

## THE PARTITION OF PALESTINE

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A single word, *partition*, captures the essence of diplomatic efforts -- now approaching the century mark -- aimed at resolving the historic Arab-Jewish struggle for mastery over geographic Palestine. This strategy of dividing fiercely-contested territory, commonly referred to in today's diplomatic idiom as the "two-state" solution, or "territorial compromise," finds its earliest expression during the 1920-48 period of the British Mandate but reached its peak in the pro-partition resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on November 29, 1947.

Notwithstanding partition's checkered past, there is no better prism for filtering the massive amounts of material on the subject of Palestine. So, too, is the basic two-state theme at the center of the clash of narratives between Israelis and Palestinians and their respective Jewish and Arab supporters, as well as in actual negotiations. Regarding the Israeli polity and its quest for peace and security, the present national debate follows the same lines of political argument for and against trading territory in return for real or imagined peace as took place following the call for partitioning Palestine in the late 1930's and again in 1947.

**United Nations Resolution 181 (1947)**

With no prospect for Arab-Jewish agreement in sight, late in 1946 Foreign Secretary Ernst Bevin summarized Britain's options: imposing a settlement; adopting partition; surrendering the Mandate.<sup>1</sup> By 1947, only the latter alternative remained; and on April 2, 1947, in a final confession of failure, Great Britain officially referred the Palestine question to the United Nations.

This chapter -- the most extensively documented of all the experiments with partition -- began with the appointment of a United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) at a special General Assembly session in April-May 1947, which submitted its report on August 31 in which the majority endorsed dividing Palestine. Following a heated General Assembly debate the *Plan of Partition with Economic Union*, was adopted on November 29 in an historic vote: 33 in favor, 13 opposed, 10 abstentions. "A/RES/181(II)" called for replacing the British Mandate for Palestine with independent Arab and Jewish States and a "Special International Regime for the City of Jerusalem." (**MAP 1**)

Strong links connect the UNSCOP majority recommendation to a lesser cited initiative undertaken ten years earlier, in 1937, by a British Royal Commission under the chairmanship of Lord Peel.<sup>2</sup> Besides drawing extensively from the earlier *Report's* clinical analysis of the Palestine problem, now made more acute with the passing of a decade, the

1947 version accepts many of its original premises (irreconcilable Arab-Jewish differences, granting independence at the earliest practicable date, etc.) while borrowing heavily from the *Peel Report* in putting forth its own rationale for again urging partition as the most “realistic and practicable” option.

Attempting to draft a convincing, workable scheme for dividing Palestine, the UNSCOP planners, and the map they drew, sought to improve upon the Peel partition design. In addition to mapping different boundaries and assignments of territory, Jerusalem’s special holy status called for declaring the city a *corpus separatum* and placing it under a special international regime to be administered by the United Nations. Unlike the Peel version of partition, the UN plan provided for economic union between the designated states rather than absolute separation, thus acknowledging the dictates of geography, such as Arab-Jewish proximity and settlement patterns as well as Palestine’s deficiency in natural resources.

The Peel Plan had the disadvantage of being sponsored by a single state actor, Great Britain, raising suspicions about the ulterior motives of an imperialist Great Power. By contrast, in 1947, the international community as a whole for the first time took primary responsibility for Palestine’s future. Also, without Cold War precedent, the U.S. and USSR concurred, with both voting in favor of partition. Following

General Assembly passage of Resolution 181, partition-for-Palestine thus received a broad moral and political mandate, achieving an unprecedented level of international legitimacy.

The international momentum for partition did not, however, bridge the Arab-Jewish divide. While the Zionist attitude toward partition in 1937 had been ambivalent, leaders of the movement, such as Dr. Chaim Weizmann and David Ben-Gurion, converted to enthusiasts and lobbied strenuously on behalf of the UN partition proposal. In striking contrast, the Palestinians under the disciplined leadership of Haj Amin al-Husayni, and supported by a bloc of Arab and Islamic countries, held steadfastly to their anti-partition stance of 1937 and categorically rejected Resolution 181.

In this sense, dividing Palestine only further added to the already-existing Arab-Jewish divide. Four decades would pass before another spokesman, Palestinian Liberation Organization chairman Yasser Arafat, could be pressed into publicly consenting to the principle of two states when, in 1988, he declared:

"The United Nations bears an historic, extraordinary responsibility toward our people and their rights. More than 40 years ago, the United Nations, in its Resolution 181, decided on the establishment of two states in Palestine, one Palestinian Arab and the other Jewish. Despite the historic wrong that was

done to our people, it is our view today that the said resolution continues to meet the requirements of international legitimacy which guarantee the Palestinian Arab people's right to sovereignty and national independence."<sup>3</sup>

In 1947, however, the lack of any UN enforcement mechanism for giving immediate effect to its own decision, combined with determined Arab opposition, rendered the United Nations' partition plan of action inoperative. By early 1948, the situation in Palestine deteriorated into armed conflict and open civil war, exacerbated by the political vacuum created by Britain's phased withdrawal. In the end, Palestine was territorially divided, but with the lines of partition determined by the force of arms rather than meticulous mapmaking, and without international sanction.

### **The UN Partition Struggle in Perspective**

Mention the 1947 chapter in Palestine's troubled history and attention invariably shifts to the drama centering on the General Assembly session of 29 November, where intense behind-the-scenes maneuvering preceded the actual roll-call vote of the 48 member delegations in attendance.<sup>4</sup> The literature on this single episode easily fills an entire library shelf, tracing exactly what transpired in those final tense days as the Arab-Jewish rivalry reached a climax.

Pieced together, this historical narrative showcases ceaseless efforts by representatives of the Jewish Agency for Palestine in laboring to guarantee the necessary majority endorsement of partition and Jewish statehood. Closely related sub-themes include:

- The uncertain position of the United States as it wavered between pressing home on partition and possible half-way measures such as temporary trusteeship for Palestine, exposing serious bureaucratic friction within the Truman Administration, and between the White House and its representation in New York.
- Lobbying by prominent American Jews and other Zionist sympathizers, who, through their understanding of the American political system and personal connections, sought to secure the crucial vote of the United States.
- The strong affirmative support for Jewish statehood under partition surprisingly demonstrated by Soviet Russia, which constituted a major departure from its consistently anti-Zionist ideology.
- So, too, is there the Palestinian and Arab "take" on 1947, expressing condemnation for the illegality of the partition vote and explaining away their inability to prevent passage of the UN resolution as owing to underhanded Western imperialist and

Jewish Zionist machinations while ignoring the extensive lobbying efforts of Arab states and their supporters. <sup>5</sup>[

- Reflecting this preoccupation with the political and diplomatic dimensions of the UN partition initiative, two important aspects remain relatively unexplored. The first involves analyzing the substantive, problematic side of partition when applied to physical, geographic Palestine. The second sees considerable value in reviewing the controversial history and politics of Palestine partition to better understand why peace through the two-state framework still remains so elusive.

