

A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE FAILURE OF CAMP DAVID SUMMIT 2000

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Thesis Prepared for the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

August 2005

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Yilmaz, Ismail, A historical analysis of the failures of Camp David 2000 Summit.

Master of Science (Criminal Justice), August 2005, 106 pp., references, 84 titles.

This research seeks to understand the reasons for failures of Bill Clinton, Yasser Arafat, and Ehud Barak's Camp David Summit that was held in July, 2000. The Summit was arranged to complete the last phase of Oslo Peace Process.

Numerous researches have attempted to reveal the facts of the summit but, so far, they have failed to present the complete details of what happened before, during, and after the summit. This research explores all aspects of the problem including the various variables that would have had effected the breakdown of the Middle East peace process. Finally, the researcher determines the parameters needed to maintain a substantial peace in the Middle East and what proposed strategies might be followed in order to avoid the previous mistakes in future peace negotiations.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the Turkish National Police for giving me with the opportunity to attend the Criminal Justice program at University of North Texas.

I also owe a special thank to my thesis committee chair Dr. Eric J. Fritsch, and committee members Dr. Kall D. Loper and Dr. John Liederbach for their guidance and support in writing this thesis.

Finally, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to my wife Hulya for her great support, patience, and understanding and to my sons Suat and Sedat for the meaning they have brought to our family.

## ABBREVIATIONS

UN	United Nations
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PFLP-GC	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine- General Command
DFLP	Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PLF	Palestine Liberation Front
PIJ	Palestinian Islamic Jihad
IDF	Israel Defense Force

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
ABBREVIATIONS .....	iv
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Objectives and Research Question.....	4
BACKGROUND OF ARAB-ISRAEL CONFLICT .....	5
British Policies.....	6
Balfour Declaration.....	7
Mandates under the League of Nations .....	8
Palestine between World War I & II.....	8
Partition of Palestine .....	10
Aftermath of Arab-Israel War.....	11
Sinai Campaign.....	12
Terrorist Groups Leading to Unrest.....	12
Al-Fatah.....	13
Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) .....	14
Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).....	15
Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine–General Command (PFLP-GC) .....	15
Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP).....	16
Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ) .....	17
Palestine Liberation Front (PLF) .....	18
Abu Nidal.....	18
Six Day War .....	19
Black September.....	20
Yom Kippur War.....	20
Camp David Accord 1978 .....	21
Israeli invasion of Lebanon.....	22
Hezbollah .....	23
1983 Attack on the Marine Barracks in Beirut .....	24

Hostage Taking of Westerners .....	24
Palestinian Uprising .....	25
Hamas .....	25
Oslo Accord.....	26
Kach and the Kahane Chai .....	27
Failure of Arafat-Barak Negotiations at Camp David Summit 2000.....	28
The Intifada 2000 and Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades.....	29
Continuous Violence .....	30
Palestinian State and U.S. Road Map.....	30
<b>LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>32</b>
Dennis Ross.....	32
Robert Malley and Hussein Agha.....	34
Jeremy Pressman .....	35
The Mitchell Report.....	38
Cheryl A. Rubenberg.....	39
Nicholas Guyatt.....	40
Walid Khalidi .....	41
Ziya Flamhaft .....	42
Stephen Zunes.....	44
Scot Lasensky.....	45
Laura Eisenberg and Neil Caplan .....	46
Harold Saunders .....	47
Daniel Heradstveit.....	48
Summary.....	48
<b>METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>50</b>
Dependent and Independent Variables.....	50
The Screening of Independent Variables .....	50
Methodology.....	54
Limitations .....	55
<b>ANALYSIS OF INDEPENDENT VARIABLES .....</b>	<b>57</b>
Leaders' Perception and Belief System.....	57

Ehud Barak .....	57
Barak's Background .....	57
Barak's perception of Camp David.....	58
Yasser Arafat .....	61
Arafat's Background.....	61
Arafat's Perception of Camp David .....	63
Bill Clinton .....	65
Clinton's Perception of Middle East Peace Process.....	65
Clinton's relations with Israelis and Palestinians .....	66
The Impact of Core Demands (Sine-Quo-Non) .....	68
Status of Jerusalem .....	70
Background of Issue .....	70
Mutual Positions on the Status of Jerusalem .....	71
The Palestinian Territories under Israel Occupation .....	73
Background of Issue .....	73
Mutual Positions on Occupied Territories.....	76
The Issue of Palestinian Refugees.....	78
The Birth of Refugee problem .....	78
Right to Return .....	79
Mutual Positions on Refugee Problem .....	80
The Effect of Third Parties.....	81
The Impact of Public Opinion .....	83
Public Reaction to Peace in Israel.....	85
Public Reaction to Peace in Palestinians .....	88
Summary.....	91
CONCLUSION .....	93
Recommendations .....	98
REFERENCES.....	101



## INTRODUCTION

The Middle East peace process has a long history. Since the Arab-Israel War in 1948, there have been numerous peace initiations implemented in an attempt to end the conflict. The Camp David Accord 1978 between Israel and Egypt and the Oslo Accord 1993 between Israel and Palestine comprise the two most significant events in the history of Middle East peace process. These agreements both managed to halted the terrorism for a short period of time and helped to create a transitory peaceful atmosphere between Israelis and Arab countries.

The Camp David Summit 2000, the subject matter of this research, was initiated to revive the bankrupting Oslo process. The negotiations between Yasser Arafat, Ehud Barak, and Bill Clinton failed to achieve their intended results and a Palestinian uprising ensued. Numerous studies have attempted to explain the true reasons for the failures of the Oslo peace process, but most of them have failed because they did not address the broader context of Middle East peace. In order to understand the facts and the multiple dimensions of the peace process in the Middle East, the major issues causing conflict need to be examined in a meticulous way.

The conflict between two sides, the Israelis and Palestinian Arabs, began soon after the United Nation (UN) partitioned ancient Palestine into two sections: one for Israelis and the other for Palestinian Arabs. The first Arab-Israel War in 1948 created some very contentious issues after the new boarders were drawn and a number of Palestinian Arabs became refugees in neighboring Arab countries. In addition to these refugees, additional refugees in West Bank and Gaza were created as they had to leave their land after the Six Day War in 1967 due to the Israeli occupation.

Soon after Six Day War, Israel passed a law which banned Palestinian refugees from returning to their homes (Freedman, 1979). After that, Palestinian refugee issue has been the central issue in almost all peace negotiations. The right to return to their homes has always been negotiation demand made by the Palestinians. In this light, many Palestinian Arab and Palestinian supporters have continued to refer the UN Resolutions 194 and 242. They claim that these Resolutions give the Palestinians the right to return to their homeland. The UN's Resolution 194 was based on the belief that the right to return was based on international law.

The status of Jerusalem, as well as the refugee issue, is another problematic subject that continues to occupy the agenda of almost all peace negotiations. In UN's partition in 1947, the administration of Jerusalem was handed over to an independent international committee. After the Arab-Israel War, however, the UN did not enforce the internationalization of Jerusalem and the city was divided between Arabs and Israelis: East Jerusalem to Arabs and West Jerusalem to Israelis. At present, Israel controls both East and West Jerusalem.

After the Six Day War, Israel began to build illegal settlements on the occupied territories of West Bank and Gaza. In 1968, religious militants established the settlement of Kiryat Arba adjoining the Arab city of Hebron. The Palestinians have demanded that the occupied territories be given back to the Palestinians based on the UN Resolution 242. Despite continuous calls by the UN, Israel has refused to hand back any of the occupied territories of the West Bank and/or Gaza. This has occurred for the following two reasons: (1) Israeli security concerns and (2) religiously-inspired Israeli

nationalism – both concepts help expose the underlay development of the Israeli settlement policy.

These political issues, of course, are not the only dimensions of the Middle East peace. Besides, all these political and religious issues are the issues that relate to human concerns. Yasser Arafat, for example, was one of the most important figures of the Middle East peace. As the past chairman of Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and the past president of Palestine, he had participated in almost all peace talks negotiated between Palestine and Israel. Another major player in the peace talks was President Clinton who became involved as a mediator in the Oslo Accord 1993 and Camp David Summit 2000. A third major influence on the process was Ehud Barak. He had a significantly different background from the other two as he had served in the Israeli Army (IDF) for years as the general staff before he became the prime minister of Israel. He joined the Camp David Summit as the chief negotiator for Israel. Thus, the characteristics of leaders, their prior political experiences, and mutual perception of each others significantly influenced the Camp David peace talks.

As the conflict in the Middle East has had a significant effect on world politics, states, international organizations, the media has shown great interest in the matter. An obvious problem arises when the media approaches these complex matters with particular prejudice toward one side or the other. This makes it more difficult for researchers to differentiate the facts from biased information. In reference to the Camp David Summit 2000, there are two different versions of what occurred before, during, and after negotiations. Dennis Ross, who took part in the Camp David Summit as the head of U.S. peace team, laid the blame on Arafat for the failure, while one of team

members, Robert Malley and his colleague Hussein Agha, charged that the U.S. and Israel were responsible for the breakdown.

### Objectives and Research Question

Numerous researches have attempted to reveal the facts of the Summit but, so far, they have failed to present the complete details of what happened before, during, and after the Summit. Some of those researches focused merely on the Summit, while others studied only the preceding and following events. This has been problematic because the results of the Camp David Summit 2000 cannot be understood without laying out the broad context of Middle East peace process. This process is difficult to understand without placing it into the context of the prior peace efforts, mutual perceptions and characteristics of Israeli and Palestinian leaders.

This research will analyze the related official documents, reports, articles, interviews, and books. I will try to identify all aspects of the problem including the various variables that would have had effected the breakdown of the peace process. Finally, I will determine the parameters needed to maintain a substantial peace in the Middle East and what proposed strategies might be followed in order to avoid the previous mistakes in future peace negotiations.

Under the light of facts presented above, I will investigate, as part of this research, the following question: What political and personal factors led to failures for Camp David Summit 2000?

## BACKGROUND OF ARAB-ISRAEL CONFLICT

### Zionism and Early Jewish Immigration to Palestine

Zion is the name of the hill in Israel where the Temple of Jerusalem had been built. Temple of Jerusalem or Temple Mount was the center of ancient Judaism and has remained as a crucial place for Jews over the centuries. The idea of Zionism represents a desire for all Jewish peoples around the world to return to their homeland from which they had been exiled to Babylon in 600 B.C. The inspirational leader of Zionism in 19th century was Rabbi Yehoda Alcalay who lived in Yugoslavia and wrote extensively about Zionism. As a movement, Zionism was founded by Theodor Herzl who was raised surrounded by an anti-Semitic society in a small Jewish community in Paris. In 1896, he suggested the formation of a new Jewish state on today's Palestinian territory which had been the Jews homeland two thousand years previously. In his book, *The Jewish State*, Herzl wrote about the emergence of Diaspora and the return to Zion. He founded the World Zionist Association in 1897 in order to gather the world's Jewish population under one organization to realize his dream of a Jewish state.

In the late 19th century the Zionist movement became very powerful in Europe, and large numbers of Jews began to immigrate to Palestine. From 1882 to 1904 about 25 thousand Jews came to Palestine, most of them from low-income families in Russia and Romania. The new immigrants tried to survive through agriculture and therefore many of them settled in the countryside. They bought lands from both small local Arab landholders and absentee Arab landlords. As a result of this, vast Jewish purchases led to displacement of Arab peasants from the land. Although the Ottomans wanted to

control the Zionist movement and its plan to motivate the world's Jews to immigrate to Palestine, Jews established a significant presence in the historic Palestine.

During the first five years of World Zionist Organization, Herzl attempted to gain a contract from the Ottoman Sultan for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. To this end, in 1898 he met with Sultan Abdulhamid II in Istanbul and offered to pay 30 million in English sterling in return for a part of ancient Palestine. The Ottoman Sultan, however, refused this offer in an effort to deny Jewish settlement on their soils (Oke, 1981). At the sixth congress of World Zionist Association, Herzl offered that Uganda be the homeland of the prospected Jewish state. His proposal, however, met with severe opposition from a vast number of Jews. In 1906, the supporters of Palestine won the argument and thousands of Jewish from different European countries continued to immigrate to Palestine.

The establishment of World Zionist Association, no doubt, inspired many Jews around the world to emigrate their ancient country. Early tensions between Arabs and Jews began after the first settlers arrived in the 1880s. The Jews had purchased land from absentee Arab owners that had been worked by Arab peasants who were now displaced (Peretz, 1993).

### British Policies

At the end of 19th century, the entire Ottoman Empire became a major arena for the European powers. Great Britain, Germany, France, and Russia sought to take advantage of post-Ottoman political situation in the Middle East. In one incident prior to the World War One, the British promised the Arabs of Palestine freedom if they revolted against the Ottomans. At about the same time, after David Lloyd George had become

new English prime minister in late 1916, he saw the Zionists as a potential ally capable of protecting British interests in the region.

At first, Palestinian Arabs did not believe that England would allow a Jewish settlement on their soil. This all changed after they witnessed an immense Jewish immigration to Palestine that began in 1918. The conflicting British promises escalated the tensions between the Arabs and Jews, resulting in the early Jewish settlers being confronted with Arab hostility (Freedman, 1979).

#### Balfour Declaration

While Jewish immigration was continuing in Palestine, the World Zionist Association lobbied the British cabinet through Lionel Walter Rothschild, an England born Jew. He was attempting to achieve an international recognition of their cause. In November 1917, a letter signed by British foreign secretary Arthur Balfour was extended to Rothschild. Balfour wrote the following in this letter:

His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country (Weizmann, 1949).

Balfour declaration, without any doubt, was an important milestone to the establishment of a Jewish state and it gave an extra impetus to the Zionist movement. The letter also played an important role in allowing the Jews to immigrate to Palestine

freely, increasing their number to 56.6% of the population of historic Jerusalem in 1918 (Diller, 1994).

### Mandates under the League of Nations

In the aftermath of the World War One, ally states held a conference on 19-26 April 1920 in San Remo, Italy. Considering the League of Nations' mandate, they allocated that the southern Ottoman territory, Palestine, including Transjordan and Iraq, were deemed to be under British governmental control; while Syria and Lebanon went to France. The area of Transjordan was the eastern part of Jordan River. Transjordan was the east part of the river and at the beginning it was in the Palestinian mandate area. However, in 1922, the British Empire split the Palestine mandate into two parts: Transjordan and today's Palestine. The mandate authorization granted the administrations of those territories to the British until they could stand alone. In a hope for popular support, British assigned Faisal to Iraq and his brother Abdullah to Transjordan as kings, both of whom were from a famous Arab family, the Hashemite. In 1946 the eastern part of Palestine, Transjordan, became the independent state of Jordan (White, 2002).

### Palestine between World War I & II

After the formation of mandates, continuous immigration of Jews led to a great hostility by Arabs and the long-lasting conflict in the Middle East was sparked. In the years 1920, 1921, and 1929, Arab nationalists and Jewish immigrants confronted each other several times. Both Jews and Arabs conducted terrorist attacks and low-level warfare particularly when a British policy was believed to benefit one side over the other. In response to this new conflict, the British issued the Passfield White Paper in



October 1930. The paper recommended that Jewish immigration be stopped and that Jews should not be allowed to acquire any new lands. The new policy faced such sharp opposition from the Jewish side that the British had to retreat from the policy (Diller, 1994).

After 1930, Jews driven from Eastern Europe and Hitler's Germany rushed to the Palestine. In 1936, Arab nationalists started a new revolt in which many Arabs and Jewish civilians were killed. The new Jewish immigrants responded with bombings of Arab civilian targets and random terrorist attacks against civilians implemented by Irgun, Lehi, and Haganah. All of these were Jewish-lead terrorist groups in the era. Riots and terrorist attacks pushed the British to take more severe actions to secure Palestine. In 1937, the Peel and Woodhead Commission offered an idea to partition Palestine into two sections, the Arab side and the Jewish side. However, the proposal was refused by the Arabs. To end the now raging riots, in 1939 the British issued the Second White Paper which reduced the number of Jewish immigrants for a five year period and stipulated that an increase in Jewish immigration would require the permission of Arabs thereafter.

During the World War Two, the German Nazis killed millions of European Jewish civilians in the war. Jews held the British partly responsible for the Holocaust, because they had restricted the Jewish immigration to Palestine just as the war began. Discontented Jewish groups such as Irgun and Lehi began to murder, kidnap, and bomb British officials in an attempt to drive them out of Palestine. In July 1946, the Irgun bombed the King David Hotel in Jerusalem where the offices of the mandatory government and the British military command were located. The British officials reported

91 dead: 28 British, 41 Arabs, 17 Jews, and five others (Bell, 1977). During the same time, the U.S. and other western countries began demanding that the British begin to allow Jewish immigration to Palestine. The Arabs, on the other hand, insisted that the British to continue the immigration blockage. After 1946, continued pressures from both international communities and terrorist attacks lead to the British deciding to hand over Palestine mandates to the United Nations (UN), the successor of League of Nation (Kolinsky, 1999).

### Partition of Palestine

In November 1947, the UN adopted a resolution plan for Palestine that divided the area into an Arab and a Jewish state. The plan came into effect with the support of U.S. and Russia. Approximately half of Palestine, according to the plan, was given to the Arabs, while the other half to the Jews. Jerusalem was not incorporated in the partition plan and its administration was brought to an international committee. Jews were satisfied with the plan, while Arabs were not. Soon after the plan was adopted, the conflict between two sides escalated the tension once again (Smith, 2000).

