THE ANNAPOlis CONFERENCE:
A CHRONIC CASE OF TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE?

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of
The School of Continuing Studies
and of
The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of
Master of Arts
In Liberal Studies

By

Marta P. Silva, B.A.

Georgetown University
Washington, D.C.
December 1, 2010
THE ANNAPOLIS CONFERENCE:
A CHRONIC CASE OF TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE?

Marta P. Silva, B.A.
Mentor: Ralph Nurnberger, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

On November 26-27, 2007, President George W. Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice organized the Annapolis Peace Conference, the first international conference to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on American soil. It was held at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. The conference brought together representatives from 49 states and organizations. The presence of such a diverse group demonstrated strong support for a resolution to the Israeli-conflict and for Ehud Olmert, Prime Minister of Israel and Mahmoud Abbas, President of the Palestinian National Authority as peace negotiators. This thesis analyzes why the Annapolis Peace Conference failed to resolve the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

The United States’ long term myopia to the geopolitical realities of the Jewish/Muslim relationship has caused a pernicious, on-going stalemate in the Middle East. The discussion here begins with the analysis of the Bush administration’s policies throughout the two terms and then looks at the yearlong events leading up to the conference.

The analysis concludes that the Bush administration’s lack of concern for the conflict during the President’s first term; the geopolitical fallout from the attacks on September 11, 2001; lack of enforcement of the Annapolis Peace Conference provisions;
missed diplomatic and political leverage opportunities; and the political weakness of all three leaders during and after the Annapolis Peace Conference led to the failure of the Annapolis Peace Conference.
The research and writing of this thesis is dedicated to my parents, Maria L. Pinheiro and Americo M. Silva, for their dedications and support throughout this process and to Maurice L. Johnson for his unconditional love and support.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.................................................................................................................... ii

DEDICATION................................................................................................................ iv

TABLE OF CONTENTS..................................................................................................... v

CHAPTER 1: THE DEVIL WE KNOW: WHY MYOPIC U.S. POLICY TOWARDS THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT FROM 2001-2006 WAS A BLUEPRINT FOR POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC FAILURE ......................................................... 1

Introduction .................................................................................................................. 1

Al-Aqsa Intifada ........................................................................................................... 1

Sharon Elected as Israeli Prime Minister ................................................................. 5

Powell's First Trip to the Middle East ........................................................................ 5

Bush's First Meeting with Sharon ............................................................................. 6

Violence in the Holy Land ......................................................................................... 7

Mitchell Report .......................................................................................................... 7

Tenet Plan ................................................................................................................... 9

"War on Terrorism" ................................................................................................... 9

General Zinni Appointed as Special Envoy ............................................................... 11

Bush' Second Meeting with Sharon ......................................................................... 12

Arab Peace Plan ....................................................................................................... 13

Bush Lays Out His Middle East Policy ..................................................................... 14

The Roadmap ............................................................................................................. 16

Bush's Third Meeting with Sharon .......................................................................... 20

Preparation for the Disengagement Plan ................................................................. 21

Yasser Arafat's Death .............................................................................................. 22

Palestinian Presidential Elections ........................................................................... 22

Rice's First Trip in 2005 to the Middle East ............................................................. 23

Bush's Fourth Meeting with Sharon ....................................................................... 23

Disengagement Plan ............................................................................................... 24

Palestinian Legislative Elections ............................................................................ 25

Olmert Elected as Israeli Prime Minister ................................................................. 26

2006 Lebanon War ................................................................................................... 26
The Aftermath ............................................................................................................................. 64
Paris Donor's Conference ........................................................................................................... 65
Bush’s First Trip to the Holy Land ............................................................................................ 66
Carter’s Meeting with Hamas’ Leaders ....................................................................................... 68
The Last Attempt to Resolve the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict ................................................. 69
Operation Cast Lead .................................................................................................................. 70

CHAPTER 4: THE COST OF RETROACTIVE DIPLOMACY:
LESSONS LEARNED ................................................................................................................ 72
Lessons Learned ....................................................................................................................... 81
How Does the U.S. Resolve the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict? .................................................. 83

REFERENCE LIST .................................................................................................................... 87
CHAPTER 1

THE DEVIL WE KNOW:
WHY MYOPIC U.S. POLICY TOWARDS THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT FROM 2001-2006 WAS A BLUEPRINT FOR POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC FAILURE

My vision is two states, living side by side, in peace and security.

President George W. Bush,
Address on the Middle East White House June 24, 2002

Introduction

George W. Bush, a Republican, was elected as the President of the United States in 2000. In 2007, the Bush administration organized the “Annapolis Peace Conference,” the first international peace conference to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict held on American soil. Like his predecessors, President Bush moved the peace process forward, but still did not resolve the conflict.

This paper will address the Bush administration’s policies towards the conflict during his two terms in office. The failure to achieve peace during the first seven years of his administration led President Bush to organize the Annapolis Peace Conference in 2007. This thesis will discuss what took place at the Annapolis Peace Conference and analyze the lessons learned from the Bush administration’s Middle East policies.

Al-Aqsa Intifada

Extreme violence, known as Intifada II, erupted in the Holy Land on September 29, 2000. The first Palestinian “uprising” against Israeli occupation, Intifada I, had taken place between 1987 and 1991. The first Intifada was sparked by “... an accident in
which an Israeli driver lost control of his vehicle and killed a number of Palestinians . . .,”
although the underlying cause was the growing frustration among Palestinian youth
angered by Israeli control of their land for over fifty years (Ross 2004, 41). During the
four years of the first Intifada, young Palestinians constantly threw stones at Israeli
forces, and the hostilities frequently escalated to more violent acts by both sides.

*Intifada* II, which translates as the “shake off,” is also known as the *Al Aqsa* Intifada (Bickerton and Klausner 2007, 219). The *Al-Aqsa Intifada* began after Ariel
Sharon, then-Chairman of the *Likud* party, visited the Temple Mount, which Muslims call
*Haram esh-Sharif*. This is a religious and historically important site in Jerusalem to both
Jews and Muslims. According to Dr. Ian Bickerton, Associate Professor at the University
of South Wales in Sydney, Australia, and Dr. Carla Klausner, a Professor of Modern
Middle East, Medieval Europe, and Judaic Studies at the University of Missouri in
Kansas City, to the Jews, the Temple Mount is known as the “platform from which
Solomon’s and later Herod’s Temple once stood, while, [for the Muslims] it is the place
where Mohammed once took a mystical night journey” (Bickerton and Klausner 2007, 8).
Sharon’s visit to the historical site took place on 28 September after Yasser Arafat,
President of the Palestinian National Authority, most commonly referred to as the
Palestinian Authority (PA), had asked Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak on 26
September to prohibit Sharon from going to the Temple Mount. Barak told Arafat that he
would not prevent Sharon from going to one of the holiest sites to Jews. Palestinians
reacted by throwing stones at Israelis citizens and soldiers. In retaliation, Israeli soldiers
fired live ammunition and rubber bullets into crowds of Palestinians.
Intifada II once again forced the Middle East to the forefront of American foreign policy. The U.S. media covered the violence extensively, “on the three major network’s evening news broadcasts ‘ABC World News Tonight’, ‘NBC Nightly News,’ and ‘CBS Evening News’ the West Bank and Gaza were mentioned in ninety-nine news stories since the fighting began . . . .” (Ackerman 2001).

The cycle of violence was repeated frequently until 2006. Dennis Ross, chief Middle East negotiator during the George H.W. Bush and Clinton administrations argued that Arafat played a major role in the continuity of the second Intifada, “. . . Arafat countenanced violence as a tactical move to gain advantage, but underestimated how uncontrollable the ensuing events might be” (Ross 2004, 730). The casualties on both sides were numerous. According to Beverly Milton-Edwards, professor of Politics at Queen’s University in Belfast and author of several books on Islamists in the Middle East and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, “the vortex of violence between 2000 and 2005 resulted in an estimated 3,800 Palestinians and 1,100 Israelis dead” (Milton-Edwards 2009, 155).

During the early days of Intifada II, President Clinton sought to end the violence and also negotiate peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Clinton met with Barak and Arafat from October 16 -17, 2000 in Sharm el Sheik, Egypt in an effort to negotiate a cease-fire. The meeting was also attended by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, King Abdullah II of Jordan, and leaders of the European Union. The summit resulted in a brief cease-fire between Israelis and Palestinians. In addition, the United States was charged with putting together an international commission to investigate the causes of Intifada II
and providing methods to prevent an outbreak of violence in the future. Clinton assigned
former Senator George Mitchell (D-ME) to lead the investigation.

Despite such international efforts to promote a cease-fire, when Bush took office, he inherited both a spike of violence in the region and new elections in Israel. Barak had called for elections in Israel to be held in February 2001. Although the violence continued, Bush refrained from intervening to end the violence or sending an envoy to the region to find a solution. Instead, he approached the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with a relative “hands off” approach (Freedman 2005). When Martin Indyk, U.S. Ambassador to Israel at the time and current Director of the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution, asked Bush’s Secretary of State Colin Powell about the administration’s policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in February 2001, Powell responded “. . . park this problem for awhile” (Indyk 2009, 380). Powell’s response reflected the Republican belief that while President Clinton’s efforts to resolve the conflict had been tireless, they had also been fruitless.

Bush believed that the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict should be resolved by the two parties involved. During a press conference at the White House in February 2001, Bush was asked by a journalist about the administration’s policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The President responded that “a lasting peace in the region will come only when the parties agree directly on its terms” (U.S. White House 2001a).
Sharon Elected as Israeli Prime Minister

Israelis elected Ariel Sharon as their new Prime Minister in February 2001. During his campaign, Sharon had stated that the security of Israel would be his prime concern and implied that concessions of land to the Palestinians would be practically impossible. The day after Sharon was elected, he declared, “I am aware that peace requires painful compromises. Any agreements will be based on security . . .” (Cable Network News 2001a). The practical impossibility of a peace deal between Israelis and Palestinians was evident “at Sharon's headquarters in Tel Aviv, [as] supporters danced with joy while shouts of ‘The end of Oslo!’ were heard, referring to the interim peace accord that Sharon opposed” (Ibid). This policy was also evident in Powell’s first trip abroad.

Powell’s First Trip to the Middle East

Making it his first trip abroad, Powell visited the Middle East from February 23 to 27, 2001. During this trip he made stops in Egypt, Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan, Israel, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. According to Dr. Robert O. Freedman, former president of the Association for Israel Studies, Powell did not go to the region to address the violence between Israelis and Palestinians, but “. . . to convince the Arab states to support his plans for smart sanctions against Iraq” (Freedman 2005). Unfortunately, Arab leaders were not interested in supporting sanctions against Iraq. Instead, Arab leaders wanted to discuss the Israeli-Palestinian conflict because “. . . [the] Palestinian uprising has deprived Iraq the dubious honour of being the most inflammable issue in the region” (Habib 2004). When asked about the conflict, Powell stated, “we must get the level of
violence down” (U. S. Department of State Office of the Spokesman 2001). From the outset, the Bush administration did not understand that Arab leaders perceived instability in the Holy Land as a bigger threat to their societies than the Iraqi regime.

Bush’s First Meeting with Sharon

Soon after Powell’s return to the United States, Sharon met with Bush at the White House on March 20, 2001. The two leaders discussed relations between the United States and Israel, as well as prospects for peace. In a press conference at the White House after their meeting, Bush reiterated the administration’s policy to support peace, but not impose it. He said, “. . . I told him that our nation will not try to force peace, that we will facilitate peace and that we will work with those responsible for peace” (U. S. White House 2001c). In response, Sharon declared that the first condition needed to bring about peace between Israelis and Palestinians was to ensure Israel’s security, and he asked for Bush’s assistance to ensure it. Later Bush was asked by reporters about meeting with Arafat. Bush responded, “I haven’t made up my plans on who[m] I’m going to meet with yet” (Ibid). One can assume that Bush’s comment meant that he was not very interested in meeting with Arafat because he had already decided to meet with Sharon.

Bush’s disregard for Arafat was evident in the fact that while Bush was president, Arafat was never invited to Washington, DC. In Ross’ opinion, Bush’s disdain for Arafat stemmed from his belief that Arafat was untrustworthy (Ross 2004, 786). In addition, Bush perceived that “. . . Yasser Arafat was doing little to stop terror . . .” (Ibid). Bush’s distrust of Arafat made resolving the conflict practically impossible because as Arafat had to be part of negotiations for them to succeed.
Violence in the Holy Land

During Bush’s first three months in office, Israelis killed Colonel Masoud Ayad, a member of Arafat’s personal security force and Mahmud el-Madani, a leader of Hamas, formally known as the Islamic Resistance Movement. During the same time, Palestinian terrorists drove a bus into a group of soldiers killing eight people. Then in April 2001, after Israelis killed Iyyad Hardan, a leader of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad—a Palestinian political and paramilitary organization committed to destroying Israel and to “. . . [the] creation of an Islamic state in all of historical Palestine . . . ,”—Palestinians again retaliated by firing shells into Israel from Gaza (U.S. National Counterterrorism Center). As a consequence, Israelis shot missiles into Gaza and large Israeli tanks and bulldozers invaded the Khan Younis refugee camp in Gaza. Arab leaders grew concerned with the escalating violence in the region, and on April 16, 2001, Jordanian King Abdullah II presented both sides with a cease-fire proposal. The proposal was later rejected in May and the fighting continued.

Mitchell Report

Following the failure of the Jordanian cease-fire proposal, the Mitchell-led committee released its report in May. The report summarized how the Al-Aqsa Intifada began and presented recommendations for ending the violence. Due to the intense nature of the conflict, most reports analyzing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict tend to be biased and highly controversial, but surprisingly the “Sharm El-Sheik Fact Finding Committee Report,” popularly known as the “Mitchell Report,” did not place the blame on one culprit. Instead, the report concluded that both parties were responsible for the outbreak.
of violence. Moreover, the report recommended that Israelis freeze all settlement activities and that the Palestinians cease using violence. According to Freedman, the commission also advised the U.S. government to resume peace negotiations, stating that the Israelis and Palestinians should “. . . 1) put a 100% effort to stop the violence; 2) the immediate resumption of security operations; 3) the exchange of confidence-building measures; and 4) the speedy return to serious negotiations” (Freedman 2005). The recommendations in the Mitchell Report would later be the basis for the Quartet Roadmap, a three-phase blueprint on how to solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

While the report recommended that the administration should be more involved in solving the conflict, unfortunately, the administration showed no signs of taking their recommendations seriously. According to Aaron David Miller, a former advisor to six Secretaries of State and who helped formulate U.S. policy on the Middle East and the Arab-Israeli peace process, “Senator Mitchell told me that the administration ‘expected the recommendations to be self implementing.’ ‘Someone’, he continued, ‘should have been over there the day it was announced ‘pushing to implement it’’” (Miller 2008, 332).