Rather than a separate, isolated event, the 1947 episode needs to be placed, historically, within a larger dual perspective. Accordingly, this essay looks at how the basic concept of a two-state partition has evolved over time, both *before* and *since* 1947.

### **The Origins of the Two-State Solution**

On July 7, 1937, His Majesty's Government in London released a public statement of intent toward its mandate over Palestine.<sup>6</sup> Noting the existence of an "irreconcilable conflict" between Arab and Jewish aspirations led them to conclude that the only logical and fair way of avoiding future bloody conflict was to carry out "a scheme of partition." The dramatic policy departure then proceeded to spell out the advantages.

Arabs of Palestine would obtain national independence and be able to enjoy equal status with the neighboring Arab countries while "delivered from all fear of Jewish domination" and the anxiety "lest their Holy Places should ever come under Jewish control." By the same token, partition would "secure the Jewish National Home," converting it into "a Jewish State with full control over immigration" while relieving it from any dread of being subjected to Arab rule, so that "The Jews would at last cease to live a "minority life" and acquire "a status similar to that enjoyed by the nationals of other countries," thereby attaining "the primary objective of Zionism." Above all, the British Cabinet expressed confidence that through partition "fear and suspicion would be replaced by a sense of confidence and security," bestowing upon both peoples "the inestimable boon of peace."

Official endorsement of partition in 1937 by the British Government was itself prompted by the harsh findings and unanticipated recommendation of a prestigious Palestine Royal Commission chaired by Lord Peel and charged in August 1936 with ascertaining the "underlying causes" for new and unprecedented disturbances in Palestine, and empowered to recommend ways for preventing their recurrence.

Given the subsequent tragic, bloody chronology of Palestinian affairs, and the "boon of peace" still denied the two resident communities,



this document, buried in the mountainous archives on the “one long war” in the Middle East, is worthy of note for its misplaced optimism. This notwithstanding, the 1937 partition plan is the rightful reference point for any serious discussion of what makes the eminently rational solution of two coexisting states so difficult to achieve. Moreover, then as now, demographics, geography, economics, historical memory, religion and nationalism worked to complicate the Palestine equation. The point here is that this proto-experiment with partition in 1937 holds the key to understanding why its realization has eluded a succession of would-be peacemakers from Count Folke Bernadotte and Dr. Ralph Bunche through Gunnar Jarring and Henry Kissinger, the architects of the 1993 Oslo accords and every American president from Harry S. Truman to Barack Obama. By their shared sense of frustration they bear personal and collective witness to the profound insight volunteered already in 1938 by Britain’s then Secretary of State for the Colonies, Malcolm MacDonald, who observed ruefully: “There is nothing so easy as to state the problem in Palestine,” whereas “Its complexities make it the supreme test of our capacity to govern” -- or to end the seemingly endless Israeli-Arab conflict.

### **Palestine Downsized**

The history of the partition/two-state theme shows eight if not nine widely different variations, depending upon whether events in 1921-2

qualify for inclusion or not. Briefly, in March 1921, then-Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill held an impromptu meeting in Jerusalem to ask Amir Abdullah ibn Hussein to contain tribal unrest for a period of six months.

This hastily improvised administrative arrangement has in the longer term proven to be of profound territorial, strategic and geopolitical consequence: by limiting the Jewish national home enterprise west of the Jordan River; by compressing the space awardable to the two claimants in the event of a territorial compromise; and by opening the way for yet a third contender, Jordan. (**MAP 2**) What was meant to be an interim stopgap measure assumed a dynamic of its own until "Transjordania," formally part of the original League of Nations mandate for "Palestine," gained full sovereignty in 1946 as the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Churchill's ad hoc decision effectively excluded Transjordan from Jewish settlement, arbitrarily and artificially detaching the East Bank from the West Bank (**MAP 3**) by converting the Jordan River from an internal body of water to a line demarcating two distinct entities. So that by the time partition emerged as a serious option in 1937, a large swath of territory had already been effectively removed from possible inclusion. In this way the "pie" -- the partitionable areas designated for sharing -- reduced itself to the "small notch" of territory between the

Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. Moreover, installing Abdullah in Amman had the effect of "triangulating" Palestine, inserting still a third aspirant for possession of the contested West Bank, and a substitute for the Palestinians as a partner-in-partition with Israel.

These transformations of the Palestine equation -- territorial and political -- play a part in subsequent partition-based initiatives.

### **The Peel Precedent and Logic of Partition**

Undiminished by time, the 404-page Peel Commission *Report*,<sup>7</sup> its findings and recommendations are required reading for anyone presently concerned or directly involved in the Palestine question. It provides the definitive analysis of what lies at the core of the Israeli-Arab dispute. It represents a rare instance of a conceptual breakthrough in the long chronology of attempted conflict resolution, in addition to drawing the first detailed and comprehensive roadmap for how to settle it. Peel is also the template for territorial compromise, offering the most thoughtful case yet made for the logic of partition. Besides, the royal commission's *Report* is the most concrete and detailed blueprint ever drafted, at least until Camp David II in 2000, for apportioning the disputed land into distinct Arab and Jewish geopolitical entities. From its 1937 beginnings, the strategy of splitting historical-geographic "Palestine" has always been championed not as the ideal solution; simply the least bad.

Observations by the Peel commissioners in 1937 based upon their close investigation of the objective situation in Palestine and of relations between resident Arabs and Jews not only help in tracing their intellectual progress at the time toward adopting partition but echo across the intervening decades. Three direct quotes from the Report in particular resonate: "no other problem of our time is rooted so deeply in the past" ... "a conflict of right with right" ... relations between the two communities mirror "so wide a gulf" and "one so difficult to bridge." It is this social, cultural, ethnic and economic estrangement which drove the commission, in turn, to abandon previously tabled solutions predicated upon Arab-Jewish integration into a single bi-national Palestinian entity as "palliatives" that at best "might reduce the inflammation and bring down the temperature, but ... cannot cure the trouble." Despite their close physical proximity, rather than drawing closer, the two peoples were drifting further apart. This, in 1937!

