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# Contradicting Peace Proposals in the Palestine Conflict

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The article is an attempt to evaluate structurally different types of solution proposals to the Palestine conflict. These types are named 'Greater Israel', 'canton state', 'separate states' and 'Palestine'. The basic question concerns which of them is most likely to promote a durable settlement. Four hypotheses based on conflict research are applied as a gauge in the solution assessment. The hypotheses assume that a durable solution is more likely if (1) the parties' subjective conflict definitions are employed in a proposal, (2) if a proposal regulates basic and/or indivisible values, (3) if a proposal is realized at a low military level and (4) if a proposal promotes the realization of Human Rights. Of the solution proposals, the 'Separate states' proposal is most often in accordance with the assumptions of conditions for a durable settlement, and is thus the most promising proposal for a durable solution. 'Greater Israel', which is similar to the official Israeli interpretation of the Camp David Agreement, seems to have the lowest probability as a durable solution in comparison to the three others.

## 1. Introduction

One hundred years ago, Palestine saw the embryo of the current main conflict in the area. It was in the 1880s that Jewish immigration to Palestine became an enterprise not only of purely religious character but also including certain political traits. As a response to this, as well as to the Ottoman rule over the area, Arab nationalism emerged.<sup>1</sup> After World War I, and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, Arab nationalism had to control British and French colonialism as well as Zionism. Today, Zionism and Palestinian nationalism are the two main contending ideologies in the area.<sup>2</sup>

Many peace proposals have been presented to the parties and by the parties themselves. A unique achievement so far is the Camp David Agreement from 1979. Although regulating Egypt-Israeli affairs, it seems unable to solve the Palestinian issue. It is therefore of interest to study some structurally different, and politically relevant, proposals that deal specifically

with the relations between Jews and Palestinians in the former British Mandate of Palestine.

This article deals with conditions for a durable solution of the Palestine conflict. Four hypotheses from conflict research on the conditions for durable conflict resolution are applied to four main types of solutions to the conflict. The aim is not to discuss the feasibility of the different solutions; rather they indicate the complexities of the conflict. Finally, an assessment of the solutions is made.

## 2. Four hypotheses

Conflict resolution can take place at different levels of ambition. A proposal may treat a conflict as 'non-realistic' (Coser 1956) or relegate it to a latent status by means that reduce conflict behaviour or attitudes. However, such approaches disregard the parties' opinion about the basic issue, i.e. the parties' subjective conflict definition (Wiberg 1975). If the parties' subjective definitions are overlooked in a proposal, one may expect the conflict issue to be raised again. A durable solution, therefore, is more likely if the parties' subjective conflict definitions are used as a point of departure instead of being a priori rejected. As a minimum, it is crucial that the parties' positions should not be contradicted. This provides the basis for the first hypothesis:

\* This article is a revised version of a report from the project *Armed Conflicts and Peaceful Conflict Resolution* at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University. For a full report, see Nordquist (1983). An earlier version was presented at the 10th IPRA Conference at Győr, Hungary, 1983. I am indebted to Peter Wallensteen, Håkan Wiberg and Björn Hagelin for valuable comments.

*H 1 A durable conflict solution is more likely if the parties' subjective conflict definitions are employed.*

The second hypothesis is related to the character of the values creating the incompatibility. Values could be material or immaterial, divisible/indivisible, relative/absolute etc. 'Party-constituting' values, here referred to as 'basic', are of particular interest. These are generally different from 'party-characterizing' values, which may be referred to as 'central'.<sup>3</sup> Values that can be handled in a variety of ways offer more alternatives for a durable solution. Likewise, values that are not linked to the existence of one party are more easily negotiated upon. It is therefore reasonable to assume that conflicts over basic and/or indivisible values are more difficult to solve than conflicts over central and/or divisible values. This is most probable with respect to the basic incompatibility found in the conflict and values related to it. The second hypothesis, then, is:

*H 2 A durable conflict solution is more likely if the proposal regulates the distribution of basic and/or indivisible values in a conflict.*

The third hypothesis is based on recent research indicating a positive relationship between arms-racing major powers and escalation of disputes into war (Wallace 1979, 1981). Given the political tension between the parties involved, and the on-going arms race in the area, it seems reasonable to assume that a settlement realized at a low military level probably will last longer than a high military level settlement. The hypothesis is then:

*H 3 A durable conflict solution is more likely if it is realized at a low military level than on a high military level.*

The last hypothesis is the following:

*H 4 A durable conflict solution is more likely if it promotes the realization of basic Human Rights.*

Although empirical research on the connection between realization of basic Human Rights and the outbreak of armed conflict and war is sparse, several authors have proposed that maintaining basic Human Rights reduces tension and thus makes war less probable (see Falk 1980; Eide 1980). The content of Human Rights is variously interpreted within different ideological and religious systems, and this is also the case in the Middle East. The hypothesis may seem to be blurred by this, but it should be understood as a condition valid for each ideology's interpretation of Human Rights within 'its' domain. This does not relativize the concept. Rather, it allows for a certain degree of pluralism in interpretation. Fundamental for the argument, however, is the fact that all human beings share a number of basic material and immaterial needs, needs that are expressed in various ways in different social contexts but nevertheless have to be met. If those needs are not met, there is clearly a danger that structural violence will result in direct violence.

We shall now outline the four main types of solutions, and then, in sections 4 and 5, return to the hypotheses.

