AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

& ITS LINK TO

TERRORISM

IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my children, Lyla K. Azar, and George K. Azar, and to my wife Nabila Azar, as well to my brothers and sister and to their families, to my mother, and to all my friends.
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I. Introduction

This is a study of how American foreign policy is linked to the development of terrorism in the Middle East, using the Palestine-Israel conflict as a case study. I discuss questions that consider how American foreign policy in the Middle East is managed. What values and what political systems produce this policy? Who influences this policy? What is the relationship between the countries in the Middle East, especially Palestine and Israel, to America? This paper will specifically focus on how American foreign policy was influenced by American presidents from Woodrow Wilson to George Bush II.

This paper explains American policy’s path and goals in the Middle East. Eric Watkens asserts that American “policy in the Middle East historically has been driven by two main goals: securing oil for US industry and establishing Israel as a Jewish homeland. Although American policymakers claim to adopt an even-handed approach in dealing with the Arabs and the Israelis, their practice traditionally favours Israel.” One could ask therefore why America chose to side with Israel in the Middle East conflict.

This American foreign policy choice produced enemies, some of whom turned to terror in response to a biased American foreign policy that supported economically, militarily, and diplomatically the Israeli occupation and its oppressive policies over the Palestinian population. American support for Israel filtered into American culture more broadly and hence has further increased the hostility in the region towards America.

In the first section, I will discuss chronologically how American foreign policy toward Palestine and Israel developed in the period from WWI until today. The end of WWI saw the defeat of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires by the victorious allies, the British, French, Japanese, and Americans. During the period of 1917-1922 the
Ottoman Empire was split into pieces. That split, and its disastrous consequences for the native inhabitants of Palestine, reverberates into the present. I explore how American Presidents from Woodrow Wilson to George W. Bush developed their administration’s foreign policy vs-a-vs the Israel/Palestine situation. Next I will discuss how the Israeli lobby AIPAC influenced American foreign policy in Congress in favor of Israel.

I then turn to a discussion of how to define terrorism and how American policymakers have perceived terrorism in the Middle East, what Palestinian and Israeli terrorism amounts to, and how it is perceived by others. The bias in American foreign policy in favor of Israel has also shaped how the American government and Americans view the problem of terrorism in the region. Israeli state terrorism goes unremarked while Palestinians overall are labeled as “terrorists” in American popular culture. These views, in turn, bolster the pro-Israel tilt in American foreign policy.

I conclude by considering the consequences of American foreign policy and how America’s foreign policy failure has caused blowback leading to more violence, destabilization, and enemies in the region. I offer suggestions for how America could play a more productive role in the region.

II. Unfolding American Foreign Policy vs. Israel and Palestine

The Settlers’ colony of the Puritans at Massachusetts Bay in the 1630s established the early American political, economic, and social system. The belief in American Exceptionalism began with John Winthrop’s admonition to his colleagues that, “We should be as a city upon a hill. The world’s eyes would be on the settlement, he added, so they must stay together in the community as one person.” They stayed together, gaining their independence in 1776 from Britain. They were united after a civil war in 1861-65,
moving on to become a power in the international arena. Americans saw and still see their country as the “Promised Land.”

To this view Americans added a Crusader’s view, a desire to take control of Palestine, the Christian holy land, from (infidels) Muslim hands; a view they inherited from Europe about Islam. Adopting the tenents of what has become known as Orientalism, European powers saw the Middle East as a backward area with peoples incapable of launching their own country’s development or creating stable political institutions. Middle Easterners therefore, had to be guided, supervised and instructed by Europeans on how to manage their own affairs. Popular 18th-century literature read by many Americans reinforced this view that Islam fosters political and social tyranny and opposes progress. American Exceptionalism fits well with the new cultural view of Orientalism, and these combined views influenced American policymakers and subsequent foreign policy. American Exceptionalism fits well with the new cultural view of Orientalism because both were based on Judaeo-Christian cultures and shared the same roots and historical bias that created the enlightenment and the industrial revolution.

The “other” for both was Islam and the East. This “other,” a great previous civilization that gave impetus to the European enlightenment, was easily forgotten as the source.

David Lamb wrote that,


[fff]or seven hundred years, the writing of Ibn Sina (980-1037), or Avicenna, as he was known in the West, remained the basic text for European medical students, and the ninth-century “philosopher of the Arabs,” Al-Kindi, eloquently argued that the search for truth was the most exalted of human endeavors. In mathematics, the Arab sifr, or zero, provided new solutions for complicated equations. In medicine, Al-Razi was the first to diagnose smallpox and measles and to use animal gut for sutures, and Ibn al-Nafis, a Syrian, discovered the fundamental principle of pulmonary circulation. In agriculture, the Arabs learned how to graft a single vine so that it would bear grapes of different colors, thus laying the
foundation for Europe future wine industries. Arab shepherds made the bagpipe that one day would return to Palestine with the British army, and an Arab author, Ibn-Tufail wrote what many consider to be the first real novel. Hay ibn Yagzan (Alive, son of Awake). The Arabs brought the techniques of irrigation, navigation and geography to Western Europe, and architects, using horseshoe-shaped arches and cubical supports, redesigned Spain with airy, mosaic-tiled buildings that had graceful patios and a feeling of openness. The missionaries carried the basis of that style to Mexico, then to Southern California, where it remains today as a mark of affluence in many contemporary homes. 

American policymakers secured special treatment for their merchants, missionaries, and other citizens visiting the orient. According to Wharton, “Citizens of the United States, by virtue of the provisions of the treaty of 1830 with Turkey enjoy, in common with all other Christians, the privilege of extraterritoriality in Turkey.” American dealings with the Orient were also fostered by the Paris formal agreement of 1856. In this agreement, the Ottoman Sultan was forced to agree to certain terms, called the capitulations, which gave Europeans more rights than they had previously had in the Empire. New forms of property ownership, particularly individual private property rights, were also instituted through this agreement.

The capitulations assured American citizens religious freedom in the Ottoman Empire, further reinforced by Article LXII of the agreement of Berlin in 1878. These assurances applied to foreigners who were Christians as well as to native Christians who resided in the Empire. Palestine and its holy places, then part of the Ottoman Empire, were of concern to the United States because Americans were visiting the Christian holy sites and were engaged in religious and educational work within the Ottoman Empire. American foreign investments and the importance of its trade relations with the Empire also produced concerns. Americans were anxious to have access to the lucrative Mediterranean spice trade. From these visits ‘images of the Muslim world’ appeared in
the news and writings back in America, coloring other Americans’ knowledge about the
Middle East.¹²

According to Christison, American policy can be attributed

*To the extent, then, that early twentieth – century policy makers in the
United States thought about the Palestine situation at all, it was within a
frame of reference in which Palestine stood forth as a biblical land
destined for reclamation by Christians and Jews and in which the native
Arab inhabitants were unimportant.*¹³

Through the next decades, what characterized American foreign policy vis-a-vis
Palestine was “a divided executive policy with the Presidency and the State Department
... pulling in different directions.”¹⁴ Prominent American Jews could be found on both
sides of the issue. Men like Henry Morgenthau and E.R.A. Seligman supported the non-
Zionist position of the State Department. Jewish leaders like Louis Brandeis and Felix
Frankfurter used their personal ties to American President Wilson, to push a pro-Zionist
policy. In the end, personal ties triumphed and the Presidents finally tipped the scale in
favor of Israel and Zionism.¹⁵

III. American Policymakers from Wilson to George W. Bush

Woodrow Wilson

Woodrow Wilson, president of the United States from 1913-1921, led America
during World War I (1914-1918). He has, therefore, one of the first American Presidents
to get directly involved with Palestine. During WWI the Arabs in the Ottoman Empire
were promised self-determination by the allies if they would fight on the allies’ side to
help defeat the Ottoman Empire. The Arabs, believing the allies’ promises, did indeed
fight, but they did not receive the promised self-determination when the Ottomans were
defeated. According to Lesch, after “World War I and the subsequent peace negotiations,
the French, British, and U.S. governments all made declarations that indicated support for self-determination for the peoples of the Ottoman Empire." Instead, the only people to receive self-determination were European and Jews who colonized Palestine.

America became a power in the international arena at the end of WWI. Wilson started the trend of affirming that Palestine was the Jewish national home. Wilson, the idealist, revealed a pragmatic bent during the 1916 Presidential election campaign when his attitude on Palestine changed from disinterest to vocal pro-Zionism. The change of heart was a maneuver calculated to please a numerically small but active circle of Democratic Zionists led by Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis. A pro-Zionist position helped Wilson gain their support and get reelected.

By 1917, in England, Lord Balfour could deny the existence of the Palestinian people by avoiding referring to them as anything positive, merely calling them 'the existing non-Jewish communities,' when in fact they constituted over ninety percent of the population of Palestine at the time. The promulgation of his Balfour Declaration, on 2 November 1917 ostensibly looked with favor upon the creation of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine, stirred the recently founded American Jewish Congress to greater cooperation with the European-led World Zionist Organization on the issue of supporting an English trusteeship in Palestine. The "realists" of American diplomacy considered Wilson's support for Balfour rash and ill-advised. While the British pressed him for a commitment, his friend and adviser, Colonel Edward M. House, cautioned the President of the danger lurking for him, as well as for the United States, if he succumbed. Secretary of State Robert Lansing couched his argument in stronger terms. The Secretary was irritated because he had not been consulted as to the course of action that should be
taken subsequent to the announcement of the Balfour formula. Signing on the formula was to establish a Jewish home on conquered Arab land.

Wilson and his administration's stand on the M.E. conflict were known to many students of history. Davidson indicates that there is little evidence in this period of strong resistance to Zionist plans from any level of America's bureaucracy. Despite its later opposition to the Zionist enterprise, the State Department did nothing at the time to counterbalance Wilson's tilt toward Zionism. Wilson actually did not care deeply about the political fate of Palestine. His endorsement of Britain's 1917 Balfour Declaration was a gesture made without a great deal of thought; it was the easy choice. The endorsement supported Britain's objectives in World War I, and the gesture showed Wilson to be responsive to his American Zionist friends.

Suleiman in his book, U.S. Policy and Palestine: From Wilson to Clinton, points out that, Woodrow Wilson's idealism and the call for self-determination of the people of the Middle East clashed with, and was opposed by, the Zionist movement which sought a Jewish homeland in Palestine. At the time, the United States had no major political interests to defend or advance in that region. Zionist pressure and the popular American notions which associated the Holy Land with the Jews were instrumental in suppressing the Arab demand for independence and/or for keeping the Zionists out of the region.

Zionism's influences on American policymakers, like Wilson, were enormous. Such U.S. policymakers lacked objectivity.

After WWI, President Woodrow Wilson declared that "America had the infinite privilege of fulfilling her destiny and saving the world," thus demonstrating that America was heading down the Exceptionalist path. He was involved and wanted to change the international system from one based on balance of power politics to another based on
collective security, by aiding people’s self-determination. But Wilson ignored the Palestinian case, and failed to affirm his own principles, and establish collective security there, based on self-determination and free people. In fact, Wilson never succeeded in actualizing his principles as he encountered resistance from the allies and the American Congress at home. Wilson, a religious man, leaned toward the holy land being in the hands of the Jewish people and the Zionists, not the Palestinian Arabs.

Given his commitment to self-determination, in 1919 Wilson appealed to France and Britain to join him in establishing a commission that would be sent to Palestine and charged with evaluating the entire Middle Eastern situation. Worried that their own political interests would be harmed by such an inquiry, first France, then Great Britain declined. As a result, an American commission acted independently under Wilson’s direction to investigate the situation in Palestine and began sending back reports in July. The commission was headed by Henry C. King, President of Oberlin College (Ohio) and Charles R. Crane, a Chicago businessman. They spoke of the intense desire of the populace for a union of Syria and Palestine. In their opinion, extreme Zionism was pernicious, fusion was the best solution and Jewish immigration ought to be restricted. Finally, they recommended that Feisal be installed as head of “unified” Syria. The King-Crane Commission discovered that, barring the Jews (who favored an English mandate) and Roman Catholics (who were for a French mandate), the vast majority of Palestinians (Muslims), aware that America had no territorial ambitions, desired an American mandate. The Commission recorded the will of the Palestinian people and their thinking, what their fears were, what people’s concerns were in the area, and what
their response was to the Balfour Declaration. After receiving the commission’s report, Wilson fell ill and the report was shelved and never acted on.

Many scholars agree that, by the end of Wilson’s term in 1920, the frame of reference already had become firmly established. Palestine, which at the time had a Jewish population of less than 10 percent, had begun to be considered by American policy makers a Jewish land. America was committed to supporting Zionism, and Wilson’s successors in the 1920s were more tied to Zionism than he had been.\textsuperscript{29} Since Wilson, the doors were opened for the colonization of Palestine, which was the beginning of a new and difficult era for the native Palestinians.

The victorious allies divided the spoils of war between them and set in motion what happened afterwards. They divided the Ottoman Empire from a European geographic perspective to become the Middle East countries. Approved by America, Syria came under France’s rule while Britain was given the mandate for Palestine, Mesopotamia, and Arabia.\textsuperscript{30} Wilson’s backing was crucial to Britain being awarded the League of Nations mandate for Palestine at the time.\textsuperscript{31} The San Remo Conference decided on April 24, 1920 to assign the Mandate [for Palestine] under the League of Nations to Britain. An agreed text was confirmed by the Council of the League of Nations on July 24, 1922, and it came into operation in September 1923. As soon as word of the San Remo Conference was publicized, the Arabs rioted in Jerusalem; a few months into 1921, they took the same path in Jaffa.\textsuperscript{32} Violence was the sole means available to the frustrated Palestinian nationalists who viewed the terms of the settlement as Zionist-inspired and a stab in the back by the British. Since Britain controlled Palestine, the
Balfour Declaration’s promise of Palestine as the national home for the Jewish people, began to be actualized.

