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Intervening in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: A Strategy and Its Risks

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The primary problem in reaching a peaceful arrangement between the Israelis and the Palestinians is that a significant number of people on both sides reject dividing the land between the Mediterranean and Jordan (the two-state solution), and neither local government (not the Israelis nor the Palestinians) can control their own rejectionists. As long as any "solution" assumes that the local governments will be able to confront these rejectionists, that plan will fail.

The only way around this is with the use of an international coalition composed, at least, of the United States, the EU, the UN, and Arab countries. The coalition must declare its immediate willingness to use diplomatic, economic, and military pressure to achieve three goals simultaneously:

- *ending the use of violence;*
- *removing a large number of settlements; and*
- *agreeing up front to the plan outlined by President Clinton and negotiated at Taba.*

This plan has difficulties, but it can work because there is now an international consensus opposing the use of terror, opposing the presence of settlements, and favoring the two-state agreement all but agreed to at Taba. And this consensus is supported by substantial majorities of Israelis and Palestinians. It is the rejectionists on both sides who block it and who must be confronted.

The British did not create the conflict between the Jews and the Arabs in the Middle East, but the Balfour Declaration drew the knot very tight. The Declaration in 1917 promised a "national home for the Jewish people in Palestine" while assuring that nothing will "prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine." The British governed Palestine from the end of World War I until 1948. In that time the question of how to untie the knot was considered by perhaps nineteen commissions[1] and ten plans of division.[2] In 1947 the United Nations made the first of its many efforts at resolution, and the United States under every president from Truman to G.W. Bush has undertaken efforts of his own. Almost every one of these efforts has focused on persuading Jewish and Arab leaders to divide the land lying between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River. The question has been where to draw the line.

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For many people in the region, however, this has not been the major question. For them, and they have been on both sides, the major question has been whether there should be any line at all, whether there should be any division of the land. These people — government leaders, non-government leaders, and many residents — have rejected the idea that land division is the solution, and they have worked diligently against such a solution. Over the last eighty years the strength of rejectionists has gone up and gone down. Their rationales, their organizational forms, and their strategies have changed with the times. Arab rejectionists have sounded and behaved differently from Jewish rejectionists, and although the rejectionists from each side have completely opposing goals, they have, with no formal consultation, nonetheless aided each other.

To be a rejectionist, for the purpose of this essay, one must be:

- Either an Arab who does not believe there should be a Jewish state west of the Jordan; or a Jew who does not believe there should be a Palestinian state west of the Jordan; and
- One who believes that this goal is more important than abiding by the law of one's government, and that it is legitimate to use physical force to achieve this goal.[3]

There are variations within this definition. Some Arab rejectionists will accept a bi-national state, others won't. Some Jewish rejectionists will accept a Palestinian state but only one sufficiently circumscribed to raise significant questions about its viability. Some people speak and act with complete consistency as rejectionists; others, at the fuzzy edge of the definition, say they favor a two-state solution but either set implausible conditions or act in ways inconsistent with that goal. Rejectionists express their views in the vocabularies of religion, race, history, justice, security, and combinations among these.[4]

The focus of this essay will be on these rejectionists, on the role they have played in undermining peace prospects, and on what outside intervenors (nations, international organizations) can do about them. This essay reverses the usual sequence: rather than aim at settling the explosive issues of Jerusalem, refugees, and borders so as to control the rejectionists, this essay proposes that one must control the rejectionists in order to confront these issues. The reason for this reversal is that rejectionists will use considerable resources to block any effective peace process, and that local governments — Israeli and Palestinian — will, alone, be unable to combat them. Thus the support of intervenors will be needed to counter rejectionists, and intervenors will have to undertake major, perhaps unprecedented, commitments to be effective. One goal of this essay is to describe the minimum intervention necessary to achieve success. This essay is not meant to be a complete overview of a peace process; there are many elements omitted and others treated only insofar as they impinge on the rejectionist issue. It looks primarily at the period prior to peace negotiations, but it does include comments about the role of intervenors during and after negotiations.

A brief history of rejectionists on both sides will show that rejectionists have deep roots, and many of them.

Arab Rejection

Arab rejection of Jewish migration to Palestine began before the Balfour Declaration. During the period of the Mandate, official Arab attitudes toward Jews were almost uniformly hostile; Arab leaders objected often, and with some success, to British immigration policy concerning Jews. But the most prominent and significant expression of Arab rejection was the use of violence. Riots involving the killing and raping of Jews occurred in 1919, 1920, 1921, 1929, and 1936–39. Those involved were primarily the Arabs living in Palestine, though the Arab Revolt of 1936–39 attracted the interest of Arabs elsewhere as well. There is debate over whether these riots were spontaneous or orchestrated by local leaders. Though some Arabs did amicable business with some Jews (including the selling of land), and some worked at establishing good personal or collaborative political relations, these were eddies in a storm blowing in one direction. There does not appear to have been a time in the last eighty-plus years when rejecting the Jews has not been a crowd-pleasing cause among Arabs in part or all of the Middle East.

In 1937 the Arabs rejected the partition recommendations of the Peel Commission, as they did the UN partition resolution of 1947. Arab hostility reached a peak when in 1948 the British withdrew from Palestine, Israel declared independence, and five Arab countries attacked the new Jewish state with the declared purpose of destroying it.

During the period from 1948 until the 1967 War, official Arab policy, and especially Palestinian policy as it began to be articulated toward the end of this period, remained firmly opposed to the existence of Israel. Some Arab leaders, to be sure, did see advantages in seeking accommodation with Israel. King Abdullah of Jordan entered into talks with Israel and was assassinated in 1951 for his effort. Colonel Adib Shishakli, head of the Syrian government hinted in the early 1950s at some interest, as did President Nasser of Egypt. But Abdullah's example plus strong hostility toward Israel within Arab governments and society (and a less than enthusiastic response from the Israeli government) taught the leaders the wisdom of keeping their inclinations secret. Finally, these inclinations were swept up in the larger forces of rejection.

The war of 1967, begun for many reasons, certainly contained large elements of rejectionist motivation among the Arab nations involved. Arab policy toward Israel following the war can be divided into four parts. At one level, nothing changed. Arab hostility toward Israel continued with terror attacks, a war of attrition, a boycott of trade, UN resolutions, and the declaration at the1967 Arab summit meeting that there would be "no recognition of Israel, no peace and no negotiations with her." But from the ashes of the 1967 Arab defeat, changes were emerging. A major new player rose to prominence on the Arab side, as the Palestine Liberation Organization largely achieved its goal of becoming the representative of Palestinian interests. In 1972 the PLO killed eleven Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics, and throughout the 1970s and 80s it continued its attack on Israel using terror, the UN, and other approaches. Over the same time span, Islamic organizations, drawing on discouragement throughout the Arab world following the 1967 War, increased in strength and focused their religious commitment on the destruction of Israel. Not all Arab thinking during this period, however, was rejectionist. In the 1970s, President Anwar Sadat determined that it was in Egypt's interest to seek accommodation with Israel. The 1973 War fit into his plan, which subsequently led to his visit to

Jerusalem and to the Camp David Accords. Sadat tried but largely failed to link those Accords with the recognition of Palestinian rights, a failure that reinforced for Palestinians the sense that they would have to represent their own interests in public forums. In 1981, President Sadat was assassinated, in part for the accommodation with Israel. In 1988–89 the PLO took steps toward accepting a two-state solution; and in 1993 it joined in producing the Oslo agreements.

