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Centering Palestinian Human Rights:
Recommendations for a Coalition

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Centering Palestinian Human Rights: Recommendations for a Coalition

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Glossary

Abraham Accords	Bahrain, Morocco, Sudan, and the UAE normalize relations with Israel in 2020
AIPAC	American Israel Public Affairs Committee
AIM	American Indian Movement
Al-Aqsa Mosque	Considered the third holiest site in Islam, located in Jerusalem
Area A	Zone containing major Palestinian cities in the West Bank, administrated fully by the Palestinian Authority
Area B	Zone containing most Palestinian villages in the West Bank, under joint administration by the Palestinian Authority and Israeli military
Area C	Largest of the three zones in the West Bank, containing most Israeli settlements in the region and fully under Israeli administration
ANC	African National Congress
Camp David	American Presidential retreat in Maryland, site of several peace talks between Israel and Palestinians
C-RAM	Counter Rocket, Artillery, and Mortar
CRS	Congressional Research Service
Fatah	Dominant political party of the Palestinian Authority
Gaza Strip	140 square mile strip of land controlled by Hamas since 2007 and subject to an Israeli blockade ever since, home to almost 2 million Palestinians
Hamas	Islamist militant group associated with the Muslim Brotherhood, operates in and controls domestic affairs in the Gaza Strip

Haram Al-Sharif	Muslim name for the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, considered a holy site in both Islam and Judaism
Highly Enriched Uranium	Weapons-grade uranium used in nuclear warheads
Historic Palestine	Designation for region containing all of Israel and the Palestinian territories
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IBCS	Integrated Air & Missile Battle Command System
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICJ	International Court of Justice
IDF	Israel Defense Forces
IITC	International Indian Treaty Council
Intifada	Arabic term meaning “shaking off,” used to describe two uprisings against Israel by Palestinians
ISP	Internet Service Provider
FMCT	Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty
FY	Fiscal Year
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPT	Treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons
NSF	Palestinian National Security Forces of the Palestinian Authority
Occupied Palestinian territories	The West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem
Old City of Jerusalem	Neighborhood in East Jerusalem; made up entire city until late 19th century; home to important Christian, Muslim, and Jewish religious holy sites

Oslo Accords	Agreements in 1993 and 1995 in which representatives of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization negotiated a process to create an eventual Palestinian state
PA	Palestinian Authority; official representative of the Palestinian people since 1994
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization; political group that attempted to end Israel's occupation through various means, including terrorism and diplomacy; replaced by the Palestinian Authority in relevance after Oslo Accords signed
Pre-1967 borders	Borders preceding the Six-Day War; used to indicate a future Palestinian state's territory as the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem
Separation Barrier	Wall and fence barrier which traces the border between Israel and the West Bank; crosses fully into the West Bank at some points
Temple Mount	Muslim and Jewish holy site in Old City of Jerusalem; site of contention between Israel and the Palestinians
UN	United Nations
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees
V-SHORAD	Very Short Range Air Defense
VPN	Virtual Private Network
Waqf	Muslim charitable endowment under Islamic law; land administrated as Islamic trust
West Bank	2,183 square mile region home to about 2.7 million Palestinians and 400,000 Israeli settlers
Western Wall	Holiest site in Judaism; sits directly adjacent to the Temple Mount in the Old City of Jerusalem
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

Executive Summary

By failing to make Palestinian human rights a priority within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the international community and the US not only condone, but normalize, the human rights violations that accompany Israel's continued occupation of the Palestinian territories. This analysis provides a blueprint for the the creation of a coalition that will leverage international political influence to center Palestinian human rights within the conflict and empower the Palestinian voice in political discussion.

Key Questions

To determine the most optimal pathway to convening a coalition, the following questions will serve as a guide for this report:

- How does Israel's state of security affect the humanitarian conditions Palestinians face under occupation? How does Israel's defense system impact the state of international security?
- What are the legal implications of Israel's policies?
- Who has an interest in promoting human rights in the Palestinian territories?
- What are potential fundraising avenues for financing coalition activities?
- What role does censorship and media play in the suppression of Palestinian human rights?
- What can we learn from historical examples of success in coalition building in response to oppression and disputes over territory?

Introduction

Mani Singh and DaisyJane Darling

While the roots of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict stretch back into the late 19th century, there is no universally accepted date for the beginning of the conflict itself. Nonetheless, the end of the British Mandate and the declaration of Israel as a state in 1948 marked a turning point, spurring the events that defined the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as we know it today. When a conflict rages on for as long as the one between Israelis and Palestinians has, it is difficult to measure and keep up with the amount of pain and suffering endured by those impacted.

While the current state of the conflict clearly leaves one side, Israel, with a greater degree of power, there is no side left unscathed from the decades of ethnic conflict between them. The Jewish people are no strangers to suffering and insecurity at the hands of oppressors. Even after generations of somewhat peaceful integration, Jewish diasporas across the world were constantly subject to political scapegoating. After the horrors of the Holocaust, it became impossible to ignore the Jewish need for a homeland to offer protection and prevent history from repeating itself yet again. However, it must be acknowledged that since the foundation of Israel as a state Palestinians have suffered as well. Over the past half-century, Palestinians have fought and struggled for their right to self-determination and to no avail. Even the traditional allies of Palestinians have seen fit to renege on old promises made to the Palestinian people in pursuit of their own agendas with Israel. Left without hope, reliable allies, or the means to have their voices heard, it is not surprising that some Palestinians feel justified in resorting to violence to end the status quo. Israel has a right to defend itself but far too often favors an overwhelming show of force as opposed to restraint in dealing with a people that have already lost so much. The abysmal state of human rights is the first thing that gets lost in all of the political gamesmanship

and none are more aware of this than Palestinians. The international community cannot sit idly by with the expectation that these conditions will somehow improve themselves. By failing to make Palestinian human rights a priority, the international community and the US not only condone, but normalize, the human rights violations that accompany Israel's continued occupation of the Palestinian territories. Through analysis of vital aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, this report presents a blueprint for the the creation of a coalition that will leverage international political influence to center Palestinian human rights within the conflict and empower the Palestinian voice in political discussion.

Despite numerous attempts at reconciliation, there have been recurring obstacles to peace that ultimately result in the derailment of any significant progress being made to alleviate the suffering of those struggling the most. Tensions regarding decisions made by the Israeli government in relation to settlements have contributed to prolonging the conflict and have generated mutual animosity between Israelis and Palestinians. The settlement policy has direct implications on how a potential final resolution could look like in terms of territory and thus evokes strong emotions on both sides. Disputes over how to distribute control of ancient holy sites significant to Islam, Judaism, and Christianity have been another common source of tension, especially in the case of Jerusalem. Acts of terrorism against Israelis in retaliation for the ongoing troubles Palestinians face have yielded nothing but reprisals from the IDF and have only added fuel to the fire, paving the way for fear-based decision making on both sides. Influence from outsiders who have their own political and religious interests in the conflict adds even more angles to the issue. In particular, American influence has played a significant role in shifting the balance of power in favor of Israel. Furthermore, since international concern for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has decreased in recent years, it receives less coverage and discussion.

This, along with censorship of Palestinian voices and an avoidance of the issue in most mainstream news outlets, makes it difficult for everyday people to learn about both sides of the conflict, which leads to the lack of a sense of empathy or personal connection to the issue.

Primarily driven by political considerations, these obstacles indirectly undermine the human rights of the most vulnerable, and, at the very least, the most preliminary obstacles must be overcome before a meaningful solution can take effect. This report focuses on key elements of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that can be incorporated by a coalition to address these obstacles in order to eventually form a foundation of mutual respect and empathy from which negotiations can grow. For the purposes of this report, our Task Force focuses on the humanitarian conditions for Palestinians in the occupied territories and does not address the humanitarian issues faced by Palestinian refugees and the Palestinian diaspora. Though the needs and concerns of each of these Palestinian communities are equally important, the refugees and diaspora face issues of a different nature than the humanitarian issues in the occupied territories, and therefore require a separate assessment and solution.

Our team believes immediate negotiation would not succeed in achieving a Palestinian state. Since the re-election of Benjamin Netanyahu in 2009, Israel has not been an enthusiastic partner for peace, and, in fact, actively undermines the process. Our team believes the formation of a grassroots coalition advocating for the improvement of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories is better served for creating change in this moment due to the lack of leverage in negotiations on the Palestinian side. Additionally, we acknowledge the differences among Palestinians that will make an agreement with Israel difficult. Palestinians are not a monolith, and their governments are not aligned on the best path towards peace. Thus, we prefer to advocate for an improvement of human rights over immediate negotiations. This report will

begin by offering background and history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from 1947 to the present. This section will be followed by an overview of the current humanitarian situation in the occupied territories, as well as an analysis of international law, diplomacy, and security in relation to Israel. Next, the report will focus on the steps needed to take in order to form a coalition, including identifying potential and influential members, identifying what lobbying efforts the coalition should advocate for, how to overcome barriers such as censorship and economic hardships, and lessons that can be learned from previous coalitions that were successful in the past.

Statement of Purpose:

This coalition advocates first and foremost for the respect and prioritization of Palestinian human rights, and the human rights of all people, as they are defined by the United Nations in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, enacted by the United Nations in 1948. By virtue of participating in this coalition, each member party agrees to uphold the following values and steps towards promoting peace. First, mutual respect and recognition of the legitimacy of Israel and of Palestine as nations. And second, Israel must acknowledge and address its violations of international law through the occupation and subsequent blockade of the Gaza Strip, as well as the institution of Israeli settlements throughout the West Bank.

Section I: Historical Context

History Part I: From Partition to the Oslo Accords

Caty Neeser

Introduction

The year of 1947 marks the beginning of the Arab-Israeli conflict that has remained volatile to this day. The conflict has inflicted unfathomable tragedy on every party involved. Not only have thousands of Israelis lost their lives due to constant warfare, but the nation continues to face several security threats within the region to this day. However, when examining history it becomes clear that the Palestinians have been disproportionately impacted by the Arab-Israeli conflict in several ways. Throughout the twentieth century, the Palestinians suffered an immense loss of life, mass displacement, unstable leadership, and have struggled for allyship, all of which have contributed to their current dire conditions.

Partition of Palestine

On November 29th, 1947, the United Nations passed Resolution 181, which called for an end of the British Mandate of Palestine, as well as the partition of the land into two sovereign states, one Jewish and one Arab (see fig. 1)

(Shapira 155). The plan allocated 55% of land for the Jewish state and 42% for the Arab State,

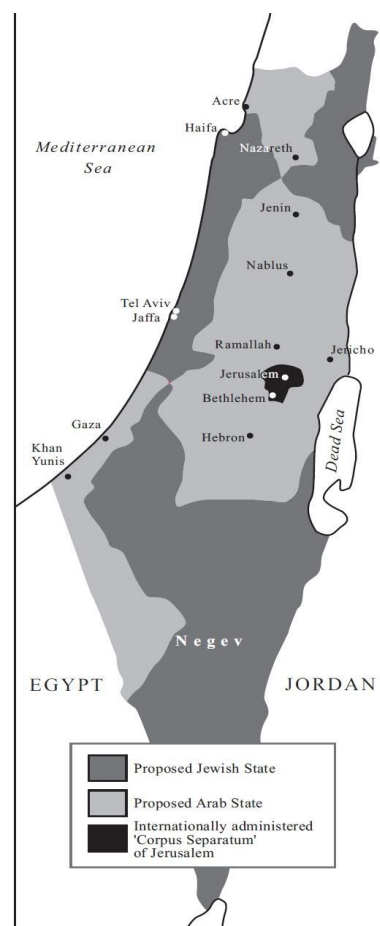


Figure 1. Harms, Gregory and Todd Ferry. *The Palestine-Israel Conflict: A Basic Introduction*. Page 93.

while Jerusalem was to be left under international control (Morris, "1948: A History" 63). The territorial allotment plan was arguably doomed from its inception. The Arabs struggled to understand how a Jewish minority, which was 37% of the population at the time, managed to receive a majority of the land (Morris, "1948: A History" 65). The divide left nearly half a million Palestinian Arabs under Israeli jurisdiction, forcing them to become a minority ruled by what many felt was a foreign government (Morris, "The Birth" 53). Unsurprisingly, the declaration of the partition plan quickly culminated in violence, leading to the first Arab-Israeli War.

The First Arab-Israeli War of 1948

While Israelis refer to the First Arab-Israeli War as their "War of Independence," Palestinians prefer to use the title "Al Nakba," or "The Catastrophe" (Shapira 155). In more ways than one, what happened to the Palestinians during this war was indeed a catastrophe. Not only did they suffer military defeat, but hundreds of thousands of Palestinians fled from their homes, creating a refugee crisis that persists to this day.

Violence between Arab and Jewish militias broke out immediately following the announcement of the partition plan in 1947. After Israel declared statehood on May 14th, 1948, the surrounding Arab states launched a more conventional war (Shapira 163). The Arab states knew that the Palestinians would fail without their support and were compelled to act due to the growing sentiment of Arab nationalism (Shapira 163). As a result, only one day after Israel was established, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Transjordan, and Iraq invaded the state (Morris, "1948: A History" 77).

From the onset, the Palestinian Arabs were ill equipped for a war. A major contributing factor for this was the destruction incurred by Palestinians during the Arab Revolt in the 1930s.

During the revolt, the British killed thousands of Palestinian soldiers, politicians, and activists, leaving them with not only no fighting force or stable government, but a generation disoriented by trauma and fear (Morris, “1948: A History” 21). Furthermore, while the Arab states that came to the Palestinians' defense spread violent rhetoric about the destruction they would cause to Israel, it failed to develop into a reality. Much of this is due to the catastrophic lack of coordination between the states and differing agendas, which made cooperation impossible (Shapira 158).

Throughout the course of the war, Palestinians fled Israel by the hundreds of thousands to the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and surrounding Arab states. There is a common misconception that Arab leaders called for the Palestinians to leave the region, however there is no evidence to support this claim (Shapira 162). It is more likely that the fear and uncertainty of what Jewish rule would bring caused them to leave. In May of 1948, “Plan Dalet” was carried out by Jewish paramilitary forces (Khalidi 8). This plan ordered the Jewish forces to gain control over their allocated partition territory before the British withdrew (Shapira 161). Following the launch of Plan Dalet, stories spread rapidly of forced expulsions and violent encounters with Jewish fighting forces (Shapira 161). The most notable story recounts the massacre of Deir Yassin, in which 100 Palestinians, women and children included, were slaughtered by the Jewish gangs (Pappé 113). The spread of these horrific stories was expedited through propaganda produced by the Israelis in order to intentionally perpetuate terror (Tamimi 53). This triggered a massive flight of the petrified Palestinian community. Indeed, the majority of the Palestinians left under the conviction that they would certainly be returning after the Arabs defeated Israel.

By the end of the war, Israel's demographics had dramatically changed; over 90% of Arabs that originally inhabited Israel's borders were gone, as well as 50% of all Arabs from the

entirety of Mandatory Palestine (Cotran and Karmi xi). This led to a refugee crisis that has endured to the present. It is estimated that 750,000 Palestinian refugees were produced by the war. Many ended up in the West Bank or Gaza Strip, and the rest in surrounding Arab states, primarily Jordan and Syria (Cotran and Karmi xi). This crisis continues to exist today, with five million Palestinians registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) (“Palestinian Refugees” par. 2). Unfortunately, this number is likely even higher due to the fact not every refugee is registered or eligible to register with the UNRWA.

The war came to an end in July of 1949 following a series of armistice agreements between Israel and the Arab states (Shapira 171). Through these agreements, Israel managed to expand its borders past the original partition lines by 22% (Jamal 531). Furthermore, Egypt gained control over the Gaza Strip, while Jordan received the West Bank (Shapira 171). The Palestinians, on the other hand, were left with nothing. Not only had they been expelled from their homeland and dispersed throughout the region, they also lost their rights to any form of self determination.

The Six-Day War of 1967

Conflict persisted from the War of 1948 onwards. In 1956, Israel launched the Suez Campaign against Egypt, though this war did not change the Palestinians’ reality in any tangible way. However, the Six-Day War of 1967 did have a disastrous impact on the Palestinians. Not only did it worsen the refugee crisis, but it led to an Israeli occupation of their land that remains to this day. Additionally, the war facilitated a significant rise in Palestinian nationalism.

On May 13th, 1967, President Gamel Abdel Nasser of Egypt received false Soviet intelligence claiming that Israel was stacking troops at the northern border in preparation to attack Syria (Kolander 404). As a result, Nasser deployed troops to the Sinai Peninsula, ordered

the UNEF peace troops to evacuate, and closed the Straits of Tiran to all Israeli ships (Kolander 404). The rapid development of events caught Israel off guard and left it terrified of its own destruction. Initially, Israel was hesitant to take immediate action, but increased public demands to act eventually resulted in a full scale war, launched on June 5th, 1967 (Shaw and Demy 751). Within a matter of hours, Israel won the war by utterly destroying the Egyptian air force (Shaw and Demy 751). After only six days of fighting, Israel quadrupled its territory, gaining control over the Gaza Strip, Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank, the old city of Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights (see fig. 2) (Shapira 302 and 307).

The implications of this war were dramatic for the Palestinians. It led to another wave of refugees and established an Israeli occupation that persists today. An estimated 430,000 Palestinians fled the conquered territories due to both fear and forced expulsions (Cotran and Karmi 96). Even after this enormous flight, the nearly one million Palestinians who stayed in the conquered territory had fallen under Israeli jurisdiction (Shapira 302). Israel originally claimed no intention of annexation, mostly because the state was not keen on the idea of granting one million Arabs Israeli citizenship (Morris, "1948: A History" 52). As a result, the Israeli Minister of Defense, Moshe Dayan, announced a "soft occupation" that allowed the Palestinians to continue their day to day activities (Shapira 310).



Figure 2. Harms, Gregory and Todd Ferry. *The Palestine-Israel Conflict: A Basic Introduction*. Page 114.

Unfortunately, the reality of a “soft occupation” was short lived. While Israel did not want annexation, they did want control over the population. Thus, an Israeli military regime was quickly established in the occupied territories. Life under occupation involved checkpoints at all major bridges and crossroads, routine searches, curfews, and arbitrary school closures (Harms and Ferry 143). An extremely restricting permit system also developed that required the Palestinians to obtain permits for the most common activities such as work and travel, significantly hindering their freedom of movement (Naser-Najjab 192). The War of 1967 also allowed the number of Jewish settlements located in the occupied territories to quickly increase (Jamal 530; Shapira 317). By 1968, Jewish settlements began to appear in densely populated Arab regions, signaling Israelis intent to exert control over the Arab population and settle the land for themselves (Jamal 530). The presence of the Israeli military and Jewish settlers in the occupied territories created an oppressive environment for the Palestinians to live in that would only worsen with time.

In efforts to settle the territorial dispute, the United Nations passed Resolution 242, which called for Israel to “be willing to return conquered lands in exchange for peace with Egypt, Jordan and Syria” (Lerner 394). The resolution’s vague verbiage led to several separate interpretations preventing any progression towards peace. The gravest downfall of Resolution 242, however, was that it completely failed to address the Palestinian people, only briefly calling for a solution of the “refugee problem” (Lerner 394). It made no mention of Palestinians rights to self determination, as had been laid out in the 1947 partition. Once again, the Palestinians were failed by all potential allies. This continuous defeat would transform the Palestinian ethos and give rise to a radical Palestine Liberation Organization.

The Palestine Liberation Organization

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was founded in 1964 by the Arab League and would come to play a paramount role in Palestinian politics (Becker 39). The organizations intended objective was to protect “the human and legal rights of Palestinians creating an independent state for Palestinian Arabs in Palestine” (Clarke 155). Numerous other organizations, such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), fell under the umbrella of the PLO, in attempts to unify the Palestinian voice (Clarke 155). While the PLO was dedicated to the liberation of all Palestinian territory, including the land that had become Israel, its headquarters were not located in the West Bank or Gaza Strip. Rather, the organization operated from the surrounding Arab states for as long as they could before being expelled, creating a form of exiled leadership.

During the organization's formative years, it received little international recognition and primarily engaged in diplomacy with other Arab states. Furthermore, the PLO was under tight Egyptian control and the majority of members were conservative elites (Kirisci 42). This concerned many Palestinians who feared that the organization was too closely aligned with the Arab states, and thus would quickly conform to their demands under pressure (Hamid 95). However, following the War of 1967, the PLO was completely transformed.

After essentially being abandoned by the international community and suffering multiple losses under the direction of Arab states, the Palestinians distanced themselves from pan-Arabism and realized that their only chance of achieving liberation would have to be accomplished on their own. This shift from pan-Arabism to Palestinian nationalism resulted in the rapid radicalization of the PLO. The conservative leadership that had previously dominated the organization was swiftly replaced by members of Fatah, a militant group committed to the total destruction of Israel through the use of guerilla warfare (Kirisci 42). The Palestinian

National Council, the main governing body of the PLO, revised its charter to signal its commitment to a revolution achieved through armed struggle (Harms and Ferry 118). This shift towards radical tactics resulted in a sharp increase of terrorist attacks against Israel. Due to this violence, the PLO was labeled a terrorist group by Israel and later the United States, which would repeatedly come to challenge their legitimacy. However, the PLO would ultimately remain the most important Palestinian representative for the rest of the century.

War of 1973

No peace agreements were reached following the War of 1967, resulting in the continued occupation of Palestinian land. On October 6th, 1973, Egypt and Syria invaded Israel in order to reclaim the territory lost in 1967 and liberate all of historic Palestine (Shapira 326). While Egypt quickly gained control over half of the Sinai Peninsula, Israel launched a series of successful counterattacks and ultimately did not lose any territory (Shapira 331). The War of 1973 had enormous international and regional significance. It was the beginning of third party diplomacy, where the U.S. began to play a major role in Middle East peace negotiations (Menshawy 897). Furthermore, it launched Israel and Egypt into a series of disengagement agreements, led by U.S. Secretary Henry Kissinger, that began to normalize their relations (Shapira 332). Although this war was fought in the name of liberating Palestine, once again, the Palestinians were largely ignored in the planning, duration, and aftermath of the war. This is not to say that the Palestinians were not impacted by the war; in fact, it led to a change in the PLO's status and paved the road to the Camp David Accords.

The aftermath of 1973 gave the PLO a window of opportunity that they capitalized on. The PLO realized that their Arab neighbors may exchange the territory lost in 1967 for peace with Israel, thus reclaiming authority over the Palestinian territories (Rubin 46). In response, the

organization quickly supplemented their guerilla warfare tactics with diplomatic efforts (Rubin 46). This small shift in strategy quickly paid off. In October 1974, the Arab League recognized the PLO as the “sole, legitimate representative” of the Palestinian people (Rubin 47).

Furthermore, after the President of the PLO, Yasser Arafat, spoke in front of the UN General Assembly, the organization was granted observer status by the UN (Rubin 47). These major diplomatic strides signaled increased international legitimacy for the Palestinians and their rights to self determination. However, this progress also led the Arab states to feel absolved of responsibility to solve the Palestine problem, which is reflected in their lack of action in the following decades.

