**

The two options under study are the impact which an independent sovereign Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza or a Palestinian/Jordan association (also comprising the West Bank and Gaza) could have on the region and the outside parties, in particular the Great Powers. The two central components for study, whether the Palestinian entity is a state or in an association, are the impact on 1) the people most directly affected and 2) on the security and secure borders for Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian entity. Any proposed solution of this conflict must focus upon these two issues. The two, people and security, are also inextricably linked. Attempts to solve one without the other will not lead to a comprehensive settlement.

Whereas the reader is able to envision the definition of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, it is necessary to define what is meant by an association. If there were to be a Palestinian/Jordanian association, the basis and type of such an association would have to be decided between the Palestinian entity and Jordan. It is likely that it would be based on something similar to Jordan’s 1972 federation scheme which calls for a complete Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and the phased replacement of Israeli forces with Jordanian troops. Such a federation would comprise two regions: the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and the region of Jordan on the East Bank with its center in Amman. Amman would also serve as the capital of the association, and the seat for the unified executive authority including foreign affairs and defense. Each region would have an elected People’s Council and government, while the supreme authority would remain vested in the monarch. The parliament would be composed equally of delegates from both regions. A variation of this would be a confederation between a sovereign Palestinian state and Jordan. Details regarding the nature of such an association have been the cause of many discussions between King Hussein and Yasir Arafat.

**The People**

From an Israeli perspective, the Arab-Israeli conflict has been primarily a question of two peoples laying claim to the same land. For the Palestinians, the conflict is seen as between two peoples, one a people displaced from their lands and the other a people who after two thousand years of absence occupied and claimed the same land as their own.

Each of these two peoples shares a sense of its nationalism and identity, as Jews or as Palestinians. Yet, each is made up of different sub-groups which would be affected differently should an independent Palestinian state be established in areas of the West Bank and Gaza or a Palestinian entity in association with Jordan. The Palestinian subgroupings include: the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza; the Palestinian refugees; Palestinians now Israeli citizens in pre-1967 Israel; and those Palestinians who have been displaced since 1948 but have since become integrated elsewhere. The Israelis include the Ashkenazi Jews and pre-1948 Sephardic Jews of Israel; the Sephardic Jews who emigrated from the Arab world to settle in Israel after 1948; Jewish settlers in the occupied territories; and the Jewish diaspora. There is a clear difference in how the establishment of a state or association would affect these different groupings, for example refugees as opposed to displaced persons who are now fully integrated into countries where they intend to remain.

In any attempt to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the question of the people will automatically assume a central role. While many feasible proposals and suggestions have been presented for a solution to the security questions or economic dimensions of the future of this area, the question of the displaced Palestinian people has remained highly charged with political, military, economic, and, above all, human considerations.

As an acceptable solution is negotiated, the issues of the people—more than any other element in view of
the collective human tragedies involved and the understandably emotional driving forces—will require some pragmatic departures from absolute principles. A willingness to accept that neither the Palestinians nor the Israelis will agree to the other’s understanding of history, and that neither party will achieve all its objectives is critical for a solution. If there is to be progress toward a settlement, there must be a broader understanding of the injustices suffered by the Palestinian people for thirty-five years. So too must there be an understanding of Israeli fears based on both the Jewish experience in the Holocaust and the post-1948 emigration from some Arab states of the Jewish minorities. Above all, it will require a clear perception that in this Arab-Israeli conflict, the pains and memories of human tragedy and suffering belong to both peoples. Both sides can justifiably point to the other for its role in causing one of the major Arab-Israeli wars. Only with such understandings can there begin to emerge a perspective that any potential co-existence must be based upon individual and collective equality. The most difficult “people” question to resolve will not be the people living in the West Bank, Gaza, or (pre-1967) Israel, nor the displaced persons already integrated into other societies. The most difficult questions concern, first, the Palestinian refugees and, second, the “right to return” of the Jewish people on the West Bank and Gaza.