From the early 1990s to the present the shifting mix of peace-seeking and Israel-rejecting behaviors has continued, with an increased role for the former. Egypt has played a significant mediating role trying to help Israel and the Palestinians reach agreement, but President Mubarak has refused (with the exception of attending Prime Minister Rabin's funeral) to set foot in Israel; Egypt has refrained from military intervention (when, for example, Israel entered Lebanon in 1982), but the largely government-controlled press has often been vitriolic and frothing with anti-Semitic rage. Jordan, the Arab country with the most at stake if a two-state solution were to occur (it sits next to a putative Palestinian state, and 60 percent of its population is Palestinian), has since 1994 developed a relationship with Israel roughly parallel to that of Egypt: it has a peace treaty with Israel, in a climate of public, press, and domestic non-acceptance of the Jewish state. President Hafez Assad of Syria beginning in 1995, and Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia in 2001 have shown interest in accommodation with Israel, while others — former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq and every leader of Iran — have maintained staunch rejectionist positions. The current president of Syria, the son of Hafez Assad, said in March of 2003 that "it is inconceivable that Israel will become a legitimate state even if the peace process is implemented."[5]

In 2004, the most prominent promoters of the rejectionist cause are the two relatively new religion-based organizations, Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Whether Fatah,Yassir Arafat's arm of the PLO, also supports the violent destruction of Israel is a topic of debate. These organizations are well funded and flexible in their use of tactics. Estimates defining their membership size vary wildly, but all journalistic accounts suggest that there is widespread sympathy for their goals and their violent means. Hamas puts much money and effort into building social service networks that also teach the cause and aim to build loyalty to the organization. That these organizations continue to function reasonably well even after Israel has killed or jailed so many of their leaders suggests a breadth of support and a depth of talent.

Understanding the motives of individuals is problematic; understanding the motives of large groups may be delusory. But one can at least catalog the rhetoric that rejectionist groups use to explain their behaviors. For Arabs seeking a traditional way of life (for example, the role of women), Jews represent the West and its threat to tradition. For Arabs seeking independence, Jews represent a revived colonialism. For Arabs seeking Islamic purity, Jews controlling holy land represent an intolerable stain. For Arabs who hate Jews, Jews are Jews. For Arabs who see the land on which Israel sits as Palestinian homeland, Jews are usurpers. For Arabs who see Israeli policy as expansionist, Jews are a threat to other Arab regimes. For Arabs who see Israeli policy as racist, Jews are morally offensive. For Arabs who see Israel as a society to be emulated (as a democracy or an economy), Jews are a reminder of what Arabs have not achieved. And, of course, many Arabs see Israel through several of these lenses at once.

Many Arabs, nonetheless, have come out in favor of a two-state solution, and thus do not fit the definition of rejectionists. Arguments in favor of this position
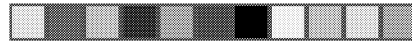
generally focus on the advantage of making peace rather than expending the resources to fight with a country that always wins the wars. Even among those willing to accept a two-state solution, there is little evidence of positive feelings toward a Jewish state. Palestinian school textbooks were revised after Oslo, and, though improved in their description of the conflict, they still do not place Israel on a map of the Middle East.[6] Though polls of Palestinians conducted between July 2000 and April 2003 show high numbers eager for a peaceful settlement, they also asked the question: Do you want a "school curriculum in the Palestinian state that would recognize Israel and teach school children not to demand return of all Palestine to the Palestinians." Between 87 percent and 94 percent said No.[7] In short, Arab rejectionists work within a population that may disagree with their means, but that has at least some sympathy with their ends.

The rejectionists receive essential support (money, arms, training, manpower, logistics) from Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and, before the war, Iraq. There is constant talk, though no hard evidence in public, that they also receive aid from terrorist groups located elsewhere (Pakistan is mentioned occasionally).

There is a long-standing debate over whether Arab governments wish to eliminate or control rejectionists, and if they wish to, can they? Claiming that they cannot do so, or maintaining ambiguity about the question, can be useful, giving the leaders an explanation for not doing what they may not wish to do for other reasons; Yassir Arafat, of course, is an excellent example of this stance. As for whether controlling rejectionists is really possible, there is evidence pointing in both directions. No analyst can know the answer definitively, but the intensity of popular anti-Israeli feeling, its durability in Arab history, its widespread and multi-national nature, its many sources of inspiration, its funding and flexibility, and the general weakness of many of the Arab governments, all suggest that the most plausible working assumption should be that Arab governments, and the Palestinian government in particular, are not capable of doing so on their own.

Jewish Rejection

Jewish rejectionism has taken two primary forms since the Balfour Declaration. One has been rhetorical and symbolic, emphasizing the aspiration that Jewish or Israeli sovereignty run from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River, and in some cases beyond. The other has used fait accompli, inserting people and physical structures, with or without official approval, on land claimed for a Palestinian state, and then using a range of techniques to prevent their removal.

In the Mandate period, Jewish rejectionism can be found primarily in the rhetoric of various prominent leaders. The all-consuming work for Jews involved establishing a presence, settling any land at all, and building administrative institutions. To the extent that anyone was thinking about boundaries, the question was how far a Jewish state, framed by nationalistic thinking, would reach, not on the location of a Palestinian state. In 1928 Menachem Ussishkin, a Jewish leader said: "the Jewish people wants a Jewish state . . . from the great sea to the desert, including Transjordan" (today's Jordan).[8] The Revisionists, a forceful Jewish minority during the Mandate period, left the World Zionist Organization in 1935 in protest over the decision by Britain to cut Transjordan off from Palestine; the Revisionists still envisioned Jewish sovereignty extending to both banks of the Jordan. In 1938 the Peel Commission recommended a partition plan that Ben Gurion accepted, though

he noted to his son that he saw this as a step toward a state extending to the Jordan River. In 1944 a group of the Revisionists, lead by Menachem Begin, used as a logo a map of Palestine reaching from the Mediterranean to Iraq. In 1947, though the main stream Labor Zionists were committed to a country that ran from the sea to the river, Ben Gurion accepted the UN partition plan over their protest and that of the Revisionist opposition.

The war of 1948 was fought by the Israelis largely on a defensive basis; military, not ideological considerations dictated almost all of the decisions. The boundaries that existed at the end of the fighting reflected the accident of where the combatants were when the final cease-fire went into effect.

From 1948 to the 1967 war, pressure and rhetoric for expansionism abated, as the boundaries, accidental though they were, took on the appearance of permanence. Nonetheless, as Meron Benvenisti puts it, during this period the West Bank was "never a foreign country."[9] The only source of expansionist rhetoric came from Begin and his friends, and, though his group never disappeared, it was, up until just before the 1967 war, politically unimportant.

It was the 1967 War and Israel's sudden, surprising control of the West Bank that changed everything. Since that war, a dominating fact of Israeli political life has been the continuing flow of energy to expand the country into the West Bank. Not only was it the political right wing that wanted to build settlements, but a significant portion of the Labor party also supported security-based expansion. But there were voices of opposition as well: those who wanted to use the control of the West Bank only as a bargaining chip in peace negotiation; those who saw domination of Arabs as unconscionable if not suicidal; and those who saw the expansion as part of larger, destructive, changes in Israeli society. These voices were frequently expressed by people of stature and authority, but they were usually overwhelmed and out maneuvered by the forces of expansion. But not always. When Prime Minister Begin, supported by the Knesset, agreed as part of the Camp David peace agreement to return the Sinai to Egypt, the government was able to remove five thousand settlers from the settlement of Yamit. Violence and resistance were threatened, but civil disobedience turned out to be modest, and those who did resist were removed without much difficulty.