Camp David Accords

Another crucial impact of the War of 1973 was the Camp David Accords, held in 1988. Continuing the move towards peace that had been facilitated by Kissinger for the years prior, President of Egypt Anwar Sadat announced groundbreaking news: he would be flying to Jerusalem to speak in front of the Israeli Parliament with hopes to reach a peace agreement (Shapira 366). Shortly after his speech it became apparent that the negotiations would be grueling. He demanded a withdrawal to the pre-1967 borders and a “solution to the Palestinian Problem.” (Shapira 367). Sadat was adamant that any agreement made between Israel and Egypt must include a solution for the Palestinians (Quandt 323). Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, known for his right wing politics, took a hard line on keeping the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Shapira 367). He refused to acknowledge the possibility of a Palestinian state. Instead, he proposed giving the Palestinians autonomy, but not sovereignty. This meant the Palestinians could live day to day as they chose, but it did not prevent building new Jewish

settlements in the territory, nor did it relinquish Israeli's claim over the land (Shapira 368). This idea of autonomy but not independence would be a recurring trend in all negotiations to come.

Seeing that the two leaders were unlikely to ever reach an agreement and fearing they were headed towards another war, US President Jimmy Carter invited Sadat and Begin to Camp David in the United States (Shapira 369). No Palestinian leaders were invited to attend, further cementing the alienation of the Palestinian voice. The negotiations lasted thirteen days and resulted in two "framework agreements:" A Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel and a Framework for Peace in the Middle East (Avineri 19).

The framework for Egypt and Israel included a return of the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt in return for the Suez Canal being open to Israeli ships, as well as normalized relations. The second framework proposed a solution to the "Palestinian Problem" and mirrored much of Begin's autonomy plan (Anziska 124). The agreement attempted to create the framework that would lead to full Palestinian autonomy for five years and diminish the Israeli military government (Shapira 368). Following five years, new negotiations would take place on the status of the territories (Anziska 124). It was included that the Palestinians should participate in all future discussions of how to implement these plans (Shapira 370).

Other than being the first time Israel acknowledged the need to address Palestinian rights, the Camp David Accords were largely a disappointment for the Palestinians. First, no Palestinian leadership was included in the negotiations that were said to be helping them (Bartal 261). In fact, the PLO outright rejected the framework as it did not grant the Palestinians their own state (Anziska 126). Furthermore, the framework was immensely vague and provided no action steps to actually progress the autonomy process. Many argue that this was intentional due to Sadat and Begin's inability to agree on any solution (Anziska 124). Sadat ultimately abandoned the

Palestinian cause in return for Egyptian territory, which was another massive failure of the Accord; once Israel had managed to establish peaceful relations with their most dangerous neighbor, very little incentive remained for Israel to take Palestinian demands seriously or improve their conditions. Unsurprisingly, the autonomy talks ultimately collapsed and were never implemented in the occupied territories (Shapira 373). In the end, there was no tangible change made in favor of the Palestinians. Israel, on the other hand, having just made a monumental peace deal, looked towards Lebanon as their next opportunity to gain regional influence.

Lebanon War of 1982

The regional “peace” achieved from the Camp David Accords in 1978 was short-lived. On June 6th, eighty thousand Israeli troops invaded Lebanon, making it to Beirut within a week (Jansen 141). This war was vastly distinct from all preceding wars; rather than a war to defend Israel’s existence, the 1982 Lebanon War was Israel’s attempt to transform regional politics to their benefit. The right wing leadership of Israel at the time had several desired outcomes of the war. First, they wanted to destroy the political and military infrastructure of the PLO in order to secure the annexation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Second, they hoped that by aiding the Christian Phalangist political party to victory, Israel would gain a friendly neighbor and secure another peace agreement (Jansen 11). It is commonly claimed that the invasion was triggered by the attempted assassination of Israeli ambassador in June of 1982 by the PLO (Shapira 380). However, this attack was actually launched by an anti-PLO organization and there is sufficient evidence that the Israeli leadership knew this (Harms and Ferry 135). Thus, this event was used as the justification for a war that had already been in the making for months.

In the end, Israel failed to achieve any of their pre-war goals. While the PLO was pushed out of Southern Lebanon and Beirut, they were by no means destroyed. They moved their headquarters to Tunis and continued operations (Shapira 382). In fact, this gruesome war garnered a lot of support for the Palestinian plight, actually increasing recognition of the PLO (Harms and Ferry 138). Furthermore, no peace agreements ever came to fruition between the Lebanese Christians and Israel (Shapira 382).

One undeniable outcome of this war, however, was the awful destruction caused by Israel. Twelve thousand Lebanese and Palestinians died, the majority of whom were civilians, and an estimated forty thousand were injured (Jansen 25). One of the most tragic events of this war was the Sabra-Shatila Massacre. On September 15th, the IDF gave the Phalangist militia fighters permission to enter the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps (Shapira 382). These fighters ruthlessly murdered over 800 unarmed Palestinians, women and children included (Harms and Ferry 137). The IDF did not commit the killings, but after being alerted of what was happening at the camps, they did nothing to stop it (Shapira 384). In addition to the loss of life, every single Palestinian refugee camp had been damaged, ranging in severity. Several camps were bulldozed to the ground in order to push the Palestinians away with no intention of ever allowing refugees back (Jansen 30). This war not only displays Israel's complete disregard for Palestinian human rights, but their intention to stifle the PLO, the only legitimate Palestinian voice at the time. However, in ample time the struggles of the Palestinians would have the entire world's attention.

The First Intifada

In December of 1987, massive riots erupted in the occupied territories at unprecedented levels. The riots were a reaction to a car accident that occurred in the Gaza Strip. The accident was caused by an Israeli and four Palestinians died. These riots led to a demonstration that lasted

years and came to be known as the First Intifada (Harms and Ferry 142). Though it may appear that the uprising was the result of a single traffic accident, the root cause actually lies in twenty years of deteriorating economic and social conditions in the occupied territories.

From 1975 to 1985 Israel suffered an enormous economic downturn. Israel not only failed to invest the taxes collected from the occupied territories back into the territories, but actively prevented Palestinian local industry from developing in fear that Palestinian products would compete with Israeli products (Shapira 411). Furthermore, the energy crisis of the 1980s led to a significant drop in demand for Palestinian labor in the Gulf states, leading to decreased employment opportunities (Shapira 411). These factors combined resulted in a drop in the standard of living and widespread poverty. In addition to poor economic conditions, the rise of the right wing Likud party in Israel in 1977 resulted in exponential expansion of settlements (Harms and Ferry 143). In 1982, there were an estimated 20,000 settlers in the West Bank, but by 1988 that number had increased to 60,000 (Harms and Ferry 143). Among the Palestinians living in the occupied territories, this produced a sense of colonial encroachment and widespread fear that Israel would soon annex their land. These factors culminated in untenable living conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, unsurprisingly leading to a revolution.

The Palestinians quickly realized the Intifada was going to need to be sustainable and as a result many crucial players emerged to facilitate the revolt. For one, the United Leadership of the Uprising (UNLU) was established and played a critical role in developing the uprisings agenda and organizing logistics (Naser-Najjab and Khatib 194). The UNLU's objective was statehood, and civil disobedience was their means to achieving it (Leopardi 271). They quickly transformed a sporadic uprising into an organized resistance with strikes, sit-ins, protests, and boycotts (Naser-Najjab and Khatib 195). At times their tactics put the UNLU at odds with the PLO, who

preferred less direct confrontation with Israel (Naser-Najjab and Khatib 196). However, the two entities were committed to working together and developed very close ties (Harms and Ferry 145).

Another pivotal group that emerged during the Intifada was Hamas. Originating from the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas was and continues to be an Islamic fundamentalist group committed to the destruction of Israel and creation of an Islamic state in historic Palestine(Shapira 413). In the early 1980s Hamas began to provide numerous welfare benefits and built mosques, schools, and clinics in the Gaza Strip (Harms and Ferry 145). Thus, when the First Intifada launched, Hamas already had widespread support among the impoverished. Hamas managed to gain almost as much influence as the UNLU during the revolt, becoming the first ever Palestinian challenger to PLO leadership (Leopardi 279). While today Hamas is designated as a terrorist organization by the United States, in 1988 it actually preferred civil disobedience as a form of resistance(Tamimi 63). They did not have access to advanced equipment or well trained soldiers, thus rarely conducting “successful” violent attacks (Tamimi 57). Since the Intifada, Hamas has only increased their influence and is a major political force in the Gaza Strip today.

In response to the revolt, Israel enacted brutal policies, causing the conditions in the occupied territories to go from bad to worse. Despite the fact that the majority of the Palestinians only had access to stones and molotovs, thousands of troops were deployed to the West Bank and Gaza Strip to repress the population (Shapira 416). Common tactics deployed by the IDF included “large-scale arrests, imprisonment without trial, deportations, punitive destruction of homes and property, beating, and the use of tear gas and live ammunition against crowds” (Harms and Ferry 142). In November of 1988, the United Nations issued a resolution

condemning Israel's blatant violation of human rights and only then was the IDF ordered to prohibit the use of firearms (Harms and Ferry 146). However, Israeli officials continued to claim the only way to end the uprising would be through violence (Shapira 415). By 1993, "over 1,000 Palestinians were dead, roughly 20% of whom were under 16 years of age" (Harms and Ferry 146-147).

The Intifada's momentum deteriorated over the years and by roughly 1991 was coming to an end. Despite years of resistance, concrete change had yet to occur for the Palestinians in the occupied territories. The Palestinian's plight had continued to gain international attention, though it would be up to the PLO to turn this attention into diplomatic gains.

Oslo Accords

By the end of the First Intifada, several changes had taken place in the political atmosphere that allowed the process towards peace to begin. In 1991 the United States organized the Madrid Conference that successfully gathered Israeli, Egyptian, Lebanese, Syria, Jordanian, and Palestinian representatives all under one roof to negotiate (Harms and Ferry 150). Seeking another victory in the Middle East following the Gulf War, the U.S. hoped that the peace conference could settle the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict for good (Harms and Ferry 150). The symbolism of the conference was more important than any real outcome produced.

Unfortunately, lack of U.S. facilitation and the inability to reach agreements, especially regarding the Israeli settlements, ultimately led to the breakdown of the conference. However, dedicated to achieving peace, the Norwegian Government secretly invited both Israel and the PLO to Oslo to negotiate in January of 1993 (Chomsky 1). These secret meetings led to what are now known as the Oslo Accords: a series of agreements intended to settle the territorial dispute once and for all.

The first Oslo Accord was signed on September 13th, 1993, by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO chairman Yasser Arafat (Chomsky 3). Rather than a conclusive treaty, Oslo Accord I was a framework intended to guide both parties towards a permanent solution. It began with “Letters of Mutual Recognition,” in which both parties recognized the other's right to exist (Diner 443). It also included the Declaration of Principles (DOP) that called for the creation of a temporary Palestinian government, as well as the withdrawal of Israeli military from portions of the occupied territories (Harms and Ferry 153). These demands were fulfilled by the 1994 Cairo Agreement that established the Palestinian Authority (PA), which was given administrative and security control over the Gaza Strip and Jericho (Shapira 431). The transfer of power from the Israeli government to the Palestinian Authority continued to progress with the signing of the second Oslo Accord in September of 1995 (Diner 444). Oslo II was much more complex than the prior Accord and outlined a detailed plan that divided the West Bank into different areas based on who would rule (Harms and Ferry 154). The Oslo Accords were the first sign of hope in decades of an endless bloody conflict.

The Oslo Accords were monumental for several reasons. For one, it was the first time that Israel and the PLO ever engaged in direct negotiation, breaking a century long trend of excluding Palestinian leadership. In addition, it provided meaningful steps towards transferring power from Israel to the Palestinian Authority, in a sense reflecting Israel’s recognition of Palestinians’ rights to self determination. However, as with every negotiation that came prior to the Oslo Accords, many were disappointed with the Accords. Many argue they were simply just the acceptance of decades of Palestinian defeat and upheld Israel’s control under a new disguise. Regardless, the political atmosphere in the years to come would endure a series of changes that would ultimately lead to the dissolution of the infamous Oslo Accords.

Conclusion

The political history of Israel and Palestine is deeply complex, though one thing remains constant: the Palestinians were disproportionately impacted by the events of the twentieth century in countless ways. Beginning with the First Arab-Israeli War of 1948 and once again with the War of 1967, millions of Palestinians were forcibly displaced from their homes or fled in terror. Those who remained in the West Bank and Gaza Strip endured an oppressive Israeli occupation characterized by colonial encroachment and a military regime. While the Palestinians endured such traumatic experiences, their voices were continuously stifled and demands ignored. All potential allies, from the United Nations to the Arab states, who initially vehemently rejected Israel, failed to advocate for the Palestinians time and time again. The century's end was promising: a powerful Palestinian revolt followed by monumental peace accords. Unfortunately, this was not the end of suffering for the Palestinians. Several existing trends, including displacement, unstable leadership, and poor allyship would continue, while new and unthinkable struggles would emerge.

History Part 2: Breakdown of Oslo to Present

Nate Sigmon

Introduction

The history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the impacts on the status and conditions of the Palestinians will continue with the events following the ending of the First Intifada. The analysis will cover over twenty-five years of important context necessary to inform the proposal of a coalition. The signing of the Oslo Accords between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), ending the First Intifada, fundamentally changed the situation on the ground for Palestinians. The aftermath of signing the Accords and their breakdown will be discussed, as well as how Oslo's outcomes have led to specific changes in Palestinians' political, geographic, and economic situations. Additionally, the current conditions of Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem are different from each other, and the factors that impacted their divergence will be discussed.

The first five years following the signing of Oslo II in 1995 were politically chaotic. During those years, the Israeli government experienced significant turnover and the Palestinian Authority (PA) began to take shape, changing the political landscape. Additionally, the Palestinians began to experience the effects of the Oslo Accords on the ground. Palestinians' disappointment with the impacts of the Accords, as well as a weaker Israeli resolve to maintain the promise of Oslo, led to a second Palestinian Intifada, which began in 2000 and lasted more than five years. In response to the Intifada, Israel further separated itself from the Palestinian population, forever altering the geographic nature of the conflict, and threw open the question as to whether the Palestinians could be partners for peace. The end of the Second Intifada marked a turning point in the timeline, where the paths of the Palestinians in the West Bank, the Gaza

Strip, and East Jerusalem diverged. From this point on, interactions between Israel and the Palestinians began to impact the various Palestinian groups more distinctly. As a result, while covering the history between 2005 and the present, the respective effects on the Palestinians in each location will be discussed separately.

Aftermath and Impacts of Oslo

Following the monumental breakthrough at Oslo in 1993 and the signing of Oslo II in 1995, hope was high in Israel and the international community that a lasting peace plan was in progress and two states would soon live side by side. Unfortunately, this dream was significantly weakened on November 4, 1995, when after giving a speech in Tel Aviv, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated by an Orthodox Jew. Rabin's courage in signing the Accords was critical. He did so despite pushback within his government and country, and it was unclear if leaders after him would be as committed to maintaining the integrity of the deals. The first five years following Rabin's assassination saw three new Israeli Prime Ministers: Shimon Peres, Benjamin Netanyahu, and Ehud Barak. These leaders had varying sentiments towards the Oslo agreements, and as a result the implementation of key parts of the agreements was stunted. For example, instead of reducing the amount of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, Netanyahu increased settlement construction during his term, causing distrust from the Palestinian side (qtd. in Rynhold 5).

The PA, formed by the Oslo Accords, held its first elections in 1996, and former PLO chairman Yasser Arafat was elected President. In addition, the first territorial changes designated by Oslo were executed. As the first "phase" in creating an independent Palestinian state, the Oslo agreements split the West Bank and Gaza Strip into three distinct zones based primarily on the Palestinian population. The PA gained sole control over Area A, which was comprised of eight

major Palestinian cities, most of Hebron, and the Gaza Strip. Area A encompassed only about 18% of the West Bank but included most of the Palestinian population (“Planning Policy in the West Bank”). Israel withdrew from but maintained security control over Area B, comprised of most Palestinian villages, which made up about 22% of the West Bank. Area C, by far the largest of the three zones, remained under the control of Israel and contained all Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territories. It comprised more than 60% of the West Bank and included a small percentage of the Palestinian population of the West Bank, as well as a small area in the Gaza



Figure 3. “Oslo II Map”
Foundation for Middle East Peace.

few decades prior, when “autonomy” was the only outcome Israel would agree to. Consequently, though Palestinians had gained jurisdiction over less than half of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, there was hope in the international community that the two sides were starting down a path toward a contiguous Palestinian state, i.e., comprising 100% of land in the occupied territories.

Strip. However, Israel did not extend Israeli civilian law to Area C, and the zone was to be governed under Israeli martial law. In addition, while the PA controlled civil affairs in its respective zones, Israel maintained military sovereignty over all three areas, and could enter them if it wished, though the military was not intended to be present on the ground. Although the Palestinians’ self-rule in the territories was initially limited, any self-rule was a large step forward from just a

The rosy attitude toward Oslo was not felt by everyone involved. Though the division of Palestinian territory had been agreed upon by Yasser Arafat and the PLO, ordinary Palestinians were generally not supportive of the Oslo agreements. Most Palestinians believed they were entitled to all of historic Palestine and had demanded a state at least marked by the pre-1967 borders. As a result, when the Oslo agreements split the West Bank from a contiguous area into three distinct zones, most Palestinians were incensed, especially because Israel maintained full control over a majority of Palestinian land. In addition, though the naming of the three zones implies each would be self-contiguous, reality did not reflect this. Instead of three distinct jurisdictions, the splitting of the West Bank created a labyrinth of small enclaves (“Oslo II Map - Oct 1995”). Though they contained a majority of the population, most of Areas A and B did not connect to one another (see Figure 3). On the ground, this prevented ordinary Palestinians from traveling distances longer than a few kilometers without passing into another jurisdiction, unnecessarily complicating travel. The settlements further fragmented Palestinian land, and settlers received preferential treatment from the Israeli government over nearby Palestinians. The continued proliferation of settlements in the face of Oslo inspired Palestinians to believe Israel was undermining the Oslo process and not acting in good faith by further entrenching themselves on Palestinian land. Palestinians’ frustration with the outcomes of Oslo increased during the first few years after the Oslo Accords went into effect. To ordinary Palestinians living in the West Bank, the Oslo Accords only divided their land further while adding more burdens to their lives and allowing Israel to build more settlements. This continued dissatisfaction of the Palestinian population would form a backdrop for a looming recurrence of violence between Israel and the Palestinians.

In late September 1996, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu opened an underground tunnel under the Temple Mount in East Jerusalem, known to Muslims as Haram Al-Sharif. The Temple Mount is the holiest site in Judaism and the third holiest in Sunni Islam. The Temple Mount has a unique religious significance and geographic location, and the issue of its eventual sovereignty has been one of the most contentious in the Israel-Palestinian conflict. Since 1967, Israel has controlled East Jerusalem and the Old City, where it is situated. An Islamic Waqf, a religious custodianship, funded by Jordan since 1948, administers the Al-Aqsa Mosque, which sits upon the Temple Mount. The construction of the tunnel was designed to improve accessibility to the Western Wall for tourists, but it was interpreted by the Waqf and many Palestinians as an attempt to undermine the Palestinians' claims to the site, as well as a possible security risk for their own holy sites (Rowley). In response to the opening of the tunnel, Palestinians rioted, and the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and the newly created Palestinian National Security Forces (NSF) clashed. Each side blamed the other for the rioting, in which hundreds of Palestinian civilians were wounded (Trounson). Over the following four years, Palestinians' frustration at the impacts of the Oslo Accords led to more riots, as well as sporadic suicide bombings perpetrated by Palestinians against Israeli citizens, often followed by IDF operations into Palestinian territory, further entrenching the conflict. In July 2000, seven years after Oslo II had been signed, and two years since an independent Palestinian state was intended to have been created, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat met with American President Bill Clinton at Camp David to end the enduring and still growing conflict. Unfortunately, both sides lacked faith in each other, the talks ended in failure, and the situation on the ground began to change immeasurably in short order ("What did, in Fact").

Outbreak of Second Intifada

In September 2000, enraged by the failure at Camp David and a provocative visit to the Temple Mount by Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, Palestinians began a second Intifada against Israel. The Second Intifada, sometimes referred to as the Al-Aqsa Intifada due to the location at which it began, was notably more violent than the First Intifada, and its fallout affected the Palestinians much more negatively. Over the next five years, Palestinians perpetrated many suicide bombings and other acts of terror against Israeli civilians, and Israel violently put down protests. The IDF performed many operations within the Palestinian territories during the Intifada, and demolished homes and agricultural fields (Peters and Newman 64). Some effects of the Intifada can be encapsulated by numbers. By its end, over three thousand Palestinians and almost one thousand Israelis had been killed (Peters and Newman 65). Beyond human casualties, Palestinians suffered severe economic losses in the form of lost land and businesses. In addition, the Intifada also had more profound impacts. Before the Intifada, there was still hope for a continuation of the Oslo process. Afterwards, peaceful discussion was rejected as a possibility on both sides. In contrast to the First Intifada, which forced Israel into negotiations with the Palestinians, culminating with the Oslo Accords, the violence of the Second Intifada drove Israel away from the negotiation table. Instead, Israel constructed the Separation Barrier between Israel and the West Bank and withdrew from the Gaza Strip, which created a power vacuum. Perhaps most importantly, because Israelis both in the occupied territories and within Israel were targeted by attacks, Israel interpreted the Second Intifada as being directed not against the occupation, but against Israel as a whole (Shafir 48). Arafat did little to refute this and failed to disavow the terror attacks on Israeli civilians (Rynhold 5). As a

result, the Israeli government ceased viewing the Palestinians as partners for peace (“Exchange of Letters”).

The Second Intifada’s end is not officially dated. It is a matter of discussion if it ended in 2005 or 2007, and there are several possible events that could count as its conclusion. Regardless, by the time it was all over Yasser Arafat had died of an illness, fracturing Palestinian leadership, and Hamas had gained more influence among Palestinians. The strength of the PA was diminished, evidenced by the ease at which Israel operated its military within the PA’s jurisdiction. In addition, the effects of the new Separation Barrier, which began construction during the Second Intifada, and Israel’s withdrawal from the Gaza Strip left the Palestinians in a worse position than they had been before the Second Intifada.

Second Intifada – Present

In 2005, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon controversially carried out an evacuation of all Israelis from the Gaza Strip (four settlements in the northern West Bank were also evacuated). The move, intended to improve Israel’s security, removed all Israeli military from inside the Strip, as well as around eight thousand settlers (“Exchange of Letters”). After Israel’s withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, Fatah, the dominant political party in the Palestinian Authority, assumed control. However, the PA held an election in 2006 and Hamas won a majority. Not wanting to be dominated by their militant rivals, Fatah refused to take part in the government. In response to the growing rift between the two major Palestinian groups, Hamas violently took over the Gaza Strip in 2007. Israel immediately began a blockade of the Gaza Strip following Hamas’s takeover. Egypt followed suit and both countries have since constructed physical barriers on their borders with the Gaza Strip. The blockade remains to this day. Though Hamas currently controls the Strip’s internal affairs, Israel maintains almost complete control on the Strip’s maritime and

land borders, as well as its important resources such as electricity and water. Israel also maintains economic controls on imports and exports and significantly limits the amount of goods that can enter and exit the Strip. Since Hamas's takeover and the ensuing blockade, Gazans have experienced reduced economic prosperity and a severe decline in resources. Today, half of Gaza relies on the United Nations for food aid and 95% of the population lacks access to clean water. Seventy percent of youth are unemployed, contributing to severe economic distress (Alashqar). There are issues with sanitation and health services, some of which are caused by the limited resources allowed into the Strip. Israel's blockade of the Gaza Strip includes the movement of people as well as resources. The Gaza Strip lacks an airport, meaning, coupled with the maritime blockade, that Gazans can only leave the Strip through Israel or Egypt. Both countries strictly regulate the number of Gazans allowed across the borders, and it is extremely difficult to gain passage. Travel is restricted even when traveling to and from the West Bank, and the populations of the two occupied territories have become socially distanced as a result.