After five months of meek involvement in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Powell sent his first envoy to the region, Ambassador William Burns. Burns was serving as Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, and was sent to the Holy Land to “. . . establish a timeline for measures to resume peace talks” with the Israelis and the Palestinians (Bickerton and Klausner 2007, 346). Burns believed that the United States should become more engaged in resolving the conflict, ending the violence and rebuilding economic hope in the region. At Burns’ confirmation hearing, he declared
“active American engagement in the Middle East is a necessity, not an option . . .” British Broadcast Company News 2001). Although Burns understood that the U.S. ought to be more involved in the conflict, the administration did not appear to be of the same opinion.

**Tenet Plan**

_Hamas_ and the _Islamic Jihad_ rejected Burns’ idea to resume peace talks. As a result, the two groups organized a bombing at the Dolphinarium disco in Tel Aviv on June 1, 2001, that killed twenty-one, mostly young Israelis (Bickerton and Klausner 2007, 346). In an effort to reach a cease-fire, the U.S. sent Central Intelligence Agency Director George Tenet to the Middle East in June. During his trips and meetings with the various leaders, he produced the “Tenet Plan,” a detailed proposal designed to end the violence and resume negotiations with the consent of both parties. The Tenet Plan demanded one week of non-violence before negotiations could proceed. According to Tenet, “and that, too, like so much else was never implemented” (Tenet 2007, 81). In Tenet’s opinion his plan failed because there was no one who thought about solving the conflict day and night, there was no political process, and there was “. . . nothing left to broker honestly” (Ibid). The peace process was at a standstill.

**“War on Terrorism”**

More violence and unrest in the region continued throughout the summer of 2001. Unexpectedly, on September 11, 2001, the United States was attacked by terrorists from the Middle East. Following the 9-11 attacks, Bush’s policy toward the region shifted dramatically toward prosecuting those who had planned, financed, and carried out the attacks on the United States. Officially, the American government blamed _Al-Qaeda_, an
international terrorist network, for the attacks on the United States. As “for Arab-Israeli diplomacy [,] 9/11 created a paradox: the attacks triggered the administration’s most serious foray into the problem while planting the seeds of neglect and abandonment in its first term” (Miller 2008, 334).

At a joint press conference with French President Jacques Chirac in November 2001, Bush rhetorically divided the world by stating “you are either with us or against us in the fight against terror” (Cable Network News 2001c). Although Bush did not specify any nations or groups, given the Palestinian Liberation Organization’s (PLO) history and continued use of terrorism against Israelis, Bush implied that Arafat and the PLO were against the United States’ fight against terror. Indeed, the PLO had been on the U.S. Department of State’s (DOS)’s Foreign Terrorist Organization list from the organization’s inception in 1960 to the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1994 (Council on Foreign Relations 2006).

In retaliation for the 9-11 attacks, the so-called “War on Terrorism” officially began in 2002 when American troops invaded Afghanistan and removed the ruling Taliban party from power. Less than two years after 9/11, the military operation extended into Iraq with the stated goal of overthrowing Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, in large part because of fears that Hussein intended to construct and deploy weapons of mass destruction against Israel and the United States. The “War on Terrorism” consumed the administration’s attention in the Middle East. Although the administration wanted to focus its efforts on fighting the “War on Terrorism,” the Arab-Israeli conflict could not be forgotten.
To appease allies and build a coalition to fight the “War on Terrorism,” Miller rightly argued that “. . . by the fall 2001 the White House had realized that mobilizing coalitions to fight the war against terror might be easier if the United States signaled interest in the Arab-Israeli peacemaking” (Miller 2008, 336). Specifically, in Bush’s address to the United Nations General Assembly on November 10, 2001, he laid out his vision for a two-state solution:

The American government also stands by its commitment to a just peace in the Middle East. We are working toward the day when two states—Israel and Palestine—live peacefully together within secure and recognized borders as called for by the Security Council resolutions. We will do all in our power to bring both parties back into negotiations. But peace will only come when all have sworn off forever incitement, violence and terror. (Cable Network News 2001b)

Although Bush stated that he was working for peace, his “hands off” approach and policy of “let the two parties resolve the problem on their own” made his words untenable. Bush’s speech demonstrated that he knew how to appease to allies, but did not wish to take concrete steps to realize his vision.

General Zinni Appointed as Special Envoy

Two weeks after presenting the speech at the United Nations, Bush appointed retired four-star Marine General Anthony Zinni as “Special Envoy” to the Middle East. Zinni had worked in the Middle East Central Command and believed that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict needed resolution before the U.S. dealt with any other issue in the Middle East, including Iraq. Specifically, he was in charge of mediating an Israeli-Palestinian cease-fire. Although Zinni’s appointment may be seen as a way to implement Bush’s vision for a two-state solution, events on the ground undermined Zinni’s mission. During Zinni’s first trip to the region there was an attack on a bus in northern Israel and
two attacks in Jerusalem. Then, there was an attack on Haifa a day later, on 2 December.

On Zinni’s third trip to the region in January, the Israelis intercepted an Iranian ship, the *Karine A*, carrying arms for the Palestinians. “Arafat denied any knowledge of the shipment, but the United States and Israel blamed Arafat” (Nurnberger 2008, 57). Zinni’s appointment as a Special Envoy ended when “... a wave of Palestinian suicide bombings in the spring of 2002 killed the process” (Zinni 2006 184). Following Zinni’s failed mission, it was back to the drawing board for the administration, which then sought to find another way to implement Bush’s vision of a two-state solution.

**Bush’s Second Meeting with Sharon**

In December, when Sharon revisited Washington, Bush affirmed his support for Israel and the Israeli people, especially as they suffered from violence during the Intifada. At a press conference, Bush indicated, “I will tell him our nation grieves for those whose lives have been affected by the murderers” (U.S. White House 2001b). This meeting marked a change in American foreign policy and a decided shift in support for Israel. Bush deemphasized a “hands off” approach, and started using rhetoric strongly supporting Israel. He retained this stance until the end of his presidency in January 2009.

According to John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, authors of the *Israel Lobby*, a contentious book that is highly critical of America’s support for Israel, Bush’s strong stance in support of Israel had damaging repercussions for the United States and its allies. The authors argued, “the combination of unwavering support for Israel and the related effort to spread ‘democracy’ throughout the region has inflamed Arab and Islamic opinion and jeopardized not only US security but that of much of the rest of the world”
(Mearsheimer and Walt 2006). In fact, several of the United States’ allies were targets of terrorist attacks after Bush voiced his strong support for Israel. For example, Madrid’s commuter trains were bombed in 2004 and London’s subways were bombed in 2005. Both attacks resulted in more than one hundred deaths.

**Arab Peace Plan**

In February 2002, as the violence continued in the Holy Land amid growing U.S. support of Israel, Arab leaders looked for other solutions to the problem. Indyk wrote that “Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia became so frustrated with his failure to persuade Bush to intervene to stop the Israeli-Palestinian violence, and so fearful of its destabilizing consequences in the Arab world, that he launched his own initiative” (Indyk 2009, 384). The initiative became known as the “Arab Peace Plan.”

Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah first proposed the plan in an interview with *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman. During their discussion, Friedman presented an idea to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. To Friedman’s surprise, Crown Prince Abdullah stated that he had been thinking along the same lines (Sandler 2002). Abdullah’s proposal stated that twenty Arab states would diplomatically recognize Israel if Israel completely withdrew to borders existing before the 1967 Six-Day War, leaving the vacated land to be used for the formation of a Palestinian state. Soon after the release of the article, a Bush administration official positively commented on the initiative, saying, “we get the sense that Crown Prince Abdullah is serious. It’s a very interesting proposal” (Ibid). A month later, Crown Prince Abdullah brought his plan to the Arab League summit held in Beirut from March 27 to 28, 2002. Although the summit was only
attended by ten of the twenty-two members, the Arab League “. . . unanimously approved the Saudi plan for Arab peace with Israel” (Palmer 2002). Unfortunately, the progress made by the Arab League was not enough to keep the violence down in the region.

As the summit took place on March 28, 2002, a Palestinian suicide bomber killed 29 people and injured more than 170 in an attack at a hotel where Israeli families were celebrating Passover. This became known as the “Passover Massacre.” Sharon’s response was to launch “Operation Defensive Shield,” in which the Israel Defense Forces moved into the West Bank from March 29, 2002 to April 12, 2002. The main objective of the operation was “. . . to give the IDF renewed control over the West Bank . . .” (Ynet 2009). Nonetheless, the Arab Peace Plan was the first concrete plan proposed by Arab leaders during the Bush administration to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and it later served as a precursor to the Annapolis Peace Conference.

**Bush Lays Out His Middle East Policy**

A few months following the end of Operation Defensive Shield, President Bush gave an important speech on June 24, 2002 that defined the United States’ policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In his speech, Bush blamed the terror taking place in the Holy Land on the Palestinian leaders and called for new Palestinian leadership. Essentially, Bush did not see Arafat as a valid peace partner. In addition, international pressure was mounting on his administration to get more involved in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Bush hoped that after electing new leadership, the Palestinians would also improve their relations with their closest neighbors by “. . . reach[ing] an agreement with Israel and Egypt and Jordan on security and other
arrangements for independence” (Bush 2002). Thus, for Bush, electing alternative leadership to Arafat became a prerequisite for implementing his vision for a two-state solution as described in his address to United Nations General Assembly in November 2001.

To motivate Palestinians to hold elections, Bush committed the United States and the international community to assist in organizing and executing fair, multiparty, local elections by the end of the year. As a further incentive, Bush offered additional financial aid to the Palestinian people, if they could meet these conditions. As a condition for additional assistance, however, the Palestinians were required to renounce terrorism and stop facilitating weapons and financial resources to Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Islamic Jihad.

In the 24 June speech, Bush also demanded that the Israelis contribute to the peace process by halting the construction of all settlements as recommended in the Mitchell Report. Towards the end of the speech, Bush declared that an agreement between Israelis and Palestinians could be reached within three years. Miller commented that although the speech was ambitious, “it reflected the just leave me alone attitude that had come to embody much of the president’s reaction to this issue” (Miller 2008, 346). Even though Bush proposed a new way forward, he still maintained that it was up to the two parties to resolve the conflict.

The speech did not produce the outcomes that Bush had envisioned. The legislative elections eventually took place in January 2006 and resulted in a victory for Hamas, which had the effect of isolating the Palestinians more politically from the rest of
the world. The elections could have been more successful if they had included allowance by the Bush administration for grassroots level demands for democracy to flourish and for Palestinians to choose when and how they wanted to elect their government. In addition, Palestinians could have demanded democratic elections rather than having them imposed by an outsider. Holding elections alone did not mean that the Palestinians had a de facto democracy or legitimate representation. A few world leaders agreed with Bush’s approach. Nasser Aruri, a Palestinian and a Chancellor Professor Emeritus at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, wrote that “almost every one of those leaders (from the Group of 8) felt a need to distance himself from Bush’s position by commenting on the right of the Palestinians to name their own leaders” (Aruri 2003, 210). As a beacon for democracy and freedom, the U.S. should allow everyone to pursue these values in their own way.

**The Roadmap**

At the same time as Bush called for elections for the Palestinian people, the Israelis held their own elections. Sharon was re-elected Prime Minister of Israel on 28 January 2003, becoming the first Israeli Prime Minister to be reelected since Menachem Begin in 1981. Soon after Sharon’s reelection, the United States supported another approach designed to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In April, the Quartet of the Middle East—a group composed of Russia, the European Union, the United States, and the United Nations organized to promote the Israeli-Palestinian peace process—drafted the *Performance-Based Roadmap to a Permanent Two-State Solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, which is most commonly referred to as “the Roadmap.” The
Roadmap, which was officially announced on April 30, 2003, is divided into three phases requiring both parties to accomplish certain benchmarks in order to proceed to the following phase. The Quartet called for all benchmarks in the Roadmap to be accomplished by the year 2005. Additionally, the representatives agreed to meet regularly at senior levels to evaluate progress on the plan.

In Phase I, the Quartet called for the Palestinians to end violence, elect new leadership, and build democratic institutions. In addition, the Palestinians would recognize Israel and draft their own constitution. The Quartet called on Israel to freeze building settlements, which had also been a recommendation of the Mitchell Report. Additionally, the proposal called on Israel to actively engage with the Palestinians, including providing political and financial support, and withdrawing from Palestinian areas occupied after Intifada II began on September 28, 2000. Furthermore, the Quartet called on other Arab nations to end their financial support for organizations that employed violence and terror. The American government agreed to assist in reorganizing the Palestinian security forces by “...rebuilding, training, and resuming security cooperation plans in collaboration with [an] outside oversight board” (United Nations News Centre 2003).

Phase II of the plan required the Palestinians to create an independent nation with strong institutions that sternly applied the rule of law. After the Palestinians held elections, as stated in Phase I, the Palestinians were expected to work on creating a state within provisional borders. An international conference would assist the Palestinians in creating a state. Most important for the Palestinians, the United Nations would consider
membership of a Palestinian state when all other benchmarks were met. This would have been an important accomplishment for the Palestinians because they would finally be recognized as a state by the international community.

In Phase III, the two parties were to hold negotiations to settle all remaining disputes at a second international conference. The main subjects at the conference would have included: borders, Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, agreements between Israel and Syria, and agreements between Israel and Lebanon. All Arab states would have also recognized Israel and normalized relations based on the Arab Peace Plan.

Unfortunately, the goals of the Roadmap were never accomplished; in fact, as of today, the two parties still have not completely implemented Phase I. Nonetheless, some progress has been made on both sides. The Palestinians have held presidential and legislative elections and the Israelis have withdrawn from Gaza. Also, Bush hosted the Annapolis Peace Conference as a means to implement Phase I of the Roadmap, even though this took place two years after the Quartet had expected the Roadmap to be accomplished.

In Miller’s opinion, the Roadmap was not accomplished because none of the parties was serious about its implementation. He argued “in the end, the only real problem with the road map was that neither the Americans, the Israelis, nor the Palestinians were serious about implementing it” (Miller 2008, 352). One could argue, however, that the real challenge to implementing the Roadmap was that the plan expected too much too quickly. Progress on this conflict had to come in small steps, but the Roadmap only called for big changes. For example, to just get the parties in a room to
talk to each other is a big accomplishment. Both parties needed to build their trust in each other by agreeing on less complex issues, such as curfews, before they can move on to negotiations on recognizing Israel. Although the first phase of the Roadmap called for the Palestinians to end the violence, the Palestinian government could not have just ended violence as if it was a light switch that the government turned on and off. Underlying factors caused violence that had to be addressed before the violence could end, such as the Palestinian perception of Israeli occupation of their land, high unemployment, and a scattered society. In addition to Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza, Palestinian refugees are scattered throughout Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan, where many live in dire poverty.

Bush appointed a group led by Ambassador John Wolf, a former Department of State Foreign Service Officer, to oversee the implementation of the Roadmap. The mission of the Wolf group was to manage that the “. . . the parties move[d] towards peace and monitor their progress and to make sure both parties kept their promises” (U.S. White House 2003). According to Daniel Kurtzer, U.S. ambassador to Israel between 2001 and 2005, and Scott Lasensky, of the Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention at the U.S. Institute of Peace, Wolf’s mission was unsuccessful. They argued that the mission failed because Wolf lacked the expertise for the position, specifically that he “. . . lacked both political clout and extensive expertise with Arabs and Israelis, was not taken seriously by the parties” (Kurtzer and Lasensky 2008, 63).

