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AFTER CAMP DAVID:

The Role of Autonomy Negotiations in
Furthering Middle East Peace,

By

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INTRODUCTION

The constantly changing political realities in the Middle East necessitates a dynamic analysis in evaluating alternative future strategies for US national security managers. Events change so unexpectedly and dramatically in this region that even political gaming techniques, often used by US officials to reduce misperception in crisis management are rendered of limited use. Other factors, too, make any future oriented analysis of Middle Eastern affairs extraordinarily difficult since many US policy decisions are defined and redefined by other unpredictable players in the equation.

US foreign policy objectives need to be viewed within a geopolitical perspective. However, as Dr. Kissinger has stated on different occasions, while domestic consensus can be formed on specific issues such as, interalia, SALT, it is virtually impossible to obtain a domestic consensus on a geopolitical balance of power strategy in furthering American foreign policy. Furthermore, events in the Middle East are so intertwined as to render isolated political, economic, and social cause-effect relationships sterile. Yet attempting to identify all the dynamic variables is akin to understanding at first glance Jackson Pollock's abstract painting Converge. Finally, lack of information at a time when it is most needed in the decisionmaking process has resulted in significant ad hoc decisions that have been based on a piecemeal approach, where stated limited objectives and immediate concerns have successfully lowered the barriers to mutual co-existence between Arabs and Israelis.

This paper explores the question: How will the current autonomy negotiations, based on the Camp David accords and Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty, and conducted by Ambassador Sol Linowitz, affect the future stability of the Middle East?

Section I comprises a statement and analysis of various components related to the West Bank/Gaza autonomy talks. After a brief historical view of the role of previous US envoys to the Middle East--with specific focus on Eric Johnston, 1953, Robert Anderson, 1956, and Henry Kissinger, 1974-5, the section focuses on the Camp David accords and Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty and the implementation of these documents. More specifically, current West Bank/Gaza autonomy talks are analyzed in detail with comments offered on: the issues of central importance, the maximalist demands of Egypt and Israel; various tactics employed to obtain their objectives; and the differing perceptions of the future autonomy administration. Central to the successful implementation of the agreement is an understanding of the role of the Palestinians in determining the future status of the occupied territories after the transition phase and the election of self rule.

The section ends noting the current status of the talks, the influence of the upcoming Presidential campaign on the US ability to pressure Israel for concessions, and the domestic constraints on both Israel and Egypt. Nevertheless, compromise with the help of US mediation is possible. One viable compromise entails using the concept of the US Sinai Field Mission to electronically detect movement in a demilitarized zone on the West Bank and Gaza.

Section II views the possible short-range and medium-range future geopolitical situation in the Middle East. It views the effects of events in Syria, Jordan, Iran, and Saudi Arabia that might hinder or precipitate a successful outcome of the autonomy negotiation.

Section III draws conclusions and makes modest recommendations in light of the previous analysis. For example, it notes that in the past comprehensive solutions have failed to achieve their objective and piecemeal initiatives and agreements have produced tangible results. The paper concludes that the autonomy

negotiations should be approached on a step-by-step basis although there must be some understanding as to what will eventually constitute "peace and security" for the parties concerned. The paper also concludes that it is imperative to initially negotiate autonomy in Gaza so as to entice Jordan to enter negotiations. It predicts that Jordan will continue to reject the Camp David accords but will push for negotiations on a larger scale that includes all parties to the dispute, possibly in a UN forum. King Hussein, it is predicted, will adopt a more independent stance and a more moderate posture and will play a major stabilization role in the future. The paper recommends that Ambassador Linowitz expand the de facto condominium between Israel and Jordan as a viable alternative to a radical PLO state on the West Bank and Gaza.

This section also concludes that direct US contact with the PLO, even to encourage moderate elements within that organization, would undermine the current autonomy talks. Ambassador Linowitz should encourage Egypt and Israel to accept a "special relationship" in the form of an Egyptian-Israeli military administrative presence and attempt to subvert the terrorist tactics used by the PLO to scare independent Palestinians from dealing with the autonomy delegation members. The PLO structure, it is further concluded, works against modernization and flexibility and the autonomy talks need to make the PLO problem an "Arab problem." Ambassador Linowitz, it is suggested, should take advantage of previous Israeli-Egyptian talks on the issue of Jerusalem as a basis for further talks. This mediation should be conducted simultaneously with discussions of other issues. Finally, the essay notes that Ambassador Linowitz and his delegation must bridge the gap between commitment and reality, between sovereignty and the limits of sovereignty, and that the outcome of his mediation will color future events in Middle East politics.

SECTION I

Since the 1949 Rhodes Armistice negotiations, led by Dr. Ralph Bunche, direct and indirect, formal and informal communication and contact between Israel and Egypt and other Arab nations fostered a change of perception by lowering the barriers to mutual acceptance. These contacts, many times initiated by American envoys, played a crucial role in educating peoples and governments toward creating a foundation for President Sadat's 1977 Peace Initiative and the subsequent Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty of 1979.¹

One critical American envoy, sent by President Eisenhower in 1953, attempted to use several key decisions made by the Israelis to enhance their state's economic and survival capability by developing a comprehensive program to develop the Jordan River's water resources on a regional basis. Eric Johnston's stated objectives were to further economic progress and stability of the area and stemmed from three postulates. First, the Arab-Israeli conflict required a piecemeal approach rather than an all encompassing comprehensive settlement and that Johnston's objectives were a viable solution to the Arab refugee problem. Second, the success of the Marshall Plan could be transposed to the Middle East, and finally, that political problems could be solved through economic aid and cooperation. The near success of the Johnston Mission, including an agreement for formal cooperative sharing of the region's water (save Syria's Premier, El Ghazi, and his veto in the Arab Higher Committee due to fear of domestic political consequences of acceptance) and the de facto recognition of Israel by her Arab neighbors made this Mission unique in the checkered history of Arab-Israeli relations.²

A second U.S. envoy, Robert Anderson, attempted peacemaking through personal diplomacy. Appointed by President Eisenhower in 1956 and originally conceived by Kermit Roosevelt, CIA Chief in Cairo, and entitled "Project Gamma," the plan called for Anderson to fly between Cairo and Tel Aviv to narrow differences between Ben-Gurion of Israel and Nasser of Egypt. Then, the two leaders would meet secretly on a yacht in the Mediterranean to try to close communication gaps even further. Robert Anderson shuttled between Cairo and Tel Aviv informing each side as to what the other side had informed him. Anderson learned, for example, that from Ben-Gurion's perspective Nasser's fear of internal instability and his unwillingness to take the necessary risks confirmed to the Israelis that Egypt had not intended to accept Israel's legitimate right to exist. From Nasser's perspective, Anderson related the point to the Israelis that Nasser's inability to speak for other Arabs and Nasser's assessment of the intolerance that the Arab public would have regarding direct talks prohibited a successful conclusion.³

A final noteworthy U.S. envoy who played a major role in Middle East stability was Secretary of State Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy, which commenced 16 December 1973 when Kissinger informed Israeli officials that Sadat demanded a pull back of Israeli forces in the Sinai but that Sadat was temporarily willing to settle for a retreat about 30 kilometers beyond the strategic Mitla and the Gidi Passes. The direct and immediate results of these negotiations were the Sinai I and II agreements. The agreements, however, were strictly limited. Kissinger did not view a comprehensive settlement as advantageous to either party at that time since a comprehensive settlement would have necessitated difficult negotiations related to the Palestinian refugees and the status of Gaza and West Bank--questions that are difficult to answer today as years ago. Also, it would have necessitated the inclusion of a coalition of Arab states,

some of which were Soviet clients and some which denied Israel's right to exist. In any case, Secretary of State Vance's recent announcement of an expanded role for the Sinai Field Mission to the Middle East is politically significant and is built upon Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy. It also demonstrated the role that creativity can play in negotiating a settlement, an important variable that Ambassador Sol Linowitz, President Carter's new personal representative, would be well advised to remember.