The Jewish rejectionists, like their Palestinian counterparts, also have a range of explanations for their stance. For Jews who feel terrified in a tiny country (nine miles across at its narrowest point) surrounded by violently hostile enemies, more land means more security. For some, more Israeli security will convince the Arabs over time to accept Israel as inevitable; for others, more Israeli security is necessary precisely because the Arabs will never give up their goal of annihilating Israel. For Jews whose attachment to the land is based in the Bible, the West Bank is Judea and Samaria, sacred land. For Jews whose attachment to the land is historic, the West Bank is where the Jewish kingdoms had been, and from which Jews had been driven out by Romans in c.e.70 and by Arab riots in the 1920s and 30s. For them, return is a matter of justice. And, in the national election of 1977, all of these voices were given successful political expression. What made the difference was the vote of Sephardic Jews. The Sephardim are Jewish immigrants from Arab countries, possessed of passionate confidence in their pessimistic view of Arabs. The Sephardim felt long excluded from power and resources by the Labor party, which had governed Israel since independence and which was generally blamed for the perceived loss in the 1973 war. The result was a victory for Menachem Begin and a strongly

pro-expansionist government. With that election, construction of settlements, justfied by nationalist ideology, became official government policy and moved ahead rapidly, though not smoothly.

As long as Palestinians, and Arabs generally, were perceived by Israelis as uncompromisingly opposed to the existence of Israel, Israelis who opposed the expansionists had little to work with. By the late 1980s, this began to change. The PLO took steps toward the recognition of Israel, the Madrid conference of 1991 made negotiation with Palestinians a more or less legitimate approach, and the Oslo Accords brought into sharp focus the idea that the West Bank settlements (or many of them) were inconsistent with the only agreement that seemed even possible, a two-state solution.

Settler strategies have evolved, but some of their techniques have stayed constant. Lustick[10] describes one effort in 1968:

> to establish a small, illegal presence in a hotel in the middle of Hebron during the spring festival of Passover. . . . The government was caught by surprise. Internally divided, depending for its survival on the votes of the National Religious Party, and reluctant to forcibly evacuate the settlers from a city whose Jewish population had been massacred thirty-nine years earlier, the Labor government backed away from its original prohibition against civilian settlement in the area and permitted this group to remain within a military compound. After more than a year and a half of agitation and a bloody Arab attack on the Hebron settlers, the government agreed to allow Levinger's group to establish a town on the outskirts of the city.

Another campaign by settlers illustrates additional techniques.

> With the blessing and participation of Rav Tzvi Yehuda, the dramatic involvement of whole families, and the skillful use of the symbols associated with Jewish holidays, and with the legendary illegal struggle by Labor Zionism to settle the Galilee during the British mandate, Gush (Gush Emunim, a settler organization) members made eight attempts in 1974 and 1975 to evade army roadblocks and establish a settlement in the Nablus area. Seven times they were foiled by the army but each time the number involved in the effort, the extent of media attention, and the level of public support grew. These attempts also attracted visits of support to the temporary Gush encampments by influential political personalities, including Menachem Begin, Ariel Sharon, and Geula Cohen. Finally on the holiday of Hanukah in December 1975, some two thousand Gush supporters succeeded in establishing a settlement in Sabastia. After prolonged confrontation with the Labor government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Defense Minister Shimon Peres, the settlers received permission to maintain their presence in the nearby army camp of Kadum.[11]

In the summer of 2003, Prime Minister Sharon declared that some settlements had to be dismantled. Whether he was sincere in seeking this goal was a subject of discussion, but the techniques used by the settlers to resist included: filings in court to declare the closures illegal; pressure on various legislators with threats of blocking other legislation or of derailing the coalition government; establishment of additional settlements; use of large numbers of settlers to block the way of soldiers sent to dismantle the settlements; harassment of neighboring Arabs; hints about the use of violence; and appeals to the Israeli public seeking support. When the process ended, the number of settlement homes had not changed.

Settler strategy, then, is well thought out and has the advantage of taking the long view. It includes making Arab life sufficiently unpleasant and unpromising to

encourage many to leave; provoking Palestinian violence and then using that violence to justify further settlement; moving furtively into locations and refusing to move out; legal, political, and civil disobedience techniques to forestall government efforts to remove them; and outreach efforts to convince the rest of Israel that the settlers represented a necessary part of a necessary Israeli strategy. The settler organizations have played a major role in national elections, not always gaining their goal, but always carrying influence. And over all of this strategy has hovered an ambiguous relationship toward violence, including the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin, the massacre of twenty-nine Palestinians at prayer in 1995, and the public celebration by settlers (though not by all of them) of both events. These strategies have worked. For practical purposes no real settlements have been removed from the West Bank, and expansion continues.

An additional tool for rejectionists, driving Arabs out of Israel altogether, has a long history. Whether based on attitudes of purity or security, it has had proponents since the 1930s. Though the departure of many Arabs during the 1948 war has been debated at length around the question of why they left, there is no question that some Arabs left because they were driven out by Israelis, whether for military or political purposes. Since the war, leaders in and out of government, though not representing official government policy, have advocated either "voluntary transfer," using carrots, or coerced transfer. Settler rhetoric has been vague on the question of whether the target of transfer policy would be Arabs living inside the Green Line or Arabs on the West Bank, or both. Though there are no signs that a sizable portion of Israeli Jews support a transfer policy, the idea is clearly more acceptable now in public conversation than it had been.

Settlers are not alone. In addition to the aid they receive from the Israeli government, they have support from American Jewish and Christian fundamentalist organizations. Both American groups provide direct funding to settlements, support for Israeli politicians supporting settlements, pressure on the United States government, and pressure on the Israeli government. Despite this pressure the United States government has long declared the settlements to be an obstacle to peace, though, perhaps related to this pressure, the United States has done nothing to enforce this declaration.

The settlers also have a quiet weapon. Many middle-of-the-road Israelis, who in polls clearly oppose settlements, quietly respect the settlers. The settlers are seen as people of principle willing to put their lives on the line. They are seen as the spiritual descendants of the kibbutzniks who lived the heroic pioneer life.[12] And the settlers' fundamental understanding — that the Arabs will never accept us, no matter what some of them may say today — cannot be completely dismissed by even the most pro-peace Israeli. How might this quiet sympathy express itself? One expression may be in the fluidity of swing voters who will vote normally against settlements but who can be induced by rhetoric and events to support settler-supporting candidates. This sympathy can also be seen in the mild response of mainstream Israelis to calls by settler leaders for "transfer." And its most significant expression may arise in the reaction of these quiet admirers if an agreement is at some point reached that requires the Israeli army, a largely reserve-based organization, to dismantle settlements.

Indeed, this is the question that haunts all deliberations with the Palestinians. In its harshest form, will an effort to remove settlers lead to civil war? Will Israeli soldiers be willing to use force against resisting settlers? Again, no one can answer
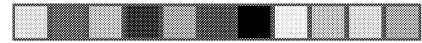
that question definitively. The example of Yamit is occasionally invoked to suggest that the threat of civil war is mainly bluster and that all would, in fact, go more or less smoothly. Deeper in the Israeli memory is the Altalena event of 1948 in which the newly independent Israeli government destroyed a ship loaded with arms intended for a Jewish faction that sought, as a major tenet, Jewish sovereignty of all the land up to the Jordan River. Both events, Yamit and Altalena, represent success for the central government, but both raise painful memories about the capacity of the society to hold together. The settlers' success in the 1970s and 1980s at getting their way in spite of governmental opposition, and their success in the face of Sharon's declared effort to dismantle settlements in 2003, suggest that their sophisticated strategy should not be taken lightly.

What portion of West Bank settlers will participate in resistance can only be estimated. Polls, that could be misleading in both directions, show that 68 percent would accept financial inducements to move, 26 percent would demonstrate but finally not break the law and would move, and 6 percent (or perhaps 13,000 to 14,000 people) would actively resist removal.[13] Only a tiny number of settlers have said they would use weapons to resist, though there are many weapons available in the settlements, and one cannot rule out the possibility of unplanned escalation. No government will undertake such a venture lightly or without trepidation, and it is part of the settlers' strategy to enhance that trepidation.[14]

How Rejectionists Interact with Each Other

Rejectionists on each side work in two directions at once. They bring whatever pressure they can on their own government to prevent the negotiation of a two-state solution, and they collaborate (though presumably without explicit agreement) to support each other's goals. Palestinian terrorists can count on Israeli settlement expansion to justify the next attack; settlers can count on a terrorist bomb to enhance today's justification for its hold on the West Bank. The accusations and insults that come with each move provide further justification for the other side's response. Each rejectionist uses the behavior of the other side to expand its support among those who would rather seek agreement. An inherent ambiguity — is the rejectionist behavior representative of a large portion of the other side or of only a small group? — enhances rejectionism's effectiveness: in a conflict defined by many as existential, it feels far safer to assume the worst about the other side. Or, in a variation, it feels prudent to predict that rejectionism will be the practice of the other side when, in the future, those favoring transfer or those favoring a militantly Islamic state takeover.

