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THE IMPACT OF A PROLONGED OCCUPATION

Edited Transcript of Remarks

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INTRODUCTION

Dr. Edmund Ghareeb

Good morning and welcome to the Palestine Center. My name is Edmund Ghareeb, and you have extensive biographies of all our distinguished speakers in your handouts. I want to introduce or say a few words about the speakers in the order that they will be appearing today. I also want to thank you for coming, and the fact that we have such a large and impressive turnout reflects the importance that many accord to this date, this very momentous date of 5 June 1967.

Forty years ago, Israel launched a preemptive strike against Egypt, Syria and Jordan. After five days, the West Bank, East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, the Sinai Peninsula and the Sheba'a farms came under Israeli occupation. Today, those territories, with the exception of the Sinai, remain under occupation. That war, that year and the occupation have transformed the nature of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Actually, the conflict became much more "Palestinianized," at least between the Palestinians and Israel than previously. It also transformed the attitudes and the perceptions of the Palestinians, the Arabs, the Israelis and in fact the rest of the world towards this issue. The Arabs moved from trying to regain the 1948 territories to seeing Israel as a reality that must be dealt with, eventually leading to two states. It also led to treaties between Israel and Egypt, Israel and Jordan, and one agreement with the Palestinians.

Yet in spite of this, the Arab territories of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, as I've said, remain under occupation. The war and the 40 year-old occupation have also transformed Israeli society. After the victory, Israel realized it is a permanent presence in the Middle East, and that victory made it believe that it can also have peace and territory. However, 40 years later, the Six Day war—as one Arab Muslim religious leader was saying yesterday on an Arab satellite channel—was in fact a six hour war. Basically, he was criticizing the Arab secular regimes in the area. But as I was talking to a friend, he said, "No. It was not a six hour war or six day war. It was in fact a 14,600 day conflict and counting as there is no comprehensive and just settlement of this issue."

I would like to start by introducing our distinguished panelists. I think we are in for a fascinating, lively and informative session this morning. Our panelists have been very active, very much involved with this issue as scholars, as diplomats, as activists. In many ways, they have hoped and wanted to see an Arab-Israeli resolution of this conflict, and they come at this issue from, of course, different directions with different experiences.

Our first panelist will be Ambassador Alvaro de Soto. Ambassador de Soto is a Peruvian diplomat, an international

diplomat. He recently left the United Nations after his assignment as the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process from May 2005 to May 2007. He was also the Secretary General's personal representative to the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization] and the Palestinian Authority as well as the envoy to the Quartet. His 25 year career at the United Nations included thirteen years in senior positions in the Secretary General's office and he served as the Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs for five years. He has been very much involved in a number of areas, including the Central American peace process, Cyprus, Myanmar and other areas. He will talk to us today bringing in his own experience to this area.

Our next panelist is Dr. William Quandt, whose well-known to all of us. Dr. Quandt joined the Department of Politics at the University of Virginia and he holds the Edward Stettinius chair there. He started in 1994 and he has served as an academic in a number of universities and institutions, think tanks in the United States, including Brookings and Rand Corporation and he also served with the National Security Council. He has written extensively on this issue and was involved with the 1978 Camp David Accords. He is the author of many books and I won't mention them all, but the one I would like to mention is his book, *The Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict since 1967*.

Our third speaker is Ambassador Afif Safieh of the PLO. He is the head of the PLO Mission to the United States, following fifteen years as the Palestinian representative to the United Kingdom and to the Vatican. He has worked extensively on Palestinian affairs and Palestinian issues. From the 1970s onwards, he worked as a staff member of President Yasser Arafat's office in Beirut and he later was in charge of European affairs. He has taught at the Catholic University of Louvain and at Harvard University. He has also written extensively and spoken extensively on this issue in a number of forums all over the world.

Our fourth speaker will be Dr. Herbert Kelman. Dr. Kelman is the Richard Clarke Cabot Professor at Harvard University and he has been there actually from 1993 to 2003. He was the director of the Program on International Conflict Analysis and Resolution at Harvard's Weatherhead Center for International Affairs. He's the past president of the International Studies Association too and he has written extensively on issues dealing with psychology and international affairs. He's the author of a number of books as well as the recipient of numerous awards.

Our last speaker is Mr. Jan de Jong who is a well-known cartographer who has been working on this area for a very long time and has done some impressive work in this arena.

I would now like to invite Ambassador de Soto to the podium.

THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY: AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Mr. Alvaro de Soto

Thank you very much, Dr. Ghareeb. I'm very pleased to be here, after a fashion, because of course today is not a happy anniversary, not the kind of thing that one wants to commemorate in a festive mood. No one can dispute the assertion in the title of the symposium that the occupation is a prolonged one by any standard. Measuring its impact is a more challenging enterprise with huge human and material losses accumulated, layer upon layer, decade upon decade and the literally incalculable hopes raised and dashed. The prospects that reached their peak in the Oslo Accords seem so distant today. The overused circumlocution "peace process" seems to have lost its usefulness even as an alibi. Where is the humming procedural machinery, the process that diplomats can point to in the absence of the real thing?

The speakers today have their work cut out for them, as do the Israelis and the Palestinians—in the words of [Israeli author] David Grossman, "the conflict's children." Make no mistake, the absence of a solution, the lack of an end in sight to the occupation benefits neither. Israel is proud of its democracy and justifiably so. But its democracy can thrive only if the occupation over another people ends. Time is on no one's side. I just completed a two-year assignment in Jerusalem and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Now when I took it on, I knew better than to pack many illusions in my bag. My responsibilities were two-fold: the so-called peace process on one hand and the coordination of assistance by agencies and programs of the UN system to the Palestinian people in the Occupied Territory on the other. The central purpose of my peace process related responsibilities was to help solve the underlying issues in the Arab-Israeli conflict and end the occupation of Arab territory including Palestinian territory. And the main goal of my coordination mandate, in the spirit of the Oslo Accords, was to help strengthen Palestinian institutions.

Unfortunately, during my time, there has been precious little movement in the direction of solving the underlying issues between Israelis and Arabs or ending the occupation of Arab territory, be it Palestinian or Syrian. As to the assistance of UN agencies and programs—well since the early spring of 2006—guided by those who fund them, it has turned largely to humanitarian assistance and away from the development and institutional improvement and reform that had been their main goals since Oslo. Today, UN agencies and programs are mostly helping to alleviate the humanitarian impact of measures taken by donor countries and by Israel—each for their own reasons—since a new government took over the Palestinian Authority early last year. What I mean by that impact is the precipitous decline of the standard of living of Palestinians, and by no means exclusively in Gaza; the debilitating blow to the

service—the delivering capacity of the Palestinian Authority whose employees—doctors, nurses, and teachers—provide the bulk of medical attention and education services in the Occupied Territory; the perilous weakening of Palestinian institutions, which are meant to provide a foundation for a future Palestinian state; the Palestinian security body’s inability, or seeming inability, to work together to establish and maintain law and order, not to mention, put an end to attacks against Israel. In fact, the prospects for ending the occupation seem to have receded rather than come any closer, and the Middle East appears to have become more complicated and dangerous and volatile than it has been for many years. And the various conflicts have become more tightly intertwined to the point where progress in each arena is, to a large extent, dependent on progress in others. Egypt and Jordan made peace separately with Israel in their time. Today, with the new forces that have been unleashed—and I include forceful ideas and passions—as well as a military variety, it is difficult to imagine such a neat “dis-aggregation,” or I suspect that Professor Quandt may have something to say about that.

The Oslo process is slightly threadbare today. In fact, the Quartet and the Road Map which it put forward were meant to address some of the shortcomings that had become apparent after Oslo. Among other things, it instituted parallel implementation of steps to be taken by the parties precisely to get around the “You first!” problem. It created a precise timeframe for each of the three phases in the process, too precise perhaps in retrospect. It stipulated the creation of a monitoring mechanism to facilitate enforcement. But the Road Map itself has now suffered a certain erosion of its own. Unilateral disengagement from the Occupied Territory, Israel’s most powerful *idée-force* of the last few years, whatever its drawbacks, including its unpopularity in Israel today, made an Olympian end run around the Road Map. Similarly, [Palestinian President] Abu Mazen’s grand scheme to bring Hamas into the system appears to skirt the Palestinian obligations stipulated under Phase I of the Road Map. Not to mention that there are, in fact, two road maps: one that was endorsed by the Security Council and the other that was drastically amended by Israel.

Hence, Secretary General [Kofi] Annan’s call for some introspection by the members of the Quartet in a report that he presented to the Security Council in December, in effect his valedictory report on the Middle East—in it, Mr. Annan made a number of points. This was on 11 December 2006 by the way. Mr. Annan made a number of points of policy as well as of procedure. Let me just highlight a few which I think are particularly apposite if we are devoted to more than handling but rather the search for a way out of the occupation, ending it. Firstly, Mr. Annan placed great emphasis on insuring that the Quartet should act together rather than behave as a sort of a contact group which gathers to compare notes but then essentially disperses with its members acting individually. Then he repeated the point, which is actually contained in the Road Map, about a Quartet monitoring mechanism on the ground. He called on the Quartet to take a good hard look at the Road Map with a view to identifying priorities and updating its timetable. He emphasized the need to clarify the parameters for an end game deal. This would respond to the need to confirm that there is indeed a viable solution worth making sacrifices for at the end of the day.