### *3. Four main alternative solutions*

A large number of proposals for the solution of the Palestine conflict have been presented over the years by politicians, scholars, the military and diplomats. This is not the place to review them all. Instead, what can be seen as the main types of solutions will be presented. They have been selected with respect to a) focus on the territory of the former British Mandate, and b) the positions of the politically significant parties. The result is a number of alternatives that vary mainly with respect to the degree of centralism within a given territory. For those alternatives that are not pursued by politically significant parties, some illuminating examples of proposals have been chosen. The four main types are:

- (1) *Greater Israel*, which includes proposals for Israeli sovereignty ranging from parts of

the territories occupied in 1967 to the whole Levantine area.

- (2) *Canton state*, meaning a federal type of state, like Switzerland or the United States.
- (3) *Separate states*, to divide the territory and create two separate states, a proposal which has increasing support from Western countries and also some conditional Arab support.
- (4) *Palestine*, a PLO position also embraced by most Arab states, rejecting the arguments for a Jewish state and holding that a secular, democratic state is the only appropriate solution.

These four types present what seems to be the outer ramifications for a feasible solution. They are taken here at face value. The question of how they can serve in a political process — as bargaining chips or comprehensive solutions — is left to further studies.

The examples, under each type of solution, are:

#### *Greater Israel*

- Official Israeli interpretation of Camp David Agreement

#### *Canton state*

- Johan Galtung (1971)

#### *Separate states*

- Avi Plascov (1981), Prince Fahd (1981), President Reagan (1982) and official Egyptian interpretation of Camp David Agreement.

#### *Palestine*

- The PLO provisional program for Palestine (1980).

### 3.1 *Greater Israel*

The idea of an Israeli state encompassing the whole Levantine area has flourished in the Zionist movement since its emergence, and some still consider it an important task for the movement. The former Likud coalition government included right-wing parties with

clear ambitions in this maximalist direction. Political reality, however, such as the costs of war, has turned this position into a distant vision, although it could, in the long run, exert an impact on Israeli politics.

'Peace' and 'security' are key words in Israeli security policy. The Israeli position was presented in the following way by Foreign minister Yitzhak Shamir in 1982:

Peace is fundamental to Israel's way of life, and Israel's determination to achieve it is permanent. Security is a vital guarantee of the viability and maintenance of peace. Together these two objectives provided the conceptual framework that produced the Camp David accords, and the march along this road must continue unabated. A program for continued action to secure regional stability and peace must originate from the countries and governments that will have to implement the peace and live by it. Israel believes that it should include the following elements: 1. Negotiations between Israel and each of its neighbors, aimed at agreement on a just and lasting peace, laid out in formal peace treaties, would provide for the establishment of normal diplomatic, economic and good-neighborly relations. 2. Recognition of the sovereignty and political independence of all existing states in the region, and of their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries, free from threats or acts of force, including terrorist activity of any kind. 3. Autonomy for the Arab inhabitants of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district for a five-year interim period, as set forth in the Camp David accords, and deferment of the final determination of the status of these areas until the end of this transitional period. 4. Restoration of the full independence of Lebanon, through the withdrawal of Syrian and PLO forces from the Lebanese territory. 5. Negotiations, among all the states of the Middle-East, aimed at declaring the region a nuclear-weapons free zone, for the security and well-being of all its inhabitants (1982, p. 811).

These five elements, together with the Israeli interpretation of the Camp David Agreement, constitute the basis for present official Israeli policy. The Israeli Labour Party position is a mini-version of 'Greater Israel', including a settlement-based security belt on a demilitarized West Bank with Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel.

The Camp David Agreement actually 'fits into' the five-point-program above in that it is a treaty between states which recognise each other's sovereignty and independence. The basis

for the agreement is said to be the UN Security Council resolutions 242 from 1967 and 338 from 1973. With respect to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the agreement states that Egypt, Israel, Jordan and representatives of the Palestinian people should participate in negotiations in three stages covering: 1) transitional arrangements for a period not exceeding five years as soon as a self-governing authority has been set up through free elections, including a withdrawal of Israeli military government and civilian administration; 2) negotiations between Egypt, Israel and Jordan (where delegations of Egypt and Jordan may include Palestinians) on the definitions of power and responsibilities of the self-governing authority and withdrawal of Israeli armed forces into specified security locations; 3) after not more than three years of the transition period, negotiations between the three governments and elected representatives of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza to determine the final status of these areas.

The Camp David Agreement gives the Palestinians the right to participate in the determination of their future through negotiations on the final status of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, a provision for self-government and participation in the work of the committee negotiating a peace treaty between Israel and Jordan.

The Agreement also defines the principles for peace treaties between Israel and neighbouring states. These principles include full recognition, abolition of economic boycotts, and guarantees for the protection of the due process of law for the other parties' citizens. One major issue, the question of Jerusalem, is not, however included in the Camp David framework.

The Israeli interpretation of the Camp David Accords includes annexation of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. East Jerusalem was annexed in 1967 and proclaimed undivided capital of Israel in 1981. Within this framework, Israel has launched a 'unification programme' aiming at strengthening Jewish presence in the Eastern parts. The annexation was based on ideological reasons

— history, religion and culture of the Jews converge on Jerusalem. The Golan Heights annexation, on the other hand, was motivated by military objectives.