Since 1967 there have been numerous examples of terrorist and settler behavior undertaken with the goal of undermining efforts to reach an agreement. In 1974 the founding of Gush Emunim was explicitly aimed at blocking the Labor Party policy of negotiating a withdrawal from the West Bank. In 1979 when Israel withdrew from settlements in the Sinai, the possibility that this could be a precursor of Israeli policy on the West Bank lead Gush Emunim to attack the government of Menachem Begin and to defend, in defiance of a Supreme Court decision, the settlement of Elon Moreh. Settlement expansion has continued through the last twenty-five years, sometimes coinciding with peace efforts (for example, during the administration of Ehud Barak), sometimes not. Terrorist activity in response to possible negotiation

was most visible in the 2000–03 period where peace efforts by Presidents Clinton and Bush produced, almost on cue, suicide bombings in various parts of Israel.

Polls show that for non-rejectionists the greatest block to wanting a deal is the belief that the other side does not want one, and the salient evidence for that conclusion is the list of rejectionist acts carried out by the other side.[15] Government reactions to these acts reinforce this dynamic. Whether the government values the behavior of rejectionists for ideological or tactical reasons, or deems itself too weak to confront it, the failure of government to diminish the effectiveness of rejectionists sends a message to the other side almost as loud as the act of the rejectionists themselves. Whether it is an Israeli court granting a lenient sentence to a settler convicted of harming a Palestinian, or a Palestinian security officer arresting a terrorist only to release him shortly thereafter, the effect is to enhance the standing of rejectionists and to magnify their importance in the eyes of the other side. One tempting strategy for government, inducing rejectionists to join it, provides yet more evidence for the other side to distrust that government. Even the arts of ambiguity and vagueness will, in the hyper-scrutinized atmosphere of Israeli-Palestinian relations, be inadequate to cover over the differences in a government composed of those who wish to negotiate a settlement and those who wish to obliterate the other side. In a context of bitterly competitive politics and highly intense anxiety (a description of both sides), such ambiguity will invite only the most hostile reading possible.

Roles for Intervenors: Tools, A Strategy, and Some Resistance

Outside powers have been intervening in the Arab-Jewish conflict since the 1920s. American and UN peace proposals, from 1947 to the present, have either ignored the role of rejectionists, or, what has come to about the same thing, have assumed that coping with the rejectionists will be the responsibility of the Arabs and the Jews themselves. To the extent that there has been thinking on this topic, it has assumed that the prospect for peace, the fact of peace, and the increased economic betterment that will result, will draw large parts of the rejectionist population, and those who support them, away from actively rejecting, leaving a small group of hardcore rejectionists who, through being marginalized, will be prevented from interfering with the peace process.

It is the main point of this essay that this approach has not worked, that neither the Israeli nor the Palestinian government is able to cope with the rejectionists, that there is no likelihood in any foreseeable future that they will be able to do so on their own, and that no peace plan can work unless intervenors take on the rejectionists directly.The endless argument over whether the governments, Israeli or Palestinian, are unable to take on the rejectionists or just refuse to, is finally irrelevant. Whether the leaders fear civil war, fear making too explicit their inability to control the rejectionists, find the rejectionists useful as a threat to use against the other side or against the pressures of outside intervenors, or find the ambiguity about whether they can't or won't equally useful, is a quarrel over intent that cannot be resolved. Considering all the incentives for local leaders not to take on the rejectionists, the only policy choice for intervenors is to take some responsibility for doing the job, or to accept that the rejectionists will continually block all peace efforts. Moreover, it will not be enough for intervenors only to support the efforts of local governments, and to cheer them on. While these approaches are useful,
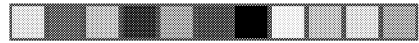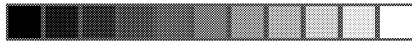
intervenors will also need to develop tools to work with the rejectionists directly.

There is, of course, a substantial literature on intervention in regional wars, but not much has been written on the topic of rejectionists. The best writing on this topic has been done by Stephen John Stedman. In "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes,"[16] Stedman analyzes four cases of international intervention into peace processes that were undermined by what he calls "total spoilers." Stedman's defintion of total spoilers (identical to what I have been calling rejectionists) is: "leaders and parties who believe that peace emerging from negotiations threaten their power, worldview, and interest, and use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it."

Stedman divides rejectionists[17] into three categorizes: "total spoilers are irreconcilably opposed to any compromise peace";[18] "greedy spoilers"[19] have goals that expand and contract depending on costs and risks; and "limited spoilers"[20] have limited goals. The Israeli-Palestinian rejectionists are, of course, all in the first category and, according to Stedman, "cannot be accommodated in a peace settlement; they must be defeated or so marginalized that they can do little damage."[21] Stedman's "total spoilers" are resistant to conventional interventions when, as is true for both sides in the Israeli-Palestinian case, the impetus for their undermining behavior derives from the followers and not from the leaders.[22] Though Stedman is analyzing civil wars in which a peace process is already in place, his reading of history is just as applicable in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as is his observation that "the crucial difference between the success and failure of spoilers is the role played by international actors as custodians of peace."[23]

The following nine guidelines, drawing on the historical sketch provided above and some lessons gathered by Stedman, should govern any intervention.

First, the rejectionists exist in a network of support. Each has three groups who are, in different ways, their allies. There are those who do not necessarily agree with the rejectionists' policy goals, but who join them for opportunistic reasons (for example, economic benefits, political advantages). On the Palestinian side this group would include individuals who work with Fatah because it provides status and economic benefits; on the Israeli side this group would include settlers who find life on the West Bank to be more convenient (though dangerous) and more comfortable than they could afford within the Green Line. In addition, there are those whose political stance and expressions of support sway with events, who would prefer peace and accommodation, but who believe that the other side will never allow it on acceptable terms. Polls identify this group on both sides, usually marked by apparently inconsistent statements: in favor of violent action against the other side and in favor of a two-state solution. And, finally, there are extra-national supporters, who agree with the policy goals of the rejectionists, and who contribute money, material, men, and moral support; these can be individuals, groups, and nations. It can be difficult to identify the size of each of these categories, in part because there is some flow among them (depending on internal politics and external events), and in part because there are strategic reasons for them to use the rhetoric of moderation or the rhetoric of extremism (even with pollsters) which may not reflect what they actually do when faced with real choices. All three of these categories are needed for rejectionists to be successful, but there is little question that energy and direction come from the rejectionists themselves. The rejectionists are neither pawns of outside forces nor masterminds controlling those forces; they are collaborators in a joint venture.

Second, rejectionists have several advantages in their effort to block peace

processes. Any subgroup of either side can act, more or less autonomously, without needing the approval of a cumbersome decision-making structure, and thus they can operate sometimes invisibly and often by surprise. Rejectionists also live on the easier side of an asymmetry: one rejectionist act can undermine months of negotiating progress in a peace process.