### The First Arab-Israeli War and Proclamation of Israel State

The clashes between two sides restarted soon after the resolution plan had been adopted by UN in September 1947. In fact, the resolution plan could not succeed to end prolonged Arab-Jewish fight in Palestine because the Arabs were not content with the plan, while Jewish seemed to be satisfied with the resolution. Upon this, the Arab League, which was formed in 1945 to secure Arab interests, declared war on the Jews in late 1947. At the outset of the war, irregular Arab groups commanded by Haj Amin El Hussein confronted the Jewish underground organizations, Haganah, Irgun, and Lehi

with limited arms and untrained soldiers. While Arabs initially cordoned Jerusalem in late 1947 and won some small victories, Haganah was able to break the siege. On May 14 1948, the Jews proclaimed the independent Israel state.

During a second phase of the war, Arab nations made up of Syria, Egypt, and Jordan invaded Palestine and Israel in an attempt to rid them of Jews. Arab forces initially seemed to be successful until the Israelis took the advantage of a cease-fire to strengthen their army with modern war equipment. At the final stage, the Israelis won the war. After the war, the Israelis increased its territory beyond the partition resolution's boundaries resulting in their possessing 78% of all historic Palestine (Freedman, 1979; White, 2002).

#### Aftermath of Arab-Israel War

Though UN offered several opportunities to end the war, both Israelis and Arabs persistently maintained the fighting. After the Arab-Israel War in 1948, Arabs did not recognize the green line which was determined by UN as the border of Israel state. The Israelis also did not accept the number of Palestinian refugees that the UN wanted them to allow to return. Instead, Israel offered to permit families who had been separated by the war to come together, and agreed to the return of 100,000 out of 539,000 Palestinian refugees. This offer, however, was rejected by the Arabs. Despite an apparent cessation of violence, the Arab League and Israelis tried to strengthen their military power for another possible conflict. In this period, Arabs aligned with Soviet Union to ensure their support and Israel approached the U.S. for support in defending against another possible Arab attack (Tessler, 1994).

## Sinai Campaign

From 1949 to 1956, the conflict between Arabs and Israelis continued with locally-based reprisals and raids. After King Farouk of Egypt was overthrown in 1954, the new President Nasser maintained a peaceful relationship with Israel until an Israeli spy was caught attempting to blow up British, American, and Egyptian public buildings in Cairo and Alexandria. The spy was attempting to hinder a possible Egypt-U.S. rapprochement. This event came to be known as Lavon Affair. The event made the Egyptians question the true intentions of Israel and subsequently ended with the nationalization of Suez Canal by Egyptians. The blockade of Egypt constituted an obstacle for the trader countries which had to use Suez Canal as a transition way to the southern Asia. At this point, Britain and France involved in the dispute prompting Israel to invade Sinai Peninsula of Egypt to break the Egyptian blockade in Suez. The plan was put into effect with Israel's invasion of Sinai on 29 October 1956. Shortly after the invasion began, to Israelis' surprise, the U.S. and some other western countries explained their concerns on the plan. The crisis was solved by UN's intervention; according to the resolution of UN, Israel would withdraw from Sinai and the U.S. would guarantee that international waterways would remain open to Israel (Diller, 1994; Sela, 1998).

## Terrorist Groups Leading to Unrest

Before the Arab-Israel War, nationalist Arabs had thought that they would eliminate the state of Israel from Palestine by using their united power. Israel's victory, however, shocked all the Arabs who hoped for an absolute victory against the newly formed and outnumbered Israeli army.

After the Arab-Israel War, some radical Arabs began to think that the elimination of Israel would never be possible by using conventional war tactics. In reality, there had been continuous conflicts between indigenous Arab rebels and Israelis violent groups since 1920s and both sides were familiar with guerilla tactics. However, those groups were loosely organized and never pursued a political goal which would provide them with international recognition for their cause. The rise of radical Palestinian groups during 1960s, in this sense, was a more conscious political process than that of local-based and loosely organized apolitical rebel groups of the past (Shalim, 2000).

### *Al-Fatah*

The basis of Fatah is traced back to the activities of Palestinian students who studied at Cairo University in late 1952. Those students led by Yasser Arafat were organized under Union of Palestinian Students in Egypt. The Union inspired by the Muslim Brothers in Egypt and by the leader of Palestinian National Movement Abd al-Kader al-Husseini aimed to liberate Palestine and to drive Israelis from what they perceived as Arab soil. Arafat and his close acquaintance Abu Iyad founded Fatah in 1956 to actively fight the Israeli armed forces.

The Fatah later became the leading group in the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). The PLO was an umbrella organization under which a number of groups organized and focused the overall Palestinian national movement. Fatah carried out guerilla tactics from the beginning of 1960s to the early 1990s. These tactics stopped when Fatah became the leading faction within the PLO and then later in the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in 1996 (Crenshaw & Pimlott, 1997). Yasser Arafat and other Fatah leaders were repeatedly accused by Israelis of founding the Tanzim

during the Oslo peace process, a quasi-militia faction of Fatah. Upon the failure of Camp David Summit 2000, Tanzim undertook a major role in Palestinian uprising, the Intifada 2000. More recently, Farouq Qaddumi assumed the leadership of Fatah after Yasser Arafat died in November 2004.

### *Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)*

In an effort to combine the works of Palestinian liberation groups, Arab League members created an umbrella organization during the Palestine Congress held in Cairo in 1964. At the beginning of its foundation, The PLO declared that their purpose was to eliminate Israel state from the Palestine whatever the means they had to use. Airliner hijackings became the major strategy in the PLO during 1960s and 1970s. In early 1970s, PLO launched several terrorist attacks against Israelis including the assassination of 12 Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics in 1972 (Tessler, 1994).

After 1974, PLO changed the course of its actions towards a more political route by seeking dialogs to secure the recognition of their existence in the international arena. At about the same time, some of those discontented with the PLO created a new alignment under the name of Projectionist Front against Arafat leadership. Despite this strong opposition, politic efforts of the PLO achieved recognition by UN in 1988.

In 1993, PLO and Israel signed the Oslo Accord which provisioned mutual recognition and transition of Gaza and West Bank from Israel to Palestine. The peace process provided temporary stability for the Middle East. Also, Arafat was elected the president of Palestinian-controlled territory and extended the borders of peace by removing the words of violence in the PLO's founding manifesto. PLO became PNA after 1996 as provisioned in the Oslo Accord in 1993.

The most visible groups to participate under the newly created PLO were the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command (PFLP-GC), and Al-Fatah (Dawisha, 1986; Crenshaw & Pimlott, 1997; White, 2002).

#### *Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)*

Three years after the PLO began, another Palestinian liberation group was formed. The PFLP was established in 1967 by Arab Nationalist Dr. George Habash to advocate for the Palestinian liberation and to ensure the Arab unity. The group combined Marxism with Arab nationalism to rid the capitalist western alliance with Israel. Leaders of the PFLP saw the group as a counterbalance to Fatah which had proclaimed itself as the foremost organization of the liberation of Palestine. PFLP was a member of PLO up until 1993 when Arafat signed the Declaration of Principles with Israel. The group quit the PLO to protest the Oslo Accord. The PFLP reconciled with Arafat and his Fatah faction in 1999. The group carried out many terrorist attacks including the hijacking of four western passenger airplanes in 1970. During the Intifada 2000, PFLP terrorists killed Israel's tourism minister Ze'evi, in a Jerusalem hotel. This was the first assassination of an Israeli minister in history of Israel-Palestine conflict (Dawisha, 1986; Crenshaw & Pimlott, 1997; Shalim, 2000).

#### *Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command (PFLP-GC)*

Unlike the PLO and the PFLP, which were independently established, The PFLP-GC is a splinter group from PFLP and a Marxist-Leninist organization that advocates the liberation of Palestine on the basis of anti-imperialism rather than religious motives. It

was Ahmad Jibril who started the group opposing the PFLP and declaring that their war should be grounded on the military tactics, not politics. Based in Damascus, the group has close ties with Syrian intelligence and Lebanon Hezbollah. The PFLP-GC has claimed responsibility of several significant terrorist attacks that occurred between early 1970s and mid-1970s in Europe and Middle East. Those attacks were carried out by using some unusual terrorist tactics. In one, a hot air balloons filled with poisonous gas was launched into a crowd of people. The most recent significant attack by the group was the bombing of a Pan Am airplane in Scotland in 1988.

Although the group took part in the PLO at the beginning, it opposed Arafat's policies which they believe were too tolerant and accommodating to a Jewish settlement on the Arab soil. Unlike PFLP, the PFLP-GC did not reconcile with Arafat. In the mid-1990s, Jibril, the leader of PFLP, reportedly threatened to kill Arafat for pursuing a political agreement with Israel. PFLP-GC is one of the most marginal and the group most opposed to any negotiations with Israel (Dawisha, 1986; Tessler, 1994; Crenshaw & Pimlott, 1997).

#### *Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)*

DFLP is another splinter group from PFLP. They also espouse Marxist-Leninist ideology for the liberation of Palestine. Established by Nayef Hawatmeh in 1969, DFLP was based in Damascus. The majority of its members come from Palestinian intelligentsia who advocate for a two-state solution in Palestine. DFLP's most infamous attack came in May 1974 in which DFLP gunmen assaulted a school in a Galilee town and killed 25 Israeli students. The group said the killing was in response to the U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's Arab-Israeli shuttle diplomacy (Dawisha, 1986;



Crenshaw & Pimlott, 1997). Despite a temporary withdrawal from the PLO during Oslo process, it reconciled with the Arafat's Fatah party. After this, the U.S. removed the DFLP from its list of foreign terrorist organizations. In July 2000, a DFLP delegate joined Palestinians at the Camp David Summit. The delegate then withdrew from the negotiation before it ended.

### *Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ)*

Split from the Muslim Brothers in mid-1980s, PIJ defines the liberation of Palestine as the destruction of the state of Israel. The group claimed several suicide bombings and shootings against Israelis during 1990s. After the Oslo Accord was signed in September 1993, the organization initiated a series of military actions against Israel by adopting a plan of military suicide attacks intended to sabotage the Oslo process. To spread fear among Israelis, PIJ targeted civilians as well as military personnel and government officials. The bloodiest attack came on January 22 1995. The PIJ members went to Beit Lid, a city in the centre of the Israel and blew themselves up at a crowded bus stop, killing 22 Israeli soldiers. The group has had complicated relations with Fatah party. Early on, a common Palestinian cause had brought them together the Arab-Israel conflict. This coalition fell apart when Arafat renounced the armed struggle against Israel in the beginning of 1990s. PIJ suicide bombings shook the Israelis public confidence in its government. This resulted in the election of a right-wing Israeli government in May 1996 that presided over a deadlock in negotiations from which the peace process may never recover. The group was weakened by serial arrests after 1996. However, the majority of its members were released at the outset of the Intifida 2000 (Tessler, 1994; Crenshaw & Pimlott, 1997; White, 2002).

### *Palestine Liberation Front (PLF)*

The PLF left the PFLP-GC in mid-1970s and later split into pro-PLO, pro-Syrian, and pro-Libyan factions. The pro-PLO faction was represented by Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazin), in the PLO from 1983 to 1991. The group carried out terrorist attacks against Israel among which the best known is the attack of the cruise ship Achille Lauro in 1985. PLF was located in Iraq and received logistic support from Libya and PLO (Dawisha, 1986; Crenshaw & Pimlott, 1997). In 1998, within the framework of the Oslo Accord, Israel permitted Abbas, the leader of PLF to return to the Gaza Strip. Fearing an extradition request by the U.S., he chose to go to Baghdad instead. In 2000, Abbas joined the Camp David peace talks as one of the top negotiators. He assumed a significant role in the conclusion of Camp David Summit 2000. Abbas became the President of Palestine after Arafat died in November 2004.

### *Abu Nidal*

Known also as Fatah-Revolutionary Council, Abu Nidal was founded by Sabri El-Benna who split from Fatah in 1974. The splitting of Abu Nidal from Fatah was mostly interpreted as a result of Iraq's pressure on Sabri El-Benna to serve Iraq's interests. Abu Nidal was often perceived as the most dangerous terrorist organization during 1980s because of its ability to act outside of Middle East against westerners as well as Israelis. Before 1980, the group was based in Baghdad. The debate over the demands of independence for Abu Nidal culminated in expulsion of the group from the country by the Iraqi government. After that time, Abu Nidal temporarily moved to Lebanon. After that they relocated their headquarters in Libya. During the second half of 1980s, a change in modus operandi and a seeming reconciliation with Arafat dragged Abu Nidal

into an internal debate within the organization, which resulted in the isolation of Sabri El-Benna. Yet, the group remained active during 1990s relying financially and ideologically upon Iran (Crenshaw & Pimlott, 1997; White, 2002).

### Six Day War

During 1960s, the tension in the Middle East never decreased. Israel and Arab countries continuously debated various political issues, but the true reason behind their tension was the long standing, reciprocal hostility of the Arabs and the Israelis.

International efforts were insufficient in appeasing the tension between the two parties.

When Israel put the Water Carrier Plan into effect in mid-1967, it effectively cut off Syria and Lebanon from the water flowing from Jordan through the Sea of Galilee. Soldiers of both sides battled several times during that period. Accepting Syria's request, Egypt gave explicit support to the Syrian Army. President Nasser of Egypt used an aggressive rhetoric when referring to the Israelis and explicitly talked about war. On May 30 1967, Jordan entered into a defense agreement with Egypt by stating that Jordan, Egypt, and Syria were ready for the war and welcomed the support of entire Arab world. The inevitable confrontation started with Israel's attack on Egypt on June 5 1967. Despite an initial victory of Arab armies, six days after the beginning of the war, Israeli soldiers defeated the Arabs and seized Sinai, Gaza Strip, West Bank, Jerusalem, and Golan Heights.

Israel's victory shocked the Arabs once again and caused desperate Arabs to begin to seek another solution that would result in an end of Israel's existence in the Middle East. In September 1967 at Khartoum Arab Summit, Arab countries closed all the doors to any negotiation and/or recognition of Israel state. Radical Arab groups,

which advocated the liberation of Palestine, vowed to use terrorism more decisively than ever before. Israel, on the other hand, swiftly created settlements on the occupied territories in part to create an advantage for further negotiations (Freedman, 1979; Diller, 1994; Sela, 1998).

### Black September

Six Day War caused an increase in population of Palestinians living in Jordan. The number of Palestinians reached upwards of 700,000 with an additional 300,000 refugees from West Bank. Radical elements in the Palestinian refugees were seen as a threat by the Jordanian Hashemite to a sovereign government in Jordan. June 1970 witnessed open fighting between Palestinian Fedayeen and Jordanian forces. Fedayeen, most of whom were PLO members, hijacked three international airplanes and kept them in the desert. The incidents prompted Jordan government take severe actions which later resulted in killing some 100,000 Palestinian civilians by Jordanian Forces in September 1970. The tragedy caused the Palestinians to develop a great animosity toward King Hussein of Jordan who they saw as the person most responsible for the massacre. The event has been called as Black September by Palestinians (Crenshaw & Pimlott, 1997).

### Yom Kippur War

From the end of Six Day War in June 1967 to October 1973, the tension between Arab countries and Israel never decreased. The Yom Kippur War was fought in October 1973 between Israel against Egypt and Syria. There were two major factors for the war: The first was the over-confidence of Israelis on their defense force. This caused them to ignore any peace initiations. The other was the failure of negotiations between Arabs

and Israelis over the return of territories occupied by Israel in Six Day War. UN's Resolution 242 and Egyptian president Anwar Sadat's calls to Israeli leadership proved ineffective. UN's Resolution 242 stated that the land occupied in 1967 conflict should be returned to Palestinians (Tibi, 1998).

The war came unexpectedly on the day of Yom Kippur in 1973, the holiest religious festival for the Jews. At first the Egyptians blocked the Suez Canal, while Syrian forces took the Golan Heights and reached almost as far as the borders of occupied land from the Six Day War. The course of war changed suddenly when Israel forces pushed the Arab forces back to the pre-1967 borders. Egypt appealed to the Soviet Union to back their Third Army. At this point in the war, the U.S. intervened. The U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger went to the Soviet Union to negotiate a cease-fire. Both sides agreed upon the UN's renewed Resolution 338 that provided an immediate cease-fire and reinforced the previous Resolution 242 (Diller, 1994).

At the end of the war, both parties claimed their victory. However, Israel army had lost prestige gained from the Six Day War. The Arabs had refreshed their self-confidence in their own power. In part, because of the blockade of the Suez Canal, during the war, the world faced with an increase in oil prices which led to a world-wide economic recession between the years 1974 and 1975 (Reich, 1979).

#### Camp David Accord 1978

The Yom Kippur War resulted in a stalemate as both Israelis and Arabs were not pleased with the UN's Resolution 338. The reasons that had triggered the war, however, were yet to be removed. After the war, Egypt repeatedly demanded that Israel return Sinai and Gaza Strip which Israel occupied in Six Day War in 1967.

When Menachem Begin became the prime minister of Israel in 1977, the relations between Egypt and Israel entered into a new, more peaceful era. An apparent rapprochement between Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin created this new air for the peace. The two prime ministers visited each other in their own countries. This new process brought about an unprecedented time of peace between Israel and an Arab country. Both parties met at Camp David, Maryland under the mediation of U.S. president Jimmy Carter in September 1978. The meeting resulted in Egypt's recognition of Israel as a state in return for Israel returning control of the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt. It was also stipulated that Israel would maintain Gaza Strip. This peace with Israel, however, was neither welcomed by other Arab countries nor by the Egyptian public. Anwar Sadat paid for this peace with his life. Three years after Camp David Accord, he was assassinated by Egyptian terrorists while attending an official celebration in 1981 (Freedman, 1979; Diller, 1994).