Each side demanded independence and was judged worthy. Each claimed sole right to Palestine, yet neither was willing or able to "set aside their national hopes or fears and sink their differences in the common service of Palestine," making administering the country's affairs under the terms of the British mandate impossible. Arabs and

Jews of Palestine, in short, were fit to govern themselves, but not together.

Hence, the commission's operative recommendations:

- Being unworkable, under the force of circumstances the mandate should be terminated.
- "There is little moral value in maintaining the political unity of Palestine at the cost of perpetual hatred, strife and bloodshed," just as "there is little moral injury in drawing a political line through Palestine if peace and goodwill between the people on either side of it can thereby in the long run be attained."
- "The only hope of a cure lies in a surgical operation," with partition the instrument best suited for offering "a middle path" and "at least a chance" of ultimate peace.
- "If Palestine *ought* to be divided, it *can* be divided."

Having thus rationalized so drastic a step as bisecting the land, the Peel panelists submitted their own map and scheme of partition, replacing the mandate with separate Arab and Jewish States and a British enclave reinforced through a system of treaties, mutual guarantees, financial subsidies, land exchange and population transfers. **(MAP 4)**

### **Partition: The First Experiment and Missed Opportunity**

With adoption of the Peel plan now official British policy, partition's initial prospects appeared favorable. Yet history records 1937 as the first and possibly greatest missed, or *dismissed*, opportunity for averting the looming crisis and collision in Palestine. Knowing why *that* effort failed helps to grasp all subsequent attempts a two- state solution.

### **An Uncompromising Spirit**

As the wording itself implies, territorial compromise -- another name for "*partition*" -- is premised on a basic predisposition to *compromise*. The expectation in 1937 was that the parties would accept the idea that "half a loaf of bread is better than none." While the concept seemed eminently reasonable, many Jews were reluctant to share, and most Palestinians and other Arabs believed the entire loaf was theirs. The Zionist mainstream endorsed the Peel principle, but only reluctantly and as a matter of momentary necessity, whereas the Palestinian leadership categorically rejected it out of hand. As late as February 1939, with partition already a dead issue, Prime Minister Chamberlain's praise for the virtues of compromise -- "It is the task of statesmanship when faced by what may appear to be a deadlock between two peoples to achieve a compromise on the basis of justice"<sup>8</sup> -- went unheeded.

At no time since 1937 have both protagonists marched in step, pledging themselves, simultaneously, to make the painful territorial and boundary concessions necessary for the “fifty per cent solution”<sup>9</sup> of agreed partition to work, and for the protracted dispute finally to reach what specialists on conflict term “ripeness.”

This conspicuous absence of a common negotiating stance on “splitting the difference” has, in turn, always been a reflection of estrangement inside Palestine proper. Indeed, it was precisely the nonexistence of Arab-Zionist / Palestinian-Israeli common ground which led the Peel commission to their proposal of partition, and which still remains the most compelling, most persistent argument in its favor.

### **Too Much Togetherness**

The combination of geography and demography likewise works to partition’s disadvantage. In terms of population dispersal, Arabs and Jews physically live next to each other even as they segregate into two inner-directed, self-contained societies, with competing loyalties and with separate economic, cultural and educational systems. And in a country the small size of geographic Palestine the mix of people was already telling in 1937; even more so after 1948 and since 1967.

If by the 1930s Palestine’s ethnic composition defied any neat division, the passing of time has made sketching clear lines of disengagement that much less feasible. Arabs constitute nearly twenty percent of

Israel's population; the number of Israeli Jews living in the West Bank and east Jerusalem claimed by the Palestinians for their designated state is estimated at well over half-a-million. Now as then the issue has been not only *whether* to draw a line of partition but *where* to draw the line.

With Jaffa-Tel-Aviv in mind, and Haifa evenly divided with 50,000 Jews and 48,000 Arabs, the Peel Commission conceded no frontier could be devised for separating Arabs and Arab-owned land from Jews and Jewish-owned land. Nevertheless, the imprecise borders they did outline became the center of controversy. Arabs and Zionists, and their allies among the British public, press and parliament, took turns condemning the proposed boundaries as both *too* generous and *too* constricting.

The Peel Plan called for the exchange of land (in today's parlance, "swaps") and transfer of populations which depended, as must every aspect of territorial compromise, upon Arab-Jewish consent and cooperation. As Lord Peel, chairman of the commission, himself confessed, "We were not in love with partition ... but we were driven to it by the force of facts."<sup>10</sup>

Subjected to close public scrutiny, the plan's imperfections came to light in the course of the 1937 debate, causing initial enthusiasm for dividing the country to fade. Reporting from Jerusalem, the American



consul confessed that whereas he had originally concurred with the Peel findings, on practical grounds he now felt that the situation had so deteriorated "as to render the principle of Partition impracticable of application."<sup>11</sup> Similarly, in explaining his refusal to support the partition initiative Winston Churchill rightfully argued: "the principle cannot be judged fairly apart from the details by which it is expressed."<sup>12</sup>

### **Principled Palestinian Opposition**

Unlike Churchill, and in direct contrast to their Zionist rivals, to British newspaper editorialists and to the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations who expressed reservations about the particulars of partition, spokesmen for the Palestinian national movement condemned the concept itself. In one of the first official responses to Peel, a Palestinian memorandum dated July 23, 1937, pronounced the partition scheme "one of the greatest catastrophes that could befall the Arab race in territories revered both as fatherland and as holy shrine."<sup>13</sup> For added emphasis, it further derided partition as "illogical, humiliating, impracticable and fraught with danger."

Showing consistency and an awareness of the negative connotation of Arab equivalents for partition, "*taqsim*" or "*tajzi'a*," implying fragmentation, a follow-up position paper drafted a decade later equated the very thought of dividing Palestine with "dismemberment

and mutilation of a living body.”<sup>14</sup> For most Palestinian nationalists this would be enough in itself to render partition anathema, irrespective of shape or form. The interplay of additional factors only further colors negative Arab attitudes: modern Arab history, which blames partitioning of the Ottoman Empire and of “greater Syria” by the European powers in 1919-20 for crushing Arab political aspirations and the dream of Arab unity; denial of the Zionist claimant’s legitimacy and opposition to awarding any territory to Jews; distrust of the outside partition broker’s motives.