Third, Israeli rejectionists have a major advantage over their Palestinian counter-parts. Though many in the international community have identified settlers as obstacles to peace, and though many interpret international law to say that settle-ments are illegal, there is not likely to be the international law enforcement/intelli-gence/diplomatic momentum turned against them that there is to take on Palestinian bombers. Settlements, though many find them objectionable, are less offensive in the international eye. Many of the tactics of settlers, including the fait accompli, civil disobedience, the construction of communities, and the use of courts, do not create the same degree of outrage as does the annihilation of children on a bus. By contrast, Palestinian rejectionists are seen by many as another group of terrorists, a category of dishonor well before and certainly since 9/11. In short, there is an emotional imbalance in popular reaction to settlers and to terrorists. Though large parts of the world have much greater sympathy for Palestinians in general than for Israelis, mobilizing international intervention is easier when the target is defined as terrorists than it is when aimed at settlers.

Fourth, no one intervening country or organization can make a dent in the rejectionist stance by acting alone. Any intervention must involve many nations and organizations. There are two reasons. First, major pressure on the parties will come from a consensus shared by many parts of the world concerning the illegitimacy of the rejectionists.[24] Second, there are many essential tasks, and there is no single entity with the capacity to do them all. Coordination, thus, is central, and, as usual, time-consuming and difficult. Each intervenor has important domestic constituen-cies, bureaucratic demands, and deep and quite different interests in the region.This, plus the natural centrifugal force pulling sovereignties away from coordination ("We're not going to let X tell us what to do.") invite rejectionist strategies to split the coalition. Moreover, coordination requires a coordinator, and there is no good candidate to play the role. The United States may insist on the role, given its deep interest, commitment, and history in the region, but United States prominence will be its own liability. The United Nations has played the role elsewhere, but it is a source of deep suspicion for the Israelis and the Americans; and a coordinating group (for example, "the Quartet") may not be strong enough to produce real coordination. Nonetheless, since no coordination can occur without the participation of the United Sates, a team including the United States, the United Nations, the European Union, and one Arab country might be the least worse alternative.

Fifth, intervention must be conceived as a long-term process. The rejectionists will work to prevent a peace negotiation, to undermine any negotiation that occurs, and to destroy any agreement that results.[25] A look at the durability of rejectionists in the region, at the zeal with which they pursue their goals, and at their adaptability in confronting opposition, makes clear that even signing a peace agreement will be seen by them only as one more chapter, one more obstacle. An intervention strategy must assume up front an obligation, though its degree, role, and form will change with circumstance, that could last for years. A commitment that appears to be short-term will encourage rejectionists to "wait it out." A long-term commitment, however, brings its own problems. Maintaining coalition coordination will become
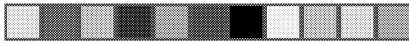
harder with each day, and a long-term commitment will inflame those who see intervention as latter-day colonialism. Rejectionists will be quick to exploit both weaknesses. The only way to cope with this problem is to develop a strategy to strengthen the capacity of the local governments to take on the rejectionists when the intervenors have left, and to provide indirect, less visible, support at that point. The best example of indirect support will be a continued effort to block aid coming from outside sources. As there will be no way to know in advance whether such confidence in local governments will be well placed, a potential re-entry strategy in the event rejectionists revive will be necessary, in part to dissuade the rejectionists from reviving.

Sixth, and corollary to the fifth, is that the goal of an intervention ought not to be the complete elimination of rejectionists on either side; their roots are too deep, their support too wide. The goal can be only one of neutralizing their impact on the peace process and allowing the process to proceed. One should not assume that at any one moment the threat of rejectionist activity will be eliminated; one should assume that the threat will, in one form or another, in one degree or another, continue. One challenge to expect, for example, will be the creation of a Palestinian political party based on a militant version of Islam with strong support based on the social services it supplies and the perceived grievances (for example, no right of return) it can exploit; this party can be expected to seek power by elections or other means. One should, by the same token, not expect to convince religious Jews that holy places can never be theirs' as a matter of sovereignty, or nationalistic Jews that greater Israel can never be theirs'; though their expectations were low during 1948–67 when Jordan controlled the West Bank, these groups now are much better organized and funded. What tactics they will use can't be well predicted, but one should assume they will continue to probe for weak spots and seek to exploit them.

Seventh, intervenors need to work with the local governments (Israeli and Palestinian) without allowing these governments a veto on any particular intervention move. Both local governments are very sensitive to charges of control by the outside, and both are delicately balanced coalitions, easily destabilized when a leader is perceived doing the bidding of foreign powers. The anti-intervention argument, however powerful, is nonetheless misleading: intervention has been a widespread practice for decades, and leaders and opposition groups on both sides have courted the intervention that would suit their purpose. The right questions to ask are about the goal of that intervention and who decides this. The legitimate justification for outside intervention is that the conflict on the ground affects the wellbeing of other parts of the world. Thus, intervenors need to make clear that they listen to local governments and respect their views, but that they also maintain an independence of judgment and action. It is often said that peace can come only when local leaders and populations want it, and this is certainly true: if either local government finally opposes an agreement, it can undermine that agreement without much difficulty. The relationship between intervenors and local governments will thus be delicate and loaded with tension. It is the role of intervenors to make clear to the local governments that the world's leaders deem such an agreement to be in the interest both of the parties and of the world community, that such an agreement is possible, and that it is possible only with the help of the intervenors. The intervenors can help remove obstacles local governments cannot manage on their own, and they can help overcome (not eliminate) generations of distrust.

Eighth, significant efforts at intervention will inevitably generate opposition from

the constituencies of the intervenors. Motives, clean hands, fairness, and likelihood of effectiveness will be challenged. Some of this will be the work of the rejectionists and their allies, but certainly not all. Given the volatility and visibility of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, one should expect that opposition by the domestic constituencies of intervenors will be serious. Seeking a peace agreement by focusing on the rejectionists of both sides will be easily, inevitably, and in some cases willfully, misconstrued. An intervention should be undertaken only after careful domestic preparation: strong reaction must be anticipated.

Ninth, underlying all these guidelines is the understanding that intervention is essentially a process of political change. Building and maintaining coalitions, rallying constituent support, keeping the focus, applying pressure with the appropriate touch, dealing with setbacks (many of them quite predicable), taking risks, finding resources, inventing new solutions, inspiring hope: all these are the stuff of political leadership. The guidelines set out above and the strategy set out below both depend on day-to-day political judgments, and on leaders who can make them. Most especially it will require an American president perceived as politically skillful with domestic politics and international coalitions, sincere in his support of a two-state solution and support for Israeli security, and committed to a long-term intervention. Almost every step will be difficult and dangerous.

A Strategy

Working with these guidelines, what strategy is possible? The most important place to begin is with a public, unambiguous statement issued by a wide range of national and multinational units. These must include at least the UN, the United States, the EU, and the heads of government of Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. A summit meeting of these players might be the right forum. Most significantly, the Israelis and the Palestinians should be invited to attend as observers. They should not be given any role that would allow them to veto any part of the statement, and they should not be asked to sign any public commitment.

The goals of the conference would be:

- To announce a widely shared consensus on the seriousness of the conflict for those attending the meeting;
- To announce their own commitment to combating the use of terror as a tool for conducting the conflict;
- To announce their own commitment to dismantling many of the settlements, and their opposition to any expansion;
- To announce their own commitment to a peace agreement that has the same parameters as those expressed by the Clinton principles (12/00) and the negotiation at Taba (1/01).

This conference will be characterized by at least three approaches that have not been part of prior interventions.

Simultaneity: There is a logic behind the notion that terror needs to be combated before settlements must be removed, but the logic fails for several reasons. As long as non-rejectionist Palestinians see concessions only on their part, many will find it difficult to support the ending of terror. Terror may be perceived by much of the rest of the world with horror, but for many Palestinians, especially terrorists and

their sympathizers, it is a tool with a success record and is a satisfying expression of their frustration and anger. Why should they give it up without seeing some benefit? That will certainly be construed as "rewarding terror," but the alternatives, escalation and pleading, have not worked. The goal of the strategy proposed here is to convince the supporters of terrorists (not the rejectionists themselves) that terror may have worked in the past, but that better approaches are available. Supporters of terrorists will be more easily convinced to withhold support if settlements are being dismantled, and supporters of settlements will be more easily convinced to withhold support if terrorists are being controlled. A plan for confronting both, more or less simultaneously, must be devised.

