# CHAPTER - 1

# INTRODUCTION

Throughout recorded history the land of historic Israel and Palestine, located on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, was conquered many times by invaders. The area is the homeland of the Jewish people, who immigrated to the area beginning in the 13th century BC as Hebrew tribes. The tribes confederated as the Israelites who ruled much of the area from the 11th century to the 6th century BC. The Jews formed an identity as the people of the covenant but subsequently came under the rule of others until they succeeded in establishing an independent Jewish state called Judea in 168 BC. The Romans expelled the Jews from Judea in 135 AD. In subsequent centuries many Jews maintained the idea of regaining control of the area, which they considered home. In the 1890s Theodor Herzl, a Jewish journalist living in Austria, advocated re-establishing a Jewish state in Palestine. Herzl believed Zionism (the reuniting of Jewish people in Palestine) would match *'a people without a land with a land without a people.'*

Palestine was already inhabited, however. The countryside was home to Arabs, most of them Muslims, while the larger towns contained both Arabs and Jews. Some of the Jews were long established there, while others were religious pilgrims from Europe who had come to live near the holy sites in Jerusalem and other cities. (Because the vast majority of Palestinians were Muslim Arabs, the term Palestinians now usually refers only to them, not to the Jews of Israel. Most Palestinians are Muslims.) The land was ruled by the Ottoman Empire, but the Ottomans saw little of value in Palestine and neglected the area. Consequently, poverty, disease, and malnutrition were widespread. Nonetheless, the area served as a land corridor between Europe, Asia, and Africa and thus had strategic importance. It was also near the Suez Canal, which, when opened in Egypt in 1869, connected the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea. Palestine was therefore important to the British, who occupied Egypt in 1882 and depended on control of the canal for its fortunes.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries the Zionist movement gained strength in Europe, and large numbers of Jews immigrated to Palestine. The movement focused on

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self-reliance through agriculture, and many immigrants settled in the countryside. To do so, Jews had to buy land from local Arab holders of small tracts and from absentee Arab landlords of large areas. As a result, Jews and Arabs came into increasing contact; at times, Jewish purchases led to the displacement of Arab peasants from the land. Although the Ottoman government sought to slow the Zionist movement, Jews established a significant and expanded presence. Their success furthered the world debate about whether and how to establish a Jewish homeland, and it also created apprehension among Arabs.

Arab-Israeli conflict is the conflict between Arabs and Jews in the Middle East over the historic land of Israel and Palestine. The conflict has led to several wars as War of Independence(1948),Sinai war(1956),Six day war(1967),War of Attrition(1967-70)and Yom Kippur war(1973) among Arab nations, Palestinian refugees, and the state of Israel. Since 1979 several peace accords as Camp David Accord, Oslo Accord have been signed, addressing parts of the conflict and giving some territory to Palestine.

## 1.1    Background

Palestine, which had been part of the Ottoman Empire since 1517, came under the domination of Great Britain at the end of the First World War. The last years before 1914 had witnessed a growth of Arab national sentiment demanding the decentralization of the Ottoman State and the establishment of Arab autonomy.[1] When the Ottoman Empire entered the First World War on the side of the Central Powers, the British feared that the prestige of the Caliphate might be used in an attempt to raise all Islam against the Allies in a Jihad or Holy War. To meet this danger, negotiations were undertaken by the British with Hussein, the Sheriff and Emir of Mecca, who occupied a position of great prestige in the Arab World. In 1915, Sir Henry McMahon, British High Commissioner in Egypt, and Sheriff Hussein entered into an agreement for Arab co-operation against the Turks in return for certain British guarantees of Arab independence. In one of his letters Sheriff Hussein asked for British acknowledgement of Arab independence in the whole Arabian Peninsula, except Aden, and roughly all of what are now Iraq, Israel, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. On 24 October 1915, Sir Henry McMahon replied delimiting the area in which Great Britain would agree to recognize Arab

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[1]. J.J. Zasloff, *Great Britain and Palestine,*1952, pp.1-2.

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independence. While the Arabs claimed that Palestine had been included in the promise by the British for recognition of independence, Winston Churchill, then Secretary of State for Colonies asserted that "the whole of Palestine west of the Jordan was excluded from Sir Henry McMahon's pledge.[2]"Sir Henry McMahon also declared later that he had meant to exclude Palestine from the terms of his pledge and had every reason to believe that Sheriff Hussein had understood this at the time of negotiations.

At the same time Zionist settlers also laid the foundations of modern urban development in Tel Aviv. Meanwhile, there were also secret exchanges between Great Britain and France, which culminated in the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 16 May 1916 under which the area between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf was divided into five distinct regions, part of the area was to  under British control, part under French, part to be a British sphere of influence and part a French sphere of influence, and Palestine was to fall into a special category, its special regime to be determined  by agreement between Russia, France and Great Britain. A complete negation of the understanding arrived at between Sherif Hussein and Sir Henry McMahon. What is more, besides this secret agreement, Great Britain also entered into a promise to the Zionists concerning the future of Palestine. Arthur James Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary, issued a statement of policy on 2 November 1917, which contained, what has been generally referred to as, the Balfour Declaration.  In April 1920, the Conference of the Allied Powers, in San Remo, Italy considered the fate of the disremembered Ottoman Empire. The Allied Supreme Council assigned the Mandate for Palestine to Great Britain, providing therein that the Mandatory should, inter alia, be responsible for implementing the Balfour Declaration. The Mandate was officially endorsed by the Council of the League of Nations on 24 July 1922 and entered into force on 29 September 1923.

The Palestine Constitution of 10 August 1922 fell far short of Arab expectations. The Arabs, therefore, refused to co-operate in the measures envisaged under it. In 1929, they demanded that "after 10 years of absolute colonial rule in Palestine", a democratic system of government should be granted "in accordance with the Covenant of the League of Nations and pledges and declarations made to the Arabs by the Allies. Meanwhile the foundations of the Jewish national home were firmly established during the first years of the Mandate. From 1920 to 1929, the net immigration of Jews into Palestine amounted to

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[2]. *Ibid*.pp.15-18.

77,063.Following Hitler's rise to power, the wave of violent anti – Semitism which swept over Germany and Poland augmented Jewish immigration from central and Eastern Europe. Thus, while in 1931, Jews formed 17 percent of the population of Palestine, in 1940, it was about 30 percent.

During this period from 1936–1939, known as the Great Arab Revolt or the "Great Uprising",[3] British forces, supported by 6,000 armed Jewish auxiliary police, suppressed the widespread riots with overwhelming force. In the wake of the strike the Peel Commission recommended a partition of the country into a small Jewish state and an Arab state to be attached to Jordan. In 1940 Ben Gurion went to the United States in his capacity as chairman of the Zionist executive and sought to express on the Zionist organization of America the urgency of political campaigning of formulating a political programme and mobilizing American Jewry(about 53 lakhs)toward its end. His plan was based on three things: opposition to the policy of the white paper, the formation of a Jewish army, and the conversion of Palestine into a Jewish common wealth after the war. In May 1942, a congress of American Zionists unanimously endorsed the proposals, under the title of the Biltmore program. A fortnight after the end of the war in Europe, the Zionists requested the immediate acceptance by the British Government of the full Biltmore Program. The Jewish agency modified the Biltmore program in favor of "a viable Jewish state in a adequate area of Palestine" the British having failed to bring about a compromise between the Jews and the Arabs, resolved to refer the Palestine problem to the United Nations.

On 29 November 1947 the United Nations General Assembly approved a plan, UN General Assembly Resolution 181, to resolve the Arab-Jewish conflict by partitioning Palestine into two states, one Jewish and one Arab. Each state would comprise three major sections, linked by extraterritorial crossroads; the Arab state would also have an enclave at Jaffa. The partition plan was accepted by the Jews but not by the Arabs which started the conflict. The conflict has led to several wars as War of Independence (1948), Sinai War (1956), Six Day War (1967), War of Attrition (1967-70) and Yom Kippur War (1973) among Arab nations, Palestinian refugees, and the state of Israel.

## 1.2    Statement of the problem

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[3]. G.E.Grunebaum,*Eastern Jewry Under Islam,*p.365.

Arab-Israel conflict is one of the World's historic conflicts and has become one of the sensitive issues till today. Though historical evidences sufficiently speak that both Israel and Palestine existed but the present conflict was ignited when in Belfour Declaration it was stated "the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people."[4]This was further enhanced when Peel Commission recommended a partition of the country into a small Jewish state and an Arab state to be attached to Jordan. On 29 November 1947 the United Nations General Assembly approved a plan, UN General Assembly Resolution 181, to resolve the Arab-Jewish conflict by partitioning Palestine into two states, one Jewish and one Arab. The problem evolved when Jews accepted the partition plan but the Arab Palestine rejected the plan. This disagreement led to four successive wars in 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973 but the interesting fact was that Israel was in upper hand in all of these wars and successively extended its territory than that had been allotted in the UN partition plan. Though some part like Sinai Desert has been returned but Golan Height has been nationalized by Israel which always fosters the problem.

In spite of the several international attempts for peace in Arab-Israel conflict like Camp David accord, Oslo accord Israel still have been victim of various terrorist attacks which subsequently leading to the invasion of Lebanon 1982 and 2006.Thus, unless a feeling of self respect and identity to each other emerges in the minds of every Arabs and Israelis the road map to the conflict will never achieve its aim.

## 1.3     Hypothesis

The tentative hypothesis of the study is as follows:
i)      Historical evidences which provide sufficient facts regarding the Jews state in  Palestine so that it encompasses the legal rights of Jews to live in the Palestine.
ii)      The ignition factors that led the conflict to escalate and its effects in the World politics.

## 1.4     Objectives

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[4]. *Ibid.* p. 367.

The objectives of the study will be:

i) History regarding origin of Palestine and Jews with the rise of conflict in their territory and identity.

ii) Consequences of the conflict leading to four major wars, active involvement of two super powers during the cold war period and the use of oil as weapon during the war.

iii) Not comprehensive but step by step peace process adopted to settle the conflict in international forum.(In brief)

iv) Importance of 'War of Attrition' (as 'Defensive rehabilitation',' Offensive defense' and 'Liberation') when the enemy forces are stronger but still have the mentality of confronting with the enemy forces.

## 1.5    Importance of study

There are number of reasons which justify this study:

As has already been stated above that Arab-Jews conflict is one of the World's historic and sensitive conflict in the conflict management. Tracing back the history we find the Jews diaspora right from the Roman rule and in modern times it was followed as Holocaust by the Nazi Germany. All these circumstances led UN the partition plan that erupted a never ending issue to Arabs and there have been four wars on the conflict, invasions and lot many terrorist activities. Because of all these, this region has been center of interest to United Nations, two superpower nations and the whole world. Besides, Middle East is located in such a strategic location (being Suez Canal) to Europe and Western powers that conflict in this region directly affects the whole world as seen in the Arab-Israel wars. Also, since this region is the ore of petroleum and when this was used as weapon in war (1973) it directly affects the world economy.[5]Besides Jews have important position in the United States and as the whole world is directly or indirectly affected by US (being sole super power) policy, we can't deny the importance of the study of Arab-Israel conflict and the consequences it has brought to the whole World.

## 1.6    Limitation of study

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[5]. Herzog, Chaim.*The Arab-Israeli Wars,*(Published in US by Random House,New York ,1982) p.323.

Arab-Israel conflict is a very vast topic if we trace it back right from its history and is very difficult to find out the actual facts regarding the boundary of Palestine(that was frequently changed by invasions) and Jews state within it. Besides, four major wars that have been fought because of conflict, War of Attrition(1967-70),two major invasion in Lebanon(1982,2006),many terrorists activities and the step by step peace process are the other important aspects in Arab- Israel conflict. But this study will not cover the entire history lying behind, detail of operations in the major wars, two major invasions over Lebanon, terrorist activities and the step by step peace process in detail. Specific area of the study will be limited from the rise of Ottoman Empire (1517) to the Yom Kippur war (1973) and the peace process in very brief. The degree of truthfulness will be limited to the various sources as internet, books available on the subject matters.

## 1.7    Methodology

This study will be mostly descriptive, explanatory and to some extent analytical as its conclusion. This study will be based on primary and secondary data and information. These materials will be collected from various books, journals, websites and libraries. Other information will be collected taking interview from political intellectuals and high ranking military personnel serving in the region during the conflict period.

## 1.8    Literature Review

Arab-Israel conflict is not a new conflict .It is one of the oldest and sensitive in issue in the World because of  which it was and is the centre of interests to even superpower nations.Since,the region contains the Suez Canal and much of World's oii producing nation it has also become a matter of high interest and concern from strategic and economic point of view to all the nations of the World.So,several books,journals,newspapers,articles have been found published since decade of time some supporting the existence of Jews in Palestine while others denying it.Hence,its very difficult to state as to which writer is true and which is at false.

Rao (1967) have studied the Arab-Israel conflict from the Ottoman Empire since 1517 after which he has clearly stated origin of the conflict with Balfour Declaration.He has defined this as mutually contradictory assurances held out to the Arabs by some of the

big Powers of the ,and the strategically important  position occupied by the area which have all added to the complexities of the problem.

Herzog (1983) hve explained struggle in the Middle East which transcends its local nature and its global implicationds for world peace;both from a military and political point of view and its direct bearing on the East-West confrontation .From a professional point of view he has described principal areas in the World of development and advances  in military science.From political point of view he has reflected the various trends and pressures bearing upon the vital oil production centre of the World.Besides,he has also described in detail the War of Attrition.

Rabinovich (2000) has provided a unique insight into the critical debate on the future of peace in the Middle East.He also examines the complete history of Arab-Israeli relations beginning in 1948 and then gives a vivid account of the peace processes.Besides,he also brings the conflict into this century ,widens the scope of his proposals for achieving normalized and peaceful Arab-Israeli relations.

Dershowitz (2003) has responded to Israelis vociferous opponents and explained why Israel,while not perfect ,is a country that has earned the right to exist and defend itself.He has also talked of legal basis for Jews as Israelis to live in Israel.