Not that this latter apprehensiveness was far from the truth. According to the Peel provisions “the overriding necessity” of maintaining sanctity of holy places in Jerusalem and Bethlehem inviolate meant excluding them from either Arab or Jewish control and giving them separate status under British administration as a sacred trust of civilization. Furthermore, protection of the religious sites would require an enclave comprising the two holy cities and a wide band of territory surrounding the railroad to Jaffa and providing direct access to the Mediterranean. In addition to which the new British “presence” would cover -- for a period of unspecified duration -- Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee; an enclave on the northwest coast of the Gulf of Aqaba; plus the four “mixed” Arab-Jewish towns of Tiberias, Safad, Acre and Haifa.

Palestinian rejectionists attacked the false premise of parity, which implied that Palestine involved a clash of two equally valid claims. To them, partition was not "a middle solution" but a pro-Jewish one, conceding the essence of Jewish claims,<sup>15</sup> and for this reason alone could never be acceptable.

Consistent with this studied rejection of both Zionism and partition, the Palestinian counterproposal insisted that the right of the Arabs to complete independence in Palestine be recognized. To which four further demands ("four No's")<sup>16</sup> were appended: no Jewish National Home experiment, no Jewish immigration, no land purchases, no British mandate. As part of efforts at impressing these claims upon policymakers in London two days after publication of the Royal Commission's recommendations, the Arab Higher Committee sent an appeal for support and advice to Arab and Muslim leaders throughout the world. The subsequent steady inflow of reports reaching the Foreign Office which told of mounting hostility to partition in the Arab countries -- with the notable exception of Transjordan's King Abdullah, who quietly favored its adoption -- had the desired effect.

Only one month after the Cabinet's pro-partition decision, officials in Whitehall were led to conclude that "a policy of this kind could only be carried through at the risk of a general conflagration in the Near East."<sup>17</sup> This diplomatic phase of intervention by the neighboring

countries in Palestinian affairs in 1937-9, leading to “regionalization” of the Palestine problem and, in 1948, to Arab military intervention, has not only made Palestinian fortunes hostage to inter-Arab politics but has also enabled various Arab actors to play the role of “spoilers,” even at such times when Palestinian moderates might have been willing to entertain the possibility of the two-state solution.

### **Too Many Directly Concerned Parties**

The 1937 map of partition attached to the *Report* and still widely reprinted and circulated as authoritative nevertheless contains a glaring inaccuracy. As Arab critics were quick to grasp, it does graphically confirm the determination of British strategists to be indirect beneficiaries of the new policy by retaining a sizeable presence even after formally relinquishing the mandate. As Colonial Secretary Ormsby-Gore openly stated, “... if partition is to be fair, practical and successful, it should be tripartite.”<sup>18</sup>

On the other hand, the map does not follow the text with respect to one of its principal and most controversial recommendations (MAP). The authors of the Peel plan did intend for two political entities to emerge; but assigned the Arab portions to neighboring Trans-Jordan.<sup>19</sup> By expressly not placing areas designated for Arab independence under Palestinian rule, this provision by itself sufficiently offended Palestinians as to guarantee their opposition to the plan as a whole.

Likewise, the royal commission's recall of suggestions put to them that "the solution of the Palestine problem was to be found by bringing Trans-Jordan into the picture"<sup>20</sup> represents possibly the earliest conceptualization of a "Trans-Jordanian option" for peacemaking. Reframed and popularized after 1950 as the "Jordanian option," this peace strategy reached its apogee in the wording of the 1982 Reagan Plan, wherein the United States called for self-government by the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza "in association with Jordan." Linking the West Bank and the East Bank of the Jordan River by the Peel *Report* would also figure meaningfully in the slow evolution of a tacit and unwritten alliance between Zionist leaders and the Hashemite dynasty. The broad intent of this understanding was obvious: political exclusion of the Palestinians, regarded by both parties as antagonistic, while installing Israel and Jordan as successors to the British, and sole co-partitioners of Palestine.

Had the Peel Commission's prescription for territory and compromise been accepted in principle on *both* sides -- by the Palestinians and not only by the Zionists -- and had it been acted upon "swift and clean" by Britain, the Palestinians could have spared themselves the entire *Naqba* chronology of humiliation, loss and dispersion. The same holds true for 1947. They might then have secured the independence and

statehood status which continue to elude them three-quarters of a century later.

### **Yesterday's Rejected Idea, Tomorrow's Accepted Plan**

From a larger historical perspective, and with the benefit of hindsight, the cause of peacefully dividing and sharing Palestine has never recovered from its initial setback. On the other hand, the 1937 base line underscores partition's remarkable staying power. Those commentators at the time who, like the co-authors of a 1938 analysis of the Peel misadventure, were led to conclude "The idea of partition is dead,"<sup>21</sup> were themselves dead wrong.

As a Middle East peace formula, however imperfect, partition's robustness and longevity are altogether surprising. One reason might be that all the other options -- the "one-state" solution (binationalism, autonomy, federation) -- are no more attractive. The other reason could be its compelling logic, for the notion of territorial compromise comes closest to satisfying the hopes of enthusiasts for a "just and lasting peace."

Whatever the explanation, partition, re-branded as the more pleasant-sounding "two-state" solution, still appears on every short list of peace constructs. From the United Nations partition scheme (1947) to the Clinton parameters (2000) to President George W. Bush's "Performance-Based Roadmap to a Permanent Two-State Solution to

the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict” (2003), every one of the serious peace proposals ever put on the negotiating table is in effect a variation or refinement on the theme of partition initially aired toward the end of the British mandate: in 1937 and, again, in 1947. Each of the later proposals deals with the same core issues (borders, minorities, security, *etc.*) first addressed in 1937; each essentially repeats the arguments for and against partition raised at the time; each confronts the same basic stumbling blocks defying any “clean cut” or “fair share” political division. Needless to say, the intervening 75 and more years have done nothing to make drawing a dividing line any easier.

### **Seven Variations on a Theme**

As presented here, disentangling historic Palestine’s resident ethno-national communities by repositioning them behind separate, sovereign borders has been a recurrent peace strategy for preventing and, since 1948, ending the Israeli-Arab conflict. Aside from 1921, 1937 and 1947, there have been at least seven concerted attempts at reapportioning the country in line with the two-state formula. Arranged chronologically, these stepping stones are: 1943-6, 1948-50, 1950-67, 1967-88, 1993-95, 2000, 2002 to the present.