In 2003, absent a true peace process, Sharon announced Israel’s unilateral plan for withdrawal from Gaza, formally known as the “Disengagement Plan.” At first, Bush did
not support the Disengagement Plan because the move was unilateral and was reached without negotiations. However, Bush later supported the disengagement and sent envoys to Israel to discuss the situation. Regardless of the American position, Sharon was determined to accomplish the plan without the United States’ assistance if necessary. He made this clear to Bush when he visited Washington for the third time as the Israeli Prime Minister.

Bush’s Third Meeting with Sharon

Sharon visited the White House once again on April 14, 2004. During his meeting with Bush, the two leaders exchanged personal letters. Bush’s letter reiterated his commitment to the two-state solution and his acceptance for Israel to keep parts of the West Bank. Sharon’s letter restated Israel’s pledge to implement the provisions stipulated in the Roadmap, explained the purpose and benefits of the Disengagement Plan and Israel’s “Security Fence,” and affirmed Israel’s support for the United States’ assistance in reforming Palestinian security forces (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2004).

Bush and Sharon held a press conference following the exchange of letters at which they discussed the Disengagement Plan. Bush described the plan as monumental in his public remarks and in his letter to Sharon. Bush stated that “these (actions taken towards disengaging from Gaza) are historic and courageous actions” (U.S. White House 2004). In addition, Bush reaffirmed his commitment to the Palestinians and his support for Israel. Bush “. . . reiterate[d] our steadfast commitment to Israel's security and to preserving and strengthening Israel's self-defense capability, including its right to defend

**Preparation for the Disengagement Plan**

On April 18, 2004, Prime Minister Sharon’s Office produced a formal outline for the Disengagement Plan. The plan consisted of Israel’s withdrawal from Gaza and four settlements in the West Bank. Ironically, Sharon’s interest in the Disengagement Plan was more economic than diplomatic: the cost of protecting the “few” Israelis in Gaza was unsustainable. At the time when he made the decision to propose the Disengagement Plan, about 10,000 Israeli soldiers provided security for only a few thousand settlers in Gaza. The Disengagement Plan was approved by the Israeli Cabinet in June and withdrawal from Gaza was scheduled to take place during the summer of 2005.

As the Disengagement Plan began to take shape, Bush was reelected to a second term in November 2004. As part of his new cabinet, he appointed Condoleezza Rice as the new Secretary of State. Palestinians were hopeful for Rice’s appointment because they thought that she would be more sympathetic to their cause due to her upbringing in the segregated southern United States. They believed that by living through segregation, she understood what it was like to be oppressed in one’s own country. Rice commented on her upbringing in a meeting with Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni after the Annapolis Peace Conference. Rice told Livni, “I know what it is like to hear to that you cannot go on a road or through a checkpoint because you are Palestinian . . . I understand the feeling of humiliation and powerlessness” (Kessler 2007). Although Rice was
sympathetic and understanding to the Palestinian’s position in the conflict, she did not become an advocate for the Palestinian cause, but rather for the administration’s policies.

**Yasser Arafat’s Death**

Yasser Arafat died in November 2004. For over thirty-five years, Arafat had been the face of the Palestinian struggle and the main protagonist in reminding the international community of the devastations occurring in the Holy Land. Arafat was replaced as Chairman of the PLO by a weaker leader, Mahmoud Abbas. Abbas had previously served as Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority, but he resigned after Arafat deprived him of the power he needed to govern. After Abbas’s resignation, Arafat had appointed Abu Ala (also known as Ahmad Qurei), who remained the Prime Minister after Arafat’s death. In December 2004, Palestinians held their first round of municipal elections. These elections were the first in which *Hamas* candidates participated. Municipal elections were followed by Presidential elections to determine whom the Palestinians wanted as their leader.

**Palestinian Presidential Elections**

The Palestinians held presidential elections in January 2005. Abbas was elected President of the Palestinian National Authority. In addition to his other duties, this position entitled him to become the official Palestinian negotiator in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Bush administration was pleased by the outcome of the elections as they considered Abbas to be a viable partner for peace negotiations. Although legitimately elected to represent the Palestinian people, Abbas was a weak leader and unable to negotiate a peace deal. Many questioned whether he would have been able to
enforce a deal even if one had been accepted by both sides. In Milton-Edwards’ assessment, Abbas had little political power because “the man of peace was surrounded on all sides by nay-sayers and enemies of negotiated solution” (Milton-Edwards 2009, 201). Still, with hope that the new Palestinian leader might be acceptable partner in the peace process, Rice made her first trip to the Middle East.

Rice’s First Trip in 2005 to the Middle East

On Rice’s first trip to the region as Secretary of State in February 2005, she met separately with Sharon and Abbas. Later that month, the two leaders met in Egypt to negotiate a cease-fire. At the meeting, Abbas agreed to try to convince radical groups to end the violence and Sharon agreed to stop targeted assassinations. Both leaders, however, were unable to fulfill their commitments. Shortly after Rice’s trip, Sharon visited the United States.

Bush’s Fourth Meeting with Sharon

After the inauguration to his second term, Bush once again invited Sharon to his ranch in Crawford, Texas. Sharon visited Bush at the ranch in April 2005 to discuss improving economic ties between the two nations. At the meeting, Bush reiterated his support for a two-state solution and for the Quartet’s Roadmap. He also requested that Israel dismantle settlements. Bush stated, “Israel should remove unauthorized outposts and meet its road map obligations regarding settlements in the West Bank” (U. S. White House 2005). He told Sharon that he saw the new Palestinian leadership as a new opportunity for peace and negotiations. Sharon said that he was committed to working with the Palestinians on the Disengagement Plan and encouraged Palestinian leaders to
work with him on a peaceful transition. When the Palestinians failed to respond to
Sharon’s request to work with him on Israel’s withdrawal from Gaza, Sharon carried out
the Disengagement Plan unilaterally.

Disengagement Plan

In the summer of 2005, the Israelis executed the Disengagement Plan. Most
settlers in Gaza left on their own, but a few had to be physically carried out of their
homes by Israeli soldiers. Israeli settlers who had to leave Gaza were relocated to other
Israeli settlements in the Holy Land; the last Israeli soldier left Gaza on September 20,
2005. The Disengagement Plan could have been an opportunity for the U.S. to empower
Abbas by providing him with economic and military assistance to govern Gaza. Instead,
the U.S. did not do anything to assist Abbas. According to Miller, however, at least one
person in the Bush administration understood that a great opportunity was missed; “a
senior administration official [intimately] involved in policy matters conceded that it was
a ‘blown opportunity’” (Miller 2008, 355). Israeli withdrawal combined with the
inaction of the U.S. and Abbas’s weakness led to an increase in violence among
Palestinians for control of Gaza.

The majority of Sharon’s Likud party opposed the Disengagement Plan. The
opponents within Likud felt that Israel’s unilateral withdrawal gave Palestinians control
of Gaza but provided Israel with nothing in return. They viewed this withdrawal as a sign
of weakness and feared that it might lead to similar pull outs in the West Bank at a later
date. As a result, Sharon left the Likud party in November 2005—and ultimately formed a
more centrist political party called *Kadima*, meaning “Forward,” which could help him carry out his political vision.

**Palestinian Legislative Elections**

Under pressure from the U.S., the Palestinians held legislative elections for new Palestinian leadership in January 2006. To the Bush administration’s dismay, *Hamas* won the majority of seats in the Palestinian Legislative Council. According to Indyk, the *Hamas* victory had serious implications for the region since it was “... the first time that an Islamist party had come to power in the Arab world” (Indyk 2009, 382). The election of *Hamas* also had other serious repercussions.

Internationally, the *Hamas* victory was not well-received. The U.S. and the European Union characterized *Hamas* as a terrorist organization. *Hamas*’ classification was principally due to their numerous terrorist attacks against Israel. As a result, *Hamas*’ victory led to them being boycotted by the international community and the suspension of international aid to the Palestinian Authority. According to Milton-Edwards “by April 2006, the European Union had announced a halt to their funding of the PA in the West Bank and Gaza” (Milton-Edwards 2009, 180).

Palestinians were inclined to elect *Hamas* candidates because they were viewed as less corrupt. In addition, *Hamas* had provided Palestinians with essential social services such as water and education, which *Fatah* had frequently failed to provide. *Hamas* also had better political strategies during the elections. In many districts, *Fatah* had several candidates on the ballot while *Hamas* only had one. The votes for *Fatah* in such districts were split among the various candidates, making it practically impossible for *Fatah* to
win in these districts even when the combined *Fatah* candidates received the majority of the votes.

**Olmert Elected as Israeli Prime Minister**

Shortly after the Palestinian’s long awaited elections, Israelis went to the polls to elect a new leader. In January 2006, Sharon suddenly fell into a coma and could no longer govern. Deputy Prime Minister Ehud Olmert became the interim Prime Minister. Due to the unforeseen circumstances, Israelis went to the polls to vote on March 28, 2006. In the special election, *Kadima* won the plurality of seats in the Knesset and Olmert became the new Prime Minister of Israel. Miller describes Olmert as very different from Sharon. Miller wrote that Olmert “. . . was smart, centrist, and pragmatic but lacked the moral or historic legitimacy to sell big decisions” (Miller 2008, 356).

A day after Israeli elections, on March 29, 2006, *Hamas* leader Ismail Haniyeh based in Gaza was sworn in as the new Palestinian Prime Minister.

**2006 Lebanon War**

In the summer of 2006, the Israeli armed forces engaged in two armed conflicts with its neighbors, first in Gaza and then in Lebanon. On June 25, *Hamas* operatives tunneled into Israel from Gaza and killed two soldiers and kidnapped a third, Corporal Galit Shalit (Nurnberger 2008, 71). Israel responded by invading Gaza. Israel Defense Forces destroyed building and important infrastructure that left Gazans without electricity (New York Times 2006). Their purpose was to free Shalit and for *Hamas* to end their use of *Qassam* rockets against Israelis (Ibid). Neither of these objectives has yet been accomplished.
Hezbollah, based in Lebanon decided to replicate the Hamas raid. Hezbollah activists crossed into northern Israel, where they killed eight and kidnapped two Israeli soldiers. Israel responded by attacking Lebanon from the air and on the ground. The fighting during the summer of 2006 resulted in a total of “1,225 deaths: 1,109 Lebanese civilians and 116 Israeli soldiers” (British Broadcast Company News 2006). With the support of the United States, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1701 on August 11, 2006 which brought about a cease-fire between the two parties.

Iraq Study Group

The Iraq Study Group consisted of ten former distinguished American government officials. On December 6, 2006, the Iraq Study Group released a report that analyzed the war effort in Iraq. The report also discussed the Arab-Israeli conflict. Within the overall context of American policies in the region, the Iraq Study group recommended that the administration should have become more involved in seeking to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The report recommended that to enhance its war efforts in Iraq and stabilize the Middle East, the United States should also work towards resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Furthermore, the report suggested that the United States host an international conference similar to the 1991 Madrid Conference. Although the report received a good deal of attention, the recommendations relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict did not have a significant effect, at least not immediately.

The United States has been the traditional peace broker for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, Bush took a more “hands off” approach than his predecessors. He stated that the two parties should resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on their own.
Nonetheless, after six years in power, the Bush administration decided to become directly involved in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in the hope that this would enhance American efforts in Iraq, appease its allies, and maintain amicable relationships with Arab leaders.
CHAPTER 2

RHETORIC WITHOUT ACTION

Transformational Diplomacy

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice launched an outline for her strategy of “transformational diplomacy” during a speech at Georgetown University in January 2006. She stated that the goal of the strategy was to redistribute diplomatic resources to regions that the administration deemed to be areas of both ongoing and emerging importance. In addition, she called for all U.S. diplomats to be more directly engaged among the populations, instead of remaining isolated at the embassies.

Rice applied transformational diplomacy to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by becoming more directly involved in the Middle East. In fact, Rice made seven trips to the region in 2007 alone. At first, she went to the region in an effort to arrange for the Palestinians and the Israelis to engage in direct talks. Later, she visited Arab state leaders to attain support for the Annapolis Peace Conference. Despite the fact that the administration had announced a major change in policy to focus on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Rice went to the region without a detailed mission or specific goals. In this way, Rice was no different than the other “Special Envoys” that the administration had sent previously.

Rice’s First Trip in 2007 to the Holy Land

During her first trip to the Holy Land in 2007, Rice discussed strategic issues concerning Iran, the progress made toward the goals of the Roadmap, and the plans for
how to implement a two-state solution. At a press conference with Tzipi Livni on January 13, 2007, Rice reaffirmed that one of President Bush’s most important goals was to move towards creating the foundation for a Palestinian state. He envisioned a Holy Land where Israelis and Palestinians could live independently, side by side, and in peace. Rice, however, failed to understand that before the two parties could discuss the complicated arrangements for a two-state solution, they needed to start negotiations on basic issues, such as checkpoints and water rights. Laboring under the illusion that it was a good time to start negotiating, she continued to meet with Israeli and Palestinian leaders to sell the idea that the two needed to discuss the core issues, and the United States was there to help.

The next day she met with Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah. After the meeting, at a press conference, Abbas stated that the purpose of their meeting was to discuss the peace process. He also declared that the Palestinians planned to move forward toward the two-state solution. Abbas then stated that he and Ehud Olmert had met weeks earlier to discuss concrete steps towards implementing the two-state solution (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2006). The two leaders had discussed several controversial issues, including imposing the rule of law and restricting the unnecessary carrying of arms. In addition, Abbas suggested that several steps were necessary to move the two-state solution forward, such as: immediately halting all Israeli colonial activities in the Palestinian territories, “. . . stop[ping] the separation and expansion wall and put[ting] an end to the siege and closure in its various forms imposed upon our people . . .” (U.S. Department of State Bureau of Public Affairs 2007d). Additionally, Abbas demanded that
the Israelis release Palestinian prisoners and that the two parties continue their consensus truce beyond the Gaza Strip and into the West Bank. Furthermore, Abbas declared that the temporary borders were unacceptable, and urged the international community to cooperate to resolve the conflict (Ibid). Later, Abbas explained that Hamas and Fatah were trying to form a unity government to establish an independent Palestinian state.

In response, Rice stated that the U.S. was committed to maintaining and building on the momentum created by Abbas and Olmert’s previous meeting. In addition, the U.S. pledged $85 million to train the Palestinian security forces. On the other hand, Rice did not express any views on how the Israelis would react to Abbas’s demands or whether the U.S. would support a unity government. Although Abbas indicated that a unity government would be indispensible for Palestinian cohesion, the U.S. continued to reject this concept as long as it included Hamas, which the U.S. classified as a terrorist organization.

Rice’s Second Trip in 2007 to the Holy Land

Rice returned to Ramallah on February 18, 2007 for a meeting with Olmert and Abbas. She again hoped to set the stage for eventual negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians (Nurnberger 2008, 75). Abbas, however, wanted to elaborate on the Mecca Agreement brokered by King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. The agreement was designed to create a Palestinian unity government between Hamas and Fatah factions. The two parties would jointly govern the Palestinian territories, with Cabinet offices divided among the various Palestinian factions (Ibid). Like the previous government, Ismail
Haniya from *Hamas* would head the unity government, while Abbas would remain President of the Palestinian Authority.