Israel and Hamas have fought at least three wars, most recently in 2014, during which Israel has often bombed civilian areas in the Strip while attempting to kill Hamas operatives, damaging infrastructure, killing civilians, and instilling fear in the population. Additionally, the IDF has killed Gazans during mostly peaceful protests at the border, including journalists and children ("Gaza Protest Deaths"). Hamas has also contributed to the conditions of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, and indeed restricts the rights of its own population. Hamas frequently detains its critics ("Palestine: Crackdown"), and just weeks ago ruled women must only travel with a male guardian ("Women Need"). Gazans live under two governments that violate their rights and have suffered greatly as a result of the blockade. This situation differs from that of Palestinians in the

West Bank and East Jerusalem, who come into closer contact with Israel and are not governed by Hamas.

In the West Bank, the PA has remained in power despite losing the most recent election in 2006. Mahmoud Abbas (known in Israel and the Arab world as Abu Mazen) has served as President since that time. Under Abbas, the PA has mostly chosen to work with Israel instead of against it, in hopes of maintaining a mutually beneficial relationship that may eventually lead to more negotiations on the final fate of the Palestinians. Palestinians in the West Bank are economically better off than their counterparts in the Gaza Strip, partly due to the ability to work in and trade with Israel. However, their land is becoming increasingly fragmented by the continued construction of settlements, and a myriad of checkpoints prevents easy travel. Israel continues to enjoy sovereignty over the West Bank, and 60% of the region is governed by the IDF.

In addition to the physical barriers created by the division of Palestinian land, the Oslo agreements did not explicitly ban Israel from continuing to build illegal settlements in Area C and East Jerusalem, despite the importance of these areas to Palestinians. Israel interpreted this as permitting the building of settlements until the time of Palestinian independence, when they would be removed. However, the construction of settlements, which continues to this day, has undermined the implicit goal of Oslo, which is to create a contiguous Palestinian state. By building infrastructure in the Palestinian territories and moving a sizable population there, Israel has created a basis for the continued ownership of those lands in the event a Palestinian state is formed. Furthermore, because the Israeli government operates under the assumption that the occupation will end at some point, one way or another, Israel believes it has no legal obligation to remove the settlements until that state is formed (Shafir 154).

When Israel annexed East Jerusalem in 1967, the Palestinian residents there did not automatically become citizens of Israel. Instead, they were allowed to maintain Jordanian citizenship, and could apply for Israeli citizenship if they wished (Nassar). Almost all Palestinian residents of Jerusalem chose not to apply, for fear of betraying the Palestinian cause by recognizing Israel's sovereignty over East Jerusalem. Instead of as citizens, most Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem are classified as "permanent residents." The label brings inherent instability to the life of those who carry it. Though permanent residents can vote in municipal elections, they cannot vote in parliamentary elections. Permanent residents are also subject to the burden of proof that they live in Jerusalem. To maintain residency status, permanent residents must prove that they reside in Jerusalem and that the city is their "center of life," (Nassar). If the Israeli government refuses to confirm their residency, these Palestinians are subject to losing their rights as permanent residents.

Beyond the laws governing permanent residency, Israel has used other methods of displacing Palestinians in East Jerusalem. Palestinians in the city encounter significant difficulty obtaining building permits, though they are easier to come by for Jewish residents (Nassar). As a result, Palestinians in East Jerusalem can often only construct new buildings illegally. Israel frequently cracks down on such illegal buildings, and demolishes the structures, which can leave Palestinians homeless. In addition, Israel often appropriates Palestinian land in East Jerusalem by designating it as public land, giving the government legal authority to repurpose it. The land is then regularly given to Israeli Jews or immigrants. These methods of land dispossession have been harmful to the Palestinian population of East Jerusalem and represent deliberate discrimination by Israel.

Prospects for the Future

The unique geographic and political situation in the Palestinian territories makes negotiation with Israel difficult. Not only do Palestinians have little leverage in any discussion, but Hamas and the PA are ideologically and geographically separated. While the PA chooses to negotiate with Israel, Hamas prefers violent struggle, which puts the two groups at odds (Tahhan) and unable to unify to face their problems together. In addition, the party Israel will negotiate with, the PA, lacks popular support (Fatafta and Tartir) and is undemocratic, as there have not been elections in fifteen years. Mahmoud Abbas, who as President of the PA leads the civil administration of about 40% of the West Bank, has served as the main negotiator with Israel since Yasser Arafat's death in 2004. Unfortunately for the Palestinians in the West Bank, Abbas has been unable to reach an agreement with Israel to end the occupation and create a Palestinian state. Though he came close to a deal with Ehud Olmert in 2008 (Avishai), negotiations have been uncommon and unsuccessful since Netanyahu's reelection in 2009. Under Netanyahu, settlement building has increased, and the two sides have not met for talks since 2014. The 2008 discussion could serve as a framework for a future deal, but prospects are dim, as the two sides are farther away than ever.

Unlike Abbas, Netanyahu has made significant headway with Israel's enemies. With the help of the Trump Administration, in the last year Israel has established diplomatic ties with Bahrain, Morocco, Sudan, and the United Arab Emirates, in a process known as the Abraham Accords. Each country has historically supported the Palestinian cause and refused to recognize Israel's existence, so the signing of these Accords signals a growing sentiment in the Arab world of recognizing Israel as a *fait accompli*. In recent years, countries in the region have become less concerned with the Palestinian question and more concerned with the regional threat of Iran,

against whom Israel's military strength and intelligence capabilities makes a strong ally. In addition, Israel has made innovations in water, agriculture, and other technologies in areas in which other countries in the region are concerned. Beyond the four countries who signed the Abraham Accords, other regional powers like Saudi Arabia have been quietly cooperating with Israel for years (Schwartz and Said). In short, many of Israel's traditional enemies have become significantly more friendly, decreasing the pressure on Israel to end the occupation. International and regional support for the Palestinian cause is waning, leaving the Palestinians in a worse position than ever before.

The promise of the Oslo Accords has faded as Israel has strengthened its hold over the occupied Palestinian territories in the last twenty-five years. In the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem, Palestinians are experiencing worsening conditions. In the Gaza Strip, there is a growing humanitarian crisis, as much of the population struggles to find enough food to eat. In the West Bank and East Jerusalem, Palestinians experience trouble traveling, and starting new businesses or construction is almost impossible, making economic struggles much harder to overcome. Additionally, their territory is dominated by Israel and settlers continue to take up residence on their land. It is crucial the situation is resolved or improved, to help the Palestinian people improve their welfare and gain leverage to negotiate with Israel. The current situation is untenable and requires a swift and equitable solution that will improve the conditions for Palestinians living in the occupied territories.

Section II: Overview of Current Situation

Internal Threats to Palestinian Human Rights

Taishi Walden

Introduction

Decades of conflict have woven two divergent populations into the disputed territory of the West Bank. Of the three million people that live there today, nearly 20% are Jewish Israeli citizens, but that wasn't always the case. Captured by Israel in the Six-Day War in 1967, Jewish Israeli citizens began moving into this disputed land and built settlements strategically between Palestinian communities. The majority of these settlements were authorized and supported by the Israeli government, despite violating international law ("Israeli Settlement"). Many Palestinians view this as a method to colonize their land and expand Israel's borders, provoking Palestinian resentment. Despite international condemnation, over the next few decades more and more factions of the Israeli government expressed support for these settler movements by allocating public resources and granting permits for building (Harris, 00:00:55 - 00:02:30). Presently, Area C constitutes 61% of the West Bank territory, and there are developed roads, critical infrastructure, and planned Israeli communities. Under the Oslo II Accord in 1995, Area C was committed to be gradually transferred over to Palestinian jurisdiction, but such transfer never occurred. Area C is still under Israel's exclusive control and Israeli authorities continue to administer severe restrictions on Palestinians while facilitating the development of Israeli settlements. Nearly half a million Jewish settlers now live in the West Bank and this has increased friction between Israeli and Palestinian communities. In 2019 alone, Israeli authorities approved plans for 5,995 housing units in the West Bank ("World Report 2020"). Meanwhile,

Israeli authorities destroyed more than 500 Palestinian homes for reportedly being built without an Israeli building permit. Obtaining these construction permits is nearly impossible for Palestinians in East Jerusalem and Area C, and associated demolitions have resulted in the displacement of more than 1000 Palestinians. The difficulty in acquiring an Israeli-issued building permit has driven Palestinians to construct houses and structures that are at constant risk of being destroyed or confiscated by Israel (“World Report 2020”).

Following the inception of settlements, in 1987, the First Intifada, a Palestinian rebellion against the Israeli occupation, began. This uprising was a sustained series of protests and, in some instances, violent riots that ended in substantial casualties. The Israeli military responded with brutal force and repeatedly fired live ammunition at the mostly unarmed Palestinian demonstrators. This resulted in more than 1000 Palestinian deaths, many of whom were children under the age of 17 (“What did, in Fact”). Although the majority of the protestors posed no imminent threat, Israeli forces used lethal means in situations where lesser measures would have sufficed. According to international human rights law standards, lethal force is only justified as a last resort to prevent an imminent threat to life (“World Report 2020”). This chapter will discuss the impacts of the Intifada in relation to the development of the security policies in the region and how this complicates reaching a practical and peaceful resolution. Further analysis will examine how the presence of the Israel Defense Forces and the restriction of movement through Israeli-controlled checkpoints threaten Palestinian human rights.

The Presence of the Israel Defense Forces

Many human rights activists agree that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict does not get the media attention it deserves, and these activists have taken measures to expose the true nature of

the occupation. Breaking the Silence, an organization created to combat biased narratives of the occupied territories, was founded by Israeli veterans who have served in the military since the start of the Second Intifada. They assembled to reveal the reality of everyday life in the occupied territories to the Israeli public through a multitude of testimonies and cases of abuse towards Palestinians from IDF soldiers. Many of the soldiers recall the practice of home invasions during their time in the IDF, in which soldiers would intrude into Palestinian homes in the occupied Palestinian territories (OPT) by force and without permission. Israel views their actions not as invasions, but as legitimate entries into homes performed in accordance with the law as part of their sovereign right to protect their citizens, (“*A Life Exposed*”). However, these home invasions are highly traumatic events that can potentially have long term implications on the mental health of those who experience them. One victim of an unjustified home invasion stated that “We were very scared. Every time the army comes in, it’s a trauma. I keep remembering that fear and cannot sleep properly. The youngest child, he also suffers from trauma. He’s quieter, does not want to talk, does not want to let me go” (“*A Life Exposed*”). The widespread practice of invading Palestinian homes has stolen the sense of security that is associated with the protection of fundamental human rights. Soldiers often invade the same houses more than once, leaving families feeling apprehensive in the security of their own homes. Israel has been controlling the West Bank through military occupation for more than 53 years, relying heavily on practices that violate the dignity and privacy of Palestinian communities in doing so. Although this military occupation once stood as a symbol of security in the region, it’s practices now impede everyday functioning and development in the occupied Palestinian territories.

While many Israeli citizens are unaware of the extent of IDF abuse, others turn a blind eye to the organized intimidation tactics used by the soldiers on innocent Palestinian families.

One retired IDF soldier recalled that soldiers invade Palestinian homes to take up new strategic positions, carry out random searches, and in some cases to merely make their presence felt (Weiman). This type of behavior is often unaccounted for, with far-right media smear campaigns which attempt to cover these incursions in breaking news alerts that reduce the events to a declaration of: ‘Five wanted Palestinians arrested tonight.’(Weiman). Far-right media sources argue that these invasions are necessary to maintain public order and safety in the area and to protect the local population. Additionally, this type of media framing makes it more difficult for the Israeli population to gain awareness of the true nature of the IDF operations. These actions constitute systemic discrimination on the basis of nationality and cause harm to the entire Palestinian population. Furthermore, while Jewish Israeli citizens are able to move freely in and out of the West Bank, the IDF acts to limit freedom of movement for Palestinians through its various security checkpoints. This system is clearly discriminatory and only fuels the resentment that already exists between the two parties.

Restricting Palestinian Mobility

While Israel sees their enhanced security measures as a way to protect their land and people, it has significantly harmed the Palestinian people’s efforts to advance economically. Prior to 2009 the Israel-Palestine borders were often described as “Thousands of young Palestinian men crushed into tunnel cages on the way to the security check. People... forced to climb on top of one another ”(Kossoff). Circulating videos on social media depicting the conditions at the Israel-controlled borders pressured the Israeli government to take action. In July of 2009, Israeli authorities renovated the borders, spending millions of dollars on more advanced technology that decreased wait times. While this satisfied Palestinian workers commuting in the short term, strict security measures still persist. COGAT (Coordination of Government Activities

in the Territories), Israel's military bureaucracy, is responsible for civilian issues, economic development, and infrastructure projects in the Palestinian territories. COGAT soldiers issue travel permits to Palestinians who want to enter Israel to visit family or hospitals, yet ex-soldiers have claimed that the permit-application process requires exhaustive biographical information (Kossoff). Even if the physical borders have been fixed, the Israeli government undermines an integral part of Palestinian mobility by maintaining the arduous application process. Restricting freedom of movement of Palestinians in the West Bank infringes on basic human liberties and reflects Israel's lack of regard for human rights for the Palestinian population.

Following Hamas's violent rise to power in the Gaza Strip, Israel and Egypt constructed physical barriers along their border. Due to Israel's blockade and their complete economic control on trade and access to critical resources such as electricity and water, Palestinians in the Gaza Strip are facing unprecedented poverty. Israel limits the amount of imports and exports within the Gaza Strip, and as a result Gazans have witnessed a substantial decrease in economic prosperity. More importantly, Palestinians in the Gaza Strip can only leave through Israel or Egypt, both of which stringently limit the number of travelers allowed to cross the borders. These Israeli-checkpoint barriers result in traveling complications and worsen economic prospects for Palestinians. Furthermore, due to the high employment rate in the occupied Palestinian territories, many Palestinians have no choice but to find work beyond the borders. More than seventy thousand Palestinians with Israeli work permits make this daily commute, many of them having to wake up at daybreak just to reach their workplaces on time (Ashly).

Israel's Vaccination Response

Most recently, in response to COVID-19, Israel has become the world leader in vaccination coverage in proportion to its population size, after vaccinating 84% of its population

as of February. However, until recently it has only vaccinated citizens of Israel, including Israeli settlers living inside the West Bank, and Palestinian residents of Jerusalem. Their success in a rapid vaccine rollout has faced backlash from international public opinion, as most Palestinians in the occupied territories are still waiting (“Denying COVID-19 Vaccines”). While many believe that the pandemic gives Israel the moral responsibility to provide vaccines for Palestinians, who live under Israeli martial rule, it is critical to refer to legal documents to determine whether or not they have a legal obligation. The legal debate revolves around two specific legal documents: the Fourth Geneva Conventions that declared internationally recognized rules of warfare and occupation and the 1995 Interim Oslo Accords (Lazaroff). Under Article 56 of the Geneva Conventions, occupying powers have the duty to ensure the availability of preventative measures necessary to combat the transmission and spread of contagious diseases and epidemics (Stevenson). Furthermore, in compliance with International Humanitarian Law (IHL), Israel must respect and enable the right to health for the Palestinians in the occupied territories without discrimination.

Comparatively, those that argue that such a legal obligation does not exist point to the Oslo Accords—claiming that the signed agreement between the two parties makes the Geneva Conventions inapplicable in this conflict. In Annex III, Article 17 of the Oslo Accords, it states that the responsibilities in the realm of health in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including the healthcare insurance system, would be transferred over to the Palestinian Authority (PA). Israel has been clear that its role is to help facilitate the passage of vaccines acquired by the PA to the occupied territories, emphasizing that it is the PA’s responsibility to secure their own vaccines (Feuer). This means that Palestinian Authority must purchase the vaccines or receive them

through donations, during which a great number of healthcare workers have been infected, impeding the the health system's ability to provide care.

Conclusion

Internal threats continue to disrupt a peaceful path to resolution in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The expansion of Israeli settlements impacts the ability to negotiate the future of a Palestinian state, and new settlers are motivated by the cheap housing and financial incentives offered by the Israeli Government. These settlements of the West Bank contradict the gradual transfer to Palestinian jurisdiction under the Oslo II Accord in 1995, yet Israeli authorities continue to facilitate the relocation of Israeli citizens into settlements. In addition, the physical separation barriers in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and parts of East Jerusalem dim the economic prospect of Palestinians, which is critical in improving their prosperity. The restrictive nature of the Israeli checkpoints impacts a large number of Palestinians who work in Israel by necessity, fueling indignation. While the Israeli Government has renovated the most populous checkpoints to substantially decrease wait times, many Palestinians view this as a purely political move aimed at enhancing its own image in the rest of the world, rather than for the purpose of aiding Palestinians. The presence of the Israel Defence Forces and military occupation pose a threat to the future of Palestinian human rights. Palestinian welfare must be prioritized if a solution to this conflict is to be found.

Palestinian Media Censorship

Hayley Webster

Introduction

In the same year as Israel's creation in 1948, the United Nations released the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. This declaration became a legally binding covenant between countries to promise that never again would a group of people be subjected to the erasure and slaughter that the Jewish people endured during the Holocaust. The following articles are derived directly from this promise:

“Article 19:

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20:

- (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.*
- (2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.*

Article 27:

- (1) Everyone has the right to freely participate in the community's cultural life, enjoy the arts, and share in scientific advancement and its benefits.*
- (2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author,”* (Universal Declaration of Human Rights).

Articles 19, 20, and 27 show that the United Nations recognizes the power of protected public media to prevent tyranny. By guaranteeing that all religions, groups, and races have access to freedom of speech, these articles guarantee that horrors like the Holocaust will never happen again.

With this being said, it is surprising that the people who inspired and fought for these rights have denied them to the Palestinian people. Palestinians are victims of Israeli censorship which directly breaks the articles of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Due to this

ensorship, Palestinians are not able to engage the media in political conversation about the violence they face; consequently, the Palestinian voice is erased. Without international media awareness of their circumstances there is no hope for a fair and humane negotiation between Israelis and Palestinians.

Origins of Palestinian Censorship

Direct censorship of the Palestinian press is best displayed in a newspaper called *al-Fajr* (the Dawn). *al-Fajr* was a pro-Palestinian paper established in 1972 by American Palestinian and U. S. Navy veteran Paul Ajlouny and Christian Palestinian Yusuf Nasr. In 1974, Yusuf Nasr disappeared, never to be seen again. At the same time, *al-Fajr*'s first editor Jamil Hamad was arrested, and despite being released shortly after his detainment, Hamad never worked at the paper again ("Arabic Newspapers"). In 1982, *al-Fajr* critiqued Israel's invasion of Lebanon and according to Jewish newspaper *Yediot Aharonot*, the government objected to articles that included death tolls of Palestinians or used words like "pride" (Friedman 2-3). Consequently, Israel restricted *al-Fajr* along with *al-Sha'ah* and *al-Quids*, two other Palestinian publications, from reporting on politics. The Israeli Civil Administration decided that these three papers were responsible for contributing to social unrest, and banned their papers from the Gaza Strip with *al-Fajr* further banned from the West Bank (Friedman 2). On July 15th, 1982, *al-Fajr* filed a show-cause petition to the Israeli High Court and Defense Minister Ariel Sharon about the merits of the restrictions, arguing that their more controversial articles had been translated directly from the Hebrew Press (Friedman 2). Indeed, the Israeli High Court Ruled that the newspaper had the right to report and distribute articles until November when the petition would be reviewed, yet two military governors of the West Bank region defied the High Court's verdict and illegally continued the restriction by threatening *al-Fajr*'s staff with arrest (Friedman 2-3).

After these events, the Israeli government began to target *al-Fajr* and Palestinian papers. For example, in July 1982, *al-Quids* was forcibly closed when it reported that a Palestinian “fell” during Israel's invasion of Lebanon (Friedman 3). Kamel Jbeil, a reporter from the newspaper, was arrested without charges or probable cause for reporting on a book fair at the Arab School of Nursing in Ramallah (Friedman 3). By August, Israel extended the censorship beyond the specified territories by denying two Palestinian mayors, Elias Freij of Bethlehem and Rashid al-Shawa of Gaza, travel permits to the United States to premier on the NBC news program *Meet the Press* (Friedman 4). In October, the night editor for the newspaper, Nebhan Khreisheh, was restricted from leaving his village in Tulkharm for six months without any charges being laid (Friedman 4). Four times in November, Editor Ali Khalili was held in a Nablus prison where he was interrogated for four to eight hours about his trip to the United States, his political views, and “news judgement” (Friedman 4). Again in November, the military court imposed a one year sentence and a fine of one hundred dollars on the English language *al-Fajr* editor Saman Khoury because he possessed two issues of the Bulletin of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine which was banned in the West Bank but accessible to Israeli journalists (Friedman 4). Khourey was detained for seventeen days in solitary confinement and denied his right to contact his lawyer (Friedman 4). By the end of 1982, the editors of *al-Fajr*, *al-Sha'ah*, and *al-Talia* were all arrested for the "maintenance of security, public order, and safety of this area” (Friedman 4).

A year later in May 1983, *al-Fajr* correspondents Iqab Sa'ed and Bilal Dabri were arrested and fined one hundred dollars due to having English copies of the newspaper. In June, two Shin Bet (internal security force) agents entered English *al-Fajr* without a warrant or cause and verbally abused the staff (Friedman 4). By August, the Israeli military governors reinstated the *1945 Emergency Regulation Article 92* which allows the governors to revoke the license of

newspapers without specifying reason and *No. 88* which dictates that every Palestinian article, picture, death notice, decree, or advertisement must be sent to military censorship (Friedman, 4-8).

In the span of a few decades, Israel took away the Palestinian press's ability to sell copies to Palestinian people, report safely without the threat of violence, and offer commentary to foreign nations. *al-Fajr* editor Mamoun al-Sayyed noted that the words "awda" (return) and "sumud" (steadfast) were commonly censored and he stated, "we haven't any definite guidelines...we know that provocative, libelous, and anti-security articles are strictly forbidden, but what is provocative? I've come to the conclusion that there is no way to deal with this kind of arbitrary censorship" (Friedman 8-9) After two decades of reporting, disappearances, arrests, and legal battles *al-Fajr* closed ("Arabic Newspapers"). Ever since these events, Palestinian editors and journalists continue to face censorship, violence, and arrest daily in order to have their history and reality heard.

Palestinian Censorship in American News

Four decades later, Palestinian voices are still being censored by Israeli controlled rhetoric. For example, a study titled "50 Years of Occupation," published by 416Labs, analyzed over one hundred thousand news headlines about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from five major American Publications: *the Chicago Tribune*, *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *Wall Street Journal* (Siddiqui and Zaheer 2-3). Over fifty years, articles referring to Palestinians as "refugees" have declined by 93%, and the word "occupation" regarding Israel has declined by 85% (Siddiqui and Zaheer 2-3). Both international and local articles covering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are 250% more likely to cite Israeli sources over Palestinian sources and to include "Israel says" over "Palestinians say" (Siddiqui and Zaheer 2-3). Moreover, these

newspapers are 400% more likely to include the word "Israel" in the headline, 300% more likely to write, "terror" instead of "occupation" concerning Palestinian territories and conflict, and 60% less likely to include words like "talks," "Peace talks," and "Peace Plan" (Siddiqui and Zaheer 2-3).