## 1.9    Organization of Study

The tentative plan of the study will be divided into following:

CHAPTER 1:          Introduction

CHAPTER 2:          Historical Background

CHAPTER 3:          Arab-Israel Conflict

CHAPTER 4:          Major Wars Fought

CHAPTER 5:          The War of Attrition

CHAPTER 6:          Summary, Conclusion & Recommendations

APPENDIX

REFERENCES

# CHAPTER - 2

# HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

## 2.1    History of Palestine

The history of Palestine is the account of events in the greater geographic area in the Southern Levant known as Palestine, which includes the West Bank and Gaza and the entire territory of the State of Israel. Historically "Palestine" referred to this whole territory. The name "Palestine," in the form of the Greek toponym *Palaistinê* which is derived from the Greek "Philistin" and is recorded in the work of the Ionian historian Herodotus, circa the 5th century BCE.[6] He uses it to denote all of the coastal land of the Mediterranean Sea, including Phoenicia, down to Egypt, the land originally inhabited by the Philistines. The term was first officially used to describe all the Land of Palestine ,Roman domination of the Hebrew nation. The Romans changed the region's name from Judaea in order to historically disconnect the Jews from their land as punishment for their rebellion against Roman imperialism. Jerusalem was also re-named to Aelia Capitolina, but this name change did not succeed.

## 2.1.1   Hebrew Bible Period

According to the tradition recorded in the Hebrew Bible's book of Genesis (composed in the 9th/10th centuries BCE), the Israelites descended from Abraham who is called a "wandering Aramean", whose family is associated with Aram-Naharaim, including the ancient places there such as Ur in Iraq, and Haran and Teran in Turkey.[7] After Abraham, the Israelites are said to descend through Isaac, born in the land of Israel, and then through their eponymous ancestor Jacob who is also known as Israel. Israel's sons married wives in the land of Canaan. The Bible also describes a famine time when the Israelites dwelled in Egypt, and following the Exodus returned from Egypt, back to Canaan, in some instances conquering cities of other ethnic groups there, and reclaiming the land God promised them.

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[6]. Lehmann,Clayton Miles.*'Palestine History*,' pp.135-337.
[7]. Amahai, Mazar. *Archaeology of the Land of Bible,*p.104.

### 2.1.2 Monarchy Period

The kingdom of Israel reached the height of its existence and included the most territory under the reign of King David (1000–961 BC). Its borders stretched far beyond present-day Israeli borders and included parts of what is now Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt.With the death of King Solomon around 925 BCE, the Israelites fell into civil war, and the kingdom split into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. The northern kingdom was far more wealthy and politically influential, but its monarchy was unstable with frequent intrigue and dynastic changes.

In the relative backwaters of the southern Kingdom of Judah, the Davidic Dynasty alone ruled Judah and its vicinities for centuries until the Persian Period, proving remarkably stable. Several factors contributed to the stability of the southern monarchy. Its kings made a frequent practice of ruling alongside a son in a period of coregency. Gradually, the kings centralized all religious authority to Jerusalem the capital city: to the Temple located next to the king's palace. Unlike El that was perceived as a universal deity in the north, Yhwh was perceived in the south as a patron deity of the nation of Israel, thus worship of other gods equated to treason.[8] Throughout the Davidic Dynasty of the Kingdom of Judah, religious loyalty and loyalty to the king consolidated.



Kingdom of Israel under the reign of King David(1000-961 BC)

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[8]. H.H.Ben-Sasson. *A History of the Jews People,*p.351.

### 2.1.3   Hellenistic Period

In the early 330s BCE, Alexander the Great conquered the region, beginning an important period of Hellenistic influence in Israel. After Alexander's death in 323 BCE, his empire was partitioned, and the competing Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires occupied various portions of the eastern Mediterranean, including different parts of Israel.

### 2.1.4   Roman Period

Following the Roman conquest in 63 BCE, parts of Israel—first a client kingdom of the Roman Empire, after year 6 CE the Iudaea Province—were in nearly constant revolt against Roman occupation .The Great Jewish Revolt began in 66 CE and resulted in the destruction of Jewish temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE.

### 2.1.5   Islamic Period

In 638 CE, the Christians of Jerusalem surrendered to the conquering armies of the Caliphate (Islamic Empire) under Caliph (Emperor) Umar.Umar allowed seventy families from Tiberias in Galilee to move to Jerusalem to live.[9]

### 2.1.6   Ottoman Period

In 1516 the Ottoman Turks occupied Palestine.The country became part of the Ottoman Empire. Constantinople appointed local governors. Public works, including the city walls, were rebuilt in Jerusalem by Suleiman the Magnificent in 1537. An area around Tiberias was given to Don Joseph Ha Nasi for a Jewish enclave. Following the expulsions from Spain, the Jewish population of Palestine rose to around 25% (includes non-Ottoman citizens) and regained its former stronghold of Eastern Galilee. That ended in 1660 when they were massacred at Safed and Jerusalem. During the reign of Dahar al Omar, Pasha of the Galilee, Jews from Ukraine began to resettle Tiberias.

Napoleon of France briefly waged war against the Ottoman Empire (allied then with Great Britain). His forces conquered and occupied cities in Palestine, but they were finally defeated and driven out by 1801. In 1799 Napoleon announced a plan to re-

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[9]. Kung,Hans.*Islam:Past, Present and Future,* pp.45-95.

establish a Jewish State in Palestine which was mostly to curry favour with Haim Farkhi the Jewish finance minister and adviser to the Pasha of Syria/Palestine. He was later assassinated and his brothers formed an army with Ottoman permission to conquer the Galilee. Turkish rule lasted until World War I.

Jewish immigration to Palestine, particularly to the "four sacred cities" (Jerusalem, Safed, Tiberias and Hebron) which already had significant Jewish communities, increased particularly towards the end of Ottoman rule; Jews of European origin lived mostly off donations from off-country, while many Sephardic Jews found themselves a trade.In the 1830s Egypt conquered Palestine and made some minor improvements and many Egyptians, in particular soldiers, settled there. In 1838 Palestine was given back to the Turks. However, with the advent of early Zionism, just prior to the outbreak of World War I in 1914, the Jews had become a small majority in the central Judea region. Many were not Ottoman citizens and were expelled to Egypt at the time that war was declared.

## 2.2    History of Jews

Jewish history is the history of the Jewish people, faith, and culture. Jewish history encompasses nearly four thousand years and hundreds of different populations.For the first two periods the history of the Jews is mainly that of the Fertile Crescent. It begins among those people who occupied the area lying between the Nile river on the one side and the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers on the other. Surrounded by ancient seats of culture in Egypt and Babylonia, by the deserts of Arabia, and by the highlands of Asia Minor, the land of Canaan (later known as Israel, then at various times Judah, Coele-Syria, Judea, Palestine, the Levant, and finally Israel again) was a meeting place of civilizations.[10] The land was traversed by old-established trade routes and possessed important harbours on the Gulf of Akaba and on the Mediterranean coast, the latter exposing it to the influence of other cultures of the Fertile Crescent.

Traditionally Jews around the world claim descent mostly from the ancient Israelites (also known as Hebrews), who settled in the land of Israel. The Israelites traced their common lineage to the biblical patriarch Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. Jewish tradition holds that the Israelites were the descendants of Jacob's twelve sons (one of

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[10]. Maurice Roumani,'*The Case of the Jews from Arab countries:A Neglected Issues,'* pp.26-27.

whom was named Judah), who settled in Egypt. In the Jewish tradition, the Israelites emigrated from Egypt to Canaan (the Exodus), led by the prophet Moses. This event marks the formation of the Israelites as a people, divided into twelve tribes named after Jacob's sons.

Jewish tradition and the Bible (Genesis through Malachi) tells that the Israelites wandered in the desert for forty one years after which they conquered Canaan under the command of Joshua, dividing the land among the twelve tribes. For a time, the twelve tribes were led by a series of rulers known as Judges. Afterwards, an Israelite monarchy was established under Saul, and continued under King David and Solomon. King David conquered Jerusalem (first a Canaanite, then a Jebusite town) and made it his capital.



Kingdom of Israel and Judah after the death of King Solomon

The kingdom of Israel reached the height of its existence and included the most territory under the reign of King David (1000–961 BC). Its borders stretched far beyond present-day Israeli borders and included parts of what is now Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt.After Solomon's reign the nation split into two kingdoms, Israel, consisting of ten of the tribes (in the north), and Judah, consisting of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin (in the south).Thus with the death of King Solomon around 925 BCE, the Israelites fell into

civil war, and the kingdom split into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. The northern kingdom was far more wealthy and politically influential, but its monarchy was unstable with frequent intrigue and dynastic changes Israel was conquered by the Assyrian ruler Shalmaneser V in the 8th century BCE. There is no commonly accepted historical record of those ten tribes, which are sometimes referred to as the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel.[11]

### 2.2.1    Babylonian Period

The kingdom of Judah was conquered by a Babylonian army in the early 6th century BCE. The Judahite elite was exiled to Babylon, but later at least a part of them returned to their homeland, led by prophets Ezra and Nehemiah, after the subsequent conquest of Babylonia by the Persians. Since Zoroastrianism was the state religion of the Persian Empire so Zoroastrianism has been an influence in the development of Judaism .

### 2.2.2    Hasmonean Period

The Persians were defeated by Alexander the Great. After his demise, and the division of Alexander's empire among his generals, the Seleucid Kingdom was formed. A deterioration of relations between hellenized Jews and religious Jews led the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes to impose decrees banning certain Jewish religious rites and traditions. Consequently, the orthodox Jews revolted under the leadership of the Hasmonean family, (also known as the Maccabees). This revolt eventually led to the formation of an independent Jewish kingdom, known as the Hasmonaean Dynasty, which lasted from 165 BCE to 63 BCE.[12] The Hasmonean Dynasty eventually disintegrated as a result of civil war between the sons of Salome Alexandra, Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II. The people, who did not want to be governed by a king but by theocratic clergy, made appeals in this spirit to the Roman authorities. A Roman campaign of conquest and annexation, led by Pompey, soon followed.

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[11]. *Ibid.*pp.35-37
[12]. *Ibid.*pp.45-48.

### 2.2.3　Roman Period

Judea under Roman rule was at first an independent Jewish kingdom first by the Hasmonaeans then by the Herodians, but gradually their power declined, until it came under the direct rule of Romans and renamed the *Iudaea Province*. The Romans were often callous and brutal in its treatment of its Jewish subjects. In 66 CE, the Jews began to revolt against the Roman rulers of Judea. The revolt was defeated by the future Roman emperors Vespasian and Titus. In the Siege of Jerusalem in 70 CE, the Romans destroyed much of the Temple in Jerusalem and, according to some accounts, plundered artifacts from the temple, such as the Menorah.

### 2.2.4　Islamic Period (Crusaders)

As part of the diaspora a large number of Jews had taken up residence in the Arabian peninsula, out of the control of the Roman state which, in both its pagan and Christian incarnations, persecuted them greatly. The History of the Jews under Muslim rule as at times as unstable as their history elsewhere: they were ejected from western Arabia shortly after the death of Muhammad in the mid-7th Century.[13] Despite such setbacks, the Jews controlled much of the commerce in Palestine and as dhimmi prospered despite certain restrictions against them. Culturally, the Jews continued to advance, and the niqqud seems to have been invented in Tiberias in the era of Islamic Caliphate. Preferring the benign discrimination of the Arabs to the outright slaughter frequently suffered under Christian rule, the Jews defended Jerusalem and Haifa against the Crusaders in 1099 during the First Crusade: failure, in this instance, meant massacre.

Jews were frequently massacred and exiled from various European countries. The persecution hit its first peak during the Crusades. In the First Crusade (1096) flourishing communities on the Rhine and the Danube were utterly destroyed. In the Second Crusade (1147) the Jews in France were subject to frequent massacres. The Jews were also subjected to attacks by the Shepherds' Crusades of 1251 and 1320. The Crusades were followed by expulsions, including in, 1290, the banishing of all English Jews; in 1396, 100,000 Jews were expelled from France; and, in 1421 thousands were expelled from Austria. Many of the expelled Jews fled to Poland.

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[13]. G.E.Grunebaum,*Eastern Jewry Under Islam,*'p.369.

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## 2.2.5 Ottoman Period

Jews lived in the geographic area of Asia Minor (modern Turkey, but more geographically either Anatolia or Asia Minor) for more than 2,400 years.For much of the Ottoman period, Turkey was a safe haven for Jews fleeing persecution.At the time of the Battle of Yarmuk when the Levant passed under Muslim Rule, thirty Jewish communities existed in Haifa, Sh'chem, Hebron, Ramleh, Gaza, Jerusalem, and many in the north. Safed became a spiritual centre for the Jews.The first Hebrew printing press, and the first printing in Western Asia began in 1577.Historian Martin Gilbert writes that in the 19th century the position of Jews worsened in Muslim countries.There was a massacre of Jews in Baghdad in 1828. In 1839, in the eastern Persian city of Meshed, a mob burst into the Jewish Quarter, burned the synagogue, and destroyed the Torah scrolls. It was only by forcible conversion that a massacre was averted. There was another massacre in Barfurush in 1867.



Muslim Ottoman Turks Empire 1680 AD

In 1840, the Jews of Damascus were falsely accused of having murdered a Christian monk and his Muslim servant and of having used their blood to bake Passover bread or Matza.[14] A Jewish barber was tortured until he "confessed"; two other Jews who

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[14]. Gilbert,Martin.*The Story of the Jews People,* pp.179-182.

were arrested died under torture, while a third converted to Islam to save his life. Throughout the 1860s, the Jews of Libya were subjected to what Gilbert calls punitive taxation. In 1864, around 500 Jews were killed in Marrakech and Fez in Morroco. In 1869, 18 Jews were killed in Tunis, and an Arab mob looted Jewish homes and stores, and burned synagogues, on Jerba Island. In 1875, 20 Jews were killed by a mob in Demnat, Morocco; elsewhere in Morocco, Jews were attacked and killed in the streets in broad daylight. In 1891, the leading Muslims in Jerusalem asked the Ottoman authorities in Constantinople to prohibit the entry of Jews arriving from Russia. In 1897, synagogues were ransacked and Jews were murdered in Tripolitania.