The two million Palestinian refugees (who are not integrated into other societies) will necessarily be the most complicated part of a comprehensive peace settlement. It is expected that in such a settlement, even if it results in an independent Palestinian state, the Palestinians will have to abandon adherence to the full “right to return” concept in its original definition. The Israelis will have to relinquish their “right to settle” concept in the West Bank and Gaza. The Israeli settlements, which have become an obvious political burden and obstacle to progress in negotiating a settlement, paradoxically could become part of a general package deal. There are even possibilities that an agreement could be reached with Israel, allowing a specified number of Palestinians to return to their pre-1967 homes and a Palestinian state agreeing to allow a limited number of Jews to live in Palestine. A general peace agreement between Israel and Palestine should institutionalize the political and civil rights of such respective Jewish and Palestinian minorities in the two countries under the sovereignty of the host state. The ability to resettle those Palestinian refugees who want to live in a new Palestinian state, as well as those who seek integration into Arab or other countries, would become the primary question to be addressed. This would follow compensation of all outstanding claims, most likely with U.S. and Western funds. Such compensation and the subsequent resettlement should end the refugee questions in all its aspects.

However, if there were an association with Jordan, the Gaza Strip and West Bank populations would be granted Jordanian citizenship, although this does not address the question of Palestinians living elsewhere. The critical problem which would have to be addressed is Palestinian nationalism. Many Palestinian leaders have argued that the Palestinian people need, at the very least, a land to call their own, a flag, and a passport. These could be provided in an association or an independent state.

Security and Secure Borders

In order to succeed, a peace treaty must include a detailed security plan to provide security for Israel, the Palestinian entity (whatever its constitutional form), Jordan and the neighboring states. Security cannot be achieved on either side of the border—whether with the Palestinian state or in association with Jordan—through barriers, fences, and minefields, with armed units poised along the border, nor through the use of military power or doctrines based on preemptive strikes. A sense of security cannot be achieved until the development of a comprehensive and just settlement is in place. A recognition of established borders between the two sides would create the first sense of security. Each political leader would be expected by his people to serve as a guardian of this new security arrangement, responsible for avoiding actions that would plunge the region into renewed war. External guarantees would also be needed.

The strategic situation of the Arab confrontation states and Israel is primarily characterized by the limited space in which their common borders would be situated. A Palestinian state would constitute a new factor in the strategic balance in the area. At first glance the disadvantages of such a new territorial structure would seem to fall primarily on Israel. Israel’s strategy is based largely on four prerequisites: 1) “maximum distance” between Arab military forces and Israel; 2) proper strategic warning; 3) the capacity of mobilization without interference; and 4) the ability to delay the attacking forces. To achieve these prerequisites, Israel would undoubtedly prohibit the concentration of other Arab military forces within
Jordan’s borders, as well as the stationing of any heavy armament in the West Bank by Jordanian or Palestinian forces.

Many Israelis consider that an independent Palestinian state will pose a major threat to Israel. They believe that placing the Palestinians under the administrative control of Jordan would satisfy Israeli and Jordanian political and security requirements. The so-called “Jordanian option” for Israelis is a means of defusing a possible Palestinian threat by relying on Jordan to apply restraint. At the same time, the Jordanian government realizes the risks of a Palestinian-Jordanian association which may arise from rejectionist Palestinian elements. This is particularly significant since more than 60% of Jordan’s current (excluding West Bank) population is Palestinian. To allay such difficulties the Jordanian government pursues efforts to extricate the Palestinians from Israeli occupation.

It would probably be easier, from a military point of view, for the West Bank and Gaza to be integrated militarily into an association with Jordan. The small size of the West Bank and Gaza realistically precludes the deployment of most categories of weapons and air capability. This matter reaches down to the most fundamental capabilities for a military establishment: For example, the geographical restrictions of the West Bank would not even allow for a full artillery range which any modern army would need. It would be much more feasible for Jordan to absorb such weapons and assume the mantle of Palestinian defense needs. However, such an arrangement could end up making the West Bank akin to a buffer zone between Jordan and Israel and a “second class” entity.