The Oslo Accords, for good reasons at the time, and in accordance with many negotiating texts, spelled out a number of agreed-on important principles, and left many very difficult subjects for later. This did not work. Those who want agreement need to know immediately what the outcome will look like, and those who oppose agreement need to know that there is already a very widely shared consensus about the terms of an agreement and that those terms are widely perceived as fair and workable. That those terms originated from intense negotiating by Israelis and Palestinians from the spring of 2000 through January of 2001 adds to their legitimacy. There will still need to be some topics negotiated by the parties, but the bulk of the final agreement must be stated up front.

The approach proposed in this essay treats settlements and terror as playing similar and mutually reinforcing roles in blocking progress toward a peace agreement, and thus it proposes to confront both settlers and terrorists at the same time with the same level of commitment, though not, of course, with the same techniques. This approach, if it is seen as treating both sides equally, will be deeply offensive to many. On strategic grounds, many Israeli supporters will see such equality as undermining the special relationship Israel has had with the United States. Moreover, some will argue, this approach will convince Arab rejectionists of weakened support for Israel and thus will encourage their long-term commitment to terminate a Jewish state. Some Arabs will doubtless react in this way. The United States will thus have to demonstrate its unmitigated commitment to Israel while at the same time condemning some settlements. (The United States, of course, has already made this distinction, but with a tepidity that has made it meaningless.) Those, moreover, who see settlements as the root cause of the conflict will insist that they be dismantled first, while those who find terror completely unacceptable will insist that it be ended first. More generally, those who do not consider the two sides to have equal moral standing (and this includes large numbers on both sides in the region, and many elsewhere) will find this approach offensive on moral grounds. The moral battle and the who-goes-first battle, however, ignore the most fundamental dynamic paralyzing any progress toward a peace agreement: the mutually reinforcing interaction of the terrorists and the settlers, and the support that each rejectionist receives from its own side so long as the opposing rejectionist continues to exist. Simultaneity is thus key. Partisan moral positions have great force, but they can be trumped by the morality of a peaceful relationship between the sides.

Clarity: The use of ambiguity, of vagueness, of hints, of undefined commitments has a long and honorable function in diplomacy and in the Middle East. But there are times when maximum clarity is of greater value. Here it is important that each side of the conflict understand that great pressure will be applied to their own side and to the other side, and that the substantive outcome is already, in large measure,

decided. Uncertainty about the durability of outside intervention, and about the result of the process, has in the past undermined any willingness by local governments to take on the rejectionists. Clarity on the part of the intervenors will undoubtedly provoke anger and resistance, but it will also attract essential supporters if they have confidence that the intervenors intend to persevere.

Physical Force: This plan proposes that intervenors use a variety of techniques, including physical force. This is rare and always (appropriately) controversial. The rejectionists have made a long-term commitment, have adopted physical force as a primary tool, and are willing to put themselves and their families at risk. Stedman thus summarizes the necessity for using physical force.

> A total spoiler, because it defines the war in all-or-nothing terms and holds immutable preferences, cannot be appeased through inducements, nor can it be socialized; moreover, both inducement and socialization risk strengthening the spoiler by rewarding it. Two versions of the coercive strategy are also dangerously counterproductive for managing total spoilers. Coercive diplomacy is unlikely to succeed, given the cost insensitivity of total spoilers; they call bluffs and test will. If custodians (interventionists) fail to carry through on threats or fail to establish escalation dominance, the spoiler's position may be strengthened. By showing the inadequacy of international force, the spoiler adds to its domestic reputation for coercive strength. The withdrawal strategy also backfires against (sic) a total spoiler, who has everything to gain if custodians abandon the peace process.[26]

A strong state is one in which "the ruled accept the rightness of the ruler's superior power."[27] The rejectionists on both sides most clearly do not accept this rightness. Whether the rulers on each side are willing to test their capacity to control their own rejectionists cannot be known in advance, and the risk of civil war on either side must be considered significant. Indeed, rejectionists will have incentives to threaten the coming of civil war. They can take steps to promote it, and they may foresee benefits to themselves from its occurrence. Though the use of physical force by an intervenor is full of risks and costs (including widespread resentment, whatever the motivation behind intervention), ruling it out provides advantages that almost guarantee the rejectionists' success.

A willingness by the intervenors to use coercion requires that they define in advance what success will look like so that an exit point can be defined. Such success can be easily described: when the local governments each appear to have the capacity and will to manage their rejectionists without the use of intervenor forces. In practice this may be difficult to recognize, and the desire to leave may make any evidence at all seem sufficient.

The Content of The Strategy

1. An international consensus exists concerning most of the components of a peace plan. The Clinton principles plus the negotiation at Taba closed in on an agreement.[28] Stedman argues that an international consensus around a solution (and around who is a rejectionist) is a force for moving the parties toward that consensus.[29] It is both a carrot suggesting international recognition and a stick suggesting other international pressure. This consensus, in summary, includes the following:

   a. The creation of an unarmed Palestinian state.
   b. The 1967 border, with exceptions for three Israeli settlement blocs, becomes

the border between Israel and Palestine. The Palestinians receive current Israeli land as compensation for the territory of the three settlement blocs.

    c. Palestinian refugees will receive compensation and will be able to go to five parts of the world, including Israel, but Israel will control which refugees can return to Israel.

    d. Jerusalem will be divided according to existing Arab and Jewish populations.

    e. Security arrangements for Israel will include Israeli bases in Palestine for certain periods of time, and defined overfly rights.

2. This will leave a number of very important issues undecided.

    a. Negotiators came close to describing the size and shape of the settlement blocs but there are still gaps to be closed.

    b. Negotiators came close to agreeing on the size of the Israeli land that would become part of Palestine in compensation for the settlement blocs remaining part of Israel. This gap also needs to be closed.

    c. Negotiators did not go very far in determining where that compensatory land would be.

    d. The number of Palestinian refugees allowed into Israel is undetermined. Negotiations on this topic began.

    e. The precise location of the border dividing Jerusalem needs more speci ficity, and the nature of that border (will it be "open" and what does that mean) was worked on but not decided.

    f. In Jerusalem there are places holy to Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. Sovereignty and/or control over them was not resolved, though there are many plans that would seem to outsiders to meet most and perhaps all of the stated goals of the parties.

    g. Security issues as discussed in 2000–01 need further detail.

    h. When and how "the conflict" will formally end is an open question.

There are other big issues, like allocation of water rights, which also need negotiated attention. All issues in the Israeli-Palestinian relationship are important and difficult, and some are especially inflammatory. Palestinian negotiators, for example, will be caught between Israel's refusal to permit more than a small number of refugees to return to Israel and the large number of refugees who will then settle in Palestine. These refugees living in Palestine will still despise Israel and will resent the Palestinian government that traded away the right to which they believe themselves to be entitled. A similar problem will arise in negotiating about Jerusalem. It is not only pious Jews for whom a unified city is central. The entire city has a hold on the imagination of many Israelis, a hold difficult for an outsider to comprehend, especially when one considers that the currently defined city expanded to its present size only in the last thirty years.[30] Losing part of it will be seen even by many secular Jews as a kind of national desecration, a hurt kept alive by the security issues that will arise to the extent there is an "open border" dividing the city. Access by Jewish religious rejectionists to holy places located within areas of Arab sovereignty will also act as an invitation to violence. To suggest that these kinds of issues be left only to negotiation by the parties is thus to make extremely tempting the rejectionist-friendly solution of deferral, and to invite rejectionists to undermine those negotiations.