The U.S. had mixed reactions toward the concept of a unity government. In fact, “the US State department thanked King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia for brokering the deal, but stopped short of welcoming it” (British Broadcast Company News 2007b). To the U.S. government’s disappointment, *Hamas* would have gained substantial political power with the formation of a unity government. David Aaron Miller poignantly wrote: “. . . *Hamas* became a new and permanent reality in Palestinian governance and a factor in any effort to launch Israel-Palestinian negotiations” (Miller 2008, 357).

Essentially, the U.S. government had a dilemma on how to deal with *Hamas*. On one hand, the U.S. government would not accept or negotiate with the organization because of their terrorist acts and deep ties with Iran. On the other hand, the U.S. would not dismiss the results of the elections that gave *Hamas* the majority of the seats in the legislative branch because the elections had been called for by the Bush administration. Rather than dealing with the dilemma, the administration ignored *Hamas*, focused its efforts on supporting Abbas and hoped that the *Hamas* question would resolve itself.

**Rice’s Third Trip in 2007 to the Holy Land**

Rice returned to the Middle East in March for another round of shuttle diplomacy. During her meeting with Abbas in Ramallah, Rice and Abbas discussed Israeli settlements, the relative calmness between Israelis and Palestinians since the last time they met and efforts to revive the Arab Peace Plan. Rice told reporters that the main purpose for this visit was “. . . to begin to establish in parallel [ , ] a common agenda to
move forward toward the establishment of a Palestinian state . . .” (U.S. Department of State Bureau of Public Affairs 2007h).

Two days later, Rice met with Olmert and Abbas together. Again, her goal was to discuss how best to move the peace process forward in an effort to build on Bush’s vision of a two-state solution. Rice later announced that the three parties had agreed to a proposal to accelerate the peace process through several means. First, Olmert and Abbas agreed to meet biweekly to discuss current issues, as well as details on how to establish a permanent Palestinian state based on the principles in the Roadmap. Second, Rice made a commitment to meet with the two leaders periodically, as well as to seek assistance from members of the international community. Third, Rice assigned U.S. Army Lieutenant General Keith Dayton to aid the two parties in developing ways to measure progress and make sure they moved in the right direction.

During the press conference, Rice explained that this meeting was different from the previous session because she saw “...[a] renewed desire to see a resolution of that conflict, and that has been building over now a period of years” (U.S. Department of State Bureau of Public Affairs 2007e). However, Rice failed to specify what kind of progress Dayton was going to measure and what exactly constituted progress. Additionally, she did not state whether Dayton would have any political power to force the parties to meet and to adhere to their promises.

Olmert and Abbas’s First Biweekly Meeting

Olmert and Abbas held their first biweekly meeting on April 15, 2007. They discussed border crossings, smuggling across the Egyptian border, prisoner exchanges,
and travel restrictions in the West Bank and between the West Bank and Gaza. The Bush administration felt the first biweekly meeting was a noteworthy milestone because for the first time since Bush became president, the leaders from the two sides spoke about significant issues. Government officials in the Holy Land, however, had mixed reactions to the meeting. “Saeb Erekat, a senior adviser to Abbas, [and chief negotiator for the Palestinians] said: ‘We should not expect this one meeting to perform miracles’” (AlJazeera 2007). In contrast, Israeli Deputy Defense Minister, Ephraim Sneh “. . . stated that just the agreement to meet in itself was important” (Ibid). Hamas downplayed the meeting stating it was “. . . useless and a “photo opportunity”” (Ibid). The lack of consensus on the significance of the meeting underscored just how tough negotiations were going to be between the two parties.

The Winogard Report

Two weeks after Abbas and Olmert’s first biweekly meeting, a commission headed by retired Israeli Justice Eliyahu Winogard released an interim report, commonly known as the “Winogard Report,” assessing how the Israeli government handled the 2006 Lebanon War. The report concluded that the Israeli government mishandled the conflict because the Israeli military was inadequately prepared for the undertaking; the Olmert administration made the decision to go to war too quickly; the reserve troops were not activated on time; and the Israeli Defense Forces overwhelmingly used air defense units rather than more infantry and armor units. Due in part to the release of the report, Olmert’s political capital began to decline. Olmert was so weakened by this report that Livni even asked Olmert to resign. While the findings in the Winogard Report helped to
erode Olmert’s political power, he refused to let it change his mandate, and he continued to govern as the Israeli Prime Minister. Nonetheless, Olmert’s weakness became an impediment to the peace process because he was no longer deemed credible to sell a peace deal with the Palestinians to the Israeli people.

**Bush’s Eight-Month Timetable for Peace Talks**

In another attempt to move the peace process forward, the Bush administration announced an eight-month timetable in May 2007, setting dates for when Israeli and Palestinian leaders would seek to complete steps to bolster formal prospects for peace talks. The plan was to be executed between mid-May and December, and serve as a supplement to the previous agreement brokered by Rice after the Israelis implemented the Disengagement Plan. Specifically, the timetable established when Washington envisioned Israel would allow Palestinian bus and truck convoys to travel between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. The Bush administration drew up the plan with the intention to “...create conditions for final status negotiations...” (Reuters 2007). The Israelis and the Palestinians reacted to the plan differently.

The Palestinians were hopeful that the plan would be successful, while the Israelis dismissed it as too stringent. “Some of these (steps) are difficult,” acknowledged Abbas aide Saeb Erekat. ‘But it’s the right approach.’ Israeli officials said most troubling for them was Washington’s decision to set specific dates for when Israel would begin allowing Palestinian bus and truck convoys to travel between the territories” (Ibid). Although the administration had good intentions with the launch of the plan, it had no
specific vision on how to implement it. As a result, the plan was not taken seriously by the Israelis or the Palestinians, and violence soon erupted in the region.

There was a major outbreak of violence between Hamas and Fatah supporters in the Gaza Strip in June 2007. Contrary to the Bush administration’s objectives, Hamas achieved military and political control of Gaza after the intense fighting. The Hamas victory in Gaza “. . . left well over 160 dead; over 800 more injured” (Nurnberger 2008, 81). It was clear that negotiations reached in the boardrooms were not translating to peace in the streets.

Palestinian Emergency Government

Four days after the takeover of Gaza, at the DOS’s daily press briefing on June 18, 2007, Rice announced that Abbas had formed an emergency government “. . . to replace the Hamas-Fatah coalition he dismantled after Hamas took control of Gaza by force” (Waked and Associated Press 2007). Abbas appointed Salam Fayyad as the new Prime Minister of the Palestinian National Authority to lead the emergency government. In addition, Rice declared that the United States would lift financial restrictions on the Palestinian government, which it had imposed after Hamas won the elections in January 2006. Furthermore, she pledged a contribution of $40 million to the United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA) for humanitarian assistance to Palestinians living in Gaza.

Considering that the U.S. was providing Israel with almost $3.0 billion in military aid annually, Palestinians did not consider $40 million as comparable, let alone, enough to rebuild an area that has been devastated by violence and poverty. To the Palestinians,
the United States’ unequal contributions of assistance to the parties underscored its “special relationship” with Israel. This led some Palestinians to question whether the U.S. could be the largest supporter of one side of the conflict and also serve as a fair mediator in an effort to resolve differences.

Meeting Between Abbas, Olmert and Mubarak

Rice presented both Olmert and the Palestinian Authority with a plan to engage in negotiations on June 25, 2007. She hoped that this plan was designed to produce a permanent peace agreement. Olmert rejected the plan because he believed that Abbas did not have the political capital to sell the arrangement to the Palestinian people. In order to improve Abbas’s standing among his people, Olmert stated that he would release 250 Fatah prisoners (New York Times 2007a). As a result, Israel released 250 Fatah security prisoners on July 8, 2007. The Fatah prisoners were released on the condition that they pledged not to commit any future crimes. The New York Times reported that Olmert made the decision in an effort to “. . . push forward the peace process . . .” (Ibid).

At the time, the Israeli government held about 10,000 Palestinian prisoners. The release of the prisoners was supposed to weaken Hamas, and signal Israel’s willingness to negotiate in good-faith, but more was needed to resolve the conflict between the two parties.

Bush’s Announcement of the International Peace Conference

To build on the good faith efforts being made by Abbas and Olmert, Bush discussed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in an address to the nation on July 16, 2007. In his address, the President called for an international meeting to resolve the Israeli-
Palestinian conflict. He reiterated his support for establishing a sovereign Palestinian state, as well as how he envisioned a two-state solution could be accomplished. To reach the two-state solution, Bush made four commitments: (1) $190 million in assistance to the Palestinians; (2) stronger diplomatic efforts to reach a two-state solution; (3) support for the work of the Quartet in rebuilding the Palestinian territories; and (4) organizing an international meeting to show support for a two-state solution (Bush 2007). Specifically, he called for an international meeting, “. . . of representatives from nations that support a two-state solution, reject violence, recognize Israel’s right to exist, and commit to all previous agreements between the parties” (Ibid). It was clear from his comments that Hamas would not be included as they repeatedly rejected these four provisions. He also requested assistance from the international community. Specifically, he requested that Jordan and Egypt open up trade with the Palestinians to create employment opportunities in the West Bank and Gaza respectively. Bush wanted increased Arab states involvement to reassure both Israelis and Palestinians. Bush also wanted the international community to show support for Abbas as a way to weaken Hamas, and to enhance the prospects for an agreement.

Robert Satloff, the Director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, wrote that Bush’s speech was remarkable in two ways: the “absence of significant reference to the Roadmap must be viewed as a major development [and] . . . gone is any reference to the idea of a Palestinian state within provisional borders” (Satloff 2007). In Satloff’s opinion, the dismissal of the Roadmap was a victory for Abbas because the “. . . improvements in quality of life, rule of law, and the effectiveness of Palestinian
governing institutions cannot substitute for the animating power of visible progress toward the political goal of statehood, i.e., the horizon” (Ibid). By putting the Roadmap on a back burner, Bush was pushing this new initiative forward.

His call for an international meeting was premature because the two parties were not near an agreement. For the U.S. efforts to produce a peace agreement within four months, Bush would have had to become even more personally involved in the issue and put the weight of the presidency behind this effort. Instead, he ordered Rice to organize the event, and called on members of the international community to show their support for the efforts being made by the Israelis and Palestinians.

Rice’s Fourth Trip in 2007 to the Holy Land

Two weeks after Bush’s call for an international conference, Rice traveled with Secretary of Defense Robert Gates on her fourth trip to the Holy Land in 2007 to sell American foreign policy. Rice’s main objective was to win support for the Annapolis Peace Conference. Gates committed to providing the Israeli government with an additional $30 billion over ten years, to ensure Israel’s security. In Egypt, Gates discussed a ten-year, $13 billion military assistance agreement with Egyptian government officials. Hamas did not receive the trip well.

An influential leader of Hamas, Mahmoud Zahar, assessed Rice and Gate’s trip as not serving the interests of the Palestinians. Dr. Zahar stated that “America is interested with these visits to give the impression that something can be given to the Palestinians.” He added that the Palestinian people could only lose from what he called this waste of time” (Cooper and Cloud 2007). Indeed, the trip was a failure. Rice was unable to obtain
Arab leaders’ support for the conference as none of the leaders publicly confirmed their attendance at the conference (Ibid).

**Olmert and Abbas’s Second Meeting**

Olmert once again met with Abbas on August 6, 2007 to discuss the creation of a Palestinian state. The meeting in Ramallah was the first time since the beginning of the *Al-Aqsa Intifada* that an Israeli head of state had visited Palestinian territory. According to the *New York Times*, the meeting was organized to test the collaboration between Israeli and Palestinian security forces around the West Bank that had been created after *Hamas* took over the Gaza Strip, and also as preparation for the Annapolis Peace Conference (*New York Times* 2007b).

During their meeting, Abbas and Olmert realized they had conflicting expectations for the Annapolis Peace Conference. The Palestinians wanted to discuss the final borders for a Palestinian state, a division of Jerusalem, the removal of Israeli settlements, and the future of Palestinian refugees. On the other hand, Olmert and his team of negotiators were more interested in discussing Palestinian aid, Israeli security concerns, and the future of the Palestinian state. The two parties could only agree that there should be a Palestinian state, but they did not agree in any of the specific terms needed to accomplish this goal.

With only three months before the conference, the two parties differed greatly in their expectations. While the Bush administration should have been more alarmed, it did not intervene or postpone the scheduled conference. Essentially, the administration lacked the diplomatic skills to make any significant progress. As Martin Indyk wrote,
“‘we don’t do diplomacy,’ one of Bush’s senior aides boasted to me at the time. ‘We do policy’” (Indyk 2009, 380)!

U.S. and Israel Sign a Memorandum of Understanding

In addition to disagreeing with the Israelis on practically all of the issues needed to end the conflict, the Palestinian Authority was weakened when the U.S. expanded its military aid to Israel. The U.S. signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Israel to increase Israel’s military aid by 25%. Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns signed the memorandum which committed the United States to give Israel $3.0 billion annually over ten years in a military assistance package (Ferzinger 2007). According to the agreement, “Israel was scheduled to receive the first payment of $2.6 billion in October 2008, with the package growing each year by about $150 million until it reached an annual $3.1 billion in 2011 . . .” (Ibid). The U.S. government’s argument for increasing Israel’s military aid was to keep Israel militarily ahead of its Arab counterparts.

Olmert and Abbas’s Third Meeting

To prepare for the November conference, Olmert and Abbas met again in Jerusalem at the end of August 2007. The two leaders discussed refugees and Jerusalem, as well as their desire to draft a memorandum to present at the Annapolis Peace Conference. In addition, the two leaders agreed to organize a security committee comprised of Israel, the United States, the Palestinian territories, and Egypt to prevent weapon smuggling from Sinai to Gaza.
The two parties believed that the first task was to develop proposals and lists of issues to be addressed. They felt that actual negotiations would come later. In order to proceed with the administration’s goal of a final statement, Israeli and Palestinian working group discussed the details of how to resolve the core issues. While these meetings designed to promote peace were taking place, Hamas militants fired rockets into southern Israel, wounding and killing Israeli civilians. Once again, violence trumped diplomacy and threatened to short circuit any progress toward lasting peace.

Rice’s Fifth Trip in 2007 to the Holy Land

Rice made her fifth trip in 2007 to the Holy Land in September. En route to Jerusalem, she explained to reporters that in addition to assessing the progress that had been made on negotiations, she was making the trip to discuss how to move the peace process forward. The following day, she held a press conference with Livni at which the Israeli Foreign Minister expressed support for the bilateral dialogue that had been taking place and stated that more work was needed for fruitful negotiations at the November meeting.