Israel’s new defense requirements, should there be a Palestinian state, have been thoroughly discussed by many Israeli strategic experts. They have focused on the exposed position of (pre-1967) Israel. They have pointed out that this narrow strip—eight to thirteen miles wide—harbors 67% of Israel’s population and 80% of its industry, and that it is exposed even to medium-caliber artillery deployed in the western-most areas of the West Bank. It has also been stressed that a surprise attack, aimed at reaching the Mediterranean, could quickly split the territory of Israel. Limitations on artillery, rocket-launchers, and armor units capable of carrying out swift surface attacks can be assumed to be a vital security provision. In addition, Israel and several Western states have alleged that a Palestinian state would become an armed base for the Soviet Union, performing a role in the Third World similar to Cuba.

A Palestinian defense strategy would likely be based on the following considerations: 1) discontinuity—the Gaza Strip and the West Bank are separated from one another by Israeli territory. Even if East Jerusalem were restored to the Palestinian state, West Jerusalem would dominate the main road linking Nablus to the north and Hebron to the south. The strategic depth on the West Bank is very limited; 2) encirclement—both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank are almost completely surrounded by Israel; 3) accessibility of Palestinian territory—just as the heavily populated areas in Israel are within artillery range from the West Bank, so is the West Bank within Israeli artillery range. Accessibility is not only a function of distance, it is a function of terrain, vegetation, communication routes, and transport capacities, and above all, of the balance of power; and 4) links to the outside world—the West Bank has no direct access to the sea; one airport north of Jerusalem with limited capacity; and its sole link to the Arab world is across three bridges on the Jordan River.

The Gaza Strip is five to ten miles wide and 30 miles long. Every square yard is penetrable from the Israeli side by foot within half an hour, by vehicle within minutes. There is no warning time whatsoever against aircraft. A military buildup even for limited defense purposes could have little more than symbolic value. The whole Gaza Strip could easily be sealed off within minutes by an armor thrust.

Following a peace settlement, it can be expected that Israel will maintain a strong and effective military force which will remain superior to any combination of Arab states, particularly its air force and armor. Certain security arrangements between the Palestinian state and Israel would have to be established. However, peace will ultimately depend upon the political arena and the willingness of each side to recognize and respect the other’s inalienable right to live at peace as well as each other’s borders.

A Palestinian state cannot be expected to agree to complete demilitarization, although it might become a non-aligned state and agree to some demilitarized zone and monitoring arrangements. The very history and concept of Palestinian nationalism shows that a Palestinian state would almost assuredly not become a client state of a particular power. Policing of demilitarized zones and border monitoring (on both sides of the border) could be carried out initially by some combination of the following types of forces: 1) Israeli and Palestinian; 2) Israeli and Jordanian; 3)
Israeli and Palestinian with Jordanians and/or Egyptians; 4) United Nations forces; 5) multinational forces (e.g. the multinational force in Beirut); and 6) a Soviet-American force. Many other monitoring measures might be introduced to supplement the procedures, such as mutual patrols, observation posts, liaison officers, and border committees, to solve day-to-day border incidents and supervise land cultivation in the border areas. These should be of mixed personnel—preferably Israelis and Palestinians.

In addition to monitoring functions, outside parties can be expected to provide international guarantees which could provide confidence and a warning to any potential aggressor that the territorial integrity of a state will be defended. The choice of guarantor and the conditions that require immediate intervention by the guarantor are among the most important determinants to assure the effectiveness of a guarantee. Many types of safeguards relevant to this case have been put forward by a myriad of academic and political sources, including troop contributors to peace-keeping forces and the Great Powers.

Dr. Avi Plascov, an Israeli strategic expert, concluded in a detailed study that only through politics will Israel ultimately gain its security. According to his study, new military technology tends to diminish the value of buffer zones and the virtues of strategic depth and it is only predictable behavior and good will—not the security arrangements as such—which can provide the parties with security. Any efforts to separate security problems from the other aspects of the conflict will mean the inability of the parties to achieve agreement on a settlement. The technology does exist to develop security arrangements which will help make Israel and its neighbors feel more secure once there is peace. Over time and assuming peace, such arrangements should become less and less important.

Economy and Cooperation

An economic and social profile of the West Bank and Gaza today demonstrates that there are certain areas where an independent state, if established, could operate independently of its neighbors and other areas where it will be highly interdependent with Jordan and Israel. One must consider what would be required to make the present population of the West Bank and Gaza independently viable as a state and what would be required to enable the area to absorb large numbers of refugees. As a new country seeking to establish a state infrastructure and rapid economic growth, the populace of this state must initially be willing to live with austerity, and a modest level of consumption in order to attain its development goals.