The content of 'autonomy' in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is not decided upon in the Camp David Accords. On one important point, Prime Minister Begin stated before the Knesset in 1979: '... "full autonomy to the West Bank and Gaza District". This is not stated in the Camp David agreement. It states "full autonomy to the inhabitants." And these are two different worlds' (Medzini 1981, p. 671).

### 3.2 *Canton state*

The idea of creating cantons that protect certain values has been part of the Swiss history for 700 years. Many federal states of today are more or less 'cantonal'. Johan Galtung suggested his idea of a canton solution to the Middle East conflict in 1971. Its point of departure is that the optimal solution — a pluralistic, undivided democratic state — is not possible for the time being. In order to come as close as possible to this, Galtung designs an interim solution that without great problems could be changed into the optimal solution. He did not specify any borders but argues that a canton state should encompass an area as large as possible, and for this reason he discusses an inclusion of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan into a canton solution (Galtung 1971, p. 112ff).

A canton solution is 'singularistic', which means that within each canton one should delimit full citizenship to those with certain ethnic and/or religious characteristics. Jews would be first class citizens in Jewish cantons as would Palestinians in Palestinian cantons. A multitude of cantons also makes it possible to create cantons for groups within the Jewish and Palestinian communities. Jerusalem could be a federal, common territory or a mixed canton. Certain restrictions on economic penetration between the cantons would be necessary although basically associative relations is a prerequisite. The same goes for social and economic relations within the state as well as with neighbouring countries. The

totality of Jewish cantons could name themselves Israel and the totality of Palestinian could call themselves Palestine. Israel and Palestine would elect representatives for the common authorities. Certain rules blocking domination attempts would probably be necessary.

Galtung does not discuss Jerusalem in his study. The canton solution, however, is a federal solution. An example of possibilities is given by Daniel J. Elazar (1980). He presents some types of 'local government of heterogeneous populations', such as city-county arrangements, an application of the county concept on an urban, densely populated area and federated municipalities, which are borough systems or a federation of existing municipalities (Elazar 1980, pp. 208ff).

### 3.3 *Separate states*

#### 3.3.1 *The Plascov proposal*

Plascov proposes in an elaborate plan (1981) a 'phased move towards a fully-fledged Palestinian state with most of the characteristics of sovereignty but with certain treaty restrictions regarding its security and political orientations' (p. 22). This state should consist of the West Bank and Gaza strip as 'defined by the pre-1967 borders'. Plascov foresees certain border adjustments and also claims that Israel must remain in control of strategic points on the West Bank. In return, the Palestinian state could be offered limited areas west of the 1967 border in Israel.

Plascov argues that it is necessary to leave Jerusalem fully open. East Jerusalem would be the capital of both states. A formula for this could be that '(t)he Arab part could gain a legal status similar to that applied to the Vatican' (p. 24). Before the Egypt-Israeli Peace Treaty in 1979, there were speculations whether Egypt would grant an eventual Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza a part of eastern Sinai (Davis 1974). Today, proposals for separate states or a new Palestinian state deal only with the 1922 Mandate area.

Plascov proposes that the Jerusalem question be solved so that Jerusalem can be declared capital of the respective states. He discusses

some federal solutions and an eventual re-division of the city so as to clarify the situation. And he argues that 'there is room for some trading of land as a gesture of sincerity' (Plascov 1981, p. 24). Another solution discussed is the creation of an 'overarching municipality with a rotating mayorship' where the religious aspects of the city are stressed. 'Jerusalem's status could then resemble that of Mecca and Medina. Neither of these cities are Saudi-Arabia's capital but they are revered as holy. Nablus could then serve as the Palestinian capital' (Plascov 1981, p. 24). This idea suggests that only the Palestinians should refrain from Jerusalem as capital. If Israel also agreed to do this, it could more easily become a basis for an agreement. A possibility also considered is that both parties could have symbolic governmental bodies in each part of the city, so that they could declare the city 'capital'.

#### 3.3.2 *The Fahd plan*

Another two-state solution was outlined by Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia in October 1981. His plan assumes Israeli evacuation of all Arab territories seized during the 1967 Middle East War, dismantling the settlements set up by Israel on the occupied territories, guaranteeing freedom of religious practices for all religions at the Jerusalem holy shrines, asserting the rights of the Palestinian people and compensating those Palestinians who do not wish to return to their homeland, commencing a transitional period in the West Bank and Gaza under UN supervision, setting up a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, affirming the right of all countries of the region to live in peace and guaranteeing the implementation of these principles by the United Nations or some of its member states (The New York Times October 31, 1981).

#### 3.3.3 *The Reagan plan*

A variation of this theme was put forward by President Reagan in 1982. The President reaffirmed the Camp David Agreement as the foundation of US policy in the region. He called upon Israel to make clear that security

can only be reached through genuine peace. The Palestinians as well as the Arab states should, on their part, accept the reality of Israel and recognize Israel's right to a secure future. A five-year transition period was outlined in Reagan's proposal, beginning after free elections for a self-governing Palestinian authority. During a second period a created Palestinian self-government on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip would be in association with Jordan. Jerusalem should remain undivided, and its final status should be decided upon through negotiations.

### 3.3.4 *Camp David — Egypt's interpretation*

The official Egyptian view has been that the Camp David Agreement defines the 'final status' of the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a two-state solution (Persson 1980, p. 156). In his speech before the Knesset in 1977, President Sadat said that an element in Egypt's peace plan is 'the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and their rights to self-determination including the right to establish their own state' (Boutros-Ghali 1982).