After the Camp David accords and Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty, President Carter appointed Robert Strauss as his personal envoy to the Middle East. His job was to keep the Israeli-Egyptian peace process in motion and expand it by producing a new agreement that would satisfy Palestinian aspirations for self-determination as well as insuring long term Israeli peace and security. Referred to by some notables as the "toughest, shrewdest, most experienced and least ideological negotiator," Strauss has spent the past seven months pursuing three strategies simultaneously--those related to a piecemeal approach, as suggested by the Camp David accords, a territorial approach as recommended by the Israeli Labor Party, and a comprehensive approach as suggested by the Arabs.⁴ Ambassador Strauss recently announced his departure of this post for a campaign position with the Carter-Mondale campaign. Ambassador Sol Linowitz, upon Senate confirmation, will assume Strauss' position.

The Camp David accords and the subsequent Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty were the results, in part, of secret meetings held between Moshe Dayan and Sadat's closest confidant, Hassan el-Tohamy, in September 1977. Held under the auspices of King Hassan II, of Morocco, Tohamy allegedly told Dayan that Sadat wanted no part of a Geneva Conference and that Sadat wanted no involvement with the Russians. Finally, it was reported that Sadat was not interested in the

creation of a Palestinian state. Tohamy informed Dayan that Sadat wanted a peace treaty if the Israelis were willing to return Sinai to Egyptian sovereignty and some "Palestinian arrangement" linking the West Bank and Gaza with Jordan could be arranged. Although it is quite likely that the accords and peace treaty could not have succeeded without the direct participation of President Carter, there is evidence to suggest that without the secret contacts a basis for discussion would not have given the impetus for the Camp David summit.

The current West Bank/Gaza autonomy talks is an outgrowth of the Camp David accords and the subsequent Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty. Camp David produced two inseparable agreements dealing with bilateral peace arrangements and the return of the Sinai to Egypt and a general overview for a more comprehensive Middle East settlement. These documents are entitled, "Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt," and "Framework for Peace in the Middle East," respectively. The former document is straightforward and deals with a peace treaty with terms to be implemented in two to three years. The latter is more complex and includes the principles of UN resolution 242 plus detailed provisions for West Bank/Gaza autonomy.

The Camp David summit was advantageous in that, unlike the 1949 Lausanne Conference, a followup to the Rhodes Armistice Agreement, Israel and Egypt formally, officially, and openly talked with each other and not just to or through the US. It was also advantageous because it gave hope for future involvement of partners who are indispensable to the peace process--Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. Nevertheless, it was the implicit, albeit unrealistic, desire of the Carter Administration that Jordan would join in the negotiations, Saudi Arabia would acquiesce, and that the PLO would be ignored and would lose its influence. Arab leadership, it was surmised, would pass to others that were more moderate and less PLO oriented.

Camp David creatively combined two distinct policy options. One related to a comprehensive settlement, and the other related to a U.S. succession of separate bilateral arrangement resting on the balancing of local factors. Camp David embodied elements of each policy and is therefore necessarily open-ended and ambiguous. It is evident that the Carter Administration has chosen a course of action that combines aspects of Sadat's "full partner" approach and Begin's "honest broker" approach. Embodied in Zbigniew Brzezinski's "concentric circles" approach, this blending of policy options, while confusing, is quite logical since the US is attempting to achieve several objectives simultaneously, including, securing a flow of oil, supporting Israel, and frustrating Soviet advances in the "arc of crisis."

As stated in the peace documents, no later than one month after the exchange of instruments of ratification, negotiations over autonomy would start. At the end of these negotiations (one year) elections to the self-government authority would be conducted and the self-government authority could be established a month after the elections. After a five year transition phase, "full autonomy" could be achieved. The aim of the current negotiations is to agree on "modalities" for establishing the elected self-government administration on the West Bank and Gaza.

The Peace Treaty represented more than another series of protracted negotiations. One only needs to view past agreements such as the 1949 Rhodes Armistice, 1949 Israeli-Egyptian Mixed Armistice Commission, 1955 Kilometer 95 negotiations, 1973 Kilometer 101 talks, and others, to understand the importance of direct bilateral negotiations, as opposed to indirect, informal negotiations. The peace treaty was one tangible component deriving from these past contacts and demonstrates a new perception of mutual acceptance and co-existence. The importance that the Israeli's place on such an agreement and the unprecedented

opportunity it affords was eloquently articulated by Abba Eban at the 1973

Geneva Conference:

"Peace is not a mere cease-fire or armistice. Its meaning is not exhausted by the absence of war. It commits us to positive obligations which neighboring states owe to each other. . . The ultimate guarantee of a peace agreement lies in the creation of common regional interests in such degree of intensity, in such multiplicity of interaction, in such entanglement of reciprocal advantage, in such mutual human accessibility as to put the possibility of future wars beyond any rational contingency."⁵

The Peace Treaty devised an important US role. Like the Sinai I and II agreements that Kissinger hammered out by cajoling--and even threatening the participants--Camp David and the Peace Treaty offered the hope of satisfactory resolution of difficult and intertwined problems. President Carter put forth his conviction regarding a US role on 18 September 1978 when he stated:

"The US has had no choice but to be concerned about the Middle East and to use our influence and efforts to advance the cause of peace. . . . The strategic location of these countries and the resources they possess mean that events in the Middle East directly affect people everywhere. We and our friends could not be indifferent if a hostile power were to establish domination there. . . . That is why we cannot be idle bystanders, why we have been full partners in the search for peace."⁶

The treaty also institutionalized procedures for future discussion of issues left unresolved and provides an outline for future negotiations and a partial timetable. The idea was to create momentum so as to foster further accommodation, bring the "Palestinian Arabs" to the conference table, and defuse the threat of the Arab rejectionist states--Libya, Iraq, Algeria, and South Yemen.

Critics have claimed that Sadat "sold out" the Palestinian cause and that Israel has diplomatically succeeded in separating and dividing Egypt from the other Arab nations and achieved a recasting of the military balance that will preclude the recurrence of future two front wars. It is further claimed that the Camp David accords will amount to nothing more than a long-held tactical objective of Israel. Former US Ambassador to Egypt, Herman Eilts, responded to this charge by stating that Sadat "has consistently and strongly fought for a comprehensive peace and for Palestinian rights. He has never wavered on these

points."⁷ Admittedly, difficult issues, such as Palestinian rights, self-determination, the status of Jerusalem, etc. were not resolved during the negotiations but one would not have expected all the issues pertaining to all the participants to be discussed and solved during the summit. Necessarily, then, difficult issues were put off to be discussed and debated during a later time period when momentum could serve as a vehicle to overcome 30 years of hostilities. The success of the autonomy talks, and in particular, the second phase of the negotiations--the implementation of the self-governing authority--will certainly color all future Israeli contact with neighboring states. Failure of the negotiations could harm Israel's security and US objectives in the Middle East. That is why it is important for these autonomy talks to be successful.