#### Israeli invasion of Lebanon

After the Black September in 1970, many of the PLO members expelled from Jordan cascaded into Lebanon and used southern Lebanon, Galilee, as a basis for their activities. The situation in Galilee led Israel to take action against the PLO members in Lebanon; Israel's defense minister Ariel Sharon launched an invasion of Lebanon and the Israeli army occupied Beirut in June 1982. A multinational task force provided for the evacuation of PLO members from Lebanon in August. Disappointed with the policy of Lebanese government, the PLO assassinated the Maronite president of Lebanon. Upon the assassination, Israeli army and a right-wing Lebanese Christian group, Phalanges massacred over 500 Palestinians remaining in Sabra and Shatilla refugee camp. The

Israeli invasion and the massacre caused an international outrage and resulted in the creation a new anti-Israeli terrorist group known as the Hezbollah. It would subsequently undertake many bloody terrorist attacks against Israelis (Freedman, 1984; Cantori, 1991).

### Hezbollah

Hezbollah or Lebanon Hezbollah was also an umbrella terrorist organization like PLO. The group was formed by Hussein Musawi who had supported the Iranian ideology so as to realize Islamic revolution in Lebanon. Hezbollah explicitly declared that they would also fight against Israel and Christian groups in Lebanon. Moreover, Israel's invasion of Lebanon was one of the most significant incentives in the establishment of Hezbollah. Since 1982, Hezbollah has claimed numerous attacks including the bombing of U.S. Embassy and Marine barracks in Beirut. The group has been known to promote the suicide bombing campaign among the Middle Eastern terrorist groups. In 1992, Hezbollah actively participated in the Lebanon political system and it had eight chairs in Lebanon parliament as of 2004 (Karaca, 2004). The group is located mainly in southern Beirut and Bekaa Valley where various terrorists groups in the Middle East have their own armed training bases. Consultative council is the top governing unit of Hezbollah and has been headed by Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah since 1984. Another significant figure Ayatollah Hussein Fadlallah is known as the religious and inspirational leader of the group (Crenshaw & Pimlott, 1997; White, 2002; Ozeren & Voorde, 2004).

### 1983 Attack on the Marine Barracks in Beirut

In 1982, Lebanon government officially requested the U.S. to secure and maintain the public order that had denigrated during the prolonged Lebanon civil war. Accepting the Lebanon request, the U.S. deployed 24th Marine Amphibious Unit in Beirut. In the mean time, continuing diplomatic efforts regarding Palestinian settlers in Lebanon culminated in failure. This subsequently caused great anger among the Muslim population against the U.S. force in Beirut. On October 23 1983, one of the U.S. Marine buildings was destroyed by a non-Lebanese terrorist who drove an explosive truck into the building. The explosion resulted in the death of 241 American soldiers and the wounding some 80 others. The attack came as a surprise for the Americans since they thought that they had been positioned in Lebanon to maintain peace and stability. The vagueness concerning the responsibility was clear when an official report concluded that the attack was undertaken by the Hezbollah militia (Tessler, 1994; Crenshaw & Pimlott, 1997).

### Hostage Taking of Westerners

Another type of terror in the Middle East during 1980s was the hostage taking of westerners. Between 1982 and 1992, some 100 westerners from the United States, France, and United Kingdom were reported to have been taken as hostages by the Hezbollah and its sub-units. Hostage incidents were believed to be sponsored by Iran and Syria to advance their interests and to obtain some political concessions from the west. Iran and Syria have always actively supported Hezbollah against their Arab and non-Arab rivals in the Middle East and west. Towards the end of 1980s, hostages were begun to be released one by one. The involvement of Syria was so evident that when a



hostage, for instance, had been released somewhere in Lebanon, he or she subsequently appeared in a media conference within hours in Damascus, Syria under the observation of Syrian officials (Crenshaw & Pimlott, 1997).

### Palestinian Uprising

Repeated expulsion of PLO members from Lebanon made Palestinians desperately concerned about their future and prompted them act. In 1987, a revolt which subsequently was called Intifada, or the first Intifada, began in West Bank and Gaza Strip to protest the Israeli occupation. PLO and a newly formed terrorist organization, Hamas, managed riots, demonstrations, strikes, and violent acts against Israeli military forces and civilians. Israeli forces, in return, tried to suppress the revolt by using broad security tactics including force, deportation of Palestinians, closing universities, and restricting some routines.

### Hamas

The acronym Hamas stands for Islamic Resistance Movement and also means “zeal” in the Arabic language. Hamas emerged from another terrorist group, Muslim Brotherhood, during the Intifada and still keeps close relations with its mother organization. The strategy of Hamas as declared in its charter is an endless war with Israel. For that reason, peace with Israel cannot be a solution for the liberation of Palestinians and is unacceptable. That resistant manner of Hamas has led them to violently attack PLO members as well as Israelis. During and after the Oslo process, the organization extensively used suicide bombings in the middle of Israeli cities that consequently caused some Israelis to emigrate from their country. Throughout the Oslo process, Hamas has cut off its relations with PLO and Palestinian National Authority

(PNA), but has repeatedly accused them of corruption and of selling out to Israel and to the U.S. by participating in the peace process. Hamas was at the top of world press during Oslo peace process with suicide bombing incidents. Just in a suicide attack in 1996, 22 civilians were killed in a commuter bus. Shortly before the Camp David Summit in 2000, Israel suspended many of its commitments with regard to the withdrawal of occupied territories because of Hamas' suicide attacks. The group is also known for its support of public welfare in Palestine; Hamas members have taken part in a sizable number of educational activities, health-care programs, and provision of employment for Palestinians (Crenshaw & Pimlott, 1997; White, 2002).

#### Oslo Accord

After Yitzhak Rabin had become prime minister of Israel in 1992, a new peace process began. In fact, the new process was a product of Norwegians who had mediated the meeting of Israelis and Palestinians in Oslo, Norway before the new accord was signed. After agreeing on the Norwegians proposals, in October 1993, both sides met in Washington D.C. and agreed upon the details which had been negotiated ahead of time in Norway. The new accord was named Oslo. The Oslo Accord stunned the world when it was declared that both sides would recognize their coexistence in the Middle East and the settlement problem would be solved in a peaceful manner in the near future. The Accord also provided that Israel would withdraw from West Bank and Gaza and that Palestinians would have the rights to rule those areas through a Palestinian authority. PLO, in return, would remove the extreme statements written in PLO's charter that mention the elimination of Israel from Middle East. Issues regarding status of Jerusalem, Israeli settlement, and returning of Palestinian refugees were

intentionally unsolved for a five-year period until considerable progress with the decisions made in Oslo Accord could be implemented.

Following the Oslo Accord or Declaration of Principals on interim self-government, several other additional agreements were signed to facilitate the implementation of Oslo Accord. Within this context, Oslo Accord II was one of those follow-up agreements that provided for the returning of Bethlehem, Hebron, Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah, and Tulkarm to Palestinians. In June 1996, Palestinians in Gaza and West Bank elected their legislature and president, Yasser Arafat, as the head of newly created Palestinian National Authority. The PNA was given a five-year implementation period to pass the final phase of peace negotiation (Aranoff & Aranoff, 1998).

#### Kach and the Kahane Chai

Shortly after the signing of Oslo Accord by the PLO and Israel, an American-born Jewish extremist, Baruch Goldstein fired his machine gun into the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron, West Bank killing 29 Palestinians and wounding many others, before he killed himself. Soon after his attack and death, Goldstein was declared to be the member of Kach, an outlawed terrorist organization which was founded by Jewish extremist Rabbi Mehir Kahane to expand the Jewish interests in Middle East and expel the Palestinians from the West Bank. Kahane was succeeded by his son, Binyamin, after his assassination in New York City in 1990. Binyamin founded another terrorist group named Kahane Kachi that was also banned as a terrorist group by Israeli government. The goal of these two terrorist groups was the restoration of biblical state of Israel. The Kach and the Kahane Kachi have organized a number of protests against Israeli

government and have implemented some low-level attacks against Israeli targets (Crenshaw & Pimlott, 1997).

The Kach played key roles in the breakdown of Oslo process. Though the PLO and Israel had agreed to end violence in Oslo, attacks on Palestinian settlers continued. Goldstein's attack met with great anger by Palestinians. In retaliation, the Hamas carried out several suicide attacks in Israel beginning in April 1994. Later, the leader of Kahane Kachi Binyamin Kahane and his wife became the target of radical terrorist groups and both were killed by Palestinians in 2000 (White, 2002).

#### Failure of Arafat-Barak Negotiations at Camp David Summit 2000

The final step of Oslo process was scheduled to be completed by September 13 2000. To this end, prime minister of Israel Ehud Barak requested the president of U.S. Bill Clinton call for a meeting at an impartial place. Accepting Barak's request, Clinton called the parties to the U.S. and the meeting started at Camp David, Maryland in July 2000 with the participations of Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat. The issues to be discussed at the final stage were difficult to resolve and the success of the meeting would only be achieved by a full consensus of both parties. The status of Jerusalem, Israeli settlements and the return of Palestinian refugees were all on the table to discuss. However, at the conclusion of the meeting there was a stalemate. Both sides left the Camp David without reaching any agreements beyond those already defined by the Oslo Accord. The Israeli side shifted the blame to the Palestinians saying that Yasser Arafat did not act appropriately under the Oslo Accord. They said that he was responsible for the redeployment of Israelis from Gaza and West Bank, and that he gave control of East Jerusalem to the Palestinians. This control of East Jerusalem to

Palestinians was unacceptable for Israelis according to their red line policy. The Palestinian side, on the other hand, accused the Israelis of insisting on strategic control over the Gaza and the West Bank and retaining sovereignty over East Jerusalem, including the area of Harem-Al-Sharif. As a result, the Camp David Summit 2000 or the final step of Oslo process ended in a disappointment and it suspended the hopes of Palestinians and Israelis who had been anticipating peace since 1993 (White, 2002).

#### The Intifada 2000 and Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades

When the Camp David ended in a stalemate, the tension between Arabs and Israelis rose again. On September 29 2000, Israeli politician Ariel Sharon visited the Temple Mount. This is a holy site for the Muslim near Al-Aqsa Mosque. His visit triggered a massive demonstration which subsequently turned into a new Palestinian uprising, Intifada 2000 or the second Intifada. Violence continued during 2001, 2002, and 2003 despite some peace initiatives.

The second Intifada, like the first one, created a new terrorist group, Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades. The group explained that their purpose was to drive Israelis out of West Bank and Gaza like the Lebanon Hezbollah did in the southern Lebanon. Al-Aqsa is deemed as a subsidiary of secular Fatah group and defines Palestinian nationalism. Leaders of the group explained that their inspirational leader was Yasser Arafat. However, Arafat denied any connection. They committed numerous suicide bombings and shootings against Israeli civilians as well as Israeli soldiers and settlers. The bloodiest attack of this group occurred in January 2003 in a pair of suicide bombing killing 23 people and wounding 100 others in downtown Tel Aviv.

## Continuous Violence

During 2001 and 2002, Hamas, Al-Aqsa, and PIJ committed numerous suicide attacks and shootings despite several calls for a cease-fire. Israel, in response, reoccupied Ramallah, Nablus, Jenin, Tulkarm and other towns in attempt to suppress the violence. Meanwhile, the UN declared Resolution 1402 which called again for Israel's withdrawal from occupied territories. Ignoring the UN's renewed resolution, Israel occupied almost all of the West Bank claiming that the trend of terror by Palestinian radicals required this kind of action. The terror trend declined from September 2002 until January 2003 when Palestinian radicals committed another suicide bombing on a bus in Tel Aviv. In response to that, Israeli forces besieged Yasser Arafat in his base in Ramallah in September 2002. The siege was dissolved in November 2002 after several requests by the UN and consequently Israel withdrew from Gaza too. The siege of Arafat caused his approval rating among the Palestinian radicals to soar (Isserrof, 2004).

## Palestinian State and U.S. Road Map

In April 2002, a number of U.S. politicians initiated a series of consultations including a roadmap for the peace of Middle East. The roadmap envisioned that the Israelis would withdraw from occupied territory and that Palestinians would establish a Palestine state. In an attempt to implement the roadmap, in April 2003, Palestinians elected their own prime minister, Mahmoud Abbas, as the head of Palestinian state. In June 2003, prime minister of Palestine Abbas and prime minister of Israel Ariel Sharon shook hands as a promise to fulfill the conditions of roadmap. The violence, however, did not end; Hamas and PIJ declared they would continue violence because they did

not accept the plan. On June 10 and August 20 2003, in two separate suicides bombings, Hamas killed 37 Israelis in commuter buses. Abbas' continuous counter-terrorism attempts fell short. This undermined his political career and eventually caused his resignation four months after his election. He was replaced by an Arafat-supported politician Ahmed Qurei in September 2003. Both Israel and Palestinian administrations have initiated several cease-fires since Qurei became prime minister of Palestine. However, the extremism that is continuously being raised by Palestinian radicals and the reactive policies of Israel continue to hinder a lasting solution in the Middle East (Isseroff, 2004).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The consequences of Camp David Summit 2000 cannot be fully understood through events preceding and following the negotiation. Previous peace initiatives and the characteristics of negotiators, as well, proved a significant effect on the results of all negotiations. Hence, the literature review regarding the failures of the Summit should examine the prior peace efforts and the behaviors of peace initiators as well as the events preceding and following the talks.

I will review the literature to determine the independent variables of the research. Then, I will try to understand all aspects of the Camp David Summit 2000 by seeking different variables that would have had effected the breakdown of the peace process.

### Dennis Ross

Ross was the chief Middle East peace negotiator of the United States from 1988 to 2001 and involved in all peace negotiations as a key figure from Madrid Conference 1991 to Camp David Summit 2000. He was one of most prominent believers of the common notion that Middle East peace needs a strong third party other than Israel and Palestine, because there is an asymmetry in military strength between those two parties. Ross was one of the key players of all of the peace processes. He directly charged the individuals involved for their weak commitment to the peace agreement. Hence, he rarely criticizes the concept of the peace agreements and seldom talks about what else needs to be done in terms of improving the existing peace concepts.

In his article, "Camp David: An Exchange" (2001) and his book, *The Missing Peace* (2004), Ross documented almost every phases of peace negotiations in detail beginning in the early 1990s. He believes that a strong U.S.-Israel relationship is



important if the Israeli state is going to feel secure enough to make concessions concerning the occupied territory-Gaza and West Bank. Ross's approach however, has been extensively criticized by many politicians, scholars, and journalists. This has occurred in part because of Ross's overestimate of Israel's security concerns and his tendency to overlook the Palestinian's needs for justice. Ross's critics also state that Israel has abused the U.S. relationship repeatedly and has never given any real concessions neither in Oslo nor in Camp David Summit 2000 (Malley & Agha, 2001; Sontag, 2002).

According to Ross, the parameters of peace are completely different for Israelis and Palestinians. It is the security of their state which is the most fundamental issue for Israel in any peace negotiations, while it is the right to return to their homes is the major issue for Palestinians. According to Ross, Israelis should be the first to start a peace negotiation because they occupied Palestinians' territories and continue to violate the international rules.

Ross blames Arafat for the failures of Camp David, because Arafat said no to everything, but never offered a counterproposal in return. Ross believes that Arafat, the head of the Palestine, did not want to appear to be abandoning his cause or be made to vow to end the violence at the Camp David Summit. For Ross, Arafat could not transform himself into a real leader and instead chose to stay as a national symbol for Palestinians. In fact, according to Ross, Arafat was correct to act that way as the Palestinians' only victory had been to create Arafat as a national symbol. Had Arafat given that up, the Palestinians would have had nothing. Ross, in sum, believes that

Ehud Barak offered the “moon” at Camp David, but Arafat decided to refuse all those generous offers rather than risk his status as a national symbol.

The opponents of Ross do not agree that Arafat was offered any far-reaching concessions by the Israelis at Camp David. They assert that it is Barak who should be responsible for the failures of Camp David negotiations and who, in fact, offered very little concerning the occupied territories and almost nothing on the issue of Jerusalem and refugees. Arafat’s supporters did not view Dennis Ross as an impartial figure for the position of chief negotiator for the Middle East peace negotiations. After all, they claim that his being a Jew biased him toward Israel. Therefore, what Ross has reported was overshadowed by his partial approaches (Sontag, 2002; Zunes, 2001).

Robert Malley and Hussein Agha

In their article, “Camp David: Tragedy of Errors”, Malley and Agha (2001) examined the Camp David Summit from their point of view by pointing out the most common errors. For them, none of the parties is culpable alone for the failures of Camp David; however, both sides did make significant mistakes before, during, and after the negotiation talks and should be held responsible for their own faults.

Ehud Barak, in their view, forced both the U.S. and Palestine to reach for a peace before the Palestinians were ready. What they called “tragedy of errors” is the bad timing and missed signals or in the terms of Dennis Ross “Barak’s over-eagerness” (Ross, 2001). However, they continue, Barak’s pressure was a technical error, rather than political maneuver intended to ensure that he be first to start the peace. They believe that Barak came to the Camp David as a man on a mission and committed to the peace.