After meeting with Livni, Rice met with Abbas. The Palestinian Authority leader made several commitments: the Palestinians would continue to prepare for the November meeting; they would seek to create a framework agreement to forge solutions on borders, refugees, settlements and water; and continue meetings between Israeli-Palestinian working teams. Abbas also asked Rice for assistance to get Israel to freeze their settlements, stop building the security fence, end the roadblocks that were preventing Palestinians from developing economically and stop excavations near the Haram al-
Sharif in Jerusalem. Furthermore, Abbas requested that Israel release more Palestinian prisoners.

Rice declared that the purpose of the upcoming November meeting was to “... advance the cause of a Palestinian state. That is the only reason to have a meeting” (U.S. Department of State Bureau of Public Affairs 2007g). Although the main goal for the Annapolis Conference was to implement the two-state solution, much more work was needed by the three parties.

Rice’s Sixth Trip in 2007 to the Holy Land

Rice made another trip to the region on October 14, 2007 in a further effort to rally support for the Annapolis Conference, and to obtain updates on the bilateral meetings that had taken place. On her way to Jerusalem, Rice stated that she was working with the parties on several issues to get them to where they needed to be by the Annapolis Peace Conference. Rice declared, “... when we’re trying to build confidence of the parties in each other, when we’re trying to build confidence that a two-state solution can work, when we’re trying to build confidence that there are not going to be actions on the ground that prejudge the outcome, you know, it’s just a time to be extremely careful” (U.S. Department of State Bureau of Public Affairs 2007b).

To rally support for the conference, Rice stopped in Jerusalem, Ramallah, Cairo, and London. In Cairo she met with Hosni Mubarak, while in London she met with King Abdullah II of Jordan. At a press conference with Abbas in Ramallah, she announced that the international meeting would take place in Annapolis, Maryland, near Washington, D.C. She also stated that she would like to have a document prepared in advance of the
Annapolis Peace Conference that would help establish a way forward and implemented Phase I of the Roadmap. Rice declared that this document would not be the final resolution, but would be a means to help the two parties achieve the two-state solution.

Rice’s Seventh Trip in 2007 to the Holy Land

Rice made one last trip to Israel three weeks before the Annapolis Peace Conference. She hoped to gain additional insights on the progress that the Israelis and the Palestinians were making and to help the two parties toward reaching an agreement. At the press conference with Livni, a reporter asked what had changed since the last time Rice had been to the region. Livni answered that the two parties had been discussing the most important issues in preparation for Annapolis.

Despite all of these efforts and after months of discussions, surprisingly, three weeks before the two parties were supposed to present a final statement, the two parties had not agreed on anything, except that there should eventually be a Palestinian state.

Rice Meets with the Media Outlets About the Conference

Rice remained optimistic in the days leading up to Annapolis. During an interview with Steve Centanni from Fox News, two days after her trip to Israel, Rice stated that there was a window of opportunity for negotiation that needed to be seized (U.S. Department of State Bureau of Public Affairs 2007c).

The following day, Rice met with radio, television and wire reporters and defined the goals for the Annapolis Peace Conference as the “... launch of negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians for the establishment of a Palestinian state and therefore a two-state solution” (U.S. Department of State Bureau of Public Affairs 2007i). Rice also
stated that the purpose of the conference was to launch negotiations with the support of the international community, and for the two parties to continue their talks after the conference.

Rice had come a long way in the course of 2007. She had reduced her expectations from defining success at the Annapolis Peace Conference as resolving the conflict to seeing it as mainly launching negotiations to resolve the conflict. A key factor that helped to undermine the chances of resolving the conflict at Annapolis was that, at the time of the conference, all three leaders were politically weak. Both Olmert and Abbas lacked the political capital to sell a peace deal to their own constituencies. Their political weakness, along with Bush’s lame-duck status and low approval rating in the U.S. would greatly contribute to the failure of the Annapolis Peace Conference to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
CHAPTER 3

HOW THE ANNAPOLIS CONFERENCE BURNED ON THE LAUNCHPAD

For the first time in seven years, the Bush administration—the secretary of state really—seemed to be interested in testing whether Israelis, Palestinians, and Arabs were ready to make key decisions.

—Miller The Too Much Promised Land: America’s Elusive Search for Arab-Israeli Peace

Expectations for the Conference

Leading up to the conference, the three main parties expressed conflicting expectations for the conference. The United States hoped that the Israeli and Palestinians would be able to develop a formal agreement to present at the conference. The DOS Spokesman, Sean McCormack, stated that the “Annapolis Conference will signal broad international support for the Israeli and Palestinian leaders courageous efforts, and will be a launching point for negotiations leading to the establishment of a Palestinian state and the realization of Israeli-Palestinian peace” (U.S. Department of State Office of the Spokesman 2007).

On the other hand, leading up to Annapolis, Israelis expected “. . . to reach an understanding on the widest possible common ground in the time available” (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2007c). Rather than developing a formal statement prior to the conference, the Olmert administration saw the Annapolis Conference as a starting point leading to negotiations that would take place after the conference. Olmert repeated his view that it was imperative that the Palestinians commit to renouncing terrorism as stipulated in the Roadmap. He committed Israel to fulfilling its part of Phase I of the
Roadmap, but stressed that the rockets being fired into Israel from Gaza remained an obstacle and those continued attacks had to cease. Israel was dedicated to protecting its citizens; therefore, Olmert defined potential success at the Annapolis Conference as reaching a two-state solution without compromising Israel’s security. Furthermore, Israel hoped that the international community would support the two parties’ efforts towards peace negotiations and not stipulate conditions for negotiations. At the conference, Israel hoped “that each of the leaders and involved parties would address all the vital components of this crucial opportunity for peace, facing the risks with courage and determination, and proceeding toward the dream of peace with fortitude and resolve” (Ibid).

In contrast to the Israelis, the Palestinians “…sought a detailed plan and timetable for concluding and implementing a final status agreement” (Quarterly Update on Conflict 2008, 125). In addition, Mahmoud Abbas wanted a commitment from the Israelis to accept a two-state solution. Olmert responded that the Israelis would accept “…two states for two people” (Quarterly Update on Conflict 2008, 126).

Although the Palestinians wanted specifics while Israelis wanted to keep the potential agreement broad, the two parties decided to send their negotiating teams to Washington on 19 November in the hope that it might be possible to eliminate their differences and reach an expansive agreement that might secure broad support from the Arab states. While in Washington, the working teams were directed by Bush to develop a joint statement for the conference. During this process, Bush commented that the two parties needed to iron out their differences on their own and the United States would not
interfere. The Israelis wanted the Palestinians to renounce violence before Israelis addressed final status as stated in Phase I of the Roadmap. Rice convinced Israel to eliminate this precondition.

A week before the conference began, the two parties still disagreed on a number of issues including Israel’s definition of Israel as the home of Jews and Palestine as the home of Palestinians; Israel’s reference to Palestinians’ use of “terrorism”; the Palestinians’ desire to establish a specific timeline for implementation of a peace agreement, and the Palestinians’ endorsement of the Arab Peace Plan. The Palestinians wanted the Israelis to agree on the Arab Peace Plan, specifically its provision dealing with a solution to the refugee issue based on the 1948 United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 197. That resolution states that Palestinian refugees have the right to return to their homes and neighborhoods as soon as possible. Those refugees who cannot return home because of loss or damage of property, should be financially compensated. Under international law, the governments or equities responsible for the loss should provide the compensation (United Nations General Assembly Resolution 197, 1948). The fact that each party had different objectives for the Annapolis Peace Conference should have alerted the administration that the likelihood of success was very low. These factors, however, did not stop the administration from continuing to organize for the conference.

Preparations

Together with the White House, the DOS sent out the invitations to attend the Annapolis Peace Conference on November 20, 2007. The Bush administration invited the members of the Quartet, the Arab League Follow-on Committee, the Group of 8, the
permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, and other important international actors. Specifically, the invited parties were: Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Algeria, the Arab League Secretary General, Bahrain, Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, Egypt, the European Union Commission, European Union High Representative, European Union President Portugal, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Italy, Jordan, Japan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mauritania, Morocco, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Poland, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Syria, Quartet Special Envoy Tony Blair, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, the United Nations Secretary General, and Yemen (U.S. Department of State Office of the Spokesman 2007). The International Monetary Fund and World Bank were invited as observers. The DOS also announced that Condoleezza Rice would host a dinner preceding the conference at which Bush would deliver an address. The DOS also confirmed that George W. Bush and Ehud Olmert would speak at the conference.

To gather Arab support for the conference, Olmert reached out to Hosni Mubarak on the same day. Olmert visited Mubarak in Sharm el-Sheikh and asked him to persuade Arab leaders to participate in the Annapolis conference. Additionally, Olmert asked Mubarak to convey this message when the Arab League convened in Cairo on November 22-23, 2007. After meeting with Olmert, Mubarak endorsed the Annapolis Peace Conference.

Obstacles

Despite a number of good faith initiatives for peace, a series of obstacles still stood in the way of success at the conference. The first concern was that many of the
leaders who were invited to attend the conference remained skeptical. King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia was one the first to pronounce his skepticism of the conference, on behalf of the Arab states. He stated that the Annapolis Peace Conference would be another photo opportunity and no real progress was likely. Bush addressed his concerns by personally calling King Abdullah and assuring him that serious talks would take place after the conference and that the United States would assist whenever the two parties were deadlocked.

As a condition for their attendance at the conference, members of the Arab League wanted Israel to pull back to borders that existed before the Six Day War of 1967, which was stipulated in the Arab Peace Plan. Tony Blair spoke with members of the Arab League, which subsequently led to the Arab League’s endorsement of the conference. Most members of the Arab League ultimately sent representatives to Annapolis.

Before Syria agreed to send a representative, however, its government wanted to make sure that the future of the Golan Heights would be on the table. Additionally, Syria wanted to make sure that it was invited to the conference on its own, not because it was a member of the Arab League’s Follow-up Committee. Experts were skeptical about Syria’s attendance because Syria was perceived as rejecting the entire peace process due to its alliance with Hamas and Iran. In contrast, “Syria appeared at Annapolis mostly because it was its first opening to the Western states and to the moderates in the Arab world in a while. Syria considers the Western camp to be a more beneficial long-term affiliation than its current identification with the Iranian camp” (Liel 2007). In addition, Bush addressed Syria’s concerns by assuring them that Golan Heights would be
discussed at the conference. As a symbol of partial acceptance, Syria sent its Deputy Foreign Minister, Faysal Mekdad.

Another impediment to the success of the Annapolis conference was the “spoilers”, most notably Iranian president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Hamas. Ahmadinejad dismissed the conference, when he stated in a meeting with Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Mouallem that “apart from hurting the Palestinians, this conference will accomplish nothing” (Cohen 2007). With this comment, Ahmadinejad hoped to not only discourage the Palestinians from attending the conference, but also deter Arab states in the region. Hamas also opposed the conference. For example, Mussa Abu Marzuq, a top aide to the chief of the Palestinian Hamas movement Khaled Meshaal, stated, “this conference wants to destroy the Palestinian issue. This conference will fail” (Agence France Presse 2007). Hamas leaders also asked Arab states to boycott the Annapolis Peace Conference. Ismail Haniya, Hamas leader in Gaza, even tried to dissuade Egypt and Saudi Arabia from attending the conference.

Spoilers were not only those who opposed the conference from the outside, but ones who opposed the peace negotiations from within the government. “Spoilers exist on both sides of the conflict and include the right-wing settler group of Israel, with their expanding programs in the West Bank and East Jerusalem . . .” (Milton-Edwards 2009, 203). Right-wing Israelis are just as destructive as right-wing Palestinians to peace negotiations because neither wanted negotiations to succeed, and both have a tremendous amount of political power. As for their political power, Israelis cannot govern without a coalition composed of various right-wing political parties. For the Palestinians, Hamas
was legitimately elected to hold the majority in the Legislative Council, yet was widely perceived as an extremist faction. Although the spoilers tried to discourage representatives from attending the conference, they were unsuccessful.

Public Opinion

Leading up to the conference, public opinion polls showed that Israelis had mixed thoughts about the conference. Two major Israeli newspapers, Yedioth Abaronot and Ma’ariv, polled Israelis on what they thought about the conference and the two leaders involved. Yedioth Abaronot found that most Israelis were optimistic of the outcome of the conference. Their poll showed that “69 percent of Israelis supported the conference while 27 percent thought it should not go ahead. Their poll also showed that 71 percent believed that the Annapolis Peace Conference would lead to progress in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict” (Jewish Telegraphic Agency 2007).

The Ma’ariv poll, on the other hand, found that “53 percent of those polled thought Olmert was only attending the conference to boost his domestic agenda, while 38 percent stated Olmert was going to the peace conference for peace. Only 48 percent also thought that Abbas wanted coexistence rather than destruction and 46 percent replied negatively” (Ibid).

Palestinian polls showed that they were more hopeful for the conference. A day before the commencement of the conference, on November 25, 2007, the Palestinian Center for Public Opinion published their findings on what Palestinians’ expected of the conference. The polls found that more than “67 percent of Palestinians supported their government’s participation in the Annapolis Peace Conference” (Palestinian Center for
Public Opinion 2007). However, only “58 percent believed that Olmert was genuinely seeking peace with the Palestinians” (Ibid). The poll also found that “54.4 percent of Palestinians believed that if the Annapolis Peace Conference failed; it would lead to instability and turmoil in the region” (Ibid). With mixed feelings among the Israelis and Palestinians, it was no surprise that the conference didn’t make the breakthrough that many had hoped.

The Conference

The Annapolis Peace Conference took place at the DOS in Washington and at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis on November 26-27, 2007. Representatives from over forty different countries, organizations, and political entities attended. Of all the parties invited, only Iraq, Libya, and Kuwait did not send representative to attend the conference. Due to Iraq’s internal struggle to define their policies and to shape their new democracy, “. . . sitting down with Israelis was only one of many things Iraqis can’t agree on . . .” (Friedman 2007). As for the Kuwaitis, they “. . . asked not to be invited” (Ibid). It is unknown why Libya did not send its representative to the Annapolis Peace Conference, but one could hypothesize that it was due to the fact that Libya does not recognize Israel and “the Libyan leader has long been one of the harshest critics of Israel . . .” (Reuters 2009).

As representatives arrived on November 26, 2007, Bush met with Olmert and Abbas to discuss the final statement that the two parties were supposed to have put together prior to the conference so that it would be presented the following day. Instead of assisting the two parties write the final statement, he left it up to the negotiating teams
to decide the content. It is likely that had President Bill Clinton been involved, he would have probably personally talked to the two leaders until an agreement was reached. Unfortunately for the success of the conference, Olmert still insisted that Palestinians renounce terrorism and for Arab states to recognize Israel before Israelis dismantled settlements.

That evening, Rice hosted a dinner for the guests in the Benjamin Franklin Room at the DOS in Washington DC. At the dinner, she thanked her guests for attending and especially welcomed Abbas and Olmert. She acknowledged their courage for attending the conference and working towards peace. She went on to stress that she looked forward to the international community’s support for the bilateral process. After the gathering, work began on negotiations. According to the *Journal of Palestine Studies*, the negotiating teams stayed up until four that morning trying to finalize a joint statement, but were unable to complete the task (Quarterly Update on Conflict 2008, 128).