### **Back to Partition (1943-6)**

With victory over the Axis Powers still uncertain, on July 12, 1943, the War Cabinet in London charged a Ministerial Committee on Palestine

with the task of considering a "long term policy for Palestine." With its report on December 20, the Morrison Committee gave new life to the formula of "two states" by confessing it could see no alternative but to fall back upon partition -- the very principle His Majesty's Government had pronounced "impracticable"<sup>23</sup> on the eve of the war -- and which the Cabinet now formally endorsed as official policy, for a second time in seven years, on January 25, 1944. Among the converts: Prime Minister Churchill, himself one of the most vocal critics of the earlier Peel initiative, who now confided: "Some form of partition is the only solution."<sup>24</sup>

Going a step further toward giving effect to the policy, on October 16, 1944, the Ministerial Committee in its revised, final report<sup>25</sup> concluded, inter alia: a policy based on partition offers "the best and possibly the only final solution" of the Palestine problem; and that on the twin grounds of "equity and finality" a scheme of partition, "based upon that recommended by the Peel Commission" but "varying from it in certain respects" is "practicable" and "should be adopted." In a clear slap on the wrist of the previous Government for its mishandling of the 1937 initiative, Morrison and his fellow committee members sought to stiffen the resolve of the War Cabinet, insisting: "Should His Majesty's Government take the decisive step of proposing partition to the Arabs and Jews, we do not think that that policy should again be



abandoned." On the contrary; "Partition should be carried through, whatever the opposition." The cut, this time, would have to be "swift and clean." Once again, however, the two-state policy lost its forward momentum at a decisive moment. Led by the Foreign Office, out of greater sensitivity for Arab opinion, the Cabinet refused to go through with the proposed partition, and the plan was struck from the agenda until the war's end.

The narrative resumes in July 1946 with the report of an Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry. Called the Morrison-Grady Plan after its co-chairmen, the report did suggest a division of Palestine -- but into semi-autonomous Arab and Jewish cantons, with Britain retaining control over immigration, customs, defense and foreign relations. Not surprisingly, falling far short of minimal Arab and Jewish demands for full independence, the non-partition plan was promptly rejected by both sides, thus setting the stage for the 1947 aborted UN experiment in partitioning Palestine discussed above, and which led to open Arab-Jewish warfare.

### ***Force Majeure* -- De Facto Partition (1948-50)**

The aftermath of the 1948 fighting proclaimed a new reality. Once the fog of battle cleared, Palestine's partition became patently evident, giving tangible expression to the principle of territorial compromise: *de facto* if not *de jure*; on the ground if not on paper; by force if not by

mutual consent. This new reality manifested itself in a number of dramatic ways which would have far-reaching consequences, starting with a transformed map of what had previously been "Palestine."

**(MAP 5)**

"Palestine" no longer existed except as an "imagined community" in the minds of Palestinian Arabs. Second, taking its place as co-partitionists were: the emergent Jewish State of Israel and, in fulfillment of Abdullah's longstanding aspiration, Transjordan, by virtue of having militarily occupied those portions of Palestine designated for Arab independence under the UN partition plan.<sup>26</sup> Third, the areas under Israeli control expanded by as much as one-third to include the entire Galilee, Jaffa, Haifa and the entire Negev. Fourth, in defiance of the UN call for internationalization of Jerusalem, Abdullah solidified his hold over the eastern half, including the historic Old City and its holy places, with Israel possessing the western part of the city, in effect leaving Jerusalem a divided city. Fifth, the new boundaries emerged under the force of arms. They essentially reflected troop dispositions at the moment the fighting ceased, and hence were artificial, illogical, insecure, and assumed to be temporary. Nevertheless, shortly thereafter Israel's improvised borders – with Egypt, Lebanon and Syria as well as Transjordan -- achieved a greater degree of permanency

through the series of bilateral armistice agreements signed with Israel in February-July 1949.

### **"Palestine" Under Israeli-Jordanian Rule (1950-67)**

As principal beneficiaries of the new geopolitical order, Israel and Transjordan had a shared priority in stabilizing the situation. Thrust together in the wake of Palestine's decomposition, what may have begun as an armed truce dictated by necessity evolved almost imperceptibly into a complex relationship unique in the annals of modern diplomacy. While hardly qualifying as normalization, and variously depicted as "collusion across the Jordan," "the best of enemies," an "adversarial relationship," or a "tacit security regime," an entangling web of sensitivities and understandings presaged by their 1937 pro-partition alignment bound together Hashemites and Israelis in a united front committed to erasing any traces of Palestinian identity, withstanding the wave of Arab revolution, warding off pan-Arabism and preventing Soviet encroachment. The two small, insecure, neighboring countries -- one a democratic republic, the other a traditional monarchy -- increasingly came to appreciate their parallel and even matching interests in preserving the favorable yet tenuous status quo during the 1950s and 1960s.

Mutual acceptance of the armistice ("green lines") boundaries was borne out by Israel's studied silence in the face of Abdullah's unilateral

incorporation of the Transjordanian-occupied West Bank in 1950, with the eastern and western banks of the Jordan River reconstituted as the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Abdullah's intervention and defiant land grab was interpreted as consistent with the wish for a two-state end to the Palestine problem, and thus came to be accepted as a fait accompli. Except for a younger generation of Palestinians committed to forcibly rendering Israeli-Jordanian condominium null and void.

The new order stemming from Palestine's partition did not pass without acrimony and crises. The period 1950-67 is marked by border infiltrations and cross-border reprisals, and by the litany of allegations and counter-accusations duly registered with the UN by Israel and Jordan, each charging the other with violations of the armistice accords. Nevertheless, the two countries did succeed in weathering these storms through the better part of two turbulent decades.

### **the Jordanian Option (1967-88)**

Israel's sweeping victory in the 1967 War altered the regional balance of power and dramatically changed the political map. (**MAP 6**) Jordan, in particular, made a historic error, restoring the conflict between Arabs and Zionists to an intercommunal land dispute between Israelis and Palestinians. Ignoring Israeli warnings to stay out of the war, King Hussein attacked Jerusalem in a moment of impulse or compulsion that forfeited the hard-won legacy bequeathed him by his grandfather,

Abdullah, and resulted in Jordan losing possession of east Jerusalem and custodianship of the Temple Mount as well as the entire West Bank.

This being the Middle East, however, surface appearances proved deceptive. Israel and Jordan may have been co-belligerents but nonetheless still remained neighboring co-partitionists of historic Palestine. So that even his defection from the unwritten code of conduct did not disqualify the Hashemites in Israeli eyes from repossessing the West Bank, thereby relieving Israel of the unsought responsibility for governing an "occupied" Palestinian populace within a "liberated" West Bank corresponding to biblical "Judea and Samaria."