### 2.2.6    Zionism

During the 1870s and 1880 the Jewish population in Europe started to discuss more about immigrating to Israel and to establish a national home to the Jewish nation. In 1882 the first Zionistic settlement was founded - Rishon Le Zion, by immigrants whom belonged to the "Hovevei Zion" movement whom originated from the Russian empire.[15] The Zionist movement was founded officially after the Kattowitz convention (1884) and the World Zionist Congress (1897) and it was Theodor Herzl, which started the struggle to get the world superpowers to establish a state for the Jews. After the First World War, it seemed that the conditions for establish a state like this had arrived: The United Kingdom occupied the Palestine from the Ottoman Empire and the Jews got a promise for a "national home" from the British in the form of the Balfour Declaration of 1917 which was given to Chaim Weizmann.

In 1920 the British Mandate of Palestine started and the British had promised to create and foster a Jewish national home in Palestine. In the beginning, The pro-Jewish Herbert Samuel was appointed High Commissioner in Palestine, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem was establishment and several big Jewish immigration waves to Palestine occurred – the situation seemed to be going well. Nevertheless,the Arab inhabitants of the Palestine weren't fond of the Jewish immigration which increased and they began to oppose the Jewish settlement and the pro-Jewish policy of the British government by means of violent uprising and terror.Arab gangs began performing terror acts and murders on convoys and on the Jewish population. After the 1920 Arab riots and 1921 Jaffa riots,

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[15]. Morris,Benny.*A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict,* p.208.

the Jewish leadership in Palestine believed that the British had no desire to confront local Arab gangs over their attacks on Palestinian Jews. Realizing that they could not rely on the British administration for protection from these gangs, the Jewish leadership created the Haganah organization to protect their farms and Kibbutzim.Large riots occurred during the Arab massacres of 1929 and the 1936-1939 Arab revolt in Palestine.Due to the Arab violence the British gradually started to back track from the original idea of a Jewish state and started to speculate in a binational solution or an Arab state which would have a Jewish minority .Unable to solve the problem British turned to UN for the solution.

# CHAPTER - 3

# ARAB-ISRAEL CONFLICT

## 3.1     Pre –United Nations Era

Palestine, which had been part of the Ottoman Empire since 1517, came under the domination of Great Britain at the end of the First World War. The last years before 1914 had witnessed a growth of Arab national sentiment demanding the decentralization of the Ottoman State and the establishment of Arab autonomy.[16] When the Ottoman Empire entered the First World War on the side of the Central Powers, the British feared that the prestige of the Caliphate might be used in an attempt to raise all Islam against the Allies in a *Jihad* or Holy War. To meet this danger, negotiations were undertaken by the British with Hussein, the Sheriff and Emir of Mecca, who occupied a position of great prestige in the Arab World. In 1915, Sir Henry McMahon, British High Commissioner in Egypt, and Sheriff Hussein entered into an agreement for Arab co-operation against the Turks in return for certain British guarantees of Arab independence. In one of his letters Sheriff Hussein asked for British acknowledgement of Arab independence in the whole Arabian peninsula, except Aden, and roughly all of what is now Iraq, Israel, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. On 24 October 1915, Sir Henry McMahon replied delimiting the area in which Great Britain would agree to recognize Arab independence. While the Arabs claimed that Palestine had been included in the promise by the British for recognition of independence, Winston Churchill, then Secretary of State for Colonies asserted that "the whole of Palestine west of the Jordan was…excluded from Sir Henry McMahon's pledge". Sir Henry McMahon also declared later that he had meant to exclude Palestine from the terms of his pledge and had every reason to believe that Sheriff Hussein had understood this at the time of negotiations.[17] At the same time Zionist settlers also laid the foundations of modern urban development in Tel Aviv. Mean while, there were also secret exchanges between Great Britain and France, which culminated in the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 16 May 1916 under which the area between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf was divided into five distinct regions. Part of the area was to  under British control, part under French, part to be a British sphere of influence

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[16].  J.J. Zasloff,*Great Britain and Palestine*,1952,pp.1-2.
[17].  Cited in Philip P. Graves*,Palestine ,the land of Three Faiths*,1923,pp.53-54

and part a French sphere of influence, and Palestine was to fall into a special category, its special regime to be determined by agreement between Russia, France and Great Britain.

### 3.1.1    Balfour Declaration

This, for the Arabs, meant a complete negation of the understanding arrived at between Sherif Hussein and Sir Henry McMahon. What is more, besides this secret agreement, Great Britain also entered into a promise to the Zionists concerning the future of Palestine. Arthur James Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary, issued a statement of policy on 2 November 1917, which contained, what has been generally referred to as, the Balfour Declaration. This Declaration read:

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

The Principal Allied powers, especially the United States, endorsed this Declaration. Its terms were, however, vague and permitted conflicting interpretations. The British had insisted from the beginning that there was no case for creating a Jewish State or Commonwealth in Palestine at that time since 90 per cent of the inhabitants were Arab speaking peoples who demanded national status and self-determination. Even Lloyd George, who was Prime Minister at that time, acknowledged that the Balfour Declaration was prompted by "propagandist reasons."[18] Winston Churchill, as British Colonial Secretary, also denied in a white Paper, that the aim of the Declaration was to create a wholly Jewish Palestine .The Declaration, according to the White Paper, ,"did not contemplate that the Palestine as a whole should be converted into a Jewish National Home, but that such a Home should be founded in Palestine."[19] Zionists however insisted that the Declaration unequivocally recognized "the principle of recognizing Palestine as the national home of Jewish people". While the Zionists thus misrepresented the British undertaking, the Arabs feared that, what ever the verbal limitations continuous Jewish

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[18]. Testimony of Lloyd George before the Plestine Royal Commission of 1936,*Royal Commission Report*,Cmd.5479,1937,p.17.
[19]. Mahmoud Rousan,*Palestine and the Internationalization of Jerusalem*,1965,p.22.

immigration with its great economic strength must ultimately lead to the creation of a Jewish majority and the relegation of the Arabs to a subordinate place in Palestine. British policy to reconcile both was rebuffed by both.[20]

### 3.1.2 British Mandate for Palestine

In April 1920, the conference of the Allied Powers, in San Remo, Italy considered the fate of the disremembered Ottoman Empire. The Allied Supreme Council assigned the Mandate for Palestine to Great Britain, providing therein that the Mandatory should, inter alia, be responsible for implementing the Balfour Declaration. The Mandate was officially endorsed by the Council of the League of Nations on 24 July 1922 and entered into force on 29 September 1923. The Mandate received an official interpretation in the British statement of policy issued by Winston Churchill as Colonial Secretary in June 1922. It rejected the suggestion that the Arabic population, language or culture might be subordinated to that of the Zionist. The latter, however, were in Palestine "as of right and not on sufferance" and might exhibit their capacities in the "free development" of the national home" in order that it may become a centre in which the Jewish people as a whole may take…an interest and a pride".[21] While the Zionist organization accepted this interpretation, the Arabs rejected it and proclaimed a policy of non co-operation with the government so long as the latter adhered to the Balfour Declaration. An Arab delegation to London, elected in 1921, comprising Muslims and Christians, denounced the British Government as having placed itself "in the position of a partisan in Palestine of a certain policy which the Arab cannot accept because it means has extinction sooner or latter." In 1929, they demanded that "after 10 years of absolute colonial rule in Palestine", a democratic system of government should be granted "in accordance with the Covenant of the League of Nations and pledges and declarations made to the Arabs by the Allies."[22]

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[20]. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol.17,1963,pp.100-136.
[21]. *Ibid,* pp.140-155.
[22]. *Ibid.*

British Mandate for Palestine

Meanwhile the foundations of the Jewish national home were firmly established during the first years of the Mandate. From 1920 to 1929, the net immigration of Jews into Palestine amounted to 77,063.[23] Following serious Arab riots in 1929 on the matter of Jewish and Muslim rites concerning the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem a British Commission of Inquiry reported that Arab fears of Jewish immigration and Jewish land purchase had formed the fundamental cause of the riots and suggested closer control of Jewish immigration, and protection for the Arab peasants and tenants. These recommendations were accepted by the British in a white paper of May 1930. This provoked violent protests from the Zionists.

Following Hitler's rise to power, the wave of violent anti – Semitism which swept over Germany and Poland augmented Jewish immigration from central and Eastern Europe. Thus, while in 1931, Jews formed 17 percent of the population of Palestine, in 1940, it was about 30 percent. According to immigration statistics the total legal number of Jewish immigrants was 4,12,389, which was considered to be lower than the actual figures, since there was a large amount of clandestine Jewish immigration, estimated in the aggregate at 30,000 to 40,000 in 1939.

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[23]. *Ibid.*

### 3.1.3   Great Arab Revolt (1936–1939)

In the late 1920s and early 1930s several factions of Arab society became impatient with the internecine divisions and ineffectiveness of the Arab elite and engaged in grass-roots anti-British and anti-Zionist activism organized by groups such as the Young Men's Muslim Association.. The death of the preacher Shaykh Izz ad-Din al-Qassam at the hands of the British police near Jenin in November 1935 generated widespread outrage and huge crowds accompanied Qassam's body to his grave in Haifa. A few months later a spontaneous Arab national general strike broke out. This lasted until October 1936. During this period from 1936–1939, known as the Great Arab Revolt or the "Great Uprising", British forces, supported by 6,000 armed Jewish auxiliary police, suppressed the widespread riots with overwhelming force. This resulted in the deaths of 5,000 Palestinian Arabs and the wounding of 10,000. In total 10 percent of the adult male population was killed, wounded, imprisoned, or exiled. The Jewish population had 400 killed; the British 200. In another significant development during this time the British officer Charles Orde Wingate (who supported a Zionist revival for religious reasons) organized Special Night Squads composed of British soldiers and Haganah mercenaries, which "scored significant successes against the Arab rebels in the lower Galilee and in the Jezreel valley" by conducting raids on Arab villages. Significantly, from 1936 to 1945, while establishing collaborative security arrangements with the Jewish Agency ,the British confiscated 13,200 firearms from Arabs and 521 weapons from Jews.

The attacks on the Jewish population by Arabs had three lasting effects: First, they led to the further development of Jewish underground militias, primarily the Haganah ("The Defense"), which were to prove decisive in 1948. Secondly, the attacks solidified general sentiment that the two communities could not be reconciled, and the idea of partition was born. Thirdly, the British responded to Arab opposition with the White Paper of 1939, which severely restricted Jewish immigration. However, with the advent of World War II, even this reduced immigration quota was not reached. The White Paper policy also radicalized segments of the Jewish population, who after the war would no longer cooperate with the British.

### 3.1.4 The British Mandate administration and training of local Arabs and Jews

From 1936 onward the British government facilitated the training, arming, recruitment and funding of a range of security and intelligence forces in collaboration with the Jewish Agency. These included the *Guards* (*Notrim*), which were divided into the 6,000 to 14,000-strong Jewish Supernumerary Police, the élite and highly mobile 6,000–8,000 strong Jewish Settlement Police and the Special Night Squads, the forerunner of Britain's Special Air Service regiments. There was also an élite strike force known as the FOSH, or *Field Companies*, with around 1,500 members, which were replaced by the larger HISH or *Field Force* in 1939.

The British had enlisted 6,000 Palestinian Arabs during the Second World War and 1,700 Palestinian Arabs were recruited into the Trans-Jordanian Frontier Force or T.J.F.F. . In addition the British supplied officers, such as John Bagot Glubb Pasha for the Jordan's Arab Legion, and supplied the Egyptian army with trucks, rifles and airplanes. The British army therefore was intimately involved, ironically, in the training of both sides for the coming conflict.

### 3.1.5 Lord Peel Commission

The evolution to independence of a number of Arab countries in the region e.g. Iraq, Syria and Egypt, increased the tension in Palestine, the Arabs claiming independence and democratic self- government, the prohibition of transfer of Arabs lands to Jews, and the stoppage of Jewish immigration. These demands were, however, rejected. Armed bands of Arabs, thereupon, engaged British military detachments in battle and they were soon joined by Arabs from Syria and Iraq. The rulers and leaders of Iraq, Egypt and Saudi Arabia became actively interested in their cause. A Royal Commission appointed by the British government , with Lord Peel as its head reported in 1937, that the Arab and Jewish positions were irreconcilable and that the only hope of a solution lay in a partition of the country. The mandate should terminated as in Iraq and Syria, and great Britain should conclude treaties with and independent Arab state consisting of Transjordan and the hill country of Palestine , and the independent Jewish state ,consisting of the maritime plain and Galilee while Jerusalem and Bethlehem and a narrow corridor connecting them with the sea should remain mandated territory. A transitional period was foreseen. The British government endorsed the findings of the

commission .While one section of the Zionists was prepared to accept this scheme, at least as a temporary measures and with an extension of the area suggested for the Jewish state, the Arab rejected any scheme of partition.[24] The permanent, mandates commission also opposed the immediate creation of two new independent states. Various measures were, thereafter, adopted by the British government against the Arab leaders responsible for the resistance activities, but proved unsuccessful. Large parts of the country ,save a few Jewish settlements and the more important cities,came under the control of the Arabs.
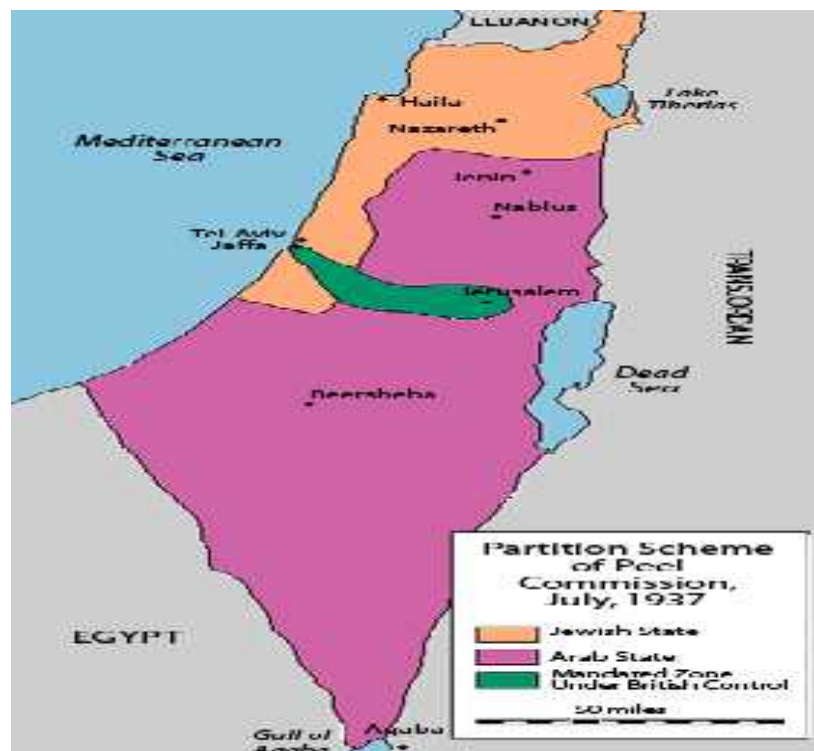