The most crucial and fundamental question not directly addressed by the Camp David accords centers on the Palestinians and the role of the PLO in the autonomy negotiations. It has been suggested that the principal deficiency of the peace structure is the inadequacy of its Palestinian component. Yet many items were deferred for future consideration and it is therefore impossible to determine the validity of the alleged deficiency at this time.

The Camp David structure did provide, however, a forum and measure of participatory opportunity for Palestinians in establishing West Bank/Gaza self-government. This self government could potentially be a major factor in determining the future of these territories after the five year transitional period. This opportunity offers more in the practical sense than any UN resolutions. Yet, whatever opportunity exists regarding the concept of autonomy and self government, Begin's view of new settlements has made Arabs and Palestinians skeptical about Israeli intentions.

The question of the Palestinians and their claim to the West Bank as a site of a national homeland has loomed in the background of all discussions pertaining to the peace strategy. Dodged by negotiators in the past, this issue is central to the task of making the provisions of the peace structure work. In fact, the durability of the Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty and quite possibly the future of Middle East peace hinges on how this issue is resolved. And each party to the negotiations has distinct views on this subject as do factions within each camp.

Israeli hardliners, exemplified by Minister of Agriculture, General Ariel Sharon, succinctly stated to President Carter in March 1979, "You have a clear plan to create a Palestinian state. But you cannot force us or convince us to allow it." Many persons feel that more Jewish settlements would make agreement on autonomy much more difficult to attain. On this point General Sharon informed President Carter: "You can take it for granted that there will be a million Jews there (on the West Bank)--maybe even two million." Sharon and others believe "there is now a Palestinian state." As reported in the New York Times Magazine, Sharon explained to the President:

"It is called Jordan. It consists of three-fourths of the land mass of Palestine, as determined by the League of Nations. . . . Of the two million people living in Jordan, nearly all are Palestinians. If you count the Bedouins as Palestinians. . . then everyone in Jordan is a Palestinian, except maybe the Hashemite King Hussein, because his dynasty was imported by the British from Arabia, so a Palestinian state on the West Bank would be a second Palestinian state."

Begin, who also is determined to bar the way for the evolution of a Palestinian state, however, took a more moderate tone in that same conversation. "I don't know if there will be a million Jews there," he stated, "but maybe--who can tell"?⁸

At the opposite extreme, Sadat wants maximum linkage between the accords and the peace treaty in order to convince his Arab neighbors that peace with Israel could trigger a process leading to the satisfaction of Palestinian

aspirations. In the face of the Iranian crisis, Sadat has hardened his demands for linkage. He is insisting on--at the very minimum--a symbolic presence in the Gaza Strip and is ready to backtrack on his commitment to exchange ambassadors for this point. Yet, at a 5 September 1979 meeting between Sadat, Carter, and Begin, Sadat reportedly stated: "I am for a solution to the Palestinian problem, but I want to prevent the establishment of a state. Therefore, we should find a way within the context of Jordan--perhaps a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation."⁹ It seems apparent that like other Arab leaders, Sadat is fearful of a PLO-dominated Palestinian state, with financial and political support from the Soviet Union and radical Arab regimes.

Each party will set out to maximize their demands in each of several broad areas but will be constrained by domestic problems. Succinctly, the domestic economic plight in both Israel and Egypt will influence the degree to which the governments have freedom of action. In Israel, for example, its economic vulnerability (the annual economic and military assistance package from the US is \$2.8 billion), low productivity due to inefficient state enterprises, loss of fuel from the Sinai and Iran, expected triple digit inflation, highest military burden per capita in the world, and a balance of payment deficit in 1978 of \$325 billion, indicates that Israel is entering into the most difficult economic phase in its history.¹⁰ Egypt, too, must be able to show some economic dividends from signing the peace treaty with Israel. Due to an economy which is particularly vulnerable to foreign market pressures and based on economic policies of subsidizing domestic food while importing 40 percent of its food stuffs, Sadat must find ways to increase his revenues whether it be from the Suez Canal, the oil fields in the Sinai, or from tourism. He must also restructure a malaised and ineffective bureaucracy and decrease a large budget deficit. Together, the Egyptians and Israelis must develop a close working relationship by getting

involved in joint projects. Only in this way will the two nations strengthen their national future and fulfill Abba Eban's definition of peace.¹¹

The talks, which will determine whether the treaty is relevant in a larger sense, consists of five major areas. These areas include: the control of the population and the composition of the population in the areas; ownership of the West Bank and Gaza territory; boundaries of the area and the question of who will negotiate on this issue; security of the region including guaranteeing Israeli's safety; and finally, the form of the self-governing government.¹²

Israel's maximum demand regarding the population of the region will most likely be to deprive the inhabitants of the trappings of sovereignty until the borders are set and will oppose the "right of return" of Palestinians. Egypt, on the other hand, will demand that the new governing body have total control over the entire population and will reject Israel's claim of extraterritorial rights for Israeli citizens and extraterritorially of Jewish settlements.

The territory issue will probably be one of the most contentious issues in the autonomy negotiations with Israel demanding the right to purchase West Bank land. Also, domestic pressure may force the Begin Government into a clash with other parties and factions regarding the policy of new settlements and dismantling old settlements, which the Egyptians will surely demand. Furthermore, the West Bank territory, which Begin refers to as Judea and Samaria, involves an emotional domestic response and it appears that Begin wants the self-governing authority to have strictly limited responsibilities so as to prohibit a future Palestinian state.

The boundaries of the new regime will be defined so as to prevent true autonomy--if the Israelis have their way. As Moshe Dayan stated on 18 April 1979, "autonomy is not a state. If the administrative authority declares itself

a state, the autonomy becomes null and void. . . . We negotiate only with sovereign states. The autonomy is only an Arab Palestinian national committee."¹³ This seems to preclude Israeli discussion with groups, such as the PLO, since Israeli's basic demand is to deal with "sovereign states"--Gaza talks with Egypt and West Bank Talks with Jordan.

Since the founding of Israel and the numerous offensive by neighboring Arab states, security has been of utmost importance. Israel's "seize mentality" will dictate that Israel continue to act as the security watchdog and will refer back to section A, West Bank and Gaza paragraph a of the Camp David accords to legitimize a minimal role for the self-governing authority regard security matters.

While Egypt will insist on no permanent stationing of foreign troops, Israel will want a demilitarized zone. In Gaza, the Egyptians will want to control an Egyptian-Israeli-UN-Palestinian police force and in the long run Egypt will insist on a total Israeli withdrawal. On the West Bank, Israel will resist efforts of total withdrawal and will demand guaranteed military enclaves. The recent assassination of the Imam of Gaza for alleged pro Egyptian activities and PLO threats to the Mayor of Gaza for having expressed hope for the West Bank/Gaza autonomy talks raises questions as to the efficiency of Israeli security protection in Gaza. It also raises questions as to why the Israelis would object to Egyptian participation in Gaza security as a means of protecting those Gazans who want to participate in the talks.

The final aspect related to the form of self-governing authority and type of future regime directly addresses the core question: Will the autonomy talks form the basis of statehood for the Palestinians? On this issue, Egypt and Israel are at polar ends. Israel wants the administrative agency, the Arab National Committee, to have no trappings of sovereignty while Egypt wants as many elements of sovereignty as possible.