From the Israeli point of view, the West Bank and Gaza cannot be economically viable as an independent state, and are considered to be auxiliary sectors of the Israeli and, to a lesser extent, the Jordanian economies. The impact of the Israeli occupation can be felt on the economic life of the two areas today. The West Bank and Gaza have become heavily dependent on Israel for trade and employment. Industry has stagnated. Israel’s inflation in recent years has caused serious repercussions in the territories, inhibiting investment and further economic growth.

However, it is not adequate to use the existing situation as a model for a future state. To some extent, the union experience with Jordan from 1949-67 and most importantly the experience since 1967 under Israeli occupation, have had negative economic consequences for the inhabitants of the West Bank in terms of their being able to determine their own economic future and growth. The West Bank and Gaza, with its human resources in a state of peace under its own government, could develop and achieve viability.

However, the high cost and problems of resettling the refugees, in terms of demographics and resources, could perhaps be more easily resolved in the long run in an association rather than by a small Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza. Among the major reasons: 1) the territory and resources of the association, including water, are vastly superior to that of the West Bank; and 2) the existing infrastructure of the Jordanian government could more easily provide certain basic resources and economic needs which are lacking in the West Bank and Gaza. These might include banking, an access to the sea at Aqaba and possible water supplies to the West Bank from the Euphrates via Iraq. An association with Jordan might make a Palestinian entity much more viable in the short run, provided it does not impose an imbalanced relationship of dependence.

The concept of viability itself has many different meanings. Used in an economic sense, a society is considered viable if its economic characteristics permit it to experience sustained growth and rising per capita welfare. If viability were primarily a function of available natural resources, then Japan might not
be viable. If it denotes food or energy self-sufficiency, then only a handful of countries in the world would be viable. If it is measured by independence from foreign assistance, then few non-oil producing countries in the Middle East and certainly no states involved in this conflict would satisfy the criteria. If viability is the ability of the economy to attain continued growth rates and is seen as an achievement of growth, then a viable Palestinian state is achievable.

A Palestinian state of only 6,000 square kilometer and limited resources, however, cannot develop in isolation. It would be obligated to establish close relations with its neighbors in order to play a role in the dynamics of regional economic growth, while simultaneously developing infrastructures for the development of agriculture, industry, commerce, and tourism.

Palestinians compare favorably with other peoples in the region, including the Israelis, in terms of white-collar skills as well as technical and entrepreneurial skills. The ratio of Palestinian university graduates to total population is the highest in the Arab region and similar to that of Israel. This highly trained Palestinian pool helps at present to manage the economies of many Arab countries.

An increase in Palestinian GNP may only be accomplished through massive international investment directed towards industry, or through the initiation of large-scale projects which would attract investment from Arab banks and big businesses. Under different political circumstances it is possible to envisage Israeli-Palestinian industrial ventures which, if undertaken, could prove to be a strategic factor in the region's industrial growth. There will be a strong need for investment to diversify production in the new Palestinian state, employment of new technologies, and the development of new irrigation systems. As a means of stimulating the reconstruction of the rural economy, a policy of urban decentralization should be pursued. In the field of agricultural development the goals are well-defined: achieving self-sufficiency in the supply of food, hence an end to their near total reliance on Israeli agricultural products; and creating employment as more people take up residence in rural areas. A high percentage of the people expected to reintergrate into a Palestinian state would be unskilled workers.

Agricultural growth depends on the expansion of water resources. A water resource program could be initiated to double the irrigation base of agriculture in the West Bank and Gaza. In the West Bank, such a water resource program could expand water for agriculture by 80 million cubic meters a year. In Gaza, water resource development would depend almost entirely on desalination technology. A system can be developed for desalination and conducting sea water to internal water supplies to use for electricity production and for irrigation. A prototype desalination plant of advanced design is now under construction in Israel. It has the potential to substantially reduce the cost of producing desalinated water. A similar plant could be the basis of a Gaza project, although the cost is exceedingly high.