### 3.4 *Palestine*

A fourth solution, put forward by the PLO and a vast majority of the Arab states, and also supported by many Third World countries, is to create a democratic, non-sectarian and progressive state in a completely liberated Palestine. These concepts cover the views held by the major PLO organizations, The Palestinian National Liberation Movement (Al-Fateh), The Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP) and The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) (Kadi 1969, p. 103ff, 168ff, 223ff).

Before the October War in 1973, discussions about alternatives to a solution of the Palestine conflict, other than a liberation of the whole of Palestine, were considered as counter-productive to the Palestinian cause by the PLO. Certainly, the PLO goal is still to liberate Palestine, but in order to reach this, some provisional arrangements, such as a West Bank state, are regarded as worthy of consideration.

Although an 'armed struggle is the only way

to liberate Palestine' according to article 8 in the Palestine National Charter, diplomatic means have gradually become part of PLO strategy. This has strengthened the PLO position among Western countries. In 1980, the PLO outlined a five-point provisional programme for Palestine in a diplomatic 'offensive' to European countries. Although the programme has not been adopted by the Palestinian National Council, it could be considered a valid example of a peace process acceptable to the PLO, provided that a number of other circumstances make such a process possible at all. The five points can be summarized as follows: (1) reaffirmation of the principle that no one has the right to annex areas by force, (2) Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, (3) keeping the areas under UN control for a period of six to twelve months, during which period the Palestinians exercise their right to self-determination, (4) establishment of a Palestinian state and (5) an international conference under UN auspices between the Super-Powers, European states and concerned parties in the Middle East conflict. The provisional character is underlined by a remark that the PLO retains its right to reunite the whole of Palestine. This could, however, be combined with co-existence with the State of Israel; a situation comparable to that between the two German states, where the Federal Republic of Germany in its constitution expresses a wish for reunification of the German states (Le Monde, May 10, 1980).

If this solution is implemented, the question of Jerusalem may not constitute a problem. At least, not to any extent comparable with the other proposals.

In Table I, the four proposals are summarized with respect to basic values and incompatibilities in the conflict.

### 4. *Conflict interpretation*

We shall now discuss the conflict with respect to hypotheses 1 and 2. The hypotheses dealt with the parties' subjective conflict definitions (H1) and the character of the disputed values (H2) respectively.

Table I. Summary of Four Main Types of Solution With Respect to Conflict Issues in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.

Conflict Issue	Type of Solution			
	Greater Israel	Canton state	Separate states	Palestine
Citizenship/ social control	Jews: full access to all rights; Palestinians: autonomy in the West bank and the Gaza Strip	Self-determination within each canton joint internal security duties	Self-determination within each state; Israel remains a Jewish state	No second class citizenship; a non-sectarian state
Territory: — area	1922 British Mandate plus Golan Heights	1922 British Mandate	Pre-1967 Israel and the West Bank (incl. the Gaza Strip) respectively	1922 British Mandate
— sovereignty	Israeli sovereignty	Full sovereignty. Joint external security duties	Full for respective unit	Palestinian sovereignty
Jerusalem:	Undivided capital of Israel	Federal area, open to both parties	Capital for both states; federal arrangements probable	Undivided capital of Palestine

Two interpretations of the Palestine conflict dominate the literature: the *national liberation* and *imperialist colonialist* ones.<sup>4</sup> The first uses terminology applicable to both the Zionist and Palestinian nationalist case, and it is the Zionist interpretation. The second makes sense only from a Palestinian point of view and is often combined with a nationalistic perspective where the struggle is seen as a way of combating imperialist domination. The Palestinians regard the Zionist activities in Palestine as a type of colonialism, based on European imperialist tradition.

#### 4.1 The national liberation interpretation

At first glance, there is a striking symmetry between the parties' interpretation of the conflict: they consider themselves as 'a national liberation movement' and deny the other party any claim to be a 'national movement'. Both claim historic rights to Palestine, notably the territory of the British Mandate of 1922, and both aim to create 'democratic and progressive' states. Finally, both movements claim to represent a dispersed people — the Jews having lived in Diaspora for 2000 years, the Palestinians increasingly expelled from Palestine as a result

of Jewish colonization during the last hundred years. A minority of Palestinians now live in the core area. Among the many asymmetries, the most conspicuous one is that Zionism seems closer to achieving its main goal, a Jewish state. A number of others will be discussed in the following.

##### 4.1.1 A Zionist perspective

Both the traditional Western view and the Zionist view regard the creation of the State of Israel as the fulfillment of a liberation process based on nationhood of a people exposed to suffering, saved from near-extinction. It is seen as a unique experience, and the creation of the State of Israel is considered the more admirable since it is seen as a democratic oasis among authoritarian and hostile Arab regimes, if not 'the advance post of civilization' — as Theodor Herzl put it. Many Christians in the West also see the State of Israel as 'a sign to the peoples', a fulfilment of Biblical prophecies.<sup>5</sup> The Zionist author, Marie Syrkin, gives this summary of arguments:

But whether you read Ben Gurion or Weizmann, the statements of Balfour and Churchill, or those of



lesser officials entrusted with carrying out the policy of the Balfour Declaration, the reasoning is simple:

1. The persecuted, homeless Jewish people has longed for restored national independence in Zion for centuries.
2. This Zion is a 'tiny notch' ... in territories liberated by the Allies from the Turks.
3. This 'notch' has been fructified and brought to life by the labor of Jewish pioneers. No Arabs are displaced by this process; on the contrary, the Arab population keeps increasing dramatically as the result of Jewish development of the country.
4. Arab nationalism, which has no fixation on Palestine, is being amply satisfied through the establishment of many independent Arab states. Since the Arabs have received 99% of the liberated land and the Jews less than 1%, this is 'equity'. The compromise redressed an immense wrong at little substantive cost to any other groups (Syrkin 1975).