Subsequent Presidents followed Wilson’s lead. Warren G. Harding, president of the United States (1921-1923), signed a joint resolution with Congress approving of establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Calvin Coolidge (1923-1929) made no policy on Palestine, but followed what his predecessor had done. Herbert Hoover (1929-1933) spent his time in office focused on the depression and concentrated on domestic economics rather than Palestine. Like Coolidge, Harding, and Wilson before him, however, he continued to support a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

**Franklin Roosevelt**

Franklin Delanore Roosevelt (1933-1945) served longer than any other president. His unprecedented election to four terms in office will never be repeated. He, too, made no major policy change on Palestine. He followed what already had become a firmly set frame of reference at a critical time in the history of Palestine. “Elected in 1932, he was in office during the period of vastly increased Jewish immigration to Palestine prompted by Hitler’s rise, through the Holocaust, to the beginning of serious discussion of Jewish statehood in Palestine”³³

Roosevelt was in office when the longest strike, a Palestinian Revolt, occurred that lasted from 1936-39. This Revolt was a protest at the increased Jewish immigration and colonization of Palestine by European Jews entering the country with help from the British mandate authority. The revolt became their judgment on the British mandate. On 11 November 1936, a Royal British Committee, “Bill Committee,” arrived in Palestine to investigate the reasons behind the Great Rebellion. They discovered that the new
immigrants caused a threat to the natives in many ways. The new immigrants were building new settlements that caused the disruption of native peoples’ lives, creating fear and concern for their country. Natives were also losing their jobs, their land which the British mandate authority assigned to the new immigrants or that was purchased from absentee owners through often suspect, secret, or illegal deals. During the revolt, Britain was pressured to cut back on the numbers of Jewish refugees who were allowed to enter Palestine.

In July 1938, US President Franklin D. Roosevelt, responding to mounting political pressure, called for an international conference to address the [Jewish] refugee problem. It was decided that the venue should be Évian-les-Bains on the shores of Lake Geneva in France. During the nine-day meeting, delegate after delegate rose to express sympathy for the refugees. But most countries, including the United States and Britain, offered excuses for not letting in more refugees.

Roosevelt did not send a high-level official to the Evian conference but a businessman and a friend, Myron C. Taylor, as American representative. The Evian conference was attended by thirty-three countries including America. The conference’s main aim was to find a solution for the Jewish refugees, to a destination other than Palestine.

Stevenson argues that, “[o]ne of Roosevelt’s greatest hopes was that immigration barriers against Jews might be lifted by all nations, including the United States. To Roosevelt it seemed dishonest to demand immigration concessions from the Arabs while the United States retained its tight and selective quota laws.” Roosevelt mistakenly believed that Arab immigrants to Palestine had “vastly exceeded” Jewish immigrants during the 1920s, when in fact Arab immigration was at a minimum and Jewish immigration was high enough to alter the population balance drastically, reducing the
Arab majority from 90 percent in 1920 to 69 percent by 1939. That is why the Palestinian Revolt erupted, because the future of the Palestinian people was in question.

During the Roosevelt administration, the president kept his promise to the Arabs and Jews that no decision altering the basic situation of Palestine should be reached without fully consulting with both. Roosevelt tried to be true to American values and principles when he was formulating foreign policy. But the historical record testifies to his ignorance on the facts in Palestine. His long term in office and his concerns with events of the war contributed to his lack of action. He failed to stop the Zionist colonization plan of Palestine and to alter the sequence of events in Palestine like he had done with the war.

According to Kathleen Christison, Roosevelt’s

failure to understand [the Revolt] meant that he could not have understood Palestinian fears of being made [into] a minority in their own land. Without any consideration for the justice or injustice of forcibly expelling an entire population, he devoted much thought during World War II to the possibility of accommodating Jewish control of Palestine by transferring the Palestinians elsewhere. Several times over the years, he wondered aloud to political colleagues, Zionists, and the British whether Palestine might be made mostly Jewish by moving a few hundred thousand Arabs to other Arab countries.

The group or entity that could benefit from the “transfer idea” that circulated at the time was the Zionists. The Zionists were the group that was promised a homeland in Palestine by the Balfour Declaration. They wanted “a land without a people, for a people without a land.” Palestine, contrary to their propaganda, was not empty land for the new Jewish state to occupy; the Zionists needed Palestinians to move elsewhere.

It was clear that the most notable feature of Roosevelt’s policy on Palestine was widespread ignorance about the complexities of the Palestine situation. Politicians in his
administration seemed to know nothing about the Palestinians or their concerns. Roosevelt supported the whole of Palestine as a home for the Jewish people. He thought the British had promised Palestine in the Balfour Declaration to the Jews; he had in mind to make it a country with a Jewish majority.\footnote{In 1941, Roosevelt said: "I can merely call to the attention of the British our deep interest in the defense of Palestine and our concern for the defense of the Jewish population there; and, as best I can, supply the British forces with the material means by which the maximum protection to Palestine will be afforded."\cite{roosevelt_palestine}}

**Harry Truman**

Harry S. Truman, president from 1945-1953, initiated the foreign policy of containing Communism, a policy that was the hallmark of the cold war. President Truman was influenced by his Zionist friends like Rabbi Stephen Wise and Clark Clifford to support the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. This support was initiated after WWII as a result of the Holocaust. Guilt in the West, in general, was felt in response to the Nazi atrocities against the Jews and the lack of action by Western countries to stop them. It was Christian guilt over what happened to the Jewish people and other minorities in Nazi Germany. One response by the victorious allies was to aid those who escaped the Holocaust, the death camp survivors. Instead of letting the Nazi perpetrators pay with land for their crimes, the allies decided to make the Arabs pay by giving Palestine to Jewish survivors of the Holocaust. As the Arabs were receiving Holocaust survivors, America and other Western countries were turning away those survivors from their shores and borders.
In 1947, Palestine came to the world’s attention when the British announced they would leave the country and turned the Palestine situation over to the United Nations to solve. United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181 called for the partition of the British-ruled Palestine Mandate into a Jewish state and an Arab state. Congressman Cellar had urged President Truman to pressure nations that were hostile to partition, in particular Greece. He argued that Greece was morally indebted to America. America expected other countries friendly with them to cooperate on the matter of Palestine. The American lobbying pressure was not limited to small third-world nations, as France also was pressured into voting for partition. Partition was approved on November 29, 1947 with 33 votes in favor, 13 against, 10 abstentions and one absent. America’s vote was in favor. The resolution was accepted by the Jews in Palestine, yet rejected by the Arabs in Palestine and the Arab states.

Congressmen Cellar sent a letter to Truman several days after the partition vote in the UN, in which he expressed his sincerest gratitude for the effective work Truman did in actively assisting the passage of partition. Another Congressman who supported the Zionist cause, Arthur Klein, stated that there can be no doubt that the successful fight of the American delegation was made at the personal direction of President Truman.

A report circulated in the State Department served as the basis for the more comprehensive Policy Planning Staff Report (PPS 119) issued by its director, George F. Kennan, on January 19, 1948. “The U.S. Government,” the report stated, “should face the fact that the partition of Palestine cannot be implemented without the use of force. … It should be clearly recognized that such [military] assistance given to the Jewish State, but withheld from the Arabs … would in Arab eyes be a virtual declaration of war by the
U.S. against the Arab World.\textsuperscript{44} The State Department eventually dropped resistance to Truman’s pro-Zionist position.

On May 14, 1948, President Truman recognized the provisional Jewish government as de facto authority of the new Jewish state. In his memoirs, Truman wrote:

\begin{quote}
On May 14 I was informed that the Provisional Government of Israel was planning to proclaim a Jewish state at midnight that day, Palestine time, which was when the British mandate came to an end ... I decided to move at once and give American recognition to the new nation. I instructed a member of my staff to communicate my decision to the State Department and prepare it for transmission to Ambassador Austin at the United Nations in New York. About thirty minutes later, exactly eleven minutes after Israel had been proclaimed a state, Charlie Ross, my press secretary, handed the press the announcement of the de facto recognition by the United States of the provisional government of Israel.\textsuperscript{45}
\end{quote}

Before Truman had decided whether to recognize the soon-to-be-declared State of Israel, Clark Clifford had written both the Zionists’ request for recognition and the president’s response, all without Truman’s knowledge.\textsuperscript{46} That was in contradiction to Truman’s own writing. In an oral interview Clifford said: “president [Truman] spoke to me and said, I want to have a conference on this problem of Israel. I would like you to prepare yourself and you be the lawyer for the position that we should recognize Israel.”\textsuperscript{47}

After recognizing Israel, America moved to provide military assistance as the country erupted into war. Truman’s hostility toward Arabs was enforced by his decision to send military assistance to Israel. This assistance helped strengthen Israel to defeat the Arab armies and led to the dispossession and dispersal of Palestinians from their land in 1948. After the 1948 war between Arabs and Jews, the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194 was issued on December 11, 1948, to establish the right of return for Palestinian refugees to their homes and land.
Through Harry Truman’s presidency, most of America literally fell in love with Israel, and the Palestinians dropped into total political obscurity. The Israeli scholar Avi Shlaim wrote that “history is in a very real sense ‘the propaganda of the victors.’ To the victor after the 1948 war, belonged not only the actual spoils of war but the very history of it and much that came after”48 Christison, argues that by giving American support to the partition of Palestine in 1947 and immediately extending diplomatic recognition to the new state of Israel in May 1948, President Harry Truman presided over the most critical period in the development of a policy-making frame of reference that would be centered almost totally on Israel, to the exclusion of the Palestinians, well into the future.49

President Truman said in a speech on October 28, 1948: “It is my responsibility to see that our policy in Israel fits in with our policy throughout the world; second, it is my desire to help build in Palestine a strong, prosperous, free and independent democratic [Israeli] state. It must be large enough, free enough, and strong enough to make its people self-supporting and secure.”50 Truman neglected the Palestinian tragedy he partly caused by his decision to recognize Israel as a new state. As he failed to stop colonization, he succeeded in causing a quagmire in the region. His stand was contrary to American values, denying Palestinians freedom and independence on their land.

Truman was motivated by domestic political considerations to be loyal to Israel. The domestic consideration was to get him reelected with support from Zionists. After election, the view was to secure a Jewish haven in Palestine. For Truman, like others of his generation, a Jewish presence in Palestine seemed more fitting than an Arab presence. Truman attached no importance to the Palestinian’s fear of being made a minority. Even
years later, he brushed off Palestinian concerns by referring in his memoirs to Arab “rights” in quotation marks, and his frame of reference was so centered on the Zionists that he even saw the issue of self-determination as a principle that benefited only the Jews.\textsuperscript{51} Truman’s animosity toward the Palestinians had reached its climax. He made the worst of decisions and changed the lives of most peoples concerned, including Palestinians, Israelis, Arabs, and Americans.

Truman administration’s policy toward Palestine was based on the Zionist lobby and its special relation to Truman and to American domestic politics. The lobby dictated how much Jewish pressure about domestic policies in the 1940s was exerted on Truman during his election, and how Truman was apt to sway the UN for the Zionist plan for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine in March 1948.\textsuperscript{52} On the other hand, Khalidi noted that in “what was to become an American tradition that a few decades after Wilson’s original intervention, at critical moments for the fortunes of the Palestinians and Zionist cause, President Truman overrode the views of most of his foreign policy advisors on the Palestine issue”\textsuperscript{53} Truman helped to plant the seeds of hatred (colonization) in Palestine.

The war of 1948 resulted in about 800,000 Palestinian refugees being displaced mostly by Israeli military forces. Their desire was to go back to their homes. They waited for the UN to help them. The United States took an active part in drafting Resolution 194 which stated that those [Palestinian] “refugees wishing to return to their homes and live in peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date.”\textsuperscript{54}
The Truman administration, however, did not help to enforce UN Resolution 194, nor did the Security Council enforce it. The dispossession and dispersal of the Palestinians in 1948 constitutes “an unrecognizable episode” even for most informed Americans. Americans were unaware of the magnitude of the displacement of Palestinians. They were also unaware that the new Jewish state was successful in developing because it was built using the property and assets of those same displaced Palestinians. The American policy makers have paid little heed to the Palestinian viewpoint on the conflict. The United States’ emotional bond with Israel; the perception that has prevailed to one degree or another throughout every administration, since Harry Truman’s that Israel is not only emotionally close but strategically important to the United States; a strong and ingrained reluctance among policymakers to challenge the conventional wisdom or upset the status quo; and the militancy and uncompromising nature of the Arab and Palestinian reaction to Israel’s creation and Palestinian’s dispossession – all these factors have combined to give Israel overwhelming predominance in U.S. policy considerations and to push any examination of the legitimacy of Palestinian claims to the background.

The Truman administration was warned by the State Department about the consequences of its hostile policy against the Palestinians, but it ignored such warnings. It seems that Truman went against the forces of change for a better and more peaceful future to accommodate the forces of aggression and colonization. American public opinion on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict from here onwards was formulated on the basis of an American policy that centered on an Israeli vantage point.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

Dwight David Eisenhower (1953-1961) was the supreme commander of the Allies in Europe during World War II (1939-1945) and the first Supreme Commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces. Eisenhower was the first American
president to take office after the division of Palestine and the creation of the state of Israel. He was in a position to implement UN Resolutions 194 on refugees, and 181 on the partition of Palestine. Israel had expanded in 1949 to more territory than that assigned to her by the UN. Eisenhower could have moved to redress Palestinian grievances.