As it reaches a certain stage of development, the Palestinian state could begin to direct its efforts to regional affiliations with Jordan and perhaps later even Lebanon, Israel, and Syria. Once its social, political, and economic bases and self-identity are established, the Palestinian entity might wish to direct its efforts to a regional "common market" affiliation, including Jordan, Lebanon, Israel, and Egypt. Such visions of the future have been expressed by Arab and Israeli leaders in the region.

It is also possible to surmise that a Palestinian association with Jordan might be the needed transitional phase for an independent Palestinian state. Association with Jordan could help provide the Palestinians with the necessary economic, political, and military infrastructures to create a viable state of their own. A transitional association might also be the needed confidence-building measure for Israel to grow accustomed to the idea of a Palestinian entity as its neighbor without the perceived threat that an independent state raises in Israeli minds. However, the risk exists that Palestinian aspirations will not be met completely or expeditiously.
A Palestinian Perspective on the Future *

This essay is an attempt to analyze the consequences of two alternative hypothetical future developments in the Middle East. Although it could be termed a “future-oriented” study, unlike most future-oriented studies, it does not reflect a Palestinian vision or a Palestinian dream. It is simply a Palestinian answer to a question pertaining to the alternative consequences and impact of two hypothetical developments which are referred to as possible “solutions” to what is currently termed the “Palestinian problem”. It is very difficult to engage in such hypotheses when Israel will not even acknowledge the need for a Palestinian entity (whatever its form) or self-determination and when Israel continues what can only be perceived by Palestinians and any objective observers as expansionist measures. Beyond this, Israel presents a view of history which denies the existence of a Palestinian identity, subsumed them as a lump group under all Arabs, while using history as a means to justify continued occupation and expansion as well as continued wars to destroy the political embodiment of Palestinian nationalism, i.e. the Palestine Liberation Organization, which is the sole legitimate internationally-recognized representative of the Palestinian people.

The actual course of events in the Palestinian present, which is in a state of dispersal, does not necessarily point only to these two future alternative developments: an independent Palestinian state or association with Jordan on the West Bank and Gaza. The pace at which Palestinian history is being forged through continuous Israeli wars and expansions could lead to other developments, perhaps more negative or positive. However, the two options to be analyzed in this paper are those which are viewed through an emerging international and Arab consensus to be the two most realistic solutions to the Palestinian problem, at least in the near future. Genuinely “Palestinian” solutions range from the proposal to establish a secular democratic state in all of Palestine as a maximum demand to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza as a minimum demand. However, the cornerstone of such a state is “the concept of Palestinian sovereignty, not half sovereignty or quasi sovereignty or ersatz sovereignty, but a sovereign independent state.”

It is necessary to point out other aspects of the Palestinian question which on the one hand will affect the realization of these solutions, and on the other hand will be affected by them. These factors also clearly influence the course of this analysis. They are related to all these factors that constitute what could be referred to as “national conscience” and which in turn is composed of a people’s conception of history, of a people’s aspirations, of a people’s sense of right and wrong. All these elements are more clearly formulated in what one could refer to as “Pales-

* by Noha Tadros

An Israeli Perspective on the Future *

One should shift—even for a moment—one’s focus of attention from the many political, security, and legal problems involved in any effort to solve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which are presented so forcefully in this issue of Trialogue and try to engage in an exercise aimed at foreseeing a more optimistic vision.

After all, is it not possible that the Israeli soldier and the Palestinian fighter that found themselves on the battleground of Lebanon recently will be trading partners in the near future, or that the area which the former call “Eretz Israel” and the latter “Palestine,” while separated into two political entities in which each of them enjoys his right to self-determination, the right to “live and let live,” can still be united economically and socially? Is it difficult to imagine that the new socio-economic structure which will include Jordan and perhaps, later, even Lebanon and Syria, might turn into the “Benelux of the Levant.”