More substantively, Mr. Annan referred to the need to address the dilemma posed by Hamas as constructively as possible. He pointed to the danger of disintegration of Palestinian society and the need to remedy it by supporting Palestinian institutions, promoting efforts to achieve unity among Palestinian factions on the basic principles of the peace process and persuading Israel not to pursue any policy which damages institutions or deprives Palestinians of democratically elected and therefore legitimate leaders. “We must recognize,” said Mr. Annan, “that the postponement of a settlement has taken a social and political toll and that countercurrents to the previously widely-accepted notion of a two-state solution have grown and acquired greater potency.” In other words, things have not stood still. Forging an internal Palestinian consensus once again around a two-state solution should be encouraged and nurtured, which would be considerably quickened by a credible effort between the parties and from the international community, to re-energize the political process. The international community needs to find constructive response to the challenge posed by democratic choices made by the peoples of the region. For their part, victorious parties, even radical ones, need to acknowledge that with power come responsibilities and that previous decisions and agreements reached by the government to which they have been elected cannot be ignored or put aside without serious consequence.

I'd like to emphasize Mr. Annan's proposal for an *examen de conscience* by the Quartet regarding its handling of the advent of Hamas. Now as I understand it, this was before my time, Hamas refused to participate in elections that led to the first Palestinian legislature in 1996, precisely or mostly because they were being held in the Oslo framework, which they rejected. And yet Hamas agreed to participate in the 2006 elections, which presumably suffered from the same original flaw. So the question arises: does Hamas still reject the Oslo framework? Or has it, albeit not explicitly, accepted it? In September 2005, the Quartet, in effect, endorsed Abu Mazen's strategy of bringing Hamas into the system—mapped out soon after he was elected to the presidency when he agreed to reform the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization], welcome Hamas's participation in the legislative elections—all this in exchange for a ceasefire. Now if the goal is to rebuild a consensus around a two-state solution, will there not be a higher probability of achieving it by welcoming moves in the right direction such as agreeing to a ceasefire and joining, albeit imperfectly, in the democratic process is a question which I pose. I cannot help but wonder whether it would not have been more productive for the international community to take it, that the new government that took over in February of last year is, in effect, bound by previous agreements rather than assuming that it wouldn't feel bound by them and rather than setting the bar at a height which it was known they could not clear, at least not explicitly.

The most serious observers of Palestinian public opinion confirm month after month that external pressure strengthened the Palestinian Authority government and they have been doing so long before the national unity government. The Quartet's stance was widely perceived, not just among Palestinians, but I think in the Arab world, more broadly, as collective punishment of the Palestinian people for their choice at the ballot box, whether that was the intention or not. The appearance of partiality, with little or very mild criticism of Israel for its own failings, tended to corroborate that impression. We need to ask ourselves whether we haven't made it somewhat more difficult for Hamas to join the mainstream. There is, of course, only so much that outsiders can do. One of the most frustrating aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as Mr. Annan said in his speech to the Security Council on 11 December 2006, is the apparent inability of many people on both sides to understand the position of the other and the unwillingness of some even to try. Now this, I think, is at the heart of the problem because without that kind of sort of outward introspection, if you accept the contradiction in terms without trying to put yourself in the shoes of the adversary, it is very difficult to actually make progress. [Israeli author] Amos Oz writes about the moral imperative of imagining the other. Now, he writes firstly for his country men but others should take heed as well, it seems to me.

Mr. Annan said that it is completely right and understandable that Israel and its supporters should seek to insure its security, the security of Israel, by persuading Palestinians and Arabs and Muslims more broadly to alter their attitude and behavior toward Israel. But they are not likely to succeed unless they themselves grasp and acknowledge the fundamental Palestinian grievance—namely that the establishment of the State of Israel involved the dispossession of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian families, turning them into refugees and was followed 19 years later by a military occupation that brought hundreds of thousands more Palestinians under Israeli rule. I read an article in the *New York Times* this morning by Tom Segev, the Israeli historian, who reveals that in 1966 and early 1967, a study was conducted—and its results later approved by the Prime Minister and Chief of Staff—which concluded that capturing the West Bank would weaken the relative strength of the Jewish majority and that it would encourage Palestinian nationalism and lead to violent resistance. I think he was implicitly making the case that in taking over the West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem, Israel had blundered into this operation rather than heed the advice and the conclusions it had reached itself.

Mr. Annan, of course, also sent some frank messages to the Palestinians and their supporters. Jews, he said, have very good historical reasons for taking seriously any threat to Israel's existence, and today Israelis are often confronted with words and actions that seem to confirm their fear, that the goal of their adversaries is to extinguish their existence as a state and as a people. Now, this is a difficult time. It is a difficult time for the reasons that I have explained and that are obvious to all. And it seems to me that the impact is—and has been over time—aggravated, simply devastating. And that the two sides, if we're talking about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, are sort of locked in

an unwilling embrace and one which they have to sort out themselves, essentially. But the international community has an important role. It has a responsibility and it should take the necessary precautions because of the ramifications of it. But, before that, it should take its responsibilities and encourage a solution firstly for Palestinian reasons. The agenda regarding the solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict should be first and foremost an Israeli-Palestinian agenda and not one dictated by other purposes. Thank you very much.

THE JOHNSON ADMINISTRATION AND THE 1967 WAR

Dr. William B. Quandt

Thank you very much for inviting me today. It is a day that evokes a lot of memories for those who lived through the Six Day war. It's one of those things that you probably, if you were alive at the time, will always remember where you were when you learned about it. I want to congratulate Ambassador de Soto for a very elegant overview of a very complicated situation, and I'm tempted to join the discussion of the current situation. But I was really asked to come here to talk about something else and that is the American role at the origins of this problem of dealing with the crisis that erupted into the 1967 war. So, I'm going to talk about the [former U.S. President Lyndon B.] Johnson (LBJ) administration in the May-June 1967 crisis. It may seem like ancient history, but I think there are lessons to be learned from it. It was such an important event, and any light we can shed on the American role at that time is perhaps of some value.

I think the 1967 war was very much like an earthquake in the Middle East, and it changed the landscape for years to come. It caused enormous damage and it left us with aftershocks that still reverberate. Because it was such a huge and consequential event, there's a tendency to think that its origins must be very complex and perhaps even a bit mysterious and sinister. And indeed, there's been quite a literature on the origins of the war. It's been the subject of enormous debate, and there are quite a few thriving conspiracy theories—some more or less connected to reality and some rather fanciful. But the fundamentals of the 1967 crisis and of the war are not so mysterious. The reality of the time was that Israel and the surrounding Arab states had been in a state of war, suspended in terms of actual combat from 1956 onwards. But neither side was happy with the prevailing status quo. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, both sides were arming themselves in anticipation that one day there would be another test of strength, another war, and that the next round might work to their advantage. Both had sought and received help from their external patrons to advance their causes.

Now, I personally don't believe that either the Israeli leadership or the Egyptian leadership had in mind, say in March of 1967, that within a couple of months, a large scale war would break out in the region. I don't think they had that in mind at that time. Nor do I believe that President Johnson or the Soviet leadership had some plan in mind to spark a war in the Middle East in 1967. Insofar as there were actors in the region who were eager to challenge the status quo by force, I think they largely could be found in the new Baath regime in Damascus, which had come to power in 1966, and among newly emerging Palestinian guerilla organizations who believed that carrying

out small scale attacks on Israel might have the effect of drawing into the conflict the cautious Arab states who, up until that time, had not seemed eager to challenge Israel on the battlefield.

None of this, in my mind, adds up to a master plan in Washington, in Moscow, in Tel Aviv or in any of the Arab capitals to launch major military operations in June of 1967 or any time around there. But insofar as there were active and violent challenges to the status quo, they came primarily from the Syrians and the Palestinians. Even the Jordanians, who did not act as if they wanted war, were nonetheless taunting [former Egyptian President Gamal Abdel] Nasser about his propensity to hide behind the skirts of UNEF [United Nations Emergency Force] as they said. So, the status quo was being challenged and yet it had prevailed for the preceding decade and perhaps had even sparked a degree of complacency because it had seemed to be fairly robust.

Now, there are those who believe that the 1967 war was the result of a carefully orchestrated Israeli-American trap that was set for Nasser, who unwittingly fell into it. This, if I understand it correctly, was and still is [Egyptian scholar] Mohammad Hassanein Haykl's view and that of many others in the Arab world. There are also those who believe that the war was in many ways the result of Soviet efforts to ignite the fuels of the tensions that were in the area. A recent book has been written to that effect called *Foxbats Over Dimona*, a very dramatic title. I can't speak authoritatively, certainly, about the Soviet side, and I have my doubts about the recent spate of speculations that the Soviets were really the architects of the 1967 war, but I do feel reasonably competent to talk about the 1967 war, although I was not in government at the time. I didn't begin my own service in government until five years later.

I had the chance at various times to look at all the publicly available documents as well as some of those that have not yet been released. I interviewed at one time or another almost everybody on the American side who was involved in the crisis, with the exception of President Johnson and [former U.S. Secretary of State David Dean] Rusk and a few other personalities close to Johnson. In 1992, I put together most of what I knew in an article published in *The Middle East Journal* that put forward the thesis that Johnson had initially in fact tried to prevent the June 1967 war when the crisis arose in mid-May. But during the latter part of May 1967, he changed the so-called red light warning that he had given to the Israelis not to go to war, to a yellow light, a more permissive stance. Once the Israelis were sure that was his stand, they then didn't hesitate much further. In other words, Johnson initially had opposed the outbreak of war and had warned the Israelis not to take the initiative. But as time wore on, he changed his signals and told them that if they felt they had to act on their own, they could do so. At the same time, I found that there was no evidence that Johnson urged them to go to war. In fact, on the contrary, he seemed to be somewhat skeptical that war would solve the problems.