During the Eisenhower administration,

opportunities arose when solutions to the Palestine-Israel problem could have been possible. However, for various reasons, the Eisenhower administration missed these opportunities. Among the reasons for this,...

[was]a basic flaw in the way many American governments have viewed the situation: the United States has looked upon Palestinians not as a people seeking a homeland, but only as refugees needing to be settled. In other words, economic solutions were sought for a definitely political problem. 57

During the Eisenhower administration, John Foster Dulles, his Secretary of State, had spoken of the refugees as an unhappy group with a potential for upsetting the status quo but, as each year passed and they did not revolt, the need to resolve their plight grew less, opportunities to find a solution receded until no one felt it necessary to expend any energy even in trying to resettle them. 58 Eisenhower thus neglected the Palestinians and continued with the policy of his predecessor. The Palestinians suffered in refugee camps waiting for the Security Council to implement Resolution 194.

President Eisenhower had none of the emotional identification with Israel or the biblical appreciation for the concept of a Jewish state in the holy land that had partially motivated his predecessor, Harry Truman. In fact he is the only American president to ever have exerted heavy pressure on Israel. In 1953, he used economic pressure to force Israel to halt its diversion of the headwaters of the Jordan River to Israel, and in 1956 he forced Israel's withdrawal from Sinai after the Suez War, when Israel, France and Britain attacked Egypt to occupy the Sinai and the Suez Canal zone. 59 He could have pushed
further for peace and did not. The Eisenhower administration had no interest in or real awareness of the Palestinian situation; it is probably no exaggeration to say that he never gave the Palestinians any thought except as Arab refugees. Eisenhower was aware of the injustices suffered by the Arab population, but he turned his back on them.

These injustices were alluded to by John Foster Dulles. After the fighting ceased in Palestine in 1948, John Foster Dulles, then at the United Nations and, as previously noted, later to become president Dwight Eisenhower’s Secretary of State, summed up the United States’ view of the Palestine situation. America regarded Israel’s establishment as a “historical necessity” that it was committed to uphold, Dulles said. We realized, he acknowledged, that this

involved certain injustices to the Arab States. The situation was not one where there was any solution that was totally just to all concerned. ... Nevertheless, there had to be a solution and, we believed, a peaceful solution. ... Therefore, our [policy] could be looked upon ... as completing one phase of a historical development which, completed, would permit of better relations than ever before with the Arab States. 61

American interest, Dulles made clear, was in the Arab states, their oil, their market, and their strategic position not in the stateless Palestinians. Eisenhower was guided more by issues of international politics and his containment strategy of Communism than he was with domestic political considerations and the Israeli - Palestine problem. 63

John Kennedy

John Fitzgerald Kennedy served from 1961 until his assassination in 1963. In a speech at Eastern Oregon College of Education in November 9, 1959, Kennedy said: “Let us make it clear that we will never turn our backs on our steadfast friends in Israel, whose
adherence to the democratic way must be admired by all friends of freedom.”\textsuperscript{64} In another speech, in June 1960 to the U.S. Senate on the Middle East, Kennedy said:

\begin{quote}
We must formulate, with both imagination and restraint, a new approach to the Middle East – not pressing our case so hard that the Arabs feel their neutrality and nationalism are threatened, but accepting those forces, and seeking to help channel them along constructive lines, while at the same time trying to hasten the inevitable Arab acceptance of the permanence of Israel. We must give our support to programs to help people instead of regimes – to work in terms of their problems, as well as ours, and seek a permanent settlement among Arabs and Israelis based not on an armed truce but on mutual self-interest. Guns and anti-communist pacts and propaganda and the traditional piecemeal approach to the Middle East are not enough – refugee resettlement and a regional resources development fund in full partnership with the Middle Eastern nations, are all parts of a long-range strategy which is both practical and in the best interests of all concerned.\textsuperscript{65}
\end{quote}

With Kennedy’s strategic approach, impartiality, international legitimacy, and being just, the conflict had a better chance for settlement.

On aggression in the Middle East, in August 25, 1960, John Kennedy said: “We will act promptly and decisively against any nation in the Middle East which attacks its neighbors. I propose that we make clear to both the Israelis and the Arabs our guarantee that we will act with whatever force and speed is necessary to halt any aggression by any nation.”\textsuperscript{66} When he became president he was quoted to say that: “Israel was not created in order to disappear – Israel will endure and flourish. It is the child of hope and the home of the brave. It can neither be broken by adversity nor demoralized by success. It carries the shield of democracy and it honors the sword of freedom.”\textsuperscript{67}

President John Kennedy had some sympathy for local nationalism throughout the world. He believed that America should profit from this rising trend rather than move to suppress it. With that view, he tried to win the friendship of many nationalist Arab
leaders. He sent letters to those nationalist leaders, especially those who were major players in the region after he took office in 1961. In these letters of support Kennedy pledged assistance to solve the Arab–Israeli conflict. He also promised moral and economic support for the new emerging states in the Arab world after their independence from the colonial powers of Europe.  

Christison continues to stress, however, that throughout Kennedy’s discussion of resolving the conflict, the Palestinians themselves were absent from American foreign policy. “Israel was a greater priority for Kennedy than any Arab party, and the warm and enduring nature of the U.S.-Israeli tie essentially began with him,” and strengthened. Kennedy “was also the first of a succession of presidents who winked at Israel’s growing nuclear capability, the first to speak of a ‘special relationship,’” during his administration. He was also “the first to appoint a full-time aide to maintain contact with the American Jewish community, something that gave supporters of Israel immediate access to the White House, which the Eisenhower administration never permitted.”  

Abraham Ben-Zvi wrote that, in his December 27, 1962 conversation with Israeli Foreign Minister Golda Meir, President Kennedy for the first time acknowledged that “the United States ... has a special relationship with Israel in the Middle East really comparable only to that which it has with Britain over a wide range of world affairs.” This special relation continued to benefit Israel and obscure the Palestinian stand in American public opinion. 

During the Kennedy and even the Johnson administrations, the Palestinians continued to be no more than a refugee problem. Even on this level, Kennedy’s attempt to solve the refugee problem was not successful exactly because other American interests
in the region, like oil, were deemed to be more important. During the Kennedy administration the relationship between America and Israel underwent fundamental change as a result of political guarantees and military sales.

**Lyndon Johnson**

Lyndon Baines Johnson (1963-1969) "had been a longtime supporter of Israel from his days in the U.S. Senate. His pledge upon assuming the presidency was to carry on Kennedy's policies. This pledge and his long-standing support for Israel gratified supporters of the Jewish state" Johnson was quoted to say: "Our society is illuminated by the spiritual insights of the Hebrew prophets. America and Israel have a common love of human freedom, and they have a common faith in a democratic way of life." He moved far beyond Kennedy's agreement to sell defensive equipment to Israel. In 1964 the Arab League, a loose confederation of fourteen Arab countries, including Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon, met in Cairo and established a political body to deal directly with the problem of the Palestinian Arabs. They called it the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The Arabs created the political entity of the PLO which was developed by the Palestinian National Council (PNC) and subsequently created a force to fight Israel. The creating of these entities to fight Israel gave Johnson reason to support Israel's diversion of the waters of the Jordan River in 1964, it's understood, an action President Eisenhower had earlier opposed.

Johnson accelerated the process of providing Israel with arms. By 1965 the United States had become the largest supplier of military goods to Israel. The sales accelerated with the announcement in February 1966 that America was selling Israel 200 Patton tanks in order to maintain military superiority in the region. Supplying these tanks,
as well as other weapons systems, would further bind Israel and America at the expense of Washington’s relations with Arab states. Johnson rejected his predecessors’ attempts to win the friendship of nationalist Arab regimes.  

On 13 November 1966, Israeli forces attacked Al Samou’, a village near Hebron, and killed 18 people, injured 54 people and destroyed 125 houses. This Samou’ event was one of the triggers that led Jordan to agree to cooperate militarily with Egypt and Syria. Jordan’s cooperation with Egypt was the one of the reasons that led Israel to launch a pre-emptive strike against the three countries in June 1967. Johnson assisted Israel in its 1967 war militarily, financially, and diplomatically against Jordan, Syria, and Egypt. His support of the Israeli position during and after the 1967 war was such that he did not even protest when Israel attacked an American communications intercept ship, the U.S.S. Liberty, killing thirty-four American naval personnel, in circumstances that clearly indicated the attack was not a mistake.

America “actively assisted Israel in gathering and analyzing intelligence during the 1967 war. Units from Ramstein, West Germany and Britain were sent to the Negev to conduct surveillance flights and develop the photos. During the first few days of the conflict the function of these units was to gather intelligence on the destruction of the Arab airfields” David Lesch wrote that the Johnson administration had colluded with Israel against the forces of Arab nationalism. His administration’s support of Israel with the subsequent America’s abandonment of its previous support for the 1949 armistice regime reinforced the widely held Arab view of America’s hostility.

By siding with Israel in the 1967 war against Arabs, Johnson helped America to win many Arabs and Palestinians as foes. The war on terrorism today is just a side effect
of America’s foreign policy in the past with regard to that region. On 22 November 1967, the Security Council issued Resolution 242 in which Israel was called upon to withdraw from the territories occupied in the June war of 1967. America voted in support of this resolution.

The 1967 war was between Israel and the Arabs; mainly Egypt, Syria, and Jordan. In this war Israel had a quick victory on the three Arab armies within six days. During the war Israel seized Sinai and the Gaza Strip from Egypt, the Golan Heights from Syria, and the West Bank and Jerusalem from Jordan. Historical Palestine was now occupied by Israel; more Palestinian refugees were created and added to the refugees of 1948; Arab humiliation was real and the desperation of Palestinians and many Arabs accelerated.

**Richard Nixon**

Richard Milhous Nixon (1969-1974) as president was well informed on the Arab-Israeli situation, but did not understand the Palestinian part of the conflict. Neff observed “He was not indebted to Jewish-American voters for his political success, and wanted to find a solution to the Arab-Israeli problem, but in the end he failed.” In June 1970, his secretary of state, William Roger, came up with a plan for disengagement in response to an appeal made by Abdul Nasser, President of Egypt. Nasser wanted Israeli withdrawal from land occupied in 1967 in exchange for a peace agreement with the Arabs. Israel refused to withdraw and was supported by military aid and political backing by America that caused Roger’s plan to fail. The plan initiative was taken over by Kissinger.

Nixon’s Secretary of State Kissinger disagreed with the conclusion by Nixon and the State Department that the impasse in the Middle East was primarily due to Israeli intransigence. Kissinger blamed Arab radicals abetted by Soviet meddling. But Nixon did
not agree with Kissinger on that view. Nixon leaned toward the State Department views that Israel's policies were the basic cause of the difficulty. While Nixon had no particular attachment to Israel, the same cannot be said of his Secretary of State; associates have described Kissinger as dealing with Israel less as a statesman than as a friend and advisor. Kissinger as a friend of Israel helped her in the worst of her crisis. He helped her by getting America to send crucial military aid during the 1972 war.

Furthermore, the Nixon administration fully supported the Israeli nuclear program. This support was demonstrated later in 1969 when America ended the inspection of the Dimona facility. In addition, the State Department in 1971 suppressed reports indicating Israel's nuclear capability. Nixon contributed to better relations with Israel. He helped to maintain Israeli nuclear capability and became hostile toward the Arabs. This hostility was acquired and engineered mostly by his Secretary of State Kissinger, who was an agent working for Israel in high American government offices.

Following Israel's creation in 1948, the Palestinians disappeared from America's policy considerations and did not reemerge until the late 1960s, when they forced themselves on the world's consciousness with a series of armed, violent actions and a determined assertion for their national aims. This was certainly the case during the Nixon administration, from 1969-1974. In the 1970s, the Palestinian image evolving in this period was double-edged. To announce their grievances to the world community, the Palestinians chose the only way at hand -- "violence" -- the world community and Israel understand. They targeted Israel, the state that suppressed their freedom and colonized their country. In their struggle the Palestinians demanded their rights, freedom, and
independence on their ancestor’s land from Israel and the United Nations who were responsible for their tragedy and colonization. Terrorism finally brought the name ‘Palestinian’ to the world’s consciousness.

Eventually, by the mid-1970s, America had come to concentrate its anti-Palestinian viewpoint specifically on the PLO, which became the new American blind spot, which America does not want to deal with. The Jordanian civil war in September 1970, a struggle for power between King Hussein and the Palestinian guerrilla organization, is a case in point. The Jordan crisis became a watershed in American-Israeli relations, establishing Israel as a strategic asset by virtue of its readiness to intervene at America request. Israel intervened to aid king Hussein in his civil war with the Palestinians by American directive. The seeds of this civil war were planted when the Arabs were defeated in the 1967 war.

The 1972 war was initiated by Arabs to regain their land, the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights, which were occupied by Israel in the war of 1967. This war was between Israel, on the one hand, and Egypt and Syria, on the other. Given the Arab advancement in the beginning of the war Nixon and his Secretary of State Kissinger bailed Israel out by diplomatic means and supplied Israel with sophisticated military equipment to turn the tide of battle. By the end of the war, Israel, with direct aid from the Nixon administration, had turned the war to its advantage. An emerging colonial power after the war, Israel was also used as a military base to protect America’s interests in the Middle East.