Malley and Agha accept that the Palestinian side did not engage in negotiations and never offered any counterproposal. Palestinians rigidity, especially Arafat's intransigence can not only be attributable to the errors by the U.S. and Israel, but also to Palestinians' and Arafat's historic fear of being trapped by enemies. They point that mutual mistrust was one of the main factor for the Palestinian in determining their course of action at Camp David Summit. For Malley and Agha, the purposes of Israelis and Palestinians are mutually exclusive which made it impossible to meet in the middle in a peace agreement.

Malley and Agha were the first to disagree with Dennis Ross (2001) as to what actually happened during the Camp David Summit. They are more objective in their arguments when they state that both sides made mistakes and each side has to take their own responsibility (Singer, 2002).

#### Jeremy Pressman

In his article, "Vision in Collision", Pressman (2003) tries to analyze what happened at the Camp David Summit. He argues that neither Israeli nor Palestinian version of what happened at Camp David is completely accurate. He, first, lays out both sides' assertions and then evaluates them through evidentiary records of articles, interviews, and documents.

The first assertion of the Israeli side was that Barak offered Arafat a historic proposal that would have given Palestinian 94% of the West Bank and 96% control of Gaza, sovereignty over East Jerusalem, and the right for a symbolic number of refugees to return to Israel, with the remaining refugees given the permission to relocate to the West Bank and Gaza. Pressman claims what Israel offered on West Bank and Gaza

was based on their own definition of the regions, which is in fact 86%, but not 94 and 96 percent. With this offer, Israel still wanted to deploy its army on significant part of West Bank and Gaza. The Palestinian sovereignty over East Jerusalem, on the other hand, was in fact a functional autonomy, not a full sovereignty, in which Israelis could still deploy its armed forces and launch checkpoints in the middle of the city.

The second Israeli assertion was that Palestinian delegations did not present any counterproposals at negotiation. According to Pressman, however, the Palestinian delegation demanded the implementation of UN's Resolution 194.

Another Israeli assertion was that the Palestinians did not want to recognize Israel's right to exist. Pressman, however, points out that the UN's Resolutions 242 and 338 that the Palestinian delegation offered to implement calls for Arabs to recognize Israel in return for Israel to leave the occupied territory. Had Palestinians really wanted to attack Israel, they would not have refused the offered parts of Gaza and West Bank. This is because these territories would be the best place for Palestinians to launch an attack on Israel.

Israelis accused the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) of planning the outbreak of the second Intifada, upon the failure of Camp David. However some of the problems were because of increasing corruption in PNA. The emotional strain occurred because of the ongoing Israeli humiliation of Palestinians under the name of security checkpoints, operations, and searches in the sites where many Palestinian refugees live. These injustices were then fueled by the visit of Israel's Likud Party leader Ariel Sharon to Temple Mount, which is a holy site for Muslims in Jerusalem. A day after his visit, an uprising exploded. Pressman believes that the two events are linked. He also

acknowledges that even though Mitchell Report of U.S. (2001) concluded that the visit was not the reason for subsequent riots, it had provocative effects on the events that occurred.

The final Israeli claim was that Palestinians insistence on the right to return for refugees meant that they wanted to destroy Israel. For many Palestinians, according the Pressman, however, the demand to return to their home was more than anti-Semitic Jewish destruction. After the Arab-Israel War and Six Day War, many Palestinian Arabs became refugees because of occupation; therefore, for Palestinian officials negotiating the right of over 4 million Palestinians return to their home was the best bargaining chip at Camp David. Though Israelis were blaming the Palestinians with not presenting any counteroffer, they interestingly refused every Palestinian core demand as unacceptable or nonnegotiable by using the security of Israel as a subterfuge.

On the contrary, Palestinians assertions were not a hundred percent accurate, even though some seemed more accurate than the claims of Israelis. To Pressman, Israel's approach at Camp David was based on the expansion of occupation, but at subsequent Taba talks Israelis seemed much closer to accept Palestinians demands. For example, they offered 97% of West Bank and Gaza which was 3% more than they offered at Camp David. In addition, they gave Palestinians full sovereignty of East Jerusalem, which was one of the delicate discussion points at Camp David. According to Pressman, Palestinians tragically could not see that opportunity and failed to achieve a peace with Israel six month after Camp David.

On the other hand, Palestinian's explanation of the second Intifada was accurate when they said that the following issues fueled it: expansion of occupation policy of

Israel, Ariel Sharon's visit to Temple Mount, and Israel's harsh reaction to uprising. However, they omitted the fact that the PNA failed to restrain the uprising even though they had the political power to do so. Pressman denotes that in the second Intifida, Tanzim and Al-Aqsa Brigades, two prominent terrorist organizations allegedly related to Arafat's Fatah, played important roles in the escalation of violence. Had Arafat wanted to rein in the uprising, according to Pressman, he could have used his authority on Marwan Bargouthi, the leader of Tanzim, to end the terror during the Intifada.

Pressman's article and comments make a very significant contribution to the literature about the Camp David. He examined the mutual accusations in detail and interpreted them in a very broad context, including the preceding and following events as well as peace talks. However, he was incorrect when he said that Palestinian did not want peace at Taba talk, the subsequent meeting after Camp David. What Palestinians worried about was the security of Palestinians in the offered territory because Israel did not want to make a complete withdrawal from Gaza and West Bank (Hume, 2002).

#### The Mitchell Report

Mitchell Report (2001) was prepared by Senator George Mitchell of Maine who was appointed by Bill Clinton to investigate reasons for breakdown of Camp David and outbreak of the second Intifada. Covering a 10-year period of Palestine-Israel relations, the report suggested that both Palestinians and Israelis came to Camp David blaming each other for not having fulfilled the commitments those they had agreed-upon at Oslo.

For Palestinians at Camp David, Israel demanded the annexation of their the most fertile lands, the return of less than 1% of refugees to their home, the maintenance of Israeli control over East Jerusalem, a continued Israeli military presence on

Palestinian lands, Israeli control over borders, natural resources, and airspaces all of which were unacceptable for any Palestinian. In addition, Palestinians' expectation from Oslo was the establishment of a Palestinian state and the resolution of all occupation within agreed time. These expectations were not met; furthermore, Israel doubled the number of settlements on the occupied territories and angered Palestinians with the Israeli military presence on their territories.

From the Israeli perspective, the expansion of settlement was an agreed-upon part of Declaration of Principals, the major contract of Oslo Accord. Israelis claimed that they made notable concessions on the settlements issue at Camp David and subsequent talks. Israeli stated that they understand Palestinians' concerns about Israeli military presence and their security operations; however, the security of Israeli settlers, settled on the occupied Palestinian territories, is a key concern for them because of ongoing violent and terrorist acts on the settlement sites. Israelis stated that security was something on which they cannot bargain and compromise.

The Mitchell report in fact brought nothing new to what had been reported (Zunes, 2003). The reporters involved did interview many participants from both sides and conveyed their concerns and comments about Oslo, Camp David, and Intifada. So, from this perspective, it is noteworthy that the report revealed the internal pressures that the leaders came to Camp David under.

Cheryl A. Rubenberg

In her book, *The Palestinians: In Search of a Just Peace*, Rubenberg (2003) underlies the importance of establishing a just agreement in terms of creating a permanent peace process. The principles of justice, according to the author, should be

applied at all phases of a peace process to remove the imbalance of power between the parties. She asserts that the Middle East peace process that began in the early 1990s was undercut by the powerful Israeli government, because they never wished to apply a just peace with the Palestinian Arabs. Rubenberg analyzed the consequences of Oslo process. She asserts that Israel used its military advantage when discussing the Oslo and gave the signal that they had no intentions of handing over the occupied territory in the West Bank and/or Gaza. Also, the during implementation phase of Oslo, according to Rubenberg, Israeli army illegally confiscated Palestinian territories and their soldiers humiliated the Palestinians under a system of bypass roads and curfews. Thus, she continued, the second Intifada broke out as a result of the anger of Palestinians who felt that the peace process had brought no justice to their lives.

Rubenberg presents a well-documented argument on the topic and analyzes all the phases of a peace process according to her primary thesis, the imbalance of power between the two parties-Israel and Palestine.

#### Nicholas Guyatt

Guyatt (1998), in his book, *The Absence of Peace*, takes a similar point of view to that of Rubenberg. He also asserts that the peace must be grounded on the principle of equitable agreement between equal parties. However, he asserts, in the Oslo example, Israelis adopted the Grand Apartheid strategy which provisioned the complete segregation of Israeli and Palestinian communities from each other. According to Guyatt, the Apartheid strategy dominated the entire Oslo process. Israel continued to build illegal settlements in Gaza and West Bank far from Palestinian settlements. For Guyatt, Oslo could never provide an economically independent Palestine so long as



some of its territory remains Israeli settlements as this made Palestinians dependent to their rivals for electrical power, job opportunities and other similar requirements of every day life. He further articulated how Israelis manipulated the Oslo Accord for their own causes and undermined the peace process until the second Intifada. Guyatt concluded that as long as a peace agreement continued under the same circumstances, the results will not change. This kind of “peace process” will only serve to confirm the fact that the mighty Israel will continue to dominate the weaker Palestine.

Guyatt was right when he used the term apartheid to explain the Israel’s segregation policy. The term apartheid was first used by South Africans to segregate the blacks from whites in Republic of South Africa. In 2002, the Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel started to construct a wall in West Bank to separate Israelis from Palestinians. The wall was immediately called the Apartheid Wall by the world media (Williams, 2004).

Walid Khalidi

In his article, “The Prospect of Peace in the Middle East”, Khalidi (2003) examines the Palestinians’ reasons for not accepting any of Israel’s offers. Like Malley and Agha (2001), Khalidi claims that the Palestinian delegation pleaded to U.S. for extra time to prepare for the negotiations. Clinton did not accept the Palestinians’ request, but promised, in return, not to blame Arafat in case of a failure. After Camp David ended up in failure, however, Clinton accused Arafat of being responsible. Another factor that caused the failure at Camp David was Barak’s refusal to meet face to face with Arafat because of his personal animosity toward him. Further, the territory that Israel

demanding it in and around Jerusalem was the most strategically important part of Palestine as far as economic and political viability was concerned.

Even though UN had repeatedly condemned the illegal settlements of Israel on the West Bank and Gaza, the rate of settlement increased 100% after Oslo. The U.S., however, did not explicitly condemn the Israel for its settlement policy much to the shock of Palestinians. Ehud Barak's sovereignty demands concerning Haram-Al-Sharif, one of the most holy sites for all Muslims in the world, was endorsed by Clinton. This was an unacceptable offer for the Palestinian delegations. They had previously notified Israel and the U.S. that they could not bargain on Haram-Al-Sharif as an agent for all the other Muslims in the world (Khalidi, 2003).

Khalidi presents a good analysis on the core demands of Palestinian side. He shows the reasons why Camp David Summit failed and why Palestinian showed resistance in the face of Israel's offers.

#### Ziya Flamhaft

Flamhaft (1996), in her book, *Israel on the Road to Peace*, makes an in-depth analysis of Israelis internal struggles against Arab-Israeli peace negotiations and the effects of third party mediation, particularly of the United States. She examines Reagan's 1982 Peace Plan, Shultz's 1988 Peace Initiative, and James Baker's 1989 Peace Map. All of which were initiated by the U.S. to influence Israelis to make a peace with Jordan and Palestine similar to that made with Egypt in 1978. At that time when the U.S. urged Israel to make a peace with Egypt, the international conditions were supportive of such a peace initiation in the Middle East. The mutual visits of Egypt's president and Israel's prime minister had helped to create sympathy between the two

nations and had allowed achievement of the Camp David Accord 1978. In the final analysis, neither the U.S. intervention nor Jimmy Carter's efforts had much of an effect on both sides' willingness to sign a peace agreement.

Flamhaft touches on the hardships of making peace with Israel when their religious Likud Party was in power. According to her, the Likud Party and its right-wing-extremist proponents never wanted to make peace with the Arabs. A peace between Israel and Palestine would only be possible if both parties actually wanted it at the same time. She also adds that a third party might be successful in helping to make peace only if the conditions below are met:

There should be a pre-negotiation process, like Khalidi (2003) referred to concerning Arafat. In addition, a third party should not initiate a peace negotiation nor publicize it before the pre-negotiation process matures. Finally, if the negotiating parties cannot achieve the peace, the third party can still prevent other negative developments.

Flamhaft's book was published 4 years before the Camp David Summit, but made reference to almost every mistake the U.S., as a third party, made before and after negotiations. According to her hypothesis, the failure to allow the matured peace process to develop was one of the most important key factors that caused the failure of Camp David Summit 2000. Malley and Agha (2001) support Flamhaft's hypothesis when they say that the timing of Camp David was a mistake. Flamhaft's other hypothesis that the third party's role should also be in preventing negative developments, came to light in the aftermath of Camp David as the U.S. did not initiate any policies to appease the tension between Israel and Palestine.

## Stephen Zunes

In his article, "The United States and the Breakdown of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process", Stephen Zunes (2001) questions the stance of the U.S. at Camp David Summit and criticizes its minor contributions on behalf of Palestinian side. Referring to the Mitchell Report (2001), Zunes denotes that the report failed to call for Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories, which was repeatedly mentioned in the UN Resolutions 242 and 338. The U.S., though, according to Zunes, has never supported a peace negotiation between Palestine and Israel on the basis of UN Resolutions 242 and 338. This implies that Israel never wanted the Palestinians to take their occupied territories back. Mitchell's report, in this sense, was not surprising to Zunes .

According to Zunes, the U.S. has intentionally kept the UN out of U.S.-led peace negotiations so far. In the Memorandum of Understanding of 1991 between the U.S. and Israel, it is explicitly stated that UN would not be involve in the peace process. This, despite the fact that, Resolution 242 guarantees that Israel will be protected from its Arab neighbors in return for its withdrawal from the occupied territories. However, Israel and the U.S. seemed to be dissatisfied with the UN Resolution. In fact, they pushed for radically expanding the safety zones to ensure Israeli's physical security for fear of Palestinian terrorists. Concerning the U.S. policy which has recently been echoed by the Bush administration and both Republicans and Democrats in Congress, Zunes concludes that the U.S.' economic and military support to Israel has nothing to do with Israelis adherence to international law, UN resolutions, and international human right standards. Therefore, he concludes, Israel has no reason to make a peace with Palestine.

Zunes criticizes the United States' unconditional support of Israel. He implicitly points to another key component of peace; conditional support for the conflicting sides. According to Zunes, if the conflicting sides have no fear of losing anything, they will have little motivation to make a real peace. Zunes blames the U.S. for the failure of Camp David because it never used any sanction against Israel, but it did explicitly articulate its unconditional support for Israel which made the peace implausible.

#### Scot Lasensky

In his article, "Paying for Peace", Lasensky (2004) touches the effects of American foreign aid on sustaining the peace efforts. He criticized Clinton's foreign aid approach during the Camp David talks which he believed were ineffective because of a lack of economic incentives. He referred to Jimmy Carter's foreign aid policy that supported Israel with political and security assurances to convince them to make more concessions in the peace negotiations. Carter achieved the peace between Israel and Egypt through economic incentives which, Lasensky believed, encouraged Israel to choose diplomacy over the war. He further supported the use of foreign aid by detailing the U.S.' promises to the Palestinians that were made just before the Declaration of Principals in the Oslo Accord were signed. A senior Palestinian negotiator Nabil Sha'ath had told to the U.S. officials before Oslo that the peace should bring Palestine economic prosperity as well as freedom and security (Zunes, 2003). Seeing this fact, the U.S. officials met Palestinians delegations before the Oslo to assure that the U.S. would make economic contribution to Palestine.

According to Lasensky, Clinton's mistake at Camp David was to offer foreign aid in a way that appeared more like a transaction for Palestinians. However, the

Palestinians did not want the foreign aid in that way. The U.S. should have offered a guarantee of economic investments in Palestine through the government and private business thus transacting the money in a more effective way that would have provided for the economic satisfaction of the Palestinians.

Lasensky's point can be better understood when the roots of terrorism in the Middle East and Palestinians' appeal to terrorism are carefully studied. It is a well-known fact that the overthrown Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein rewarded every family in Palestine with \$25,000 if one of the family members was killed in a suicide attack. Similarly, Hamas contributed to the families of suicide bombers between \$3,000 and \$5,000 to assure them their loved one did not die for nothing (Peraino, 2005).

Laura Eisenberg and Neil Caplan

In their book, *Negotiating Arab-Israeli Peace*, Eisenberg and Caplan (1998) point out that mutual bias has an effect on the willingness of the negotiating parties when they are making peace. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, for example, tried to escape from negotiations at Madrid Conference in 1991. For Eisenberg and Caplan, it was a classic reflection of the historic reluctance of both Arabs and Israelis to construct a peace in the Middle East. The unwillingness of Yitzhak Shamir delayed a likely peace for two years; the peace came with a more flexible politician, Yitzhak Rabin, at Oslo in 1993. Eisenberg and Caplan concluded by stating that the overall problem in the Arab-Israel peace process is not the lack of a creative solution, but the inflexible attitudes of leaders that is the result of their efforts to protect their own benefits.

Eisenberg's and Caplan's argument articulates one of the significant hurdles to the peace process. Their conclusion that stated that the peace process in the Middle

East, in fact, has nothing to do with creative solutions was also very bold. Therefore, it would be unjust to conclude that Camp David failed only because of Arafat's intransigence (Sontag, 2002).