Now fifteen years since putting forward that yellow light hypothesis, I still think it is essentially correct. I had hoped that by now we would have more evidence, particularly from what Johnson was saying to his most intimate advisors and friends in his almost obsessive telephone conversations during the crisis. What we do know is who Johnson talked to. Telephone logs were exquisitely well-kept by his secretaries and we know that from the earlier sixties, 1964/1965, Johnson had a habit of pushing the little button on his phone to record the conversations. About two years ago, the LBJ Library in Texas got around to releasing the tapes from 1967, and I thought we would find a treasure trove of new materials telling us what Johnson really said to whom in the crucial weeks of May/June 1967. Alas, he stopped pushing the little button in 1967. There are a few tapes from 1967, none of them have to do with the Middle East crisis. So, there is no new information that has come to light in the last few years, but what does the record actually show, the record that we do have?

First, Johnson, and probably one could say anyone who becomes President of the United States, was a fairly political human being. He fought and lived and breathed politics. He was aware in 1967 that his popular standing among his fellow citizens was in decline because they were in Vietnam. He was already beginning to think about his re-election prospects the next year, in 1968, and was very worried Bobby Kennedy might run against him. His long experience with Congress had convinced him that the United States could not contemplate any new military engagements, particularly while we were engaged in Vietnam, without full Congressional backing. This was probably the lesson

he had drawn from the controversy of the so-called Gulf of Tonkin Resolution and the whole experience of opinion turning against him on Vietnam. And he knew from his military that American forces were stretched thin and that if any military action was needed in the Middle East, he wanted it to be multilateral. That is, get the British involved, get the French involved, get anybody else involved who was available.

Johnson was not fond of Nasser. Relations between the United States and Egypt began to deteriorate in 1964 and got steadily worse over the next several years. Johnson was sympathetic towards the Israelis; he had many close friends who were very pro-Israeli. But the Middle East had never been the central focus of his concerns, and I don't believe it was in the early part of 1967. When the crisis erupted in mid-May 1967, Johnson and his advisors seemed to be genuinely surprised that that low-level crisis that had been brewing for several months had all of a sudden broken out into a much more dangerous crisis. Their first instinct was to try to cool things off, to tell everybody to calm down and take a deep breath. He also tried to enlist the Soviet Union by urging them to use their influence with the Arab side, implying he would do the same thing with the Israelis to insure that this crisis did not erupt into a war that might draw the two superpowers in. Johnson was very slow in getting around to communicating with Nasser. We had no ambassador in Cairo at the time. The first message sent to Nasser was badly timed. It was sent on 22 May and actually arrived just after Nasser had given his famous speech closing the Strait of Tiran, at which point war became a distinct possibility. So Johnson's attempt to warn Nasser not to take any precipitous action actually reached him just after Nasser had made a fateful decision.

Johnson surrounded himself with a fairly impressive group of advisors; they were men of considerable experience, diversity of views, and Johnson actually listened to them, unlike some presidents who have not paid too much attention to people around them. And they were not all of one mind. Johnson typically would get a large group together and ask people what they thought he should do and would interrogate them with fairly sharp questions: "What if you're wrong? What if your assumptions aren't valid? What would you do then?" And he wouldn't tip his hand in advance. Secretary Rusk, who was one of the important advisors, seems to be the most consistent in trying hard to avoid war in the Middle East. He thought it might be possible to do so by working with the British who had launched an idea of sending a multilateral, multinational fleet through the Strait of Tiran to demonstrate that this was considered to be an international waterway. Rusk opposed "unleashing Israel"—a term he used—and was insistent that Israel must consult the United States before taking any action.

At the Pentagon and at the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency], there was much less confidence that a multilateral fleet could be put together or that any such effort would really solve the crisis. Quick analysis done by analysts at both the CIA and [Department of] Defense and some at [Department of] State all came to the conclusion that if war did occur, regardless of how it began, Israel would win, win quickly, probably within a week. From this perspective, the United States should essentially stand aside and let the crisis play itself out, by diplomacy if possible. If not, then by the use of force.

The Israelis asked Johnson to meet with their Foreign Minister [Abba] Eban in the third week of May and this forced the Americans to come to terms with what is our policy, what will we say to Eban when he arrives. Johnson therefore convened, just before meeting with Eban, a very large meeting of his advisors, his National Security Council, and invited to that meeting some people who normally would not be in the National Security Council, meetings including his close friend Justice of the Supreme Court Abe Fortis. Rusk presented initially the options that the State Department had come up with: the so-called unleash Israel, that is, let the Israelis take care of their problem on their own, versus the multilateral fleet alternative. And he strongly argued in favor of the latter, that is against the unleash Israel and in favor of the multilateral fleet. He introduced the enigmatic phrase which was subsequently used repeatedly by Johnson that "Israel will not be alone unless it decides to go alone." Johnson, in his own handwriting, added the following and conveyed this subsequently to the Israelis, "We cannot imagine that it (Israel) will make this decision to go alone."

This is the basis on which, I think, Johnson was in fact on board with Rusk to try to prevent the war initially. [Former U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert] McNamara and others, in this initial meeting before Eban arrived, raised questions about the feasibility of a multilateral fleet. Then this non-member of the National Security Council but Johnson's close friend, Supreme Court Justice Abe Fortis, joins the discussion and says to Johnson, "You can't tell the Israelis that they will be alone if they act on their own. It's simply impossible. The kind of relationship we have with the Israelis is such that we cannot in good conscience make that statement. We have to either solve the problem for them or we have to support them as they solve it on their own." So, these were sort of the range of opinions that Johnson heard. What we know is that he signed on to Rusk's recommendation that we would tell Eban that we supported the multilateral fleet and needed time in which to implement it.

In the course of the discussions, Johnson frequently mentioned the need for Congressional support and support from allies. As the discussion was coming to an end, Johnson mused out loud and said, "I wonder if I will regret not offering Eban more when I see him this afternoon"—as if to recognize that he wasn't actually offering very much with the multilateral fleet. It wasn't imminent, it wasn't intact and it wasn't a sure solution, and he realized that what he had to offer was relatively weak. The record of Johnson's meeting with Eban exists; we have the American side of the conversation anyway. Johnson does tell him in no uncertain terms that Israel should not rush to war. He says they need more time for diplomacy. He put forward the idea of the multilateral fleet. He says that it will take some time, but that it's the best solution. He shares the intelligence judgment that the Egyptians do not seem to be preparing for a strike, and he asks for time to deal with the crisis. Eban asks a lot of questions, and as he leaves the Oval Office, Johnson turns to his aides and says, "I've failed, no go."

The Israelis didn't seem to know what to make of Eban's report. Some Israelis thought Eban was too much of a dove and was translating what Johnson said into words that suited his preferences but perhaps did not reflect Johnson's true views. What did LBJ mean when he said, "Israel will not be alone unless it decides to go alone?" Was this a subtle way of signaling that Israel did have the right to go alone but should not then count on the United States to help if she got into trouble? Or what is really meant to be a strong signal not to strike first?

The last days of May were very puzzling and complex. Johnson left town for his Texas ranch on 27 May, right as the crisis was getting very, very tense indeed. He took none of his foreign policy advisors with him. Instead, he was surrounded by his family and friends, including Democratic party money man and his Texas neighbor, Arthur Krim, and his wife Mathilde with whom Johnson seemed to have, what we might now politely call, a very close personal relationship. Mathilde was also a convert to Judaism who had worked as a secret agent for the Irgun right after World War II and had helped to smuggle guns from Europe to the Irgun underground. She later married movie mogul Arthur Krim and retained a vivid interest in the Middle East. The files actually show numerous instances of her passing documents directly to Johnson during the crisis, usually supporting a very hawkish viewpoint.

Johnson did not return to Washington until 1 June in the company, incidentally, of Mrs. Krim, who then stayed on at the White House as his guest for the next week. Johnson did not see any Israeli or Arab officials during this period and, in fact, up and through the outbreak of war. He held no more meetings with his advisors. He did, however, continue to be in communication, particularly, with the Israelis, and he was clearly following events closely. My own view is that it was during this period, probably while he was at the ranch, that he reached the conclusion that the multilateral fleet was simply not going to work. There were no takers internationally and the Defense Department was not at all interested in diverting ships from Southeast Asia to sail through the Strait. Johnson's advisor, Walt Rostow, later recalled that when Jordan, I think it was 30 May, joined forces with Egypt, all hopes seemed to be lost for avoiding war. LBJ may have shared that view.

Then on 1 June, the Israelis decided to check on Johnson's real views, and they sent the head of intelligence, Meir Amit, to Washington for very important meetings, not with Johnson but with the head of the CIA and that of the Defense Department. With Helms, and I have seen a record of this conversation although it is not in the

Foreign Relations of the United States volume that has recently been released, he said bluntly that time was running out, that Israel could not wait much longer, that Nasser might be considering an air strike at Dimona and Israel would not let this happen. Helms immediately passed this information on to Johnson and Rusk. Johnson made no effort to communicate directly with Amit himself or to meet with him. Instead, he wrote to [former Israeli Prime Minister] Levi Eshkol again repeating that Israel will not be alone unless it decides to go alone but also adding that he had received the message delivered by Amit and that was the last communication from Johnson to the Israelis.