Current autonomy talks, spearheaded by President Carter's new envoy, Ambassador Sol Linowitz, must attempt to address these concerns. Yet, Professor Amos Perlmutter of the American University has poignantly assessed what most Israelis expected from Camp David--a separate peace with Egypt "nothing less and nothing more." They had no intention of making concessions, territorial or philosophical, to any one who did not enter the bargain with Jimmy Carter, Anwar El-Sadat, and Menachem Begin. That remains their position." He concluded: "and no exaggeration of Camp David's significance by its American sponsors will alter that Israeli reality."¹⁴

The importance of the US-Israeli perceptual difference in questions of autonomy is seen in the crucial distinction between Israeli approval in surrendering the Sinai Desert with its on-line oil production and the Israeli reluctance (and probable rejection) to surrender the West Bank which is composed of Biblical Judea and Samaria and is part of the Zionist philosophy. One author notes that there is a "widespread uneasiness in the Israeli body politic over America's apparent desire to use the autonomy plan as a lever to resolve the Palestinian problem in a way that would place Israel in mortal danger."¹⁵ A recent Israeli poll showed that 89 percent opposed the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza. This perceptual difference will have profound ramifications on domestic Israeli politics and on the US ability to negotiate and mediate between the various parties.

Within Israel, for example, the US has looked to the Labor Party for moderation and pragmatism and believed that it was prepared to exchange territory for peace when the time was propitious. Yet, when the Camp David accords were presented to the Knesset, the main opposition came from the United Kibbutz Movement and its political arm, the Achdut Ha'avoda faction, led by former

foreign minister Allon. In an interview in Ma'ariv, Allon clearly stated he would not vote for the accords with Egypt "if the Knesset will not impose on the government a different concept of the autonomy plan." He continued: "My conditions for an Arab autonomy in Palestine means total Israeli domination over the Jordan Valley, the deserts of Judea and Samaria, and Etzion area the south tip of Gaza."¹⁶

Begin's complex views on the question of sovereignty and territorial acquisition are incorporated in a plan presented to President Carter on 28 December 1978. This autonomy plan was designed to ensure Israeli military control over the autonomy administration while permitting Israel to have free access to newly established autonomy areas. Furthermore, new settlements would contribute to Israel's security because its troops would not be removed after the five year autonomy phase had ended.

Israel is currently proceeding and establishing a tone and style leading toward autonomy. Based on a working paper under the direction of Prime Minister Begin's chief of staff, Eliahu Ben-Elissar, it contemplates establishing new Israeli water, land, and settlement rights on the West Bank and Gaza. The Israelis also contemplate populating over a quarter million acres of West Bank territory and controlling underground water resources. New settlements, including Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and army kibbutz volunteer settlements, will create a lasting link between the West Bank settlements and military bases. The IDF posts will take the place of the military administration in larger towns. It appears that Israel will insist on formally accepting the West Bank open for the next five years and will attempt to create a viable alternative to the PLO in the framework of Begin's self-governing administration. Yet, it seems clear that Israel will reject--even past the five year period--a Palestinian self-determination and to a complete Israel withdrawal. It also appears that Begin

will not go beyond the returning of the Sinai to Egyptian sovereignty. West Bank inhabitants will be offered self-rule (elected representatives) and an end to the military occupation regime while Israel will continue to control the territory as a whole and permit Jewish settlements in parts of it. After the five years, the Israel will open negotiations with the West Bank Arab government and Jordan on the fate of the territory. This will apply to Gaza as well.

In sum, Begin seems to recognize that the autonomy administration will attempt to establish sovereignty over the area and intends to prohibit such action through sparsely populated areas dominated by Israelis with links to the IDF bases. Furthermore, the limits of self-government are evident in Israel's conception of the source, extent and scope of the council's authority. For example, the proposed education department would be staffed and administered by the council but would be subject to Israeli censorship rules, the commerce, industry, and tourism departments would have no authority over East Jerusalem, and the agriculture department would have no authority over land and water. The refugee department could establish rules and numbers for Arab immigration through a joint committee composed of Israel's and Jordanians, whose decisions must be unanimous. Whether Begin's autonomy ideas are incompatible to the successful implementation of the Camp David Accords remains to be seen.¹⁷

In assessing the various positions the US will probably support Egypt's demands over Israeli demands. For example, through State Department and White House announcements, it is clear that the US does not recognize the extraterritoriality of the new Israeli settlements. Furthermore, it seems likely that the US will press Israel to negotiate a special status of Jerusalem, and to give the autonomy administration a minimum sovereignty facade. Finally, the US expects the Israelis to withdraw from military occupation by 1980 although they will

support the Israeli claim for legitimate military enclaves and will support the protection of areas where the probability of terrorism is high.

In spite of what appears to be Israeli intransigence, it is conceivable that the various parties will be able to compromise. One author forecasts that the first phase compromise might entail "wide autonomy for the Palestinians under two simultaneously erected authorities: One agreed to essentially by the Egyptians and Israelis, on their own, in Gaza; and second, . . . involving not only these two negotiating partners but the US and Palestinian Arabs on the West Bank."¹⁸ This compromise might involve a restriction of Jewish settlements, leaving borders open, and producing joint Egyptian-Israeli security forces in Gaza. It might also involve Israeli security on the West Bank possibly with the aid of UN forces, until Jordan entered into the negotiations, or until the West Bank Palestinians achieve "autonomy" five years after the elections.

An additional viable compromise that Ambassador Linowitz might advance and which all parties might accept relates to safeguarding Israel's security. This compromise entails transposing the US Sinai Field Mission, located in the Sinai Desert since 1975, to the West Bank and Gaza. The field mission, with its electronic sensor fields, solar powered television cameras, and watchtowers, detects land movements ranging from a jack rabbit to tanks in a demilitarized zone. Originally conceived by Kissinger under the Sinai II disengagement, the mission has shown to be an effective tool in bridging the gap in trust and confidence between various parties.¹⁹

To date, the autonomy talks have been deadlocked on the issues. Should the self-governing authority have control over the region populated by one million Palestinians or just be a local adjunct of Israel control? Another specific issue centers on whether the Palestinians in East Jerusalem should vote in West

Bank elections. Israel contends that it annexed East Jerusalem while Egypt maintains that East Jerusalem is part of the West Bank and considers its population to have the same voting rights as other West Bank residents.

Begin's limited autonomy plan will probably not satisfy Palestinian aspirations. Yet, Palestinian demands for a state is anathema to Israel. This process is further complicated by the position of many Arab nations, including Saudi Arabia, Syria and Egypt, who split between their private and public support for a Palestinian state. Furthermore, it appears that Begin is incorrect in assuming the Carter Administration wants a full fledged Palestinian state. As Dr. Kissinger has accurately stated, "I don't think it is wise to have a PLO state. . . . It will certainly lead to war."²⁰ This belief appears to be well founded since it would be another radical Arab emirite and would probably overthrow Jordan's Hussein as well as attack Israel with Soviet made weapons and lead to further instability in the region. Nevertheless, it is also clear that the Carter Administration's objectives go beyond an Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty. The treaty, it is thought, must serve as the basis and catalyst for a Palestinian solution. In any case, with the upcoming Presidential election normal political pressures in the US will work against any major American pressure on Israel, and will work against any major US initiatives.