One unusual approach to this problem would be to urge the parties to negotiate on those issues but to set a time deadline on reaching a solution. If a solution is not

achieved in that time, the undecided issues will be taken up by an international panel of arbitrators who will decide on each of them.[31] Their decisions will be advisory not binding, but interventionists will be in position to use those decisions as a baseline for determining their own use of carrots and sticks. One variation on this plan would require the arbitrators to render decisions that select only from among the positions held by parties when negotiating time ran out. The imminence of arbitration and the use of this procedure can have the effect during negotiation of moving the parties toward each other and toward reaching their own agreement. Whether the solution comes from this encouraged negotiation or from the arbitrators, its viability will depend on the willingness and ability of each local government to implement the result, a process that will require yet further intervenor support.

3. Rejectionists require support. Both sides receive money, advice, manpower, logistical support, and, in the case of terrorists, training from sources outside their own countries; these bloodlines need to be cut off. The settlers are supported primarily by American private money and Israeli government money that is made more readily available because of American government money sent to the Israeli government. The United States government can condition further aid on cutting off Israeli aid to settlements, and United States law can squeeze the flow of private money. The United States president can do the former without Congressional approval; whether he can do the latter absent Congressional action is less clear. The terrorists are funded mainly by Iran, Saudi Arabia, and perhaps by Al Qaeda. Syria provides logistical support. There needs to be strong, concerted international pressure on these countries to convince them to cut off the flow of financial aid. These are tasks that can be undertaken only by a consortium of United States, EU, and Arab nations who collectively have leverage to impact the behavior of these terror suppliers. Tiny steps have been taken in this direction.[32] But efforts by the intervention coalition to pressure Iran and Saudi Arabia will encounter opposition from commercial interests within the coalition, and from others within the coalition who place higher priority on maintaining or creating good political relations with these two countries. Saudi Arabia, an important ally, has a fragile government; a successor could easily be more zealous in support of Palestinian terror. Iran is an incipient nuclear power with a government in flux, though no contender for control shows any sign of softening the country's rejection of Israel or support for terror. Both of these countries are tied in complex and murky ways to Pakistan, Russia, and whatever terrorist organizations are covered by the term Al Qaeda. Holding the coalition together in this effort will be very difficult, as will be cutting off aid to terror.

4. Dismantling the settlements as contemplated in the Clinton-Taba process will occur only if the Israeli government takes a firm stand to do so, and this will happen only as a result of strong international pressure and help. This pressure needs to be focused on the Israeli electoral process so that a government open to the Clinton-Taba solution can come to office. And this can happen only if Israeli voters believe there is an international campaign on behalf of Israeli security, an international campaign to produce a two-state solution, an international consensus holding settlements to be an obstacle, and good reason to believe that an agreement is imminent.

Still, after the erosion strategy has been employed, the consensus of the rest of the country has been mobilized, and the settlers have used their non-physical techniques of resistance, a key question will remain. Will the IDF be willing and able to remove those settlers who have not moved? Just as there needs to be a visible international presence confronting Palestinian rejectionists, so, too, such an

international presence must be visible in confronting Jewish rejectionists. The special role of the United States in Israeli history suggests an American participation, but again, there should be a range of nations present to communicate the breadth of international concern. Intervenors can provide support in training, material, and intelligence, and should be part of a primarily Israeli contingent in any military effort to physically remove settlers.

5. The campaign against terrorists should employ the same three-part strategy: cutting off the blood supply; erosion of surrounding support; and confrontation with the rejectionists.

Just as one target of intervenors on the Israeli side is to influence the Israeli political process, so too must this be the goal on the Palestinian side. On the Israeli side the intervenor has the advantage of a recognized electoral process that can be the focus of international pressure. The absence of such a process on the Palestinian side, and the profoundly ambiguous role of, and deeply felt response of Palestinians to, Yassir Arafat makes such a targeting immensely difficult. Any Palestinian government will operate mainly as a broker among widely disparate, sometimes violent, always volatile groupings. Intevenors, with prominent Arab participation (emphasis on the "prominent"), need to show carrot-and-stick support for leaders acting in favor of a two-state solution.

The goal of an erosion strategy is to diminish the number of Palestinians who themselves would prefer a settlement but who also give support to rejectionists. The depth of Palestinian distrust of both Israelis and Americans, plus the historic appeal of victimhood and the satisfaction of a violent response, will make this erosion a difficult process. An erosion strategy will also need to overcome the deeply held view that the Israelis don't want an agreement. An international commitment to an agreement as set out above is the place to begin. The carrots of economic improvement, political independence, a withdrawal of settlements, and a coherent, viable set of boundaries, publicly and unequivocally declared, will also be influential. Evidence of Israeli willingness to move toward agreement will focus on the immediate dismantling of real (not empty or token) settlements.

Even a successful project to cut the bloodline and erode social support for terrorists will leave committed terrorists prepared to do their work. There is no alternative but to confront them with sufficient physical force. Though there is no plausibility in trying to replace the Israeli forces attempting to do this job, there is major value in integrating with the Israelis a supply of forces from other countries. By doing this job alone Israelis undermine their own efforts. They give the Palestinians an easy and important propaganda tool by confronting them only with their hated enemy. If those who seek out terrorists are from many, including Arab, countries, and not the United States, this propaganda value will be blunted. These international forces should be prepared to serve as border patrols and terrorist seekers.

What is the sequential relationship among these strategy components? It must all begin with the formation of an international intervention coalition prepared to agree on and announce the principles stated above. The announcement must be followed by several steps, all taken at the same time. There must be strong, and, to the extent possible, highly visible efforts to cut the blood lines for both the settlers and the terrorists. There must be energetic pressures placed on Israeli and Palestinian governments to take on their rejectionists, complete with offers of direct assistance. There must be guidelines for each government indicating the steps each should take to confront its own rejectionists, and a clear report indicating whether or not the

government is adhering to those guidelines. This last is a tool to be used as part of the coalition's larger effort (using diplomatic and economic tools) to encourage each side to produce a government willing to confront rejectionists and finish the peace negotiation. While the intervenors are taking these steps, one should expect rejectionists, and at least some of their allies, to work intensely at undermining the process described here. In a difficult process this will be the most difficult moment. In the power struggle between rejectionist and local government, the balance at the beginning will favor the rejectionists. If intervenors do not step in at that moment, the process will reverse, rejectionists will gain confidence and support, and the power relationship will revert to its status before the creation of the coalition. Intervenors may have no choice but to step around the local government and take coercive steps against terrorists or settlers. When both local governments have taken steps to confront rejectionists, the negotiating process should begin.

Resistence

The strategy proposed here is inherently very difficult. Several of those difficulties have already been identified, and a few others need to be highlighted as well.

The lead player in focusing on the settlers will have to be the United States, and United States domestic politics will invite opposition from serious lobbying groups including the Christian Fundamentalist Right and very visible parts of the organized Jewish community.[33] Though there are other Jewish groups who will support intervention, Congress has demonstrated much greater sensitivity to the two longstanding lobbying groups. On April 25, 2003, while President Bush was moving forward with his "road map," two hundred sixty-two members of Congress sent him a public and extremely pro-Israeli letter. On July 30, 2003, House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, a leader of the Christian Zionist movement delivered to the Israeli Knesset a blistering defense of Israeli policy.[34] Some Presidents can resist these lobbying and Congressional pressures, and much will depend on the electoral base of the sitting president and his/her strength vis-a-vis Congress.