At this point, Justice Fortis, and perhaps others close to Johnson, seemed to have stepped in to play a role, possibly with Johnson's encouragement but possibly not—we just don't know—of interpreting for the Israelis what Johnson really meant. On 1 June and 2 June, Johnson's emissaries in Egypt had reported that Nasser was in no mood to back down, that he knew war was coming and that all he asked was for the United States to stay out of the conflict. On 2 June, the number two person at the Israeli embassy, Eppie Evron, went to the White House to see Walt Rostow to try out the idea that Israel might take limited military action just against Egypt in order to reopen the Strait. How would the United States respond to this idea? There's no record of any response from LBJ. Finally, as Amit and the Israeli ambassador Abe Harmon were preparing to return to Israel for the fateful cabinet meeting where the decision on the date to go to war was taken, Harmon decided to call on Fortis as he was on his way, literally, to the airport. What they discussed is not known, as they met privately and they are both no longer with us. Although earlier, Eban had already gotten a message through another channel that Fortis had said that LBJ would understand if Israel had to use force. What we do know from Fortis's law clerk, who was standing at the door as Harmon left and overheard their conversation, was that Fortis said to Harmon, "Rusk will fiddle while Israel burns. If you're going to save yourselves, do it yourselves."

News of the beginning of the war reached LBJ early in the morning on 5 June. He did not seem to be surprised. The first person he informed was Mathilde Krim. Johnson was a complex man; he did not share the views of some of his aides that Israel's military victory was a cause for celebration. At a meeting on 7 June when the magnitude of Israel's victory was already apparent and some of the aides were, in fact, rather happy and enthusiastic, Johnson said that he was not so sure that we were out of our troubles. He went on to say that it was important for everyone to know that we are not for aggression; we are sorry this has taken place; we thought we had a commitment from those governments but it went up in smoke very quickly. The president said that by the time we get through with all the festering problems, we are going to wish the war had not happened. Interesting.

His last comments sound to me like a president who had become disillusioned by the war in Vietnam and was projecting onto the Middle East his experiences from that war. In Vietnam, his generals kept promising victory, but the facts on the ground kept speaking otherwise. Johnson also understood, I believe, as a politician, that military power was a crude instrument, not well-suited for solving complex political problems. But if that was the case, Johnson had done relatively little to try to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict by diplomatic means in the preceding years. Perhaps his preoccupation with Vietnam is part of the explanation. Perhaps his reading of domestic politics is another. Johnson, like most of his generation, failed to see how dangerous and explosive the Arab-Israeli conflict could be. That, plus Vietnam, plus the Cold War, plus domestic politics, led to a U.S. stance from 1964 to 1967 that did little to prevent the slow deterioration of the situation in the Middle East. Johnson and his colleagues can rightly be accused of a degree of complacency and standoffishness in the face of many warning signals. But they cannot be accused of plotting the 1967 war or of giving Israel an unambiguous green light to use force. War, when it came on 5 June 1967, came largely, in my view, as the result of moves and countermoves that had their essential logic in the tangled politics of the region, not in the machinations of leaders in Moscow or Washington. Thank you.

THE 1967 OCCUPATION: A PALESTINIAN PERSPECTIVE

Ambassador Afif Safieh

Ladies and gentleman, I would like to start by paying tribute to the late Professor Hisham Sharabi, who has been the initiator and the creator of The Palestine Center. I believe in the landscape of think tanks in Washington, the absence of The Palestine Center would have made it not democracy but monotony. I would like also to pay tribute to the Executive Director of that Center, Samar Assad, and her assistants Jessica and Zeina and all the others because I believe they are doing tremendous work, and the choreography of today's event is just one of its manifestations. Samar, you are the living proof of what Christ'l [Safieh] and I have always believed: the best man for the job is usually a woman.

Listening to the brilliant exposé of Professor William Quandt, I was reminded of a study I read 35 years ago on the diaries of Moshe Sharett, the first Israeli Foreign Minister. In that study, two elements stick out in his comments on the patterns of behavior of [former Israeli Prime Minister David] Ben Gurion. The first—Ben Gurion repeatedly used to say, “Since we live with a hostile environment, we should make an alliance with the environment of our environment,” meaning Turkey, Iran, Ethiopia. But the second doctrine—apparently in the late 1940s when Ben Gurion was talking with his immediate entourage, the kitchen cabinet, and those who criticized him for some of his pragmatic decisions on why he accepted the Partition Plan and why he was reluctant to adopt a written constitution, he would apparently say, “No written constitution because it necessitates the territorial delimitations of the state that would be created,” and he would add, “Our frontiers will go as far as our defense forces will reach.” Beyond that, he used to repeat frequently, “We, Israelis, should learn how to provoke the Arabs so that they provoke us so that we can expand beyond the narrow boundaries that we have had to accept.” I am constantly reminded by this doctrine, and I believe it explains tremendously well the crisis of the uncontrolled escalation that led to the conflagration of 1967. I believe today Israel is masterful in provoking Palestinian militants into provoking them so that they can devastate and vandalize our society and our economy.

About 1967, I believe history books remind us, one, that [former Egyptian President Gamal Abdel] Nasser had his elite troops in Yemen. Apparently according to Eric Rouleau, one of the best experts of Middle Eastern realities (a Jew, an Egyptian, a French senior editor in *Le Monde*, a quality newspaper), that when Nasser asked the UN to remove the UN troops stationed in the Sinai, he was hoping for “no” as an answer and he was surprised that he got “yes” as an answer. Every possible study I've seen says that the Egyptian army was in defensive deployment and not

in an offensive posture. I believe on the day of the confrontation, 5 June 1967, Nasser, who was a non-aligned leader and had Khaled Mohi Edein to deal with the Soviets and Zakaria Mohi Edein to deal with the Americans, was sending Zakaria Mohi Edein to Washington that same morning to discuss de-escalating the crisis. That was the moment that was chosen for the blitzkrieg of six hours that devastated the region. The war was a pre-emptive strike against this diplomatic endeavor intended to avoid war.

I still remember [Israeli] General [Mattityahu] Peled—who was a sophisticated general yet a peace camper—used to say, “Anybody who believes that Israel was at risk in 1967 is committing an offense and an insult to the Israeli army.” So the outcome of that war was known in advance. To give you one example, every possible study would tell you that an Egyptian airplane fighter could make two sorties a day while Israeli airplane fighters had the capability—because of the number of the pilots, the engineers, the maintenance—to do six sorties every day. So, for example, if each of them had 500 airplanes, the Israelis, in fact, could deploy 3,000 airplanes a day while the Egyptians would deploy 1,000. All those elements, I believe, should help us in analyzing the recent past and I, for one, believe that we need to revisit the diplomatic and military regional history.

Let me telegraphically take a triangular approach—Israel, America and the Palestinian dimension. Israel—first of all, I have been a peace enthusiast for many years, yet today I am a very disenchanted peace enthusiast. I believe that today the challenge for us, Palestinians, is the following: the *Nakba* is not a frozen moment that has occurred sometime in 1948. It’s a continuous process that we see deploying in front of our eyes up to today. The Israeli official policy, whatever the diplomatic liturgy, is how to acquire as much of Palestinian geography as possible with as little of Palestinian demography as possible. [Israeli historian] Benny Morris, who as a scholar is impeccable and belongs to the new revisionist school, has revealed much of what we know from the Israeli side on the ethnic cleansing of 1948. Benny Morris as a citizen is a very questionable character and he’s known to have made an interview with *Ha’aretz* in 2004-2005 where he said, “You cannot make omelets without breaking some eggs. My grievance against Ben Gurion is the unfinished business of vacating the Palestinians to periphery postponing that task to future generations.” So, I believe that’s the challenge we are still facing today in Israel and Palestine.

If I were personally a Jew 40 years after the occupation that started in 1967, I would face a few considerations. Yes, Israel is a democracy for its Jewish component. This argument is usually used as an extenuating, attenuating factor to make Israel look more lovable. For me as an individual, I find the democratic oppression inflicted on us even a more disturbing factor on the moral level. Why? Because the oppression inflicted on us has democratic support within the Israeli/Jewish constituency—the informed consent, the informed support of the citizen, the voter and the soldier. Every four years it is reconfirmed. And to tell you frankly, I don’t believe in the comfortable, convenient but not very convincing approach that says the problem that we are encountering is due to the extremists on both sides. No, the problem we’re encountering is Israeli governmental policy, whether Labor is leading the coalition or whether Likud is leading the coalition. And I believe symmetry is beautiful in architecture but not necessarily in explaining complex political realities.

The Israelis should do some soul searching, an *examen de conscience*, as Ambassador Alvaro de Soto told us at the very beginning. I would tell them today that whoever in Israel does not condemn Israeli incursions, Israeli indiscriminant bombardment, Israeli targeted and untargeted killing is not morally qualified to have a respectable opinion on suicide bombings. We are not children of a lesser God; our blood, our tears do also count.