Concerningly, Israel also has the power to directly censor what American news outlets publish, which infringes on American freedom of speech and the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In fact, in 2014, an Israeli Military Court order banned all press accounts from using the name of a twenty-one-year-old Corporal Elor Azarya who fatally shot a Palestinian in the head at point-blank range without cause (Greenwald). *The New York Times* released an article on the brutal murder; however, it did not include Azarya's name or information. In response to the outrage of this ban and blatant disrespect of the victim, the *New York Times* responded:

"Whether we comply, defy, or challenge an order in court in a foreign jurisdiction is a decision we make based on the particular facts before us. In this case, we felt we could tell how this case is roiling Israeli society without the soldier's name. Had we thought that the court order prevented us from providing a robust, complete version of that debate, we would have considered workaround options we have used in the past — reporting the story from outside Israel," (Greenwald).

It is concerning that the *New York Times* could be directly influenced by any foreign nation especially when that influence erases and devalues a tragedy for the Palestinian people. Indeed, one of the only reasons why international people know Elor Azarya's name is because Palestinians intentionally misspelled his name or used its Hebrew spelling to bypass censorship on *Facebook* (Greenwald). This instance shows the powerful hold Israel has over American and Palestinian media, and without being able to maintain the integrity of the press and history, fact becomes convoluted. As media becomes corrupted by private interest or dominated by monolithic rhetoric, bias and misinformation much more easily becomes understood as fact. In

an era of “fake news,” objectivity must be preserved for issues concerning international relations and social iniquity. So, given current trends, it seems improbable that meaningful conversation about Israeli-Palestinian relations and history can be achieved with Israeli controlled media.

Palestinian Censorship in Social Media

With the rise of social media as a political tool used to address discourse for marginalized people, it may be surprising to find a lack of a strong Palestinian media movement. As the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics shows, half of Palestinian households have internet access with 60% in the West Bank and 38% in the Gaza Strip (43-44). Over 37% of Palestinians in these regions use more than one social media platform with over 1.5 million Palestinians using *Facebook* (“Palestinian Census” 43-44). These statistics do not encompass the Palestinian diaspora—the total Palestinian social media user base is much larger as a whole. However, Palestinians face intense risks by using social media. Over eight hundred Palestinians have been arrested by the Israeli and Palestinian Authority security forces due to their posts being flagged by Artificial Intelligence (AI) bots on major social media platforms, and over 80% of Palestinian content is deleted on *Facebook* (“88% of the Violations”). Therefore, this section will examine the relationship between Israel, Palestinians, and major social media platforms.

Facebook, and by extension the platforms it owns (*Instagram*, *Oculus*, *WhatsApp*), has had a direct tie with the Israeli Government since 2015 (Nashif 5). The relationship between *Facebook* and Israel can be explained in three ways: Israel’s highly advanced technology industry provides a profitable market for *Facebook*, *Facebook*’s office in Tel Aviv allows the company to be close to government officials, and *Facebook* may fear being sued by Israel (Taha 6). Moreover, the Israeli government and *Facebook* have agreed to work together to “tackle incitement to violence on social media,” yet neither party have released documents to explain

what this means concretely (Taha 4). In 2017, *Facebook* approved 85% of Israel's requests to remove posts (Taha 7). In fact, in 2019, there were one thousand violations against Palestinian content, yet only one hundred and eighty-five of these cases have been reviewed as of May 2020 (Taha 7). Moreover, one hundred accounts were blocked on *WhatsApp*, most of which belonged to journalists and activists. Additionally, *Facebook's* algorithm deletes any content containing the words: Jihad, Shahed (martyr) and political and regional groups Hamas, Saraya, and Jbha Sha'bya (Taha 6-7). Hypothetically, the censorship could be compared to a Black Lives Matter Post being deleted by *Facebook* if it included the names of United States politicians, ANTIFA, or the Ku Klux Klan, or if someone used the word "martyr" to describe Breonna Taylor and others who unfairly perished. By contrast "Zionist" is a "globally protected word" and any content deemed anti-zionist will be removed and the original poster could face arrest (Taha 5).

Similarly, *YouTube* is facing scrutiny over its discrimination of Palestinian content. Multiple human rights defenders have spoken out about *YouTube's* removal of content portraying violence. For example, journalist Bilal Tamimi posted a video showing Israeli soldiers abusing a young boy in Nabi Saleh, which violated *YouTube's* terms and conditions due to portrayal of violence. For instance, imagine the outrage that would be sparked in the United States if the video documenting George Floyd's murder by police was deleted by *YouTube* because it contained violence. Moreover, the *YouTube* channel Palestine 27K, which had over ten thousand subscribers, was flagged and deleted because its videos included Arabic-language (Nazzal). Hamed, the owner of the channel, who lives in the West Bank, decided to test how *YouTube's* AI worked by developing a lexicon of words likely to be flagged. Hamed realized that *YouTube's* AI screening will delete Palestinian posts including the words: "Hezbollah," "Hamas," "Islamic Jihad," and "shahed" (Nazzal). However, Hamed sent the same video to his

correspondent in Europe to post on *Youtube*, and the video passed the AI screening from there (Nazzal). Therefore, it is likely that *YouTube*'s AI screening is affected by the Israeli Internet Service Provider (ISP) or the fact that in 2015 Israel formed a Cyber Unit which includes the monitoring of media, social media, and the general population through its ISP (Nazzal).

What is concerning about these platforms' suppression of Palestinian content is that they violate Articles 19, 20, and 27 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and promote echo chambers—a social media environment where people only have access to a certain belief that coincides with their own and those they follow, creating a biased and/or ignorant bubble. Therefore, the censorship of Palestinian content is an injustice not only to the Palestinian people but to the Israeli people as well. Israeli people should have the ability to see Palestinian social media content and thereby understand Palestinian perspective and reality. As shown in the age of digitalization, social media has become a powerful tool that can bring various people together for conversation. As Israeli people are more prone to echo chambers there is a tragic lack of the opportunity for these two groups to come together in mutual dialogue and understanding via social media, thus further alienating young and otherwise tech-savvy and open-minded generations.

Pro-Palestinian Advocates and Censorship

Today, social movements rely heavily on celebrities and influential speakers' advocacy for their movements' success and survival. However, celebrities and academics who have spoken on Palestinian human rights have become victims of intense backlashes from the social media community. For example, supermodel and social media influencer Bella Hadid, of Palestinian descent, posted a picture on *Instagram* of her father's old passport stating his birthplace of Palestine. Hadid's post was promptly deleted from Instagram stating that the word "Palestinian"

was “hate speech”(Mahdawi). Hadid replied, “are we not allowed to be Palestinian on Instagram? This, to me, is bullying. You can’t erase history by silencing people" (Mahdawi). Additionally, Rihanna, Selena Gomez, J. K. Rowling, and Russell Brand also received labels and retweets of being “antisemitic" due to their posts pertaining to Palestinian Human Rights which jeopardizes their reputations and careers (Mahdawi). In this way, the fear of automatically being labeled antisemitic has become a powerful tool to deter any celebrity support for Palestinians.

Moreover, academia and Universities backing Pro-Palestinian speakers have faced extreme censorship and antisemitic titles. In September 2020, a *Zoom* webinar conference, “Whose Narrative? Gender, Justice and Resistance,” virtually held at San Francisco State University (SFSU), New York University (NYU), University of Hawaii Manoa (UHM), University of Leeds in the United Kingdom, and Western University in Ontario, Canada drew scrutiny from Israel due to their guest speaker Leila Khaled (Vincent). Khaled, a member of the militant group Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), took part in two plane hijackings in the 1970s, and has become an internationally respected public speaker and author on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Barrows-Friedman). The webinar conference was prevented from occurring, in large part due to the legal and lobbying efforts by pro Israeli organizations. Notably, the Jewish Defense League, a violent extremist group, took credit for the cancellation due to the “antisemitism” and “promotion of terrorism” of Khaled’s presence; it is important to note that Khaled has never been on the United States’ terrorist watch list (Barrows-Friedman). Attendees stated that their zoom link was suddenly deactivated, and when NYU moved their webinar to *Google Meet* it was trolled by anti-Palestinian automated bots (Barrows-Friedman). *Zoom* stated that the conference violated their terms of service and threatened universities in attendance by stating that they would ban the universities from using their platform in the future,

potentially barring two hundred campuses from holding class during the height of COVID-19 (Barrows-Friedman). Furthermore, the *Facebook* page for the webinar conference was taken down on the same day as the *Zoom* notice with the *YouTube* live stream being cut and deleted at twenty-three minutes into the video for the conference (Vincent).

Palestinian legal groups representing the universities stated that, “the exchange of ideas in a university setting is constitutionally protected free speech” and *Zoom*’s cancellation of the event was “without legal process” (Barrows-Friedman). Moreover, NYU’s chapter of the American Association of University Professors stated that the shut down was “an act of sick comedy to censor an event about censorship” and asked the NYU president to break contracts with *Zoom* if further interference continued, while UHM has publicly distanced itself from the event and retracted pro-Palestinian statements in order to maintain their contract with *Zoom* (Barrows-Friedman).

Nerdeen Kiswani, a law student at the City University of New York was planned to speak at the conference and stated that Nelson Mandela was not taken down from the terrorist watch list until 2008, and “in what parallel world would an NYU seminar featuring Mandela’s words have been censored? You don’t have to be Leila Khaled to face this kind of censorship, but if Palestinians fighting for Palestine can’t speak for themselves, then who’s really going to be left to speak?” (Barrows-Friedman). Indeed, this shut down supported by the Israeli government and pro-Israel groups infringes on the American first amendment, freedom of speech, as well as the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* by denying the Palestinian voice to be heard due to their race and beliefs. With the intense backlash public figures face in order to represent the Palestinian cause, anti-Palestinian and pro-Israeli groups shape what people from around the world are allowed to think about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Conclusion

History has shown through multiple violent and ethnic-cleansing regimes that people must be concerned when one nation becomes the sole orchestrator of ideas, learning, and opinion while squashing anyone who may disagree with their nationalistic agenda. Palestinians are facing incredible human rights violations due to Israeli censorship. If this trend continues, it could lead to disastrous effects as history has proven time and time again. Therefore, it is critical for Palestinians to regain their agency and freedom of speech by formulating a successful media movement where they can achieve uncensored media and by extension a media movement which will gather them the support and awareness they need to be able to negotiate and promote peace with Israel.

International Implications of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Marenda Chang and Jacqueline Zhang

Introduction

Although most of the violence from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict happens on Palestinian and Israeli land, the conflict reaches beyond borders to involve the entire international order. Therefore, exploring the external factors that are at play in the crisis is paramount in understanding all elements of this issue. Israel's military prowess and sophisticated nuclear capabilities pose an international security conundrum, while Israel's human rights violations pose important legal ramifications and threaten to destabilize the legitimacy of international laws and institutions. International involvement in the issue, in particular from the United States, not only exacerbates the human rights catastrophe, but also threatens to complicate an already complicated conflict. The Israeli-Palestinian issue also has significant implications for the entire Arab world, as the region continues to suffer from instability caused by Western interference and tensions among the Arab states, both of which involve Israel. Israel's security measures, conflicts with international law, and avid support by the US have stifled Palestinian voices. This paradigm only means a longer, more painful, and possibly unsuccessful peace process because the endorsement of Palestinians, the major player in this crisis, is paramount in achieving peace.

International Law

International law and norms govern the totality of the world stage, but can become conflicting when laid out in practice. The arena of international human rights law is particularly complex in the case of the Palestinians. Although there is virtually international consensus that Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory has violated international law on multiple occasions,

these same laws have time and again failed to protect Palestinians. This is due to the political nature of international law and the tendency for international law to reflect the interests of those in power rather than achieving true justice (Olsen). While international law is often difficult to enforce in any circumstance, these hierarchical power structures often complicate and serve as barriers to justice, which is apparent in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Therefore, the list of Israel's ongoing legal violations have avoided censure and consequence. Israeli settlements, which can be interpreted as de facto annexations of occupied territories (Kattan 80), are "a serious violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the Geneva Conventions" ("Israeli Annexation"). The ensuing human rights violations of the Palestinian people have happened because of occupation, with violations that include: land and natural resource confiscation, excessive use of force and torture, settler violence, forced displacement, economic deprivation and poverty, public assassinations, censorship, arbitrary detention, discriminatory laws, labour exploitation, arbitrary detention, and poisoning via exposure to toxic waste. Such horrific actions are the exact reasons why the acquisition of occupied territories through war or by force has been forbidden since 1945 through Chapter I of the United Nations Charter and in 1949 from the Fourth Geneva Convention ("Israeli Annexation").

The "Right of Return" doctrine, which is the inalienable right of a person to return to their home country, has been labeled as one of the 'core issues' of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the international law community. This doctrine has been reaffirmed through multiple treaties and conventions, such as the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 13(2)), the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 12) and the 1948 Fourth Geneva Convention (Rule 132). The only legal exception to this rule is in the case of merited criminal exile. Prior to 1974, the plight of the Palestinians was widely regarded on the

international stage as a refugee crisis. Then, in 1974, the Right of Return was reaffirmed and classified for the Palestinian people in the UN General Assembly Resolution 194 and the creation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA). However, Israel maintains legal contestations against the interpretation of this resolution, arguing that the stipulations for the enactment of resettlement are conditional and have not been met. They argue that the Right of Return is contingent on Palestinians “wishing to live at peace with their neighbors” (UN Resolution 194 (III), par. 11), and thus is invalid in the current political climate (Sabel, 417; Yonati). Palestinians maintain that they do wish to live at peace, but are incapable of doing so because of Israel’s aggression. Palestinians argue that in this case, Israel is the perpetrator of conflict with their continued human rights violations. Official deliberations in the UN have been inconclusive in what exactly this line stipulates (“United Nations Conciliation”).

Although there is little perceived legal merit in the Israeli arguments against their violations of international law, the most important thing to recognize is not the legality of Israel’s actions, but rather the way they have successfully codified the situation as unprecedented (Olsen). Israel is a liberal settler state, meaning that although they could easily achieve their occupation objectives through military capabilities alone, they have put a concerted effort into constructing a legal framework which legitimizes the occupation. This framework is based on the idea of *sui generis*, which argues that because the circumstances are unprecedented, previous norms cannot be applied and thus requires an exception to the rules (Neusner 164). Since 1922 with the establishment of the Mandate of Palestine by the League of Nations, the subject of Israel has successfully been “exceptionalized”. This conceptualization was further entrenched with the establishment of the sovereign state of Israel in 1948, and was even further solidified after the

occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip following the war in 1967. Since then, Israel has been careful in the identification of their actions, adopting nomenclature that would seem consistent with international law, with the presumption that their position is unprecedented and thus requires modified interpretations of the given customs (Olsen). For example, instead of recognizing the term “occupation,” which is illegal by international legal standards (“Security Council Debates”), Israel argues that they took control of the West Bank as an act of defensive war, which is protected by international law (Sabel 416). Israel’s human rights violations have increased over the span of decades, but with a strategic method that moved the bar closer and closer to their side at critical moments (Olsen). Most importantly, they had the continued and enthusiastic support of the US, which further codified Israel’s legitimacy in breaking international laws. Thus identifying the salience of the American role in this crisis constitutes a deep dive into US policies over the previous decades, which will be discussed throughout this section. The ambiguity of international law in the context of Israel-Palestine is not limited to just humanitarian concerns. This pattern is discernible in much of Israel’s international engagements, including military security engagements.

Israeli Defense Systems

The nation of Israel has placed high importance on maintaining their advanced security measures. Because of the heavy persecution that Jews have faced throughout history up to the present, as well as its unique size and geographical location in the Middle East, Israel feels the need to have enhanced security and missile deterrence capabilities. In 2020 alone, Iran’s supreme leader both publicly denied the Holocaust and threatened Israel with destruction, which offers just a snapshot of the antisemitism that Israelis and Jews have to endure (Esfandiari; Vahdat) . The legacy of two thousand years of Jewish displacement and oppression has caused Israel to

develop a sense of insecurity and fear of annihilation, and the threat from Iran, a regional power, informs Israel's nuclear priorities. Although Israel's nuclear program does not directly affect the Palestinian crisis, it does show the strong defense status of Israel in the region and authorities on the subject of security question if the Israeli security complex could pose a threat for Palestinian leaders. The Iron Dome missile deterrence system and Israel's nuclear history shows evidence of America's unwavering support of the country. This section presents a fact-based view on Israeli security to give a comprehensive perspective of Israel's powerful position within international and regional politics.

Israel's Nuclear History

From the time when David Ben-Gurion became Israel's first Prime Minister in 1948 to Benjamin Netanyahu's current rule as Prime Minister, nuclear weapons have always been a priority for Israel. Ben-Gurion set a more sinister tone for the nuclear program because he wanted to be able to annihilate any force that threatened Israel's existence. Ben-Gurion was leading the building of the nuclear program as a person who never wanted the Jewish people to be put in another Hitler situation. Netanyahu sees building up a nuclear program capable of "threatening the annihilation of whoever threatens to annihilate us," as carrying on the legacy of Ben-Gurion (Cohen and Klieman 270). Although Israel has never publicly denied or confirmed the presence of a nuclear program, it is clear that over the last century it has developed a sophisticated program complete with missile deterrence systems. In just a decade, 1950s to the 1960s, Israel advanced quickly from the creation of the nuclear program by Ben-Gurion to the nuclear reactor at the Negev Nuclear Research Center being able to sustain an operable level of fission chain reactions (Cohen and Klieman 271). Memories of Hitler's regime of destruction caused Israel's leaders to hold to the concept of ambiguous opacity with high priority. They

could build their nuclear power up without worrying that enemies would spy on their stockpile. With the nuclear program, they would not have to experience another Jewish tragedy, since appropriate security measures were put in place. Reeling from the trauma of the Holocaust and a lack of a strong Israeli defense system, Ben-Gurion fervently and ambitiously worked to create a Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) program as insurance against any enemies (Cohen and Klieman 273).

In 1957, Israel reached an agreement with France to join together to build the nuclear program. In the early 1960s, thanks to French contributions, the nuclear reactor became fully functional at regulated operable levels and Israel became the Middle East's sole nuclear power ("Israeli Nuclear Program"). This operable level is commonly known as "going critical" and understood to mean that the reactor sustained a stable fission chain reaction.

In 1948, US president Harry S. Truman recognized the nation of Israel the same day Ben-Gurion declared its establishment. ("Creation of Israel, 1948"). In May of 1967 Israel crossed the nuclear threshold and became an undeclared nuclear power without any apparent dissent from the United States. Cohen and Klieman explain this by saying, "Owing to America's silent and somewhat reluctant acquiescence in Israel's interpretation of the "non-introduction" pledge as a self-imposed prohibition against any nuclear public acts, such as a declaration or a nuclear test, and not about nuclear possession, Israel was able to go nuclear invisibly." (276). To this day, the United States of America has a strong relationship with Israel and recognizes the nation and its nuclear capabilities. In the 1960s, US leaders urged Israel to join the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) but this eventually went nowhere (Mizokami, "The Not-So-Secret"). Under the ambiguity through which the Israeli government operated their nuclear program, Israel was and is still not required to adhere to all requirements, making joining

the NPT seem like an unnecessary course of action. The reasoning behind why Israel will not sign the NPT is still somewhat a mystery since Israel does not seem to have any intentions to proliferate nuclear weapons. The one thing that could be holding Israel back is their ambiguous Nuclear Opacity policy and refusal to publicly acknowledge themselves as a nuclear state. The US knew of the advanced technologies Israel used for security purposes yet did not, and still does not, question the ethics or motives behind their heavily guarded nuclear program. This was because of a secret agreement between the two countries. In 1969, Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir and American President Richard Nixon reached a bargain granting Israel nuclear opacity (Cohen and Klieman 271).

Israeli Nuclear Policy

Nuclear Opacity, Israel's unique code of conduct under which it maintains the nuclear program, is a deliberately ambiguous policy with no clear definition (Kayani). The commitment to cautious prudence and restraint gives the small Middle Eastern country a safety net to fall back on while maintaining their nuclear monopoly. Because of the vagueness of the Nuclear Opacity policy, Israel has been able to improve and increase their nuclear capabilities without any of the regulated safeguards inspections that are required for every other nuclear power. This can be concluded based on facts about the increase of missile deterrence arsenal since the start of Israel's nuclear program.

This should raise alarm to not only the nations that have nuclear capabilities but to other states in the surrounding region, as Israel has avoided seemingly every single nuclear safeguards inspection out there. Instead, Israel has let in nuclear safeguard inspectors in partnership with American inspectors, but the inspections were conducted on terms that Israel wrote out for themselves (Cohen and Klieman 274). There is no sure way for the international community to

be assured that the inspections were comprehensive and thorough, and Israel's refusal to allow standardized safeguards inspections is cause for concern. In order to get Israel to join the nuclear treaties and inspections, member states of the NPT and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) should consider a revision of the signing terms. Signing nuclear treaties, such as the NPT, would require Israel to publicly proclaim themselves as a nuclear state but this cannot be done due to their vague Nuclear Opacity policy. The largest obstacle standing in their way seems to be the US-approved opacity policy.

Netanyahu took advantage of the Nuclear Opacity policy and in August of 1998 refused to sign the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT), which proposed to prohibit the further production of fissile material for nuclear weapons (Cohen and Klieman 272). Cohen and Klieman quoted Netanyahu as saying that Israel "...will never sign the [FMCT] treaty, and do not delude yourselves - no pressure will help." (272). The FMCT is incompatible with the Nuclear Opacity policy. If the FMCT was to be adopted by Israel they would have to officially declare their nuclear program, thus voiding the ambiguity of the Nuclear Opacity policy.

Current Nuclear Capabilities

Israel continues to produce fissile material for their stockpile of weapons and is able to do so legally, without much scrutiny from other world leaders. According to a chart from the Arms Control Association, Israel is still producing Plutonium (Pu 239). This is noteworthy because Pu 239 is engineered solely for nuclear weapons usage ("Fissile Material"). The United States stopped production of both Pu 239 and Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) in 1987 and 1992 respectively ("Fissile Material"). Israel's status in the production of Highly Enriched Uranium is still currently unknown and could be cause for concern. Enriched Uranium is used solely in bombs and is "weapons-usable" grade. A chart developed by the Pacific Northwest National

Laboratory in Richland, WA shows that Uranium 235, an isotope of uranium used to create Highly Enriched Uranium, is under the Always Investigate category along with the other Special Nuclear Materials. HEU contains about 20% of Uranium 235 which is a higher concentration of the element than exists in naturally occurring uranium ore (“NRC Glossary”).

After passing the nuclear threshold in just ten years, Israel is now considered an advanced nuclear weapons state in both quality and quantity of arsenal; it is estimated to have a nuclear stockpile of 80 to 300 warheads (Cohen and Klieman 271). Currently, Israel’s nuclear program is centered at the Negev Nuclear Research Center in the Negev desert, thirteen kilometers south-east of the city of Dimona, Israel. Israel has obtained a nuclear triad composed of the Jericho ballistic missile program, modified fighter jets, and a sea-going fleet (Cohen and Klieman 276). The quantity and quality of the arsenal is as impressive as the country’s ability to operate the program without publicly declaring their nuclear status. According to Cohen and Klieman, this unique position of ambiguity and Nuclear Policy is their most distinctive contribution to the nuclear age (271). The NPT Review Conference in 1995 adopted a resolution which called for states in the region to place their respective nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards [inspections] (Cohen and Klieman 272). For a state to place their nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards, they should have a publicly declared nuclear program. Israel does not have this due to the special “opacity exceptions”, which makes it difficult for them to see a need to undergo regulated safeguards. In addition to their impressive arsenal, Israel has implemented a highly advanced missile interception/defense system, called the Iron Dome.