Harold Saunders

In his book, *The Other Walls*, Saunders (1991), as well, writes on the shortcomings of previous Arab-Israel negotiations and the reasons for failures of peace in the Middle East. For him, the peace should target the political as well as the human aspects of the problem. The process should seek to understand how these aspects impact the overall situations. He mentions the gravity of preparing the political environment for a probable peace before arranging a peace talk. For Saunders, to understand why parties fear to come to a negotiation table is important. The key to identifying the fear of negotiating lies in understanding the parameters of political and psychological blockages of peace. That is why Anwar Sadat achieved a peace between Israel and Egypt in 1978 at Camp David. His visit to Jerusalem removed all the psychological blockages of the Israelis. In a 1985 peace initiation by Chairman Yasser Arafat of Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and King Hussein of Jordan proved unsuccessful despite a warm approach by Prime Minister Shimon Peres of Israel because no one extended concrete political substances nor did they prepare a political environment around which these leaders could negotiate.

Yet, Saunders argument lacks the ability to respond to the reasons for failures in the implementation phase of a peace agreement. He should have laid out the political parameters of maintaining a peace process as well as constructing it (Skronski, 2001).

## Daniel Heradstveit

In his book, *Arab and Israeli Elite Perceptions*, Heradstveit (1973) mentions a common perception that whenever a political leader is faced with new information about opponents, he or she interprets it according to his or her past experiences. Thus, a new political situation is either ignored or shaped by pre-existing thoughts of leaders. He examined the peace initiations of Egyptians after the Yom Kippur War by stating that Israelis were unsure as to whether Egyptians were articulating their true intentions and trying to settle a permanent peace or not. In Heradstveit view, there was a deep mistrust between the two sides which was a result of their past experiences.

Yet, the author failed to address the flexibility of perceptions and changeable characters of political leaders. Six years after he published his book, in 1979 the leaders of Egypt and Israel established a substantial peace by overcoming their historic positions of mutual mistrust (Skronski, 2001).

## Summary

In this chapter, the related literature concerning Camp David Summit was examined. The literature regarding the failures of Camp David can be categorized into two different groups. Those who blame Palestinian side, Arafat in particular, comprise the first group. They blame Palestinians for the failure claiming that the Palestinian delegates said “no” to almost everything and did not even develop any counter-argument against the Israeli delegates’ proposals. And the second group, those who blame Israelis and the American sides for the failure. They assert that Israel did not offer what the Palestinian delegation had expected or even hoped for. In the end, they felt that Arafat was a scapegoat for Clinton’s accusations. They see Clinton’s finger



pointing as an attempt to rescue Barak's prestige within the Israeli public. All of the core demands of Palestinian side were refused by the Israelis because of security concerns. In addition, the chapter included literature regarding general issues of Middle East peace, the parameters of a permanent peace in the region, and the lessons derived from the past peace initiatives.

## METHODOLOGY

### Dependent and Independent Variables

The dependent variable of this research is the Camp David Summit 2000. The independent variables are:

- The beliefs of participant leaders and their perceptions of each other (for the Camp David Summit, in particular, the leaders are Yasser Arafat, Ehud Barak, and Bill Clinton),
- The impact of core demands (sine-quo-non) of both sides (for Palestinians: the refugees' right to return home, to halt the occupation and settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, and to have authority over East of Jerusalem; for Israelis: the security of its citizens),
- The impact of the U.S. intervention as a third party,
- The impact of public opinion and/or domestic pressure.

In an attempt to build a methodological basis, I will articulate how those independent variables are determined. This will further facilitate our understanding of how a peace process is structured.

### The Screening of Independent Variables

The beliefs of participant leaders and their mutual perception of each other are two significant factors that play a key role in any international peace talk. Thus, how political leaders develop a belief system is the key to being able to truly interpret their behaviors. Skronski (2001) points out that an individual rarely holds an objective view of the world that surrounds them. Their belief system is made up of their experiences which form their perceptions. In other words new information is interpreted in a way that

is consistent with their pre-established beliefs. This process helps an individual understand the world. In fact, the absence of a pre-existing belief system is almost impossible and would result in misinterpretation of the world. In a peace-making situation, the leader evaluates all the possible variables under his or her belief system and then initiates a policy. Saunders (1991) explains that political leaders formulate their understandings in their nation's best interest. As mentioned in the literature review, Saunders draws attention to the human aspect when evaluating a peace negotiation. The beliefs and perceptions of leaders, according to Skronski, act as determining factors not only in pre-negotiation and during-negotiation process, but also post-negotiation process, assuming that an agreement is reached. In order to implement the provisions of a new peace and alter the domestic political environment, the beliefs and perceptions of the leaders must be taken into consideration for each step of the process in order to ensure a favorable outcome (Skronski, 2001).

Another variable affecting the results of a peace talk is core demands (sine-quo-non) of involved parties. Theoretically, a peace negotiation is initiated to resolute an ongoing conflict that cannot be resolved otherwise. In fact, this hypothesis is also true for the war. A war is also waged to resolute a conflict between two or multiple parties. If one of these resolutions does not work, either war or peace, then the parties seek to initiate the other. In this sense, war and peace work as an alternative to each other in international relations (Anderson, 2004).

Mutual demands or indispensable provisions of parties comprise the subject matters of both war and peace. Whenever some interests conflict, either war or peace comes up as a solution. The term "sine-quo-non" means the essential and

indispensable provisions of conflicting parties. In the case of Israel-Palestine conflict, the authority over Jerusalem, the removal of Israeli troops from the occupied territories (West Bank and Gaza), the right of Palestinian refugees to return to Israel, and the security of Israel were the major issues at the Camp David Summit.

The impact of third parties in the Middle East Peace Process is undeniable. Since the region possesses the largest oil reserve in the world, the Middle East has always represented a power struggle among the world's leading powers. In the Cold War Era (1945-1989), Israel enjoyed unconditional support from U.S., while the Arab countries, especially Syria and Egypt, were given arms and the expertise in the form of military specialists from the Soviet Union (Skronski, 2001).

In addition to superpower rivalry during the Cold War, the ongoing violence between radical Palestinian militias and Israeli army propelled the subject into international spotlight. Under such circumstances, it seemed the issue would turn into a nuclear war between the superpowers. This fear convinced the world's political leaders to begin negotiations that would bring a clear resolution to the problem without extreme destruction. After the collapse of Soviet Union in 1989, the Cold War ended and the U.S. became the sole superpower in the world. The new period was referred to as the World New Order. It gave U.S. the opportunity to frame the Middle East in its own way. Arab countries, especially after the collapse of Soviet Union and the Gulf War, had to welcome the United States' authority over the entire region. This U.S. authority led to the opening of new era in Israel-Arab relations. This offered the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), as the Palestinian populations' sole representative, the opportunity to resolve their problems with Israel in a peaceful way. All of these developments in

world politics in the early 1990s, consequently, provided an unprecedented opportunity for peace for the first time in the history of Israel-Palestine conflict. In both the Oslo Accord and subsequent Camp David Summit, the U.S. played the mediator role as the third party. This research will examine the role of the U.S. as a third party and its effects and consequences on Camp David.

The impact of public opinion is another variable on any policy-making process. In the case of peacemaking, public opinion has a very crucial role. As mentioned earlier, Saunders (1991) denotes the importance of convincing the internal politics and public before initiating a peace process. Even when a leader decides to negotiate, according to Saunders, he cannot reach an agreement with opposite party unless the public confirms the policy. Middle East peace process is a very good example for Saunders' argument. During the prolonged peace marathon of Middle East, two of the political leaders, one from Egypt and the other from Israel, had to pay the price of peace with their lives. Both President Anwar Sadat of Egypt and the Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin of Israel were killed by terrorists from their own countries for their strong adherence and commitment to peace. Their deaths reinforce how important it is to shape the internal politics and public opinion prior to establishing peace negotiations.

The independent variables have been derived from the literature; however, most of those studies lack a broad perspective and rarely allow a broader understanding of historical events. Most of them analyzed only one or two aspects of Camp David's failure such as the leaders' perception of each other or simply a review of some of the tactical wrongdoings. However, the subject matter has a very broad background and cannot be understood by analyzing only the specific peace talks. In this study, I

provided a broad background encompassing the areas which were discussed at Camp David so as to more completely analyze the reasons for the failure. In addition to this, I used cross-examination to increase the reliability of the research. In an attempt to diminish the impact of biased commentary, the number of resources was intentionally kept broad.

### Methodology

I analyzed the obtained data through historical analysis method. Historical method helps researchers derive the historical facts regarding the subject matter and answer the research questions based on these facts. Additionally, the historical analysis method is one of the most effective ways to study historical events. By using the historical method, researcher can eliminate biased information that would prejudice the outcomes of research. Historical method requires that researcher analyze many years of continuous events and data. This allows the analysis to be connected to other related historical events, which would help eliminate the one-sided and short-sided interpretation of current social phenomena.

In order to answer the research question, I obtained the required data from articles, interviews, and focus books. Most of the details regarding Camp David Summit have already been covered by government officials from the U.S., Israel, and Palestinian National Authority (PNA), who took part in the negotiation process. The work of reporters who covered the day-to-day developments concerning the talks; and academicians who analyzed all available records were also utilized in this study. However, there was no official report recorded at Camp David Summit. Most of the analysis in the literature was based on the memory of the participant observers. None of

the principle players, Bill Clinton, Ehud Barak or Yasser Arafat, provided any details about what happened at Camp David. However, four of the top negotiators, Ben Ami, Dennis Ross, Abu Mazin, and Robert Malley did made their observations public. Unfortunately, their accounts hardly allow for a broad evaluation of the reasons for the collapse of the peace process (Singer, 2002). On the other hand, at the official website of the U.S. State Department, there are full transcripts of the press conferences containing the day-by-day details of the negotiation.

Finally, I evaluated the Oslo process and its impact. The Oslo process was included because the Camp David Summit grew out of the earlier Oslo Accord and became the culmination of this earlier peace process.

#### Limitations

There is no written record of daily talks regarding what really happened during the Camp David negotiations. Official reports were prepared based on interviews and observations. Besides, the reports of participants were jaded by their partisan approach. For example, Dennis Ross, the head of the U.S. peace negotiators and the author of *The Missing Peace*, was extensively criticized for his harsh accusations of Yasser Arafat and for his extreme pro-Israeli interpretations. Ross' remarks, however, were broadly used by many as reference.

On the other hand, the facts preceding Camp David were narrowly reported. In fact, there are not enough resources about the failures of Oslo process. The literature does not cover all the aspects of the subject matter. In addition to this, there is no written document regarding the socio-economic reality of the Middle East peace process. There might be some variables other than what is covered in this research that

have had effects on the results of Camp David. Finally, the research was conducted based on the previous reports, documents, and interviews and made no further attempt to detail any of the phases of process.



## ANALYSIS OF INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

### Leaders' Perception and Belief System

The prime minister of Israel Ehud Barak, the president of Palestinian National Authority (PNA) Yasser Arafat, and the president of U.S. Bill Clinton were the principal leaders involved in the negotiation process of the Camp David Summit 2000. There were also some other political figures who participated in the process; however, the focus will primarily be on Barak, Arafat, and Clinton.

#### *Ehud Barak*

##### *Barak's Background*

Ehud Barak was born in 1942 in Kibbutz Mishmar Hasharon in Israel. His military career began when he joined the Israeli army at the age of seventeen. He served as a commander in many well-known battles, including Six Day War and Yom Kippur War. He is best known for sneaking into Beirut with a commando team dressed as women and assassinating the three major Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) leaders. In 1976, he commanded the very well-known hostage operation at Entebbe Airport in Uganda. In 1988, he was involved in the planning of assassination of the Tunis of Abu Jihad, the number two commander of PLO. He was appointed the 14<sup>th</sup> general staff of Israel in 1991. Barak left the military and joined the Yitzak Rabin's cabinet in 1995 as interior minister. Upon the assassination of Rabin in 1996, he became the foreign minister of Israel. In 1997 he was elected as the Labor Party leader. At the time he was elected as prime minister, critics pointed to his military background and lack of political talent as potential problems. Barak was portrayed as one of the most resistant political leaders in forming peace with Palestine. But, in fact, he was the only Labor member to

vote in favor of the agreement with Palestine in 1999. Barak was ousted from politics in 2001 when he lost the general election against Ariel Sharon. His lack of political talent became so evident that he had to resign from the leadership of Labor Party as well (Peretz, 2001; Helmick, 2004).

### *Barak's perception of Camp David*

Barak never favored the idea of Israel's gradual retreat from the occupied territories. This was the central point in 1993 Oslo Accord that was signed between Israel and Palestine. As far as Barak was concerned, during preceding seven years, Palestine had done nothing significant or tangible in return for their gradual withdrawal from Gaza and West Bank. Barak was also confident about the Israeli public's reaction. He believed that the public would be satisfied with anything as long as they reached an agreement on the ceasefire. However, he also knew that he had to bring the agreement to the public in order to confront any political resistance. He was aware of the political mistake that Yitzak Rabin had made when he signed the Oslo Accord alienating the Israeli right-wing. A mistake he paid for with his own life. Knowing these Barak's political concerns contributes to understand the psychology of the Prime Minister and his government prior to their entering the negotiations (Lerner, 2003).

Barak, at the very beginning, did not fulfill some of Israel's former obligations. Those three commitments that Barak ignored were as follows:

1. The transfer of three Palestinian villages next to Jerusalem,
2. Partial redeployment of Israeli troops from the West Bank,
3. The release of Palestinian prisoner captured before the Oslo Accord.

Barak took this approach so that he would appear to be a tough negotiator. He did not want to be viewed as an easy target for the Palestinians. Barak thought that if a final agreement was reached, these minor steps would obviously be taken, but if not, he did not want to agree to minor concessions at the start (Malley & Agha, 2001). In short, Barak was acting as if he didn't trust the Palestinians to fulfill their commitment.

After the negotiation failed, Barak was severely criticized for his all-or-nothing approach (Singer, 2002). In Barak's mind, Arafat had to be convinced that there was no third way or interim solution, other than either agreement or confrontation. In this sense, he repeatedly urged the U.S. to avoid talking about the possibility of continued negotiations if the Summit failed. Moreover, he urged some European countries and U.S. to convince Arafat to agree or otherwise all the blame for the failed talks would be blamed on him (Malley & Agha, 2001).

Despite all this apparent hard-line approach, during the negotiation, Barak presented a very flexible stance that made it difficult for the Palestinians to comprehend when his real limits had been reached. His earlier absolute firmness on some of the less important negotiating points became much more flexible when he wanted to manipulate the Palestinians into saying "yes". Before the negotiation started, he declared that there would be no deal if Arafat asked for the 95% of West Bank. But, after sometime negotiation Barak offered 97% of the West Bank to Arafat (Zunes, 2001). Barak's similar moves seemed to be based less on a calculation of what Israel had to keep, but more on a changing evaluation of what it could obtain. Barak apparently thought that if Palestinians were offered an appropriate deal with no alternative, they would ultimately

have to accept it. That is why Barak continued to make offers after the Palestinians successively turned down each of them (Malley & Agha, 2001).

Critics blamed Barak for having a slide-scaling approach and concluded that there was indeed no solid Israeli offer. Barak certainly did not take an “all-or-nothing” position but, nor did he offer the “moon” to Palestinians. These two forms of criticism represent polar opposites in the literature (Singer, 2002). The truth concerning Barak’s approach can be found in what Abu Mazin (Mahmoud Abbas), the current president of Palestine Authority and one of the participant Palestinian diplomats at the Camp David Summit, talked about in a post-negotiation interview. When asked whether there were any temptations at Camp David, he responded:

The temptations were in what was offered..... (but) despite the fact that it was true that they offered things that were never offered before, it never reached the level of our aspirations (Abu Mazin, 2001).

Barak was eager for an agreement and for this reason; he allied himself with Israel's most peace-minded politicians. He was not only the person creating the greatest pressure for the convention of Camp David, he but also wanted to achieve peace during Clinton’s tenure. He had outlined his comprehensive peace plan at his first meeting with Bill Clinton as early as 1999. In this meeting, he shared the details of his peace plan with Clinton regarding the U.S. funding for Israel’s security, support for Palestinian economy, and for the resettlement of refugees after the peace (Sontag, 2001; Singer, 2002).

## *Yasser Arafat*

### *Arafat's Background*

Arafat was born in 1929 in Cairo as a son of a Palestinian family. In his youth, he was involved in some Palestinian indigenous groups fighting with early Jewish settlers. He founded the Palestinian Student Union when he was at the Cairo University in 1952. After his brother, Badir, was killed in a raid by Israel, he voluntarily joined the Egyptian army where he took intelligence training and served during the Sinai Campaign. In 1957, he co-founded the first Fatah cell with Abu-Jihad, a friend of his from Gaza, and founded the Fatah Party in 1959.

He was elected the chairman of executive committee of PLO in February 1969 after Fatah took over the PLO. After the King Hussein of Jordan drove the PLO out of Jordan in 1970, Arafat moved to Beirut and housed the PLO there. In the 1970s, the PLO was widely recognized as the sole representative of Palestinians and Arafat was recognized as the leader of Palestinians. Under Arafat's leadership, the PLO stopped launching terrorist attacks against Israeli civilians. Arafat became an internationally known politician when he addressed the UN General Assembly in New York in 1974, wearing a military uniform with a pistol at his side and holding an olive branch in his hand. Through this speech, he managed to raise the awareness of the entire world concerning the Palestinian cause.