The plenary session took place at the United States Naval Academy’s Memorial Hall in Annapolis, Maryland on November 27, 2007. Bush opened the conference, followed by remarks by Olmert, Abbas, and Rice. President Bush’s speech included the Joint Understanding statement that the Israelis and the Palestinians had endorsed earlier. The Joint Understanding statement had only been ratified shortly before Bush presented it. His aides had not been able to brief him properly with lessons on the pronunciation of key players’ names. As a result, Bush read the Joint Understanding from a paper in front of him and mispronounced both Olmert’s and Abbas’s names during the presentation (Ibid).
The Joint Understanding was the key document to come out of the conference. The two parties committed themselves to ending the bloodshed, suffering, and the conflict between them. In an effort to accomplish this, they committed to six points:

1) launching good faith negotiations to create a peace treaty to resolve all outstanding issues as specified in previous agreements;

2) engaging in continuous and vigorous negotiations that shall lead to an agreement before the end of 2008;

3) creating a steering committee that met continuously;

4) holding the steering committee’s first meeting on December 12, 2007;

5) meeting biweekly to follow up on negotiations; and

6) providing their assistance to the process in fulfilling their obligations as stated in the Roadmap. (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2007b)

The steering committee was created to develop a working plan for the two parties, establish and oversee the work of negotiation teams, and to address all issues. The committee was headed by one lead representative from each party. It had previously been created in September 2007 and was led by Livni and Ahmad Qurei, negotiator of the Palestinian Authority. In addition to the steering committee, the United States was appointed to “... follow up, monitor, and judge the implementation of the Roadmap” (Ibid). The lack of a mechanism to perform its assigned duty contributed to the failure of the Annapolis Peace Conference.

After reading the Joint Understanding, Bush remarked that both parties wanted peace and stability for their people and that a viable Palestinian state was intrinsically important to achieve these objectives. Then, Bush provided four reasons why it was the
right time to launch negotiations at the Annapolis Peace Conference. First, he said, the two parties had leaders determined to achieve peace.

Second, he asserted that changes were taking place in the Middle East and the terror and violence preached by Palestinian extremists was “. . . the greatest obstacle to a Palestinian state” (Ibid). The changes in the region included Iraq developing into a democratic state, which would set the example of how democracy was possible for other peoples in the Middle East. Bush went on to state that if the Palestinians failed to democratize, it would represent a failure for the whole region. Iraq, in fact, was having a hard time adopting democracy and was not a good example for how democracy was supposed to work in the Middle East. While citizens went to vote, others acted violently. During elections in Iraq in 2005, “a handful of poll centres were targets of mortar rounds and there were two reports of gunfire” (Jabr 2005). The trouble was that Bush had always been very naïve about democracy; he thought it would solve all the problems in the region. David Aaron Miller wrote, “Tony Zinni mused ‘I think the president fell in love with the idea that if you could fairy-dust democracy, you could have the beginning of the solutions of your problems, including Arab-Israel’” (Miller 2008, 348).

Third, Bush stated that the members of the international community had experienced enough violence in the last six years to understand the urgency in supporting peace negotiations. Specifically, Bush stated that Arab countries should play a major role by supporting negotiations and suggested they normalize relations with Israel, support the government of Abbas, and assist the Palestinian National Authority.
Fourth, Bush also stated that the international community had the responsibility to support the Palestinian National Authority. As a result, Bush committed the United States to helping the Palestinians build democratic institutions and ensure that Israel was protected as the homeland of the Jewish people. Moreover, Bush committed the United States to assisting the Israelis and Palestinians reach peace negotiations by the end of his presidency.

Bush’s speech was followed by remarks by Olmert. He stated that it was time to end the suffering and work for peaceful solutions. He wanted to cooperate in finding the proper framework for a Palestinian state that both parties could endorse. He also declared that further negotiations would take place in the Holy Land throughout 2008. He stressed that he was prepared to deal with the core issues and negotiations would be based on United Nations Security Resolutions 242 and 338, the Roadmap, and the April 14th letter that Bush wrote to Ariel Sharon. Resolution 242 calls for Israel to withdraw from territory occupied during the Six Day War of 1967, acknowledgement of sovereignty for all states in the region, a “just settlement for the refugee problem, guaranteed freedom for the use of international waterways, and political independence for all states in the region” (United Nations Security Council 1967). Resolution 338 was passed after the 1973 Yom Kippur War and mandated that the parties enter into a cease-fire and apply the provisions in Resolution 242 that had been passed in 1967. Olmert also affirmed his support for a two-state solution consisting of a democratic Jewish state of Israel and a viable Palestinian state.
Olmert then remarked that negotiations with the Palestinians were part of a bigger picture to establish peace with all Arab states. He said there were no Muslim nations with whom he did not want to establish diplomatic relations and further asked Arab states to end their boycott and alienation of Israel. Furthermore, he stated that while many differences separated Israel and its neighbors, they still shared common concerns, such as opposing the rise of religious fanaticism and national extremism. Additionally, he encouraged nations to trade with Israel because Israel had many commodities to offer.

Olmert was followed by Abbas, who began by remarking that the city of Annapolis symbolized freedom, a value the Palestinians strongly desired. He thanked Rice for her efforts, and for the presence of so many countries, which underscored their support for negotiations. He stated that the Arab Peace Plan was “a bold strategic plan that aims [at] changing the nature of relations in the region and to usher in a new era there” (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2007a). The Annapolis Conference was a great opportunity to launch negotiations, he said, because the chance may never reoccur. He went on to say that the region stood at a crossroads, pre-Annapolis and post-Annapolis. There needed to be hope among the people, he said, to deter extremism. He pledged that Israelis and Palestinians would begin negotiations on the core issues the day after the conference ended and stressed that the future of Jerusalem would be a critical component of any peace accord. Abbas demanded that Israel end the occupation of East Jerusalem and the West Bank, allowing East Jerusalem to become the Palestinian capital. With East Jerusalem as the capital of the Palestinian state, Abbas claimed that Palestinians would be better able to establish relations with West Jerusalem, which is governed by Israelis.
Furthermore, he thanked Blair for his assistance in rebuilding Palestinian institutions, and expressed his appreciation to members of the international community who had helped the Palestinians.

Abbas told Palestinians who were refugees or part of the Diaspora that he sympathized with their suffering, to have confidence, and to not lose hope. He demanded independence and the right to self-determination for the Palestinian people. Abbas ended his speech with a message of hope for peace (Ibid).

After the three leaders delivered their speeches and set the hopeful tone for the conference, Rice thanked all the parties for attending and presented the agenda for the rest of the Conference. Once again, she stated that the goal of the conference was to add momentum to the peace process designed to promote a two-state solution to the conflict. She also stated that the international community would support the two parties as they “. . . move forward together as partners” (U.S. Department of State Bureau of Public Affairs 2007f).

Following her remarks, the invitees heard speeches from the three remaining members of the Quartet: Russia’s Sergey Lavrov, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, and the European Union’s Javier Solana. Then, all the parties participated in the plenary sessions, a part of the conference where representatives formed into smaller groups to discuss specific topics pertaining to peace negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians. Proceeding the plenary sessions, Rice announced that the next step in the peace process was the Quartet’s meeting on December 17, 2007, followed by the Paris Donor’s Conference, sponsored by the French government. While representatives inside
showed their support for negotiations, demonstrators outside had mixed feelings about the conference.

**Demonstrations Outside the U.S. Naval Academy**

Hundreds of demonstrators protested outside the U.S. Naval Academy while diplomats and distinguished guests attended the Annapolis Peace Conference inside. Some people went to show their support for negotiations, while others denounced this approach. The Associated Press reported that the demonstrators included members from organized groups such as Americans for a Safe Israel, Shalom International, Americans for Peace Now, and Ameinu (Associated Press 2007). Americans for a Safe Israel and Shalom International went to show their opposition for the peace conference as they opposed the creation of a Palestinian state. As proponents of peace between the two parties, Americans for Peace Now and Ameinu went to support the Annapolis Peace Conference. Demonstrations not only took place in Annapolis, but also in the Holy Land.

**Demonstrations in the Palestinian Territories**

Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators protested against the Annapolis Peace Conference in Hebron, Ramallah, Nablus, Bethlehem, the Gaza Strip, Lebanon, and Jenin. These protesters were worried that Abbas would make concessions that would further deteriorate the quality of life in the territories. According to a native Palestinian writer, Samah Jabr, the protests were due to “. . . the concern that the conference is laying the ground for an outcome that the Palestinian people cannot and will not accept” (Jabr 2008). Several Islamic political groups, including Hamas, the Islamic Liberation Party, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine organized the protests. They had
sent out invitations encouraging protesters to participate in a parade against the conference. Preventing an outbreak of violence in the West Bank “the Palestinian government in Ramallah had prohibited people from congregating and demonstrating” (Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center 2007). As a result of the demonstrations, there was a brutal clash between dissenters and armored Palestinian security forces seeking to prevent them from demonstrating. According to the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, one Palestinian demonstrator died as a result of the quarrel between Palestinians and the security forces (Ibid). The violent protests in the Holy Land were a world apart from the images of the three world leaders negotiating in Annapolis.

The Day After

Bush met with Olmert and Abbas at the White House the day after the Annapolis Peace Conference ended. The meeting was designed to build on the momentum created by the conference. Bush stated that what had been achieved at the conference was important, but what was to be accomplished in the future was even more important. That was Bush’s way of saying he had completed his duties and it was up to the two parties to resolve the conflict. Bush’s weak actions left doubts among experts as to the role the U.S. government was going to play until the end of the administration. In Miller’s opinion, “but nowhere were the doubts greater then when it came to America’s role” (Miller 2008, 360).

On the same day, Rice announced the appointment of General Jim Jones as the “Special Envoy” for Middle East Security. General Jones had served as the Commander of the Marine Corps and as Supreme Allied Commander of the North Atlantic Treaty
Organization (NATO). While serving as Commander of the U.S. European Command, Israel was included in his area of responsibility, which allowed him to become very familiar with the issues in the region. His mission as Special Envoy was to advance the U.S. government’s objective of resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by working with both parties to strengthen their security and to engage with key countries in the Middle East to support Middle East security. Moreover, he was assigned to “... design and implement a new U.S. government plan for our security assistance to the Palestinian Authority and our security cooperation with the Israeli and Palestinian governments” (U.S. Department of State Bureau of Public Affairs 2007a).

Assessment of the Conference

Analysts differed in their assessment of the conference, although all agreed the conference did not achieve the breakthrough all had hoped for. In Martin Indyk’s opinion “given Bush’s detached approach, it was baffling that in November 2007 he should have reversed almost seven years of virtual neglect and convened an international conference in Annapolis to launch a new effort to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict” (Indyk 2009, 358).

Daniel Kurtzer and Scott Lasensky, on the other hand, had a more positive view, stating that “despite the moderate success of Annapolis, the Bush 43 administration continued to signal that it would not go beyond a facilitation role, and that Israelis and Palestinians were expected to reach key understandings on their own” (Kurtzer and Lasensky 2008, 71).
According to Tom Lantos, Chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs “Annapolis produced some progress—one might even say success. There was an exceptionally positive atmosphere between the two principle parties, Israel and the Palestinian Authority. Attendance, especially from Arab and Muslim minority counties, was impressive” (U. S. House 2007, 2). Although the presence of a diverse group was a sign of progress, perhaps Lantos would have liked to have seen further negotiations on the core issues.

Days after the Conference, Dennis Ross was invited to testify before the House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs. In his testimony, Ross assessed the conference as, “Annapolis was an impressive event. It was an impressive event in terms of demonstrating that the international community was prepared to support the resumption of an Israeli-Palestinian peace process” (U. S. House 2007, 8). Still, he criticized the conference for setting goals that were too ambitious and writing a Joint Understanding statement that was too general. Based on his experience as top negotiator during the administrations of George H. W. Bush and Clinton, he explained that there was a critical problem with implementing what had been decided at the conference. Ross poignantly stated that “each side defines their obligations minimally and the other side’s obligations, maximally” (U. S. House 2007, 11). For example, Israelis and Palestinians have different interpretations on the meaning of “a freeze on of settlement activity” (Ibid). The Palestinians interpret a freeze on of settlement activity as not building anywhere beyond the Green Line, in Jerusalem or in the West Bank, and also not providing subsidies to settlers. On the other hand, Israelis interpret a freeze on of
settlement activity as ensuring that they “. . . won’t expand existing settlements outward” (Ibid). This lack of agreement makes it extremely difficult to tackle more sensitive subjects, such as refugees and Jerusalem.

Ross was correct in stating that the main problem between the two parties was their interpretation of what was expected of them. Not agreeing on the basics makes it difficult to discuss the core issues. Nevertheless, he stated the difficulties should not stop future negotiations (Ibid). Following the conference, the hard work began to implement what had been agreed upon at Annapolis.

The Aftermath

Even though the two parties had agreed to meet shortly after the conference, Abbas and Olmert missed their first scheduled biweekly meeting on December 12, 2007. Instead, they held their first meeting on December 28, 2007, which was the date that had originally been set for their second biweekly meeting after Annapolis. The British Broadcast News reported that negotiations had stalled because the two parties had different interpretations on the meaning of a freeze on of settlement activity (British Broadcast Company 2007a). The Palestinian Authority had asked Israelis to stop the building of homes for Israelis in East Jerusalem. In response, Israel stated that the “. . . hundreds of new homes in the Har Homa settlement are within existing boundaries” (Ibid). From their disagreements, it seemed that the Annapolis Peace Conference had not accomplished its provisions and the two parties had returned to the positions they held before the conference.
Paris Donor’s Conference

At the request of Abbas, the French government hosted the Paris Donor’s Conference on December 17, 2007 to raise financial and political support for the Palestinian Authority. The event was launched by French president Nicolas Sarkozy, chaired by Norwegian Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Store, and co-chaired by Blair and French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner. Salam Fayyad, the Palestinian Prime Minister asked the international community to donate “...$5.6 billion in aid over three years with 70 percent first allocated to reducing the deficit and the remaining 30 percent going towards development projects” (Black 2007). Delegations from eighty-seven countries attended the conference and pledged “...$7.4 billion to support Palestinian institution-building and economic recovery for the next three years” (France Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs 2007). The U.S. pledged to donate “$555 million” to the Palestinian Authority, but “...no direct aid was approved” by Congress (Quarterly Update on Conflict 2008, 162). This is a prime example of how the Bush administration made a promise and didn’t follow through on it.

While countries pledged financial assistance to help Palestinians, the violence in the Holy Land continued. Between December 12 and 16 2007, three Israelis were injured by Palestinian rockets. Consequently, the Israeli Defense Forces “...retaliated with air strikes on Gaza on 12/13 and 12/17 assassinating 7 Jihad members, 1 Aqsa Martyrs Brigades (AMB) member, killing 1 bystander and wounding 5 Palestinian children” (Quarterly Update on Conflict 2008, 132). It is perhaps an ironic commentary that even
while diplomats were negotiating to resolve the conflict and for money to improve Palestinian lives, both Palestinians and Israelis were getting killed and wounded.