Iron Dome Missile Deterrence System and US Military Connections

While the Iron Dome is not Israel’s only missile defense system, it is the most recent addition and was developed in collaboration with the United States in 2011 during Obama’s

presidency (“U.S Army Short-Range” 13). One could say that the system exists thanks to US government funding. This Iron Dome system joins Israel’s network of missile defense which includes the David’s Sling system and the Arrow Interceptor system; while David’s Sling targets “incoming missiles during their terminal phase, [the Iron Dome] intercepts missiles at their highest trajectory.” (“Israel’s Missile Defense Systems”). Landau and Bermant suggest that “according to figures released by Israeli defense officials, Iron Dome achieved a success rate of approximately 90% on intercepting rockets fired at Israel’s residential areas (37).

As one of the world’s most effective anti-missile systems, Iron Dome has the capacity to identify and destroy enemy missiles before they even land in Israeli territory (“The Iron Dome Missile”). Having an effective range of approximately 90 miles, the \$20,000 rockets are fired from a team-operated battery that acts in collaboration with radar-guided warning systems that detect and track incoming enemy fire. Two elements of the Dome system give it advantage over the other deterrence systems; the first being the precise tracking of incoming rockets, and the second being the cost efficiency of the Iron Dome (“U.S Army Short-Range” 13). According to the Congressional Research Service (CRS), the Iron Dome system is “a dual-mission counter rocket, artillery, and mortar (C-RAM) and very short range air defense (V-SHORAD) system used to target and destroy missiles with a range of about 7-70 km.” (Sharp 12-13).

The Iron Dome intercepts missiles fired from the West Bank as well as from Hamas in the Gaza Strip. Since the creation of the Iron Dome in 2011, more than 2,500 rockets have been intercepted; that is more than 90% of all rockets fired at Israel (“The Iron Dome Missile”). This highly advanced deterrence system has dramatically decreased the number of innocent Israeli casualties. For example, in 2006 during the Second Lebanon War, before the Iron Dome, when Hezbollah fired 4000 rockets into Israel, there were 53 Israeli casualties, however, after Iron

Dome was created, during Operation Protective Edge, approximately 3360 rockets were fired from Gaza and Israel suffered just 2 casualties (Landau 39). The Israeli public themselves have documented impressive interceptions made by Iron Dome and while the IDF has not made the data available, there is no doubt of the successes of the highly accurate defense system (Landau 38). The accuracy and efficiency of Iron Dome batteries is something that defense experts around the world envy Israel for and is a reason for the heavy US funding. Both the Obama and Trump administrations took interest in giving sufficient funding to Iron Dome (“U.S Army Short-Range” 13, 16).

While the Iron Dome was built with the ingenuity of Israeli advanced security technology, Israel’s newest missile deterrence defense system owes its funding to America. The United States has collaborated with Israel, from the conception of the Iron Dome to the full deployment of the batteries along the border. The Obama Administration in March of 2012 announced that an additional \$205 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 was secured to help produce Iron Dome and in July of the same year, Obama provided an additional \$70 million to ensure that Iron Dome production could be maximized for 2012 (“U.S Army Short-Range” 13). CRS concluded that from Fiscal Year 2012 through 2015, US investment in Iron Dome was more than \$900 million (13).

In September 2020, Israel delivered two Iron Dome batteries to the US Army despite US concerns over difficulties integrating the batteries into the pre-existing air defense systems; the real test for this will be if the batteries can be incorporated into the new Integrated Air & Missile Battle Command System (IBCS) the US has implemented (“The Iron Dome Missile”). Based on CRS reports, in 2019, the US Marine Corps successfully integrated Iron Dome elements into their radar and command and control system (15).

The Iron Dome was a system Israel built with the sole purpose of protecting their residents. When deploying the Iron Dome batteries, Israel had and still has no intention of using this system to attack surrounding territories. The missiles are deterrence missiles that are meant to intercept missile fire coming from outside of Israeli borders.

Nonproliferation Treaty and IAEA Safeguard Inspections

The Arms Control Association has stated that “non-states-parties to the NPT may also sign safeguards agreements with the IAEA known as item-specific safeguards agreements. India, Pakistan and Israel for instance, have placed civil nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards and India has an Additional Protocol in force” (“IAEA Safeguards Agreements”). Although Israel is stated to have put civil nuclear facilities under, there is no writing or discussions to suggest that their military level nuclear plants are also subject to the same IAEA safeguards. In fact, Israel refuses to bind their military nuclear plants to IAEA safeguards and is “protected” from doing so due to their aforementioned Nuclear Opacity policy.

The US could perhaps be considered Israel’s strongest and most powerful ally. If the US has allowed IAEA inspections to be conducted, signed onto the NPT, and is a part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), what could possibly be holding Israel back from also taking the appropriate safeguard measures. This time it was not Nuclear Opacity that prevented it, but rather the fear of other countries in the region potentially proliferating nuclear weapons. While Iran was not really a nuclear threat under Prime Ministers Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert, the country and their potential with “the bomb” has been Israel’s highest strategic security concern since Netanyahu became Prime Minister in 2009 (Cohen and Klieman 277).

In 2012, the UN General Assembly voted 174 to 6 on a resolution that called on Israel to open its nuclear program for inspection and join the NPT (“UN Tells Israel”). Those six

abstentions were from Israel, the US, Canada, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, and Palau.

Associated Press mentions that while UN resolutions “are not legally binding...they do reflect on world opinion and carry moral and political weight (“UN Tells Israel”). Israel insisted on there being a peace agreement in the region before any further action is taken despite its rivals arguing that the undeclared nuclear arsenal is the greatest threat to peace in the region. Israel’s regional rivals see the entire nuclear program as a threat to their security which is why to them, Israel joining the NPT and allowing nuclear inspections of the military grade reactors would be a step toward peace.

Despite the US voting against the overall resolution, it did support two paragraphs that called for universal adherence to the NPT and for the non-party countries to ratify it as early as possible (“UN Tells Israel”). Israeli diplomat Isi Yanouka referred to the 2012 UN Conference as having “anti-Israel resolution language...[which] proves above all the ill intent of the Arab states with regard to this conference.” (“UN Tells Israel”). It was not revealed whether the US agreed with Yanouka or not but it is quite clear that the US, Israel’s greatest ally, still urges the Middle East’s nuclear monopoly to sign onto regulations for accountability and diplomatic purposes to create peace. However, it is important to recognise that US involvement and overall support of Israel has long influenced the crisis.

American Political Involvement

The continued and enthusiastic support of the US further codifies Israel’s legitimacy in breaking international laws in weapons security and beyond. For example, the US came to the defense of Israel with a veto of the UN Security Council Resolution that deemed the construction of a barrier in occupied Palestinian territory as illegal and recommended immediate cease and reversal of the project (“Israeli Settlements Remain”). Later that same year, the UN General

Assembly requested the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to make a nonbinding advisory opinion that detailed the legal ramifications of border construction between Israel and the Occupied Territories. A year later, the ICJ released their ruling against Israel's construction of the barrier. Although the General Assembly passed a resolution demanding that Israel obey the ruling 150-6 with 10 abstentions, Israel rejected the move, highlighting the element of self defense, and declared that they would continue building the wall. The most notable response when it came to American involvement in the issue, however, was not simply the State Department and White House's response in the international realm. In 2004, the US Congress passed HR-713, a resolution denouncing the "misuse" of the ICJ in favor of Palestinian interests.

This action by the US Congress demonstrates the level to which Israeli interests have been reflected in American Policy. This process of domestically internalizing an international issue on to American soil reflects the concerted efforts of lobbying groups and appeals to the constituents, particularly to the evangelical Christian voter base. Israel is the largest cumulative recipient of foreign aid from the US since World War II, which totals to \$146 billion (non-inflation adjusted) (United States Congress). The US currently maintains \$3.8 billion in annual military aid to Israel, which is the largest military aid they provide to any single country in the world, most notably one that is not a part of NATO. This is a very important agenda piece for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), a bipartisan group that advocates and facilitates strong ties between the US and Israel.

Despite the ongoing and explicit international law violations, the international community had failed to take action. The UN Security Council has condemned both of Israel's past unilateral annexations, in East Jerusalem in 1980 and the Syrian Golan Heights in 1981, but failed both times to enact meaningful countermeasures to such actions. The Security Council has

also continually denounced Israeli settlements, but has similarly done little in response. Furthermore, the United States' continued support for Israel has become an obstacle to achieving justice ("Israeli Annexation"). Accountability in the international community is paramount to the longevity and legitimacy of international law and the support of Israel by the world's greatest superpower only undercuts this.

On February 5, 2021, the International Criminal Court (ICC) ruled that it does indeed have jurisdiction to investigate and rule on possible war crimes that Israel has committed in regards to this crisis (Kershner). This ruling comes six years after the ICC launched a preliminary investigation into the issue. The decision has come under fire both by Israel and by the US, which argues that the ICC does not have the jurisdiction to do so because Israel is not part of the ICC. Vice President Kamala Harris has also come out in support of Israel, stating that the US should come out "in full force" behind Israel against any biased investigations, decrying the politicization and misuse of the court. This instance further affirms the success that Israel has enjoyed with the unwavering support of the US (Harkov "Kamala Harris").

Israel and the American Evangelical Voter Base

Fervent American support has been instrumental for Israel in achieving their territorial and policy objectives in the Palestinian territories. Other than the successful lobbying of Jewish pro-Israel and Zionist interest groups in the US, Israeli interests enjoy a very comfortable position of maintaining support from the very large and influential voter base of Evangelical Christians. According to a Brookings poll done in 2015, 81% of Evangelical Christians believe in the rapture, which is the end-of-times event that involves the second coming of Christ to physically bring all Christians to heaven, and 63% believe that it is necessary for Israel to include all of the land that was promised to Jews in the old testament ("What Americans").

Seventy-three percent of Evangelical Christians agreed that unrest in Israel would signify that the rapture is approaching, and 79% agreed that increasing violence in the Middle East would indicate the same (“What Americans”). Evangelical Christians perceive the rapture and second coming of Christ as an attractive objective in their faith, and thus have a vested religious interest in seeing Jews in their “promised land”. According to Pew Research, roughly a quarter of all Americans identify as Evangelical, by far the largest religious affiliation in the entire country (“Religion in America”). This makes for a lucrative policy point for politicians running for elections. This platform translates to policy making, as data from 1993-2002 show a correlation between representatives of conservative constituents pursuing pro-Israel bills (Rosensen). As data from a Pew Research poll shows that 55% of Evangelicals are conservative, this indicates a strong correlation between the success of pro-Israel policies and Evangelical support (“Religion in America”). The pro-Israel lobby also consists of more Christians than Jews, which is a testament to the true facilitators of the agenda (Miller).

The Republican party in particular has adopted an extremely pro-Israel stance in the recent years. Many campaigning events have taken candidates to Israel as a show of support for the international ally. However, the Republican party is not the only side that produces candidates and constituencies that lean very pro-Israel. A 2013 poll concluded that while Republicans overwhelmingly support Israel (78%), a comfortable majority of Democrats do the same (55%). This disproportionately large influence on American politics of what would otherwise be an insignificant region can be ascribed to the influence of the evangelical voter base in the US (Miller).

While Israel may be perceived as a strategic ally to American interests, the disproportionate amount of money and political energy that it claims in domestic politics should

be reduced. There are much larger existential concerns to American national security, such as the rise of China or revived Russian aggression, which deserve more attention than Israel.

Additionally, Israel has been known to spy on American targets both domestically and abroad, which would jeopardize any bilateral relationship in most other cases (Miller). While the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is absolutely a human rights catastrophe and demands attention, American security may stand unaffected by this crisis directly. However, the conflict does have large implications in both the broader scope of international security, but more importantly regional security in the Middle East. Therefore, indirectly, resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through a peaceful solution is in the best interests of American security.

Regional and International Security Implications

NATO Non-Member Ally Benefits

The topic of Israel in the international arena expands beyond humanitarian norms, but also into their multilateral military cooperatives. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (“Partners”) currently has 30 independent member countries. While Israel is not an official NATO member state, it is a member of NATO’s Mediterranean Dialogue along with countries such as Jordan and Egypt, both of which border Israel on opposite sides (“Partners”). Israel benefits from being a NATO non-member ally and has openly voiced their support for preventing Iran and Iraq from building nuclear programs (Cohen and Klieman 272). It can be concluded that Israel has influence in the defense realm and these international bodies see them as the small country who has gained relevance through maintaining almost impenetrable defense systems both internally and externally. In 2004, an article in Tel Aviv Notes stated, “...NATO wants to promote deeper political and military relations with Israel and a number of Arab states...” (Eilam 1). Eilam also suggested that “...closer relations with Europe might give Israel

an extra “security safety-net” that would enable it to be more “generous” in negotiations with the Palestinians” (1).

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict plays a key role in why members of NATO are hesitant to fully establish relations with Israel, yet NATO members desire to see some sort of political agreement come to fruition (Shalom 1). Regardless of European Union and NATO sentiment, member states must move with caution around the notion of inviting Israel to join the Treaty. Tel Aviv Notes stated, “...the Palestinians (and other Arabs) would almost certainly object to any institutional arrangement that [seems] to entrench Israeli military dominance in the region. Consideration of Palestinian sensitivities would give [the] European members...reason to move very cautiously on the question of Israel accession.” (Eilam 2).

Regional Factors

As it is already shown, there are many players outside of Israel and the Palestinian territories who are also stakeholders in the conflict, and the international community maintains a very important role in influencing the crisis. However, it is equally important to recognize that the crisis has massive implications for the region in general, and that its effects are not confined to the borders of Israel and the Palestinian territories. Securing peace relations among Middle Eastern countries has been an unresolved issue for decades. Western Asia and particularly the countries that constitute the Arab League have experienced a significant impact with the introduction of the Jewish state, and the crisis threatens continued instability in the region. While Israel has deemed it necessary to secure their nation from the threats that larger Middle Eastern countries pose, these measures threaten their Palestinian neighbors. Historically, Israel and Palestinians have never been on friendly terms with each other and both parties have clashed over the same territory for over a century. Because Israel is a nuclear monopoly in the region

amongst its larger adversaries, it has taken on a fearless and more aggressive approach to dealing with the Palestinians. Several US Presidents have tried to negotiate for some peace among the Israelis and Palestinians to no avail because of the severe deficiency of the Palestinian voice in negotiations. The US partnership with Israel has caused a systematic and historical preference for Israel, which further disables the prospect of a lasting, sustainable peace endorsed by all sides (Goldenberg 21).

Conclusion

Rather than taking a particular stance on Israeli defense and legal systems, this chapter intends to draw attention to areas of ambiguity which may be causing friction, while recognizing that external factors have and continue to play a pivotal role in the peace process. The entire international community has a large stake in this issue, and it has the potential to set many dangerous precedents if the international community is unable to mitigate international security and legal concerns. Nuclear transparency and compliance to nuclear safeguards inspections as well as the NPT would not only facilitate a more productive peace process, but also enable a pathway for Palestinians to gain a seat at the negotiation table. Because Palestinians are directly involved in this crisis yet are the weakest party, they must have a stronger voice in the peace process in order to create a lasting stability.

Economics

Remington Scovel

Introduction

Journalist Yara Hawari once wrote, “Post-apartheid South African liberation was not fully achieved because of the separation of politics from economics,” (Hawari 19). Thus, it is clear that before a viable solution between Israel and the Palestinians can be developed, economics must be considered. The present economic landscape of Israel and the Palestinian territories looks dire to Palestinians. For all intents and purposes, the state of Israel siphons Palestinian land, money, resources, and productive potential. In Area C, a territory in the West Bank and the site of major Israeli encroachment, the Palestinian Authority loses \$480 million per year alone from the loss of arable land, property, and development potential (Hawari par. 7). Another issue facing Palestinians is that Arab States have halted aid payments to the Palestinians in 2010, as support for the Palestinian cause has declined in return for diplomatic relations with Israel to combat Iran. Such aid once constituted a third of the Palestinian GDP (Kurd par. 11). Diminishing economic assistance to the Palestinians has led to increasing rates of poverty. Indeed, the Palestine Central Bureau of Statistics in 2017 reported 29.2% of Palestinians lived in poverty (Thelwell).

The Palestinian economy is entirely dependent on Israel, and as such the two economies are deeply intertwined. Fifty percent of Palestinian trade is conducted with Israel, and Israel annually allots a minimum of \$120 million to the Palestinian Authority (PA), in what seems to be a recognition of the dire Palestinian economic situation (Fouche par. 7). Due to COVID-19, the Israeli government sent an additional billion dollars from withheld taxes to the PA to further alleviate the grave economic condition. These are crucial economic characteristics. Israel knows

that much of the capital that goes into the Palestinian territories flows back to Israel. Additionally, Palestinians are a source of inexpensive labor which Israel often profits from (Farsakh 13-27). For example, Palestinian coders work for Israeli tech companies. Nonetheless, this economic interdependence is an indispensable opportunity within the political and economic structures to foster potential collaboration between the State of Israel and the PA. This can be achieved through the methodology of Peace Economics whereby opposing parties seek cooperation in business, finance, and trade. In order to increase Palestinian bargaining power, they must develop greater economic and financial cooperation by implementing opportunities in financial markets, developing stronger monetary policy with an emphasis on currency, and honing in on productive specializations such as handicrafts.

Open trading and Palestinian Securities

Bonds

Accordingly, the first course of action should be taken relying upon bonds. Trade promotes stability and peace by linking opposing parties with mutual obligations and the opportunity to reciprocally gain through mutual prosperity. Our advocacy for healthier trade and financial practices will lead to greater cooperation between Israel and the PA. Such practices include utilizing security markets, Palestinian economic specializations, and developing the Palestinian Central Bank in the promotion of joint Israeli-Palestinian cooperation. Ultimately, the desired result is an empowered PA that can fight the poverty of its people, promote entrepreneurship, and have economic security. In turn, the prospects of joint prosperity and benefit investors will give Israel incentive to support Palestinian economic growth.

Employing the securities trade, the open exchange of stocks, bonds, and related funds, is not only a viable solution for increasing Palestinian bargaining power, but it can be a lucrative

opportunity for a Palestinian state and its investors. An ESG (Environment, Social, Governance) bond program is a viable method to begin to flood the Palestinian territories with much needed capital. According to Niall Ferguson, “Bonds are the magical link between the world of high finance and the world of political power,” (Ascent of Money, 00:56-00:59). By issuing Palestine Bonds, a number of objectives for peace become achievable. With having little available capital and limited economic governance, this source of money could boost an economy as both corporate and public bonds become actively purchased and traded. To refer to a previous instance, beginning in 1957, the Israeli state, through the Development Corporation of Israel, issued Israel bonds in the United States, Canada, and Europe (“Investing Options”). Israel bonds can still be actively purchased and traded to this day. Because Americans, Canadians, and Israelis purchased Israel Bonds, it is important that Israel pays back their “debt” (“Investing Options”). Purchasers of the bond now wish to see Israel develop and be economically sound because it ensures that there will be a repayment of the bond.

The same principle would apply to Palestine: all purchasers of a Palestinian bond would be invested in the wellbeing of the Palestinian economy. This would also offer some protection, as it guarantees investors that will look out for the Palestinians’ best interest. This protection would be doubled in the case of Israeli citizen investors, who would have a direct investment in both Israeli and Palestinian economies and seek policies that are in the best interest of both. Additionally, the exposure from foreign investors from Palestine Bonds would not only heighten awareness of the crisis in the Palestinian territories, but Palestine’s success would mean the success of the investor due to repayment of the bond. In order to protect bond purchasers and investors, encouraging Palestine’s economic viability ensures its debts are repaid and investors receive their return on investment.

Recent events relative to issues of social justice have led to a growing demand for this type of bond. After the murder of George Floyd and the COVID-19 pandemic, ESG securities have not only appreciated in value, but popularity as well (*Wall Street Week* 01:02-02:19). Stocks and bonds of this category seek to have money flow back into areas where people need money the most (*Wall Street Week* 17:01-17:37). Bank of America began their ESG program in 2016 with a total value of \$40 million. By 2020, the value of their combined ESG funds grew to \$400 million (*Wall Street Week* 15:16-15:51). There is a growing tide of protest investors seeking to promote social and political change by investing in specific securities and bonds that help the marginalized. It is a powerful way to protest and support justice, as such curated investments have the ability to bypass governments and increase the bargaining power of whatever entity is in need of help.

ESG bonds could be openly purchased in many different countries and exchanges aside from just the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange (TASE). There are American firms like Calvert Funds that specialize in creating bond funds that provide further opportunities to grow capital and bridge the gap between American investors and Palestinians as such bonds become traded on the New York Stock Exchange. Although political support for the Palestinians has subsided in the Arab states since 2010, public support remains strong, and therefore the general Arab public would be likely to support the Palestinian economy by investing in bonds (Glubb). Palestinian Bonds could be traded on Arab exchanges such as the Tadawul or Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange. The bond company Convertible Bonds issues bonds that can be converted later into company stock. A company such as this could also enter the picture, promising Palestinian equity to investors around the world, in turn opening Palestine to the globe.

There is already a spirit of investing within the Palestinian territories. As Ozy Media described, “Overall, the Palestinian territories are witnessing a 34% annual growth in startups, according to the Ministry of Entrepreneurship. All of that is giving a population under siege a chance to dream again,” (“How Tech Startups” par. 5). The Palestinian economy has potential to expand. Al-Takaful (TIC), one of the first Islamic insurance firms, is openly traded on the Palestinian Exchange. However, it is not yet sold on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange. If Al-Takaful were to be traded on the TASE, a deal could be struck that would allow Al-Takaful to invest its assets into TASE securities, thus increasing a capital flow to Israel and enabling Palestinians to be better insured.

Stocks

Additionally, the purchasing of securities can be a powerful means to protest. Purchasing securities permits investors to bypass policies that detract from the Palestinian economy and provide a return on investments. Therefore, investing in Palestine should not only include bonds but encompass stocks as well. Allowing Palestinian companies to go public and be traded on the Israeli stock exchange would allow Israelis and Palestinians to further merge their coinciding economies. This ultimately fosters economic synergy and a financial ecosystem in which capital flows to Palestinian companies that grow and accumulate larger profits that ultimately increases the wealth of investors re-circulating capital flowing back into the merged economies.

Some might be apprehensive that the Israeli Securities Authority (ISA) will not desire to have Palestinian securities openly traded. However, the department seeks to recognize foreign authorities and exchanges in Israel by expanding the openness of domestic markets to investors, both foreign and domestic (“International Affairs”). Incorporating the opportunity to trade Palestinian securities is parallel to the ISA’s mission to expand its capital markets. Particularly if

Israel faces international exposure for the unfavorable conditions of Palestinian occupied territories and the Israeli government's actions against Palestinians, as bad international PR does not promote good business, nor does it fuel the desire for others to invest in Israel. Thus by adapting its narrative of good governance and improved treatment of the Palestinians, Israel would attract a greater amount of foreign investors.