Israelis will be well-advised to head the fact that whoever shows insensitivity to the suffering they inflict should expect a reduction of sympathy for the suffering they have endured. The other factor that I would like Israelis to grow more aware of is I personally believe that the perpetuation of the conflict today is not due to Arab rejection of Israeli existence but to Israeli rejection of Arab acceptance. The Arab world in its entirety, the Arab regional state system and the Arab summit meetings have endorsed the idea of a two-state solution for two decades, at least since the Fez summit meeting of 1982 in Morocco. I could go even earlier. Egypt and Jordan accepted [UN Resolution] 242 in

1967 after the three No's of Khartoum. Syria accepted 242 after the October war of 1973 through the acceptance of [UN Resolution] 338. We, in the Palestinian national movement, after the October war of 1973, which I believe was the demarcation line in our strategic thinking, moved fast towards the acceptance of a two-state solution and for years we were not the rejectionist party; we were the rejected partner. I believe today the perpetuation of the conflict is not due to Arab rejection of Israeli existence but to Israeli rejection of Arab acceptance.

I believe Israelis should be invited to contemplate the hypothesis that the obstacle to peace making was not terrorism, which I condemn, but territory. It was the territorial appetite of the Israelis in Palestine and on the Golan that was the obstructionist factor for peace making.

This brings me to the second pole of the triangular dimension I wanted to approach. I believe clinically, 40 years after the 1967, what is acceptable to the Israelis is unacceptable to the Palestinians and vice-versa. We need third party intervention and today who speaks of third party speaks of the U.S. administration. To tell you frankly, I was from 1967 onwards converted to the [French military leader and statesman Charles] de Gaulle approach, who then called for *la concertation a quatre*—the coordination of the major four countries. China was not yet in the Security Council. His approach meant that those major powers, on behalf of the international community, will tell both sides what the world expects from them. Unfortunately, the de Gaulle approach never really took off the ground. Why? Because America was not unhappy with the Israeli victory; it compensated for the humiliations of Vietnam. The Soviets, short sighted like they frequently could be, preferred the configuration of bipolarity and didn't see why they should give equal treatment to lesser countries like France and England. England was unenthusiastic simply because the suggestion was French to begin with and since then, instead of having durable peace, we are having a permanent peace process, which is a symptom of its failure.

Professor Quandt, you spoke of President Lyndon Johnson. I believe in any study of American diplomacy in the region, except for [former U.S. President Harry S.] Truman, Lyndon Johnson is a demarcation line. I remember 35 years ago reading the memoirs of Golda Meir, which she wrote probably in the middle of the 1970s after she had to resign from her premiership. In one of those pages—and I think I'm reflecting accurately what she said—she speaks that she came for the funeral of [former U.S. President John F.] Kennedy and at one moment Lyndon Johnson bends over her to tell her, "With me in the White House there will be no repeat of the [former U.S. President Dwight D.] Eisenhower incident of 1956." Eisenhower, with just one phone call to Ben Gurion, obtained Israeli total withdrawal out of the Sinai in 24 hours. This is extremely indicative and revealing of Johnson's personal inclination and preference.

Telegraphically, I believe, that in a unipolar, monopolar world, America is the country that should be adopting nonalignment as its foreign policy philosophy. America is a fascinating society. America is a nation of nations; it's the world *en miniature*. Every possible people, country, continent and culture is represented within your ranks. And whenever America aligns itself on one belligerent party in a regional conflict, not only does it antagonize the other players but it is offending, antagonizing, alienating and ghettoizing a domestic component of its own social national fabric. Non-alignment in a unipolar world is the best foreign policy option for the only one remaining superpower.

I've always been intrigued by, what I call, the self inflicted impotence of the only remaining superpower with its dealings with Israel/Palestine. America is a superpower all over the world except in Israel/Palestine. America has waged recently two controversial wars. We are inviting America to wage peace against us and yet it is reluctant. And whenever Dr. [U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza] Rice is in the region, there is Elliot Abrams briefing Republican Jewish leaders telling them, "Worry not; this is a process for the sake of process." Bravo Elliot Abrams. One wonders why America in its dealing with Israel looks more like Lichtenstein and Luxembourg.

Palestine—I would like to speak more as a project of a Palestinian citizen rather than a Palestinian official. I believe that we Palestinians have been so maltreated by history and by humanity that we should make it a rule that in our

dealings with one another there should be affection, tenderness, civilized and civil behavior. We have been so maltreated by history and humanity we should not allow what has been happening recently in Palestine.

In Palestinian circles, pessimism has become the criteria of measurement of one's patriotism. It is only optimists that make history, not the pessimists—not the naive optimists but the political fighters who do not suffer from failure of analysis. Here again, I would like to stress the importance of analysis and we, Palestinians and Arabs, should have a better articulation between academic research and political decision making. I still remember years ago [former Arab League ambassador] Clovis Maksoud having said, "Others have brain trusts while we do not trust the brain." We should not leave the situation where every three militants, with all my respect to every three militants, consider themselves [Vietnamese general and statesman Võ Nguyên] Giáp or [Prussian military historian and theorist] Carl von Clausewitz. Politics is too serious a matter to be left in the hands of any three individuals. It should be the result of a national debate where every possible individual—with special responsibility for the elites—take part on strategy, options and alternatives. I still remember [Italian writer, politician and political theorist Antonio] Gramsci who called the alliance between intellectuals and the oppressed "the alliance of those who think because they suffer and those who suffer because they think." But we have too many of those who make us suffer each time they think that they are thinking.

Again, I am speaking as a project of a citizen. I believe we, Palestinians, need strategic clarity. We should agree among ourselves on two states or one state. One should handle that debate in the most respectful and responsible manner. I personally remain convinced of the two-state approach.

One—I believe the one-state approach is not a new strategic thinking. It's a reheated old dish. I believe it was, in the late 1960s/early 1970s, our generous offer to those who chose to be our enemies. We believed then that we have become the Jews of the Jews. We didn't want to make them the Palestinians of the Palestinians. We wanted to break the dialectic of oppression but that proposal of a one-state solution then could either succeed if we were militarily victorious or if we had succeeded in intellectually seducing, persuading a Jewish majority within Israel. You'll agree with me that neither was done. So from 1973 onwards, meaning after the October war, we moved towards a negotiated solution—a two-state solution. Today, intercommunity relations in mandatory Palestine have never been as bad. So less than at any other moment is the situation ripe for a one-state solution.

Number two—we have witnessed in the last two decades the implosion of many multiethnic states.

Number three—I believe the disparity between the two communities, the qualitative gap, has been enlarged in the last two decades rather than reduced. A one-state solution might be the best mechanism for the perpetuation of the subjugation of one community by the other.

Number four—I believe the Israelis are the ones in favor of a one-state solution, their state, and a no state solution for us. And the Wall is a demographic expeller.

Number five—I don't believe in quantitative factors being that important. Those who promise us that in the year 2020-21 we will become the numerical majority, I keep reminding them that apartheid in South Africa worked for decades even though the blacks were 40-45 million and the whites only 5 million. So even if we reached demographic numerical parity, it's not a guarantee that there will be a total switch in the balance of power from one day to another.

Number six—very pragmatically, I believe that we can bring back more Palestinian refugees to the homeland in the two-state solution than in the one-state solution, which I don't see achievable. I don't know who said it recently but it's probably [Israeli journalist] Uri Avnery in his debate with [Israeli historian] Ilan Pappé—which was of very high quality. I think he said, "Those who have recently converted to the one-state solution are behaving as the boxer who

just lost a match with a light weight boxer who says, 'Next time send me a heavy weight and you will see what I will do.'" It's not because we are not succeeding in achieving the two-state solution that we should raise the ceiling of my expectation. It's not a very rational approach in my opinion.

So the first issue that needs a debate—ideological, political and theoretical clarification—is the issue of two states or one state on the basis of what is the best enlightened Palestinian national interest. I hate to operate under external pressures. We should have our own independent debate, an exploration of the options and projections into the future.

The second debate we need urgently to undertake—and believe me I am not trying to be more angelic than I really am and I can be angelic but I'm speaking here in pragmatic practical terms—I believe we, the Palestinian national movement, should adopt as a philosophy and a strategy popular nonviolence. We are not facing a choice between resistance and nonresistance. As a society, we have to resist and reject this unacceptable oppressive status quo. But we have to make a choice between different modalities of expression of our defiance and rejection. I believe in our situation the wisest and bravest military decision we can take is to avoid military confrontation with the Israeli army. Besides the ethical considerations, it should be a military decision. That is our best way of neutralizing 99 percent of their military arsenal. And keep in mind what I told you about Ben Gurion, "We should learn how to provoke them into provoking us so that we can expand." I am in favor of us adopting non violence as the emanation of our voluntary volition and not us caving in under external pressure. We, in Palestinian circles, have always sinned in not having cohesion, coherence, consistency and perseverance, and we need to have all that in one go with the disciplined adherence of all our society. Here I have to say, we live in a difficult moment in our history. There is a failure in leadership—left, right and center. There is a failure of the *intelligentsia*. There is a failure of the Palestinian business community. And there is also a failure in the diaspora circles. Let us face it, diaspora Palestinian and Arab communities have been as successful in dealing with the pro-Israeli lobby as our governments over there have been in dealing with the Israeli regional challenge.

Near the end of the time allocated to each speaker, I would like to invoke the play by Bertold Brecht on Galileo where there is a fantastic scene. Galileo under the pressure of the inquisition caving in, tactically, and one of his disciples looking at him with condescendence says, "Unhappy are the people who have no heroes." To which Galileo answers, "No my friend, unhappy are the people who still have a need for heroes."