This, Israel's existential dilemma after 1967, plus what was perceived in Jerusalem circles as Hussein's deeply felt need to redeem himself by regaining the lost territorial legacy, came to serve as the foundations for what came to be known as the "Jordanian option" pursued for the next decade by the successive Labor coalition governments of Prime Ministers Eshkol, Meir and Rabin.

For Israel, the "Jordanian option" was appealing because it could remove the burden of controlling the West Bank and its tens of thousands of Palestinians. It was also advantageous to King Hussein, who even more than Israel dreaded a recrudescence of Palestinian consciousness and nationalism, most of all an irredentist Palestinian

state on the West Bank positioned to threaten the survival and integrity of the monarchy itself and to compete for the loyalty of its majority Palestinian population. The King signaled he would be prepared to make a deal to regain the captured territory if Jerusalem offered him honorable settlement terms, as expressed for example in the Allon Plan (**MAP 7**). Israel hoped that such a deal might give Hussein the courage to break with Arab solidarity and to commit to a genuine peace.

In contrast to this dominant interpretation of the “Jordanian option” -- a blend of idealism and realism – a dimmer view of the option’s prospects prevailed in the years 1977-92 when power transferred to Likud coalitions led by Prime Ministers Begin and Yitzhak Shamir. Skeptical regarding King Hussein’s potential as a peace partner and far less predisposed ideologically to part with any of what Jewish nationals saw as “Integral [Greater is usually term used. THAT MAY VERY WELL BE, YET IT IS AN INACCURATE TRANSLATION OF THE HEBREW TERM, “*ERETZ YISRAEL HASHLAYMA*”] Israel,” the option was not dismissed but reinterpreted. Israel continued to see a vital security interest in Jordan’s survival and internal stability, although with lowered political expectations. In this context, the series of three stunning diplomatic breakthroughs in the wider regional Arab-Israel conflict registered in 1977-9 -- the Sadat-Begin initiative, Camp David and the Egypt-Israel

peace treaty -- contributed to downgrading Jordan's diplomatic importance. With the Arab world in disarray and Egypt giving its formal consent to an [autonomous](#) self-governing authority in the [West Bank](#) and [Gaza strip](#) satisfying the "legitimate rights of the Palestinian people," Israeli leaders thought themselves relieved of the threat of a Palestinian state as well as the necessity for making major territorial concessions.

Prospects for a lasting Israeli-Jordanian two-state arrangement were shaken in December 1987 by the sudden outbreak of local Palestinian armed resistance to Israel's presence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This *Intifada* brought home to Israelis the new reality of a Palestinian political resurgence that went considerably beyond sporadic acts of airplane hijackings and indiscriminate terrorism. Across the Jordan, alert to the specter of Palestinian militancy and its potential for destabilizing his kingdom, Hussein drew his own conclusions from the uprising and Israel's disappointing inability to contain or suppress it. In July 1988, he publicly relinquished his dynasty's residual claim to represent the Palestinian cause, returning responsibility for determining their own fate to the Palestinian people and their leaders. He followed this by announcing severance of all legal and administrative ties with the West Bank, except for Jordanian funding and protection of the Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem. The "Jordanian

option,” the central pillar of Israeli policy and of international peacemaking, for all intents and purposes had exhausted itself.

### **Oslo: the Palestinian Option (1993-5)**

Two years later, an electrifying breakthrough was achieved following a series of low-level, unofficial, furtive discussions between Israeli and PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization) emissaries in Oslo, Norway. The two bitter foes managed to find enough common ground to draft a Declaration of Principles signed by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on the White House lawn on September 13, 1993. Suddenly, hope emerged that the seemingly intractable conflict might yet be resolved.

Zionist and Arab Palestinian representatives agreed to “recognize their mutual legitimate and political rights, and strive to live in peaceful coexistence and mutual dignity and security and achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement and historic reconciliation” through an agreed political framework that came to be known as the Oslo process. The Declaration of Principles set out a goal of establishing a Palestinian Interim Self-Government Authority for the Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, for a transitional period not exceeding five years, leading to a permanent settlement based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.



The promise of Oslo, however, did not match the reality on the ground. Though Israel withdrew from most of the Gaza Strip and a portion of the West Bank, and a Palestinian Authority was created to give Palestinians greater control over their affairs, the process broke down by the end of the decade. Among the many explanations: the DOP's ambiguity, one or both parties still not fully reconciled to the need for compromise, bad faith on the part of both sides in not meeting their commitments, allowing the timetable of interim phases to become open-ended, Yitzhak Rabin's assassination and an unremitting campaign of Palestinian terror. Whatever the causes, stalemate in the bilateral negotiating track prompted yet another trilateral initiative orchestrated by the United States.

### **Camp David II (2000)**

This sixth post-1947 variation of the two-state theme, centering on the Israeli-U.S.-Palestinian summit held at Camp David on July 11-24, 2000, qualifies as the most serious negotiation over a two-state blueprint to have taken place since 1947.

What made convening the conference so auspicious, in the first instance, were the very circumstances prompting it. Both protagonists were feeling the effects of the stalemate. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak was the leading enthusiast, pressing hard to reach an agreement that would end the conflict rather than continuing to work

toward a phased solution. Barak offered a number of concessions on such outstanding issues as Jerusalem and resettlement of the Palestinian refugees backed by President Bill Clinton.

Barak offered to withdraw from 97 percent of the West Bank, 100 percent of the Gaza Strip, dismantle most settlements, and make unprecedented compromises on Jerusalem. In exchange for annexing a small part of the West Bank where most Jewish settlers resided, Israel agreed to swap land in Israel. Arafat rejected the deal. In fact, he never made a counteroffer, leaving top advisers to later regret the failure to accept a deal that may have been less than the Palestinians' maximal demands, but would have created a Palestinian state.

### **The Bush Vision, the Quartet and the Roadmap (2002 ----)**

Succeeding Clinton, George W. Bush was reluctant to get involved in Middle East peacemaking, seeing little chance of success and not wanting to squander his political capital on a losing issue. The escalation of violence forced his hand, however, as concerned allies joined members of the Administration in pressing for the U. S. to use its influence in trying to halt the conflict. On June 24, 2002, Bush expressed support for a Palestinian state while also calling for democratic reforms and Arafat's replacement.<sup>28</sup> The American initiative gained momentum when the United Nations, the European Union and

Russia joined the U.S. in forming a "Quartet" dedicated to converting the abstract vision of peace into an actual roadmap.