Developing a standardized currency

At the present, the Palestinian economy is in need of a stronger central bank and a standardized form of monetary policy. Based in Ramallah, the Palestinian Monetary Authority (PMA) seeks to better maintain financial and monetary stability by regulating financial services transparently, implementing efficient payment systems, in order to achieve price stability through an effective monetary policy (Weidner). Such goals are difficult to achieve when three different currencies are in circulation in the Palestinian territories: the Jordanian Dinar, the U.S Dollar, and the Israeli Shekel. Within the Palestinian territories, each currency has its own purpose; the Shekel is primarily used for most transactions, the Dinar to transact durable goods like electronics, and the Dollar for savings and purchasing foreign goods (Zacharia par. 5). However, the circulation of three currencies is taxing for the Palestinian economy. It would be most efficacious for the Palestinians to standardize their currency in order to avoid inflation, high exchange costs, and for financial ease of transactions (Cobham and Kanafani). Although the formation of a novel Palestinian currency could be utilized as an expression of sovereignty, to encourage a new currency and hedge it against three other currencies already in circulation would be risky from an economic standpoint. Palestinians need meaningful capital enrichment, and the potential for inflation and a gross lack of demand are significant obstacles that would accompany a new currency. Furthermore, the implementation and cost to develop a new

currency would create yet another burden for an already desperate economy, and would be devastating to the economy if a new currency failed (Abumaria par. 13). As a new Palestinian currency would have little value and would therefore have difficulty enabling a Palestinian Central Bank to practice purposeful monetary policy, Palestine's economy would profit the most from adopting the Shekel as its official currency, as the sole implementation of the Shekel would invite meaningful economic stability and cooperation.

Adopting the Shekel would also be most pragmatic for business. As previously stated, the vast majority of its trade is already with Israel. Israel also subsidizes the Palestinian economy, which entails, at least in the short run, a capital outflow out of Israeli capital. Israel must then rely on the Shekel's velocity to flow back into its own economy. By permitting the Palestinian Central Bank to mint its own specified quantity of Shekels, a number of positive externalities occur. First, the Shekel would increase in value as it would be in greater demand. The Israeli government would enjoy a boost to the value of their currency and ensure greater access to trade with the Palestinians. Second, permitting the Palestinians to print Shekels would allow the formation of an effective money policy, which in turn would lead to the stabilization of its economy through economic planning as well as social investment and development. Third, the Palestinian territories will no longer have to rely upon the importation of currency and could increase its sovereignty. Most importantly, the minting of Israeli Shekels on the behalf of the Palestinians would guarantee Palestinian economic representation and the beginning of a cooperative dialogue between Israel and the Palestinians through a shared currency. Israel would be incentivized as well to lend usage of its Shekel because it would increase in value and bargaining power while signifying economic health.

Enhancement of trade specializations

For microeconomic enrichment and to diminish Palestine's poverty rate, it is vital to promote small businesses and trade specializations. Marketing culture is not only a means to revenue but to cultural preservation as well. Algerians in Paris have begun to design and sell gorgeous, embroidered masks that have become more popular than similar products from Chanel or Hermes products (Garcia and Smith par. 3). There are tremendous ongoing opportunities within the Palestinian territories for exporting handicrafts and olive based products. Setting aside the material aspect of marketing, Palestinian culture enables a revival and prevents cultural eradication. Israel would be highly incentivized to promote Palestinian exports, and will also have the potential to generate reasonable tax and tariff revenue. Additionally, tourism is strongly suitable for economic growth as travellers seeking to go to Israel also desire to go to visit Palestinian holy sites like Bethlehem ("Ethical Travel"). Palestinian products serve to attract tourists to Israel and the Palestinian territories, thus benefitting these merged economies and providing mutual economic benefits. Although Palestine at the present exports its cultural goods, it is of utmost importance to maximize and scale this approach for greater cultural awareness, industrial opportunities, and to obtain greater revenue.

Conclusion

Israel and the Palestinians have multiple economic intersections that can and will find reciprocal enrichment. The implementation of healthy economic practices is a prerequisite to developing a solution that benefits both sides. First, by focusing on issuing and selling bonds, Palestine will give birth to the capital impetus necessary to vitalize its economy. By attracting investors, domestic and foreign alike, Palestinians will prosper. By partnering with Israel in selling bonds on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, both ensure the distribution of the bonds and

money flowing to Israeli and Palestinian investors alike, as well as flows of money back to Israel and the Palestinian territories. Second, by employing the Shekel on both sides, the Palestinian Authority will be able to develop a monetary policy to promote growth, and Israelis will find benefit in an appreciating currency. Finally, by maximizing Palestinian creative potential and honing in on its economic advantage in handicrafts, Palestinian cultural can be exported, infusing itself with earned capital and attracting tourists. In turn, these tourists will also visit sites in Israel and the Israeli importation of Palestinian goods will generate tariff revenue within reason.

These proposals serve as a guide to the coalition to elevate the voice of the Palestinian people, as economic circumstances are intrinsically linked to politics. The economic vitality of Palestinians must be incorporated into this story of overcoming oppression.

Section III: Building the Coalition

Recruiting the Right People

Sundus Ahmed

Introduction

As the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues, Israel's occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem has affected almost every aspect of life for Palestinians. The occupation has limited their movement, stifled their voices, and denied them access to basic human rights. Palestinians in the occupied territories currently have little to no bargaining power in their situation (Allen 38). This can be attributed to internal and external factors, including the currently weakening and fragmented governments in the Palestinian territories and Israel's repressive policies towards the Palestinians. For Palestinians to gain bargaining power, there needs to be support from various groups, specifically those who have human rights at the forefront of their cause. Our proposed coalition comprises movements, and organizations that either support the Palestinian cause or have the goal of furthering human rights. This chapter identifies potential organizations to recruit for the coalition and how coalition-building can further Palestinian human rights.

Leadership Woes and Diverging Interests

There are multiple external and internal factors working against the Palestinians. Within the state, there is a crisis of leadership and fragmentation in political ideology. The split, though weakening, between the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip and the Fatah backed Palestinian Authority in the West Bank continues because of institutional disarray and poor leadership

(Wietschorke and Lukas 2). The economy is being damaged by spending deficits, increased joblessness, and an over-reliance on foreign aid (Qarmout and Beland 33). President of the Palestinian Authority (PA) Mahmoud Abbas's four-year term ended in 2009, and the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) has not assembled in over a decade. Abbas' leadership continues to decline and has become myopic. There is a considerable need for institution building, and the need to participate in a cycle of reconciliation between all parties is just as dire. Much of the foundation that held Palestinian nationalism and organization together is crumbling (Sela and Mishal 15). The question of who will lead and how that will be determined is contingent on all players, especially Palestinians. The fragmentation of Palestinian governance is critical for the Palestinians and Israel, and the United States—both of whom share responsibility for the present status of affairs in the region (Allen 75). In addition, regardless of whether it was conceivable to restart peace talks, Abbas's administration has neither the ability to arrange or conclude peace talks with Israel (Wietschorke and Lukas 2). Many attribute the lack of Palestinian voices to disorganization and lack of leadership. However, after the Oslo Accords, many NGOs and grassroots organizations supporting the Palestinians failed because they lacked an institutional platform and insert word under Israeli occupation (Allen 27). This is very prevalent in the current political arena in the Palestinian territories. External factors that contribute to the lack of Palestinian voices include the current right-wing government in Israel. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's administration continues to expand illegal settlements throughout the West Bank, making the prospects of a two-state solution difficult (Allen 33). He once stated that a Palestinian State would not exist under his supervision (Rumley and Tibon 78). While Netanyahu has since attempted to distance himself from that statement, his expansion of illegal settlements legitimizes it. According to Human Rights Watch, the Israeli military has deprived Palestinians of freedom

of expression, and the military impedes Palestinians' human rights by using violent tactics to control the Palestinians ("Palestine: Crackdown").

The Arab world has long stood in solidarity with Palestinians due to their shared identity as Arabs. However, they have also been a barrier to peace in the region. Arab governments have not played a positive role in peace negotiations overall. In fact, they played the role of aggressor all throughout the twentieth century. They have waged war, incited violence against Israel, questioned its legitimacy, and have not provided any real relief to the Palestinian cause (Bickerton 8). However, there has been some cooperation. In 1977 Egyptian President Anwar Sadat visited the Israeli Knesset and recognized the nation (Jiryis 26). Some historians and political analysts believe that this was when Arab politicians began reexamining their strategy and approach towards Israel. It is also important to note that during the "Arab Spring" in 2011, the issue of Palestine was hardly referenced by the millions of Arab demonstrators protesting their various governments (Achcar 392). The movement was centered around ending authoritarian regimes and creating social equity in Arab nations, yet excluded calls for Palestinian human rights. Numerous spectators invited this as an invigorating transformation from the anti-American and anti-Israel sentiment utilized by the Arab governments to redirect and diffuse any discontent (Achcar 392). However, this shows the lack of concern towards the Palestinians in the Arab world. Following the Arab spring, multiple countries in the Middle East have normalized relations with Israel, which has left many unhopeful about Palestinians gaining any liberation. However, if international and localized humanitarian organizations joined forces within a coalition to renew the world's attention on the issue of Palestinian human rights, it could create the international platform that the Palestinian's lacked during the Arab Spring. This could provide the same benefit to the Palestinian cause that the exposure of the Arab Spring awarded

other Arab political movements and regalanize popular Arab support for Palestinian human rights.

Coalition Building

The Israeli, Palestinian, and other Arab governments have failed to resolve the issue of Palestine, leaving Palestinians in the crossfire without any comprehensive representation. A coalition is a valuable approach to stimulate social development and change. When activists and associations share objectives and work together to combine their influence, they are more likely to accomplish their goals (Cole and Luna 71). However, coalitions are hard to arrange because of polarity, rivalry, and the absence of organizations. Coalitions that unite many races and identities, classes, belief systems, and so forth are among the most challenging to create. In recent history, identity politics have become a topic of discourse concerning activism. However, recently there has been a shift. In our modern and increasingly globalized world, people have begun to identify with one another beyond national or ethnic background, but rather through the lived experiences created by their socio-political condition (Davis 101). Transnational movements driven by the belief that all oppressed people's liberation is interconnected, have been driving forces behind the anti-apartheid movements in South Africa, anti-colonial struggle in the global south, and newer movements such as Black Lives Matter in the United States and elsewhere (Davis 20).

To further understand the power of solidarity and resistance, we can examine successful strategies employed by movements such as South Africa's Anti Apartheid movement (AAM). In 1948, the government instituted apartheid, barring Black South Africans from homeownership in various parts of the country and banning interracial marriage, among other things (Thorn 286). Protests against the politically-sanctioned racial segregation arose inside the country, specifically

from the multiracial Defiance Campaign, which was under the authority of the African National Congress (ANC) (Halisi 62). The Anti-Apartheid Movement's goal was to create global disdain for the "separate development" policy globally. South African activists in the United Kingdom coordinated a boycott month in March of 1960, asking consumers to abstain from purchasing any South African items (Thorn 286). This was quite successful, and as a result, criticism against the apartheid system continued to grow in the 1970s. More countries and intergovernmental organizations aligned themselves with the Anti-Apartheid Movement (Thorn 289). In 1976, The United Nations Security Council voted to condemn apartheid and placed a military embargo on South Africa. Although the plight of Palestinians and Black South Africans are not identical, they share many similarities. The most significant difference between apartheid South Africa and the current situation in Israel is that while South Africa was quite clear about its objectives regarding apartheid, Israel is not as explicit in its policies. The reality is only fully understood by those living in the occupied territories (Peteet 249). Nevertheless South Africa provided a roadmap for Palestinians in their own resistance against occupation.

The Boycott, Divest, and Sanction movement (BDS) is a Palestinian-led movement modeled after the Anti-Apartheid campaign in South Africa (Davis 10). The movement aims to increase economic and political pressure on Israel to stop the human rights abuses being committed against Palestinians (Naber 16). BDS principally wants Israel to end its occupation of the West Bank, dismantle the wall that separates Israel and the West Bank, and grant full citizenship rights to Palestinians living in Israel (Naber 16). The BDS movement has gained support from Black Lives Matter. The relationship between the two movements is based on their common resistance against systemic oppression (Naber 15). However, many feel that the organization has done more harm than good, as BDS has halted efforts for other Arab nations to

cooperate with Israel (Nelson 6). The movement has also been accused of disrupting cultural exchange in the region by politicizing any cooperation between the two groups. Many Palestinians, Israelis, and allies feel that BDS is a polarizing movement that exacerbates the conflict (Nelson 6). Employing methods that do not seek to isolate potential allies would be the best approach. The aim of our coalition is to identify multiple organizations in accomplishing the goal of elevating Palestinian voices.

Black Lives Matter

Black Lives Matter (BLM) is a decentralized social movement that aims to further the human rights of Black people globally. The once-controversial movement has become a force against global police brutality and racial discrimination. Black Lives Matter deploys multiple resistance methods, including mass protests, social media campaigns, petitioning politicians for legislative change, and extensive fundraising efforts (“Who We Are”). BLM's efforts have created systematic change in police departments across the United States, with multiple states banning chokeholds as a method of de-escalation during arrests (“Who We Are”). The objective of the movement is to "work vigorously for freedom and justice for Black people and, by extension, all people" (“Who We Are”) The founders of BLM are vocal about their support for the Palestinian cause and included the current conflict as one of the issues they want to address (Naber 25). Black Lives Matter is an ally of the Palestinian people and would be a valuable partner for the coalition due to their commitment to human rights, internationalism, and advocacy for Palestinians.

Amnesty International

Amnesty International is a non-governmental organization that focuses on human rights. They investigate human rights atrocities globally and lobby governments, organizations, and

companies to ensure that they are upholding international law (“Israel and Occupied”) Amnesty International has reported on the illegal settlements in the West Bank, unlawful killings of Palestinians, and arbitrary arrests of activists. The organization does research in the West Bank and Gaza and reports their findings directly to the public. Amnesty International's vision is to live in a world where everyone is entitled to human rights (“Israel and Occupied”). Due to their extensive knowledge on the occupation, their work in the region, commitment to the Palestinian people and human rights, their participation in our proposed coalition would be beneficial.

Center For Jewish Nonviolence

Center For Jewish Nonviolence (CJNV) aims to address the divide between Palestinians and Israelis by strengthening the connection of resistance between the two groups to create shared solidarity (“Justice you Shall”). CJNV currently works in the region through various campaigns to improve the lives of both Palestinians and Israelis. Thirty Jewish activists who are a part of this organization came together to replant hundreds of fruit trees in the West Bank that were uprooted by the Israeli government (“Justice you Shall”). CJNV is an organization that is passionate about reconciliation and human rights. They have organized countless campaigns and efforts against the occupation since their founding in 2015. Due to their commitment in creating solidarity between Palestinians, Israelis, and Jewish diaspora, nonviolence, and co-resistance, CJNV would be a natural fit for our coalition.

Adalah-The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel

Adalah, which directly translates to "justice" in Arabic, is a Palestinian nonprofit that works in Israel to protect Palestinian legal rights in Israeli courts. The organization does not align itself with any political or religious groups; its sole focus is defending Palestinians legal/human rights (“Mission, Strategic Litigation”). Since the founding of the organization in 1996, Adalah

has brought 250 cases to the Israeli supreme court and lower courts, involving land, civil and economic rights of Palestinians (“Mission, Strategic Litigation”). Adalah defended the Bedouin Al-Sira village from being demolished by the Israeli government and prevented 500 people from displacement. As a Palestinian-led organization, Adalah's contribution to our proposed coalition would be valuable because they are doing work to uplift Palestinians in both occupied Palestine and Israel.

Conclusion

Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem continue to suffer due to the lack of Palestinian leadership, the Israeli occupation, and the lack of Palestinian voices regarding the conflict. The situation is quite complex and seems to no longer be a concern or a part of the international community's agenda. Due to the Palestinians being overlooked in a lot of the negotiations concerning issues relevant to them, and the disregard for Palestinian human rights, a coalition that aims to uplift and unify the voices of Palestinians can be a solution. Our proposed coalition aims to uplift Palestinian through the solidarity and participation of multiple organizations that have shared values of advocacy, human rights and creating a better world for marginalized communities. It is important to note that this is a non-exhaustive list that should be expanded. Governments, organizations, and individuals that care about protecting international law and human rights should all be concerned with the West Bank and the Gaza Strip's current situation.

Lobbying

Emily Torjusen

Introduction

A Pro-Palestinian Coalition centered on human rights has limited recourse for promoting its cause both domestically and internationally. Years of stagnation has deterred meaningful development on the issue of Palestinian rights and breaking through it will require extensive lobbying efforts. The coalition should consider targeting the conflict's most powerful actors by lobbying in the United States, Israel, and the United Nations. Making the case for Palestinian human rights in these halls of power will have the greatest impact by increasing its relevance and facilitating opportunities for policy-makers to take measures protecting them. Included in this section are recommendations and analysis for possible lobbying strategies in these arenas.

The Politics of Organized Interests

Discussing ethnic lobbying in the US requires an understanding that the United States is particularly susceptible to the influence of ethnic lobbies on foreign policy. Well organized interest groups can successfully advocate for aid, recognition, or intervention on a country's behalf even if those demands are not in their country's best interest (Dekker 14). Because an ethnic lobby is backed by avid and politically engaged voters who can determine an election *if* they are able to vote as a bloc, foreign policy has become flexible to their demands. With 535 members of Congress, an ethnic lobby's goals are more readily achieved through Congressional relationship-building, organized voting, and engagement with the public and media (Dekker). As such, understanding the connection between US foreign policy and the Pro-Israel Lobby is a

useful avenue for establishing how a Pro-Palestinian Coalition could lobby effectively and counter the efforts of other lobbies.

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) is the Pro-Israel lobby's leading example and best demonstrates 'the politics of organized interests' (Dekker 14). However AIPAC's success depends on much more than its ability to connect with legislators and engage voters. An ethnic group's geographic concentration is a major determinant of who they can best persuade since their interests will likely be prioritized if they form at least 10% of the congressional district's population (Dekker 22). Part of AIPAC's success is the geographic concentrations of Jewish Americans. An estimated 90% of Jewish Americans are concentrated in 12 key electoral states and in some cases vote at twice the state average making them a considerable force in Congressional elections (Dekker 22). Regions where Jewish Americans are traditionally less concentrated, such as the Bible Belt, still see Pro-Israel backing due to rising support from Christian Evangelicals and Christian Zionists. In this way, AIPAC has accrued support for its policies both nationwide and in key electoral states.

Yet, bloc voting is far from the only method for impacting elections; campaign donations allow individuals out of district to support candidates or finance their opposition. In the 2020 election cycle, the Pro-Israel lobby contributed \$33,589,775 through more than 10 organizations ("Pro-Israel"). While donations are not a guarantee of policy change, they can start a valuable relationship with candidates who may later become key foreign policy deciders. This illustrates some of the ambiguities regarding America's foreign policy process, as President Clinton is credited with saying, "I don't think you can find any evidence that I changed government policy *solely* because of a contribution," (Dekker 26).

Despite AIPAC's prominence, it makes up only one part of the collective efforts of many organizations that form the Pro-Israel Lobby. According to Waxman, the Pro-Israel Lobby is "defined by its political agenda" and its members "do not necessarily represent the views of American Jews, Israelis, or whatever Israeli government is in power, [...] though they all define themselves as pro-Israel, they can have widely different interpretations of what this actually means in practice" (Waxman 9). As with any coalition, the Pro-Israel lobby is made up of various branches such as left-wing, right-wing, and centrist organizations which are united not by "their stance on specific policies, but their attitude toward the State of Israel." This "unwavering commitment" to Israel's survival means AIPAC's vagueness on controversial issues such as the establishment of a Palestinian state or the occupation of the West Bank are intentional (Waxman 11). Employing consensus politics helps AIPAC maintain a united front that focuses on what Israel can offer the US rather than polarizing issues that could turn legislators away. Additionally, it acts as the common ground between the two ideological wings, compelling them to cooperate on matters of agreement (Waxman 13).

In the same vein, a Pro-Palestinian Lobby would need to navigate division within the coalition, especially considering tensions regarding a state solution. Maintaining unity is the core responsibility of an ethnic organization, without which the voting block disintegrates (Dekker 55). Coalition building is of equal importance, as different organizations can maximize their resources together on one issue (Dekker 55). The Arab lobby and African American lobby have already acted as coalition members, particularly with the NAACP, but a Pro-Palestinian Coalition first requires a clear agenda before it can build a lobbying coalition. Typically, the agendas of ethnic lobbies feature economic, security, and value related demands which other groups can identify with (Dekker, 28). Coalitions are fluid, as partners on one issue will not

always be partners on another, but because the Pro-Palestinian Coalition would center on a human rights agenda it would consistently ally itself with human rights lobbies.

Beyond coalition building, the lobby's real goal is passing legislation. For this, bipartisan relationship building is a necessity and as AIPAC has shown, securing long-lasting relationships on both sides ensures their agenda will be heard no matter which party is in power (Dekker 29). Political connections are essential in this arena and another main responsibility of the ethnic organization because it must track issues and responses to their lobbying (Dekker 55). Knowing how Representatives and Senators have received their demands informs the lobby whether a different approach is necessary and if they have enough support for their legislation. This requires extensive relationships with congressional staff and media. Given the House of Representatives' large staff and membership, this branch of Congress is usually the most receptive to relationship building (Dekker 29). Staying informed and up to date on discourse circling Congress allows an organization to pre-emptively counter unfavourable legislation or reach out with related information. AIPAC and countless other lobbying organizations distribute frequent memos for just this purpose (Dekker 60).

Given AIPAC's seventy years of experience, finding inroads for a Pro-Palestinian lobby will be difficult; however, the Arab Lobby's fifty years of work has laid the groundwork for just that (Dekker 39). Initially galvanized by the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the Arab lobby formed to address this burgeoning humanitarian crisis and sought to unite peoples from different countries, religions, ideological persuasions, and languages (Dekker 55). But the Gulf War and 9/11 detracted from this goal causing most members to concentrate on improving America's perception of Arab-Americans, hoping that a different perspective would improve public perception of Palestinians as well (Dekker 60). The Arab Lobby has also provided civic

education for Arab Americans, improving their ability to vote as a bloc (Dekker 49). Yet, many obstacles remain. Uniting such a diverse group of people is a difficult process and although Arab Americans have incomes 22% higher than the American average, they are reluctant to invest in ethnic organizations (Dekker 54). The primary issue confronting the Arab Lobby is its own internal division. Advocating for a community's preferences requires the community to first determine those preferences, but a Pro-Palestinian lobby that unites Arab Americans and non-Arab Americans together on the issue of Palestinian human rights would have a greater chance of gaining permeable access to government (Dekker 71).

Furthermore, past attempts at lobbying by Arab countries failed due to a lack of media awareness. Most Arab governments rely on state controlled media and were not prepared for the media's significant and independent influence in the US (Dekker 35). Declining international news coverage in the US over the last twenty years has also contributed to a lack of awareness about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict; coverage that does exist usually favors Israel or anti-Palestinian animosity (Dekker 59). Taking control of the narrative is an expensive and time-consuming process but a necessary one. A Pro-Palestinian Lobby would need to phrase their demands within the frame of the US national interest while still emphasizing the morality and justness of their argument (Dekker, 70). The American public needs to know how pushing for the protection of Palestinian human rights will benefit the US and conveying that information through appropriate media outlets would be an important part of its success.