Nixon was quoted as saying: “Americans admire a people who can scratch a desert and produce a garden. The Israelis have shown qualities that Americans identify
with: guts, patriotism, idealism, a passion for freedom. I have seen it. I know. I believe that." Nixon's support for Israel continued. With the exception of the Carter administration, the history of the two decades of American policy-making that followed is one of a concerted effort to suppress the Palestinian question as a political issue and to undermine the Palestine Liberation Organization. After the 1972 war, "Kissinger made no serious attempt to force Israel to compromise; indeed he looked the other way as Israelis began building permanent settlements in the occupied territories." On 5 November 1973, the American Secretary of State Kissinger began his peace initiative to disengage the Syrian, Egyptian, and Israeli forces after the 1972 war. On 22 October 1973, the Security Council issued Resolution No. 338 to confirm a cease fire between the Arabs and the Israelis, asking them to abide by Resolution No. 242. UN Resolutions 242 and 338 were accepted as the cornerstone of a settlement then, with Kissinger's assistance. Israel colonized (by settlements) Palestinian land with massive support from its ally, America, and in collaboration with its friend Kissinger. 

**Gerald Ford**

Gerald Rudolph Ford (1974-77) by and large continued the policies of the Nixon administration. He was quoted to say: "My commitment to the security and future of Israel is based upon basic morality as well as enlightened self-interest. Our role in supporting Israel honors our own heritage." Ford presided over the 1975 Sinai Accord between Israel and Egypt. This agreement came as a result of the resumption of Kissinger's step-by-step diplomacy, which was temporarily interrupted by President Gerald Ford's threatened 'reassessment' of American-Israeli relations in April 1975. President Ford's reassessment was caused by Israeli intransigence and its position in the
negotiations. Aruri explains that far from being a step toward peace, the Sinai Accord was particularly harmful to that cause because it eased the pressure on Israel, left Sinai in Israel’s hands, and neglected the other Arab war partners with Egypt, and slowly but surely isolated Egypt from the Arab cause. The Egyptians got American foreign aid money and the promise of Sinai’s return. On 10 November 1975, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution No. 3379, which condemned Zionism as a racist movement. This set back in the UN for Israel and America actually strengthened their relationship under Ford.

Israeli Yitzhak Rabin, minister of defense stated that he was largely satisfied with Ford’s treatment of Israel. When Ford left office, Israel was in a much stronger position militarily. Rabin noted that the tank force had grown by 50 percent; the mobile artillery had increased 100 percent, armored personnel carriers by 800 percent, and planes by 30 percent. As American relations with Israel improved, American relationships with Arabs and Palestinians worsened. The purpose of this new Israeli strength was to keep Palestinians and Arabs suppressed and to enhance America’s hegemony in the region.

**Jimmy Carter**

Jimmy Carter (1977-1981) as a presidential candidate campaigned on a strong pro-Israeli, anti-Palestinian platform. Carter’s campaign adhered to the Kissinger formulation of no negotiations with the PLO until it recognized U.N. Resolution 242 and the right of Israel to exist. When Carter was governor of Georgia, in 1973, he had visited Israel; as a politician and a devout Christian, Carter had consistently expressed his deep sympathy with and commitment to the Jewish state. Carter was quoted to say: “The survival of Israel is not a political issue, it is a moral imperative. That is my deeply held
believe[...] and it is the belief that is shared by the vast majority of the American people ... a strong secure Israel is not just in Israel’s interest. It’s in the interest of the United States and in the interest of the entire free world.”

When Jimmy Carter announced his candidacy for the 1976 Democratic presidential nomination to the National Press Club, on December 12, 1974, he said: “We cannot retreat into isolationism. Ties of friendship and cooperation with our friends and neighbors must be strengthened. Our common interests must be understood and pursued. The integrity of Israel must be preserved.”

In a press conference on May 12, 1977 he said, “We have a special relationship with Israel. It’s absolutely crucial that no one in our country or around the world ever doubt that our number-one commitment in the Middle East is to protect the right of Israel to exist, to exist permanently, and to exist in peace. It’s a special relationship.” On the other hand, President Carter was unique among presidents because he came to office knowing there were two sides to the conflict. His interest in the Middle East was intellectual, and he felt no particular affection toward either Israelis or Palestinians. Carter never actually met a Palestinian until after he had left office and had no real understanding of Palestinian grievances until he made a trip to the Middle East as a private citizen in 1983.

Carter introduced a doctrine to maintain American hegemony in the Middle East, the first American president to do so. He also had a definite Middle Eastern policy. As stated in his Doctrine “on January 23, 1980: ‘Let our position be absolutely clear: Any attempt by any outside force to gain control of the [Arabian] Gulf region will be regarded
as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.\textsuperscript{96}

The Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt in 1978 led to a negotiated peace between those two nations signed in Washington DC on March 26, 1979, the first between Israel and any of its Arab neighbors. Other Arab nations, especially the Palestinians, saw Egypt's agreement with Israel as a stab in the back, leaving them weaker and with less bargaining leverage against Israel. America gave Israel assurances in a form of a memorandum of agreement, dated the same day, March 26, 1979 as a commitment to Israel in case the treaty was violated.\textsuperscript{97} These assurances and far-reaching promises not only committed the United States to the unique position of economically and military underwriting Israel's existence but they also diplomatically coordinated—practically to the point of subordination—America's policies to those of Israel. As Israeli Defense Minister Shimon Peres said at the time without exaggeration: 'The agreement has delayed [an international conference at] Geneva, while assuring us arms, money, a coordinated policy with Washington and quiet in Sinai.... We gave up a little to get a lot.'\textsuperscript{98}

The agreement between Israel and Egypt at Camp David affected the Palestinians negatively. In this agreement Egypt was drafted subsequently to deliver the coup de grâce, (changed its historic strategic position on Palestine) peacefully this time, against the Palestinians. The Camp David agreement had inflicted more damage on the Palestinian national cause by nonmilitary means than the two previous armed onslaughts of 1967 and 1972 combined.\textsuperscript{99}

Aruri argues that, "[n]ot only had Camp David I secured the removal of Egypt from the Arab strategic arena, it also allowed Israel to dodge its legal responsibilities to the Palestinian people and to shrug off its obligation to withdraw from Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese territories, in violation of U.N. Security Council resolution and
international law." Carter harmed the Palestinian cause by isolating Egypt from the Arab world and by keeping the Palestinians in refugee camps, while Israeli settlers in the West Bank were on the increase.

Christison notes that the “sound defeat of all Carter’s efforts for the Palestinians, from the vision of a homeland enunciated in 1977 to the autonomy plans framed by the 1978 Camp David accords, provides striking evidence of the extent to which old mind-sets can dictate policy.” The Carter administration ignored the reality that in the Arab world no solution would be acceptable that denied self-determination to the Palestinians. A second reason for the failure was the strength of pro-Israeli sentiment among members of the White House staff, in Congress, in the press, and in general public opinion. Eventually, President Carter and his advisors followed the time-honored approach of ignoring the Palestinians. Carter allowed Israel to get its way in Camp David by allowing the Israelis to neglect their responsibility toward the Palestinian refugees, to refuse to recognize their duties to the international community to stop settlements on Arab land, and to escape all pressure that was laid on them to compromise.

Commenting on Camp David in 2005, President Carter said:

In 1978, it was my belief and hope that the Camp David Agreement between Israelis and Egyptians would serve as a guide to resolve the remaining elements of conflict between Israel and her neighbors. While we have seen some progress through the Oslo Agreement of 1993 and the 1994 peace treaty between Israel and Jordan, much remains to be done. Today, with the Israeli government committed to disengagement from Gaza, I am optimistic that a window of opportunity is being created for real movement toward peace between Israelis and Palestinians. It’s imperative that leaders in the region and in the international community take advantage of this moment.

Carter sowed the seeds of partition between Arabs by taking Egypt out of the Arab leadership and by making the Palestinians more dependent on the Arab street than on
Arab governments for support. Those leaders that Carter called to action are farther away from international legitimacy, in being impartial, than ever before in seeking solutions to the conflict.

When Carter accepted the presidential nomination at the 1980 Democratic National Convention, he said: “I am very proud that nearly half the aid that our country has ever given to Israel in the 32 years of her existence has come during my administration. Unlike our Republican predecessors, we have never stopped nor slowed that aid to Israel. And as long as I am President, we will never do so. Our commitment is clear: security and peace for Israel; peace for all the peoples of the Middle East.”

Ronald Reagan

President Ronald Reagan served from 1981-1989. Israel’s strategic significance was heightened with the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980. In discussing Israel, Reagan stated that Israel was a strategic asset and important ally of America. The central tenet of Middle East foreign policy during the Reagan administration was ensuring Israeli military superiority over all its Arab neighbors in the Middle East.

American neglect to the Palestinians became more malignant, as the Reagan administration turned a blind eye to increasingly aggressive Israeli settlement policies that were steadily swallowing up land in the West Bank. There was a further substantial expansion in the settlement program after President Reagan announced in the 1980s that he regarded the West Bank settlements as ‘legal.’ This legal aspect announced by the Reagan Administration reversed American government policy. This reversal set in motion a huge ‘land grab’ operation on the West Bank under a deceitful guise of legality intended to satisfy liberal American opinion.
During the Reagan administration Israel was viewed as an asset while the PLO was labeled as a terrorist organization. With this view, the Reagan administration acted quickly to establish Israel as a strategic ally and generally ignored the Palestinian cause. The Reagan administration called on King Hussein of Jordan to negotiate on behalf of the Palestinians.\textsuperscript{109} The Palestine question changed priority and was regarded by the Reagan administration as secondary. It ceased to enjoy its usual priority as the region’s principal concern.\textsuperscript{110} Israel enjoyed Reagan’s support and his desire for the defeat of Palestinians.

The Israeli air force bombed Beirut on 17 July 1981 and killed 300 civilians in a crowded residential quarter. Reagan threw his weight behind attaining a cease-fire to which both Israel and the PLO agreed on 24 July 1981. After that agreement the border remained quiet until the spring of 1982.\textsuperscript{111} The Reagan administration “gave a covert green light to Israel’s invasion of Lebanon and its expulsion of the PLO from Beirut in 1982.”\textsuperscript{112} Israel chased many Palestinians in 1982 to the sea and out of Lebanon. Abraham Ben-Zvi argues that Reagan initially acted with marked complacency and equanimity if not muted satisfaction in view of the massive destruction of the PLO strongholds and infrastructure in southern Lebanon and Beirut.\textsuperscript{113}

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon in the summer of 1982 attempted to draw a new political map of Lebanon, to obliterate Palestinian nationalism, and to reduce Syria’s role to manageable proportions in the region.\textsuperscript{114} Historian Abraham Ben-Zvi declares that the Israeli July raid of 1981 on a civilian target in Beirut was clearly compatible with Reagan’s initial animosity toward the PLO and the intransigent ‘rejections front’ which Israel had perceived as embodying his tacit advance approval for such operations as targeting the nuclear reactor in Baghdad. Both the Israeli air raid on the Iraqi nuclear
reactor and the July strike against PLO headquarters in Beirut were carried out by American supplied F-16 aircraft.\textsuperscript{115}

By the end of the war in Lebanon the Reagan administration had promised in writing to guarantee the peace and security of Palestinians remaining in Beirut and their families, on the basis of assurances from Israel and certain Lebanese groups allied with Israel, the Phalangists.\textsuperscript{116} The former Under Secretary of State, George Ball, states that the Reagan administration should have taken Israel’s withdrawal as a clear message, but it appears neither to have heard nor heeded it. Instead, the Reagan administration redoubled its efforts to try to carry out, by itself, the scheme that Israel had abandoned because it had proven unfeasible even with America’s help. Furthermore, George Ball stresses that “the inconsistencies in our position had become obvious. We were pretending that our Marines were a neutral peacekeeping force just at a time when we were disavowing neutrality by making a strategic alliance with one of the warring parties, Israel.”\textsuperscript{117}

During the Reagan administration,

Direct U.S. involvement in Lebanon began with the introduction of a U.S. Marine contingent in August 1982 to assist in the evacuation of Palestinian forces from Beirut—a decision in which Shultz [Reagan’s Secretary of State] apparently played no more than a secondary role. The Marines had a thirty-day mandate but were pulled out well short of that period, which allowed Israel to enter West Beirut in violation of cease-fire terms and left the way clear for Israel’s Lebanese Phalangist allies to perpetrate the massacre at Sabra and Shatila. [There were around 3,000 Palestinian men, women, and children, massacred]. The U.S. too hastily returned the marines to Beirut in the wake of the Massacre. It was a decision taken out of guilt over the earlier, premature withdrawal, according to one American official.\textsuperscript{118}
After the war in Lebanon, the Palestinians wanted a solution to their problem. But America chose to hinder an international settlement throughout the Reagan period and beyond.\(^\text{119}\)

Christison states that, given no restraints by the Reagan administration, Israel’s grip on the occupied territories tightened and the settler population quadrupled during Reagan’s first six years in office. The Intifada [uprising] was launched in late 1987 because Palestinian frustration reached the point of despair at seeing the territories being steadily absorbed into Israel and with little prospect of gaining relief from Israeli occupation.\(^\text{120}\) The “outright U.S. rejection of even the possibility of Palestinian independence, and Shultz’s failure throughout the years to pursue any steps toward a political settlement, even those favored by Israel’s Labor party, unquestionably contributed directly to the uprising.”\(^\text{121}\)

The intifada [uprising]

*and the international support and sympathy this brought the Palestinians spurred the PLO to launch a major peace initiative in late 1988, accepting coexistence with Israel in a two-state division of Palestine. As part of this initiative the PLO agreed precisely to the formula the United States had demanded—recognizing Israel’s right to exist, accepting Resolution 242, and renouncing terrorism—and thus the Reagan administration had no choice but to begin a dialogue.*\(^\text{122}\)

While America was asking the PLO to renounce terrorism, it was not asking Israel to end its occupation of Palestine.