After Israel army invaded Lebanon in 1982, the PLO was forced to leave Beirut and settled in Tunis. In 1988 in Tunis, Arafat proclaimed the foundation of independent Palestine even though PLO did not control any Palestinian territory. This proclamation

was widely interpreted as an attempt to co-opt the Palestinian revolt against Israel, the Intifada.

From 1960s to 1990s, Arafat's profile changed very dramatically. During 1960s he was seen as the primary leader of terrorist attacks into Israel, while in 1970s he was viewed as a politician without country. In 1980s, Arafat gained the further support from the West and the Israel's invasion of Lebanon and the massacres of Sabra and Shatilla made him an important political figure. By the beginning of 1990s, Arafat and PLO had initiated peace with Israel. The efforts led to the signing of Declaration of Principles between Israel and PLO in September 1993. He was awarded Nobel Prize together with Yitzak Rabin and Shimon Peres in 1994 for their role in the establishment of Oslo peace. He set up the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and was elected president in 1995. Critics blamed Arafat for ruling the PNA in an arbitrary manner and with failing to develop democratic institutions. He has been accused of being tolerant of corruption and nepotism among the new leadership of Palestinians. Yet, the PNA and Arafat achieved their Oslo commitments by maintaining order and avoiding terror.

Upon Ariel Sharon's visiting to Temple Mount, the Palestinians living in the occupied territories initiated a period of violent uprising, which is called the second Intifada. Though Arafat explicitly condemned the violence, the charge of triggering the events remained squarely on his shoulders. In 2002 April, Arafat was surrounded by the Israel Army in his home in Ramallah and kept in confinement until his death in November 2004 (Cawley, 2003).

### *Arafat's Perception of Camp David*

Historians agree on the fact that Arafat viewed the Camp David as a trap. Top Palestinian negotiator Abu Mazin admitted that Arafat and his lieutenants never intended to make any concessions at Camp David and viewed the whole process as a trap to be escaped from (Sontag, 2002). The Palestinians' admission that they saw the whole exercise as trap demonstrates why they were not willing to negotiate away any of their rights at the Summit. It was not a negotiation tactic, as American and Israelis assumed; rather it was their real position.

In fact; neither Arafat nor his assistants treated Camp David as a historic opportunity. Top negotiators from both sides including Abu Mazin, Ben Ami, and Dennis Ross all confirm that Arafat had no intention of really becoming involved in the negotiations. As a matter of fact, despite Clinton's ongoing pressure, Arafat never proposed any counteroffers. Arafat appeared to be quite different from the man who had negotiated and signed the Oslo Accord in 1993. For example, by stating that "there was no Temple in Jerusalem, it was only an obelisk" he appeared to be questioning the core of the Israelis' faith and this seemed to be a serious technical mistake for an experienced negotiator like him (Singer, 2002).

As Arafat's view of Camp David was that of a trap, the American's compliance with the Barak's timetable proved an effective tool for him. Barak's first timetable that he offered to the U.S. was for the conference to start in May 2000. Instead, Clinton administration explained the Summit would be held in July. Seeing an opportunity to manipulate the issue of the timetable in his favor, Arafat requested more time to prepare, but then did nothing to make that preparation possible. Since Arafat was not

involved in setting the timetable, he was able to imply to the international audience the Summit was designed to press Palestinians to reach a quick agreement. On June 15, Arafat told Secretary of State Albright that if the Summit would be held in a rush, the last hope for a solution for Palestinians would be ended (Malley & Agha, 2001). His demand, however, did not create any counter effect and he went to the Camp David just knowing he was just trying to survive and not benefit from the process.

Arafat was said to believe that behind all Barak's pre-negotiation moves was the objective of either forcing him into an incompatible deal or mobilizing the world against Palestinian to weaken and isolate them if they refused to proceed (Zunes, 2003). Barak's attitudes towards the interim commitments (transferring three villages, redeployment of troops from West Bank, and the release of Palestinian prisoners) were interpreted by Arafat as Barak's attempt to keep these commitments to use as bargaining chips and advantages for further negotiations. These unfulfilled interim commitments were long overdue and they caused a delay in transition of the permanent status, which would have granted a full independent Palestinian state. For Arafat, interim commitments and permanent status were reciprocally linked issues and could not be separable. When Barak offered that unfulfilled interim commitments would certainly be ignored if negotiation succeeded, Arafat feared they might be equally forgotten if it failed. In the eyes of Arafat, Barak lost his credibility when he attempted to manipulate the Palestinians into agreeing with making in return for the fulfillment of the earlier interim commitments, an obligations which Arafat felt were overdue and thus had nothing to do with the Camp David. To Arafat, Barak was trying to gain international sympathy by promising something that he should have already done. The insistence of



Barak to jump into the final status negotiations without prior confidence-building measures, such as a freeze on new settlements or the fulfillment of previous obligations, led to Arafat's questioning the sincerity of Barak.

*Bill Clinton*

### *Clinton's Perception of Middle East Peace Process*

Clinton devoted much of his presidency to making the Israel-Palestine negotiation succeed. When Camp David began, Clinton has just five months left in his presidency. Having hosted Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin on the White House lawn at the ceremony of Oslo Accord in 1993, Clinton wanted a conclusion. He was very eager to achieve the Middle East peace and pushed the process one last time in December, 2000, at Taba, Egypt. However, by then he was losing his power base because he had just one month left as President.

It is possible to see, however, some severe criticism of Clinton and his administration concerning their perception of Middle East peace process. First of all, unlike Palestinians who saw the process as a means to end the occupation and establish a Palestinian state on West Bank and Gaza, the Clinton administration and the Israelis saw it as a way of maintaining the occupation of major territories to protect Israeli settlements. Secondly, there has been criticism that during the peace process, the Clinton administration seemed to coordinate the agenda of talks closely with the Israelis, but not with Palestinians. In spite of Palestinian's willingness to address the issues of Jewish settlements on the occupied territories and the status of Jerusalem, Clinton administration repeatedly postponed any respond to the Palestinians. Finally, Clinton administration perpetuated the well-known American foreign policy of Israel.

That was, that the security of Israel has always been the primary focus of all peace negotiations. This was confirmed by one of the Israeli negotiators who admitted that they work closely with the U.S. on their respective proposals (Zunes, 2003).

Critics agreed that it was Clinton who naively insisted that Arafat accept Israelis' proposals without noticing that the two parties were still far apart on some key issues (Sontag, 2002). Agreeing with Arafat on the need for action on the interim issues, Clinton relayed to him that Barak would transfer the occupied villages near Jerusalem back into Palestinian control. Arafat then announced this to Palestinian public. Later, Barak reneged on this promise, yet Clinton did not take any action to pressure Barak to fulfill his commitment. The Clinton administration also did not challenge Barak's construction of new settlements, his refusal to withdraw from some Palestinian land as part of third phase, and his continued support of the incarceration of Palestinian prisoners (Zunes, 2001).

#### *Clinton's relations with Israelis and Palestinians*

In preparation talks in June 2000 before the Summit, Clinton told Barak that he wanted to achieve the peace, but not under circumstances that killed the Oslo Accord. In reaction to Ehud Barak's breaking his promise to fulfill the interim commitments and retracting some of his early positions, Clinton furiously confronted Barak and expressed his accumulated frustrations. Nevertheless, it is a well-known fact that Clinton, in general, supported the proposals of Israelis negotiators.

According to the critics, Clinton gave undue significance to the so-called "concessions" of Israelis. Critics called Barak's concessions nothing more than an inch

away from his predecessors. For them, progress was based on a relative movement from the previously held positions (Lerner, 2003; 2001; Zunes, 2001).

Clinton agreed with Arafat on the need for action on the interim issues. Clinton also promised Arafat that he would support a substantial withdrawal of Israel from occupied territories. More importantly, Clinton assured Arafat on the day before the negotiation started that he would not be blamed if the negotiations did not succeed. At the end of the negotiation, however, Clinton directed all the blame on Arafat (Spector, 2003).

Clinton's decision to ignore his early promise to Arafat and blame the Palestinians after the Summit failed clearly demonstrated how Israelis and Palestinians were perceived by Americans. Some of the critics pointed out that behind Clinton's finger-pointing toward Arafat as the person singularly responsible for the failure of negotiations was his intention to help Ehud Barak whose concessions had jeopardized his political standing among Israeli public. Indeed, according to critics, behind Clinton's blaming of Arafat was the veiled intention of praising Barak (Telhami, 2001). For Palestinians, Clinton's reaction made the failure of Camp David far worse than it otherwise might have been. A Palestinian negotiator, Nabil Shaath, explained after the failure:

I personally pleaded with President Clinton: Please do not put a sad face and tell the world it failed. Please say we broke down the taboos, dealt with the heart of matter and will continue. But then President started the blame game, and he backed Arafat into a corner (Zunes, 2003).

A similar statement was made by an Israeli negotiator Shlomo Ben-Ami. He stated that they all expected the negotiation would go on, but Clinton's blame game left them to their own devices (Zunes, 2001).

Despite all this failure, Clinton did make a historic contribution to the Middle East peace process. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1994 together with his Palestinian and Israeli counterparts for his efforts in the Oslo Accord in 1993. He demonstrated a great aspiration to end this process with a final agreement before his presidency ended. His finger-pointing of Arafat was shown by some as the evidence of Arafat's indispensable role in the failure of Camp David, while some others interpreted it with Clinton's precipitance and intention to support Ehud Barak in Israel (Zunes, 2003).

#### The Impact of Core Demands (Sine-Quo-Non)

The Oslo Accord was the first step of a mutual recognition of Israeli state and the PLO. The fundamental issues of sovereignty over the occupied territories, as well as the related issues of the status of East Jerusalem, and the rights of Palestinian refugees to return their home in Israel were intentionally brought ahead in order for each party to fulfill their interim obligations first. All of these things were to resolve within a transitional period of five years, beginning with the date of the inauguration of the Palestinian self-governing authority. Final status negotiations were to commence no later than the beginning of the third year of the interim period.

A year after the Oslo, in May 1994, the clock for the interim phase began to tick when the Israelis and the Palestinians agreed to transfer the Gaza Strip and Jericho area to the newly created PNA. In September 1995, the Israel-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza, often called as Oslo Accord II, was signed,

which extended the jurisdiction of PNA to the other areas of West Bank. According to the Oslo II, Israel would gradually withdraw from the occupied territory giving partial administration of territories to Palestinian National Authority. In accordance with the plan, the West Bank was divided into three parts, A, B and C. The Palestinian Authority would have full control in area A which consists of just 3% of West Bank and around 60% of the Gaza Strip. Area B in the West Bank which would be jointly controlled consists of 27% of the territory and area C again in the West Bank totaling 70% of the territory which would be solely controlled by Israel (Savir, 1998).

Israel began to withdraw from the designated parts of West Bank and completed the first withdrawal at the end of 1996. Three other withdrawals were scheduled to be completed in six-month intervals. The last part of the Interim Agreement was reached in October 1998 at Wye River, Maryland. After all withdrawal, the areas over which the PNA would get the full control would make only the 8% of the West Bank. Palestinians in return agreed to annul the specific clause of the PLO Charter calling for the destruction of Israeli state and guaranteed Israeli security.

As clearly seen, neither Oslo I nor Oslo II granted the full control of West Bank and Gaza to the Palestinians. Rather the actions which were taken by the parties aimed not to engage any activities that would prejudice the outcomes of the final status negotiations. Thus, the interim period did not aim to solve the fundamental problems of both sides; rather it was planned as a trust building phase. The parties, however, could not achieve this end because of ongoing violence by Palestinian radical terrorist organizations such as Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and the Israeli army's excessive reactions.

During the seven-year of Oslo process, Hamas and PIJ carried out about 30 suicide attacks and killed over 120 Israeli civilians and wounded many others. Between 1993 and 1998, on the other hand, about 259 Palestinians were killed by Israeli security forces and additional 56 others were killed by Israeli civilians, including the right-wing settler Baruch Goldstein's killing of 30 worshippers in a mosque in Hebron in 1994 (Hirschberg, 2004). As a result, the interim phase had not only failed to build the trust between the two sides, but also had raised the reciprocal tensions before the final negotiation even began.

In July 2000, parties came to the Camp David with volatile issues to solve. The agenda of Camp David Summit included:

- The status of Jerusalem,
- The issue of occupied territories or Israeli settlement (Gaza and West Bank),
- The issue of Palestinian refugees and/or their right to return.

### *Status of Jerusalem*

#### *Background of Issue*

Jerusalem is considered a holy city to Muslims, Jewish, and Christians equally. Muslims pray at the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the third holiest site in Islam where Prophet Muhammad went on a celestial journey. The city became important for the Jews with the construction of Temple of Jerusalem in the 10<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Within the walls of Jerusalem's Old City, Jews pray at their faith's holiest shrine, the Western Wall. Millions of Christians visit the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, where Jesus is believed to have been crucified (Lynfiled, 2000; Kleiman, 2003).

The city has been ruled by numerous nations and religions. In 1922, the city was left to the British Mandate by the Ottomans. When UN partitioned the all historic Palestine between Arabs and Jewish in 1947, the administration of city was left to an international committee. However, the internalization of Jerusalem has never been enforced. After the Arab-Israel War in 1948, the city was divided into the two parts: the eastern part to the Palestinian Arabs and the western to the Jews. Geographically, Jerusalem is divided into three parts, an old city, a new city, and a satellite town. The city has had a Jewish majority since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and Western Jerusalem is no longer an Arab city. Jews represented the majority of old city prior to 1948, but today Palestinians make up the majority in the old city.

In 1950, West Jerusalem was declared the capital of Israel. In Six Day War, the Israel army occupied all of Jerusalem as well as all land on the western side of Jordan River (Gaza and West Bank). In 1980, Israel declared Jerusalem as their eternal capital. The declaration of Israel, however, received a huge amount of protest from the international community and all the embassies in Jerusalem. All of the embassies located in Jerusalem moved to Tel Aviv with only two exceptions. In Oslo peace, the status of Jerusalem was intentionally left as a politically debatable issue.

#### *Mutual Positions on the Status of Jerusalem*

Each of the leaders was well-aware of the fact that the issue of Jerusalem was not only the future of the region, but also the future of their own political survival. Arafat knew that he alone was not entitled to make any decision by himself about the issue. Any deal seen as concession on the Muslim's holy place would undermine his legitimacy throughout the Muslim and Arab worlds.

The ties of Muslims with the city are based on the Prophet Muhammad's sacred journey, in which he ascended to heaven from Jerusalem's Haram-Al-Sharif. Also, it is important to note that the holy places have an exceptional significance for Palestinians too. They have always believed that the possession of holy places is what makes them different from all other Arabs. The city is religiously important for Israelis as well. It also became politically important for nationalist Jews after Six Day War, when Israeli troops occupied the Old City along with the rest of the West Bank.

Following the Oslo Accord, the intentional delay for the debate over the status of Old City (East Jerusalem) and the unity of Jerusalem became the only nationalist issue that the right-wing parties could make a stand on to attract voters. Israeli's left had also joined with the right, since 1967, in the notion that the entire city is Israel's "eternal, undivided" capital. The Israeli public also has espoused an adamant stance on the city's status. For Barak, the problem with making concessions concerning this issue meant attracting all of the criticism from the religious, nationalist, and political opposition to himself (Lynfiled, 2000).

In 1999, Barak came into the office on pledge to retain Jerusalem as the "eternal and undivided capital" of Israel. At the beginning of Camp David, Barak told the U.S. officials that he would not accept Palestinian sovereignty over any part of East Jerusalem except a symbolic "foothold". After negotiations began, he appeared to agree on Palestinian sovereignty first over some part, then over all part of Arab sectors of East Jerusalem. The proposals of the Israelis, however, contained many ambiguities and blanks on the status of Jerusalem that remained to be filled in. Arafat was offered a Palestinian sovereignty over the Muslim and Christian neighborhoods of Old City based



on a very loosely defined “permanent custodianship” of the Haram-Al-Sharif, a holy site for the Muslim. The rest of the Old City was left to Palestinians’ functional authority (Lerner, 2003).

As for other proposals, the Palestinians did not present any counterproposal concerning the sovereignty of Jerusalem. Some of the participant negotiators claimed that Palestinians were not as insistent on the sovereignty issue of East Jerusalem as they were on the issue of withdrawal from the occupied territories. To them, Palestinians were open to a division of city granting Israel sovereignty over Jewish areas. However, the Palestinians’ position was even stricter than other’s when the parties began to discuss the sacred places. Americans spent hours discussing the sovereignty issue of sacred places in an attempt to convince the Palestinians to compromise. In the end, Palestinian refused all proposals and demanded full sovereignty in the exchange for an agreement.

### *The Palestinian Territories under Israel Occupation*

#### *Background of Issue*

When the Arab-Israel War ended in 1949, Israel occupied a total of 78 % of historic Palestine territories beyond the boundaries set by UN’s partition plan. The rest of areas were occupied by Arab states, the West Bank to Jordan and the Gaza Strip to Egypt. After the War, Israel signed armistice agreements with Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan in which the new borders of Israel were determined as Green Lines (Rabinovich, 1999).

In an attempt to establish a permanent peace between Israel and Arab countries, UN Security Council declared its Resolution 62 to empower the conclusion of armistice

agreements. However, Arab countries refused to sign a permanent peace treaty with Israel and consequently the new borders of Israel established by armistice agreements never received an international recognition.