Going forward an important issue will be establishing an accurate count of Arab Americans since they are not categorized in the US Census. The 2010 US Census estimated 1.9 million Americans are of Arab descent whereas the Arab American Institute Federation believes the number is closer to 3.7 million ("Demographics"). According to the Arab American

Institute's 2010 estimate, two-thirds of Arab Americans are concentrated in 10 states with California, New York, and Michigan making up one third of the total ("Demographics"). The rest are located in Texas, Florida, New Jersey, Ohio, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania. Though California has the largest population of Palestinians, Illinois has the largest concentration ("Demographics"). A Pro-Palestinian lobby would benefit from concentrating on these areas as the Arab Lobby already does, but redefining its mission and seeking the participation of non-Arab Americans will improve opportunities for lobbying.

The Pro-Israel lobby's preoccupation with internal division and AIPAC's potential, left-leaning competitor, J-Street, create a more advantageous political environment in which a Pro-Palestinian lobby can use the new generation's antipathy for Israel's actions to gradually redefine a conversation on US foreign policy (Waxman, 16). In addition to continuing public education on Arab Americans to reduce prejudices, the lobby should weaken the Pro-Israel voting bloc by promoting statistics bridging the divide between Palestinians and Christian Evangelicals.

The Knesset

Clearly, Israel's legislative body is a relevant actor that should be considered in a Pro-Palestinian Coalition's lobbying efforts. However, opinions within the Knesset and the majority of Israel's voters are not favorable to a Pro-Palestinian Coalition. In light of this, viable coalition members such as left-leaning Israeli interest groups and NGOs should be employed for an innovative lobbying campaign to help establish the case for Palestinians, though tangible results remain uncertain.

Like the US Congress, lobbying is a deeply entrenched part of the Knesset's legislative system (Zrahiya). In fact lobbying in Israel has become a topic of recent debate as four lobbying

firms represent around half of the interest groups and employ most of the 180 professional lobbyists approved to work in the Knesset (“Lobbyists in the Knesset”). The concentration of persuasive power and competing interests these firms have has come into question with recent scandals exposing the notable influence of corporations on Israeli democracy (Feltri). Despite using a regulative system that requires lobbyists to disclose who they work for and restricts them to one committee at a time, the amount of unofficial lobbying has increased through a loophole allowing party activists and former MK’s free reign of the building (Harkov, “Panel Tackles”).

Given Israel’s party-list proportional system, there are fewer former MK’s that could lobby for Pro-Palestinian policies but the Arab Joint List demonstrates the existence of some support for a Pro-Palestinian coalition within the Knesset (Ibrahim). Currently accounting for roughly 13% of the seats, the Arab Joint List is a 2015 alliance of Arab Israeli parties such as Balad, Hadash, Ta’al, and the United Arab List. Despite becoming the third biggest bloc in the Knesset, there are few chances to promote its Pro-Palestinian rights agenda. Yet its existence signifies the voting power of Arab Israelis who form 20% of the electorate and are organized enough to usually vote as a bloc (Ibrahim).

But the public’s general perception of the Knesset is not positive. Civic education has failed to highlight opportunities for voters’ involvement in the legislative process and in contrast with corporations’ strong roles, the ‘public good’ has been overlooked (Harkov “Panel Tackles”). This has given rise to Lobby99, a “non-profit, non-partisan, crowd-funded organization that employs the methods of corporate lobbyists to advance the public interest [...] We aim to promote issues that serve the 99%, and to do so in ways that forge broad coalitions across the political spectrum” (“Who Are We”). A unique solution that relies on over 7,500 members whose monthly donations give equal credence to the issues they put forward (TOI

Staff). Though Lobby99 decides what issues they ultimately lobby for and will not take up issues on defense or Palestine, its platform offers a model for Israeli coalition members to replicate on behalf of Palestinian human rights (Feltri).

In the same vein, the Knesset includes over 137 internal lobbies one of which is the Israel Victory Caucus launched in 2017 and closely linked to the Philadelphia-based Middle East Forum (Tobin). The goal of this group is to persuade both Congress and Palestinians that Israel has won and its time all parties accept it (Tobin). President of the MEF think tank, Daniel Pipes, supported the formation of the Congressional Israel Victory Caucus' sister-caucus saying, "Wars usually end when failure causes one side to despair, when that side has abandoned its war aims and accepted defeat, and when that defeat has exhausted the will to fight" (Tobin). Though Pro-Arab lobbies also exist such as the lobbies for Promoting the Employment of Arab Women, Resolving the Israeli-Arab Conflict, Women Against Annexation, and the lobby to Promote Coexistence and Equality between Arabs and Jews, they cannot match the Lobby for Promoting Awareness of the Israeli Victory's popularity ("Knesset Lobby"). Considering the Knesset's role in US politics through AIPAC and the Lobby for Strengthening Israel's Relations With Jewish Communities in the United States, the establishment of Pro-Palestinian and human rights sister-lobbies in the Knesset is not without merit; however, gaining tangible support for them is another matter.

Changing the Knesset's discourse on Palestinians requires Israeli coalition members to take advantage of the Democratic system and meet directly with MKs or contact their offices to share their perspectives (Harkov "Panel Tackles"). It appears Israeli civic education does not highlight opportunities for citizens to take on a larger role in the legislative process and its absence provides an opportunity for Israelis supportive of Palestinians and Pro-Human Rights to

lobby as a citizen on behalf of those goals. Countering opposing interests with crowd-funded lobbying and establishing Pro-Palestinian sister-lobbies in Israel are also unique avenues for a Pro-Palestinian Coalition's lobbying efforts.

The United Nations

Though the United Nations, as an international organization, is a fundamentally different structure, the same rules of lobbying apply. As South Africa's successful Anti-Apartheid movement demonstrates, the UN can wield extraordinary influence if used correctly. Unlike Congress or the Knesset, the UN is lobbied through its member countries and the most influential lobbying method is through NGOs given consultative status (Tallberg, 33). Exploring factors which make NGOs influential in policy-making will lay the groundwork for recommendations from the UN Assistant Secretary-General of the Centre against Apartheid, Enuga S. Reddy. Drawing from this analysis, the section will conclude by summarizing these methods of UN lobbying.

In many ways, NGOs are special interest groups for international organizations; their agendas affect the type of information and policies it shares. Assuming policy-makers want to know the implications of potential decisions, they will "demand information about the likely effects of alternative proposals and the likely reactions from constituency interests" (Tallberg 6). Therefore, the usefulness of its information to a UN organ or member state determines its relationship and influence over policy-making. Becoming an imperative resource for the UN means creating structures to continuously monitor all developments concerning discrimination and violence and exposing those who profit from or incite human rights violations (Reddy). Typically, transnational networks, material resources, level of professionalization, access to decision-makers, capacity to mobilize public opinion, moral authority, ideational resources, and

information provision are the chief explanatory factors for NGOs success (Tallberg 3). Their contributions shift research costs off budgets and are better at detecting non-compliance due to their closeness with local populations (Tallberg 9).

As with domestic politics, money is a major determinant of a successful global governance, advocacy campaign. NGOs either directly engage with decision-makers or mobilize public opinion, making endowments an essential part of lobbying the UN (Tallberg 13). Similarly, building coalitions or “transnational networks” with other like minded NGOs increases the network’s strength and density, allowing them some leverage in IO’s (Tallberg 13). Public opinion is mobilized when individuals pressure negotiators, governments, and target groups to be more flexible in international negotiations by campaigning, sending letters of protest, rallying, direct actions, boycotts, and civil disobedience (Tallberg 15). While individuals can play an important role, its directness is contingent upon receiving UN observer status, such as the writers, artists, musicians, and athletes’ representatives who persuaded trade partners to join the arms embargo against South Africa (Reddy). In conjunction with a UN led campaign, this type of lobbying may be successfully replicated by a Pro-Palestinian Coalition (Reddy). However, NGOs and member governments remain the most expedient path to UN involvement in lieu of an international campaign. Both types of advocacy are necessary for a Pro-Palestinian Coalition’s policy goals, but they highlight the need for scarce resources.

This information for access exchange is ingrained in a system absent of pressure from public opinion through electorates (Tallberg 43). Gaining access as early as possible when NGOs have the greatest influence in the policy-process, and building transnational networks should be focus areas for NGOs joining a Pro-Palestinian Coalition (Tallberg 28). The prohibitive cost of establishing a global NGO means the coalition would benefit from relying on existing NGOs

like: the International League of Human Rights, the International Indian Treaty Council, and the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights.

Enuga S. Reddy emphasizes that partnerships between committed governments and NGOs can launch campaigns which in turn motivate the UN to take effective action, but the “denial of rights of communities subjected to racial discrimination” can be considered without a Member States’ formal complaint (Reddy). After establishing the Special Committee against Apartheid and its mandate to promote international action, the General Assembly and the Security Council took tangible action based on its reports and recommendations (Reddy). The Special Committee's work was joined by efforts to give political prisoners legal assistance through the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, support for the arms embargo from the World Campaign against Military and Nuclear Collaboration with South Africa, and other groups which monitored implementation of UN recommendations (Reddy).

While the UN’s member governments are susceptible to constituent advocacy from NGO’s members, the most effective way to influence policy is through information exchange. Providing expert data related to human rights abuses in Palestine makes the NGO invaluable to policymakers and earns it a place in the policy-making process. Coalition building with other NGOs strengthens the case for Palestinian rights and like the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, an NGO can support advocacy through legal aid to Palestinians. Working in coordination with committed member governments, the coalition and its supporters can urge meaningful action from the UN.

Conclusion

Based on this analysis, a Pro-Palestinian coalition would do well to focus their efforts in Israel, the USA, and the UN in the following ways.

Solve collective action problems Pro-Palestinian Israelis may face by encouraging a crowdfunded lobbying effort. This will establish a voice advocating for Palestinian human rights amidst its opposition. Additionally, establishing sister-lobbies of Pro-Palestinian Congressional lobbies in the Knesset would strengthen connections and communication between both political groups. Most importantly, significant effort should be made to strengthen the Arab Israeli voting bloc since they typically support left-leaning political parties that are less aggressive on matters of Israeli expansion. If this voting bloc pursues opportunities for citizen advocacy in the Knesset, then greater awareness of diverse opinions within Israel will stand out in the traditional absence of citizen lobbying.

The greatest asset to coalition efforts in the USA is also bloc voting based on cultural or ethnic Arab unity. Concentrating grassroots advocacy in geographically population dense regions (>10%) will also help the coalition put supportive voices in Congress. At the same time, outreach to Christian Evangelicals and progressive Jewish Americans will help weaken the Pro-Israel voting bloc and potentially garner more support for Palestinian human rights. Lastly, relationship building with legislators, Congressional staff, and media outlets would go a long way towards information gathering.

Rather than focusing on short-term goals in the UN, coalition efforts should build transnational networks that increase information exchange with UN organs. The importance of NGO coalition members in this process should not be underestimated. In the long-term, the coalition should establish more Pro-Palestinian NGOs with UN Economic and Social Council consultative status by becoming an expert source on human rights violations during the occupation. If possible, securing larger endowments for Pro-Palestinian NGOs will quicken the process of establishing Pro-Palestinian NGOs as credible UN sources.

Developing a Palestinian Media Movement

Hayley Webster

Introduction

In light of Israeli censorship, it may seem futile to hope that Palestinians could develop a strong media movement, as pro-Palestinian media has lost its agency with their stories being suppressed with impunity. As Israel controls the vast majority of the media that surrounds Israeli-Palestinian relationships, Palestinians are unable to gather international support and awareness about the human rights violations they face. Currently, it seems unlikely that Palestinians will be able to promote their perspective or raise negotiating power with Israel. However, Palestinians are not the only movement or race that has faced extreme government censorship, and Palestinian media may find fraternity with Chinese citizens.

China has rigorously censored its citizen's media platforms with such an intensity that the Chinese government's censorship has been coined the "Chinese Fire Wall," for the government blocks any perspective that does not align with the State's political agenda. For example, one of the most internationally covered protests of all time was that of the extremely censored #HongKongProtest. Citizens and students in Hong Kong began protesting in June 2019 when China passed the extradition bill. The bill would result in Hong Kong losing its independent status and being encompassed into greater China (Ramzy). Moreover, the bill would mean that citizens of Hong Kong would lose their democracy and political autonomy. Therefore, citizens protested despite strict police violence and the media censorship of the Chinese FireWall (Ramzy). The reason that protests against China could be a great resource and inspiration for Palestinians is due to the fact that despite strict censorship, the Hong Kong protests were able to organize in massive numbers and achieve global recognition and support. By analyzing how

Chinese citizens are able to bypass the Chinese Fire Wall, perhaps a Palestinian media movement can be realized through a clever navigation around the Israeli FireWall.

The Utilization of Virtual Private Networks

Both Chinese and Palestinian media users can have their information spied on by their governments and be arrested for their media content. Since the creation of Israel's Cyber Force in 2015, Israel has the ability to data-mine Palestinian people through Israeli ISP. Similarly, the Chinese government is renowned for its ability to monitor and censor its citizen's media through data-mining where it can analyze and record every internet search a person makes within their country. To protect their privacy and avoid arrest, Chinese citizens utilize Virtual Private Networks (VPN) (Anti).

VPN software works by encrypting data traffic and sending it past a local ISP to a VPN server, the encrypted data from a computer is decrypted by the VPN server and sent to the internet. The data traffic is encrypted again by the VPN server and sent back to the computer of origin with the data decrypted. In short, VPN works to hide one's Internet Protocol (IP) address by redirecting it to a remote VPN server. ISP and third parties, like governments, cannot see what data a person sends and receives online by turning all VPN data is hypothetically unreadable and untraceable (Marks). This means that governments and social media platforms cannot trace the IP address and general location of the user. Indeed, the usage of VPN is legal within Israel and has not been banned for Palestinians, so the Israeli Cyber Security Force would not be able to trace or track Palestinian's posts (O'Driscoll). Moreover, platforms like Facebook and YouTube who create different regulations for their terms of service based on location would not be able to ascertain where a post originated. Palestinians using Israeli ISP or other Middle Eastern ISPs would be able to circumnavigate regional regulations for less-strict European media

regulations. This means Palestinians would face fewer instances of data-mining, fewer arrests due to their media usage, less social media content suppression, and it offers a way for Palestinians to raise more digital awareness of their perspective in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Therefore, Palestinians would not have to worry about their social media sites being shut down or the threat of arrest, allowing them to feel less worried about what they say on social media platforms. Utilizing VPN could also help minimize the amount of their content that is suppressed, allowing their stories to reach local and International audiences.

The *Telegram* Platform

Using the common messaging app *WhatsApp*, Chinese citizens were not entitled to security from their government or censorship. This caused problems in being able to hold political discussions or plan group organizations during the Hong Kong Protests (Ramzy). This is why many Chinese citizens and citizens throughout the world who face censorship use the messaging app *Telegram* because it offers communication in similar ways to *WhatsApp*; however, it is dedicated to providing security.

Developed in 2013 in order to navigate governmental surveillance, *Telegram* offers its users encrypted privacy and saves information on the users specific device instead of the Internet Cloud (Iqbal). This means that information and accounts are more difficult to hack or be vulnerable to government interference. Moreover, *Telegram* users can consciously have their information and conversations secure and untraceable by third-parties, making Telegram a vital tool for citizens in surveilling countries. *Telegram* has been utilized by the Hong Kong Protests, Belarus Protests, Arab Spring Protests, and #EndSars protests—all of which faced extreme governmental censorship (Iqbal).

While *Telegram* is occasionally blocked in Israel, utilizing a secure VPN service would allow Palestinians to utilize the app when necessary. As the previous chapter examined, Palestinians are currently ascertain the reality alternative Palestinian communities due to the suppression of their news, speak with Israeli people online due the social media censorship and Israeli echo-chambers. Therefore, by utilizing this *Telegram*, Palestinians in the West Bank could ascertain a better understanding of Palestinian life in the Gaza Strip, formulate uncensored news threads, and reach out to the international *Telegram* community. By doing this, Palestinians would create a viable and reliable source of news, open dialogue with Israelis and the international community, raise awareness of their situations, and begin organizing their movement. Potentially, *Telegram* could promote an open conversation which could begin changing political attitudes towards meaningful peace talks.

Microblogging

Microblogging is a short sentenced post that has taken off with Chinese citizens to avoid the Chinese Firewall. In contrast to single lengthy American tweets, microblogs tend to post five times the amount of an American tweet with their content spread out through each post (Anti). By spreading numerous small tweets and posts, Chinese citizens can get more information out to the public. Moreover, microblogs tend to utilize euphemisms, alternative languages, and phonograms for censored information like politicians and regions' names. Palestinians know that their political party names, many Arabic words, and names of casualties are censored. Already, Palestinians often utilize the Hebrew translation of names, like in the case of Cpl. Elor Azarya, and by taking this a step further with the inspiration of Chinese microblogging, Palestinians may be able to overwhelm Israeli ISP (Greenwald).

Therefore, by taking a note from Chinese citizens and posting microblogs that cleverly encapsulate while hiding censored words, Palestinians would be able to post meaningful political content. Moreover, by posting shorter content more numerous, the amount of content that is suppressed by Israeli ISP and social media algorithms would be lessened. This could potentially gather more media awareness towards pro-Palestinian content. In turn, this could gather public support for Palestinian human rights which would allow Palestinians to create a social media movement.

Conclusion

Once Palestinians have increased awareness and formulated the beginnings of a social media movement, they can raise pressure on international powers to uphold international media laws. The United Nations *General Comment No. 34* states that social media platforms have a responsibility for their user's content and information (Taha 8). While social media platforms cannot be held legally accountable for their user's content, they can be held liable if a foreign party has specifically intervened in the content by intervention, blocking or removing content (Taha 8). Furthermore, according to the *2011 Joint Declaration on Freedom of Expression and the Internet*, a social media platform should not be allowed to remove content unless following a court order or have given the user prior notice of the takedown (Taha 9). Consequently, once a pro-Palestinian media movement is established, Palestinian people and Human Rights groups would have the opportunity work together to pressure social media platforms into complying with International Law.

In conclusion, the best way for Palestinians to achieve the agency to be able to negotiate human rights abuses with Israel, is to gather public support. Today, social media movements have become the most influential route to creating political change. It is vital the Palestinians are

able to create a media movement for their cause in order to enact change in their relationship with Israel. By bypassing Israeli censorship and spreading their stories to fellow Palestinians, Israelis, and the International community, they will be able to muster international recognition of the human rights violations they face today. Therefore, freedom of media is a crucial step in achieving equality and peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

Convening the Coalition

Emily Torjusen

Introduction

Having formed a broad coalition and identified objectives which members can organize around, this segment identifies what specific actions members will take to solve gaps in the movement through evidence-based practices and agenda building. Undoubtedly this is an important step for a movement in its early stages of development. A lack of knowledge and communication between partners can leave the coalition half-baked, whereas convening a coalition fosters the sharing of useful practices and builds a joint action plan. Creating a forum for dialogue will build a stronger coalition as leaders of the various organizations can more effectively share learning experiences, help other members, and fundamentally raise awareness about the coalition's goal.

In order to facilitate this process, the successes and failures of the coalitions from two historically untenable situations - South African Apartheid and Native American disenfranchisement - will be analyzed. Particular emphasis is placed on how they were able to convene their coalition, develop a successful structure, and maintain their coalition's vitality.

Case Study 1: South Africa

South Africa's Anti-Apartheid Movement provides a detailed example of convening a coalition, as it illustrates the importance of established ideals and unifying documents for sustaining a domestic and international movement within in the context of an an unequal power dynamic. The Congress of the People's initial consolidation of proposals was taken from all sectors of society and formed the Freedom Charter, which established a non-racialized consensus

that proved essential to developing a successful structure (“Significance”). The movement’s founding documents established cohesion and leadership for the domestic Anti-Apartheid Movement, which in turn created a structure that international actors such as the UN and US could advocate for. Furthermore, the contributions of faith-based activism, trade unions, and the Mahlabatini Declaration of Faith helped maintain the coalition’s domestic vitality. As the Palestinian territories enter a new election this year, the opportunity for Fatah and Hamas’ divided leadership to learn from the Anti-Apartheid Movement is more timely than ever (Cohen, “Pacified Parties”). Vowing to recognize the results of the election, both parties can employ methods exemplified by the South African Anti-Apartheid Movement to promote cohesion and mutual goals that international actors can recognize (Cohen, “Pacified Parties”).

The Anti-Apartheid Movement had a tremendous outreach campaign, which offered a new and cohesive vision for South Africa and reinvigorated the movement by raising the political consciousness of the masses. Following the African National Congress’ rebirth as a mass movement in the 1940’s, the group led the Defiance Campaign Against Unjust Laws in 1952, which was the first organized mobilization of its kind under apartheid (“Significance”). Yet, the movement noticed an ebb in peoples’ enthusiasm as economic conditions disproportionately affected its participants. Realizing a unifying document was necessary to sustain their cause, ANC executives, the South African Indian Congress, the South African Congress of Trade Unions, the South African Congress of Democrats, and the South African Coloured People’s Congress joined together to create a Freedom Charter (“Significance”). To include as many voices as possible, they formed provincial committees and then trained volunteers to advertise and collect demands for the Freedom Charter.

Leaflets were distributed saying:

“If you could make the laws... what would you do?” they said “How would you set about making South Africa a happy place for all the people who live in it?” [...] We are calling the people of South Africa black and white – let us speak together of freedom!...Let the voices of all the people be heard. And let the demands of all the people for the things that will make us free be recorded. Let the demands be gathered together in a great charter of freedom.” (Mandela 210)

While sub-committees received these demands, the provincial committees established new committees in every town, village, and workplace which elected a delegate to attend the drafting of the Freedom Charter. A drafting committee melded the thousands of demands into one charter to be reviewed at the Congress of the People.

In June of 1955, over the course of two days, three thousand workers, peasants, intellectuals, women, youth, and students of all races and colors arrived as delegates to review the charter (“Adoption”). It was read in multiple languages before the Freedom Charter’s vision of a united, non-racial, and democratic South Africa was adopted. All organizations affiliated with the Congress also adopted the charter as their official program. Not only was the Freedom Charter groundbreaking, but the Congress of the People united and strengthened the South African liberation movement while broadening its social and geographic bases (“Significance”).

It is noteworthy that the South African Congress of Trade Unions was an early partner in this endeavor, as trade unions were instrumental in the Anti-Apartheid Movement. As WWII forced the country to industrialize more, Africans employed in the private sector rose rapidly from 54,856 in 1932-33 to 215,582 in 1945-46, resulting in a revival of African trade unionism (“The Role” 2). While the state initially adopted a more relaxed approach towards African Unions, this changed when the National Party came to power in 1948. Although the South

African Congress of Trade Unions ceased to function by the late 1960's , an important breakthrough was made during the Durban Strikes of 1973 ("The Role" 3). While most of the participants were not union members, 2,000 workers at the Coronation Brick and Tile Company in Durban, South Africa, went on strike demanding a rise in wages on January 9, 1973. Newspapers covered the strike with great attention as the Durban Strike broke the initial fear barrier created by the "Grand Apartheid" policies, leading more than 61,000 workers to participate in 160 strikes in the first 3 months of 1973 ("The Role" 3). Strikes against Frame Industries Group – one of the largest and lowest paying firms in South Africa – continued for the next decade ("The Role" 3).