It thus seems evident, as one author noted, that the US "after producing its diplomatic miracle at Camp David, will have to face the continuation of the Arab-Israeli conflict in a new phase that will generate new crises and require new strategies. A new round of war is not on the horizon, if only because of the disparity in military power between Israel and her Arab enemies on the eastern front, but then, neither is the comprehensive peace that the Carter Administration hoped to achieve. The Arab world may well relapse into a new state of internecine struggle and violence . . . in a state of general radicalization and instability growing out of persistent problems."²¹

SECTION II

The United States faces serious challenges to its interests in the Middle East and will continue to face challenges in attempting to achieve its various interrelated objectives. The deterioration of the Northern Tier, for example, including domestic dissension in Turkey, the Soviet-backed Afghanistan regime, and a revolutionary Iran that rejects the CENTO alliance, the role of "policeman" of the Persian Gulf, and basic Western concepts related to the nation-state and international law, all dramatize the need for a policy that will restore US credibility and encourage moderate elements in maintaining stability. Similarly, the formalization of the politization of oil, recently exemplified by Iran's oil cut-off to the US, dramatizes the need for a clear, coherent, and geopolitically oriented policy toward the region. Finally, with the inability and refusal of Iran to protect the security of the Strait of Hormuz and the Strait of Bab el-Mandeb, wedged between Soviet-oriented South Yemen and Ethiopia, the pipelines to the Mediterranean from Saudi Arabia are more vulnerable than ever. Thus, the dangerous vacuum created by Iran's renunciation of its hegemony over the Gulf should give a new sense of urgency to the strategic planning of the Indian Ocean-Gulf area.

The underlying problem in attempting to devise a strategy pertains to others' perceptions of American credibility. Regardless of who is to blame for "losing Iran" it is clear that the fall of the Shah has lowered others' perception of the US credibility in coming to the aid of an ally.

Furthermore, Soviet advances have widened the general impression throughout the world and in crucial countries, such as Saudi Arabia, that the US had not done anything to check these advances. The roots of this problem may, in fact, lie in the original differing conception of detente between the US and the Soviet Union. The Soviets claim, for example, that detente is a special type of class struggle which entails a further change in the correlation of forces in the Soviet favor. US compromise, therefore, is viewed as a sign of weakness. In response to Soviet support of national liberation movements, it appears that the US has made unilateral concessions and has been unable -- or unwilling-- to stop Soviet advances in the strategic Third World areas.¹ This aspect has been combined with the policy of limiting arms sales to friendly nations -- nations which the US has vested political and strategic interests. In this regard, a "major shift" in policy was recorded with the decision to sell US arms to Morocco. It was unfortunate that for a long time the Carter Administration did not understand that the weapons were important for many reasons -- some political and others diplomatic and strategic. The Administration should have approved this sale without delay if only to reward King Hassan II, for his vital role in mediating secret Israeli-Egyptian meetings as far back as 1976 and setting the stage for the subsequent Camp David summit.

One vital concern, then, should be the reversal of these trends and the restoration of a strong yet sensitive American posture in the Middle East. To this end, the US should shelve (if it hasn't already) an Indian Ocean Arms Limitation accord, which was virtually completed through a

series of negotiations held in 1976-78 by ACDA. President Carter should realize that demilitarizing the Indian Ocean, in light of current circumstances, is not in the national interest. President Carter should also recognize that an Indian Ocean agreement would be more advantageous to the Soviets and would contribute to further instability in the region. In fact, an Indian Ocean base at Diego Garcia would provide the US many benefits. It would also begin to solve the problem of the perceived weakness of American assurances to allies.²

The US should also recognize that Iran will become more and more unstable and anarchistic as people realize that their freedom will be restricted due to the new powers of the Ayatollah Khomeini, as legitimated by the new constitution. Khomeini and his followers will be vehemently anti-US in the short run and anti-Communist and leftist in the long run. The xenophobic nationalism of the revolution will slowly subside; yet, the distrust of multinational corporations and perceived US meddling in the Arab world will continue. Furthermore, it is not difficult to see that a rift between the theocratic, liberal, and leftist-leaning factions will polarize the political spectrum even after a Khomeini-type figure passes from the limelight. Thus, it seems difficult to understand the overly optimistic contention by some noted authors that "the restoration of monarchy under propitious circumstances must not be written off with complete finality."³

Although it is quite possible that Iran will turn outward virulently, it is more likely that in the medium range time frame Iran will confine itself to the defense of Iranian "national borders," pursue a hands-off

policy in the Gulf, and turn its energies to badly needed political consolidation. But this is by no means assured. Ayatollah Khomeini sees himself as head of a great Shiite community which knows no national boundaries. Thus, he is threatening revolution in Bahrein, where the population is 70% Shiite, is causing unrest in Kuwait, where the Shiite population is 20%, and is stirring up Shiites in Iraq, who constitute 55% of the population. In the end he may placate domestic opposition with limited outside negotiations such as, interalia, settling the Iranian dispute with Sheikh of Sharjah over the Gulf island of Abu Musa.

In any case, the close relationship between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Iran's Khomeini will undoubtedly increase pressures on Gulf states and other Arab states to be responsive to the pressures of the Palestinians who comprise a large segment of these population, as well as who comprise the elite in politics, industry, and business in these Arab countries.⁴ The new alliance will have profound and multifaceted effects on the Gulf region and the autonomy negotiations. The Carter Administration has recognized this and has unfolded a modest counter strategy. This new strategy (fortunately) does not rely on a single "linchpin" nation, such as Saudi Arabia, which does not have the necessary military infrastructure. Nor does the strategy entail reliance on "regional influentials," as phrased by Zbigniew Brzezinski. As outlined by Secretary Brown, it involves a "quick-strike force" of Americans and a sharp increase of military supplies and economic aid to pro-Western governments, including Saudi Arabia, North Yemen, the Sudan, Egypt,

Jordan and Israel. Yet this strategy has flaws and, as one author stated, could only aid security in the Persian Gulf "indirectly, peripherally, and partially."⁵ What is needed is US encouragement for local initiatives toward indigenous security arrangements. The US must be prepared to assist these regional states and encourage OECD nations to support these efforts. In spite of these policy initiatives, the central challenge to US foreign policy in the Middle East in the face of the Iranian revolution continues to exist: By working through Arab allies, how can the US seek to moderate the new tide of radicalism. The autonomy negotiations will play a crucial role in the resolution of this dilemma.

Events in Iran, coupled with the new situation in the Northern Tier, are closely intertwined with events in the Arab world. Saudi Arabia must be encouraged to take on a larger role in the stability of the region -- its religious posture, money to Arab causes and tremendous oil reserves, together with Egypt's military capacity and manpower are potential elements that could stem the tide of radicalism and pave the way for more moderating Arab influence. Yet, the US must recognize that internal turmoil and the recent wave of unrest and bloody clashes with extremists trained in a Palestinian camp in South Yemen has made the Saudi monarchy more concerned with domestic stability. The Washington Star recently noted that "reports filtering out of Saudi Arabia say that the recent turmoil also was far more widespread and coordinated than initially reported" and that, in addition to the riots in Dhaharan, disruption also broke out at the oil refineries, oil jetties, and in the town of Qatif.⁶ To date, it has been reported that the Saudis have threatened to cut off

all financial aid to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the PLO if attacks continue. The New York Times reported that the Shiite disturbances and earlier clashes in Mecca and Medina mean that "religious tension is sweeping the country."⁷ The Saudis are also concerned with the new alliance between Iran and the Palestinians. During Secretary Brown's Mideast trip in February 1979, Saudi officials expressed their concern over the 1.5 million immigrant workers out of a total population of 8 million and the increasing possibility of subversion. In particular, the Saudis are disturbed at the composition of the non-Saudi workforce in ARAMCO -- 60-65% of the total workforce at ARAMCO consists of Palestinian or Palestinian-born Jordanians. In the past, the Saudi's have permitted ARAMCO to exclude these workers from sensitive installations such as the Ras Tanura refinery. This deep rooted concern of internal turmoil was acknowledged as far back as 1973 when Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani, Saudi Petroleum Minister, announced, "If war comes, we will have to shut off the oil. You know about the Palestinians and other foreigners we have around us. We could not prevent sabotage by a handful of trained professional saboteurs."⁸