Partition Scheme of Peel Commission,July,1937

### 3.1.6   Sir John Woodhead Commission

Strong military reinforcements, however, succeeded by the spring of 1939, in putting down the worst of the rebellion. Mean while the Palestine partition  commission under sir John Woodhead had in November 1938 set out three possible principles on which partition might theoretically be effected with suggested  boundaries in each case, but had concluded by emphasizing the great political, economic and security objctions inherent in any conceivable scheme. By this time Hitler's first dismemberment of Czechoslovakia had brought Europe to the brink of a general war, and the British

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[24]. *Encyclopaedia Britannica,op.cit.,*p.*135.*

government, with its vital strategic communications and other interests in the middle east, could not contemplate the prospect of continuing, indeed growing, hostility in the Arab countries, which the axis was able to exploit on the Palestine issue. In the light of the Woodhead report, Great Britain decided that the creation independent Arab and Jewish states in Palestine was impracticable and that an effort should be made to promote a direct understanding between the Arabs and the Jews. With this end in view great Britain invited representatives of the Palestinian Arabs and of the neighboring Arab States on the one hand, and of the Jewish agency, on the other, to meet in London early in 1939.[25]

### 3.1.7   Macdonald White Paper

Since neither party was prepared to abate its extreme demands, the British government proposed its own solution in the Macdonald White Paper of May 1939. It asserted:

1.     that the Balfour declaration given in 1917 meant a "National home "for the Jews in Palestine and not a "Jewish State". This National Home, the White Paper explained, had already existed;

2.     that Jewish immigration to Palestine should therefore cease after admitting a further quota of 75,000 Jewish immigrants;

3.     that the inhabitants of Palestine, consisting at that time of 1,250,000 Arabs and 650,000 Jews, should enjoy self determination and become independent within a period of ten years.[26]

These British proposals did not satisfy either party, the reaction of the Zionists, to whom the paper was without any moral basic and "contrary to international law", being specially violent; and the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations, to which they now appealed, ruled by a majority of four to three that the White Paper was not in conformity with the Mandate. A decision by the Council of the League was, however, prevented by the outbreak of the war. While the Palestine Arabs, their extremist leaders being now in exile, maintained and innocuous neutrality in the World War II, the

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[25]. *Ibid.*

[26]. Mahmoud Rousan,*op.cit.,*p.23.

Zionist co-operated fully with the Allies, both because of their intense hatred of Nazi Germany and because of their desire to build up political credit with the allies.

### 3.1.8 Biltmore Program

In 1940 Ben Gurion went to the United States in his capacity as Chairman of the Zionist Executive and sought to impress on the Zionist organization of America the urgency of political campaigning, of formulating a political programme and mobilizing American Jewry(about 53 lakhs) toward its end. His plan was based on three things: opposition to the policy of the White Paper, the formation of a Jewish army, and the conversion of Palestine into a Jewish Commonwealth after the war. In May 1942, a congress of American Zionists unanimously endorsed the proposals, under the title of the Biltmore Program.[27] A fortnight after the end of the war in Europe, the Zionists requested the immediate acceptance by the British Government of the full Biltmore Program. Equal pressure was exerted on behalf of the Arab cause by the Muslim States of the Middle East. A protocol of 1943 establishing the Arab League consisting of Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Transjordan and Yemen outlined their attitude towards Palestine, declaring their support for the achievement of the legitimate aims and the protection of the just rights of the Palestine Arabs. The British Labor party, which had previously uncritically committed itself to Zionism, now came into power and realized Britain's vital interests in the Arab world. The Labour government endeavored, therefore, to gain the co-operation of the United States in reaching and carrying out a jointly agreed policy for Palestine, if possible one acceptable to both Jews and Arabs. The Zionists, thereupon, embarked on a Jewish Resistance Movement. Following British counter measures, the Jewish agency modified the Biltmore Program in favour of "a viable Jewish State in a adequate area of Palestine". The British having failed to bring about a compromise between the Jews and the Arabs, resolved to refer the Palestine problem to the United Nations.

### 3.2 Post –United Nations Era

On 2 April 1947,the United Kingdom asked that a a special sessiosn of the General Assembly be called to examine the question of Palestine,and to constitute and

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27. David Ben-Gurion,*Israel:Years of Challenge,*( Maariv Book Guild,Te1 Aviv,1963)p.18.

instruct a Special Committee to prepare for the cosideration of the of the question.[28]A special session was,thereupon,convened on 28 April.Certain other States including Egypt,Iraq,Syria,Lebanon and Saudi Arabia suggested to the General Committee of the Assembly the inclusion of an additional item on the agenda,namely,"the termination of the mandate over Palestine and the declaration of its independence,"to be considered along with the United Kingdom's proposal.The reasons put forward by the Arab States in support of their request clearly reflected their basic attitudes towards the Palestine question.They maintained that all that was necessary in Palestine was not setting up of a Committee but the application of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations,and the declaration of an independent Palestine along democratic lines with equal rights for all citizens.They also held the view that the problem of the Jews people was separate from the Palestine problem.[29]The Arab proposal was put to vote but was rejected by the General Committee.Efforts to raise the issue of putting the item on the agenda were again made in the General Assembly itself,but proved unsuccessful.

### 3.2.1 UN Partition Plan (1947)

On 29 November 1947 the United Nations General Assembly approved a plan, UN General Assembly Resolution 181, to resolve the Arab-Jewish conflict by partitioning Palestine into two states, one Jewish and one Arab. Each state would comprise three major sections, linked by extraterritorial crossroads; the Arab state would also have an enclave at Jaffa. With about 32% of the population, the Jews would get 56% of the territory, an area that then contained 499,000 Jews and 438,000 Palestinians, though this included the inhospitable Negev Desert in the south. The Palestinians would get 42% of the land, which then had a population of 818,000 Palestinians and 10,000 Jews. In consideration of its religious significance, the Jerusalem area, including Bethlehem, with 100,000 Jews and an equal number of Palestinians, was to become a Corpus Separatum, to be administered by the UN.

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[28]. *Year Book of the United Nations*,1946-47,pp.276-78.
[29]. *Ibid.*

UN Partition Plan 1947

Although some Jews criticized aspects of the plan, the resolution was welcomed by most of the Jewish population.The Jewish leadership accepted the partition plan as "the indispensable minimum," glad as they were with the international recognition. Arguing that the partition plan was unfair to the Arabs with regard to the population balance at that time, the representatives of the Palestinian Arabs and the Arab League firmly opposed the UN action and even rejected its authority to involve itself in the entire matter. They upheld "that the rule of Palestine should revert to its inhabitants, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations." According to Article 73 b of the Charter, the UN should develop self-government of the people in a territory under its administration.

### 3.2.2 Civil War in Mandatory Palestine (1947-48)

In the immediate aftermath of the United Nations' approval of the Partition Plan, the explosions of joy amongst the Jewish community were counter balanced by the expression of discontent amongst the Arab community. Soon thereafter, violence broke out and became more prevalent. Murders, reprisals, and counter-reprisals came one after

the other, killing dozens of victims on both sides in the process.During the period beginning in December 1947 and ending in January 1948, it was estimated that nearly 1,000 people were killed and 2,000 people were injured. By the end of March, the figure had risen to 2,000 dead and 4,000 wounded. These figures correspond to an average of more than 100 deaths and 200 casualties per week; in a population of 2,000,000.

From January onwards operations became more militaristic, with the intervention into Palestine of a number of Arab Liberation Army regiments who divided up around the different coastal towns and reinforced Galilee and Samaria. Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni came from Egypt with several hundred men of the Army of Holy War.Having recruited a few thousand volunteers, Al-Husayni organized the blockade of the 100,000 Jewish residents of Jerusalem. To counter this, the Yishuv authorities tried to supply the city with convoys of up to 100 armoured vehicles, but the operation became more and more impractical and more and more died in this process. By March, Al-Hussayni's tactic had paid off. Almost the entirety of Haganah's armoured vehicles had been destroyed, the blockade was in full operation, and hundreds of the Haganah members who tried to bring supplies to the city were killed. The situation for those who dwelt in the Jewish settlements in the highly-isolated Negev and northern Galilee was even more critical.Since the Jewish population was under strict orders obliging them to hold their dominions at all costs, the situation of insecurity across the country affected the Arab population more visibly. Up to 100,000 Palestinians, chiefly those from the upper classes, left the country to seek refuge abroad or in Samaria.

This situation caused the U.S. to retract their support for the Partition Plan, thus encouraging the Arab League to believe that the Palestinians, reinforced by the Arab Liberation Army, could put an end to the Partition plan. The British, on the other hand, decided on 7 February 1948 to support the annexation of the Arab part of Palestine by Transjordan.Although a certain level of doubt took hold amongst Yishuv supporters, their apparent defeats were due more to their wait-and-see policy than to weakness. Ben-Gurion reorganized the Haganah and made conscription obligatory. Every Jewish man and woman in the country had to receive military training. Due to funds gathered by Golda Meir from sympathizers in the United States, and assisted by Stalin's support for the Zionist cause at the time, the Jewish representatives of Palestine were able to sign very important armament contracts in the East. Other Haganah agents retrieved stockpiles

from the Second World War, which helped equip the army further. Operation Balak allowed arms and other equipment to be transported for the first time by the end of March.

The British had, at that time, essentially withdrawn their troops. The situation pushed the leaders of the neighbouring Arab states to intervene, but their preparation was not finalized, and they could not assemble forces that would be able to turn the tide of the war. The majority of Palestinian hopes lay with the Arab Legion of Transjordan's monarch, King Abdullah I, but he had no intention of creating a Palestinian-run state, instead hoping to annex as much of the territory of the British Mandate of Palestine as he could. He was playing a double-game, being just as much in contact with the Jewish authorities as with the Arab League.

On 14 May 1948, David Ben-Gurion declared the independence of the state of Israel, and the 1948 Palestine war entered its second phase, with the intervention of several Arab states' armies the following day.

### 3.2.3   Period From 1948-67

This was the formative period of the Arab-Israel conflict. The 1948 war which gave birth to both the state of Israel and the Arab-Israel conflict ended with a series of armistice agreements, not with a peace settlement. This fact has in recent years been the focus of a fierce debate in Israel among three schools of opinion: an orthodox, establishment-oriented, sometimes almost official historiography which blames this failure on the Arab world and its refusal to accept Israel's existence; a revisionist school which considers these critical years through a contemporary ideological prism, relying on several newly opened archives, primarily Israel's state archives, and which lays much of the blame on Israel and its leader, David Ben-Gurion, for refusing any sensible compromise or concession; and a further school of post-revisionists, also using newly available archival and other sources, which shuns both the apologetic tendency of the first historiography and the blunt revisionism of the second .[30]

This third group is interested less in allocating blame and discovering "missed opportunities" than in trying to understand the stalemate produced by the Arab-Israeli

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[30].  Shabtai Teveth,*Charging Israel with Original Sin,*(Commentry 88,Sept 3,1989) pp.24-33.

clash of interests and outlooks and in their asymmetries. Israel sustained heavy casualties in the 1948 war, believed that in the aftermath of the Holocaust the Jewish people was entitled to a secure homeland, and maintained that a belligerent force defeated in a war that it had itself initiated could not reasonably demand a reversal of its outcome.Israel was also guided by a genuine, existential insecurity and a fear that a "second round" might be initiated by its Arab adversaries, who had refused to accept the war's outcome and Israel's entrenchment in their midst. Under Ben-Gurion's leadership, Israel sought to stabilize the status quo, on the assumption that, once it had consolidated its existence and absorbed the postwar wave of Jewish refugees and immigrants, peace could be made on better terms a few years later. In a series of exploratory and then real peace negotiations conducted after the 1948 war, Israel offered some concessions, though not the ones demanded by its Arab interlocutors .[31]

From the Arab nationalist perspective, Israel was an illegitimate state that threatened the Arab world culturally and geopolitically. In the circumstances obtaining at the war's end, any concession that could possibly satisfy at least some of the Arabs was perceived by Israel's leaders as an existential threat. This state of affairs continued until June 1967, when Israel's victory in the Six-Day war gave it territorial assets that it could use as bargaining chips in peace negotiations. Until then, the conflict had lingered and festered. The limitations and shortcomings of the armistice agreements, friction over unresolved issues, the impact of radical ideologies espoused by certain Arab army officers on Arab politics, Israel's response to these developments, and the Soviet Union's influence in the region combined to shape a full-blown Arab-Israel conflict by the mid-1950s. This meant a virtual absence of normal contacts between Israel and the Arab world; a complete Arab boycott; border clashes; individual and organized group Arab violence against Israel and an Israeli policy to retaliate against both; a second Arab-Israel war in 1956 shaped by Israel's cooperation with Great Britain and France, two declining colonial powers, versus revolutionary pan-Arab nationalists; an arms race; and perennial fear of still more war .