As industries were forced to talk with African employees regarding workplace conditions, a recognition of their humanity and needs grew across South Africa. Realizing that Black labor was permanently embedded in the country's economic and social structure meant African unions and collective bargaining were eventually re-instated ("The Role" 3). Perhaps the impact on white South Africa was even more important, as whites in Durban and other areas acknowledged the huge pay discrepancy that justified the strikes.

Protesting government repression also helped overcome racial or ethnic differences between unions and its ability to call for mass action proved useful to furthering anti-apartheid efforts. In April 1979 the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) brought 20,000 workers together in an independent, non-racial federation ("The Role" 4). Meanwhile the state was forced to review their labor laws at the behest of corporations losing money in the strikes, while the result was largely in accordance with ILO laws, its significance was its applicability to all workers regardless of race, color, or sex ("The Role" 4). The union's newfound power was demonstrated in 1982 when a white union organizer was found dead as a result of police

brutality. When FOSATU asked its member unions to stop work for 30 minutes more than 100,000 workers complied (“The Role” 4).

Initially Christian, Jewish, Hindu, and Muslim faith based communities were reticent to speak out against apartheid, but as the Anti-Apartheid Movement caught on internationally in the 1980’s their positions began to change (“Religious” 1). The Kairos Document, released in 1985, marked this change. A group of anonymous pastors sparked intense debate with their publication of the Kairos Document, a brief critique of the state’s use of theology that called for a return to prophetic theology where God sides with the oppressed (“Religious” 2). This call to action, coupled with the promotion of liberation theology by the Institute for Contextual Theology, put pressure on churches’ tacit responses to apartheid (“Religious” 2). The South African Council of Churches (SACC) and the South African Bishops Conference (SABC) were already actively anti-apartheid, but after this turning point many individual faith leaders joined the movement and suffered for their activism (“Religious” 1). Earlier, the South African Indian community, which faced similar prejudices, had been galvanized by Mahatma Gandhi, who helped establish the Natal Indian Congress in 1894 before beginning a protest campaign in India supporting South Africa’s Indian community (“Religious” 2). Likewise, Jewish and Muslim communities took part in the anti-apartheid campaign, particularly in the 1980’s. Imam Gassan Soloman captured the intersectional zeitgeist of the movement in a speech delivered to his congregation in 1983, saying:

“ [...] this new type of government based on the division of people, into "Indian" into "Coloured" to the exclusion of the majority of people in this country... What do we do as Muslims? What action do we take? ...Let us get this straight that the Muslims in this part of the world are part and parcel of the oppressed, that the Muslims in this part of the

world should join forces with the rest of the oppressed against this evil system of apartheid.” (“Religious” 3)

These various religious leaders and groups joined forces with the United Democratic Front in the 1988 Defiance Campaign, which contributed to the subsequent negotiations between the pro-apartheid National Party and the non-racialized agenda of the African National Congress (“Religious” 4). Indeed, the important role of unifying documents and consensus throughout the domestic Anti-Apartheid Movement was essential to achieving these landmark negotiations in 1990. Similarly, the 1974 Mahlabatini Declaration of Faith worked as a framework to guide the eventual negotiations and signified a societal shift in South African politics (“South Africa”). In just 278 words the Mahlabatini Declaration of Faith established a common ground which acknowledged that, “The situation of South Africa in the world scene as well as internal community relations requires in our view an acceptance of certain fundamental concepts [...] on the basis of which we believe all our people can co-operate” (“Mahlabatini”).

While the domestic anti-apartheid movement’s innumerable efforts forced a radical reshaping of South Africa, it sparked an international movement as well, which put powerful pressure on the status quo (Reddy). The successful, combined efforts of the international community and South African anti-apartheid leaders makes this case a valuable guide for a Pro-Palestinian Coalition centered on human rights. Developing a domestic framework based on consensus and unifying documents laid the stage for an international effort which otherwise would never have considered their situation. As is the case in the Palestinian territories, domestic efforts in South Africa could easily have been stifled by the unequal power structure if not for the awareness of international actors - but this international awareness was hard-won.

The 1960 Sharpeville Massacre caused a reluctant international community to reconsider its relationship with its anti-Soviet ally, the South African National Party (Houser 16). The peaceful demonstration of 7,000 – the first in the town of Sharpeville – was met with open fire from 300 police officers who fired at protestors' fleeing backs, killing sixty-nine Africans and wounding 186 others (Rev. Reeves). After the General Assembly issued the 1963 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the UN took to the task by proclaiming 1971 the International Year for Action to Combat Racial Discrimination (Reddy). Launching an international persuasion campaign targeting South Africa's trade partners, the UN mobilized a wide range of NGO's and representatives which were given observer status as leverage to persuade South Africa's trade partners into supporting sanctions and an arms embargo (Reddy). With the same breath that the 1975 General Assmby labelled South Africa's apartheid system as racist, it simultaneously condemned Zionism with resolution 3379, though this classification was revoked in 1991 (Estes, Ch. 6).

However, the objective of the Anti-Apartheid Movement was one of national liberation, and as such, the international conversation took place in the context of decolonizing Africa and Asia (Reddy). Proposing that apartheid in South Africa was a threat to international peace, anti-apartheid efforts received support from ever-increasing majorities in the United Nations. Yet, South Africa's blatantly racist government was a unique case (Reddy). In keeping with the international community's prioritization of state sovereignty over domestic issues – including human rights – complaints of racial discrimination are usually made by member nations only when their citizens are the victims. Despite the unanimous support early anti-racism resolutions garnered, many governments have lacked the political will for its domestic fruition (Reddy). As such, a specific country's racist oppression of individuals is rarely included in the UN's agendas.

However, in the 1970's pressure for UN action uniquely came from citizens of member nations, specifically Britain and the USA. Divestment efforts in the US had existed prior to the Soweto Student Uprising in 1976 but they were quickened exponentially after the successful withdrawal of the Polaroid company from South Africa following the uprising (Houser, 26). Campuses began boycott and divestment efforts with renewed strength and coalitions of campus groups formed the Liberation of Southern Africa effort to organize their protests (Houser, 26). The call for "concentrated attention to social and political responsibilities in financial investments" finally forced churches to divest and in some cases protest banks loans and investments to the country, even becoming the most influential American institutions for pressuring corporations (Houser, 27). International solidarity among unions was also a key ally in the international movement, leading national American unions to divest payroll and pension accounts handled by banks investing in South Africa (Houser, 28). The United Mine Workers went even farther, refusing to unload coal from South Africa in 1974.

In this way, the world went from passively criticizing apartheid to actively combatting it through conferences, boycotts, protests, divestment, and stricter UN resolutions. People around the world putting their money where their mouth was, ultimately forced governments to support tangible UN action and brought the South African government to the brink of an economic crisis. As words became action, not just domestically but globally, the South African state of apartheid began to crumble.

Case Study 2: The American Indian Movement

"Indigenous nationalism—a term meant to identify struggles for self determination, liberation, sovereignty, or decolonization—illustrates that in many ways Palestine is theorized in the absence of its strongest advocates. [...] I suggest that advocates of

Palestine limit their material and theoretical range by too frequently ignoring the work of American Indian and Indigenous studies.” (Salaita, 2)

Drawing on examples from the American Indian Movement, this section will derive key takeaways from its successes and failures before exploring the applicability to a Pro-Palestinian Coalition. While no example is perfectly analogous to Palestinians’ situation, these examples offer insight into how oppressed peoples promoted awareness and organized despite the limited recourse available to them. Indeed, the American Indian Movement took hold without the use of social media or most modern technology, which is particularly applicable given Palestinian’s limited access to social media as a means of organizing.

Native American and Palestinian struggles are reflections of the disenfranchisement and colonialization generally experienced by indigenous peoples. Both are occupied based on a conception of ‘manifest destiny’ that lends itself to the occupiers and their perception of religiosity (Estes chp. 6). Likewise, the successes and perseverance of the Indigenous Rights Movement and American Indian Movement illustrate that despite the prolonged and continuing Palestinian struggle, there is opportunity for a Pro-Palestinian Coalition to promote and attain respect for Palestinians’ basic human rights. Indeed, solidarity between the American Indian Movement (AIM) and Palestinians is well established and displayed in the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) (Estes chp. 6). However, to fully appreciate AIM’s achievements and its applicability to a Pro-Palestinian Coalition it is useful to first revisit Native American political history.

Nullifying all previous treaties and the potential for future ones, the US government suddenly declared in 1871 that tribes would not be recognized as treaty partners despite its long history of foundational treaty building with individual tribes (“Tribal Nations” 14). The Dawes

Act of 1877 further fractionalized tribes as their lands and communities were redistributed - contrary to all promises made by the newly formed American government (“Tribal Nations” 14). Yet, the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 emerged largely at the behest of ally groups (“Tribal Nations” 34). For some tribal members, the citizenship act inherently signified the usurpation of tribal citizenship which may explain Native American reluctance to support it. Despite creating a new political identity for Native Americans, the act did not prevent the Resolution 108 and Public Law 280 which encouraged Native Americans to leave tribal lands and integrate into opportunity-rich urban areas (“Tribal Nations” 15). Instead, this policy created a Native American diaspora known as the “Urban Indian” which now lacked tribal communities as well as the opportunities they had been promised (Abboud 1).

It seemed as if Native American identities were destined to dissipate when the American Indian Movement emerged from Minneapolis’ urban Indian community in 1968 (Abboud 2). Advocating on issues of high unemployment, poverty, a lack of educational opportunities, police brutality, and high incarceration rates, AIM revitalized the largely dormant cause for Native American Rights (“Self Determination”). Due to the efforts of Mary Jane Wilson, Dennis Banks, Vernon Bellecourt, Clyde Bellecourt, George Mitchell, and Russell Means in the 1970’s, AIM began a national journey “to upgrade the conditions in which the Indian lives, and to improve the image which has been portrayed in stereotype form of the Indian American both on and off reservations” (“Self Determination”).

Aiming to establish programs addressing Native American housing, employment, and youth, AIM also began educating Native Americans of their community responsibilities and improving communication between the diaspora and the tribal community (Abboud 2). In the long-term AIM hoped to promote unification, spread information, and help Native Americans

become active in community affairs (“Self Determination”). Over five decades the movement strove for recognition of Indian treaties and the protection of Native American liberties by lodging many successful lawsuits against the federal government which created a fundamental change in federal policy towards Native Americans (Abboud 8).

But at its start the movement was initially launched into the spotlight by the media’s coverage of the 1969 Alcatraz occupation (Abboud 4). Broadcasting the powerful proclamation, “To the Great White Father and All His People”, news outlets carried the occupation’s message nationwide, saying:

“We, the native Americans, re-claim the land known as Alcatraz Island in the name of all American Indians by right of discovery. We wish to be fair and honorable in our dealings with the Caucasian inhabitants of this land, and hereby offer the following treaty: We will purchase said Alcatraz Island for 24 dollars in glass beads and red cloth, a precedent set by the white man's purchase of a similar island about 300 years ago. [...] We offer this treaty in good faith and wish to be fair and honorable in our dealings with all white men.”

(Oakes)

The reclamation was in accordance with the nullified 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie and drew direct attention to the justness of Native American’s treatment (Abboud 4). Exhibiting an early media awareness, a daily radio program called “Radio Free Alcatraz” was broadcast to educate the public about suppressed cultural traditions and rights (Abboud 4). While the occupation’s ambitious goals ultimately failed, AIM members learned from it and would use similar tactics in their own protests.

Inspired by the civil-rights marches, AIM next organized the Trail of Broken Treaties which began in October of 1972 with caravans holding drum circles at Indian reservations as they travelled to the nation's Capital. Galvanizing pride and solidarity in the movement, 700 activists and over 200 tribes participated in the march (Abboud, 6). However, fiasco ensued on their arrival in D.C. where meetings with department officials were abruptly cancelled making it impossible to deliver "The Trail of Broken Treaties" position paper. Then, discussions with officials at the Bureau of Indian Affairs escalated the 'march' into a week-long occupation of the BIA building (Abboud 6).

Media coverage of this occupation ultimately was unfavorable as AIM's actions resulted in the destruction of federal property and missing documents (Abboud 6). However, the government did agree to review their position paper and Native American policy more broadly. US President Richard Nixon's following decision in 1970 to "create the conditions for a new era in which the Indian future is determined by Indian acts and Indian decisions" proved AIM had in many ways achieved its goals (Abboud 6).

Though AIM gradually unraveled in the years following due to inner fragmentation and violent conflicts with federal and tribal authorities over their occupation of Wounded Knee, from the perspective of coalition building AIM walked so the IITC could run (Abboud 8). During the International Indian Treaty Council's (IITC) first meeting in 1974, AIM member and founder, Bill Means, pronounced that it "was bound to the struggles of those fighting for the emancipation of their lands" - a noteworthy inclusion of the Palestinian cause (Estes chp. 6). The International Indian Treaty Council is an important byproduct of AIM's attention to media influence both domestically and internationally ("Self Determination"). The IITC became influential in the drafting and adoption of the UN's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other

international projects as it became the first indigenous NGO to be given Consultive Status by the UN (“The United Nations”).

In summary, a Palestinian Coalition can draw on AIM’s use of media and coalition building while benefiting from the IITC’s international inroads. Indeed, the struggle for Palestinian human rights has long been tied to the Native American struggle but it is important to note the differences between them (Estes, Ch. 6). Rather than viewing Native Americans as evidence that Palestinians “could end up stateless, unrecognized, in exile, or permanently placed on reservations if they did not overturn occupation” it is more accurate and useful to understand “that Palestine and Turtle Island have different histories and are experiencing different stages of settler colonialism” (Estes chp. 6). A key difference in these histories is the UN. Despite its obstacles, the UN has the potential to be Palestinians’ greatest ally, as proven by its successful campaign against South African Apartheid. The increasing role of indigenous NGOs in the UN indicates that greater opportunities for coalition building are becoming available in the inter-governmental sphere.

Conclusion:

Clearly these examples are inspiring, but their applicability to a Pro-Palestinian coalition is this study’s only concern. Exploring the various actors and obstacles involved in these movements provides a few key points for a developing coalition to consider. Perhaps the most useful takeaway is the recurring use of unifying documents throughout the Anti-Apartheid Movement. Developing consensus is not easy but it is necessary. The lengths activists took to draw support and input from all levels of South African society while forming the Freedom Charter exemplifies this, but its successful translation to a broad national and international movement demonstrates that these efforts were well worth it. The Freedom Charter, Kairos

Document, and Mahlabatini Declaration of Faith provided vision and motivation for a movement spanning eighty years. While that was not the only factor of its success, it was a defining one.

Furthermore, the Anti-Apartheid Movement excelled at coalition building; as its domestic partnerships with trade unions and religious institutions led to support from their international counterparts as well. A tragic caveat to this example is the violence of the Soweto Student Uprising and Sharpeville Massacre which significantly spurred international activism. Police violence occurs regularly in Palestine without the world's attention as reports are largely silenced in the domestic power dynamic. Similarly, the American Indian Movement faced centuries of public disregard and prejudice as it tried to bring attention to Native American disenfranchisement. Indeed, indigenous peoples' are unified in these experiences but AIM's ability to create a narrative and take symbolic action confronted public ignorance. Isolated from their tribal communities, urban Indians built an inclusive movement which a Pro-Palestinian coalition could replicate as it unites with the Palestinian diaspora, allies, and Arabs globally.

At present, Palestinians lack the international interest necessary to pressure the UN into tangible action. Though South African leaders worked tirelessly to garner such support, a Pro-Palestinian Coalition would benefit by taking advantage of the IITC and the Anti-Apartheid Movement's progress in the intergovernmental arena. Taking a two-pronged approach, the coalition should build connections with human rights and indigenous rights NGOs that hold UN consultative status while also employing intense outreach efforts to spread awareness and build connections domestically and abroad. But uniting domestically requires consensus and outreach to isolated Palestinian territories and across political parties. The upcoming elections show Palestinians have not given up; 93% of eligible voters have already registered to participate

(Friedson). What Palestinians and a Pro-Palestinian coalition need now is unifying Palestinian leadership.

Report Conclusion

DaisyJane Darling and Mani Singh

Palestinian human rights and interests have been held in gross disregard and increasing contempt since the beginning of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Since 1948, human rights abuses have increasingly worsened and the Palestinians have remained oppressed without any true political agency. In all the discussions throughout the history of Palestinian and Israeli peace processes, the human rights of the Palestinian people have been consistently dismissed. Past efforts to negotiate peace have failed to address Palestinian needs, and Palestinians have been historically disempowered, with no equal say in negotiations for peace. A coalition will seek to leverage international political influence to center Palestinian human rights and bolster the Palestinian position at negotiation table.

Tragically, in recent years there has been no progress for Palestinian peace and there has been a decline in international concern for the issue as newer conflicts emerge and take precedence. With the increasing threat that Iran poses to regional stability, many Arab states have begun to overlook their past dislike of the Israeli occupation in favor of the establishment of diplomatic relations and support from Israel's powerful military. An anti-Iranian coalition has effectively emerged, but at the expense of Arab support for the Palestinian struggle (Goldberg). The concern of the larger international community has also faded. The recent American-led peace proposal, *Peace to Prosperity: A vision to improve the lives of the Palestinian and Israeli People*, also known as the *Trump Peace Plan*, entirely excluded Palestinian representation from the discussion (Peace to Prosperity). In these recent developments, the US and the rest of the international community not only condone, but normalize, the human rights violations that accompany Israel's continued occupation of Palestine. This has reduced Israel's incentive to end

the occupation, and emboldens radical elements of the Israeli political leadership to pursue their policies with nearly total disregard for Palestinian rights and concerns, making progress impossible. If the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues to fade from headlines, the tension between the two sides will not subside. Rather, it will only lead to increased desperation for Palestinians living in the occupied territories and further marginalization for the Palestinian diaspora, putting them at risk of cultural erasure and worsened humanitarian conditions.

The Palestinians have just as much right to a homeland as the Jewish people. In pursuing a Jewish state, Israel has forced Palestinians to endure some of the very traumas that Jews themselves have historically been forced to endure, such as expropriation, exile, and devastating loss. The only way to achieve resolution and peace for both Israelis and Palestinians is to break the cycle of oppression by prioritizing human life, rights, and dignity above all else. If Israel continues down its current path, the Palestinian people will be at risk of continued marginalization and eventual erasure, and Israeli citizens will continue to suffer as well.

Until the issue of human rights is given priority and no longer used as a bargaining chip, any future attempts at achieving peace will see the same failure as those before. A coalition for Palestinian empowerment seeks to magnify Palestinian voices and advocate for their human rights. Focusing on human rights will be key toward facilitating the development of mutual respect between the Israelis and Palestinians required to make significant inroads toward peace.

Counter Arguments

It may be said that a policy recommendation written directly to the Palestinians, Israel, or the US would be more productive. However, in recognition of the immense opposition and challenges faced by the Palestinian people, the approach of this report was intentionally curated to advocate for Palestinian human rights and empower the Palestinians to advocate for

themselves, rather than advise the Palestinians on how they can improve their situation. The Palestinians are up against world powers, and their efforts, for the most part, have been limited by the constraints of colonialism as well as their own internal divisions. The end of the British Mandate left Palestinian political structure much weaker and less organized. However, once free from British control, the Palestinian government did not organize a coherent governing organization.. The 2006 election damaged the hope of a unified governance of the two territories, leaving the Palestinian administration internally divided with little hope for acting as an authority that speaks for all Palestinian people. Attempts at reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah have fallen apart for multiple reasons. This is precisely why our approach incorporates the political platform of the international community to enable the Palestinians to reach beyond and transcend their current circumstance.

This report acknowledges the historical plight and struggles of the Jewish people, and in no way discounts their suffering. The Jewish people deserve safety and security, as well as reparations for the atrocities that have been committed against them as well as protection from future injustices. Our report makes the argument that the Palestinian people deserve the same support and regard for human rights and the ability to grow, prosper and create a flourishing and productive community.

Policy Recommendations

Palestinians in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem are facing increasingly untenable conditions that are likely to get worse if circumstances don't improve. As the promises of the Oslo Accords fade further from relevance and settlement expansion continues to encroach

on what Palestinians view as their rightful land, Israel continues to sow the seeds of its own unrest and the potential outbreak of more violence on an even greater scale than seen in the past. This need not be the case, as an opportunity still exists to change course and avert suffering for both Israelis and Palestinians. The following set of policy recommendations delineates steps toward the formation of a coalition for Palestinian human rights, outlines a strategy for the coalition to leverage international political influence, and identifies important issues that the coalition should focus on.

Building the Coalition

In order to develop a coalition for Palestinian human rights, this Task Force recommends:

- Identifying and recruiting potential allies for the coalition, including indigenous and human rights NGOs with UN consultative status
- Establishing communication networks between coalition partners that bridge physical divides domestically and internationally
- Utilization of VPN and secure and encrypted platforms, to spread information and hold conversations that bypass censorship and discrimination
- Developing a media campaign based on Palestinian narratives to center human rights at the forefront of the discourse on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
- Documenting human rights violations
- Developing a Palestinian lobby within the US, the UN, and Israel

Lobbying Strategies

Within the development of its Palestinian lobbies, the coalition should focus on these points respectively:

- USA:
 - Facilitating bloc voting through cultural/ethnic unity,
 - Grassroots advocacy in geographically population dense regions,
 - Outreach to Christian Evangelicals and progressive Jewish Americans,

- Relationship building with legislators, Congressional staff, and media outlets
- Israel:
 - Solving collective action problems through crowdfunded lobbying
 - Establishing sister-lobbies in the Knesset
 - Strengthening the Arab Israeli voting bloc
 - Creating very high rates of citizen advocacy from Israeli coalition supporters
- UN:
 - Building transnational networks,
 - Increasing information exchange with UN organs via the coalition's member NGOs,
 - Establishing more Pro-Palestinian NGO's with UN Economic and Social Council consultative status
 - Securing larger endowments for pro-Palestinian NGOs
 - documenting human rights violations

Coalition Priorities

The coalition should advocate in favor of:

- American support for UNRWA
- Increased humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip
- The removal of the Israeli blockade
- Greater freedom of movement for Palestinians
- Facilitation of opportunities for communication between Palestinian and Israeli communities
- Increased economic integration between Israel and Palestine
- Increased economic development within Palestine
- Increased access to building permits for Palestinians
- Increased access to education for Palestinians
- Development of curriculum that fosters a deeper understanding between Israelis and Palestinians
- Cessation of Israeli censorship of Palestinians

- Respect for Palestinians' right to privacy
- Incorporation of Palestinian leadership in decision making of Israeli defense policies
- Facilitation of discussions with stakeholders on the topic of the Israeli Palestinian conflict focusing on its human rights implications
- Issuing Palestine Bonds and investing in Palestinian stocks
- Adopting the Shekel as the standardized Palestinian currency
- Marketing Palestine and promoting entrepreneurship
- Building consensus among Palestinians, thereby developing unifying documents

This conflict has been devastating to Palestinians and Israelis alike. Unfortunately, with an increasingly polarized political climate and the high tensions of other conflicts, at this point in time there seems to be no peaceful solution on the horizon and little cause for hope. However, we seek to offer hope even in the darkest of times. A coalition focusing on Palestinian human rights would create a major leap forward towards a peaceful resolution to this conflict. While the status quo has disproportionately injured the Palestinian community, no side is left unscathed. While a lasting resolution to the conflict may be a distant prospect for now, mutual recognition and respect for human rights need not be. In the words of Martin Luther King Jr., "justice too long delayed is justice denied."

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