The Six Day War changed the perceived balance of power in the Middle East once again. During the War, Israeli army occupied West Bank and Gaza besides other several territories. After the War, the Israeli government declared that the Israel was ready to turn over all of the occupied territories in return for a peace with Arab countries. But, some nationalist and religious groups pressured the Israeli government to maintain the annexation and settlements in those areas. Following the Six Day War, the situation in the Middle East was discussed by UN General Assembly that referred the resolution of issue to the UN Security Council. The Resolution, numbered 242, was adopted after lengthy discussion by the Council that proposed Israel's withdraw from the occupied territories in return for Arab countries recognition of an independent Israel state. At Khartoum Arab Summit, which was held in September 1967, Arab countries refused to accept the UN Resolution and the existence of an Israeli state in any form. In November 1975, the U.S. declared that they recognized the significance of Palestinian national issue and that the U.S. would be willing to facilitate a solution if the PLO would recognize the relevant UN resolutions including Israeli state's right to exist. The U.S. policy eventually yielded fruit just before the Oslo peace process began when Arafat announced PLO's acceptance of UN Resolution 242 in 1988 (Savir, 1998).

During 1980s, PLO leaders and members were in an exile in Tunis and Algeria. Seeing that the PLO's chances were waning, the Palestinians living in the occupied territories initiated an uprising in 1987 called Intifada in attempt to take their fate into

their own hands. The revolt was started by the Palestinian settlers in West Bank and Gaza and mostly involved low-level violence. The purpose of the revolt was to draw the attention and sympathy of international community to the Palestinian's cause and plight and to highlight the sufferings caused by the oppression of the Israeli army during its occupation. Israel, on the other hand, maintained strict military actions on the Palestinians living in the occupied territories under the claim of providing safety for the Israeli settlers.

Meanwhile, settlement expansion became the Israel's official policy especially after the right-wing party Likud came to power in 1977. From 1967 to 2003, Israel settled about 220,000 Israelis to the West Bank and Gaza and about 200,000 to the environs of Jerusalem (Hirschberg, 2004).

The Oslo Accord, which was signed partly in 1993 and partly in 1995, provided for the establishment of a Palestinian national authority that would have power over the occupied territories after Israeli army evacuate them. The peace led to the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Gaza and most cities of West Bank in the early 1996. In January 1996, Palestinians living in the Gaza and Palestinian-controlled West Bank elected their own legislators, led by Fatah and Yasser Arafat as the president of Palestinian National Authority (PNA). According to the agreement, the Palestinians were to rule about 97 % of the occupied territories, but the area under their actual control amounted a nominal 8 % of the land. Meanwhile, the Israelis started an accelerated settlement program, constructing thousands of housing units in the West Bank (Savir, 1998).

In 1997, Israel and PNA signed another agreement on the evacuation of Hebron. Israeli army withdrew from Hebron leaving 500 settlers in the middle of an Arab city

under the protection of Israelis troopers. Further negotiations led to Wye River Plantation Agreement in 1998 between the two sides providing that Israel would completely withdraw from Hebron in return for Palestinians' renewing their commitments against preventing terror and incitement (Klieman, 2000). Most of the provisions of the Wye Agreement were not fulfilled by Palestinians and Israel did not withdraw as they had been stipulated.

In 1999, Netanyahu was replaced by Ehud Barak who then continued the settlement expansion policy. The settlement issue on the occupied territories was at the heart of the negotiations. For the left-wing Israelis, the settlement policy was an obstacle to peace. For the moderate right, the existence of settlers on the occupied territories was a security issue. For the hard core right, the settling Judaea and Samaria (the biblical names of West Bank) was a divine mission. Even though they were the minority (200,000 on the West bank and Gaza; 200,000 on the environs of East Jerusalem), the settlers have had a dramatic impact on the Israel's policy since 1967, the year they first occupied these lands (Hirschberg, 2004).

#### *Mutual Positions on Occupied Territories*

During the Summit, Israelis persistently refused to withdraw from the occupied territories, which was just the 22% of all historic Palestine. Palestinians, on the other, had already relinquished in Oslo to the demand for 48% of historic Palestine provided by UN in 1947 partition. However, Israel continuously insisted that Palestinians' demand for the 22% was still too much. Israelis' demand was hard to accept for Palestinians because the Palestinian population living in these territories was two or three times more than the Israeli settlers (Hirschberg, 2004). Moreover, Israel had invaded and

acquired these lands by military force in Six Day War. The UN Security Council had repeatedly warned that Resolution 242, the basis of Arab-Israel peace, underscored the principle of international law: “the inadmissibility of acquisition of territory by war” (Kleiman, 2000). Palestinians’ demand for the implementation of UN Resolution 242 was challenged by the U.S., first of all, which proposed that the negotiation be based on what they termed “creative ideas” (Malley & Agha, 2001). This namely reflected the U.S.’s position to undercut the UN’s and also the Palestinians’ principles. A series of UN resolutions supported by every U.S. administration between Israel’s 1967 occupation and Clinton’s inauguration have recognized the West Bank and Gaza as occupied lands. It was Clinton who declared that such resolutions were no longer relevant and would be superceded by Oslo Accord (Sontag, 2002). The Palestinians’ strongest negotiation chip was the international law’s support of Palestinian cause, which was given teeth by UN’s Security Council resolutions. Indeed, these resolutions have already addressed many fundamental problems including Israel’s illegal settlements and its unilateral invasion of East Jerusalem. By calling into the question the resolutions, however, Clinton administration aimed to give no diplomatic option to the Palestinians other than capitulation.

Malley and Agha (2001) acknowledged that the Israelis stuck to their positions, which were unacceptable by Palestinians, in the full knowledge and support of United States. After the negotiation, Israelis were rewarded for taking extreme concessions whereas they had proposed something unacceptable to the Palestinians.

Israelis were said to have proposed that almost 95% of the West Bank go to the Palestinians. However, they did not offer to define that area on a map to validate their

propositions. It was then reported that Israelis' proposition did not include the Greater East Jerusalem area which Israel considered as part of their territory, though UN and international communities recognize it as part of occupied territories (Zunes, 2001). Their propositions did not include Jordan Valley, Dead Sea Coast, and Judean Desert either for safety reasons. As Pressman (2003) points out, the Israeli offerings in fact were based on their own definitions of the occupied territories. When calculated without these areas, the ground measure of proposed areas was not 95% but only 77% of all West Bank. The Israelis also insisted on holding on to 69 of their 85 settlements in the West Bank whereas UN Resolutions 446 and 465 prohibited a country from transferring their civilian population into territories seized by military force.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, according to the critics, saw no reason to unnecessarily alienate the settler community by giving their property to Palestinians (Singer, 2002). Unfortunately, these settlements were blocking the Palestinian territory in such a way that a contiguous Palestinian state in the West Bank was almost impossible. Consequently, it is not surprising to see that a national leader like Arafat would not accept such an offer at the expense of a nominal Palestinian state.

### *The Issue of Palestinian Refugees*

#### *The Birth of Refugee problem*

After the Arab-Israel War in 1948, 78% of historic Palestine passed on to newly established Israeli state. The rest of the area was divided by Egypt and Jordan. Over 720,000 Palestinian Arabs were driven out of Israel and became refugee in neighboring Arab countries (Palestinian Refugees, 2002). The borders which were drawn in

armistice agreements were not recognized by Arab countries. The mutual hostilities ceased, but the refugee problem has never been solved.

Immediately after the War, Israel legislated an act that banned the return of all Palestinian refugees to their properties (Moore, 1974). In addition to refugees of 1948, several hundred thousand refugees left their home after Six Day War in 1967 and were not allowed to return. The refugees of both wars constitute a real humanitarian and political problem. Therefore, any resolution of conflict can not ignore them. Since 1948, the refugee problem has always been at center of all peace negotiations.

### *Right to Return*

The most debated issue regarding the refugees is the right to return that is claimed by Palestinians. The UN has also confirmed in Resolution 194 that the refugees wishing to return their home should be permitted to do so. However, most of its provisions as well as the refugee section have never been implemented. Palestinians claimed that their right to return was guaranteed by international law, but the Resolution 194 never mentioned this. Yet, Resolution 194 further provided that those refugees who do not wish to return their home are entitled to compensation for their property losses under the international law (Moore, 1974).

Israeli governments have always feared that such a return of refugees would put an end the Israel's self-determination because large number of refugees would create an Arab majority. There were 5.4 million Jews living in Israel, against 1.2 million Israeli Arabs living in Israel. Israeli Arabs have citizenship and full civil rights, including the vote. There are also several Arab parties in the Knesset (Robinovich, 1999; Kleiman, 2003).

Israel's fear of refugees has not only been based upon their own assessment of refugee threat. Their fear has been explicitly confirmed by some Fatah leaders in their public speeches published in their original internet site. Sakher Habash (1998), one of those Fatah leaders, noted that the refugee issue is the winning card of Palestinians which means the end of Israeli state. The Arab states except Jordan do not want to accept Palestinian refugees nor do they offer them citizenship. Refugees in neighboring Arab countries are living in the refugee camps where conditions are miserable poverty and overcrowding. The Palestine refugee population is growing 100,000 every year and the population of all refugees was 3.3 million according to statistics (Palestinian Refugees, 2002).

#### *Mutual Positions on Refugee Problem*

The Palestinian side raised the issue of the right to return for refugees to Israel during the Camp David negotiation insisting upon the implementation of UN Resolution 194 and compensation for refugees for their confiscated property. The Israelis did not refuse the Palestinian proposal completely. They stated that Israel would accept a relatively small number of refugees because Israel has a population density of over 300 per square kilometer. Among the Israelis' reasons were the water scarcity of the region and high birth rate of the refugees. Therefore, they proposed, a gradual solution that permitted return of only a small number each year. This would just prolong the refugee problem for the foreseeable future (Singer, 2002).

On the highly sensitive issue of refugees, the American's idea was so narrow and spoke only of a "satisfactory solution". Palestinians were silent on the matter and extended no counterproposal against Israel's or America's proposals. In the end, the



American idea of “satisfactory solution” and the Israeli proposal of the right to return for limited number of refugees overlapped. For Palestinians, both of these solutions would cause them to have to shift away from their position in a fundamental way. They would lose the international legitimacy of UN’s resolutions on refugee return to indefinite and insufficient proposals of the U.S. and Israel (Malley & Agha, 2001).

### The Effect of Third Parties

The U.S. undertook significant roles before and during the Camp David, which were complicated and sometimes contradictory to each other. As principal broker of peace, the U.S. was expected to reconcile the demands of each party in an impartial and reasonable fashion. However, its strategic alliance and cultural and political partnership with Israel overshadowed all the negotiations from the beginning to the end. Sometimes, America’s historic companionship with Israel turned into an extreme sensitivity toward Israel’s concerns and an excessive appreciation of Israel’s concessions during the negotiation. For instance, when Barak said that he could accept a division of Old Jerusalem or Palestinian sovereignty over the Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem, the U.S. negotiation team was surprised. Indeed, the Barak’s offer was the fairest solution for the status of Jerusalem, but the U.S. peace team worried that the offer was too much for the Israeli public to tolerate. During the negotiation, the behaviors of the U.S. officials rarely reflected their concern for the Palestinian cause.

From the opening stage of Camp David to the end, the proposals of both U.S. and Israel frequently overlapped, but rarely contradict each other. The strategic relationship, in this sense, impeded the dealership role of U.S. and aligned them with the concerns of Israel. One of the consequences of this U.S.-Israel strategic partnership

was their consensus on a “no-surprise rule” (Malley & Agha, 2001). This was an American commitment to Israel that guaranteed that American would extend no surprise proposal without informing the Israelis in advance. During the negotiation, Americans always aligned themselves with the position of Israelis. For instance, in refugee issues, the U.S. officials could only propose a “satisfactory solution”, an offer that reflected nothing more than a poor diplomatic maneuver to satisfy the Israeli side rather than a fundamental solution like the UN Resolution 194. The strategic partnership of U.S. and Israel resulted in the decline of Palestinians’ confidence in Clinton, the U.S.’s credibility, and America’s ability to exercise effective pressure for a final deal.

Compounding these problems was the slow erosion of the United States’ effectiveness in terms of its dealership during the years of Oslo process. As the U.S. invested in the process, it put the success of peace in danger. Sometimes President Clinton himself had to indulge both side’s negative behaviors for the sake of peace. For instance, when Barak broke his promise on the commitment to transfer the three villages surrounding Jerusalem, Clinton exploded:

I can't go see Arafat with a retrenchment! You can sell it; there is no way I can. This is not real. This is not serious. I went to Shepherdstown for the Israeli-Syrian negotiations and was told nothing by you for four days. I went to Geneva for the summit with Assad and felt like a wooden Indian doing your bidding. I will not let it happen here! (Singer, 2002)

Similarly, Clinton was outraged when the Palestinian side offered almost nothing fourteen days after the negotiations began and yelled at Arafat:

If the Israelis can make compromises and you can't, I should go home. You have been here fourteen days and said no to everything. These things have consequences; failure will mean the end of the peace process.... Let's let hell break loose and live with the consequences (Singer, 2002).

America's alignment with the Israel was not absolute. When Clinton sought to convince Barak to move forward with the land exchange and Palestinian sovereignty over the East Jerusalem, Barak accused Clinton with aligning too strongly with the Palestinian concerns. Had Palestinians seen this divergence between Israeli and American positions, they would have taken the advantage of this complex relationship (Sontag, 2002). However, Palestinian side never put anything negotiable that would help the U.S. convince the Israeli side. This led to Americans' questioning the Palestinians' genuine purpose and loss of confidence in their sincerity. Clinton repeatedly told Arafat during the Summit that he did not expect him to agree to neither American's nor Israel's proposals, but he expected him to put something to be discussed. Clinton never got what he expected from Palestinian side and in frustration said, "I need something to tell him (Barak). So far, I have nothing" (Malley and Agha, 2001).

#### The Impact of Public Opinion

The last variable to have an effect on the failures of Camp David is the impact of public opinion and domestic politics. Both Arafat and Barak were attentive to their public's demands and the need for their support when they finally came to make a deal after the long and painful seven years of Oslo process.

Public opinion is an aggregate of individual views, attitudes, and beliefs about a particular topic expressed by a significant proportion of a community. Some political

scientists claim that these domestic constraints on leaders limit them in bringing about drastic changes in the policy (Skronski, 2001).

Analyzing the impact of public pressure on the Israel's and Arab countries policy preferences, Zeev Maoz (1996) notes that domestic politics both in Israel and Arab countries play major role in leaders' foreign policy course. However, he continues, some major breakthroughs have taken place in the past despite public pressure, where leaders have decided that they could risk severe domestic criticism in order to move ahead. During the Oslo negotiations, for instance, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin knew that barely 40 % of the Israeli public supported direct negotiations with the PLO (Skronski, 2001). In 1978, President Anwar Sadat of Egypt took a similar risk to make a deal with Israel despite the same kind of domestic pressure. However, both of these two leaders were killed by domestic terrorists as a result of increasing domestic resentment by the extreme nationalist groups.

Thus, it would not be wrong to say that both Arafat and Barak came to the Camp David with a heightened fear and awareness of the problems associated with opposing domestic pressure. For Barak the reason for going against domestic pressure was an opportunity to prevent the ongoing violence by the Palestinian extreme groups, which Israeli public including government officials believed Arafat was involved in secret. For Arafat, going against public opinion was justified by an attempt to address the unfulfilled Israeli commitments including evacuation of occupied territories, Israeli troopers' torture of civilians at security checkpoints, and the general public belief about U.S. and Israel partnership that made a peace negotiation suspect under the leadership of Americans.

For the purpose of this study, it will be more appropriate to analyze the parameters of each of the Israeli and Palestinian public opinions separately.

### *Public Reaction to Peace in Israel*

The democratic political system in Israel is one of the tools for the public to influence the government. Elections, public opinion polls, and the right to demonstrate in public are some of those tools that the public can use against governmental practices. Makovsky states (1996) that no Israeli government can ratify a peace agreement that was not supported by the public in general. Makovsky's analyze holds true for specific policies also. Israelis publicly punished the Shamir administration in the 1992 election for its intransigence in the Madrid peace negotiation despite a public willingness towards the peace.

Shamir's successor, Yitzhak Rabin, however, committed himself to the peace with Palestinians based on the public's sentiment. In his election campaign, Rabin had to make a promise to reach a peace agreement nine months after he had assumed the office. It was in fact nothing more than Rabin's public pledge that led to a final push to conclude Oslo negotiations (Skronski, 2001).

In political history of Israel, public pressure did not only give a way to the opening of a peace process, but also led to a break in the same process. In the late 1995, growing resentment toward the peace mounted as result of the increasing terrorist attacks conducted by Hamas. Much of the resentment resulted from the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin. His successor Shimon Peres was intent on maintaining the peace with the Palestine. But, in the face of increasing violence, Prime Minister Peres was called upon to take harsh precautions before the election. He carried out military operations in

southern Lebanon to displace the radical terrorist group from Israel's borders. In attempt to demonstrate his toughness against the growing terrorist threat and appease the public tension, Peres in fact undermined the peace process, which was engineered by Rabin's and his vigorous efforts in 1993 (Helmick, 2004).

In 1996 Israelis elected the Likud Party's leader, Benjamin Netanyahu, for his promise to carry out strong security measures against the terrorist attacks. The success of Netanyahu did not directly suspend the peace process, but it was widely believed that Netanyahu as a hard-liner had no intention of making any concession in order to maintain the peace. During Netanyahu's tenure, peace process was repeatedly overshadowed by the increasing violence. In 1997, Hamas killed over 20 Israeli civilians including women and children and raised the threat of terrorism among the Israeli public (Hirschberg, 2004).