Obviously, ladies and gentlemen, we belong to a people who are in a dire need for heroes, especially 40 years after the occupation and 60 years after the forced "diasporisation." I would like to bow in respect to the Palestinian collective hero—the Palestinian people for their immense and impressive capacity for steadfastness and their endurance of indescribable pain and suffering. Maybe we are at a moment in history when we and maybe others have to define and refine what the concept of heroism is all about.

Thank you.

THE IMPACT OF THE 1967 WAR ON ISRAELI SOCIETY

Dr. Herbert C. Kelman

In my analysis following the introductory remarks of Dr. Ghareeb, probably the major impact of the 1967 war was the “Palestinianization,” or you might say more accurately, the “re-Palestinianization” of the Arab-Israeli conflict. I would say the “re-Palestinianization” of the conflict for all three of the major actors. Obviously for the Palestinians, it meant Palestinians were taking possession of the conflict, which between 1948 and 1967 had been primarily in the hands of the Arab states. For the Arab states, it meant the beginning of a process of disengagement from the conflict, essentially leaving it for the Palestinians themselves. And for Israel, it meant an internalization of the conflict. In other words, the Arab-Israeli conflict went back to its origins as a conflict between two peoples within the land that they both claimed. As of 1967, with all the land under Israeli control, it had become an internalized conflict rather than inter-state conflict that Israel had gotten used to in the proceeding two decades. Now, I would say that this process is at the heart of my comments about the impact of the occupation on Israeli society, which is the topic I was assigned.

I will focus my remarks on four consequences of the 1967 war and the occupation for Israel:

- 1) It created the option of “Land for Peace” as a formula for ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- 2) It gradually, very gradually, led to widespread acceptance of the concept of a two-state solution as the permanent solution of the conflict.
- 3) It led to the development of the Greater Israel Movement as a powerful minority within Israeli society.
- 4) It has turned Israel into the role of the occupier, which contributed to an erosion of the country’s moral integrity, security and international standing.

I would like to comment on these four points as much as time will permit and at some point I will be dragged off, and I will go quietly.

Let me begin with the “Land for Peace” concept. The occupation left Israel, as you know, in control of Jordanian, Egyptian and Syrian territories. The Palestinian dimension did not enter into consideration per se at that point. A number of voices were heard right at the beginning within Israel and [former Israeli Prime Minister David] Ben Gurion was one of those voices, which is a little contradictory to what Afif just said. But Ben Gurion was a complex person and he made statements of all kinds in all different directions. But the main point is that there were a number of voices within Israel that argued that the occupation gave Israel an opportunity for peace. It gave Israel bargaining chips for coming to an agreement. But of course, there were competing voices, reservations, temptations—which I will return to shortly—which inhibited the development of a major peace movement in response to this opportunity.

The Arab states at that point did not help very much. The case in point was the three No’s of Khartoum. There are different interpretations of what these three No’s meant. They definitely did not mean that there was no possibility of a political solution. An important part of Khartoum was that there was an interest in taking the political role rather than the military role. Certainly [former Egyptian President Gamal Abdel] Nasser and [late Jordanian King] Hussein were eager to disengage from the conflict at that time. But nevertheless, the Khartoum conference with its three No’s strengthened the sense in Israel that there was no partner on the Arab side. It was not until after another war, the 1973 war, that the dynamics of “Land for Peace” fulfilled themselves with the [former Egyptian President Anwar] Sadat initiative in 1977 and eventually the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty.

Egyptian-Israeli peace strengthened the peace forces in Israel and led to increasing attention to ending the occupation, to pursuing a “Land for Peace” formula in the occupied territories. For a small minority, like [Israeli general] Matti Peled and [Israeli journalist] Uri Avnery, to the group around these people, this meant, from the seventies on, negotiating with the [Palestine Liberation Organization] PLO on the basis of a two-state solution. But the Labor party leadership, most of which was in favor of what was called the territorial compromise, favored the Jordanian option. They preferred dealing with Jordan because a) they did not trust the PLO leadership and did not trust their ultimate intentions and b) they believed that it would be easier to negotiate a smaller return of territory to a larger state like Jordan than to a state in being for which that territory was basically it. So, there was a strong preference within the Labor party among the forces that favored a compromise, a strong preference for the Jordanian option.

Even in the peace movement, the Palestinian option became a matter of debate only in the early 1980s. They did speak out strongly in favor of ending the occupation from the beginning. They were the ones who introduced, early on, the slogan if Israel were to annex the occupied territories it would have to end being either a Jewish state or a democratic state, that it could not continue being a democratic Jewish state if it annexed the occupied territories. So, they were in favor of ending the occupation. But until the 1980s, it did not translate for them into a Palestinian option.

That leads me to the second consequence of 1967 for Israel and that is that it created the logic of a two-state solution. It took a quarter of a century—and here I am talking about basically the time of the Oslo Agreement—for this logic to begin to be accepted within Israeli political circles. I would argue that it was in Oslo that there was an acceptance of the logic of a two-state solution, although it did not explicitly come out in favor of a two-state solution. [Former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak] Rabin was not ready for it at the time. So, there was no definite commitment for a Palestinian state. But clearly, that was the logic of Oslo and that logic was very well understood within Israeli society.

Now, what was critical to the eventual, very slow acceptance of the two-state solution in Israel was the development over these decades in Palestinian thinking. As I said, 1967 “Palestinianized” the conflict for the Palestinians in that they took over the struggle and turned it into a struggle for national liberation. Once it became a nationalist-political struggle, in contrast to a Pan-Arab struggle, a possibility emerged for solving the conflict that did not exist before—

namely the possibility of establishing a national state which will give concert expression to the Palestinian right for national self-determination, even if only in part of Palestine.

So, the idea of fulfilling the goal of the movement in part of Palestine became a logical possibility after 1967, which I will argue did not exist before. So, you might say that just as the occupation created a “Land for Peace” formula in Israel, it created an opportunity for a land for statehood option for Palestinians. The idea of a Palestinian state in part of Palestine was hardly popular in the early years. It was advocated, at the beginning, by some marginal elements within the occupied territories—people like Azziz Shehada, Mohammed Abu Shubaah and a few others. It was an idea that was largely rejected. As late as 1978, when Walid Khalidi advocated this concept in his now famous article in *Foreign Affairs*, he entitled the article, “Thinking the Unthinkable,” because even as of that time, that was considered among Palestinians an unthinkable idea.

I would say that [late Palestinian leader Yasser] Arafat was the leader most responsible for introducing this idea into the political discourse. He came to recognize the limits of the armed struggle and the need to engage in a political process. His priority became to establish a state, hence his 1974 declaration that Palestinians should establish Palestinian national authority on any part of the territory that is liberated from Israel. That was by no means an accepting of the two-state solution as a permanent solution of the conflict, not at all. This strategy was called the strategy of stages, and it continued to be called the strategy of stages until the 1980s. When I was at the Palestinian National Council (PNC) meeting at Algeria in 1983, that was the term that was used in a speech by Abu Iyad, the strategy of stages, and that strategy was not very appealing to Israelis because from the Israeli point of view that meant, OK, we will establish a state or authority on any part of the land that is liberated and from there we will use that as staging area for getting the rest of the country. On the other hand, it was seen in Palestinian circles, particularly among the Palestinian rejectionist groups, as an opening wedge to the concept of a mini-state in Palestine and that was the basis on which some Palestinian rejectionist groups left the PLO as a consequence.

Significant support for the idea of a two-state solution eventually came from the population in the occupied territories. Their priority was the end of occupation. Moreover, they were inclined, on the basis of their personal observations to view the idea, the goal of eliminating Israel, as an unrealistic political goal. Indeed the political slogan of the first *intifada* was very clearly—the end of occupation. It was not the elimination of Israel; it was the end of occupation. Interestingly, the West Bank/Gaza voices gained increasing influence in the ruling governing circles of the PLO as result of the Israeli policy of expelling some of the nationalist leaders, people like Hanna Nasser or Mohammed Melhem who then became major figures in Palestinian decision-making. So, their influence increased and in the end the *intifada* was a major element here in that it put Palestinians in the occupied territories into the vanguard of the Palestinian national movement. I would say that it was this alliance between the Arafat elements within the PLO and the population of the occupied territories that led to the decision—resolutions of the 1988 PNC in Algeria that accepted partition and a two-state solution referencing U.N. Resolution 242.

One further element contributing to the emergence of the two-state solution among Palestinians is that it had been given widespread support in the international community and therefore benefited from international legitimacy. Palestinians originally, as you will recall, rejected U.N. Resolution 242 on the grounds that it did not deal with the Palestinian problem as a national problem but only as a refugee problem. What U.N. Resolution 242 did was to declare the land beyond the Green Line to be non-Israel. To that extent, it gave international legitimacy to the concept of Arab control of the occupied territories which very soon came to be seen among major elements of the international community as establishing a Palestinian state. The consequence of this was in demanding a state in the territory beyond the Green Line, Palestinians have been within the international consensus and that greatly strengthened their political position.

The fact that this demand represented international consensus made it possible for Palestinians what would have been otherwise extremely difficult to accept—the idea of a Palestinian state in only 22 percent of the land rather than going back to the partition.