The concept of 'nation' generally has a territorial dimension. Realizing the goals of a national movement thus requires territory. The question for the Zionist movement was how this should be obtained. For the Palestinians it became a matter of gaining control over the area they inhabited. For the young Zionist movement it was not self-evident where and how to build a national home or state. Apart from the chosen solution, there was also serious discussion of settlement in a non-populated area. A third possible solution was to settle in political co-operation with the local population. It was not obvious for Theodor Herzl that Palestine should be the area where his dream of a 'Judenstaat' should be realized, but it was nevertheless brought into the discussion very early. The first Basel Congress of 1897 advocated the establishment of a Jewish 'national home' in Palestine, although it did not clearly express a claim for a 'state' (Persson 1980, p. 10).

Herzl was not a practising Jew. The Biblical Land of Promise was not a key element in this nationalism. It was anti-semitism growing in Europe, in spite of declared state support of Jewish assimilation into the nation states, that moved him. When the Land of Promise was brought into the discussion, Herzl realized the importance of Palestine as a call for all Jews, but he also seriously considered, for instance, Uganda, then under British protection. Before his death in 1904 he declared in favour of

Palestine — a relief for the rank-and-file within the Zionist movement.

#### 4.1.2 *A Palestinian perspective*

Palestinians also interpret the conflict in terms of national liberation. The Palestinian national movement appeared as a result of the struggle against a new entity in the Arab world: the State of Israel. This struggle has developed in the context of traditional Islamic concepts of loyalty, and its methods for fighting Israel, and the Western nation-state concept.

In Islam, contrary to Western thinking, there is a unity between politics and religion. This is most clearly expressed by the concept 'umma', the Islamic community, a superstructure forged by Islam as a religion. However, the expansion of Islam did not only develop loyalties to the Caliph but also to the homeland ('watan'), which is close to patriotism and territoriality, and to the family/tribe ('qaum') which has ethnocultural connotations (Joffé 1982). These three types of loyalties within the Islamic community correspond in some respect to elements in the Western concept of 'nation'. When ideas from European nationalism were brought to the Muslim world — from the time of Napoleon's invasion of Egypt — they were mostly seen as resembling the ideas of 'watan' and 'quam'.

The period of Palestinian resistance can be divided into three main phases:

*The Resistance phase*, from 1920 to 1948, was dominated by actions by Arab Palestinians against the Zionists; a 'quam-based' resistance, founded by notables and without any mass adherence.

*The intermediate phase*, from 1948 to 1967, was dominated by actions from the Arab states and Israel. The struggle against Israel was a Pan-Arab duty, if not for the whole 'umma'. The Six Day War 1967 ended this intermediate phase and made the Palestinians realize the necessity of self-reliance.

*The insurgent phase*, from 1967 and onwards, is marked by the rise of conscious organization of military as well as non-military resistance through the PLO. The Pan-Arabic motive is reduced and the territory of Palestine, and the

cultural affiliations to it, are stressed (Jureidini & Hazen 1976).

Religiously, the Palestinians are divided into Muslims and Christians. Although the latter are a minority, they have been influential; Christian Palestinian leaders helped to develop the nationalist ideas within the resistance movement. Clan loyalty, 'quam', is still very important in structuring the Palestine and Arab societies. For Palestinian resistance, however, 'watan', the loyalty to the homeland, becomes more and more relevant as an Islamic concept legitimizing the struggle for what, in principle, is a very non-Islamic goal: a state with an Islamic majority which does not wish to be included within the Dar-al-Islam, Pax Islamica.

#### *4.2 The imperialist colonialist interpretation*

The Zionist movement used European imperialism as an ideological leverage in pursuit of its own aspirations: without the support from Britain, and other Great Powers, it is difficult to see how the state formation process could have proceeded as quickly as it did, not to forget the financial support from Jews in the United States. Israel is a result of Great Power imperialism. In connection with this, its colonialist character is obvious, since Jewish immigration aimed at setting up a new society. This argument is frequently found in Palestinian rhetoric, where it forms the basis for the nationalistic argument (see Khalidi 1971; Rasheed 1970).

There are, however, some differences between traditional colonialism and the settlement of Jews in Palestine. Colonialism could be defined as 'a rule over an alien people that is separate from and subordinate to the ruling power' (International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, vol. 3-4, p. 1). In the traditional colonialist case, everything was done for the sake of increasing the wealth and power of the home country. Inhabitants of the colonized area were but a side-effect of the colonialistic effort as a whole; the Jewish settlement in Palestine was different. In the Zionist movement it was a key issue that the gathering of the Jews should result in an overall development

of the country. The Jews were not agents for a competing power but aimed to establish a long-term settlement in Palestine, including Jewish land-holding and labour. Maxime Rodinson (1973) appropriately calls this 'settler-colonialism'.