The royal family has always insisted (at least publicly) on a complex peace settlement and, in the face of increased pressures, they appear to want some visible progress toward that end. Internal feuding within the royal family, combined with dissatisfaction with American policy has resulted in hard-line positions taken at the two Baghdad meetings in November 1978 and March 1979. There are indications, for example, that

Saudi Arabia intends to link Saudi oil production with the progress on the Palestinian question. As related to Evans and Novak, a Saudi cabinet member stated, "We have been giving a quid without getting a quo." Other senior officials, too, have linked the issue to what he perceives as Carter's disregard for the Palestinians.⁹

Should the Saudis conclude that a potential threat exists to undermine the monarchy and institutions, they may elect to move closer to Egypt, who could provide military security. One publication stated that as Crown Prince Fahd assumes more and more power as King Khalid declines in health, it is thought that his "control of Saudi Arabia spells a gradual warming of relations with Egypt."¹⁰ In any case, it is imperative that the Saudis or other Arab nations not completely isolate or humiliate Sadat since his overthrow and replacement by a radical regime would destabilize the region and threaten Saudi institutions as well.

While the autonomy talks can help stabilize the Middle East and attempt to overcome over thirty years of animosity, Ambassador Linowitz and his delegation must also realize that a successful outcome could also precipitate political and/or military action on the part of the Arab rejectionists. For example, Iraq's strongman, Saddam Hussein, is currently fighting to be leader of the radical Arab camp. In spite of a long hatred for Syria and its Baath Party, Saddam Hussein is politically astute and recognizes the need to work with Syria against the peace process in attempting to isolate Egypt and keep Jordan under his influence.

Clearly, the Iranian revolution has affected Saddam's thoughts. The Shia majority in Iraq has become even more of a threat to the ruling Sunni Muslim council, as manifest in Shia disturbances in the holy cities of Karbala and Najaf, blatant Baathist Sunni discrimination against the Shia business community. The Iranian revolution, coupled with the military vacuum created by Egypt's peace with Israeli, has created conditions whereby Saddam might feel more willing to use military force should the autonomy negotiations gain momentum and he perceives that his role of radical leader is being shattered. Furthermore, should the Israelis fulfill their pledges, as stated in the Peace Treaty, then Iraq may suffer a political setback. This could also be precipitated if Syria, together with Jordan, see their national self-interest in the form of joining the talks in some form.

President Assad of Syria, who is struggling for a viable and honorable way out of the Lebanese crisis, may recognize that joining the talks could mean a quick Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights. This political feat could save precarious rule. Some analysts have predicted that Assad's weak leadership, domestic opposition, over involvement in Lebanon, the "non-starter" union with Iraq, and inability to use the Army to restore stability lest Sunni elements rebel, will prove too much for Assad and that the government "will collapse within a year." Egyptian intelligence estimates believe that Assad's successor "will choose alliance with Egypt ... and will commit themselves to the Egyptian plan to

create a Palestinian entity in the West Bank and the return of the Golan Heights to Syria." 11

Assad has urged the Syrian population to accept social and economic sacrifices resulting from Syrian intervention in Lebanon, based on moral and ideological precepts, and he may attempt to extricate himself from Lebanon by following steps not dissimilar to those taken by the US in Vietnam. With a Council of National Reconciliation set up by the Damascus regime, Assad might also find it politically expedient and domestically safe to attempt a diplomatic coup in the form of a tacit Israeli-Syrian disengagement vis-a-vis Lebanon. Finally, he may attempt once again to gain Syrian patronage over the West Bank Palestinians -- a request that Assad put to President Carter in April 1977 when they met in Geneva. On the other hand, recent events indicate that Syria is becoming more radical and is moving to achieve a strategic relationship with Iran. This initiative may indicate that Syrian-Iraqi unity plans are dead and implies that Syria is seeking to substitute Iran for Iraq in its anti-Egyptian/Israeli policies. In the end, this new relationship with Teheran and Damascus will increase Syria's political isolation by increasing Syrian Sunni resentment to the minority Alawite leadership in Damascus.

It is generally agreed by Western analysts that King Hussein of Jordan must be bought into the Camp David structure in order for autonomy talks and the subsequent self-governing administration to mature to fruition. Yet Jordan has limited options. As one author stated: "The (September 1970) showdown remains significant because the price he paid in

the Arab world for salvaging Jordan's national identity has severely limited his political options today."¹²

Ever since the 1974 Rabat Conference, which acknowledged the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinians, Jordan has had to rethink its strategy. In 1976, the PLO officially boycotted local elections on the West Bank, but three weeks before the election they encouraged sympathizers to enter. The result: an overwhelming defeat of the pro-Jordanian candidates. Nevertheless, Hussein continues to develop the East Bank region and believes that West Bank Palestinians will choose some link with Jordan rather than create an independent state, should they be given the opportunity. This federation concept is not unlike Sadat's idea - or for that matter, the vague US concept of a "Palestinian entity." In the end, it may prove to be the most satisfactory to the Palestinians and to other parties.

Jordan must accommodate to survive. One option before King Hussein is a continued rejection of Camp David. This would mean increased dependence upon Iraq and other radical states. This factor, in turn, would decrease Jordan's political independence and would increase the possibility of severe Israeli reprisals against the PLO in Jordan. But Jordan's budget is 62% subsidized from oil-rich Arab nations. This fact, plus yearly chronic trade deficits, means that its political independence is limited anyway. A second option would be for Jordan to join the talks, a move that President Sadat believes probable, which would mean heavy retributions from the rejectionist camp. Hussein would opt for this possibility if Saudi Arabia were to strongly encourage Jordan to join the

talks. American aid could act as a further inducement. It is considered unlikely, however, since the retributions could topple the longest reigning monarch of a major Middle East nation with a Palestinian population of over 50%.

In attempting to compromise between both options while balancing the difficult issues, including the 1970 battle with the Palestinians and the PLO, Jordan appears to be following a course of action that is moderate and distinctly Jordanian. In a recent Washington Post interview, King Hussein stated that what is needed is a coherent Arab peace plan to foster a new and different set of negotiations, which would include all parties to the Middle East conflict.¹³ This initiative, he stated, is designed to present a clear idea of what the Arabs want and what they oppose concerning peace talks with Israel. The Jordanian monarch's refusal to use Arab oil as a weapon to force the US into pressuring Israel to relinquish territories it conquered in the 1967 war from Jordan and Syria makes this call for a fresh Middle East talk significant. This type of moderation makes Hussein particularly well placed to gather Arab states around a common position.