Negotiations are counterproductive when events on the ground do not change, as the purpose of negotiations is to improve people’s lives. Government officials do not negotiate with each other to add to the suffering of their people. Instead they negotiate with the intention of improving their citizens’ political, economic, and social security. Although a citizen’s quality of life may decline as a consequence of negotiations, it was probably not the intention of the negotiators. For example, the Israeli and Palestinians signed the Oslo Accords in 1993, which was supposed to improve the lives of Palestinians and Israelis. Still, in the years following the signing of the Accords, Palestinians began an Intifada and Israelis launched Operation Cast Lead, both costing thousands of lives (Milton-Edwards 2009, 155). Furthermore, agreements can never truly succeed until the people and their governments have the same goals and objectives, when they are fighting for the same cause.

Bush’s First Trip to the Holy Land

A day after the Paris Donor’s Conference, Bush announced he would make his first trip to Israel and the Palestinian territory since becoming president. His trip would assess progress that had been made since the Annapolis Peace Conference and encourage reconciliation between the two parties. Miller poignantly assessed the announcement, “as important a step as this was, it could not allay the uncertainties about his commitment to diplomacy” (Miller 2008, 360). Bush still had not convinced his critics that he was committed to resolving the conflict.
Nevertheless, Ross gave the president a benefit of the doubt. Before Bush left for his trip, Ross wrote him a letter that laid out a blueprint for what Bush should do on his trip. Ross suggested he “focus on a series of small-bore initiatives so some early signs of progress might become possible” (Ross 2008, 2). For example, Israelis should freeze settlement expansion close to Palestinian cities and Palestinians should stop agitating in the media, schools, and mosques. Although Ross had the right idea, his suggestions fell on deaf ears.

While in the Jerusalem, Bush met with Olmert and Israeli President Shimon Peres. In addition, Bush traveled to the West Bank to meet with Abbas and Fayyad. During his visit, Bush reiterated that an agreement should be reached by the time he left office. Bush also visited Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt. His trip was part of a larger agenda to “...reaffirm American security commitment to its allies, discuss Iraq, Iran, promote democracy, combat terrorism and extremism, regional security, economic ties and relations with the United States” (U.S. White House 2007b). Although well-intentioned, many analysts criticized Bush’s trip as being insufficient. For example, Indyk wrote that:

His failure to achieve this objective did much to strengthen the argument of extremists, while undermining the credibility of all those involved in the Annapolis process. Hezbollah’s Hassann Nasrallah, and Hamas’ Khaled Mashal had crafted a message that resonated on the Arab street “our way works,” they would repeatedly proclaim, pointing out that violence, terrorism, and defiance were the only effective ways to provide the Palestinians with justice and revenge and the Arab and Muslim world with dignity. (Indyk 2009, 388-389)

Additionally, former President Jimmy Carter assessed Bush’s trip as “there was no discernable positive impact on Israel or its neighbors” (Carter 2009, 98). Carter’s
criticism of Bush’s trip was reflective of the tense relationship between the former
President and Bush’s administration.

Carter’s Meeting with Hamas’ Leaders

Carter and a group of prominent international leaders had formed a group called
“the Elders” in 2008. Their first trip was to the Middle East to assess how they could help
move the peace process forward. As they confirmed their itinerary with Egyptian
officials, “the Elders” were encouraged to also talk to the “spoilers” of the peace
negotiations. The Egyptian officials considered the “spoilers” to be Hamas, Hezbollah,
and Syria. As a result, in April 2008, Carter made a controversial trip to the Cairo, Syria,
and the West Bank to meet with leaders of Hamas. He made this trip because “a few facts
seemed obvious to us concerning the Israeli-Palestinian issues, the most notable being the
inescapable need for some kind of Hamas involvement” (Carter 2009, 97). While in the
region, he met with Mahmoud al-Zahar, Sayeed Siam, and Ahmed Yousef. Al-Zahar is a
surgeon and a co-founder of Hamas who is currently serving as foreign minister in the
government of Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh. Siam was the former interior minister in
the government of Haniyeh before he was killed during Israel’s invasion of Gaza in 2008.
Yousef is a senior political advisor to the Haniyeh-led government.

Carter’s trip was controversial because he ignored the administration’s boycott of
Hamas. The administration had classified Hamas as a terrorist organization, and
prohibited Americans from having contact with it. Specifically, “Ms. Rice told reporters
in Kuwait that ‘we counseled President Carter against going to the region and particularly
against having contacts with Hamas,’” (Weisman and Worth 2008). Conversely, in his
book, *We can have Peace in the Holy Land: a Plan that Works*, Carter explained the situation differently.

When he informed the DOS of his travel plans to the region and his proposed meetings with *Hamas*’ leaders, the Department only warned him that the trip could be unsafe. The Department never prohibited him from going to meet with *Hamas*’ leaders. Even though Carter was able to engage with leaders of *Hamas*, Olmert and his administration refused to meet with him because he met with leaders of *Hamas*. Nevertheless, Carter’s trip to the region was significant because he tried a different approach to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Additionally, Carter brought international media attention to the conflict. Furthermore, Carter’s meeting with *Hamas* was the last U.S. attempt to move the peace process forward during the Bush administration.

Before he left office, Bush revisited Israel once again, this time to celebrate Israel’s sixtieth anniversary in May 2008. Arabs were disappointed with the trip because Israel’s independence was also the anniversary of the *nakba*, the catastrophe, when the Israelis defeated the Arabs.

**The Last Attempt to Resolve the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**

In September 2008, Olmert met with Abbas and presented him with a plan to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and implement the two-state solution. Olmert offered Abbas approximately 94% of the West Bank, which would be controlled by the Palestinian Authority. In addition, Olmert offered that the Israeli government would accept a certain number of refugees every year for five years; Jerusalem would be divided
between the two parties and security issues would be discussed in more detail at a later date. Jerusalem would be divided along religious lines; what was Jewish would belong to Israel and what was Muslim would belong to the Palestinian Authority. Olmert required that 6.4% of the West Bank remain under Israeli control because a large number of Israelis lived in this part of the West Bank. Olmert offered that he would exchange the same amount of land from the state of Israel as it existed before 1967 to keep this 6.4% of the West Bank. While some refugees would be part of the five-year plan, others would be financially compensated for their loss of land. The five-year plan for refugees had a stipulation that assumed that at the end of the five years, there would be an end to the conflict and the claims.

Although this was Olmert’s best offer to resolve the conflict, Abbas did not respond. His lack of response was taken by the Israelis as a negative reply. In the same month, Olmert “. . . was forced to resign from his position because of unrelated allegations of corruption” (Indyk 2009, 387). Following Olmert’s resignation, Minister of Foreign Affairs Livni took over as acting Prime Minister of Israel. When she was unable to form a coalition government, elections were set for February 2009 (Nurnberger 2009).

**Operation Cast Lead**

In December 2008, just before Bush left the White House, Israel invaded the Gaza Strip in “Operation Cast Lead” in an effort to stop Palestinians in Gaza from firing rockets into Israel. For several years, Palestinians had continuously sent rockets into Israel randomly injuring and killing Israelis. The number of rockets fired into Israel had steadily increased after *Hamas* took over the Gaza Strip in June 2007 and continued until
the operation. The operation began with air strikes, which were followed by attacks by Israeli ground forces. It spanned more than three weeks and “. . . thirteen Israelis and almost 1,400 Gazans were killed . . .” in the war (*Arab Times* 2010). Most of Hamas’ infrastructure was destroyed as well as hospitals, schools, and homes.

At the end of Bush’s eight years as U.S. President, the administration had only managed to get the two parties to the negotiating table and commit themselves to promises that they could not keep. Although the Annapolis Peace Conference brought together an unprecedented amount of countries to support peace negotiations, it did not resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The conference left a feeling of more to be desired in all those concerned with a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the U.S. role in the conflict. On the other hand, the administration provided a few valuable lessons to future administrations on what not to do.
CHAPTER 4

THE COST OF RETROACTIVE DIPLOMACY: LESSONS LEARNED

After the Annapolis Peace Conference many analysts of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict speculated about what was going to happen next; was the conference truly the launch pad for peace negotiations between these two seemingly irreconcilable enemies? Most analysts thought the accomplishments of the conference were modest. Michael Oren, a noted historian and current Israeli Ambassador to the United States, wrote “. . . the chances for any progress emerging from Annapolis seem at best, remote” (Oren 2007). “But if Annapolis is to be an act of statecraft and not stagecraft, what happens after it will be far more important than what transpires at it” (Ross 2007a).

Unfortunately, the Annapolis Peace Conference did not resolve the major points of contention in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Nevertheless, the conference tangibly advanced the peace process slightly after a stall of more than seven years.

Some of the accomplishments of the Annapolis Peace Conference included: (1) Ehud Olmert and Mahmoud Abbas reiterated their commitment to achieving peace; (2) Israelis and Palestinians agreed that negotiations needed to lead to the creation of a Palestinian state; (3) Arab states joined western countries’ commitment to resist “extremism” in the Middle East. In addition, the conference brought together an unprecedented number of countries, 49, to support the revival of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Never before had so many Arab leaders shaken the hand of an Israeli leader. Yasir Abedrabou, Secretary-General of the Executive
Committee of the PLO stated, “Annapolis—I hope and believe—represents a new wind of change” (United Nations Department of Public Information 2007).

But why did the Annapolis Peace Conference ultimately fail to establish a durable peace? Many factors were at play in Annapolis, including (1) the George W. Bush administration’s lack of concern for the conflict during the President's first term; (2) the geopolitical fallout from the attacks on America on September 11, 2001; (3) lack of enforcement of Annapolis Peace Conference provisions; (4) missed diplomatic and political leverage opportunities; and finally (5) the political weakness of all three leaders during and after the Annapolis Peace Conference. These factors combined in what observers and analysts called a “perfect storm” of inaction allowed the triumph of the status quo. David Aaron Miller observed that Annapolis was somewhere “. . . well north of muddle through. It was not the result that the secretary had initially hoped to achieve—Israeli-Palestinian agreement in a document that would lay out agreed parameters on Jerusalem, borders, and refugees, to guide the negotiations” (Miller 2008, 359).

First, as soon as Bush became president, he insisted on a “hands off” approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He stated that it was up to the two parties to resolve the conflict and that his administration was not going to get involved. It was clear when Bush failed to appoint a Middle East envoy or to reappoint Ross to his position that he was going to take a different approach to the conflict from that of former President Clinton. In fact, Miller described Bush as having the “ABC Syndrome: anybody or anything but Clinton” (Miller 2008, 325). Since Clinton had spent so much time and energy on the Arab-Israeli conflict, Bush was not.
His closest counselors concurred:

Don [Rumsfeld], who’s a former negotiator, and used to talk about ‘so-called occupied territory . . . Cheney’s position was pretty well laid out. With these heavy hitters lined up against serious involvement, there wasn’t much to be gained from swimming upstream. Powell was the only advocate in the administration for doing anything on the Arab-Israeli issue. (Miller 2008, 330)

Powell attempted to get involved, but he did not have the support or the resources from the President. After his first trip to the Middle East, he also realized that a compromise between Ariel Sharon and Yasser Arafat was not going to occur. “[Colin] Powell’s first trip convinced him, rightly, that Arafat and Sharon were mountains that couldn’t be climbed” (Miller 2008, 331).

While Bush never appointed a Middle East envoy, he did try to compensate by sending several envoys to the region at different times: Anthony Zinni, John Wolf, Keith Dayton, and Jim Jones. Unfortunately Bush’s good intentions were ineffective because all the envoys were politically weak, sent without a precise mission, and had missions that were in short duration. “A variety of envoys were appointed, but they did not have full administration support, had their missions too narrowly defined or both” (Kurtzer and Lasensky 2008, 22).

Secondly, the attacks on the U.S. on September 11, 2001 significantly reshaped the administration and its policies toward the Middle East. The administration focused all it’s time and attention on fighting the “War on Terrorism” in retaliation for the attacks on the United States. First, the U.S. military invaded Afghanistan, then Iraq a year later. Over time, the administration started to focus more resources and political capital on Iraq. The U.S. engaged in the war in Iraq because the administration thought Saddam Hussein
had “weapons of mass destruction.” For the rest of Bush’s presidency, the administration lived in the shadow of the events on September 11th, and their number one priority was to defeat terrorists and protect America from another attack.

The biggest drawback of such a policy was that many Muslims perceived the “War on Terrorism” as a war on Muslims. Their perception was shaped by the fact that Afghanistan and Iraq each had predominately Muslim populations and the majority of those being captured and killed were Muslims. As a result, most Muslims opposed the wars and United States’ status in the Middle East deteriorated. In contrast, Israel saw the events of September 11th as creating a common interest because the United States and Israel were finally fighting the same enemies. Two days after September 11th, in a conversation with Powell, Sharon stated, “Everyone has his own Bin Laden. Arafat is our Bin Laden” (Whitaker 2001).

Even before the United States’ invasion of Iraq, Bush perceived Hussein as the most ominous threat to mankind, and he was keen on removing him from power. Although the U.S. was fighting a two-front war in Afghanistan and Iraq, the military operations in Iraq dominated Bush’s Middle East policy. By focusing on Iraq, Bush neglected the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Miller observed “the road to Jerusalem was still strewn with huge obstacles, but one thing was increasingly evident: it did not run through Baghdad” (Miller 2008, 354). Beverly Milton Edwards made a similar observation, “they were further undermined by a US mediator whose energies were dissipated by events elsewhere in the Middle East, namely Iraq” (Milton-Edwards 2009, 202).
Bush was a self-proclaimed “war president,” and he made that clear by using force to resolve conflicts. Even though September 11th was an event to which Bush had to react, it did not have to dominate his policies. In fact, he could have challenged Al-Qaeda by pursuing peace in the Middle East. As Zinni and the Iraq Study Group concluded, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is at the core of the conflicts in the Middle East. Therefore, the U.S. government should have focused on resolving the conflict before trying to resolve other conflicts in the region. The Bush Administration thought it was doing the people of Middle East a favor by eliminating Hussein, but it should have been concerned with resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The administration should have fought the “War on Terrorism” by resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and assisting with the implementation of the two-state solution. By creating a state for Palestinians, extreme groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah would have fewer targets for their causes, leading to greater stability in the region.

Third, the Bush administration failed to enforce and establish consequences for not accomplishing the provisions agreed upon at the Annapolis Peace Conference. Although the Israelis agreed to fulfill Phase I of the Roadmap that called for a freeze of settlements, they continued to build new settlements. The Joint Understanding statement created a steering committee, but it was not given enough authority to enforce the provisions.

The administration’s lack of a policy of enforcement led to deteriorating conditions on the ground. For example, “the Israeli advocacy group Peace Now reported that in the past year (2008) Israel nearly doubled its settlement construction in the
occupied West Bank, in violation of its promises at Annapolis and obligations under the American-backed peace plan” (Carter 2009, 151). Also, “there was no evidence of progress on any of the efforts, and the United Nations reported an actual increase in road-blocks” (Carter 2009, 112).