The purely imperialist interpretation has to face the question of Super-Power involvement. A crucial question is whether the Palestinian conflict is likely to be resolved without the Super-Powers. Would there be such changes on the West Bank, in Gaza, and within the territory of pre-1967 Israel that a solution would be facilitated? The answer is obviously no. There are still severe incompatibilities between the parties. The Super-Powers are obviously influential and may even have more influence on the course of some events than the parties themselves. But yet they do not constitute the basic incompatibility. It seems that an interpretation of the conflict solely in terms of imperialism or colonialism underestimates the importance of nationalism within the groups involved. The imperialist perspective has to be linked to a national liberation interpretation.

#### *4.3 Arguments for the right to the territory of Palestine*

##### *4.3.1 Zionist arguments*

Among those referring to history the most important arguments are:

- Ancestors of the Jews once controlled Jerusalem and surrounding areas.
- Only the Jews have ever had an independent nation in the area (under King David and King Solomon).
- There have always been some Jews living in the area.
- The Jews have kept alive a cultural attachment to the area.
- Palestine, or 'Eretz Yisrael', is similar to the Land of Promise, God's promised land to the chosen people.

The most important arguments with reference to the contemporary Jewish settlement are:

- Jewish settlement in Palestine was based on peaceful purchase of land via the only

- available authorities, the Turkish Sultan and later the British mandatory officers.
- A resort for the Jews after the Holocaust could only be provided in Palestine, whereas the Arabs have vast areas which are open to the Palestinians.
  - The state of Israel was legally founded through a UN General Assembly Resolution in 1947.
  - The Jews offered to live in a shared or partitioned state in 1947, but the Arabs refused.
  - The economical and industrial development of the area has created a right for Jews to be established there.
  - The superior technological and financial resources of the Jews give them a right to develop the area in the interest of all peoples in the region (Search For Peace, p. 11 f).

#### 4.3.2 *Palestinian arguments*

The Palestinian response to the Zionists is largely of the same type as the Zionist argument:

- The Arabs have lived and used Palestinian soil during the last 1300 years.
- There are no racial or other properties of the Jews that could support their claim to the land from the promise to Abraham and 'his seed' — the Arabs are his seed as much as the Jews.
- During the various occupations of Palestine throughout history Palestinians have participated in the local administration at various levels.
- The British promised during World War I to assist the Arabs in their attempts at achieving national independence. The promise was broken after the war in favour of British imperialism and Zionism.
- The Jewish immigration, especially from Europe, has threatened the basic cultural character of the area.
- Zionism is a manifestation of Western imperialism.
- The Israeli policy of settlements means a quiet expulsion of Palestinians from their land. This is a violation of Human Rights: every people has a right to remain on land

they have held as their own (Search For Peace, p. 12 f).

4.4 *Nationhood and nationalism — A key issue*  
*The International Encyclopedia of The Social Sciences* defines a 'nation' as 'a group whose members place loyalty to the group as a whole over any conflicting loyalties'. What constitutes the group, then, is a mixture of some common basic 'social properties' such as history, culture, religion, language and affiliation to a limited geographical area (IESS, vol. 11-12, p. 7).

According to this definition, a significant group of Jews in Israel of today is a nation. They share religion, language, history and culture, and they do so in relation to a certain geographical area.

The Palestinians also fit the IESS definition of a nation. They share history, culture and language and are affiliated to a limited area. Palestine, being at one of the largest cross-roads in history, has a majority of Muslims but with a significant Christian minority. Any standard defining Jews in Israel as a nation gives the same result when applied to the Palestinians. Their connections — basically religiously motivated — with a transnational Arab and Islamic culture cannot disguise the fact that the Palestinians share a number of social characteristics which in a European context would be considered as constituting a nation.

The Palestine area has been discussed as a potential national home in the Zionist movement since its beginning. The existence of an indigenous Arab population outnumbering the Jewish was constantly overlooked, even if single voices, both Zionist and Jewish non-Zionist, sometimes raised the issue (Rodinson 1973, p. 55).

A Jewish source, the Zionist leader Arthur Ruppin, estimated the population in Palestine in 1880 to have roughly 35,000 Jews, which was 7% of the total population. In 1910 the figure was about 86,000, or 14.3%. About 2% of the area, or about 3-4% of arable land, was owned by Jews in 1910 (Persson 1980, p. 10). In 1946 the Jews numbered about 608,000 or 33% of total population (Persson 1980,

p. 40).<sup>6</sup> Mainly as a result of Great Power ambivalence before Arab and Zionist demands, various statements from commissions and governments from 1880 to 1948 raised the question of the ‘legitimate rights of the Palestinian Arabs’. Even the Balfour declaration of 1917 states that ‘nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine’. The declaration does not mention political rights for the non-Jewish population in Palestine.<sup>7</sup> The non-Jewish communities represented 92% of the population by that time (Cattan 1973, p. 51f).

The Zionist arrivals brought a new factor into the relations between Palestinians and Jews in Palestine. Their ambition to create a society ‘secured by public law’, as the 1897 Basel Programme presents the formula, was a definite threat to the interests of the Palestinians. The Jews they had learnt to live with formed a spiritual community in the Holy Land and did not have the political ambitions of the Zionist movement. Palestinian nationalism arose as a response to Zionism as well as to Great Power interests, whether Ottoman, British or French. And like the Zionists, the Palestinians were determined to establish self-rule over the area.