Hussein's goal seems to coincide with the hopes of many persons that phase two of the Camp David negotiations could evolve into negotiations including Jordan, Syria, and the Palestinians for a comprehensive settlement. As Hussein stated:

"It is my feeling that we in the Arab world should do more than we have done until now, at least among ourselves, to ... translate our joint decision at the summit meeting at Baghdad -- to seek a peaceful solution, if possible ... into a

framework that we can discuss with others the world over before going back to the UN, to see what could be done there ..."¹⁴

Hussein's comments are particularly noteworthy since former US personal representative of the President, Robert S. Strauss, predicted that the autonomy talks will be stalemated beyond their May deadline. Also noteworthy were his comments which suggested that he will attempt to shift the peace talks to another forum, perhaps to the UN.

Should the talks continue to be stalemated (they will undoubtedly be slowed due to the vacuum created by Ambassador Strauss' resignation), Hussein's new efforts may prove to be an important clue as to the structure of future developments. Whether or not it is true, as some authors claim, that Jordan has been maneuvered into the ranks of rejectionist Arabs as much by the pressing of the US as by the hard-line tugging of Iraq or the PLO, the United States should encourage Jordan to take a moderate and independent stand. The US ^{can} still influence the degree of Hussein's moderation by resolving the issue of future deliveries of American weapons and trade.

SECTION III

What should be important for Ambassador Linowitz relates not to what a final peace settlement might look like, although there must be some basic understanding among the various actors, but the methodology adopted in facilitating the pacific settlement of contentious issues. In this regard, the basic assumption relates to the importance of piecemeal agreement as opposed to a comprehensive solution. As former foreign minister Abba Eban said, "American diplomacy has shown a wise humility in changing course so as to accommodate itself to the atmosphere and results of the Jerusalem and Ismailia meetings of later 1977. If you try to involve all the parties in the solution of all the issues, you give a veto power to the most intractable issue -- and to the most obdurate party." Succinctly, this step-by-step approach is viewed by many as the only real avenue to pursue implementation of the Camp David accords and stems from the historical record which documents the failures of comprehensive designs. The Rhodes Armistice agreements, Jarring's Mission, the Rogers Plan, and others, failed to achieve their objectives due to structural reasons. Yet, the absence of success for a comprehensive design has not precluded successful attempts to decrease tensions. The Sinai II Agreement, for example, enabled the Egyptians to repatriate the refugees of the Canal Zone and rehabilitate the devastated areas, opened the Suez Canal, etc. In a similar vein, the Israeli-Syrian disengagement~~ment~~ enabled a more relaxed atmosphere and a demonstration of mutual restraint. One author noted that the piecemeal method does not have an automatic built in mechanism for further agreement. Yet, the Israeli-Syrian agreement continued to have a beneficial impact. "Anyone familiar with the signal language

exchanged between Jerusalem and Damascus in 1975-76," stated Shlomo Avineri, "could not fail to recognize that an implicit infrastructure for future bargaining was being laid out." The beneficial impact on the quality of mutual perception and public rhetoric resulted in a "more sophisticated readings of each other's signals by the other."²

President Carter's view of reconvening the Geneva Peace Conference was ill-conceived and dangerous. By playing up to extremist elements, the moderates were taken for granted. In a piecemeal approach, the moderates, such as Jordan, would be the first to be consulted. Thus, to the consternation of all elements, especially the Egyptians and Israelis, President Carter was courting President Assad of Syria while ignoring the needs of Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, etc.

The key to successful mediation by Ambassador Linowitz is to be found in the incremental approach to West Bank/Gaza autonomy. The phased agreements make it possible for Jordan to enter into negotiations, although because of its limited options, it depends on the other Arab nations and may be unwilling to take the necessary steps. Jordan's "open bridges" policy, where West Bank public servants are paid with Jordanian tender, where municipalities have their budgets approved in Amman, where schoolbooks and curricula are decided in Amman, etc, grew out of a sense of implicit piecemeal agreements. This de facto condominium between Israel and Jordan should be expanded through the autonomy negotiations.

Clearly, this approach is preferable to a radical, independent West Bank state, which would most likely be a base for PLO activities against Israel. This approach would also be preferable to the already overpopulated West Bank/Gaza area of 900,000 Palestinians which could not possibly absorb

and rehabilitate any sizeable number of the some two million refugees dispersed throughout the Middle East. Furthermore, a WestBank/Gaza state, which has been the catchment area for refugees for over two generations, does not have the infrastructure for either agricultural or urban development, rehabilitation for their people. Continued refugee camps would never alleviate the human and political problems nor create the stability that is a precondition for a lasting solution.

The East Bank, however, which is ten times larger than the West Bank and is sparsely populated, could serve as a solution. Thus, the Palestinian refugee problem, a seemingly intractable problem, may be solved by including both sides of the Jordan. This would mean that rehabilitation of the refugees could commence within the already formed structure of Jordan. Such a state, which would involve a majority of Palestinians, could agree to demilitarize the West Bank, thus fulfilling Israel's legitimate security needs. Since a million Palestinians live on the East Bank as members of the Jordan polity and sit on the Jordanian parliament, a separate West Bank state could jeopardize the West Banker's integration into Jordanian society and would create friction between the West Bank Palestinian state and the Palestinians living as well-integrated members of the Jordanian society. A country encompassing both sides of the Jordan, whether it be called Palestine-Jordan, Republic of Palestine, etc, would be an adequate expression of Palestinian nationalism and would serve as a viable force for stability in the area.

The correctness of this step-by-step approach becomes more evident in viewing the US envoy's dilemma related to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Israel totally rejects an official PLO presence at the negotiation talks and it is clear that the PLO and its rejectionist allies will remain adamantly opposed to autonomy negotiating. Yet, Begin and Dayan have indicated that PLO sympathizers may be overlooked in an Egyptian or Jordanian

delegation. Furthermore, Ambassador Linowitz should initially attempt to negotiate a Gaza self-governing administration since Gaza Palestinians are more independently minded than the PLO dominated West Bank. The Gaza Strip also poses less strategic, historic, and religious problems for Israel. This is not to argue that a Gaza administration would be easy to create. Yet, except for difficulties such as settlements and issues addressed in the previous section, the self-governing authority in Gaza could serve as a model for the more difficult West Bank selfgoverning administration. Ambassador Linowitz should encourage the Israelis to accept a "special relationship" with Egypt in the form of an Egyptian-Israeli military administrative presence. This would also attempt to subvert the PLO which is using fear tactics to scare independent Palestinians from dealing with the Egyptian autonomy delegation members.

A thorough discussion of the role of the PLO in Middle East affairs is beyond the scope of this essay. While the PLO is recognized by over 105 nations (more nations than recognize Israel), and has been actively pursuing a diplomatic offensive, it continues to counter and undermine the autonomy negotiations.

Since its inception in 1956, the PLO has undergone a transformation from a small unorganized terrorist group, to a group recognized the world over. Nevertheless, it refuses to "play its trump card" and recognize Israel's right to exist. Its charter, the Palestinian National Covenant, still the basis of the PLO. A fascinating and frightening document, it claims, for example, that: armed struggle is "the only way to liberate Palestine" (Article 9); that the "liberation ... is a national duty to repulse the Zionist, imperialist invasion ... and purge the Zionist presence from the Arab nation" (Article 15); and claims that Israel is a "constant threat to peace ... and the liberation of

Palestine will liquidate the Zionist and imperialist presence." (Article 27)

Many persons claim that this document should not be used to understand the subtle changes that have taken place, especially in the past several years. This is true to a limited extent. Meeting with Israelis in Rome, the first known contact between a PLO executive committee member and an Israeli, Ahmad Sidqi Dajani expressed new Palestinian aims.