The reference to resolution 242 in the PNC's 1988 resolutions is critical because it clearly said we are talking about a two-state solution and we accept the idea that there will be a solution along the Green Line. Now, this history of Palestinian thinking about a two-state solution explains the eventual acceptance of such a solution on the part of a majority of Israelis. The *intifada* played a major role in Israeli thinking because it persuaded the Israeli population that the Palestinians were a nation—they were a real people and that these were not people who were going away overtime. This was a nation that was insisting on national self-determination.

One of the most dramatic illustrations on how the Israeli public thinking had moved as a result of the *intifada* was in 1993 when the Oslo Agreement was announced and the Palestinians were celebrating in the streets. Many Israelis, including an editorialist in a main paper said, this reminds us of what the Jews of Tel Aviv did when they were dancing in the streets in November 1947 at the time of the U.N. resolution because it meant the beginning of a Jewish state. Support for a two-state solution took a very slow long time in coming in Israel but eventually it was accepted. Since 1993, all Israeli public opinion polls have consistently shown majorities in favor of a two-state solution, with varying majorities but majorities were consistently in favor.

In the end, even [former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel] Sharon and [Israeli Prime Minister Ehud] Olmert, responding to so-called demographic pressures and international opinion, decided that you have to go the way of a two-state solution. Even many of the right-wing elements including elements of the settler movement have now accepted the idea that there will be a Palestinian state. Now, the Palestinian state that they have in mind is not a Palestinian state that can be acceptable to any Palestinian—there is no question about that.

Another major consequence of the 1967 war was the Greater Israel Movement. It was brought about by two elements. One was religious, fervent Messianic reaction—that this could not have happened by accident, that Israel found itself in control of the entire land, that this was the beginning of the Messianic era and that the whole land had to be settled and giving up any part of it was a sin. So there was religious fervor. The other was old-fashioned secular, ultra-nationalism, and Sharon was the best example of this, who were tempted by the control over the land and saw it as an opportunity for expanding the national enterprise.

Even though the support for the Greater Israel Movement was only a minority support, it had a major impact, a continuing impact largely because of the settlement project. The settlement project was not widely supported, but there were several elements that gave it influence far beyond its numbers. One is that they represented powerful elements and they received all kinds of support within the government, particularly in the early years by Sharon in his various ministerial positions and so on. Secondly, there was always some ambiguity even among those who opposed the settlement process because of what happened in Jerusalem.

The settlements, the establishment of what is called neighborhoods, Jewish neighborhoods around Jerusalem, was widely accepted within Israeli society, as also reflected in that Jerusalem was annexed. So, that in a sense weakened the importance of the Green Line as a clean basis for establishing a two-state solution. And, of course, the other factor is that the settlements proceeded and were allowed to proceed even during the Labor party rule. As they expanded and the number of settlements and settlers grew, not only did they become a major force but also introduced the threat, the danger of a civil war in the case of the elimination of the settlements. So, the concept of Greater Israel, even though it is dead as a concept, has left a legacy of the settlements and a legacy that represents a major obstacle.

The final impact that I mentioned was that Israel adopted the role of occupier, which had very important consequences for Israeli society. I don't have time to go into this, but what it led to was an erosion within Israeli society of the moral integrity of the society because of all that was involved with the role of the occupier. It led to the erosion of security because of the nature of the security problem, as 2006 made very clear that the problem is no longer an inter-state problem but an internal problem, and the international standing of Israel, which is making Israeli society less attractive to precisely those elements that are very important to Israel's self-concept and role in the world.

BETWEEN OPTIMISM AND PESSIMISM: A LOOK AT THE DEMOGRAPHY AND GEOGRAPHY IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

Mr. Jan de Jong

Ladies and gentlemen, my friend, Afif Safieh, just talked about optimism and pessimism and about Palestinian heroes. My presentation will stand at the crossroads between all of these. I will begin on a pessimistic note in relating to the current situation. But I'll move on to the optimism. I will try to give some solid foundations to optimism. In Palestine and Israel, I've acquired a reputation over the years as the so-called grim reaper. I could not help always having to show, point out and analyze the elements of pessimism in terms of the ever-growing Israeli settlements and of deprived Palestinian villages and cities.

In getting to know Palestinian heroes, there is one that I had the privilege of getting to know from close by, [Palestinian politician] Faisal Husseini. He always urged me to analyze the elements of pessimism but to move toward the optimistic perspective. Indeed, as Mr. Safieh emphasized: Palestinians need a strategy of optimism. This is basically what I will be trying to highlight in this presentation.

In the search for peace and prosperity, it is important to keep the issue of national viability in focus, the kind of viability present with most states in the western world. It is possible, in my view, that Palestine becomes a viable state just as Britain or France or Holland or Belgium is as small states. It's all possible. Small states can have it no less than big states. However, recent figures issued by the World Bank on the Palestinian economy are alarming, giving reasons for pessimism.

The Palestinian gross domestic product [GDP] has plummeted in a dramatic way from around \$4,000 billion to around \$2,800 billion. The per capita Palestinian income, which not long ago stood at \$1,000, has dropped to \$750 dollars. Unemployment is moving towards 45 percent and the poverty rate to 72 percent. These are dramatic figures. And if these figures will continue their current trends, they will even exceed the figures that we are seeing now for black Africa today—a continent of poverty, dilapidation and despair.

In this presentation, I will talk about the socioeconomic potential of Palestine, in the sphere of opportunities, and I will talk about what is threatening and obstructing it. I will illustrate it with particular cases, such as the districts of Bethlehem and the Jordan Valley and the cities of Nablus, Qalqilya and Jerusalem.

First, it is important to understand how Palestine is situated on a world scale—how it can hook itself up to the thriving, producing part of the world and become a normal state. Palestine is situated in the middle of the Arab world just south of the prosperous western states of Europe. The Arab world, in turn, is basically in the middle of the poorest parts of the world but connected to the wealthiest parts of the world.

Palestine must regain its access to this richer part of the world in order to interact with it and expand its economy. In that richer world, three mega-city systems are very important—one in America, one in Europe and one in Asia, which is Tokyo-Kansai. Palestine is brilliantly located to hook up to those parts of the world because it's in a central position. The region with Palestine at its core basically functions as the hinge of the whole Arab world. There is a very good axis to the western Arab world but also to the eastern Arab world. That hinge function gives Palestine a much greater advantage than any other region in that part of the world.

Let's zoom in closer to the level of Palestine, Israel and Jordan. It is obvious that the West Bank and Gaza, the Palestinian territories conquered by Israel in 1967, exercise that kind of hinge function, making up the region's crucial crossroads. With regard to the metropolises of the Arab world in the region, it is clear that Gaza and Jerusalem are central locations of great socioeconomic opportunity. To give an example of how Palestine can be viewed in an optimistic light, think of Gaza and Jerusalem as the main driving metropolises in the future for the whole region just on account of this centrality. It is very difficult for us to realize that prospect because Gaza today appears as a place of least opportunities. But, actually, Gaza in many ways can be compared to the major port of Europe, which is Rotterdam. Both cities have around the same amount of population, the same population buildup in terms of professional composition and are extremely well located. Gaza has a much better position than any other port that you see along the coastline from Egypt to Turkey. It has a much better position than Alexandria, Beirut and Latakia because it is better connected to the major population centers in the region. It has also prime possibilities to build up its port functions. Gaza is a place of promise, not necessarily a place of despair. The actuality doesn't need to stay as it is today. If Gaza would be able to connect to the western Arab world and make a link to Jerusalem as the gateway to the eastern Arab world, it would have all the potentials that can be seen today in Rotterdam as the Netherlands' and Europe's prime gateway.

Let's now take a look closer at the nearby metropolitan cities of the region—first, the Israeli metropolis centered at Tel Aviv. It is growing from its current 4 million inhabitants to 4.8 million. Next is the emerging Palestinian metropolis on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip comprised of the string of cities from Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah, Jerusalem and Bethlehem down to Hebron. It is gradually growing into a conglomerate metropolis just like greater Amman and the cities around it, which are growing into a Jordanian metropolis on the Jordan's East Bank. I'm arguing that the Israeli metropolis, on account of Israeli geopolitics, is negating/destroying the potential of the Jordanian and the Palestinian metropolis to become urban engines toward peace and prosperity in the region. This deprivation, by the way, also hurts the Israeli metropolis in depriving itself of a promising market.

The Palestinian metropolis now has 2.6 million people, but it will grow in the next 20 years to about 5 million people. In that sense, it will be a little bit smaller than the Jordanian metropolis, which will grow from 4 to 6 million. Looking at their productive figures is revealing. The Palestinian metropolis produces about \$3.5 billion dollars today. In the Israeli metropolis, the product is \$105 billion dollars, which is more than 30 times bigger. The Jordanian metropolis is doing slightly better than the Palestinian but only slightly so. These figures can and must change. If given the chance, the Palestinian metropolis has the same potential or even better as the Israeli metropolis. The trouble is that the Palestinian metropolis is basically being isolated and encaged and kept in a position without opportunities to positively react and respond to the stimuli around it.

When did all of this start? The *Nakba* war of 1948-1949 was a first step toward this situation. The war of 1967 was another step down the road. It is important to grasp how Israel responded to its conquests. The so-called Allon Plan, conceptualized immediately upon the 1967 June war, is key to understand Israel's approach to craft the future of Palestine. The conception of [former Israeli Prime Minister Yigal] Allon was clear. He wanted the population of the country to be encapsulated by Israel but tenuously linked to the Arab hinterland in order to control all the potentials and opportunities of the country around that demographic Palestinian area. Thus, what we could really call a "pro-to-ghettoized" system was conceptualized. Until today, it is more or less the structural background of what Israeli proposals come about.