This essay proposes international intervention, possibly over the objection of the local governments, perhaps using physical coercion. What could justify this? The answer lies in the uniqueness of this conflict, a uniqueness that lies primarily in the range of ways it connects to interests outside the immediate area of the conflict. First, the conflict is a rallying point for opponents of many governments and is thus a source of instability. Second, it exacerbates the tensions between the Arab world and the West, and between the Muslim world and Judeo-Christian world. Third, it is a war giving high prominence, and in some places legitimacy, to terrorists and terrorist tactics. Fourth, with the increasing growth of Iranian arms (especially nuclear), the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can yet grow into a major regional conflict. Fifth, the conflict is close to large portions of the world's oil supply. Sixth, for three world-wide religions this tiny area of conflict contains holy ground that elicits in many countries a zealotry from people who otherwise seem connected to their religion only on a personal and local basis. Seventh, though some see the conflict as intractable (that is, a feud that might yet go on for generations) and would be content to just "let them tire themselves out," there are possible developments on that road that would carry what are, for some people, frightening implications: for example, a bi-national state, which would mean the end of a Jewish state; or the "transfer" of large numbers of Arabs out of the West Bank. Eighth, though Israel is

a democracy and the Palestinians have had an election, minorities on both sides have proven stronger and politically smarter than the majorities and the elected governments; as a result, the minorities have been able to manipulate their governments and cause great harm (including death) to many on both sides. And ninth, this conflict is between Jews and Arabs, peoples with highly visible, complex, often pain-filled histories for which some parts of the world feel responsibility and even guilt. For all these reasons, newspapers and TV outlets, including many for whom foreign coverage is not otherwise a noticeable priority, provide intense coverage and treat routine developments in the conflict as worthy of the front page. The bombings and the occupation are in living rooms and thus on political agendas around the world. Governments have learned that they cannot ignore this conflict and most of them would be enormously relieved to find a way to end it.

The local governments will be tempted to resist these interventions for many reasons. Among them will be their perception of serious risks. Each side sees the other as duplicitous in its claims to seek peace, and each sees its own rejectionists as a strong defensive tool. Each fears that in the longer run, giving up this tool will render it vulnerable to the depredations of the other side. Simultaneity, moreover, is a difficult concept to implement: each side will see its own concession as greater, rendering its own side more vulnerable, than the concession undertaken by the other side. Or it will see the intervenors as biased; or it will see the other side as delaying implementation of a concession, thus justifying its own delay. These dynamics will be fueled by a mix of legitimate risk assessment, internal political posturing, and a decades-old reflex to blame the other side.

Being willing to act over the objection of local governments is not to suggest an eagerness to do so. Far preferable for intervenors is the coordination with willing local governments, both because it is easier, and also because one hardly wants local governments tempted to take the role of underminers of the intervention. But, in addition to the risk assessments mentioned above, local governments are fragile and subject to the influence, perhaps control, of the rejectionists, so that leaving a veto in the hands of governments runs the risk of leaving a veto in the hands of rejectionists.

Coordination among intervenors will be a huge burden. It will take much work, will constantly tempt individual intervenors to go it alone, and will constantly lead them to believe that one of their number is already breaking away. Rejectionists and their supporters will of course work to fracture the coalition and over a period of time will have a number of opportunities to try. The need for coalition coordination will inevitably lead to compromises that may weaken particular intervention moves. The importance of maintaining a widespread coalition, however, focused on containing the rejectionists and promoting the peace negotiations, cannot be underestimated if effectiveness of the intervention is to be sustained.

Conclusion

A few concluding comments.

I have tried in general to avoid commenting on the daily events unfolding as I write. The Israeli occupation of the West Bank, the complex role of Yassir Arafat, the war in Iraq, the proclivities of the current United States administration, and many other dynamics are obviously of great importance and will be central in any intervention strategy. There is much more to a peace process than I have commented

on here. My focus has been solely on what I take to be basic obstacles to any peace process, obstacles that will be central whoever is president of the United States, and whatever the outcome of the occupation, the future of Arafat, or the war in Iraq.

The strategy I propose here is, in its entirety, previously untried. It is risky not only because it may fail, but also because it can enmesh interventionists in an inflammable part of the world, because it will take a great deal of time and attention at high levels, and because it will set off a chain of events in the region that cannot well be predicted. But the history of intervention, from the time of the British Mandate to the present, shows failure because intervenors did not confront rejectionists directly. What is proposed in this essay is a substantially greater investment of the world's effort than has ever been tried before to move the parties toward a peaceful relationship. It is also the absolute minimum that must be brought to the process if success is to be considered possible. If pieces of this strategy are omitted, the whole will fail.

Can even this large investment of effort succeed? Of course, no one can know the answer, but one's estimate in advance will be based in part on whether one believes that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the battleground for worldwide historical forces, in which case local confrontations and peace agreements will be seen as ephemeral interventions; or whether one sees the conflict to be the result of weak leadership structures in need of outside support to carry out the will of a substantial majority on each side, in which case intervention tailored to the local dynamics can be effective. ❧

Notes

1. Tom Segev, *One Palestine, Complete* (New York: Henry Holt, 1999), 9.
2. Ibid., 401.
3. "Arab" is a word that will stand for Palestinians, citizens of other Arab countries, and Iranians; though there are many significant differences among these groups, on the subject of rejecting Israel they have substantial commonality. "Jew" is a word that will refer to the Jews who lived in Palestine before 1948, or who have come to Israel since 1948.
4. The concept of rejectionist is in many ways like that of "spoiler" used by Stedman, whose work I cite and draw on below.
5. Sal-Safir, March 2003, quoted in "Jerusalem Report," (April 21, 2003), 53.
6. See Nathan Brown "Research on Palestinian Textbooks," in *Teaching About Terrorism* (Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education) for a thoughtful description of the context in which these textbooks were developed.
7. See polls of Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research.
8. Segev, *One Palestine*, 304.
9. Meron Benvenisti, *The Shepherds' War* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Post, 1989), 127.
10. Ian Lustick, *For The Land and The Lord* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1988), 42.
11. Lustick, *For The Land*, 46.
12. Polls taken for Peace Now by Michael Hopp, in April 2002 and April 2003, but not yet published, show that while between 92 percent of centrist (non-settler) voters favor demolishing illegal settlements, 21 percent of the same voters consider the "hilltop youth" (young settlers who are the most aggressive about expanding settlements) are the "best of youth."
13. Poll conducted by Peace Now, April-July 2003.
14. Report of the Israel Democracy Institute, October 2003. Reported in *Haaretz*, October 27, 2003.
15. Polls conducted by the Truman Institute of Hebrew University and the Center for Palestine Research Studies, 2003; poll conducted by Search for Common Ground, November 2002.

16. Stephen John Stedman, "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes," *International Security* 22, no. 2 (Autumn 1997): 5.
17. I will use my term for consistency except in direct quotations from his writing.
18. Stedman, "Spoiler Problems," 10.
19. Ibid., 11.
20. Ibid., 10.
21. Ibid., 14.
22. Ibid., 11.
23. Ibid., 6.
24. Ibid., 7.
25. Stephen John Stedman, "Negotiation and Mediation in Internal Conflict," in *International Dimensions of Internal Conflict,* ed. Michael Brown (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1996), 341, for a discussion about undermining agreements.
26. Stedman, "Spoiler Problems," 15.
27. Max Weber, quoted in Rachel Bronson, "Cycles of Conflict in the Middle East and North Africa," in *International Dimensions*, 212.
28. Since Taba, other non-governmentally sanctioned peace plans have been put forward, most of them very similar to — and more complete than — the Clinton/Taba plan. Prominent examples include the Geneva Accord (summer of 2003) and the International Crisis Group plan (summer of 2002).
29. Stedman, "Spoiler Problems," 52.
30. See polls done by the Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research (www.tau.ac.il/peace) over several years, all suggesting only a minority of Israeli Jews willing to divide Jerusalem.
31. Ideas like this have been tested in polls among Israeli Jews and have received support varying from a low of 28 percent to a high of 67 percent according to the degree of outside pressure and the range of issues involved. See poll conducted by the Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research at Tel Aviv University, June 2003.
32. See *Boston Globe* regarding money from Saudi Arabia and terror support from Syria. September 17, 2003.
33. Stedman, "Spoiler Problems," 48–51 provides a useful overview of what he calls "organizational blinders."
34. *New York Times*, August 31, 2003.