"The final objective of the Palestinians is no longer the establishment of a democratic, secular state in Palestine, but an independent state in the territories of 1967."³

While some persons note that the "PLO's new realism also involves implied recognition of Israel" it is also clear that the PLO structure works against flexibility and moderation. It is clear that the PLO will not change its stance before the elections to the self-governing administration and that it will continue to intimidate those Palestinians who join the Arab delegations to the talks. And while a piecemeal approach may produce a change in PLO strategy the US must not wander aimlessly in the hopes of finding a solution to the PLO "problem". It must take balanced steps in building an underlying consensus between Egypt and Israel as to what role they see the Palestinians and the PLO playing in the future. The autonomy negotiations should encourage the moderate Arabs to make the PLO "problem" an "Arab problem". This could serve to influence the PLO in its orientation which would ultimately aim at a formal abrogation of the PLO "Phased Struggle" strategy which uses the West Bank and Gaza as tactics to facilitate the continuing offensive against Israel, and abrogation of the sections of the Covenant that calls for the elimination of Israel.

The final specific issue that should be mentioned pertains to Jerusalem. The uniqueness of Jerusalem as a religious and spiritual center has made this issue an intractable one. As Teddy Kollek, Mayor of Jerusalem,

said in an unpublished letter to Lord Hugh Caradon, former British Ambassador to the UN, "the one way to ensure another Middle East war is to try to divide Jerusalem. Jerusalem is not in the same category as Sinai or the West Bank. While the Jewish people could have waited another 1000 years for the unification of the city ... there is no one who would accept division following reunification ... Jerusalem is the heart and soul of the Jewish people and no one can live without one's heart and soul."⁴

Many diplomats have attempted to struggle with the issue of Jerusalem. Lord Caradon, for example, wants Jerusalem to be the "central part of the (comprehensive) settlement, a gateway to peace." This plan posits sister cities in an undivided city with Arab territories under Arab Administration and Arab sovereignty and likewise for the Israelis. The city would be based on "freedom, equality, mutual respect, and peaceful co-existence."⁵

Comprehensive solutions to this issue, along with others, have fallen by the wayside. Yet, Ambassador Linowitz should carefully review the Camp David summit meetings. As reported by John Wallach of the Hearst newspapers,⁶ Begin and Sadat made a tremendous stride in resolving this issue.

The Camp David summit produced three significant developments vis-a-vis the issue of Jerusalem which "for the first time appear to make a settlement possible." While this may be overly optimistic even President Carter announced that "we had a fairly good paragraph mutually agreed by the Israelis and Egyptians. The first development was Sadat's major new proposal that brought "Egypt and Israel to the brink of agreement on language pledging the Holy City would never again be divided nor become the battleground of warring

nations." Sadat proposed a joint municipal council made up of Arabs and Israelis to administer the city. Begin rejected the plan because it camouflaged divided Arab and Israeli rule. The second development was Begin's counter proposal, a "borough" plan, which would give jurisdiction over the holy places to religious denominations with Israel remaining the central governing authority. This, too, was rejected. The final development was President Carter's subtle change in policy from an eleven year old stance of total neutrality to sharp opposition to Israel's annexation of Jerusalem.⁷

These developments were important in light of opposition to the concept of internationalization of the city by Israelis, Arabs, and even the Pope. Thus, these seemingly small tactical changes could portend the emergence of a new consensus although it is clear that the 70,000-80,000 new Jewish settlers in the area are there to stay. The extent that new proposals will establish a framework for future discussion may depend on the ability of Ambassador Linowitz to establish mutually agreed upon goals.

In closing, it should be said that the Camp David accords and the Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty, with all its imperfections, was a milestone in Arab-Israeli relations. Whether or not Jordan and Saudi Arabia will more fully appreciate its contribution to Middle East peace and stability will depend upon the outcome of the current autonomy talks and efforts to resolve the Palestinian refugee problem and Eastern Jerusalem problem. Furthermore, President Carter's insistence upon Israeli and Egyptian recognition of principles, but not immediate Israeli withdrawals, gives Ambassador Linowitz and his delegation the responsibility of using his good office to make Begin's Plan diplomatically and semantically acceptable to the Egyptians.

Both Israel and Egypt are now looking to Washington for help. Their ability to agree between themselves or achieve more from each other depends upon their ability to mobilize US support, resist American pressures, and adopt compromises. Ambassador Linowitz and his delegation must bridge the gap between commitment and reality, between image of sovereignty and limits and sovereignty. Whether or not this can be accomplished within the present framework is doubted by many. Yet, it is clear that Ambassador Linowitz will be the key person in mediating the serpentine course for the 1980s.

FOOTNOTES

Section I

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- 2 Michael Brecher, Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), pg 175.
- 3 David Ben-Gurion, My Talks With Arab Leaders, (Jerusalem: Keter Books, Inc, 1972), pg 277.
- 4 "Advice for Bob Strauss" The New Republic, 7 June 1979, pg 9-11.
- 5 Abba Eban, An Autobiography, (New York: Random House, 1977), pg 547.
- 6 President Jimmy Carter, Report to Congress, 18 September 1978, White House Press Office.
- 7 Hermann F. Eilts, "Some Reflections on the Middle East", Middle East Institute Annual Conference, 5 October 1979.
- 8 Sidney Zion and Uri Dan, "Israel's Peace Strategy", in New York Times Magazine, 8 April 1979, pg 21.
- 9 Ibid, pg 90.
- 10 For a lengthy discussion of Israel's economic situation see Ann Crittenden's "Israel's Economic Plight" in Foreign Affairs Spring, 1979.
- 11 Assem Abdul Mohsen, "The Story of Egypt's Subsidies", Middle East November, 1979, pg 113-5.
- 12 Amos Perlmutter, "The Egyptian-Israeli Negotiations", Foreign Affairs, Summer 1979.

- 13 Ma'ariv, Tel Aviv, 19 April 1979.
- 14 Amos Perlmutter, "A New Rejectionism," Foreign Policy, Spring, 1979.p 165.
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- 17 Mark Heller, "Begin's False Autonomy," Foreign Policy, Winter, 1979-0.
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- 4 John K. Cooley, "Iran, the Palestinians, and the Gulf" in Foreign Affairs, Summer, 1979.
- 5 Lenczowski, "The Arc of Crisis" pg 827.

- 6 Washington Star, 6 December 1979.
- 7 New York Times, 6 December 1979.
- 8 Cooley, "Iran, the Palestinians and the Gulf", pg 1027.
- 9 Washington Post, 12 December 1979.
- 10 "Will King Khalid Last Until 1980?" Strategic Middle East and Africa, Vol v, number 38, 26 September 1979.
- 11 "Egypt: Regional Intel. Evaluation" Strategic Middle East and Africa, Vol V, number 38, 30 October 1979.
- 12 New York Times, 8 April 1979.

Section III

- 1 Abba Eban, "Camp David-the Unfinished Business" Foreign Affairs, Winter, 1978-9, pg 346.
- 2 Shlomo Avineri, "Peacemaking", Foreign Affairs, Fall, 1978, pg 57.
- 3 "Palestinian Diplomacy Pays Off", The Middle East, November, 1979, pg 38.
- 4 Lord Hugh Caradon, "Return to Jerusalem" unpublished paper, 1977.
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- 6 John Wallach, "At Camp David, They Talked of Jerusalem", Boston Herald American, 7 October 1979.

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