The Allon Plan could materialize through the Oslo Interim Agreement. It carved out a domain of Israeli settlements from the West Bank and Gaza, controlling and encapsulating the Palestinian areas in between and basically creating a myriad of smaller and larger population ghettos that have no way of rehabilitating the whole area as a Palestinian state. It was understood that in the end such a configuration needed to be altered into something better. The Israeli permanent status offer, made by [former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud] Barak at Camp David in 2000, was to achieve that. Israel would give up smaller settlements but keep the bigger settlements close to Tel Aviv and in Jerusalem, comprising 80 percent of the settler population. By and large, it would however solidify and fortify a pattern still of fragmentation, no longer in myriad fashion but in the form of four larger separated, cantonized Palestinian population pockets deprived of their main urban asset: metropolitan East Jerusalem. The Palestinians did not hesitate to reject Barak's "generous" offer of larger Bantustans. But that did not lessen Israel's determination to materialize and impose it in reality away from the negotiation table.

It is important to form an idea of Palestine's main assets in securing a future of peace and prosperity. It is most of all the above mentioned emerging Palestinian metropolis stretching over the central hill ridge all the way from Jenin up north over greater Arab Jerusalem, including Ramallah and Bethlehem, down south to Hebron City. The hill ridge, running from north to south, explains why the emerging city system is growing in a lengthy stretch pattern. It is equally important that Palestinians realize that this area is their main developmental asset. It accommodates about 70 percent of the Palestinian population on the West Bank and generates about 90 percent of its income. Within it, metropolitan East Jerusalem is the vital core of this urban system. It accommodates 25 percent of the West Bank's population and generates some 40 percent of the Palestinian gross domestic product. If this total—the metropolitan core of Palestinian greater Jerusalem and the outlying larger cities of Nablus and Hebron up to provincial towns such as Jenin, Tulkarm, Qalqilya and Jericho—could function as one connected organic unit, it could pose a critical substance of Palestinian urbanism reaching out to the outside world.

Precisely, that prospect is being disabled by the Israeli Wall and settlements. Israeli settlements protrude into the Palestinian urban area, into the Palestinian metropolis. It does so in the north near the settlement of Ariel and it does so in the center in and around East Jerusalem. That lengthy, cohesive structure of Palestinian metropolis is being fragmented and intruded upon by the Israeli settlements. This happens while its urban population is rapidly expanding, practically doubling in the next fifteen years. Hundreds of thousands of jobs and houses are needed in order not to become poor. What is needed is to make this a good durable city system which doesn't sprawl into the countryside, harming the rural environment. It is impossible to pursue such policies in the fragmented reality of all the larger and smaller Oslo islands of Palestinian autonomy. The Israeli-controlled C-zones leave no room for cohesive urban development. Moving from Jenin up north down to Hebron in the south requires crossing through Israeli-controlled areas, necessitating to go around Palestinian greater Jerusalem, which is largely devoid of Palestinian self-rule. Self-rule means that urban development can be planned and implemented. In this system, it is territorially totally broken up. It is a recipe for urban decay.

Israel has, however, learned some lessons. It no longer wants to continue with the policy of entirely breaking up the emerging Palestinian metropolis. Israel wants to ensure that Palestinians are, at least, able to survive on an African level instead of going down even more. That is why Israel introduced a couple of years ago what was termed a

“Separation Road System.” It will provide for two layers of road networks: one for Israeli settlers on top as it was and the local Palestinian road system underneath it. The two networks do not compare in transportation efficiency. The settler road system is a wide highway system. Settlers can quickly go from, for example, Har Homa to another bloc of settlements in just ten minutes. But Palestinian trucks and private vehicles bringing the goods and the services needed for Palestinians have to take very slow, winding rural roads. Precise analysis on this road system makes clear that it is an impossible road system because a large line of trucks have to creep through every Palestinian village on the way. And in terms of transaction costs, it means that Palestinian producers, when they want to sell their vegetables and manufacture, can never compete with Israeli firms using the good settler highway road system that Palestine needs urgently. In transaction costs, it means that even when potatoes or tomatoes are sold, a loss is incurred compared to what Israeli producers can offer. That’s already happening today. So, Palestinian producers—be they farmers or tradesmen—can never compete with Israeli producers. This way undermines one of the key foundations for economic viability.

What Israel hopes to achieve, unilaterally if needed, is to slightly ameliorate the current Oslo configuration. It entails the creation of larger manageable islands of Palestinian autonomy, where blocs of settlements in between are “converging” in the words of Israeli Prime Minister [Ehud] Olmert. It can only result in territorial configuration that only looks slightly better than the current one of the Oslo Agreement, but it remains entirely deficient in terms of minimal developmental prospects for the Palestinian emerging metropolis and its rural surroundings. Israeli unilateral policies are now producing the so-called Separation Barrier. It creates two big intrusions from the so-called Green Line: one in the north comprising basically of two big fingers that protrude and surround the city of Nablus and one in and around East Jerusalem. In that fashion, Israeli metropolitan Jerusalem disables the potential of Palestinian metropolitan Jerusalem.

The case of the Bethlehem District provides a graphic illustration of how this works. It is comprised of the main city of Bethlehem and villages surrounding it. The village of Nahhalin, for example, had access to very fruitful markets in Jerusalem to sell its agricultural produce. Now, its lands are getting isolated and are losing their productive value on account of intruding on Israeli settlements. These have sprung up the rocky areas in between those villages. In addition, most of the original road system is no longer as it was before. The original Palestinian highway to Hebron between Jerusalem has been converted into a massive settlement highway, which can be very easily used by settlers because Palestinians are largely barred access to it. They have to creep and crawl over tiny rural roads in order to get to their destinations. This is already a factor of Palestinian pauperization. Many of the products from the rural countryside have to incur unrealistic transportation costs to bring produce to the city of Bethlehem. One village, Wadi Fukin exemplifies these processes in a graphical way. It became engulfed by the huge Israeli settlement of Betar in the 1990s. Plans have been formalized to expand that settlement and others in the vicinity. These will totally encapsulate the village on three sides.

In this crucial area—the western Bethlehem region—the population of Palestinian villages will become a tiny minority. Most of these settlements are being transformed into Hollywood-type villa-suburbs that are very successful because vital ingredients are there: fresh air, good highway connections to the cities of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv and also the qualities of the landscape around them. To top all of this, the Wall is being built leaving most of western Bethlehem at the Israeli side of the Wall. The Palestinian villages behind it will have grave difficulties of bringing their produce through that Wall because of the procedures of security. They will be demanded to have their cargo inspected on top of having to transport it over a rural road of low capacity. Today, desperate farmers are crying out that they have no way of harvesting their grapes and vegetables commercially. How does this work out for those villages? Wadi Fukin offers a dramatic example of Israeli-imposed de-development. The village has everything that a modern farming system even in our western countries requires. Wadi Fukin has pure, high quality water. It has very good soil, and it has a sizeable market nearby. If it would have a connection to air and sea ports, it would easily be able to market its produce to Western Europe and become a very feasible, modern enterprise. Now this is being threatened by the Israeli expansion of the Betar area settlements.

The city of Nablus offers an example of Israeli policies disabling Palestinian urban development. Together with the surrounding towns and villages, it has around 300,000 people. The settlements immediately around the city only accommodate 3,000 people. That is 1 percent of the total of Nablus, and this 1 percent entirely controls and disables the fate of Nablus in a very dramatic way. The city has only room to expand within a restrictive tight line around it. This means that the pressure on the land in terms of prices is getting so dramatic that the city is “Manhattanizing,” so to speak. Growth is only possible vertically instead of horizontally. It creates awful living conditions while empty space is widely available but out of reach as it remains controlled by all these settlements

Qalqilya presents another similar case. Here, the Wall is creating a real urban semi-ghetto. Qalqilya has all the advantages of being close to the Israeli market and could become an example city of tapping into the prospects of a proverbial win-win situation with the Israeli market interacting with the Palestinian market. Now, the city is completely encaged by the Wall. All the settlements closely around it are in for big expansion on the lands of Qalqilya thereby depriving Qalqilya of its sole good opportunity for its own urban expansion. Qalqilya becomes a dead end place.

Jerusalem is a better known case exemplifying these policies. All the urban areas from Ramallah to Bethlehem need to be seen as one unit, which the Palestinians in all frankness were slow of realizing all along. Faisal Husseini was one to see this potential in an early stage and able to redefine this potential in that it should be one cohesive metropolitan city. The settlements springing up on its area basically break up this cohesive bigger area in which the Palestinian neighborhoods, for example Sur Bahir, can only grow inwardly as islands within the city area while a settlement like Har Homa can grow and link up to all the other Israeli city settlements. The settlement of Giv’at Ze’ev illustrates how this occurs. It is currently very small but already all the roads and all the electric lines for its future large scale expansion have been laid out to accommodate a seven-fold increase of that settlement.

The Wall is basically creating two kinds of ghettos on either side of the Wall. The Palestinian neighborhoods within East Jerusalem are being built as, let’s say, virtual ghettos. They cannot expand towards one another but only inwards making the living situation of Palestinians worse and worse and basically creating this ghettoized system in which you see those slivers of land totally encapsulated by Israeli settlements coming from Ramallah and Bethlehem and depriving the center of its very vibrant opportunities to become the metropolitan core.

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