On April 30, 2003, the Quartet issued "a performance-based and goal-driven roadmap" leading to "a permanent two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict," with specified phases, timelines and benchmarks "aiming at progress through reciprocal steps by the two parties in the political, security, economic, humanitarian, and institution-building fields" under the Quartet's auspices.

The Roadmap's timeline of peace by 2005 was never realistic. Almost immediately, both sides began to violate the terms of the agreement. Another wave of terrorist attacks launched against civilian Israelis provoked an Israeli military response, so that by mid-June 2003 the security situation had deteriorated so badly that even the default option of "talking while shooting" lost all credibility. By the following July, President Bush himself conceded the unlikelihood of meeting the 2005 target date. The entire thrust of Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking shifted subtly from conflict *resolution* to conflict *management*.

### **Back to Square One**

Numerous efforts have been made since the abandonment of the Roadmap to reinvigorate the negotiating process. The main thrust of these efforts lies essentially in further refining, repackaging and then promoting what a recent study terms "the two-state imperative."<sup>29</sup> In

2005, Israel took a unilateral step toward ending the conflict by withdrawing all Jewish residents and soldiers from the Gaza Strip, shrinking the central territorial dimension of the conflict to the contested West Bank.

The hope was that the Palestinians might see this as an opportunity to begin the process of building a state. Were the Palestinians to keep the peace in Gaza, Israelis could feel more confident in making deep withdrawals from the West Bank. The opposite occurred, however, as Palestinian terrorists began to launch thousands of rockets and mortars into southern Israel and Israelis, for their part, lost enthusiasm for territorial compromise, fearing that any withdrawal from the West Bank might lead to a similar outcome, positioning terrorists within rocket range of Israel's spiritual, demographic and industrial heartland.

A brief return to negotiations occurred in 2008-2009 when Prime Minister Ehud Olmert held a series of meetings with Arafat's successor, Mahmoud Abbas. Ultimately, no agreements were reached and talks came to an end when Olmert stepped down as prime minister in April 2009. President Barack Obama tried once again to resurrect the peace process, but a series of diplomatic errors by his administration led both Israelis and Palestinians to question his judgment. In particular, Obama called for Israel to freeze settlement construction, which Abbas

seized upon, making it the prerequisite for any return to negotiations. Even after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu agreed to a 10-month freeze (excluding Jerusalem, which Abbas had insisted be part of the freeze), Abbas refused to talk. By the end of Obama's first term the Palestinians had adopted a strategy of bypassing direct negotiations while seeking international recognition of a Palestinian state -- essentially imposing partition upon Israel on Palestinian terms.

### **Partition and Palestine: Lessons and Insights**

What are we to make of the many faces of partition?

- The general notion of partitioning (or repartitioning) Palestine offers a singularly useful organizing concept by which students of the dispute can systematically trace the ongoing search over time for a peaceful exit strategy. From a scholarly and analytical standpoint this invariably involves comparing partition's strong points and shortcomings against all other compromise peace constructs, such as autonomy, bi-nationalism, federation, confederation, or for that matter a "zero-sum" outcome ending in either exclusive Arab or Jewish rule over undivided Palestine.
- Beginning with the conceptual breakthrough made by the Palestine Royal (Peel) Commission in calling for a surgical "clean cut" already in 1937, nothing so definitively highlights divergent Israeli and Arab/Palestinian approaches to conflict resolution as

their core attitudes and instinctive responses to offers of a two-state partition. That Zionist leaders endorsed the proposal, however hesitantly, as early as the late 1930s while the Palestinian Arab leadership categorically rejected it marks arguably the most strategic crossroads in the evolution of their intercommunal dispute; a fateful parting of the ways.

- The Peel Commission's Report on what ails Palestine, and the subsequent debate over the merits versus the flaws in partitionism are a dress rehearsal for the 1947 UN historic vote and every peace effort thereafter. Many of the core arguments both pro and con regarding (a) the wisdom and (b) the practicality of separate Arab and Jewish homelands heard in 1937-8 and again in 1947 are echoed in today's quest for a Middle East peace.

The cumulative experience with partition -- under the force of arms or by consent -- certainly showcases dividing Palestine's extraordinary capacity for generating divisiveness: whether among scholars, commentators, and peace processors; between Israeli, Palestinian and Arab world protagonists; or between Israeli territorial compromisers and territorial maximalists.

The Palestine problem and the Israeli-Arab conflict it has spawned attest to politics trumping logic. The concept of agreed, symmetrical

partition (“the fifty-percent solution”) may encode both the wisdom and the justice of compromise; but time and again these values have taken flight before uncompromising positions. Uncompromising positions made unshakable through the marshalling of historical memory, religious faith and emotional nationalism.

Second, it merits emphasizing that the *sine qua non* for any territorial repartition must be a mutual willingness to part with exclusive territorial claims. Leaders in both respective camps [THIS IS NOT ACCURATE – NOR IS THIS INACCURATE! THE CRITERION IS NOT MAJORITY/MINORITY, IF THE MAJORITY IS SILENT, PASSIVE OR OF A MIXED MIND, WHILE A DETERMINED MINORITY MAY WELL EXERCISE A VETO POWER< ESPECIALLY UNDER THE EXISTING POLITICAL SYSTEM AND RULING for COALITION } The most telling question is, as it always has been, not “Are you peace?” but “What price are you prepared to pay for peace?”

Third, there is little if any real enthusiasm for partition to be found in any quarter, especially not after its record of failures. Rather, partition is posed as an imperative, as the lesser evil, as dictated by circumstances, but certainly not as a panacea. Israeli and Palestinian leaders even at the best of times give only grudging and conditional consent to the general notion of two states, invariably accompanied by a long list of clarifications and qualifications and preconditions. And as

the record of aborted peace efforts can confirm, the devil, so to speak is in the qualifiers as much as in the missing spirit of compromise.

Fourth, the simplistic model of a clear-cut or "hard" partition is impossible. As others have noted, "economic interdependence, geographic imperatives and demographic intersections rule out hermetic separation."<sup>30</sup> There are simply too many points of Arab-Jewish contact [examples perhaps?] for any surgical partition or ink-line borders to even come close to undoing the thick ties that entangle; those demographic ties binding Arab and Jew to the land, and to each other.

Fifth, using the roadmap metaphor, the pathways to exiting the Palestine maze are narrow, remarkably few in number, and extremely hazardous. So, too, every one of those pathways has come to a dead end -- an ongoing peace process which turns in circles while constantly pivoting on the axis of partition: the territorial compromise model *versus* anti-partition paradigms.