Soon events and developments occurred that led to the crisis of May 1967 and the Six-Day War in June. One was the completion of Israel's overland water carrier, bringing

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[31]. Itamar Rabinovich,*The Road Not Taken,*(New York,1991) pp.10-20.

water from Lake Tiberius in the north to the more spacious but arid lands in the south, and the Arab decision to thwart a project designed to enhance Israel's absorptive capacity and thus consolidate its existence. A second was the return of the Palestinians and the Palestinian national movement to a directly active role in Middle Eastern politics with the emergence of various groups and organizations that subsequently assembled under the umbrella of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Third was the radicalization of Syrian politics under the Ba'ath Party's regime and the exacerbation of rivalries among various Arab states, particularly with regard to issues relating to Israel. Fourth was the intensification of Soviet-American rivalry in the region. And lastly there was a leadership crisis in Israel after David Ben-Gurion's second and final abdication in 1963.[32]

### 3.2.4    Period From 1967-73

Though the June 1967-73 war created a potential for a political settlement by gaining Israel new territorial assets, it also escalated the Arab-Israeli  conflict to hitherto unfamiliar levels. Right after the war, Israel indeed considered the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights as essentially, temporary holdings to be used in order to obtain a genuine peace, but as time went by and peace failed to come, the situation progressively acquired the trappings of permanency, and the temporary holdings were tied to Israel by a variety of bonds and vested interests. The West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which Jews considered parts of the historical Land of Israel and which had been parts of Mandate Palestine, were treated from the outset on an entirely different basis. Sovereignty over the West Bank and Gaza was, unlike that over the Sinai and the Golan, according to the Israeli interpretation at least, an open issue. Control over and title to these territories raised fundamental issues of security and identity-these were the lands of the Bible (much more so, in fact, than the coastal plains where most of Israel's population actually lived). Moreover, Israel's politics were altered by the powerful wave of messianic-mystical nationalism generated by Israel's acquisition of Judea and Samaria. (In the coded language of Israeli politics, the term "West Bank" is neutral but the biblical term "Judea and Samaria" expresses a claim to the heartland of Jewish history.) This wave was reinforced by the Israelis' unprecedented sense of power after their great and swift military victory, and their

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[32]. D.Dishon,*Middle East Record 1967 ,* (Maariv Book Guild,Tel Aviv ,1971)pp.183-204.

determination never to return to the vulnerable borders of the prewar period of to a trauma like the one they had endured in May 1967.[33]

The military might that Israel displayed in June 1967 convinced the Arabs that they could not reasonably hope to end the conflict through a military victory. The effect of the 1967 defeat was qualitatively different from that of the defeats in 1948 and 1956-Israel's swift and stunning victory could not be explained away by the Western powers' direct participation or be the decay of the old order in the Arab world, for though King Hussein was a traditional Arab monarch, the Nasserite regime in Egypt and the Ba'ath regime in Syria were paragons of revolutionary Arab nationalism.. But recommendation to draw yet another conclusion from the repeated failure to defeat Israel-to seek a political settlement based on a historic compromise-was not made.[34]

These Israeli and Arab frames of mind were chiefly responsible for the diplomatic stalemate over the next six years. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union hastened to rebuild and resupply the Egyptian and Syrian armies, while the United states supported Israel's insistence that its victory should lead to nothing less than a genuine settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The UN's lengthy deliberations in the summer and fall of 1967 ended with the adoption of Security Council Resolution 242, an epitome of "constructive ambiguity": it has served ever since as the basis or the several efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli dispute precisely because its careful formulation (along with the differences between the English, French, and Russian versions) and own interpretations.

After the June war, the relationship and balance between the Palestinian national movement and the Arab states changed, the latter losing power and prestige while the former seemed to offer new hope-of defeating Israel through a popular war of liberation, and infliction unfamiliar blows on it through a series of spectacular terrorist acts. In addition, the Palestinians built virtually independent territorial bases in Jordan and Lebanon, at the expense of these states' sovereignty. Authentic Palestinian organizations led by Yasser Arafat and the Fath took control of the PLO, ending the duality of the previous four years. Arafat became am important Arab leader, wielding influence in summit conferences and at other Arab meetings.[35]

In theory, some of these developments might have been the basis for an Israeli-Palestinian accommodation. Israel was in control of all of Mandate Palestine, but it was

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[33]. Amos Oz,*In the Land of Israel,*(London and New York,1983) pp.30-38.
[34]. Fouad Ajami,*The Arab Predicament,*(Cambridge ,1982) pp.65-78.
[35]. Helena Cobban,*The Palestine Liberation Organisation,* (Cambridge ,1984) pp.50-62.

not eager to add the Palestinian population of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank to its body politic. Palestinian leaders had the authority and credibility to make a compromise agreement that their predecessors had refused to consider. But accommodation and compromise remained only theoretical options. Israeli attachment to the West Bank intensified, while the PLO was carried away by its initial successes to an inflated view of its power and prospects . [36]

By the summer of 1970, it had become clear that the PLO's efforts to organize a popular uprising in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were unsuccessful. Still more significant, the Arab states' war of attrition against Israel had run its course, and Egypt's president, Gamal Abdul Nasser, responded positively to secretary of State William Rogers's "initiative" for a cease-fire. The PLO's radical wing fought a rearguard action against what it viewed as capitulation. Western airliners were hijacked to Cairo and Jordan. In Jordan this defiance triggered a final showdown between the Palestinians and the Hashemite regime. For three years, King Hussein had tolerated the gradual erosion of his authority and sovereignty in Jordan by a movement that enjoyed the support of both the Palestinian majority among his own subjects and the larger Arab world. In September 1970, the Palestinians overplayed their hand, humiliating him and his loyalists, but the Jordanian army crushed the Palestinian opposition and expelled the PLO's fighting units from Jordanian territory without incurring significant criticism from Nasser, who had just made his own truce with Israel. A halfhearted Syrian intervention ended ignominiously: Hafez al-Assad, commander of the Syrian air force, refused to commit his planes to what he regarded as a senseless adventure, and without air cover the Syrian armored column invading Jordan fell easy prey to Jordan's small air force and was forced to turn around.

In Israel a retrospective oily debate followed this episode. Henry Kissinger's chief partner on the Israeli side had been Yitzhak Rabin, who was serving as ambassador to Washington- a preparatory phase in his transition from a military care to a political one. He and the government of Prime Minister Golda Meir as a whole took pride in what they considered a clear demonstration of Israel's strategic value to the United States, its contribution to pragmatism and stability in the region, and the reinforcement of Israel's community of intersects with the Hashemite regime in Jordan. Curiously, the government's right-wing critics took exception to this latter point; in their view. Israel should have remained neutral in the Jordanian dispute and allowed the Palestinians to

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[36]. Shlomo Avineri,*Israel and the Palestinians,*(New York Times Company,New York,191) pp.80-92.

defeat the Hashemite regime and take over the Jordanian government, for they believed that, once the Palestinians had their own state in Jordan; Israel could press its claim to the West Bank. Thus the maxim "Jordan is Palestine." [37]

But his Israeli debate seemed almost academic. The successful conclusion of the Jordanian crisis, the end of the war of attrition, Nasser's subsequent death and the partnership and intimacy with the United States came binned to generate a feeling that the status quo could be indefinitely perpetuated. This, however, came from a false sense of complacency .[38]

The war launched in October 1973 by Egypt and Syria against Israel differed from those of 1948 and 1967. They did not go to war in support of the Palestinians or drift into it in an uncontrolled process of escalation. But the Sinai Peninsula for Egypt and the Golan Heights for Syria were parts of their national territories, and Israel's control of them seemed unbearable. The real driving force that planned and executed the war was Nasser's underestimated successor, Anwar al-Sadat. Sadat's new policy toward Israel was predicated on his underlying decision to liberalize Egypt's politics and economy and to reorient that nation from a Soviet to an American focus.Sadat relied on two partners. One was Syria's new ruler, Hafez al-Assad, who seized full power in his country in November 1970 after an internecine debate over Syria's debacle in Jordan two months earlier. Assad, a senior member of the Ba'ath régime since its inception in March 1963, headed its more pragmatic wing. He did not believe in the ill-defined notion of a "popular war of liberation" but advocated cooperation with other Arab states against Israel. When Sadat approached him in 1972, he agreed to join Egypt in a war coalition, though he did not share Sadat's concept of the war as a prelude to negotiations or relish Syria's junior-partner position. Sadat's other partner was the group of conservatively governed, oil-producing Arab states. By the early 1970s, the first signs of the "energy crisis" were visible, and the balance among the oil-producing national, the international oil companies, and the Western powers was shifting. Sadat knew that in launching war he could rely on the increasing political and economic power of Gulf Arabs .[39]

The PLO was not part of or privy to these preparations. Having been evicted from Jordan, it was busy build-ing a new territorial base in Lebanon. The weakness of the Lebanese state, the sympathy and support of several factions within Lebanon, and the

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[37]. Benjamin Netanyahu,*A Place among the Nations,*( New World Press,New York,1993),pp.343-45.
[38]. Ezer Weizman,*On Eagles' Wings,*( London,1976),pp.279-95.
[39]. Zeev Laqueur,*Confrontation ,*( London,1974),pp.25-48.

asking of other Arab governments earned it to build a "state within a state" their- with virtual control over Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut and in the south, autonomous political and operational headquarters in Beirut and an extensive infrastructure in southern Lebanon, which it could use as a base of operations against Israel.

### 3.2.5 Period From 1973-77

The October War of 1973 did indeed break the deadlock and opened the way to a lengthy, intermittent effort to convert the potential created by the 1967 Six-Day War into peace negotiations that would settle the Arab-Israeli conflict. The transition from violence to diplomacy was facilitated by the absence of a clear outcome to the war, which ended with Israeli troops on the Egyptian side of the Suez Canal, a hundred kilometers from Cairo, and also in Syrian territory, within artillery range of Damascus to the north. Only forceful intervention by the United States saved Egypt from a total military defeat. But Egypt did affect a successful crossing of the Suez Canal and managed to keep some troops inside the Sinai Peninsula. And Syria, before its troops were pushed back toward Damascus, had overrun the Golan Heights. Owing to an intelligence setback caused by political shortsightedness and a bureaucratic mind-set, Israel had been caught by surprise, and at first its armed forces performed poorly. Its recovery and subsequent performance were most impressive, but the meaning of the war's early phases could not be forgotten: the large number of causalities, the need for American recompiles, and therefore the collapse of an important element in strategic U.S.-Israeli cooperation-the belief that Israel could hold its own against any Arab coalition so long as the United States deterred the Soviet Union. Given the war's ambiguous outcome and the danger of resumed hostilities, the chief protagonists sought an accommodation, and their early agreements became the starting points for a new Arab-Israeli diplomacy led and driven by President Richard Nixon and Secretary of state Kissinger, whose sense of urgency derived from several sources: the energy crisis, the quadrupling of oil prices by Iran and the principal Arab oil-producing states (which clearly took advantage of the war to effect a change they had been planning for some time), and the danger of a confrontation with the Soviet Union if war broken out again.

Beyond these immediate considerations, additional forces were at work. The debacle and shock of the early days in the October War disabused many Israelis of the sense of power they had enjoyed ever since their victory in 1967 and paved the way for

significant changes in domestic politics and national-security policies. The full extent of this domestic change was manifested only in 1977, when the Labor movement, after fifty years of hegemony in prestate and independent Israel, lost power to the right-wing Likud alignment. But meanwhile a yearning for peace and a weariness with bloodshed provided public support for the concession made in foreign policy by Prime Minister Meir and her successor, Yitzhak Rabin, in 1974 and 1975.

The Arab states were buffeted by contradictory forces. The Egyptian and Syrian armies' initial success, and the swelling of Arab economic power and political influence, tilted many Arabs against the notion of a compromise with Israel. These were the years (1973-82) of the "Arab Decade" when the rest of the world sought Arab oil and money and Arabs could reasonably hope that as a result Israel's base of international support might be undermined, other Arabs were more caught by surprise, as it had been in 1973, with its military machine out of gear, what was the point of waiting for some prospective opportunity to fight it in the future? From that perspective, there was no value in a long-drawn-out effort to erode Israel's position when signification concessions might be obtained through diplomacy.[40]

After the October War, Sadat completed the move he had begun in 1972, when he expelled the Soviet Union's military advisers from Egypt, and placed his country squarely within the American orbit. Indeed, for Henry Kissinger, his partner in this transition, the Israeli-Arab peace process was not only a mechanism for preventing another war, for directing Arab-Israeli relations on the path of resolution, and for calming the Arab oil-producers, but also part of a strategy designed to facilitate precisely this shift of allegiance. And the success of that strategy was one of the United States' greatest achievements during the Cold War. But Kissinger's effort to apply the same rule to Syria met with only limited success. Assad concluded one agreement with Israel and began negotiating with Washington, but the refused to abandon his pro-Soviet orientation.

Kissinger's mediation efforts and the three accords they yielded- disengagement agreements between Israel and Egypt and then Syria in January and May 1974, and the Israeli-Egyptian interim agreement of September 1975-were referred to at the time as "step-by-step" diplomacy. As this implied, U.S. policy was to aim not for a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict but for a series of partial, interim agreements. The pessimistic presumption was that a comprehensive, final settlement that

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[40]. Moshe Dayan,*Break-through* ,(Viking Press, New York,1981) pp.78-95.

met Arab demands and expectations and also addressed Israel's needs and concerns was not feasible under prevailing circumstances. Though almost everyone paid lip service to the idea of a comprehensive settlement by coming to a brief Arab-Israeli peace conference held in Geneva under UN auspices in December 1973, this was an essentially ritualistic affair designed to placate the Soviet Union and Arab nationalist opinion, both of which resented Washington's control of the negotiations and its preference for partial bilateral agreements.[41]Syria boycotted this conference but was eager nonetheless to collaborate with the United States in negotiating a disengagement agreement with Israel. It was a protracted and arduous negotiation. Though Syria had fewer bargaining chips than Egypt, it was determined to obtain an equivalent agreement, and Assad bargained hard, reinforcing his diplomacy with a minor war of attrition. The agreement finally reached in May 1974 provided for Israel's withdrawal from the territory it had captured beyond the Golan Heights in October 1973 and from Quneitra, the provincial capital there. Like Sadat, Assad thus managed to win back a slice of territory his country had lost in 1967. But whereas in the Egyptian case the postwar disengagement agreement was only a step in a phased process, the Israel-Syrian agreement of May 1974 had no sequel.