Situated in a strategic center between Europe, Asia, and Africa, the new union can serve as an ideal economic bridge between the continents. Palestinians, Israelis, and Lebanese have strong ties to their prosperous diasporas in the U.S., Latin America, Europe, and the oil-rich Gulf states—ties which could be translated in terms of profitable investments and large tourism as well as a successful search for new markets. These communities enjoy high levels of education and serve as a basis for a development of a high-technology industry, productive agriculture, and a sophisticated banking system. Beirut, Tel Aviv, and Amman can become major business centers for Africa and the Middle East; the roar of the stockbrokers will replace the roar of the military commanders. Jerusalem can turn into a prominent international center for various world organizations.

Having one’s cake and eating it too—e.g., establishing a Jewish-controlled “Eretz Israel” or a unitary Palestinian-Arab entity and trying to make peace with the other side—has always been a futile exercise. On the other hand, under the new economic and social union with its open borders and free flow of people and goods, Israeli Jews will be able to visit any time of the day or week the places they believe belonged to their Biblical ancestors, while Palestinian Arabs could feel at home in areas which once belonged to their families. If the parties to the new union would agree, there need be no electoral link between the place of residence of a citizen and his district affiliation. Thus, an Arab citizen of Israel could belong to the Palestinian entity even while residing in Israel, while a Jewish citizen of the Palestinian entity could still retain his Israeli citizenship while living in an Arab entity. That might make it easier for Israel to accept a limited number of Arab refugees who could hold a citizenship of a Palestinian entity, while the Palestinian entity might not

* by L. Hadar
Palestinian nationalism", which in turn finds its concrete expression in the Palestinian liberation movement and the organization which represents it.

To try and discuss the physical impact of the establishment of an independent state or an association with Jordan on the people without addressing the aspirations and national conscience of a people is a reduction of the "people" concept to an inanimate form more animal-like than human. It will be nearly impossible for Palestinians to be satisfied by material solutions, such as building houses or finding enough food, although all these factors do play a role.

It is the question of national aspirations and Palestinian nationalism which will be both the most affected by and the most influential factor in any of these solutions. In addition, this brief attempt to point out the major milestones of Palestinian history, which include the expulsion from their lands in 1948 and 1967 as well as the Israeli invasion of Beirut in 1982, brings an important but very simple question to mind, namely, how can one discuss future solutions if the problem is not clearly defined? One could ask whether the problem is simply the "Palestinian question" or a question of continued Israeli occupation and expansion.

Moreover, to be able to visualize the possibility of these future alternatives as actually occurring, it is necessary to look into both the past and the present for indicators that point in the direction of such options. For example, Israel's most recent and longest war in Lebanon and its continued establishment of settlements on the West Bank indicate that Israel is neither willing to withdraw, nor is it seriously considering peace, which are two necessary prerequisites to the two solutions under discussion.

The main difference between the two options is that the first recognizes the specificity of Palestinian identity and nationality as distinct from Jordanian or other nationality, while the second negates the specificity of this identity and seeks to subsume it under a general Arab identity.

However, while an independent Palestinian state is clearly preferable, there are many analysts who claim that some Palestinians, in the face of continued Israeli occupation and the increase in the number of settlers and settlements, would prefer any solution rather than further Israeli occupation. Such feelings, born out of despair, would lead to a Palestinian association with Jordan for the wrong reason and would be a negative compromise. Such a "solution" is not a long-term solution and would not endure because a Palestinian association with Jordan would ignore the fundamental aspirations of Palestinians which have been expressed since the emergence of Palestinian nationalism at the beginning of this century. For the Palestinian refugees, a solution short of an independent state would not fulfill any of their aspirations to self-determination or independence nor would it solve their economic problems as well as their status as refugees.

Israeli regard it as a burden to allow a limited number of Jews who will continue to be Israeli citizens to live in the West Bank. Thus what we are thinking about is a new geopolitical system that aims at integrating the two peoples, not on a basis of dominant-subordinate relationship. We are envisioning a spatial integration of nation-states which guarantees the autonomy of each community, one which can serve as a model for other arrangements in the area.