The Intifada gave the impression to the world that America was unfair to pressure the Palestinians under occupation, while remaining silent about Israel’s “iron fist” policy to break the bones of Palestinian children. America was in Arab eyes, cast “in the same mold as the enemy. A deep emotional alienation from the United States [was] developing
in the Arab world, buttressed by a hardening conviction that the U.S. government [was] structurally incapable of being fair.” American foreign policy practices and treatment of Palestinians created its foes in the Middle East. Those foes increased over time as nationalists were joined by Islamists.

George H. W. Bush

George H. W. Bush was President of America from 1989-1993. In the early years of the Bush presidency, American policy maintained the importance of Israel as a strategic ally in the Middle East. In fact, this first Bush administration also maintained other America policies toward the Palestinians including rejection of the Palestinian right to self-determination, to an independent state, and to leaders of their own choosing. This administration continued the historic American hostility to fundamental Palestinian rights and interests.

The Madrid Conference, an initiative inviting Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians to an open meeting, was jointly sponsored by America and the Soviet Union on October 30, 1991. It was a result of American Secretary of State James Baker's shuttle diplomacy in the eight months following the Gulf War. The conference was not based on international legitimacy and UN Resolutions. When George H. W. Bush addressed the Madrid Peace Conference he said: “Peace will only come as the result of direct negotiation, compromise, give-and take. Peace cannot be imposed from the outside by the United States or anyone else.” This conference was concluded without reaching any peace accords. Negotiations ended with giving an ultimatum to Palestinian leaders to accept 11% of historic Palestine and other demands that were impossible to accept. The conference was a complete failure that ended with the second uprising beginning in 2000.
(Al-aqsa uprising). Occupation of Palestine by Israel remains and continues traumatizing the Palestinians with America's blessing and the UN's silence.

On August 2 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait and occupied it. Iraq considered Kuwait to be historically part of Iraq and it had a border dispute with Kuwait. Several days after the Iraqi occupation, America and the UN demanded Iraq's withdrawal. By January of 1991 over half a million coalition forces from (thirty-seven countries) were deployed in the Arabian Gulf region and on January 16 1991, the coalition forces led by America began a devastating bombing campaign. To counter the air attack, President Saddam Hussein ordered the launching of his SCUD missiles over Israel and Saudi Arabia. He provoked the Israelis to strike back, but they did not. To keep the Israelis from responding, America supplied Israel with Patriot missile batteries to protect it. The coalition forces evicted the Iraqi forces from Kuwait and on March 3 1991, Iraq accepted the terms of the cease-fire and the fighting ended. The devastation brought Iraq to the level of the stone age. America's intended goal was to weaken Iraq, so Israel would lose an enemy.

William Clinton

William J. Clinton (1993-2001) mainly focused on the Arabian Gulf and how to maintain American interests there as he entered the White House. As just noted, the war of 1990-91 in the Arabian Gulf had resulted in the destruction of Iraq as a major military power and assured America of its ability to set the political agenda in the region. Indeed, the State Department during the Clinton administration was designed to accord Israel strong American support and to provide it with the most favorable outcome in the Palestinian-Israeli and Arab-Israeli negotiations. In fact, the pro-Israeli slant was so
strong that the Israelis agreed to work with the PLO in Norway away from American pressure and delaying tactics in order to reach a settlement.\textsuperscript{129}

The drastically increased scale of settlement activity since the signing of the Declaration of Principles (DOP) in September of 1993 made a mockery of the peace process. Not only did official Washington look the other way as the settlements threatened to foreclose peace, but it continued to ease restrictions on America’s tax dollars going to building settlements, and it took no position on the flow of private funds enjoying tax exemptions.\textsuperscript{130} Israelis created facts on the ground by building settlements in the occupied territories. Professor Norman Finkelstein elaborates that

\textit{[a]fter seven years of on-again, off again negotiations and a succession of new interim agreements that managed to rob the Palestinians of the few crumbs thrown from the master’s table at Oslo, the moment of truth arrived at Camp David in July 2000. President Clinton and Prime Minister Barak delivered Arafat the ultimatum of formally acquiescing in a Bantustan or bearing full responsibility for the collapse of the ‘peace process.’}\textsuperscript{131}

Paradoxically, President Clinton was the one who nullified the idea of trading land for peace and explicitly altered the meaning of U.N. Resolution 242. That caused the Oslo process to create its own problems, these problems then multiplied between 1993 and 2000.\textsuperscript{132} Clinton’s private problems, his delayed tactics to the peace process, and the group of people he chose to work with him (mostly pro-Israel) contributed to the misunderstanding of the Palestinian case at the negotiating table and ended with a complete failure.

\textbf{George W. Bush}

George W. Bush has been the President of the United States since 2000. He was quoted to say: “We will speak up for our principles and we will stand up for our friends
in the world. And one of our most important friends is the State of Israel.” As Bush came to office, the Bush administration sided with Sharon to strangle the Palestinian national movement under occupation and label it terrorism. The new Bush policies of “realism” were based on military power. This new foreign policy gave the green light for the Israeli military to destroy the Palestinian infrastructure. After the September 11, 2001 attack on America President Bush supported Sharon’s policies that escalated violence in the occupied territories against Palestinians.

American foreign policy after September 11 has served Bush’s needs. It provided him with a pretext to declare a prolonged war intended to crush any opposition in the war against terrorism. The president appears to be driven by a feeling that the world in which we live today is a Hobbesian one in need of a firm hand. In this climate of insecurity the Bush administration hopes to allow Israel to assert its role as the local hegemon under the American umbrella. This Israeli hegemony kept Palestinians under curfew and harsh military rules. During this hard time Bush made a speech where he called on the Palestinians, who were trapped in their homes for weeks and months and were still under prolonged curfews, to change their leaders, to ‘build a practicing democracy,’ to acquire ‘new political and economic institutions based on democracy [and a] market economy,’ to adopt a new constitution, which ‘separates the powers of government,’ to conduct ‘multiparty local elections by the end of the year,’ to establish a ‘truly independent judiciary,’ to streamline the security system, and of course to stop ‘terrorism.’

Noam Chomsky says that the way George W. Bush and his Secretary of State, Colin Powell view a Palestinian state, as “somewhere, sometime, with unknown characteristics” reminds one of South Africa. This approach resembles apartheid realization of “Bantustans,” separate ‘home lands’ for black South Africans.
During seven visits to Washington, between March 2001 and October 2002, Sharon succeeded in convincing President Bush to cancel his father’s plan, as well as that of Clinton. Bush’s ‘vision’ of America’s policy on Palestine for a two-state solution was to let Israel fix the blame on the Palestinians, declare Arafat unfit to rule, and demand his removal. This policy provided a cover for Sharon to crush the Palestinians.\textsuperscript{137} America’s support to Israel achieved terror against the civilian Palestinian population under occupation. This is a new U.S. policy on Palestine. America supports Israel with military supplies, such as planes, tanks, and even bulldozers that are used to demolish Palestinian houses, and shown on American TV’s.

By 2004, Arafat, the democratically elected Palestinian leader, his death mysteriously was suspected by poison. A Palestinian diplomat accused the Israelis of poisoning Arafat.\textsuperscript{138} Dr. Christian Estripeau of Percy Hospital in Paris said Arafat was showing symptoms of arsenic poisoning.\textsuperscript{139} President Arafat was viewed by Bush and Sharon as an obstacle to peace because he stood fast on the agreed term of reference by the collective Palestinian community that is the right of return for the Palestinian refugees. He was replaced with Mahmud Abbas of whom President Bush approved, but no movement was made with a peace process.

Careful reading of the speeches and statements of Bush administration officials shortly after assuming power in Washington shows little if any recognition of, much less sympathy for, the plight of the Palestinian people under a brutal military occupation. The Israeli practices of collective punishment, closure and isolation, economic strangulation, starvation, massive bombardment of residential areas with American-supplied F-16s and helicopter gunships, assassinations, and deliberate maiming of demonstrators in the Palestinian Occupied Territories have elicited no serious American government condemnation or calls on Israel to cease and desist.\textsuperscript{140}
The Bush's administration's foreign policy stance of "blaming the victims" has had major negative consequences for individual Palestinians and helps to fuel the continued cycle of violence in the region. Only hope remained; for some, even hope was diminishing.

IV. Congress and the Zionist Lobby

Not content with their influence over American presidents, pro-Zionist American Jews and their associates moved to actively influence Congress by establishing a pro-Israel lobby. AIPAC, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, was founded in 1953 by I.L. "SI" Kenen, a former political reporter from Cleveland, Ohio. It was named the American Zionist Committee for Public Affairs. It changed its name to AIPAC after a controversy with the Eisenhower administration in the late 1950s. AIPAC lobbies American Government on behalf of Israeli interests as it sees them. It has 65,000 members across 50 states. Its activities are mostly in Washington to gain support for Israeli causes from members of Congress and the White House. The New York Times described AIPAC in 1987 as "a major force in shaping United States policy in the Middle East." It also stated that "[t]he organization has gained power to influence a presidential candidate's choice of staff, to block practically any arms sale to an Arab country and to serve as a catalyst for intimate military relations between the Pentagon and the Israeli army. Its leading officials are consulted by State Department and White House policy makers, by senators and generals."\textsuperscript{141}

AIPAC "has the power to pump up to a million dollars into the campaign coffers of any friendly member of Congress, or into the campaign of the opponents of an unfriendly member," according to Richard Curtiss, executive editor of the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs. AIPAC has helped to benefit Israel with help from
American neoconservatives and the American Jewish community. Although AIPAC represents a small fraction of this community, its effect is enormous and threatening. Israel is a small nation, a rich one, but the fact that "three-fourths of America's foreign aid budget [is] devoted to Israeli security interests is a tribute in considerable measure to the lobbying prowess of AIPAC and the importance of the Jewish community in American politics," according to Benjamin Ginsberg. In America AIPAC demands and issues orders, while congress, the media, and the American political leaders obey.

Just as Zionists lobbied successive presidents, they also lobbied members of Congress. This lobbying became more organized with the creation of AIPAC. The tools that sway America's foreign policy toward Israel and away from Palestinian influence were used to distance America from information favorable to the Palestinians. AIPAC keeps to itself to boost Israeli causes and to smear the Palestinian image. Since the late 1960s, AIPAC mushroomed to have more influence on Middle Eastern policy than any other American institution had in America.

According to Christison the

influence of the pro-Israel lobby, particularly its main organization, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, is so pervasive at the White House as well as in Congress that it is impossible to ascertain where lobby pressure ends and independent presidential thinking begins. The pressure is implicit as well as explicit ... Lobby pressures are an inextricable part of presidential strategy.

AIPAC has increased its access to Congress. The lobby could not afford to make the mistake of appointing policy makers who do not support Israel, as they are evaluating members for a cabinet post. AIPAC means power – raw, intimidating power. AIPAC’s own promotional literature regularly cites a tribute published in The New York Times:

"[t]he most powerful, best-run and effective foreign policy interest group in Washington.
A former Congressman, Paul N. ‘Pete’ McCloskey puts it more directly: Congress is ‘terrorized’ by AIPAC.” Some observers argue that “[t]he Israeli lobby has pretty much romped free in the Congress for a long time now, using the threat of political and financial reprisal against members of Congress who do not fall into line.” America has allowed Israel’s interests to supersede its own.

AIPAC’s lobbying has been so successful, that one researcher labeled America as an Israeli colony, 

[he drew the parallel by concluding, ‘What you have in the United States is a government that is unable to formulate an independent foreign policy without first asking how will Israel react. Secondly, the Congress is accountable to the Israeli lobby, which functions as a foreign agent placing the welfare of Israel above that of the United States. In the third place, the Israeli lobby assures the flow of billions of U.S. tax dollars to Israel.’

American tax dollars flows to Israel with help from Congress as well as by Presidents, to support Israel’s economic, military, and social needs. Members of Congress “were seen as fearful of losing their jobs if they questioned unqualified support for Israel. [Arabs] saw Congress as sanctioning acts of violence by Israel as well as supporting Israeli policies, through routine funding, of ‘dehumanizing’ the Palestinian people. This did great damage to U.S. credibility.” Abraham Ben-Zvi brings to attention how the “Congress not only occasionally placed restrictions on aid bills to prevent assistance to other countries that might prove harmful to Israel, but also often used both direct and indirect legislative measures (such as ‘sense of Congress’ resolutions, committee hearing, and reports) to influence and direct official policy on Israel’s behalf.” AIPAC helps Israel to intrude in the affairs of America’s foreign policy and manipulates it to its liking. This manipulation infringes on the interests of America by a foreign entity.
In their book Blaming the Victims, Edward Said and Christopher Hitchens wrote about AIPAC’s influence:

This sort of concentrated power in American political society has also radiated influences onto civil society, with noteworthy results. The more powerful the lobby grew in America since 1967, the more it drew attention to itself, the more resistance it fostered. So that as such organizations as the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) tried to crush any dissent on Israel in American public life, the more dissent appeared. A pioneering work on Zionist attempts to control opinion and discussion was Alfred Lilienthal’s The Zionist Connection, which appeared in 1978. The book’s merit was to expose instances of suppression and falsification by which publishing houses, journals, newspapers, radio and television stations succumbed to pressure and refrained from disseminating anything that might detract from Israel’s faultless reputation as a model state.