In the early summer of 1974, it was clear that Israel and Egypt were ready for the next stage of their negotiations, but the substantive issues were compounded by a procedural problem. Sadat was willing to defy the Arab nationalist demand for a comprehensive agreement with Israel, but was not willing to go it alone. Syria had been Egypt's partner until now,but the idea of pairing the two again did not appeal to anyone;Assad had acquired the reputation of being a tough,meticulous negotiator, and the Golan Heights limited terrain offered limited choices.A short-lived effort was made to bring in Jordan :Kissinger's idea was to offer Jordan a bridgehead in the area of Jericho as a prelude to its getting back the West Bank.To Israel's new prime minister and to the Labor Party as a whole,Jordan was a preferable partner to the PLO in resolving the Palestine problem,but Rabin was not ready to make a bold move that would address this underlying issue in Israeli politics and public life,for though it might possibly provide a satisfactory solution it would certainly generate bitter controversies.This was not Rabin the mature statesman of the 1990s,but a political  novice still,entrusted with ultimate responsibility at a very difficult time.So Rabin rejected Kissinger's intiative.Shortly thereafter, the Arab states, in a consensus formulated in a summit conference at Rabat,

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[41]. Kissinger H.,*Years of Upheaval,*(New World Press,New York,1982), pp.747-98.

formally denied Jordan's claim to the West Bank and recognized the PLO as "the sole legitimate representative of the Palestine People" and as the rightful claimant to those parts of historic Palestine that Palestine that Israel might give up in future negotiations.[42]

Given this sequence of events, Egypt decided to go it alone in negotiations with Israel. After nearly a year of arduous work, an interim agreement over the Sinai Peninsula was signed: Egypt regained its oil fields there and the strategic Mitla and Gidi passes; a collateral U.S.-Israeli memorandum of understanding was also signed that advanced the two nations' strategic and diplomatic cooperation still further. The interim agreement represented the high point of Kissinger's "step-by-step" diplomacy, but it may also have marked its end. At least one additional phase might have been planned in the Sinai, but it was not at all clear that Sadat was able or willing to face an angry Arab chorus led by Syria. Kissinger showed his own ambivalence when he allowed a senior State Department official, Harold Saunders, to state in a congressional hearing in October 1975 that the Palestinian issue was "the core of the problem. "If this was indeed the case, there was only a limited value to negotiations that avoided it. In any event, the outbreak of civil war in Lebanon in 1975-76 and the Ford administration's preoccupation with the presidential election in November 1976 resulted in a virtual suspension of Middle Eastern diplomacy.[43]

### 3.2.6 Camp David Accords

In the late 1970s Egypt's military expenses caused it increasing economic hardship and social unrest, prompting Sadat to initiate negotiations with Israel in 1977. Sadat hoped to end the military buildup and regain the Sinai Peninsula. Israelis greeted Sadat's visit to Jerusalem enthusiastically. United States president Jimmy Carter facilitated the negotiations between Sadat and Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin. The agreements came to be known as the Camp David Accords after the Maryland retreat where Carter hosted some of the negotiations. Under the peace treaty signed in March 1979, Egypt regained the Sinai Peninsula, which was partially demilitarized; foreign observers were placed in the peninsula to maintain the treaty's provisions; and Israel and Egypt entered into normal diplomatic relations. For its part, Israel achieved peace with what had been its largest enemy at the cost of evacuating Israeli settlers from the Sinai

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[42]. Rabin,*Memoirs,*(Maariv Book Guild,Tel Aviv,1979), pp.253-300.
[43]. *Ibid,*pp.799-853.

and losing some investment in the area's infrastructure, such as roads and housing. The Camp David Accords, however, did nothing for Syria and only advanced the Palestinian cause in the vaguest of terms. For these reasons, the Arab League expelled Egypt and the rest of the Arab world widely condemned the accords. In 1981 Sadat was assassinated by a group of Islamic fundamentalists within the Egyptian army. Egypt continued to maintain relations with Israel after Sadat's death.

Following Camp David, Syria maintained its warlike posture and demanded the unconditional surrender of the Golan Heights, and the PLO continued its terrorist assaults on Israel. In 1982 Israel tried to wipe out the PLO by attacking its bases in Lebanon, which had been plunged into its own civil war in 1975. The assault on the PLO, which Israel called 'Operation Peace for Galilee', quickly escalated into ground battles in Lebanon and full-scale engagements between the Israeli and Syrian air forces. After a siege on Beirut the PLO leadership evacuated from Lebanon and relocated to Tunisia. Arabs were frustrated that Israel had occupied an Arab capital with little intervention from the rest of the world, and the Palestinians of the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip felt more isolated and abandoned than ever. Israel withdrew from most of Lebanon by 1985, though it continued to maintain a self-declared security zone inside Lebanon along the Israeli border until 2000.

### 3.2.7   Intifada, Oslo Accords And The  Peace Process

In the late 1980s Palestinians  began  the  intifada  (uprising),  a  widespread campaign against the continuing Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip and West Bank. The campaign combined elements of mass demonstrations, civil disobedience, riots, and terrorism. The intifada put the Israeli army on the defensive and forced them to devote significant resources to patrolling the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a police force. Along with Israeli civilian casualties, many soldiers, including civilian reservists, were injured or killed, and the army in turn often used brutal tactics against Palestinians.

As a result of the intifada,  pressure  grew  within  Israel  to  broaden  the  peace process. The opportunity to do so was provided in 1991 by the Persian Gulf War. In this war, a multinational coalition of Western and Arab armies expelled Iraq from Kuwait, which Iraq had invaded in 1990. One of the coalition's chief partners was the United States, a strong ally of Israel. Following the Western-Arab victory, the United States, along with its one-time enemy the USSR, pressed Arabs and Israelis to pursue peace in

the Madrid Conference of 1991. For the first time, all sides sat together to discuss bilateral and region-wide peace talks. Although little progress was made, the conference paved the way for future agreements. In 1993, while the official negotiating teams of the Palestinians and Israel were engaged in deadlocked negotiations in the United States, the two sides achieved a major breakthrough with the Oslo Accords, which were secretly negotiated in Oslo, Norway. In September 13 1993, Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, and Palestine Liberation Organization chairman Yasir Arafat, agreed to the signing of a historic peace accord. The accord paved the way for limited Palestinian self-rule in Israeli-occupied territories. The Oslo Accords and the resulting Declaration of Principles(DOP) set the stage for a gradual transfer of power to the Palestinians.[44]

Meanwhile, with the initial progress on the Palestinian issue, many Arab states felt freer to engage Israel openly and formally, though still with caution. On the heels of the 1993 agreements, Israel and Jordan took steps to negotiate a cooperative relationship. Despite opposition from other Arabs that Jordan's King Hussein, like Egypt's Sadat before him, was abandoning Palestinian interests in pursuit of a treaty with Israel, Hussein was undeterred. Jordan and Israel signed a peace agreement in 1994. By the mid-1990s Israel had also achieved diplomatic relations with Arab countries in North Africa and the Persian Gulf. In September 1995 the PLO and Israel signed a second peace accord, expanding limited Palestinian self-rule to almost all Palestinian towns and refugee camps in the West Bank. Under the agreements, 70 percent of the West Bank remained entirely under Israeli control. Only 30 percent of the land, comprising the major Palestinian cities, was to be under full Palestinian control. Israel maintained the right to send armed forces into Palestinian areas and control the areas between Palestinian enclaves.

The Oslo Accords envisioned an eventual two-state solution, in which Israel would be secure in its borders and Palestine would be recognized as a state. The PLO recognized Israel's right to exist and removed from its charter a clause calling for the elimination of the state of Israel. Disputed "final status" issues to be resolved by negotiations included the fixing of borders, the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes in Israel, the withdrawal of Israeli settlements from the West Bank and Gaza, and the prospect of a Palestinian capital in Jerusalem. Further agreements in 1994 and 1995 gave the Palestinians autonomy over most aspects of life in the Gaza Strip and in

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[44]. *Ibid.*

urban areas of the West Bank through a new administrative body, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). In the first elections for the PNA in 1996, PLO chairman Yasir Arafat was chosen as its president. Finally, the agreements stated that soon after these elections Israel would conduct further withdrawals from rural areas of the West Bank, after which talks addressing the final status of the Palestinian areas would begin.

Despite these accomplishments towards peace, some terrorism and bloodshed continued. Palestinians conducted terrorist attacks on Israeli citizens, and on a number of occasions Israeli extremists responded in kind. Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated in 1995 by an Israeli student opposed to the peace process. Under Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the peace process stalled in 1997. While Netanyahu completed some elements of the peace agreements, such as removing Israeli troops from the West Bank town of Hebron, some of his policies, including building Israeli settlements in Arab East Jerusalem, angered Palestinians and earned rebukes from many nations.[45] In October 1998 Netanyahu and Arafat signed an accord by which Israel would withdraw from additional West Bank territory in return for Palestinian security measures against terrorist attacks on Israel. The Palestinians also agreed to remove articles that called for Israel's destruction in their national charter.. In 1999 elections Netanyahu was defeated by Labor Party leader Ehud Barak, who vowed to move the peace process forward.

Negotiations between Barak and Arafat were encouraging at first, but foundered over expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the issue of how Israelis and Palestinians could share the city of Jerusalem. Despite the active participation of U.S. president Bill Clinton, the two sides were unable to come to agreement after marathon negotiating sessions held at Camp David, Maryland, in the summer of 2000. The failure generated bitter frustration among both Israelis and Palestinians. The volatile situation erupted in September with the outbreak of a second intifada (known as the Al Aqsa intifada, after the holy Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem). Palestinian militants resumed widespread resistance to Israel in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, along with a string of devastating terrorist attacks in Israel proper. At the same time, the Israeli army increased its restrictions on the Palestinian population and stepped up its military tactics. During the second intifada, loss of life was heavy on both sides and peace negotiations broke down. In the absence of meaningful diplomacy, the situation

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[45]. Itamar Rabinovich, *The Road Not Taken* (New York Times Company, New York, 1991),  pp.11-67.

was marked by increased use of force by the Israeli side and frequent suicide and ambush attacks by the Palestinian side.

In a February 2001 election Likud party leader Ariel Sharon defeated Barak and became prime minister of Israel. In late 2001 Sharon asserted that Arafat was either unwilling or unable to represent the Palestinian people adequately and was therefore irrelevant to the peace process. Sharon disengaged from the peace process and announced that Israel would withdraw unilaterally from the Gaza Strip. With mounting pressure from both Palestinian and Israeli extremist groups, the subsequent period was marked by pessimism and bitterness on both sides of the conflict.[46]In December 2001, in response to a surge in Palestinian suicide bombings in Israel, Israeli forces surrounded and severely damaged Arafat's compound in the West Bank town of Râm Allâh, also known as Ramallah. Israeli forces kept Arafat confined to the compound until he traveled to France for medical care shortly before his death there in November 2004. Arafat was succeeded as leader of the Palestinian National Authority by Mahmoud Abbas.

In September 2005 Israel evacuated Jewish settlers from the Gaza Strip after the Israeli parliament had approved Sharon's decision to unilaterally withdraw from the territory. Although Palestinians welcomed the departure, the PNA still sought a negotiated settlement with Israel over the future of the West Bank and Jerusalem.In November, Sharon called an election for the following March. He resigned from Likud and formed a new party called Kadima. In January 2006 Sharon suffered a stroke from which he failed to recover. He was succeeded in Kadima and as prime minister by Ehud Olmert. The peace process was thrown into turmoil by the Hamas victory in the Palestinian Legislative Assembly elections. Hamas refuses to recognize Israel's right to exist. As a result of the Hamas victory, international aid, upon which the PNA depended for its economic welfare, was restricted. Kadima's victory in the Israeli election failed to ease the crisis. Low-level skirmishes between Gaza-based militias and the Israeli forces erupted into a full-scale Israeli offensive in June when Hamas killed two Israeli soldiers and abducted a third in an incursion from the Gaza Strip into Israeli territory. From June to August 2006 more than 200 Palestinians were killed in the offensive that also saw the destruction of much of Gaza's infrastructure, with the Olmert government refusing to bargain for the release of the soldier.

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[46]. *Ibid.*

Then in July, on the northern border of Israel, the Iranian- and Syrian-backed terrorist group Hezbollah abducted two Israeli soldiers, killed several others, and shelled a number of communities. Israel responded by launching an attack on southern Lebanon, including air raids on Hezbollah strongholds as far north as southern Beirut, leading to the deaths of about 1,200 Lebanese civilians. The escalation of the crisis saw thousands of rockets launched daily into northern Israel by Hezbollah, causing the deaths of about 160 Israeli civilians, the disruption of Israel's economy, and the temporary flight or confinement in bomb shelters of roughly a million Israelis. The fighting caused tremendous damage to the infrastructure of southern Lebanon and some parts of Beirut, and left 1 million Lebanese homeless or displaced. By the time a ceasefire was agreed at the United Nations (UN) in August, more than 100 Israeli troops and some 500 Hezbollah insurgents had been killed in fierce fighting. The UN ceasefire resolution called for the withdrawal of both antagonists and for southern Lebanon to be occupied by the Lebanese army augmented by a UN force.

# CHAPTER - 4

# MAJOR WARS FOUGHT

## 4.1    Independence War(1948-49)

In the Arab-Israeli War of 1948-1949 Arab forces (including the armies of Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq as well as Palestinian guerrillas) had expected an easy victory over the small and isolated Jewish state, but despite heavy casualties Israel won.[47] Israel also increased the land under its control far beyond what it had been given by the Partition Plan. The region just west of the Jordan river known as the West Bank came under the control of Transjordan (which was renamed Jordan in 1949). Egypt gained control of the Gaza Strip, a small region bordering the southern end of Israel's Mediterranean coast. The demoralized Arab world was unwilling to accept the Israeli victory, and shortly after the war the Arabs began to regroup for more fighting. The war had also created a large population of Palestinian Arab refugees who fled Israel for camps maintained by the UN in neighboring Arab states. With the exception of Jordan, Arab countries generally refused to allow Palestinians to settle outside the camps or to be granted citizenship. As a result, the conflict between Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs continued to fester.

In 1949, Israel signed separate armistices with Egypt on 24 February, Lebanon on 23 March, Transjordan on 3 April, and Syria on 20 July. The new borders of Israel, as set by the agreements, encompassed about 78% of Mandatory Palestine as it stood after the independence of Jordan in 1946. Considering the original British Mandate (including Jordan, which was included within the Mandate in the summer of 1921, but excluded from the provisions for a Jewish National Home), however, Israel was created only on 18% of the total area of Palestine and Transjordan. This was about 50 percent more than the UN partition proposal allotted it. These cease-fire lines were known afterwards as the "Green Line".[48] The Gaza Strip and the West Bank were occupied by Egypt and Transjordan respectively. The United Nations Truce Supervision Organization(UNTSO)

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[47].  Lorch,N. *The Edge of the Sword:Israel's War of Independence,1947-1949* (Tel Aviv,1970), pp.55-69.
[48].  Rosenne,S.'*Israel's Armistice Agreements with the Arab States.A Juridicial Interpretation* (International Law Association, Tel Aviv, 1951), pp.10-17.

and Mixed Armistice Commissions were set up to monitor ceasefires, supervise the armistice agreements; to prevent isolated incidents from escalating and assist other UN peacekeeping operations in the region.