Today, both parties want to establish independent states. Both movements are — still — in a state formation process. Even in the case of Israel this process can hardly be regarded as finished. The main argument for this view is that there is no agreement over its borders, with the exception of the Peace Treaty with Egypt in 1979. Although Israel is recognized by many states, and is a member of the UN, its many wars with surrounding states indicate that the state formation process is not yet completed.

Both the Zionist and Palestinian arguments over the disputed area may well be historically correct. It is worth noting that they are not incompatible with each other. This is, however, not the key issue. Instead, it is the relevance of these arguments. Historic connections, Great Power — or divine — promises and great sufferings — how and when do they justify a demand for state formation?

When it comes to conflict resolution, one should bear in mind that even a well-founded and just goal may not automatically become the best basis for a durable settlement. What is crucial is rather the ability of a goal to ‘interact’ with competing goals. In the Palestine conflict, the justification of goals tends to dominate over the search for compatible goals.

We might *summarize* the discussion relevant for hypothesis 1 — which pointed at the parties’ conflict definition — by saying that the Palestine conflict is a conflict between two national movements, Zionism and Palestinian nationalism. Both movements are involved in a state formation process which basically concerns the territory of the former 1922 British Mandate of Palestine. Although neither party recognizes its counter-part as a legitimate carrier of national interests both the Jews in Israel today and Palestinians form a ‘nation’ according to an IESS definition. They share within each other a number of basic ‘social properties’, mixed in different ways.

Hypothesis 2 calls for the regulation of basic values. For both parties such a value is ‘sovereignty’ over the national territory.

In the Jewish case this means a Jewish state based on Zionism while Palestinian nationalism claims to establish a democratic and non-sectarian state. Sovereignty, as defined by the parties, is not a divisible value, but the territory in contest might be so. The size of the territory has changed over time: the Palestinians have always claimed the Mandate area, although a significant group may today accept a mini-state, and the Israelis accepted a partition in 1947, although today they claim some version of a ‘Greater Israel’.

### 5. *Peace proposals, security, and Human Rights*

In this final part we shall discuss the proposals in the light of the two remaining hypotheses, H3 and H4, which dealt with the military level and realization of basic Human Rights respectively.

#### 5.1 *Military level*

With regard to the military aspect we can, of

course, only estimate a probable development. 'Greater Israel' challenges all claims from the Palestinian national movement. There are signs in the development since 1948 that point to the possibility of a settlement of the 'refugee problem', as Israel puts it, if a 'Camp David-type' of autonomy is established on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In such a case, the PLO or parts of it would certainly arm and so would the surrounding states. A vicious circle of armament, hostile attitudes and new conflict behaviour will certainly emerge.

'Separate states' could be implemented either at a high military level, with dissociation between the parties on many levels of the society, or a low level based on arms agreements included in the peace treaty that has to be agreed upon. Plascov, for instance, discusses arms limitations only upon a new Palestinian state and not similar Israeli restraints (p. 27ff). A realization on a high level, however, seems to be the most probable. A significant reduction of Israel's military capacity is improbable — recent historic experience does not support unilateral arms reductions, notwithstanding the economic arguments.

'Canton state' requires some type of associative security arrangement, most easily realized at a low military level. It is reasonable to consider a detente in the area as part and parcel of the implementation of a canton solution.

'Palestine' is probably a comparably low-level solution since it requires Arab world acceptance. If there is a Jewish minority of considerable size there will probably be much effort directed to internal security matters.

## 5.2 *Citizenship and human rights*

### 5.2.1 *'Palestine' and 'Greater Israel'*

The extreme proposals, 'Greater Israel' and 'Palestine', both propose unification within roughly the same territory. Also in political rhetoric they resemble each other — both are called 'democratic' and 'progressive'.

The Israeli view is that the PLO wants to 'annihilate the State of Israel' (Medzini 1981, p. 547). This view is often referred to as based

on article 15 in the Palestine National Charter, which speaks of the 'elimination of Zionism in Palestine'. When commenting on this, the PLO has argued that it does not mean a physical destruction of present Israel but rather a transition process similar to the change of Rhodesia into Zimbabwe (PLO makes clear its policy, 1979, p. 13). There is some further argument about PLO's position here. Article 6 in the PNC of 1968 states that Jews 'who had normally resided in Palestine until the beginning of the Zionist invasion will be considered Palestinians' (PNC 1968, article 6). The question is when the Zionist invasion began. Zionists consider 1983 as 'the centennial of Aliya and settlement in Eretz Israel' (Lewinsky 1983, p. 6). In any case, the Jews would be a minority in the Palestinian state although they would constitute a significant group. Probably their share would diminish as a result of immigration of Palestinians and a probable increased emigration of Jews.

A unified state would meet serious economic problems and social tension due to the enormous need for investment within the West Bank and Gaza. At the same time, the educational process necessary for a closer relationship between the two communities would not be finished. Generations would be needed to reduce enemy images and objectifying attitudes.

The 'Greater Israel' position leads to a continuation of the present development, including Israeli reluctance to both annexation (for demographical reasons) and self-determination. The Israeli view is that the Camp David Agreement has to be implemented. This means 'autonomy' and not 'independence' for the inhabitants in the occupied territories. Unless the resistance disappears — a most improbable prospect — we will also see a continuation of violent conflict behaviour.