Faced with a severe public criticism, Netanyahu accused Palestinian leaders of contributing the radical terrorists and retaliated with harsh sanctions against Palestinians working in Israel, including the withholding of millions of dollars in tax revenue, an obvious violation of Oslo Accord (Helmick, 2004). In fact, Israelis responded to the new violent situation by breaking their promise to the peace that they had once supported.

In this period, the Israeli right-wing extremists actively took part in the failure of the peace process by pressuring Netanyahu to authorize them to build new settlements in East Jerusalem where the population was mostly composed of Palestinian Arabs. Netanyahu's administration was overshadowed by his settlement expansion policy,

which the majority of Israeli public believed had the major effect in breaking down the peace process and mounting the violence of Palestinian radical extremists.

In May 1999, Netanyahu was voted out of office and Labor leader Ehud Barak became the prime minister of Israel. Barak came to office with a vow to leave no possibility untried in the pursuit of peace. He then accelerated the settlement expansion program in an attempt to win the support the Israeli right-wings. The program was initiated in Barak's words "in order to mollify the Israeli right which he needed acquiescent as he pushed forward toward peace" (Lerner, 2003).

Prior to Camp David Summit, Barak had to consider domestic constituency. During his one year of tenure, his position had been eroded by a series of scandals including an accusation against one of his minister of sexual harassment and assault. More importantly, Barak was aware of the fact that poor management of domestic public opinion could ruin the chances for a peace. Israeli public opinion over the peace was divided into two different directions: (1) opposition to concessions to any Palestinians demand and (2) a tendency to show more flexibility for the sake of peace. However, Barak was fairly confident that he would win the support of most Israelis in the event of a peace (Helmick, 2004).

During the Summit, Barak's domestic concerns pervaded his position a great deal. According to the critics it was Barak's own concerns to remain in power, rather than Palestinians inflexibility, which had more to do with the failure of the Camp David. Throughout the Summit, right-wing extremists and settlers went to public demonstrations in Israel to press Barak not to negotiate on the withdrawal from any land (Bregman, 2002).

Barak's domestic concerns were also behind President Clinton's decision to explicitly assign the blame to Arafat when the Summit failed. Senior Palestinian negotiator Sa'eb Erekat told journalists that Clinton told Arafat that he wanted to make a closing speech for the end of the Summit and emphasized to him:

You have to take the high ground, don't engage in finger-pointing, and don't put the blame on anyone. The parties agreed to highlight the progress achieved, rather than the failures, and continue the negotiations. However, on July 25, Clinton held a press conference and we saw him finger pointing at us. I asked him why and he said he'd done it for the sake of Barak, whose domestic situation was very fragile (Claudet, 2001).

Barak returned to Israel to face an eroding domestic support. Right-wing Israelis accused him of giving too many concessions on Jerusalem in particular. Left-wing Israelis, on the other hand, felt that it was Palestinians, not Barak, who caused the collapse of Summit. Increasing numbers of Israelis were convinced that Palestinians were unwilling to make a peace that Israelis could accept. Consequently, the influence of Barak was declining across Israel and he was defeated by peace opponents Likud leader, Ariel Sharon in January 2001 (Bregman, 2002).

#### *Public Reaction to Peace in Palestinians*

By 1980s, a political consciousness began to rise among the Palestinians. In this period, PLO leader Arafat began to promote a political remedy to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. But, fear of losing his fragile partnership with more radical segments of PLO and Palestinian population restricted him to pursue a peaceful relationship with Israel (Skronski, 2001).



The first Intifada movement led to a shift in PLO's constituency. Tired of living their living conditions, Palestinians living on the occupied territory wanted a political solution and made this clear to Arafat. The Palestinian uprising, Intifada, achieved an international recognition to their cause and Arafat seized this opportunity to make a substantial deal with Israel. The Palestinian uprising alone was not the only incentive to Arafat in his peace pursuing efforts. The defeat of Saddam Hussein in Gulf War in 1991 compelled him to think about the peace with Israel and so with its strategic alliance, the United States (Bentsur, 2001).

The Intifada also made the PLO and its chairman the perpetual leaders of Palestinian people. Arafat had managed to make the PLO identical to the Palestinian cause and to make it popular in the eyes of Palestinians. The public's allegiance to the PLO in reverse created its leader, Arafat and thus Arafat was also dependent on the Palestinian public opinion.

There were, nonetheless, many people in Palestinian public, as well as in PLO, who rejected the peace with Israel in any condition. A public poll in the occupied territories showed that the support for the Oslo Accord had dropped 25 %, from 69 % in September 1993 to 44 % in January 1994. As the support for peace diminished, the radical terrorist groups such as Hamas became popular among the Palestinians (Helmick, 2004). The main objective of such terrorist groups was the destruction of Jewish state and establishment of an independent Palestinian state on the territory of historic Palestine. The Oslo process met with serious cut offs when a terrorist act was perceived as a deviation from the agreements and therefore trust among the parties would never be possible.

Israel always tended to see Hamas as a subdivision of PLO and blamed Arafat with sustaining the terrorists in secret. In the distrust of Israel, on the other hand, Arafat's reluctance to crush Hamas and its refusal to extradite Palestinian fugitives to Israel proved an important role (Eisenberg & Caplan, 1998). When Hamas became a major constraint on Arafat administration, he ordered the arrest of their militants in response to the bombings inside Israel. Upon Arafat's order, Hamas publicly threatened the PLO by declaring that further arrests would be responded by terrorist attack to Palestinian security forces (The Middle East Reporter, 1995). Both the activities of rejectionist group in the PLO and terrorist organizations, without any doubt, undermined the PLO's ability to maintain the negotiation process with Israel and restricted Arafat's capacity to implement the obligations of Oslo Accord.

Dennis Ross (2004), the chief negotiator of U.S. negotiating team at Camp David, noted that both Palestinians and Israeli failed to resist the pressure of domestic politics during the Oslo process. Palestinian leadership under Arafat was lacking democratic legitimacy and unwilling to confront militant Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

Preceding the Camp David, a severe hostility developed among the Palestinians against the Summit and this domestic hostility exacerbated the tensions among the Palestinian negotiator as the stakes rose with the possibility of final deal. Arafat came to Camp David under the strong pressure from both inside and outside the Palestinian National Authority. He was well-aware that if he attempted to make any concessions on the right of return, Jerusalem, or any West Bank territory, he would face a strong reaction not only from his constituency, but also from entire Arab world. Some of the

Palestinian political organizations such as the Fatah, Popular Front for Liberation Palestine (PFLP) and PLO all insisted on the full right of return (Ross, 2004). Therefore, Arafat and his team avoided taking any positions that would undermine their situation back in Palestine.

### Summary

In this chapter, the four different variables that led to the failure of the Camp David Summit have been examined. The mutual perception of participant leaders was one of the major variables that impacted the results of the Summit. As seen in the chapter, the behaviors of Barak and Arafat were significantly influenced by their backgrounds. Barak had a military background that predisposed him to be adamant concerning the security of Israel. This perception was responsible for throwing the negotiations into a deadlock. Arafat was biased against the Israel-American relationship. Therefore, he saw the entire process as a potential trap and said “no” to almost every offer. Clinton, on the other hand, took a pro-Israeli approach to the matters. Sadly, the parties did not agree on any of the core demands. While Israel did want to relinquish full sovereignty of East Jerusalem, they would not accept a hundred percent withdrawal of their troops from the occupied territories. Further, the Palestinian final demand for the right to return their refugees to the occupied territories was completely refused by the Israelis. In the end, the impact of U.S. intervention on this process was very minor. Clinton made mistakes in determining the timing of the negotiations. In addition, the U.S. peace team did not offer any counter-proposals concerning the core issues of the two parties. Finally, public pressure from both

Palestinian and Israeli side were remarkably effective in influencing the behaviors of both Barak and Arafat.

## CONCLUSION

In light of the evidence, the answer to the research question raised at the beginning of this study, what political and psychological factors led to the failures of Camp David 2000, has proven to be more complex than indicated by previous literature. Without any doubt, Camp David concluded in a failure. In this study, the researcher answered the research question by addressing four different variables. These variables have been defined as political and personal factors in the research question.

The first variable that influenced the result of Camp David was the perceptions of the participant leaders. In this research, three of the political leaders' perceptions of each other were examined. Ehud Barak's perceptions had a remarkable impact on the failure of Camp David. His perception of the Palestinian leaders, especially of Yasser Arafat, negatively impacted his flexibility throughout the negotiations. During the Summit, the two leaders, Barak and Arafat, never met with each other because of Barak's personal antipathy for Arafat. Face to face interaction, however, has been a very significant factor in other peace negotiations. Barak's denial of vis-à-vis talk with Arafat also negatively influenced the behaviors of Palestinian negotiators. It should also be stressed that Barak made remarkably generous offers that no other Israeli prime minister had ever made before. His concessions concerning the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza were greater than any Palestinian would have dared imagine before. Yet, the efforts of Barak proved insufficient to convince Palestinian side. After the negotiations had failed, Palestinian official explicitly admitted that they did not trust Barak and therefore said "no" to all of his proposals.

Arafat, on the other hand, was intransigent. He rejected every Israeli proposal for fear of being trapped by the Israelis and the Americans. He did not offer the peace-minded position that he had previously presented when he addressed in UN General Congress in 1974 with an olive branch in his hand or when he signed Declaration of Principles with Yitzak Rabin on the White House lawn in 1993. Arafat's position grew partly out of his lack of trust for both Barak and Clinton, but another major component of his stance was created by the domestic pressure on him. In addition, Palestinians, as well as other Arab countries, have always seen American as a strategic ally with Israel. When the Palestinian side came to negotiate the final phase of Oslo at Camp David, they were convinced that Americans would never want to upset their strategic partner and would therefore always take a position that supported them. Therefore, Palestinians believed that saying "no" to everything was the safest way to escape from a possible American-Israeli trap. Indeed, Arafat, like every Palestinian, never believed that Oslo would bring an ultimate solution to the prolonged Middle East conflict. Oslo was only about presenting goodwill and sending a message to the entire world that both sides were committed to making peace with each other even though that was not the case. Oslo, in this sense, was nothing more than a political maneuver for both parties. It offered them the opportunity to articulate their positions in front of entire world. Throughout the Oslo, neither Israelis nor Palestinians were ultimately sincere. For example, in the face of radical terrorist activities by both Israeli and Palestinian extremists, they both remained silent or at least escaped from an explicit condemnation. Arafat could never extricate himself from being accused of providing clandestine support for the radical terrorists because many of the world's politicians believed that he

had the adequate authority to stop it. Israel, on the other hand, had always been criticized for its security operations and settlement expansion. Many Palestinian people living in the occupied territories suffered from Israeli Defense Force (IDF) troopers' humiliation and tortures.

The second variable or core demands of each party, was probably the most influential one. In Oslo, parties intentionally left the core demands for the final negotiation because they had no mutual trust at that time. When Palestinians and Israelis came to Camp David seven years after Oslo, the mutual trust was yet to be developed.

The status of Jerusalem: The issue of Jerusalem was a political hot potato. The city has sacred meaning for all celestial religions and it was impossible for any party to relinquish their claims to the city of Jerusalem. Neither of the parties suggested any reasonable proposal that would satisfy the opposite side. Furthermore, Palestinians and Israelis didn't hesitate to claim Jerusalem as their eternal capital. That claim was one of the fatal mistakes that closed the doors to negotiation concerning the issue of sovereignty over the Jerusalem. Ironically, the U.S. did not press the parties to go along with the UN's 1947 partition plan, which gave the administration of city to an international committee. While that might not be the best solution it would at least work until an appropriate solution could be found.

The issue of Palestinian refugees: The right to return for Palestinian refugees was not even discussed because of Israelis adamant opposition. Ehud Barak saw the refugees as a direct threat to the security of Israel. Being a military general prior to his becoming the prime minister had a great effect on his perception of security matters. His

military background proved to be one of the Barak's disadvantages as a political leader and prime minister of Israel. It limited his effectiveness at Camp David concerning the contentious issues of Middle East conflict that required the political skills to maneuver and be flexible with a historic rival.

As far as Palestinians were concerned, the refugee issue was a negotiating chip. Palestinian negotiators seemed to be raising the issue to win "points" at Camp David, rather than to help the refugees.

Occupied territories: Israel took the same adamant position when they negotiated the issue of the occupied territories. Barak did not want to evacuate West Bank and Gaza completely in order to maintain Israeli settlements. Some observers, including the members of American negotiation team, assert that it was the Palestinian side that brought the negotiation into a deadlock by refusing to accept Israeli offer concerning the occupied territories. However, for the Palestinians, the occupied territories belonged hundred percent to them according to UN's 1947 partition. Palestinians felt that Israel's illegitimate occupation and then their use of the occupied territories as negotiating chip was not considered as a sincere approach. As a matter of fact, it made the Israelis that much more untrustworthy in the eyes of Palestinians.

The security of Israel: During the Oslo process, Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad committed numerous suicide attacks on Israeli civilians. The attacks of these terrorist groups resulted in the Israeli public turning against the peace process.

Oslo was proposed in different phases. Each one of them was to be fulfilled five-year-of- trust-building that was intended to test the mutual adherence of both sides to the peace. Therefore, each of the prospected phases would have to be completed



successfully in order to pass to the next phase. The terrorist attacks of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, however, not only changed the Israeli public opinions, but also led to the election of hard-line political leaders like Benjamin Netanyahu whose political preferences did not promote the peace. Unfortunately, his policy of “being tough on terrorism” did not stop the terrorism. It increased the Palestinians’ frustrations against Israelis’ security operations and settlement expansion.

The security of Israel was not separately discussed at Camp David. Israeli side raised the issue of security when they discussed the status of Jerusalem and the occupied territories. In Israel’s adamant position on those issues, security concerns played a key role.

The third variable to have an impact on the failures of Camp David was the role of U.S. as a third party. Camp David was the final opportunity for both sides to build mutual trust that developed throughout the Oslo process. However, the last chance of the peace was missed by both Palestinians and Israelis because of their unpredictable policies. Neither side had a pre-negotiated peace plan regarding their core demands before Camp David. Barak seems to have arranged his positions in response to the Palestinians’ positions. Palestinians presented almost no positions which in fact, showed their real position. In the absence of a substantial position, neither Israelis nor Palestinians extended any realistic negotiable offers.

As the primary mediator, the U.S. was expected to be more prepared than the other two sides, but, as one of the negotiator from U.S. negotiation team said, they did not even have a written draft regarding the U.S. position on any of the issues.

Furthermore, U.S.' pro-Israel stance overshadowed its neutrality and trustworthiness in the eyes of the Palestinians.

The last variable to influence the results of Camp David were the domestic politics and public pressure from both Israeli right-wing extremists and Palestinian radical groups. Barak won the election for his promise to make Jerusalem the eternal capital of the Israeli state. He was also known for his personal antipathy for Arafat, which made him more credible to the right-wing Israelis. Barak was also well-aware of the fact that if he did not earn the sympathy of right-wing Israelis, he would share the same fate as his predecessor Yitzhak Rabin, who had been assassinated by a right-wing extremist for his strong adherence to the peace.

Camp David was a real opportunity for both Palestinians and Israelis to end the sufferings of the last half-century. Throughout those painful years, Palestinians were brutalized, impoverished, and left with little education. Israelis were left under threat of terrorism and lost many in horrific terrorist attacks. Camp David resulted in a stalemate which meant those sufferings would continue for an uncertain period of time. The continuing casualties caused by Palestinian radical terrorist attacks and the overreacting of the Israeli military operations continued to inflict deep injuries on both the Palestinians and the Israelis.

#### Recommendations

- The conflict between Israel and Palestine concerns two nations that claim the right to self-determination. This requires the resolution of two-states concerning ancient Palestine. Thus, the Israeli government should absolutely stop their settlement expansion policy. Israel should stop insisting on strategic control

over the entire country because it leaves no opportunity for Palestinian self-determination.

- Jerusalem should continue to be a holy city rather than a political symbol for both Palestine and Israel. Jerusalem should not be the capital of either side.
- Secondly, sovereignty is not the only need for Palestinians. A prospected state of Palestine will need economic viability. The population of refugees, which is 80% of all Palestinians, constitutes an economic and social challenge for Palestinian governments. The U.S. should assume the primary role in Palestine's economic viability and prosperity. The U.S. government should therefore be willing to enhance the amount of foreign-aid for Palestinians.
- The issue of economic viability requires another resolution concerning the issue of refugees. A sustainable solution of refugee issue requires that Israel accept their role in creating the refugee issue. Jews have the capability to understand the pains of refugees more than other people because they have undergone similar suffering throughout the centuries. To this end, Israel should acknowledge refugees' right to return to their home.
- The U.S., as the primary broker of previous peaces, should take a more impartial role to convince the parties, Palestinians in particular, that the U.S. is working for the well-being of both the Israelis and the Palestinians.
- Politician should avoid using belligerent rhetoric directed toward each other. In an attempt to build a mutual trust between Palestinian and Israeli public. Politicians from both sides should visit each other in their own countries. This would help to construct warm relations between two nations. Both Palestinian

and Israeli governments should not hesitate to condemn extremist and radical terrorist activities. Political parties should have program in their charters that promote a permanent peace in the Middle East.

- Israel, on the other hand, has legitimate security interest. However, the Israeli government should acknowledge the fact that security cannot be provided through isolative security operations. Israel should give up security operations to advance their political agendas. Also, to balance this, the Palestinian Authorities should condemn all types of terrorism explicitly.

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