The message is “fall into line,” from the pro-Israeli lobby to those who disagree with them. Otherwise, “anti-Semitic labels,” first, “or else,” second, they work to stop the activity. Most Americans are unaware of the extent to which AIPAC controls how Israel is presented and how they silence opposition to Israeli policies. This behavior became part of the American culture, the political system, and the social norms.

V. Interventions of American Lawmakers in Conflict

Voices of conscience from Congress are trying to change American foreign policy in the Middle East, wrote the Washington Report on the Middle East in 2002, despite pressure from lobbyists. Rep. Lois Capps (D-CA): “Today, the United States is engaged in a critical war against terrorism. In my view the fight against global terror will only be strengthened when we secure a just and lasting peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. For the sake of the Israeli and Palestinian peoples-and for our own sake-the U.S. government must be an honest, credible leader toward the path of peace. Our national interests give us no alternative.” Voices of reason are in action from Congress.
In 2002, Senator Robert C. Byrd (D-WV) reminded his colleagues in Congress to be responsible when voting on resolutions of justice, on a resolution about a Palestinian state. He said: "Nowhere in this resolution is Israel called upon to fulfill its role in working for peace in the Middle East... Where are the demands that Israel withdraw from Palestinian lands and cooperate in the establishment of a Palestinian state?"152

Some members of Congress are worried about where American foreign policy in the Middle East is going. They worry that "US commitment to Israel is open-ended: the United States is providing the material means for an Israeli policy that is beyond its control – a policy that, by all indications, is carrying both Israel and the United States toward a major new crisis."153 In the 1980s, Representative James Johnson from Colorado "declared that many of his colleagues privately opposed Israel's expansion of settlements but said Congress was 'incapable' of taking action contrary to Israel policy."154

In the Congress "it is estimated that approximately 75 percent of the membership of both Houses can be relied upon to support Israel without question on virtually any issue of interest to that country."155 Many members of Congress are aware of "the way in which most candidates for elected office in the US feel that it is required for them to declare unqualified support for Israel in order to be, and to remain, elected. As a whole, US support for Israel is necessary for the Jewish state's functioning, which has become almost totally dependent on the US."156 This dependency is costing American taxpayers for FY 2004, in military and economic assistance, a total of $2.87 Billion, while total military and economic assistance between 1949-2004 to Israel has been $100 Billion.157
Some members of Congress are especially vehement in their support of Israel. House Republican Majority Leader Dick Armey (R-TX) called for what amounted to the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians from the occupied territories and endorsed Israeli conquests of those lands. (Dick Armey and Chris Mathews on Hardball, MSNBC). Armey said that he “is content to have a Palestinian state” but is “not content to give up any part of Israel for the purpose of a Palestinian state.” He said he has “thought this through for a lot of years” and believes that Palestinians living in the West Bank should be removed. When Mathews asked him: “Well, just to repeat, you believe that the Palestinians who are now living on the West Bank should get out of there?” Rep. Armey answer was: “Yes.” He said: “there are many Arab nations that have many hundreds of thousands of acres of land, soil, and property and opportunity to create a Palestinian state.”

Representative Mike Pence of Indiana’s 6th district introduced on 26 February, 2004 a resolution expressing the sense of Congress: H. CON. RES.371: Supporting the construction by Israel of a security fence to prevent Palestinian terrorist attacks and condemning the decision by the United Nations General Assembly to request the International Court of Justice to render an opinion on the legality of the security fence. Why was a Congressman from Indiana calling for the restriction of the movement of half a million Palestinians? The fence was eventually pronounced illegal by the International Court of Justice. The Wall is an apartheid fence; it carries a racist idea; it is undemocratic; it is a tool for oppression to build a fence on others people’s land. This is not in sync with American democracy principles that Representative Mike Pence represent.
In summary American policymakers, from President Wilson to George W. Bush, were biased toward Israel in their dealings with the Middle East conflict. Their dealings with the Arabs and Palestinians were not balanced but rather hostile to the Palestinians and remain so. American policymakers in effect helped to create the state of Israel for the Jewish people in Palestine despite Arab rejection of the Zionist enterprise. The victors of WWII made the Arabs pay for Europe’s crimes in that war. They blocked all international political and economic solutions to the Palestinian problem. At the same time, they supported Israel militarily, economically, diplomatically, and socially, while maintaining their support for Arab dictators; they thus are partners in the oppression of Palestinian and Arab people.

The schools of thought that produced American Middle Eastern policies – Exceptionalism, the Crusader mentality, and Orientalism – laid the seeds for the current impasse in the Israeli – Palestinian conflict. This American foreign policy helped to foster and develop the conditions of political action in the Middle East. In the next sections, I will consider how American support for Israel has colored how American policymakers envision terrorism in the region. Because they hold a distorted view of Israel and the Palestinians, American policymakers have been unable to serve as mediators in the conflict. In point of fact, they have fanned the fires and helped to produce more violence in the region.

To understand how foreign policy is linked to terrorism, I will first consider how terrorism is defined by researchers. Next, I will explore how the American government defines terrorism and then consider how Israel escapes labeling as a “state terrorist” while the Palestinians have come to be seen by many Americans as the only
terrorists. I will conclude by considering the implications of this link between American foreign policy and terrorism for America. American foreign policy succeeded in fostering terror and developing links for terrorism in the Middle East. What American policymakers sowed, they reap today in terrorist “blowbacks” throughout the world.

VI. Terrorism

The process of American foreign policy development on Palestine/Israel is important for understanding how American government views terrorism. Lack of a standard definition for terrorism by the United Nation has been a major obstacle to international countermeasures. UN Resolution language was proposed for the definition of terrorism in 1999. The UN would:

*strongly condemn all acts, methods and practices of terrorism as criminal and unjustifiable, wherever and by whomsoever committed;*... *Reiterates that criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other nature that may be invoked to justify them.*

In 1998 Gambil had further distinguished two distinct categories of terrorism: *redemptive terrorism*, which is used to force another actor into ceding specific human or material resources (e.g., prisoners, money, etc.), and *strategic terrorism*, which is designed to include fundamental changes in policy. An example of redemptive terrorism is when in December 1952 the Israeli state used its air force to intercept and high jack a Syrian civilian air craft en route to Cairo from Damascus and forced it to land in an Israeli airport. Israel took the Syrian passengers hostages, released the non Syrian passengers and the Greek pilot, and demanded that five Israeli soldiers who were captured by Syrian forces be released. The exchange of hostages with civilians occurred
within twenty four hours after the high jacking. On the other hand, "[s]trategic terrorism is designed to effect a long-term change in the status quo by forcing another actor into decisively altering a policy." That is what the PLO armed struggle is trying to do in Palestine to change Israeli policy on colonization in Palestine.

In a state system of government, it is difficult to describe which aspect of the state -- the legal, political, social, cultural or economic structures -- is responsible for acts of terror. In a 1988 study, there were a total of 109 different definitions of terrorism, and the number would be far higher today. Those who define terrorism must seek to describe the concept with precision. If terrorism is not so defined, the danger is that, the power of the State will extend very far.

Most studies of terrorism are focused on non-state political actors. But states can also operate as terrorists, as we have seen in the case of the Israeli high jacking of the Syrian civilian airplane. Other acts of state terror that would be recognized as such by scholars were the Nazi genocide, Argentina’s dirty war, Guatemala’s violence against the Mayas, and the Spanish war against the Basques (which created ETA-Euskadi ta Askatasuna, or Freedom for the Basque Homeland). To these could be added state terror against civilian populations of another country or province, such as the actions of the Contras in Nicaragua, or the Indonesian military forces in East Timor.

State-authorized terror aims not merely at the transformation of society, but at "the transformation of human nature itself." The common goal of criminally repressive regimes is mass disorientation and mass anxiety. Indeed, as Terry James notes, some contemporary governments “have employed terror-violence as an integral part of the governing process.” Other governments do it in the name of state security. Marxist
French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty wrote, "Humanism is suspended and Government is terror."\(^{168}\) Martha Crenshaw attests that what is called "[t]errorism occurs both in the context of violent resistance to the state as well as in the service of state interests."\(^{169}\)

Part of state terrorism is invading and occupying other countries. But it is more than that. How to define terrorism should be decided by public debates and media scrutiny.\(^{170}\) Such debates should not ignore state oppression or state terrorism. In fact state terrorism produces non-state terrorism as oppressed groups turn to violence to achieve political ends.

From the point of view of the developing nations, terrorism is more likely to be employed by governments than against governments, especially those governments of totalitarian, primitive, or colonial powers.\(^{171}\) The remarks in the General Assembly of Ambassador Farah of Somalia on this point are illustrative:

*We do not believe that patriotism is served by violence which destroys innocent souls. Yet we shall not be a party to exploiting an emotional act of desperation in order to block patriotic activity for liberation and suffocate in its cradle the legitimate struggle of peoples. We are firmly opposed to the massive terrorism for which member states of this United Nations are responsible, as they practice oppression against peoples who are struggling for their freedom, sovereignty, national dignity, and recovery of their lands.*\(^{172}\)

America "must recognize that while a just cause may not legitimize acts of individual or group violence, a study of the causes of this violence is not thereby made irrelevant."\(^{173}\) The causes of terrorism are not irrelevant when seeking a solution. If the causes are not included from the start, terrorism will continue to show up uninvited.

A general approach can produce a stronger moral statement about the indiscriminate use of violence to attain political, religious or ideological ends.\(^{174}\)
A broad definition of terrorism for this thesis is that:

**It is terrorism if:**

- A state terrorizes a civilian population under its jurisdiction.
- A person, a group, or an organization, uses dogma or religion to force its views on others.
- A state or a group action lacks international legal support and seeks to force others to agree to the illegal action.
- An organization seeks to maintain occupation and subjugations of others.
- A state or a group that uses might as right, and occupies another country.

**VII. The case of Palestine: Israeli State Terror**

The effects of state terrorism are nowhere better represented than in Palestine. State terrorism there has produced individual and group terrorism. James P. Terry cites that, in the Middle East “[t]he repressive practices which have marked Israeli treatment of the Palestinian people will provide the framework for discussion of the existing methodology which could control and eliminate state terrorism.” This point was clearly stated in the General Assembly by Ambassador Lopes of the Congo:

*We cannot separate (the Palestinians') actions from the circumstances that have engendered them. They were born in conditions that we have made favorable by ignoring their rights, by dissociating ourselves from their fate, and by throwing them into a ghetto like the dregs of humanity. If the Europeans of 1972 no longer blow up trains and bridges (like the Resistance), it is because their countries are free. Palestinians in a Palestine regained will go to the Olympic Games, not to take hostages but to compete with other nations in the stadium, just as Palestinians in a Palestine regained will no longer have any reason to hijack aircraft, or to commit suicide bombing.*

Individual terrorist groups do not have the same resources as states that practice terror with their air forces or huge military. “Violence is a powerful instrument of control, as history demonstrates.”178

52
The laws that protect family honor, the lives of individuals, groups and their properties should be respected by states. Existing international law seeks to outlaw repressive state practices:

*Family honor and rights, the lives of persons, and private property, as well as religious convictions and practice, must be respected. Private property cannot be confiscated.*

*Any destruction by the occupying power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the State, or to other public authorities, or to social or cooperative organizations, is prohibited, except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations.*

The above-quoted requirements of the 1907 Hague Convention and the Geneva Convention remain effective today. Enforcing the law is the responsibility of member states at the UN Security Council, but this responsibility is not being met in Palestine. It should be remembered that Israel has “demolished 8,000 homes between 1967 and 1998, with an average of ten people in every house, [Israel has] created a state of war with those people in these homes. How are you going to make peace with those particular people? Every single home has its own story of agony and pain.”

Fritz Kalshoven has correctly observed that there was no military necessity to demolish Palestinian houses in the occupied territories by Israel. In November 1977, the American Friends Service Committee issued a study which concluded that approximately 1,500 West Bank and Gaza Palestinians have been expelled by the Israeli government since 1967. These Israeli policies violate articles 53 and 33 (which prohibit expulsion and administrative detention) of the Fourth Geneva Convention. The oppressed are going to resist oppression and ethnic cleansing by all means and at every turn of events to seek freedom, the light at the end of the tunnel.
Israel is an occupying and colonizing power that has exercised terror over its subjugated Palestinian population for nearly 55 years. Creating Jewish settlements was the end game for Israel.

It must also be kept in mind that new refugees are being created on an ongoing basis as Israel’s campaign of ethnic cleansing, underway since 1967 in and around Jerusalem, continues to escalate. Residency cards are confiscated at will; building permits are all but absolutely denied to Palestinians in all parts of the West Bank, which includes ‘Greater Jerusalem,’ a concept that has no juridical meaning and would appear to be a euphemism for Jewish land expansion and ownership via expropriation, eminent domain policies, and other methods of land theft. Palestinian homes are being demolished on a wholesale basis. The bulldozer is a more lethal instrument of war against the Palestinian people (since 1948) than any other.185

In fact, many of these strategies first came into use since 1948. Four to five million Palestinian refugees exist today in refugee camps and in the Diaspora, awaiting relief and a solution for the conflict. This terror has many faces, but its bottom line is to dispossess the people from their homes, then keep them under control. Control is exercised by occupying their land, forcing them to remain in refugee camps or disappear. Their daily lives are made miserable by humiliation, by blocking roadways to jobs, by preventing access to medical attention, by refusing access to their schools and universities, and by diminishing their humanity. This is not human coexistence.186 The wars Israel conducted to conquer Palestine are another face of terror. This face cannot make Israel the occupier a victim.