### 5.2.2 *'Canton state' and 'Separate states'*

In both alternatives, questions of citizenship are decided upon within the respective unit. However, the main idea behind creating them is that a certain degree of singularism might be accepted since this is an indivisible value held by at least one of the parties, Israel.

Table II. Hypotheses of Durable Conflict Resolution Applied to Four Types of Solutions of the Palestine Conflict

<i>Hypotheses</i>	<i>Type of Solution</i>			
	Greater Israel	Canton states	Separate states	Palestine
H1 — subjective definitions employed?	No recognition of the Palestinians as a national entity	The parties' national claims employed in the proposal	The Parties' national claims employed in the proposal	No recognition of the Jews as a national entity
H2 — the solution regulates basic or indivisible values?	One party's demands met (Zionism): a Jewish state; disregarding Palestinian demands	Sovereignty for both parties but limited to intracantonal affairs; federalization	Sovereignty for both parties; division of claimed territories	Sovereignty over claimed territory; disregarding Zionist demands
H3 — solution realized on a low military level?	High level probable due to continuing Palestinian resistance	Low level probable due to the character of the solution	High level probable due to improbable Israeli military reduction	Low level probable due to Arab support of the solution
H4 — the solution promotes Human Rights?	Restraints on Palestinian population	May be realized within each canton	May be realized within each state	Treatment of 'post-Zionist invasion' Jews unclear

Therefore, it is necessary that both solutions are implemented in a way that minimizes the minority problem.

### 6. *Evaluation of proposals*

We shall now compare and evaluate the four proposals by relating them to the four hypotheses. Table II summarizes the discussion and relates it to H1 — H4.

'Canton state' and 'Separate states' are the only proposals that use the parties' subjective conflict definitions (H1). These proposals are also the only ones that satisfy the second hypothesis' demand for a regulation of basic values of the parties (H2). However 'Palestine' should take care of the Jewish claims with the exception of the creation of a 'Jewish entity/state'. The question of the military role after an agreement (H3) is seldom discussed by the extreme proposals and cannot — as we have seen — be explicitly answered. However, it seems reasonable to assume that the most associative type of solution — the 'Canton state' solution — is closest to the comparably lowest military level.

The promotion of Human Rights (H4) is provided for in the 'Canton' and 'Separate states' proposals while it is clear that 'Greater

Israel' does not satisfy this demand. 'Palestine' is not clear in this respect. It is a proposal that is under development in the political process of every day politics.

In terms of prospects for a durable settlement the 'Canton state' and 'Separate states' proposals are the most promising. The choice between them can be made by stressing the fact that the 'Separate state' solution satisfies all basic values except with respect to the territory issue (which is the key variable in the compromise). A 'Canton state' solution means compromising on these values, although its perspective is congruent with that of the parties. A settlement of the Palestine conflict according to a 'Separate state' solution seems, from the perspective of the four hypotheses applied, to offer the highest possibility of satisfying the parties and to do so in a conflict-reducing way.

## NOTES

1. 'Jew' is not a racial concept, nor is it congruent with 'a believer in Judaism'. Israel claims to be a 'Jewish state'; what this means depends, of course, on the definition of a 'Jew'. This has been discussed at length in the Israeli Parliament, Knesset. From 1970, those having a mother of Jewish faith are automatically registered as a 'Jew'. Also, an adult adopting Jewish faith may become a 'Jew'. In Israel today, citizens are registered according to three criteria: citizenship (Israeli), nationality (Jewish, Arabic, British, French etc.) and religion (Jewish, Christian, etc.).  
 'Arab' is also not a racial concept. The main common trait of Arabs is the language, but also to a large extent history and religion (Persson 1980, ch. 1).
2. Originally, the British Mandate of Palestine included areas both east and west of River Jordan. In 1921 the area east of the Jordan River became Transjordan, under Emir Abdullah. Jewish immigration was prohibited into this area. In 1922 the League of Nations approved the British Mandate of Palestine (West of Jordan) and the Balfour Declaration was included in the text of approval. It is this area which is focused in this study and referred to as 'the Mandate'.
3. Parties joining a conflict confront each others' value hierarchies. It is the mixture of rank and attributes of the values in these hierarchies that provides the fundament for a conflict solution. A 'party-constituting' value among states is, for instance, 'sovereignty', while 'peace' at best is 'party-characterizing'.
4. Another interpretation would be to regard the conflict as basically a class conflict or a conflict between religions.
5. An argument for Christians who claim that the State of Israel is an example of the fulfillment of Biblical prophecies is, for instance, to say that the words of Jesus: 'and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled' (Luk 21:24) are realized, especially after the Six Day War in 1967, when Israel got access to the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem Old City. A contesting Christian view holds that this way of interpreting the Bible is only possible through a mixture of the meanings of the word 'Israel' in the Bible. In the Old Testament 'Israel' stands for the people who was liberated from Egypt led by Moses, the 'Israelites'. In the New Testament, 'Israel' means those who believe in Christ, whether a Jew or not.
6. Persson is citing UNSCOP estimations based on Supplement to Survey of Palestine, Notes compiled for the Information of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, Government of Palestine, Jerusalem 1947.
7. The Balfour Declaration also speaks about the 'political status' of Jews in other areas than

Palestine. The expression 'civil rights', which in the declaration is used for the non-Jewish communities in Palestine', thus does not include political rights.

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