The effort to integrate Europe began with small steps, e.g., the establishment of the coal and steel, and atomic energy communities. Similarly, any attempt to create the conditions for an economic cooperation between Israel, Jordan, and a Palestinian entity could start by "thinking small," perhaps with economic-industrial projects in the Dead Sea area to develop potash and phosphates; tourism cooperation between Eilat and Aqaba; and a free port in Haifa for Jordan and the new Palestinian entity. An effort to resettle thousands of Palestinian refugees in the West Bank can certainly become part of a regional development project which will involve Western and Arab oil-producing states as well as Israeli and Palestinian expertise.

A realistic leadership on both the Israeli and Palestinian sides should come to perceive the conflict in which they have been engaged for almost 100 years basically as a clash between two national liberation movements—between Zionist-Jews and Palestinian-Arabs—and begin to work toward a reconciliation between the two peoples. There is, one hopes, the political will among the members of the Israeli, Palestinian, and Jordanian leadership to work toward such reconciliation and cooperation. P.L.O. leader Yasser Arafat expressed support in two recent interviews for the idea of an economic union between Israel, Jordan, a future Palestinian entity and Lebanon. Former Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban raised a similar idea during the late sixties. Jordan's King Hussein has in the past expressed his support for regional ventures that will include cooperation with Israel in a time of peace.

Wishful thinking? A product of a wild imagination? Perhaps. But wouldn't the reaction have been the same if, say, one would have suggested in 1942 at the peak of World War II that Germany and France, the traditional adversaries, would become the two leading founders of a new drive for an economic and social cooperation in Europe? That from the ashes of disaster and agony will emerge a basis for a political structure in which no nation will dominate the other, but instead, in this "Europe of nation-states" as the late President Charles de Gaulle had put it, a limited but still fruitful integration will take place, one which will stem from self-interest of each independent entity and will not be imposed from above?
Palestinian

It is worth noting that most of what constitutes the Palestinian diaspora belongs to the areas which were occupied by the Israeli forces in 1948. For these Palestinians, their attachment is to the cities of Haifa, Jaffa, and Safad among others. However, it might be possible under certain conditions (which would include compensation for property lost to Israel) to convince most of these Palestinians that the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza could be an acceptable solution for them since it would welcome them as full citizens, and since it would be possible to integrate them economically into such a state. For the Palestinian refugees such a solution is already a great compromise which would be based on political expediency. It does not, however, fulfill their dreams of returning to their homes. Even in the context of an independent Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza, which would end their legal status as “aliens” in foreign lands as is the case of Lebanon, there must be ways in which they can visit their original hometowns in pre-1967 Israel. Perhaps they can even be given the freedom to choose whether they prefer to return to their hometowns or cities of origin as provided for in the internationally recognized “right of return” under Israeli rule—such opportunities would help make the solution sought to the Palestinian problem just and lasting.

For both the Palestinians and the Jews, the establishment of an independent state on the West Bank and Gaza would constitute a reversal of a trend which has been continuing since 1948. For the Palestinians it will mean regrouping and returning to the land instead of dispersal and alienation. For the Jews it will primarily mean withdrawal, which will reverse their process of expansion. It will also mean security for both the state of Palestine as well as the state of Israel instead of war.

Conclusion

There are numerous private reports of impending developments in the Arab-Israeli peace process as this issue of <em>Triadology</em> goes to press. A breakthrough however must rely on a willingness of the key parties involved in the conflict (including the European Community, Japan, and the superpowers) to see it resolved. Such a breakthrough requires an important transition in the willingness by Israel, the Palestinians, and the Arab states to negotiate in good faith a comprehensive settlement. This willingness can only be generated by a solid indication from Israel and its Arab adversaries to want serious negotiations. If this is to succeed, the great powers must also be willing to make sacrifices and make extended efforts to resolve the conflict.

After thirty-five years, discussions of what an end to this tragic conflict might look like are healthy. Rather than contribute to the perpetual discussions of the current stumbling blocks to a settlement and reiterations of well-know positions, the team’s efforts are meant to encourage discussion of what might be possible. Such thinking has been called “thinking the unthinkable.” It is time the unthinkable be discussed in policy fora of the interested parties.

3Ibid.
7Khalidi, op cit. p. 701.

■ This article, by the Middle East Fellows of the Institute for East-West Security Studies, does not necessarily reflect the views of the Trilateral Commission or its members. It is merely presented as a contribution to informed discussion. -Ed