Independence War (1948)

### 4.1.1 War Summary

The Israeli nation had been forged in the heat of a bloody war. A heavily outnumbered populace had defended itself against seemingly overwhelming odds, losing in the process one percent of its population. Israel's victory was the result of the self sacrifice and determination of a people to fight for its existence. The spirit that animated the people and the courage it reflected were the function of a rare form of determined and leadership .The disadvantages under which the Israeli Army operated during the War of Independence-its weakness in manpower, its lack of modern weapons, and the necessity to fight on many fronts at the same time-evolved a military philosophy based on flexibility ,the use of surprise and innovation. Fighting by night became almost second nature to the Israeli forces, because darkness neutralised to a degree the advantages enjoyed by the Arab forces. Speed, commando-type operations, the use of outflanking manoeuvres-all of these combined to emphasize the character and mode of operation of the emerging Israeli armed forces.A rigid approach and over –dependence on higher command had no place in the Israeli forces.But on the contrary failure on the Arabs were due the fact that,when their set-piece attck encountered unexpected obstscles,the junior

leadership in the field was incapable of adapting itself rapidly enough to the changing circumstances of the battle.Above all,the inter-Arab bickering –plauged the Arab forces.While they all fought against the Israelis,they were inevitably looking over their shoulders at their allies in an atmosphere of mistrust.[49]

Besides,two large refugee problem were created as a result of the conflict,each encompassing approximately 800,000 persons:a Palestinian Arab refugee problem and a Jewish refugee problem,the latter created upon the establishment of the State of Israel when the Jewish population in the Arab countries were exiled from their countries.In the War of Independence the fate of Israel hung precariosly in the balance.
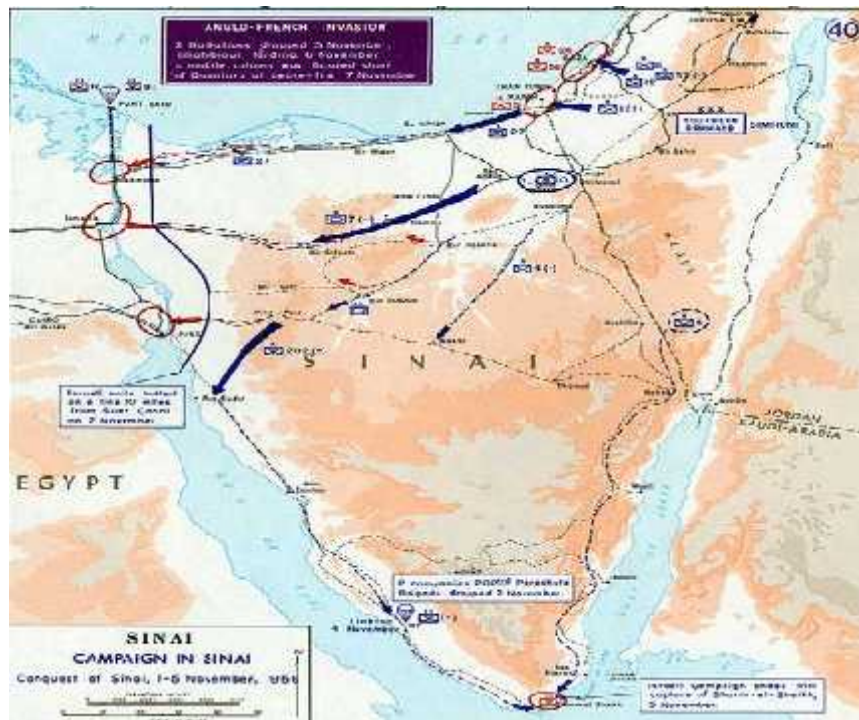
## 4.2    Sinai War (1956)

In the mid-1950s the Egyptian government began to support Palestinian guerrilla raids into Israel from the Gaza Strip. Egypt also refused to allow Israeli ships to use the Suez Canal and in 1951 blockaded the Strait of Tiran (Israel's access to the Red Sea), which Israel regarded as an "Act of War". The Suez crisis began as a result of the increasingly independent and assertive leadership role played by Egyptian prime minister (later president) Gamal Abdel Nasser. When he came to power in 1954, Nasser followed a pro-Western diplomatic course. He soon diverged from this path, however, emerging as a prominent figure in the Non Aligned Movement.In September 1955 Nasser arranged to purchase large amounts of Soviet weaponry from Czechoslovakia, a communist country; at the same time, he secured promises from the U.S. and British governments to help fund a huge construction project on the Nile River, the Asw n High Dam.

The U.S. secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, was not pleased by Nasser's simultaneous overtures toward an Eastern-bloc nation, and he successfully maneuvered to block the funding of the Asw n dam project. Nasser responded in July 1956 by nationalizing the Suez Canal, transferring ownership of the company that controlled the daily operations of the canal from its British and French owners to the Egyptian government. He declared that he would use the company's profits of $25 million per year as an alternative source of funding for the dam. Nasser defended this action by stating that the canal was Egyptian property, and he pledged to compensate the company's

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[49]. Chaim Herzog, *The Arab-Israeli Wars* (New York, 1982), pp.105-108.

shareholders and to keep the waterway open to the shipping of all nations (though Israel remained excluded under an earlier Egyptian policy).



Sinai War (1956)

The British and French governments found the prospect of losing control of the canal unacceptable, because the waterway provided a strategic conduit for huge amounts of oil shipped from the Middle East to Europe. Britain and France demanded that Nasser back down, and when diplomacy failed, they turned to Israel for a military ally. Israel at this time was already considering military action against Egypt. Since 1949 Egypt had forbidden the passage of Israeli ships and any ships carrying cargo to or from Israel through the Suez Canal. Since 1951 it had blockaded the Strait of Tiran at the mouth of the Gulf of Aqaba, completely cutting off Israeli access to the Red Sea[50]. Also, in previous years, guerrillas had staged numerous raids on Israel from the Egyptian-held Gaza Strip.

After several months of secret planning with Britain and France, Israel initiated what would be known as the Suez-Sinai War by invading the Sinai Peninsula on October 29, 1956. In one day, the Israeli forces swept across the Sinai to within a few miles of the

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[50]. Watt, D. *Documents on the Suez Crisis, 26 July to 6 November1956* (Royal Institute for International Affair, London, 1957),  pp.45-67.

Suez Canal. On October 30, as planned, Britain and France issued an ultimatum demanding that both Israeli and Egyptian forces withdraw from the Suez Canal so that a combined British and French military contingent could establish control along the length of the canal. Nasser refused to comply, and on October 31 British and French forces bombed Egyptian military bases, destroying much of the Egyptian air force on the ground. The Egyptian army in the Sinai was routed, and within a week the Israelis controlled almost the entire peninsula. British and French forces began to occupy the canal. In retaliation, Nasser ordered the sinking of 40 ships in the Suez Canal, effectively blocking the waterway.

The United States and the USSR were both caught off guard by these developments, since their attention had been focused on the anti-Communist uprising underway since late October in Hungary. Both superpowers demanded an immediate cease-fire along the canal. Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev threatened to use long-range rockets in support of the Egyptian army, while the U.S. government vowed to block all further oil shipments from South America to Europe. This combined pressure, coupled with a strongly worded cease-fire resolution rushed through the UN with the support of both superpowers, forced the British, French, and Israeli governments to relent. They withdrew their forces and agreed to the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force in the canal zone. By the end of December 1956, therefore, the Suez Canal and the Sinai Peninsula had been restored to Egyptian control, and Nasser emerged as an Arab nationalist hero. While Israel was not granted access to the Suez Canal, it did regain free use of the Strait of Tiran in return for withdrawing from the Gaza Strip in early 1957.

The long-term significance of this crisis was threefold. First, it gave a graphic example of the newly assertive attitude animating many so-called Third World nations, which would no longer be content to follow the demands of their former colonial masters. Second, it showed that the two Cold War superpowers would intervene decisively— despite their ideological rivalry—to curb what they perceived as dangerous and unnecessary conflicts among third parties. Finally, it demonstrated that the UN could act effectively in those instances when the United States and the USSR pursued the same goal and ceased to block its initiatives from within.

### 4.2.1 War Summary

The Sinai Campaign was in many ways classic.[51] The opening phase was a brilliant application of the strategy of the indirect approach. Captain Sir Basil Liddell Hart, who coined this strategy, characterized the opening moves in the Sinai as one of the most brilliant applications of such an approach in the history of warfare — he considered the Sinai plan to have been 'a work of art'. It was also the first opportunity accorded to the Israel Defence Forces to prove that what it had built since the War of Independence was an effective fighting force retaining the originality of movement and thought that had prevailed in the Israeli forces as they fought for the establishment of Israel in 1948-49. A marked degree of flexibility also characterized the main decisions in battle, with commanders proving themselves capable of adapting rapidly to changing conditions. This was particularly evident in the manner in which the task forces of the 7th Armoured Brigade were handled during the breakthrough at Abu Ageila. The Israeli reserve system, which had mobilized the Army for operations against Egypt in Sinai and had yet managed to keep the objectives of the operation secret, had proved itself. Israel succeeded at the same time in maintaining command of the air, before it became evident to the Egyptians that the British and French air forces were likely to become involved. But perhaps the most important point to note was that the tradition established in the War of Independence — whereby the officers invariably led and set a personal example in battle — was implemented in this campaign. A very high percentage of the casualties were incurred by the officers and NCOs and, in all phases of the battle, senior officers were to be seen leading their men under fire.

The Egyptians, who by and large had suffered many reverses during the operations against the Israelis, could maintain that they had not been defeated by the Israelis because they had been obliged to withdraw under the Anglo-French threat. Indeed, Nasser's stand against the onslaught gained for him considerable political prestige, which he portrayed as a highly successful outcome in the final analysis of the war.

The Sinai Campaign also marked the inauguration of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF I) for peace-keeping purposes. For ten years, the Force performed a valuable task. The failure in 1967 was not that of the force on the ground, but rather that of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and of that organization itself.

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[51]. Faber & Faber, *The Sinai Campaign 1956* (London, 1972), pp.10-95.

A new and important element, which was to become part of the Middle East scene, had been introduced.[52]

## 4.3    Six Day War (1967)

The period following the Sinai Campaign in 1956 was one of comparative quiet along the Israel-Egypt border, both along the Gaza Strip and the international border in the Sinai, largely because of the United Nations presence. However, this situation did not necessarily mean that the Middle East was quiet and had achieved a period of calm. The contrary was true.

Within a year of the conclusion of hostilities and the withdrawal of Israel from the areas occupied in 1956, a series of almost continuous upheavals in the Arab world began. A weak revolutionary regime led by General Abdul Karim Kassem in Iraq enabled the Soviet Union to achieve its first foothold in that oil-rich state and make its first moves in attempting to establish a position on the Persian Gulf. President Nasser continued to foment unrest in many parts of the Arab world, primarily at that time in Lebanon and Jordan. As a result of these activities, a civil war broke out in Lebanon and, at the urgent invitation of President Chamoun of Lebanon, the United States Sixth Fleet landed a force of marines in Lebanon to stabilize the situation and protect the regime, while the British Army flew forces across Israel (with Israel's approval) to Amman in order to bolster King Hussein's regime. In February of the same year, following the rise to power of the Baath Party in Syria, Egypt and Syria had united to establish the 'United Arab Republic' with two regions, a northern one in Syria and a southern one in Egypt. Syria thereby became the northern centre for the development of Nasser's activities against Israel, for he was hampered in this respect along the Israel-Egyptian frontier by the presence of UN troops.

From Syria, Nasser also developed his efforts to bring about the downfall of the Hashemite monarchy in Jordan and, in September 1960, his agents succeeded in killing the Jordanian Prime Minister, Hazza al-Majali, who had taken a strong stand against Nasser. After a few years of smarting under what was in effect Egyptian occupation, with Field-Marshal Abd el Hakim Amer acting as Nasser's Pro-Consul in Syria, the Syrians revolted against the Egyptians in October 1961, and Syria became once more an independent nation.

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[52]. Chaim Herzog, *The Arab-Israeli Wars* (Published in US Random House, New York, 1982), pp.141.

In 1964, an Arab Summit Conference in Cairo attended by the heads of state decided as a matter of policy to proceed actively with the diversion of the waters of the River Jordan; at the same Conference it was decided to set up a Palestinian movement, which would be known as the 'Palestine Liberation Organization'. At this Conference, and at the Casablanca Conference that followed it, some £400 million ($1,100 million) was allocated for the purpose of implementing these decisions. In recognizing the Palestinian movement, the Arab states gave official standing to Ahmed Shukeiri, head of the PLO and, following the decisions of the Conference, he proceeded with the establishment of a Palestinian Army.

In 1965, the PLO was formally established at a Conference in Jerusalem, and the Palestine Covenant, which became the political basis for the movement, was enunciated. It was to be amended in 1968 so as to include in its objectives not only the State of Israel, but also implicitly King Hussein's Jordan. Indeed, the policy of the PLO was to unwilling accept any compromise then or later in regard to those sections of the Palestine Covenant calling for the destruction of the State of Israel and endeavour to create a situation along the Israeli border that would draw the Arab states into a war against Israel. This policy did not always accord with that of the Arab states and, consequently, the PLO was restrained from time to time by them. However, the Syrian Government soon 'adopted' the PLO, a development that enabled this organization to grow and become a major factor.