Israel as a terrorist state is supported by the only superpower; the U.S. David Nes and William Fulbright confirm that “Israel has been virtually immune from criticism in our country. James Reston of the New York Times, wrote a few years ago, ‘You can put it down as a general rule that almost any criticism of our government’s policies in the
Middle East will be attacked and even rebuked these days by Israeli officials or their friends in this country or both.\textsuperscript{187} The Israeli influences on America’s foreign policy, the media, and the political system cannot be hidden. Israeli state terrorism is kept suppressed by this influence. This influence also turned America’s policy to favor Israel. Indeed, “[p]eople tend to forget that terrorism in the Middle East was invented by Jewish terrorist groups—notably the Stern Gang and the Irgun, which was under Menahem Begin’s leadership.”\textsuperscript{188}

It is the influence of powerful states that holds the key to humanitarian treatment for the oppressed. A nation such as Israel should consider it to its advantage to adhere to the principles of international law. Unfortunately, America, as the leader of the enlightened world, has set a very poor example. Charles W. Yost, former American Undersecretary of State, correctly described American government’s concept of terrorism when he stated:

\textit{We all righteously condemn it – except when we ourselves or friends of ours are engaging in it. Then we ignore it or gloss it over or attach to it tags like ‘liberation’ or ‘defence of the free world’ or ‘national honour’ to make it seem something other than what it is.}\textsuperscript{189}

Many respected scholars believe that such a contradictory American government policy actually promotes another form of terrorism – individual and group terror-violence while providing the protective shield under which state repression and terrorism can continue. They explain that a policy such as that maintained by America reinforces the conviction of oppressed peoples that they cannot receive justice through peaceful procedures.\textsuperscript{190} America not only violates the spirit and letter of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the United Nations Charter by not actively seeking an end to oppression in areas of the world where it enjoys influence, but it violates its own domestic laws by
continuing to support such oppressive regimes.\textsuperscript{191} The historical past of America’s foreign policy in the Middle East speaks volumes; it involves collaboration with Arab dictators and support for Israel’s oppression of Palestinians under occupation.

Some argue that,

\begin{quote}
[The notion of the U.S. willfully ignoring international law in its occupation of Iraq does not bode well for trying to enforce international law as the basis for the end of the occupation in the Palestinian territories. The U.S. no longer has the credibility to play the role of honest broker in the Israeli conflict with the Palestinians. On the lawns of the White House with Ariel Sharon and in the prison cells of Abu Ghraib in Iraq, the U.S. has nearly burnt up the last of its goodwill with the Arab world. The only acceptable role the U.S. can now play is as part of the Quartet, though the multinational nature of the EU and the UN will make it hard for them to act as quickly or decisively as a single state.\textsuperscript{192}
\end{quote}

America has become linked to terrorism by its own actions. It is seen as an occupation force in Iraq, and it supports economically, militarily, and diplomatically the Israeli state that terrorizes the civilian population of the occupied Palestinian territories. America’s actions are related to its own dark history. It took America eighty six years to get rid of slavery, one hundred and forty four years to give women the right to vote, and one hundred and eighty nine years to allow blacks to vote. How could Arab intellectuals forget this history when dealing with this America today in Palestine? It took America over fifty five years of dealing and supporting oppressive Arab regimes to suddenly want democracy for those Arabs. It is no wonder that Arab populations are suspicious of American motives in the Middle East.

\textbf{VIII. American Policy and Terrorism}

Different American government agencies define terrorism in their own way so the American government itself does not use one single definition. For the Defense Department, terrorism is “The calculated use of unlawful violence to inculcate fear,
intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological." To the FBI, "[T]he unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives" constitute terrorism. Finally, for the State Department, terrorism is "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience." Not unintentionally, one may surmise, this precludes violence against noncombatants committed by a state. Thus Israeli civilian casualties at the hands of Palestinian organizations like Hamas or Islamic Jihad suicide bombings are victims of terrorism for official Washington, while Palestinian civilian casualties at the hands of the Israeli military forces are not.

American definitions of terrorism are one-sided in that they focus on group or individual terrorism. By ignoring how state terror may foster or cause individual or group terror actions, the American definitions, in a sense, blame the victims. American definitions neglect the legal forms of resistance and do not differentiate between state security and the responsibility of that state towards its citizens. America uses its superpower position to benefit its allies politically and diplomatically, cover their actions, and aid a policy of dominating others. Finally, the American government shields itself from accusations that it engages in terror.
Anwar Al Darkazally argues against this American definition of terrorism and its exclusion of state actors, using the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as a case study. He contends there is no difference between the targeting of one civilian or another, particularly not if the difference is based on race, religion, or nationality. A man getting onto a bus full of commuters with an explosive belt is no different from a man dropping a bomb from an F-16 onto an apartment block full of sleeping Palestinian children. It is not good enough to say the intention was different and that the children were not the intended targets and the commuters were; the end result is the same: dead civilians. 

Israel is a settler’s society. America’s support of Israeli policies reflects terror in America’s actions. Terror became part of America’s foreign policy in the Middle East:

Until 9/11 it seemed that the U.S. might be able to persuade Israel to end its illegal occupation. But when terror became the U.S. foreign policy focus, Sharon quickly linked his fight against Palestinians to the U.S. fight against world wide terrorism. Resistance to occupation is not terrorism, of course, but U.S. politicians of both parties embraced the world of a friend and agreed that the situations were similar. It was an easy call. Both the resistance and the terror had come from people who speak Arabic and the majority of whom follow the Islamic faith.

According to the Pentagon’s Defense Science Board, a strong correlation exists between America intervention overseas and increased terrorist attacks against America. These attacks which amount to one-third of all terrorist attacks worldwide were perpetrated against American targets. 

State actors may be the main cause of individual or group terrorist attacks, due to their influence and policy effect on others.

IX. American Government and “Palestinian Terror”

American policymakers perceive Palestinians as terrorists. On the surface, Palestinian terror such as the 1968 El Al hijacking, the killing of eleven Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympic Games, the 1976 hijacking of an Air France flight to Entebbe, Uganda, the 1977 hijacking of a Lufthansa flight to Somalia and current suicide
bombings against Israeli civilians and the military inside Israel are the only “terrorist”
acts recognized as such by America. But these acts could be seen as efforts to bring the
Palestinian cause to world attention. Is it terrorism or a legitimate national armed
liberation struggle?

It is in a states interest to discredit liberation movements that have different
agendas than that of the state. It is in the colonizing state’s particular interest to depict
liberation movements as terrorist movements. The struggle is between emperial powers
represented in the state and the masses, between the exploiter and the exploited, between
the oppressor and the oppressed, between the powerful and the powerless, between the
rich and the poor, states benefit by labeling those who oppose them as terrorists. The
South African liberation movement and the apartheid regime, the Northern Ireland
liberation movement and Britain, the Palestinian liberation movement and the state of
Israel are all examples of this struggle between liberation movements and colonial state
powers.

States want liberation movements de-legitimized as terrorists. But Merleau-Ponty
“certainly comes very close to describing the truth of the matter for those who find
themselves the victims of colonialism. For them, the choice is often between the violence
of domination and exploitation, of racism and discrimination, on one hand, or the
violence of resistance on the other.”200 In fact, researcher and writer, Davidson, points to
Palestinian terror and suggests that,

we discover that [resistance] against Israelis on the West Bank brings into
focus the fact that Israel cannot occupy the West Bank in a vacuum.
Indeed, Israel cannot be Israel in a vacuum, for no country can build its
statehood on the displacement of an entire people and expect peace. Nor
can it occupy and colonize populated lands and cities and expect
quiescence. Historically, there is a predictable cause and effect pattern
Palestinian terror is the effect of Israeli state terror. Until America recognizes that Israel must end its colonizing practices, the terror will continue, because the conflict will continue.

Lesch informs us that “[h]istory has often demonstrated that struggle for independence is rarely won at the negotiating table; instead it is won after a long protracted armed struggle now defined as terrorism.” In the eyes of American policymakers, and according to America’s definition of terrorism, the non-state actors are the only ones who produce terror. This American interpretation neglects the causes of these acts. It neglects colonization and occupation, settlements, expulsion, refugees, past atrocities, wars, and ethnic cleansing. The Israeli settler society generates resistance to its attempted colonial stability. This, in turn, promotes armed struggle on the one hand, against colonial policies of the state, and on the other produces more state terrorism, as the state seeks to impose its rule.

Eventually, Davidson argues that “we have seen that modern history has rendered a judgment on colonial ventures that does not place occupier and occupied on the same moral footing. International bodies such as the United Nations have deemed illegal such conquest and occupation as that undertaken by Israel on the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights.” Furthermore, the establishment of a Jewish state founded on a religious preference damages the native Palestinians’ rights.

Palestinian “[a]cts of resistance, even when they can be judged as terrorist, cannot therefore be seen as condemnable in the same fashion or to the same degree as
comparable acts of the conqueror."\textsuperscript{204} Carolyn Nordstrom wrote that, "[p]eople at the epicenters of violence demonstrated to me that resistance emerges at the first sign of oppression, and is most powerfully coded in re-creating culture and identity against the vicissitudes of violence and oppression."\textsuperscript{205} For the occupied Palestinians no one can ‘take violence out of people ... violence is like a rash on the soul,’ only when the oppression of the occupation disappears, (the rash) the soul will be healed.\textsuperscript{206} The pain in Gaza and the West Bank is from the oppression of occupation, Palestinian pain has joined the pain of the African American slaves, the Native Americans, and the South Africans under apartheid. This sort of pain and suffering is contagious. Occupation causes pain, fear, and produces violence. When the occupation ends, this fear will dissipate and this will lead to peace.

When fear exists, the dignity of humans is absent. Linda Green points to “the invisible violence of fear and intimidation through quotidian experiences of people, [under occupation] ... Fear is inseparable from reality in which the people live.”\textsuperscript{207} Those who do not see resistance in suicide bombing have not lived in oppression under the Israeli occupation, and have not met the response from people who were suffering most of their life, under occupation, says an anonymous Palestinian leader. To deny resistance to people who suffer under occupation, is to be racist.\textsuperscript{208}

Palestinian terror is best described by the Syrian poet Nizar Qabbani. He argued that terrorism is the word used by oppressors to defame a national liberation struggle....

We are accused of terrorism
If we refused to die
with Israel’s bulldozers
tearing our land
tearing our history
tearing our Evangelium
tearing our Koran
tearing the graves of our prophets

... I am terrorism
if it is able to save me
from the immigrants from Russia
Romania, Hungary, and Poland.

... I am with terrorism
if it is able to free a people
from tyrants and tyranny
if it is able to save man from the cruelty of man
to return the lemon, the lemon, the olive tree,
and the bird to the South of Lebanon
and the smile back to Golan.

... I am with terrorism
as long as this new world order
is shared
between America and Israel
half-half.

... I am with terrorism
with all my poetry
with all my words
and all my teeth
as long as this new world
is in the hands of a butcher....

Qabbani’s view, describing Israeli and Palestinian terror, is also reminiscent of

WWII, and how resistance to the Nazi occupation was described. Saul D. Alinsky wrote:

*Those who opposed the Nazi conquerors regarded the resistance as a secret army of selfless, patriotic idealists, courageous beyond expectation and willing to sacrifice their lives to their moral convictions. To the occupation authorities [the Nazis], however, these people were lawless terrorists, murderers, saboteurs, assassins, who believed that the end justified the means, and were utterly unethical according to the mystical rules of war.*
Terror against a civilian population should be condemned no matter who the perpetrator is.

I have established that American foreign policy has been tilted in Israel's favor for over ninety years, long before the state of Israel even existed! As terrorism has entered the international arena, even American government's recognition of terror has served to protect and promote Israeli interests while ignoring and harming Palestinian interests. What then are the consequences of these two policy decisions for America?

X. Consequences of American Policy on Palestine/Israel

Benjamin Barber asserts that America cannot be viable without the world. There can be no American civilian safety, no American investors' security, no American people's liberty, unless there is safety, security, and liberty for all, including the people of the Middle East. American foreign policy can help to foster peace or promote hostility in the Middle East.

Continued American hostility toward the Palestinians has prevented a two-state settlement in accord with the broad international consensus. America and Israel have blocked these accords at every turn for many years. This hostility represents diplomatic harassment by means of soft power through the actions of American diplomats in the United Nations.

Norman G. Finkelstein affirms that:

A 2002 General Assembly resolution ('peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine') affirming Israel's right to 'secure and recognized borders' as well as the Palestinian people's right to an 'independent state' in the West Bank and Gaza passed 160-4 (Israel, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, US). The 2002 UN voting record on virtually every resolution bearing on the Israeli-Palestinian (and -Syrian) conflict was similarly lop-sided.
America is biased in support of Israel in the conflict. This policy tilt renders America unable to play the role it wanted to play as mediator and peacemaker. It disarms America of any objective role in the conflict. Furthermore, American silence on Israeli atrocities against civilian Palestinians, when these atrocities are perpetrated using American planes, helicopters, and bombs, only reinforces local Palestinian perceptions that America supports Israel. Some researchers argue that as a partner with Israel, America is perpetrating terror on Palestinian civilians. This terror occupies a place in Muslims' memory. Pew Trust polls in 2003 found that while Muslims believed it is 'necessary to believe in God to be moral,' they also favored what was termed as 'democratic values.' The Pew poll found, overall, that [Arab and Muslim] 'hostility is toward American policies, not American values.' Arabs dislike American foreign policies and its connection to the interests of Israel and disregard of Palestinian and Arab interests.