If the 1993 Oslo Declaration of Principles is the high watermark for the two-state solution, then the retreat from the spirit of Oslo finds the antithetical notion of binationalism gaining prominence. Binationalism, or the "one state" solution, in the sense of one state for two peoples, leaves Israeli liberals at liberty to interpret it as a post-Zionist, non-



Jewish "state for all its peoples," and Palestinians free to endorse it as the interim instrument for eventually achieving the English version of the 1964 PLO covenant's declared goal of a "secular, democratic" state on both sides of the 1949-67 armistice demarcation, with a decisive Arab majority, as the necessary step in ultimately displacing the "Zionist entity." Not surprisingly, this binational option was weighed by the Palestine Royal Commission in 1937 and dismissed already then as unrealistic. If Israelis and Arabs cannot coexist within the framework of two separate and independently sovereign states, why should they be expected to cooperate in an internal power-sharing arrangement?

The 1937 Peel Report should be required reading for measuring the "one state" solution against the "two-state solution." Those yellowing pages set forth questions Middle East peacemaking has yet to clarify if indeed the two-state concept is to serve as more than merely a convenient mantra.

- Who are the directly concerned parties and rightful co-partitionists, and what is the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's prospective standing and role in the final territorial settlement?
- How narrowly or expansively are the spatial dimensions of the "Palestine" that needs to be divided -- only western Palestine from the Jordan River to the sea, or both sides of the Jordan?

- Whatever the final configuration or formal lines of separation, what is the relationship between the two geopolitical units going to look like – two small states struggling to remain viable, or interdependent?

Meanwhile, the elusive middle ground -- where prudence and the politics of partition must finally meet -- is still missing. None the less, the diplomatic search for an imperfect peace in historic Palestine must persist, always bearing in mind the deepest and most lasting of the many insights handed down by the Peel commissioners: in the Arab-Israel dispute we are grappling with what is fundamentally "a conflict of right with right."

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<sup>1</sup> Michael J. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers 1945-1948*, Princeton University Press, 1982, p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> All eleven UNSCOP members unanimously recommended termination of the Mandate and rejected the Arab demand for a "one state" solution. Seven concurred on partition as the preferred course of action, while three wrote a minority report favoring an independent federal state comprised of Arab and Jewish provinces.

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- <sup>3</sup> Arafat Speech to General Assembly Renouncing Terror, Geneva, December 13 1988.
- <sup>4</sup> One delegation representing Siam chose to absent itself from the final vote.
- <sup>5</sup> MITCHELL BARD. *The Arab Lobby* Harper, 2010. pp.20-32.
- <sup>6</sup> Cmd. 5513. *Palestine*. Statement of Policy by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, July 1937.
- <sup>7</sup> Cmd. 5479. Palestine Royal Commission. *Report*, July 1937.
- <sup>8</sup> F.O. 371/23223. Great Britain. Foreign Office files (London: Public Record Office).
- <sup>9</sup> Zartman, I. William, *Fifty Per Cent Solution*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1987.
- <sup>10</sup> Lord Peel, *Parliamentary Debates* (Lords), 5<sup>th</sup> ser., 106 (July 20 1937), col. 615.
- <sup>11</sup> George Wadsworth to Secretary of State Cordell Hull, September 6 1937, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1938, Washington, D.C: Government Printing Office, 1955, p. 945.
- <sup>12</sup> *Parliamentary Debates* (Commons), 5<sup>th</sup> ser., 326 (July 21 1937): 2343.
- <sup>13</sup> "Memorandum submitted by the Arab Higher Committee on 23 July to the Permanent Mandates Commission and the Secretary of State for the Colonies," dated July 23 1937, 16 pp.
- <sup>14</sup> From a 1947 memorandum to the United Nations by an Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine of Arab and Muslim States, quoted in the Institute for Palestine Studies, *The Partition of Palestine*, Monograph Series No. 9, Beirut, 1967, p. 35.
- <sup>15</sup> Albert Hourani, "The Decline of the West in the Middle East," Part II, in *International Affairs*, April 1953, p. 162. See also Shafiq al-Rashidat, *Falastin: Tarikhan, wa-Ibrat, wa-Masiran*, Beirut, 1961, pp. 108-9.

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<sup>16</sup> A forerunner of the more famous “three No’s” resolution adopted on September 1 1967 in response to Israel’s victory at the Arab summit conference in Khartoum: “no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, no negotiations with it”.

<sup>17</sup> F.O. 371/20811, File E4714.

<sup>18</sup> *Parliamentary Debates* (Commons), 5th ser., 326, July 21 1937): 2260.

<sup>19</sup> The actual wording reads: “... within as short a period as may be convenient, two sovereign independent states would be established – the one an Arab State, *consisting of Trans-Jordan united with that part of Palestine which lies to the east and south of a frontier such as we suggest ...*; the other a Jewish State consisting of that part of Palestine which lies to the north and west of that frontier”. *Report*, p. 381.

<sup>20</sup> *Report*, p. 308.

<sup>21</sup> “H.G.L.” and “E.M.,” “British Policy in Palestine, 1937-8. From the Peel to the Woodhead Report,” published by The Royal Institute of International Affairs (London) in its *Bulletin of International News*, Vol. 15, No. 23, November 19, 1938, p. 7.

<sup>23</sup> Cmd. 5893. *Palestine*. Statement by His Majesty’s Government in the United Kingdom,” November 9 1938. The reason given for abandoning the idea of partitioning was that “the political, administrative and financial difficulties involved in the proposal to create independent Arab and Jewish States inside Palestine are so great that this solution of the problem is impracticable”.

<sup>24</sup> Churchill to Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, cited in: Conor Cruise O’Brien, *The Siege*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986, p. 257.

<sup>25</sup> War Cabinet, Committee on Palestine, *Report of the Committee*, October 16 1944, Top Secret, P. (M) (44) 14.

<sup>26</sup> In addition to Israel and Transjordan, Egypt won control over the Gaza Strip.

<sup>28</sup> <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020624-3.html>

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<sup>29</sup> Asher Susser, *Israel, Jordan, and Palestine: The Two-State Imperative*, Brandeis University Press, 2011.

<sup>30</sup> Laura Zittrain Eisenberg and Neil Caplan, *Negotiating Arab-Israel Peace: Patterns, Problems, Possibilities*, Indiana University Press, 1998, p. 129.