Fourth, the Bush administration missed key opportunities to make progress on peace negotiations. Experts on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict disagree on how many opportunities were missed, but they all agree, there were events that Bush did not leverage. According to Miller, “still at least two opportunities presented themselves that were worth testing. In November 2004 Arafat died; in January 2005 Abu Mazen was elected president in fair and free elections. Now both opportunities had arrived, but instead of working hard to empower Abu Mazen and push a political process, the administration allowed the situation to drift” (Miller 2008, 354-355).

Dennis Ross’s opinion was that in addition to Miller’s two, the Gaza Disengagement Plan was a missed opportunity. “. . . Ariel Sharon not only declared in February 2004 his intention to withdraw completely from Gaza, evacuating twenty-one settlements and pulling out the Israeli Defense Forces, but in August 2005 he implemented the withdrawal” (Ross 2007b, 264-265).

Moreover, Daniel Kurtzer and Scott Lasensky noted two other events as missed opportunities. “Despite a very negative environment for peacemaking in 2001-2002, opportunities presented themselves in the form of the Mitchell Report (April 2001) and the impact of September 11 on regional attitudes, but the Bush 43 administration did not respond” (Kurtzer and Lasensky 2008, 21).
The two biggest missed opportunities during the Bush administration were Arafat’s death and Abbas’s replacement of Arafat. Since taking office, Bush had long pointed to Arafat as the biggest impediment to peace negotiations. When Arafat died there was a new window of opportunity to engage in the region and to influence the shape of the new government. Arafat was difficult to please and was not interested in giving up anything. In contrast, Abbas was more moderate and willing to compromise. Following Arafat’s death, Bush and Powell should have traveled to Ramallah and taken part in the shaping of the new government. In the alternative, the administration could have sent an envoy to the region to help the new Palestinian government build its democracy. Instead, the administration embraced the new Palestinian leadership too late and let a prime opportunity to engage in peace negotiations pass them by.

Fifth, and most devastating to the success of the Annapolis Peace Conference, was Bush’s, Abbas’s, and Olmert’s, political weakness during and after the conference. According to a CBS/New York Times poll, Bush never obtained an approval rating of more than 50 percent during his second term. After the Annapolis Peace Conference, Bush’s ratings were at an all-time low. His approval rating began to decline after his re-election, and when he left office, he had a “. . . 22 percent approval rating, the lowest rating of any previous president” (Columbia Broadcasting System 2009). His extremely low approval ratings were due to the administration’s handling of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the economic crisis of 2008-2009. Americans were led to believe that the wars were going to be won easily, but after seven years, the end was nowhere in sight and the financial costs of the wars were exorbitant. In addition, Americans did not clearly
see the benefits of the wars. As a reflection of Bush’s unpopularity, Republicans lost the majority of seats in the House of Representatives and the Senate during the 2006 and 2008 elections.

Another hindrance to the Annapolis Peace Conference’s success was Bush’s lack of time to resolve the conflict. Bush had fourteen months left in office after the Annapolis Conference to engage in substantial negotiations. Since Bush was not running for re-election, he also lacked political motivation to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He thought the conflict was going to be the next administration’s problem. Furthermore, “Bush had squandered his influence on ill-fated efforts to promote democracy that only served to empower America’s enemies” (Indyk 2009, 386).

Unlike Bush, Abbas was weak when he began his presidency. “The man of peace was surrounded on all sides by nay-sayers and enemies of negotiated solution” (Milton-Edwards 2009, 201). Abbas got weaker when Hamas won the legislative elections and later took control of Gaza. “Already weak and dysfunctional, Fatah would grow even weaker. Hamas would fill the vacuum” (Miller 2008, 355). He was President of the Palestinian Authority, but he did not have any control over Gaza, the legislative body, Hamas, and what Hamas did. He renounced violence, but he could not enforce this position. The leaders of Hamas had their own agenda and they were going to implement it, regardless of what Abbas had promised in negotiations. According to Martin Indyk, the reasons Abbas had problems were as follows:

He had inherited a corrupt and rudderless Fatah political organization and the disintegrating institutions of the Palestinian Authority and would do little to repair the situation. Having lost Gaza to Hamas, he had become dependent on Israeli army to help him maintain his hold on the West Bank. He was hardly the
courageous and imaginative leader needed to produce a historic breakthrough, but the fear that Hamas would take control of the West Bank propelled him forward. (Indyk 2009, 385-386)

The Annapolis Peace Conference occurred five months after Hamas took political and military control of Gaza “... by 2007 he (Abbas) had already lost much of his luster, having delivered nothing on daily life or Israeli behavior—and having been weakened by the Hamas election in 2006” (Ross 2009, 141). Though politically weak, Abbas remains the President of the Palestinian Authority.

Olmert’s political power began to decrease after the 2006 Lebanon War, and it continued to decline with the release of the preliminary Winogard Report in 2007. Olmert’s political capital fell to an all time low when he was investigated from October 2007 to July 2009 for corruption on five different investigations: the Talansky Affair; the Rishon Tours; the Investment Center; false declarations made to the State of Israel Comptroller; and the assessment of the value of his pen collection. In the Rishon Tours investigation, he was accused of claiming double to triple the amount of reimbursement for his trips between 2001 and 2006. Regarding the Talansky Affair, “according to the indictment [,] Olmert received more than $600,000 between the years 1997-2005 from the American fund raiser Morris Talansky” (Elderman 2009). In August 2008, Olmert was indicted in three of the five investigations. The investigations and the indictments led Olmert to resign on September 21, 2008. In Ross’ opinion, “he (Olmert) had been profoundly weakened by the mishandling of the war with Hezbollah in the summer of 2006—and it was clear that the Israeli public had little confidence in him” (Ross 2009, 141). Olmert’s resignation was detrimental to the peace process because everything that
had been achieved thus far collapsed. The new administration elected to replace *Kadima* was from the *Likud* party, which meant a return to the hawkish politics and policies of the past.

**Lessons Learned**

Although no one president has resolved the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is obvious when one is closer to the solution. There is momentum amongst the three parties and leaders are strong enough to implement what they have negotiated. For example, during the Israel-PLO agreement in 1993 when Israel and the PLO recognized each other and committed themselves to working together for peace, both parties were ready to compromise. Yitzhak Rabin even told the Knesset, “. . . the time has come to take a risk for peace” (Bickerton and Klausner 2007, 256). By all accounts, the Bush administration was far from resolving the conflict or getting closer to the multi-dimensional answer. Though Americans cannot criticize the Bush administration alone for not resolving the conflict because there were other parties involved, we can point to its faults that led it there. The key to resolving the conflict is identifying and seizing opportunities, understanding that progress is slow and sometimes invisible. Big wins are hard to come by, but small wins are significant. By winning battles, one is closer to winning the war. The conflict at hand is very complex, with many moving parts, and a leader must not only play his/her role, but also anticipate what the other players will do. Both Israelis and Palestinians believe that the object of the game is to win everything without losing anything.
For success to have occurred during the Bush Administration, Bush needed to get involved from the outset, to have firmly committed to moving the peace process forward, to have seized all opportunities, and to have been patient with slow progress. If Bush had accepted what was necessary to succeed, the administration might have had better results. Although Bush did not want to get involved in the conflict, he was forced to engage due to pressure from Arab states and the wider international community. Arab states wanted to see the conflict resolved, and if the U.S. resolved it, then Arab states would be better able to trust the U.S. and repair the disconnect between the U.S. and the Muslim world. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is part of the “language” of the Middle East, and if a U.S. leader wants to engage with a leader of the Middle East, he/she must “speak” it—that is, be prepared to discuss the conflict in Middle Eastern terms and get involved in the hard work of resolving it.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict was never a top priority for President Bush. “President George W. Bush waded into the business of peacemaking by following the same general prescriptions; one could describe his efforts as belated and somewhat unrealistic . . .” (Agha and Malley 2009, 8). On the other hand, his lack of involvement led to the participation of others who would not have gotten involved if the U.S. had, such as King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and the Quartet. Both presented plans that served as the basis for negotiations of varying success.

No other party can take the place of the U.S. in peace negotiations because of its unique role in the world. “. . . [T]he vast majority of Middle Eastern states still look to the United States as the ultimate guarantor of their security and the power most able to help
them achieve the objectives” (Hass and Indyk 2009, 43). Israel implicitly trusts the U.S. because of the shared common values of democracy, liberty, and the belief in free enterprise. In addition, the two nations share a “special relationship” that is unlike any other. Jews have a strong influence in American politics by financially supporting organizations that petition for Israel’s interest. In addition, Jews have held some of the highest positions in U.S. government and business. “Jews are the most politicized ethnic group in the country. They constitute less than 3 percent of the population (roughly 5.3 million), but they vote, organize, and campaign in higher percentage than most other groups” (Miller 2008, 90-91). The “special relationship” between Israel and the United States is also the main reason Palestinians view Israel as the right broker for peace. “The Study group’s Arab interlocutors recognized that part of what makes the U.S. role in the peace process so vital is the closeness of the U.S.-Israeli relationship” (Kurtzer and Lasensky 2008, 83).

How Does the U.S. Resolve the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict?

Traditionally, the U.S. government has been the peace broker of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and it should continue in this historical role. First, as the richest and most militarily powerful nation, the U.S. is in the best position to broker a deal between the Israelis and Palestinians. “We (the United States) can offer guarantees on security; financial assistance to demonstrate the material benefits of hard decisions; and political and international support to bolster the legitimacy of the decisions; all of which may be important in helping each side cross historic thresholds” (Ross 2004, 772). With its economic and military might, it has the hard power to impose and protect its soft power.
Other countries may be better negotiators, such as Sweden or Norway, but they do not have as much to gain or lose strategically in the region.

Second, the United States has an economic interest in resolving the conflict because of its position as one of the world’s greatest consumers of oil from the Middle East. The U.S. imports “2.5 million” barrels of oil from the Middle East every day (National Resource Defense Council). As the prime consumer of oil from the Middle East, the U.S. must keep cordial relationships with Arab leaders. Otherwise, it will lose its privilege to relatively inexpensive crude oil. Additionally, being the broker of a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would satisfy a lot of Arab leaders in the region. In an interview on April 26, 2009 by David Gregory on NBC’s Meet the Press, King Abdullah II stated that “unless we solve the core issue of the Israeli-Palestinian, Israeli-Arab challenges, then we will always be an area of instability that costs all of us”.

Third, resolving the conflict would improve U.S. standing among Arab populations. “It boils down to mostly one issue: the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which clearly remains the prism of pain through which many Arabs and Muslims see American foreign policy” (Telhami 2010). The U.S. would finally practice what it has preached for years and gain the trust of people in the Arab world—most important—Muslims. This improved relationship would possibly narrow the gap between Eastern and Western societies. With so much at stake, it is in the best interest of the U.S. to serve as an effective peace broker in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

An American administration, regardless of what party a leader is from, must define its policy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from the outset and understand
that small steps are a big victory. As long as the peace process continues to move forward, it is progress. If the U.S. can keep people in the Holy Land from fighting and killing each other, then the administration has succeeded in moving the peace process forward. Also, the administration must have a clear idea of what it wants the goal to be, and not just preach it, but act on it. When an administration comes up with a clear plan that can be put into practice, there must be consequences for not achieving that goal.

There needs to be accountability for both sides. When Israel does not meet the goals that the U.S. establishes, the U.S. needs to hold Israel accountable. At the same time, when Palestinians use violence to reach their objectives, the U.S. must also hold Palestinian authorities responsible.

Furthermore, the U.S. government must take a hard line with Israel if it wants the Israelis to live up to their commitments. The historic double standard the U.S. has employed for dealing with Israelis and the Palestinians is unacceptable. The U.S. forgives Israel too easily and it does not forgive the Palestinians easily enough. According to Dr. Stephen Zunes, professor of Politics and International Studies at the University of San Francisco, and Chair of the Middle Eastern Studies program, “. . . only the PLO was asked to renounce terrorism, even though Israel’s armed forces were responsible for far more civilian deaths than were the various Palestinian militias” (Zunes 2003, 112). Of course Israel and the United States are strong allies, but the U.S. should not turn a blind eye when Israel does not fulfill its peace process obligations. The U.S. must be willing to take severe measures with Israel if necessary for a two-state solution. In that case, Israel will have to start fulfilling its promises because the loss of the U.S. as an ally would be
too damaging. Without the aid from the U.S., Israel would lose “. . . approximately $3 billion in military and economic grants, in addition to assistance from other parts of the budget or off-budget, which have totaled up to an additional $500 million in recent years” (Zunes 2003, 109). Additionally, Israel is alone in a region surrounded by Arab states, and it needs the United States’ protection and financial support to survive. Without a change in U.S. policy, the results on the ground will never change.

A critical piece of any solution is for negotiators to find a place for Hamas in the negotiations. The organization was legitimately elected by the Palestinians in elections requested by the U.S. government, and they should be at the negotiating table “. . . since it will not be possible to find peace in the Holy Land without the involvement of Hamas . . .” (Carter 2009, 132). Hamas has had control of Gaza since June 2007, where more than one and a half million Palestinians live. Although they use controversial methods to achieve their goals, excluding Hamas from all negotiations is not working either. “The current strategy of isolating and suppressing Hamas and persecuting the people of Gaza is not working” (Carter 2009, 136). If the U.S. or a third party can negotiate with Hamas, then it may make it easier for Fatah to accept their conditions, rather than the other way around. Just as Hamas was put into power, their power can easily be taken away by another election. Without allowing leaders of Hamas to participate, their opinion will never be heard. Furthermore, Hamas’ members and supporters will always have a reason to denounce negotiations and use violence because they were not a part of them.

Although the Annapolis Peace Conference helped move the peace process forward, it was too little, too late to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
REFERENCE LIST


(accessed August 5, 2009).

(accessed September 30, 2009).

http://archives.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/meast/02/06/mideast.06/index.html  
(accessed April 18, 2010).

___ 2001b. “U.S. President Bush's Speech to United Nations.”  

___ 2001c. “You Are Either with Us or against Us.”  


(accessed March 27, 2010).


Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Israel Intelligence Heritage & Commemoration Center. 2007. “Protests of the Annapolis Meeting Opponents-as of November 28, 2007.” http://www.terrorism-

___. 2006. “PM Olmert Meets with PA President.”

___. 2007a. “Address by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to the Annapolis Conference.”

___. 2007b. “Address by President George W. Bush at the Annapolis Conference.”


___ 2004. “President Bush Commends Israeli Prime Minister Sharon's Plan.”
(accessed March 20, 2010).

___ 2005. “President and Prime Minister Discuss Economy, Middle East.”
(accessed May 31, 2009).

___ 2007a. “President Bush Pleased by Appointment of Tony Blair as Quartet Representative in
(accessed September 30, 2009).

___ 2007b. “President Bush to Travel to Middle East to Follow up on Progress Made at
(accessed October 28, 2009).

(Tel Aviv). June 17. http://www.Ynetnews.Com/Articles/0,7340,L-3413880,00.html
(accessed April 11, 2010).

(accessed January 17, 2010).

21, 2010).

http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3685678,00.html (accessed September 3,
2010).

Zinni, Anthony. 2006. The Battle for Peace: a Frontline Vision of America's Power and
Purpose. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Common Courage Press.