For nearly 55 years America's policy in the Middle East has been directed towards the two main goals of securing oil and establishing Israel as a Jewish homeland, as Eric Watkens asserts. As noted previously, America was favored over the colonizing powers of Britain and France after WWI by the Middle Easterners. Even "after World War II the United States continued to be seen by people in the Middle East as a potential ally against the old colonial powers, and indeed played such a role in Libya in 1950—51, and during the Suez War of 1956 and the Algerian War of Liberation from France in 1954-62." Certain American foreign policies caused the anti-Americanism that surfaced today. Historically, the American response to Arab and Iranian nationalism, and America's support for Israel all contributed to anti-Americanism in the Middle East.
The earlier political capital was completely depleted by one-sided American support for Israel.

In fact, some would suggest that Israel, the most sophisticated and successful terror state in the world, is now advising and coaching the only superpower on how to implement the war on terrorism. America has implemented a "new world strategy...including what it (and its Israeli allies) call "targeted killings." During February 2003, the Bush administration sought the Israeli government’s counsel on how to create a legal justification for the assassination of suspected terrorists.219

Anti-Americanism is not evident everywhere. It is not consistent, but varies across the Arab world. "Most Arab expressions of anti-American feeling stem less from hatred of the United States or American values than from profound ambivalence: The United States is at once admired for its affluence and technology (and by some for its secularism, law, and order) and resented for its contribution to a repressive Middle Eastern status quo,"220 and the horrible treatment of the Palestinians by American foreign policy and its ally, Israel.

This interpretation leads some to argue that America is no longer the nation to which Muslims will give the benefit of the doubt in situations where America claims to be an even-handed, honest broker in dealing with them vis-à-vis Israel or other matters. We have used up all our chits with Muslims. Rather, America is now regarded as a nation that supports and protects Arab tyrants from Rabat to Riyadh, that has abandoned multiple generations of Palestinians [from] cradle-to-grave life in refugee camps, and that blindly supports Israel, arming and funding her anti-Muslim violence and preventing Muslims from arming sufficiently to defend themselves.221

Some also assert that Washington is keeping a status quo policy toward the Arab and Muslim world. That policy is giving green light for Israel's aggressive actions against
the Palestinians. This policy is enhancing recruitment of young Muslim men volunteering for jihad. One could conclude that

by electing these leaders, the American people have given their consent to the incarceration of the Palestinian people, the demolition of Palestinian homes and the slaughter of the children of Iraq. The American people have the ability and choice to refuse the policies of their Government, yet time and again, polls show the American people support the policies of the elected Government. This is why the American people are not innocent. The American people are active members in all these crimes.

Recent America’s destructive foreign policy has not just changed in the Middle East but in the international arena. “International conventions of variety have either been ‘unsigned’ or never signed, so that the world’s only superpower stands unconstrained on issues of the environment, discrimination against women, protection of children, nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, and the punishment of war criminals.”

American foreign policy has also changed toward its allies. Finkelstein suggests that with the doctrine of preventive war, the Bush administration “has dealt a ‘mortal blow’ to Article 51 of the UN charter prohibiting armed attack except in the face of an imminent threat. ‘Since Bush came to office’, the London Guardian observes. ‘The United States government has torn up more international treaties and disregarded more UN conventions than the rest of the world has in 20 years.’

President Dwight Eisenhower “cautioned Americans to recognize that ‘there can be no peace without law. And there can be no law if we were to invoke one code of international conduct for those who oppose us, and another for our friends.’” American double standards created one law to support Israel’s occupation of Palestinian land, and another to call the Palestinian freedom fighters terrorists.
Despite America’s recent half-hearted shift in its Middle Eastern policy, the situation is getting worse. Shibley Telhami argued in The Middle East Journal.

*I do not think that U.S. policy right now can be oriented at ‘winning hearts and minds’ of the Middle East in the short term. That is not going to happen. The U.S. has a legacy of decades that is based in part on our policy and in part on impression; it is not going to be able to change the paradigm overnight simply by a charm.... People are not going to trust the message if they don’t trust the messenger.*

Professor Talhami’s accurate depiction of America’s lack of credibility in the Muslim world encapsulates the consequences of a half-century of American Middle Eastern policy that moved America from being the much admired champion of liberty and self-government to the hated and feared advocate of a new imperial order, that has much of the same characteristics as nineteenth-century European imperialism: military garrisons; economic penetration and control; support for leaders, no matter how brutal and undemocratic, as long as they obey the imperial power; and the exploitation and depletion of natural resources. These policies are seeds for terror and counter terror and link America to that terror.

Some argue that “[t]he question is whether U.S. interests require Americans to be Israel’s protectors and endure the endless blood-and-treasure costs of that role. Status quo U.S. policy toward Israel will result in [an] unending war with Islam.”

*A country’s history and its people’s ideology are also important aspects of foreign policy making. In the case of the United States, long periods of isolationism have been followed by periods of forceful interventionism. This later stance, which has characterized American policy since World War II, is often accompanied by a strong missionary zeal and a tendency to rationalize foreign policy decisions with legal and moral arguments, rather than with those citing material needs or the national interest.*

America’s Palestine policy has consistently denied the Palestinians their right to self-determination and has refused to accept the PLO as the representative of the...
Palestinian people. “Three main factors underlie the particulars of American policy on Palestine: first, hostility rooted in cultural, ethnic, and racial values; second, a negative orientation to Third World peoples, including Palestinians; and third, an antipathy to the Palestinian struggle as a movement of national liberation.” American policymakers are not working for peace but to keep terror under their control.

XI. Conclusion

The seeds of Exceptionalism and Orientalism produced the crops intended, so it is no wonder that American policymakers look down on the Arab culture. Blinded by political leaders the Crusaders view, American produced a foreign policy that is biased and hostile toward the Arab World. This foreign policy supports the terror of Israel’s occupation of Palestine, and continues to create animosities with Arabs and Muslims as it fosters hostility in its “clash of civilization” with Islam. American foreign policy also produced blowbacks such as 9/11 and generated terror as in Palestine. This develops terrorism in the region and destabilizes it. American policy goals still are to secure oil for the American industry and to establish Israel as a Jewish state. This American foreign policy and its links to terror in the Middle East have become a way of life that needs to be changed to a non-violent one, for a safer future. Other American values such as justice, equality, and non-discrimination must be tapped into, for America to become the “light upon a hill.”

American foreign policy in the Middle East went from moderate to extreme, an extreme equal to that of the Jihadist; the new American leaders, armed with fundamentalist religious views and interpretations of the Bible, support Israel as it builds settlements on Palestinian-occupied land. They accept the Israeli claim that the land was
God-given to the chosen people, the Jews. American foreign policy under such leaders has gone from law-abiding to rejecting laws, norms, and customs of the international community and from self-interest after WWII to a moral double standard when identifying terrorism, resistance, and violence. From being a respected member among nations, America is now feared and hated for its actions. America has moved from a constructive member of the international community to a destructive one with less credibility. Morally, America’s actions in Iraq at Abu Graib and siding with Sharon and violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have led some international observers to question America’s value system and its commitment to justice.

By not implementing American values of justice, freedom, and the rule of law, American foreign policymakers have deviated from the goal of the American dream. By insisting on a definition of terrorism that ignores state terrorism and refuses to explore the causes of individual and group terrorism, American government is ultimately unable to act to prevent or reduce terrorism in the world. When America acts unilaterally to tackle issues that concern the international community and when it refuses multilateral cooperation, and violates international treaties and norms, it becomes isolated, an outcast, and ultimately hated. In the end, American foreign policy in the Middle East has aided in the development of terror and devastation in the region.

America will benefit by using a foreign policy based on moral values with one standard for all that will regain civility and strength to its role. This will advance the causes of justice, freedom, and the rule of law. With that morality as a pillar in its agenda, only then can America advise its ally, Israel, to end its colonization; it could take the road of multilateral cooperation, instead of the aggressive role it currently has that other
countries fear. Only then can it hope to act to reduce terror and violence in the world and live up to its potential as a world leader.
XII. Cited work


22 Davidson, Lawrence, “Press, State Department and Popular Perceptions of Palestinians in the 1920s,” unpublished manuscript, 1994. Davidson concluded from a review of state department memoranda throughout the 1920s that, where they existed, State Department objections to Zionism were low-key and ineffective. And see Kathleen Christion, U.S. Policy and the Palestinians: Bound by a Frame of Reference.


31 Khalidi, Rashid. 2004. Resurrection Empire, Beacon Press: Boston, MA. p. 120.


34 http://www.palestinefacts.org/pf_mandate_evian.php


39 - Kathleen Christison. "U.S. Policy and the Palestinians: Bound by a Frame of Reference," Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 26, No. 4 (summer, 1997), pp. 46-59, p. 51. And see Grose, Israel in the Mind of America, p. 134; Tschirgi, Politics of Indecision, p. 36. In a memorandum to Secretary of State Cordell Hull complaining about Britain’s 1939 White Paper, Roosevelt said he believed that, because the world had understood that the Balfour Declaration looked toward an eventual Jewish majority in Palestine, Britain really could not limit Jewish immigration, as the White Paper proposed to do.


43 UN (document A/364) 1/


47 Oral History Interview with Clark M. Clifford by Jerry N. Hess on April 19, 1971, in Washington, D.C.


50 Truman speech October 28, 1948.


64 http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Quote/jfkg4.html 1-17-2006

65 http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Quote/jfkg2.html 1-17-2006

66 http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Quote/jfkg.html 1-17-2006


and actions with regard to Israel’s development of a nuclear capability, see Meman and Raviv, Friends in Deed, pp. 95-104. And see, Siegel, The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict, pp. 99-100, 107-9.

70 Ben-Zvi, Abraham. 1993. The United States and Israel, Colombia University Press, 1993, p. 79. The italics were in the original quote.


76 - Christison, Kathleen. “Bound by a Frame of Reference, Part II: U.S. Policy and Palestinians, 1948-88, Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 27, No. 3 (Spring, 1998), pp. 20-34, p. 23. See also, Clark Clifford, and then chairman of the President’s Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and a staunch supporter of Israel, chaired an investigation of the incident but was asked by Johnson not to make a more extensive independent inquiry. From his investigation, Clifford concluded that there had been no justification for the attack, which he felt had been deliberate and had been covered up in Israel. Clark Clifford with Richard Holbrooke, Counsel to the President: A Memoir (New York: Random House, 1991), pp.446-47.


87 http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/g /geraldrfo 143335.html 1-17-2006


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141 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Israel_Public_Affairs_Committee

142 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Israel_Public_Affairs_Committee


157 This data is drawn from a large number of sources, primarily the Congressional Research Service report IB85066, “Israel: U.S. Foreign Assistance.”

Representative Mike Pence of Indiana's 6th district introduced on 26 February, 2004 a resolution expressing the sense of Congress: H. CON. RES.371: Supporting the construction by Israel of a security fence.

And see (GA Res. 51/210 Measures to eliminate international terrorism).

And see My choice of these terms is arbitrary. Neither of them, to my knowledge, has appeared in the existing literature on terrorism.

And see (1) see London Times, 13-15 December 1954. And Noam Chomsky, The fateful Triangle (Boston: South End Press, 1983), p. 77. Chomsky cited the diary of Israeli prime minister Moshe Sharret, who recalls being told by the U.S. State Department that Israel action was "without precedent in the history of international practice."


(1) See A. Dallin and G. Breslauer, Political Terror in Communist Systems (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1970). The authors detail the use of terror and conclude that it serves as a useful tool for motivation where positive benefits such as material inducements are lacking, noting: “Organized terror, now serves to ensure compliant behavior during…. a period of change, and to this extent, political terror, however painful or distasteful, has a rational basis.” See also R. Conquest, The Great Terror: Stalin’s Purge of the Thirties (New York: Macmillan, 1968).

(2) The systemic and ritualized use of terror in primitive societies has been studied exhaustively in E. V. Walter, Terror and Resistance: A Study of Political Violence (London: Oxford University Press, 1969).

The generally accepted view among representatives from former colonies is that colonial and “settler” regimes (such as Rhodesia, South Africa, and Israel) have a virtual monopoly on true terrorism. This was emphasized in remarks by one of the panelists on terrorism at the 1973 meeting of the American Society of International Law, where it was said, “I assume therefore, at least for the weak members of the international community – which happens to coincide with its third world component – that terrorism in international relations, irrespective of how we define terrorism, is largely an attribute of the strong.” Address by Professor Ibrahim Abu-Lughod of Northwestern University, American Society of International Law, April 12, 1973. See also Sayed Nofal, Israel’s Crime Record (Cairo, 1965).

UN Doc. A/C. 6/ L. 867 (1972) This statement is included within “Compilation of Relevant Views Expressed in the Course of the General Debate at the General Assembly.”


177 UN Doc. A/C. 6/ L. 867 (1972) This statement is included within “Compilation of Relevant Views Expressed in the Course of the General Debate at the General Assembly.”


179 Art. 46 Annexed Regulations, the Hague Convention IV of 1907 Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land, 36, US Status at Large, 2310.


(1) Paragraph 4 © of Agenda Item 4 (Question of the Violation of Human Rights in the Territories Occupied as a Result of Hostilities in the Middle East); 4 © was approved by a vote of 23 for, 3 against, with 6 abstentions on February 15, 1977.


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