The work on the diversion of the Jordan waters proceeded apace both in Lebanon and in Syria, where a canal was dug to divert the waters of the Hazbani in Lebanon and the Banias in Syria into the River Yarmuk in Jordan, thus depriving Israel of two-thirds of the water in the Jordan. Israel had on many occasions declared that the closing of the Straits of Tiran or the diversion of the Jordan waters would themselves be considered "Acts of War." Israel reacted to the diversion operations with a series of engagements in which long-range artillery and tank fire was directed against the diversion works, obstructing the progress on the canal construction. In November 1964, Israeli aircraft were sent into action against those sectors of the diversion works that were out of artillery range. However, the Arab states were unwilling to be drawn into an all-out war as a result of this Syrian initiative; indeed, Israel's activities ultimately brought the work to a halt, for it became clear to the Syrian leadership that pursuit of the diversion ultimately must mean war with Israel, for which the Arab leadership was showing little enthusiasm.[53]

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[53]. *Ibid.*pp.145-147.

### 4.3.1 Introduction

Israel and its Arab neighbors had been hostile toward each other since 1948, when Israel became a nation in an area that Palestinian Arabs claim as their homeland. After Israel declared its statehood, several Arab states and Palestinian groups immediately attacked Israel, only to be driven back. In 1956 Israel overran Egypt in the Suez-Sinai War. Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser vowed to avenge Arab losses and press the cause of Palestinian nationalism. To this end, he organized an alliance of Arab states surrounding Israel and mobilized for war. Israel pre-empted the invasion with its own attack on June 5, 1967. In the following days, Israel drove Arab armies from the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza Strip, West Bank, and Golan Heights, all of which it then occupied. Israel also reunited Jerusalem, the eastern half of which Jordan had controlled since the 1948-1949 war. The Six-Day War was viewed as an enormous victory for Israel, but the territories it gained did not stop future fighting. The peace process throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s has in large part been an attempt to resolve the land disputes created by Israel's military success.

### 4.3.2 Causes of War

In the years before the Six-Day War, the Arab countries continually refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the Jewish state, and Arab nationalists led by Nasser called for the destruction of Israel. Egypt and Jordan supported Palestinian *fedayeen* (guerrillas), who attacked troops and civilians in Israeli territory, then retreated to the Egyptian-controlled Gaza Strip or the Jordanian-controlled West Bank. From its Golan Heights region, Syria regularly shelled Israeli farms. For its part, Israel refused to accept Jordan's control of Jewish holy places in East Jerusalem. Israel also kept tensions high by responding to Arab incursions with reprisals on Arab territory.

In April 1967, after Syria heavily shelled Israeli villages from the Golan Heights, Israel and Syria engaged in aerial clashes. Israel shot down six of Syria's MiG fighter planes, which were given by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Israel warned Syria against future attacks, and both the Syrians and Soviets were alarmed by the warning. Syria appealed to Nasser for backing, and in mid-May the Egyptian army moved 100,000 troops and 1000 tanks into the Sinai Peninsula on Israel's southern border. The United Nations (UN) had earlier stationed forces in the area as observers, but on May 17,

Nasser called for the removal of UN personnel from several locations. Within days, all of the observers were removed. On May 22 Nasser announced the closure of the Strait of Tiran, a vital shipping corridor for Israel with links to the Red Sea and major sources of petroleum. A similar closure of the strait had been a major cause of the Suez Crisis in 1956; Israel had made clear since then that it would regard another closure as an act of war. Israel was further alarmed when Egypt and Jordan signed a treaty placing the two armies under a joint command. Despite a flurry of diplomatic effort, war seemed inevitable

### 4.3.3   The War Begins

Because Israel feared fighting on three fronts (Egyptian, Jordanian, and Syrian), and because it preferred that fighting take place in Arab rather than Israeli territory, Israel decided to strike first. On the morning of June 5 the Israeli air force attacked Egypt, the largest force in the region. The timing of the attack, 8:45 AM, was designed to catch the maximum number of Egyptian aircraft on the ground and to come when the Egyptian high command was stuck in traffic between homes and military bases. The Israeli aircraft took evasive measures to elude Egyptian radar and approached from directions that were not anticipated. The surprise was complete. Within hours of the strike, the Israelis, who focused their attacks on military and air bases, had destroyed 309 of the 340 total combat aircraft belonging to the Egyptians.[54] Israeli ground forces then moved into the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip, where they fought Egyptian units. Egyptian casualties were heavy, but Israel suffered only minimal casualties. War was not far behind on Israel's eastern front. Israel had conveyed a message to King Hussein of Jordan asking him to stay out of the conflict, but on the first morning of the war Nasser called Hussein and encouraged him to fight. Nasser reportedly told Hussein that Egypt had been victorious in the morning's fighting—an illusion the Egyptian public believed for several days. At 11:00 AM Jordanian troops attacked the Israeli half of Jerusalem with mortars and gunfire and shelled targets in the Israeli interior. Israel's air force, having immobilized the Egyptian air force, turned its attention to Jordan. By evening, the Jordanian air force had been largely destroyed, again with minimal Israeli casualties. At midnight Israeli ground forces attacked Jordanian troops in Jerusalem, and by the morning of June 6, Israeli troops had nearly encircled the city.

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[54]. Blanchard, A.*The Six-Day War* (Army, August, 1967), pp.24-33.

On the second day of the war the Israeli air force continued its operations against Arab air bases, raising the total number of destroyed Arab planes to 416, which included more than two-thirds of the Syrian air force.[55] With nearly total control of the skies, Israeli fighter planes and bombers were free to support the tank and infantry forces on the ground. Thus Jordanian reinforcements were prevented from reaching Jerusalem, and by 10:00 AM on June 6 the Israelis had taken the Western Wall, also known as the Wailing Wall, in the Old City, the holiest site in Judaism. It was the first time in nearly 2000 years that Jews had controlled the wall. Ground battles continued in the Sinai, where Egypt's armies fell back in the face of Israeli advances. On the third day of the war, June 7, Jordanian forces were pushed from the West Bank across the Jordan River. The UN arranged a cease-fire between Israel and Jordan that went into effect that evening.



Six Days War(1967)

The following day, June 8, Israeli forces reached the Suez Canal. As artillery battles continued along the front, the Israeli air force decimated retreating Egyptians, who were backed up on the few roads through desert mountain passes. As the Sinai shifted to Israeli control, Israel turned its forces toward the Golan Heights. There, on June 9, Israel

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[55]. Dawson,J. *The Air War in the Middle EasIt* (Air Force and Space Digest, August 1967), pp.26-29.

began a difficult assault up steep terrain against entrenched Syrian forces. Israel sent an armored corps into the front of Syrian lines while infantry forces surrounded the Syrian positions. The balance of power soon shifted to Israel's favor, and at 6:30 PM on June 10, Israel and Syria made a cease-fire agreement. Israel controlled all of the Golan Heights, including parts of Mount Hermon. Fighting between Israel and Egypt did not formally end for many years, although Israel controlled the Sinai Peninsula. Not until the 1979 Camp David Accords did the two countries finally reach peace.

### 4.3.4   War Summary

Following the Six   Day War, the strategic situation of   Israel had changed radically-for the first time in its history,Israel had the benefit of defence in depth.In the south Sinai Desert acted as a buffer.The Israeli control of the West Bank down to the River Jordon moved potentially hostile forces from the coastal strip and narrow 'waistline'of the Israel and the areas surrounding the city of Jerusalem,and created an additional buffer for Israel's defences.In the north ,the threat now posed was that of Israeli artillery and armour towards Damascus,as opposed to the situation hitherto of a Syrian threat against northern Galilee in Israel.Cards were now placed in Israel's hands,in the form the territories that had been used as a jumping-off ground for attack on Israel,which it was believed,if  played correctly ,could open the way to negotiations for peace.

The speed and scope of Israel's victory were devastating to the Arabs, who had expected victory. Egypt, Jordan, and Syria lost almost all of their air forces and much of their armed weaponry.[56] About 10,000 Egyptians were killed in Sinai and Gaza alone, compared with 300 Israeli casualties on that front. In all, Egypt lost about 11,000 troops, Jordan lost about 6000, Syria lost about 1000, and Israel lost 700. As a result, Arab leaders endured unpopularity at home while Israel's government, which had united before and during the war, surged in popularity. Abroad, the USSR, which had strongly supported the Arab powers, was embarrassed because the Arab nations had been defeated by an ally of the United States and Soviet weapons systems had failed to overpower Western weapons. Israel moved to secure  its position  in  the Occupied Territories by extending its lines of defense to the boundaries of the Arab states. The Sinai, West Bank,

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[56]. Lewis,B. *The Arab-Israeli War:The Consequences of Defeat* (Foreign Affair, January, 1968),  pp.321-335.

and Golan Heights were all fortified, and parts of these areas were lightly settled with Jewish Israelis

On November 22 the UN passed Resolution 242, which called for Israel to withdraw from the Occupied Territories; in return Arab states would recognize Israel's independence and guarantee secure borders for Israel. Events, however, did not follow Resolution 242. The Arabs and Palestinians declared their intention to continue fighting Israel, and Israel refused to return the Occupied Territories under such conditions. Terrorist attacks and reprisals persisted, and Israel and Egypt continued to engage in artillery, sniper, and occasional air attacks for several years. As a result, the Six-Day War was followed by what has come to be known as the War of Attrition[57]. Although cease-fire agreements eventually ended this situation, the region remained volatile. When Israel announced its intent to secure Jerusalem as its undivided and eternal capital, further antagonizing the Arab states. These disagreements eventually led to the Arab-Israeli War of 1973. Nonetheless, Resolution 242, which followed the Six-Day War, created the foundation of the peace process that began to yield results in the late 1970s.

## 4.4    The Yom Kippur/ Ramadan /October War (1973)

### 4.4.1   Introduction

Arab-Israeli War of 1973, armed conflict between Israel and the Arab countries of Egypt and Syria, was fought during the month of October 1973. Egypt and Syria initiated the conflict to regain territories that Israel had occupied since the Six-Day War of 1967. Although both sides suffered heavy losses during the 1973 war, Israel retained control of the territories. Because the conflict began on the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur and took place during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, the war is also called the Yom Kippur War by Israelis and the Ramadan War or the October War by Arabs. Although it brought about no significant changes to territorial boundaries, the 1973 war and its aftermath had far-ranging effects on the participant nations and their relations with world superpowers.[58] Egypt moved steadily away from USSR, which had provided military and economic aid to Egypt since the 1950s, and into a closer relationship with the United States. Syria emerged from the war as the staunchest defender of Arab rights and

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[57]. Kotsch,W. *The Six Day War of 1967* (US Naval Institute Proceeding, June, 1968), pp.72-81

[58]. Zmora, *October Earthquake,* (Tel Aviv, 1974), pp.110-145.

the closest Middle Eastern ally of the USSR. In Israel, the war increased criticism of the country's leaders, who eventually resigned. Finally, the war signaled an increased commitment by the United States to negotiate and guarantee Arab-Israeli agreements. Such agreements would center on the return of Israeli-held lands to Arab control, in exchange for Arab recognition of Israel and security guarantees.

### 4.4.2  Causes of War

The long-standing conflict between Jews and Arabs over control of historic Palestine had resulted in wars in 1948, 1956, and 1967. The Arab opposition to the Jewish state of Israel included neighboring Arab states and, after 1964, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), a political body working to create a state for Palestinian Arabs. In the Six-Day War of 1967, Israel gained control of the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip, previously controlled by Egypt; the Golan Heights, formerly belonging to Syria; and the West Bank and East Jerusalem, formerly administered by Jordan. Later that year, the United Nations adopted a resolution calling for Israeli withdrawal from these areas in exchange for Arab recognition of Israel's independence and security. However, neither side met these conditions, and cross-border attacks and reprisals continued. In 1969 Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser launched a campaign on the Suez Canal (an artificial waterway between the Sinai Peninsula and the Egyptian mainland) known as the War of Attrition.[59] The conflict, which did not escalate into a full-scale war, ended with a U.S.-brokered cease-fire in 1970. In the early 1970s Nasser's successor, Anwar al-Sadat, pushed for Israeli withdrawal through diplomatic means, while simultaneously preparing Egypt's military for war. Each year the UN passed resolutions calling for Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories. Israel refused to withdraw, and the United States suffered criticism from the international community for its support of Israel.

Neither the United States nor Israel believed that Arab forces could challenge Israel's proven military power. The USSR, which had supported the Arab nations during previous wars with Israel and had resupplied Egypt militarily, knew that Egypt was preparing for war, but underestimated Sadat's commitment to use a military option against Israel. Furthermore, neither Washington nor Moscow was fully aware of the profound differences in policy between the Egyptian and Syrian leaders. Although the

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[59]. *Ibid,*pp.150-155.

ultimate goal for both leaders was to regain their territories from Israel, Sadat was willing to combine military means with the initiation of a diplomatic process, whereas Syrian president Hafez al-Assad did not want to sign any agreement with Israel that might recognize Israel's legitimacy. Sadat, unlike Assad, also was willing to orient Egypt's foreign policy away from the USSR and toward the United States. With mounting economic pressures at home, Sadat believed that the United States, rather than the USSR, would help Egypt more in the long term. Despite these differences, mutual frustration and impatience with the diplomatic status quo led Sadat and Assad to plan an attack in collusion. Because the two Arab leaders were focused more on their own particular national interests, rather than on other Arab-Israeli issues such as the future of the West Bank and Jerusalem and the issue of Palestinian statehood, they omitted Jordan and the PLO from the planning of the war.

### 4.4.3   Courses of War

Egypt and Syria launched their attack against Israel on October 6, 1973. It was Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish year. With much of its citizen army in synagogues, its national radio off the air, and its people in a generally relaxed mood, Israel was caught off guard by the coordinated attacks. Israeli intelligence sources had discounted the probability of an Arab assault, and Israel's military was not fully prepared for war. Sadat's armies quickly crossed the Suez Canal. In doing so, Egypt overcame the Israeli string of fortifications along the canal's east bank known as the Bar-Lev line, which Israel had believed to be impenetrable. Egypt established strongholds to defend its position. Aware of his army's limited firepower, Sadat did not order an advance across all of the Israeli-held Sinai. Instead, his armies took a small slice of land along the entire length of the canal's east bank. Meanwhile, Syrian forces advanced into the Golan Heights. During the first week of the war, both Syria and Egypt could have done more damage to Israel's army, taken more territory, and inflicted severe damage on Israeli civilian centers. However, both armies failed to take advantage of their early gains, Israel's lack of preparedness, and initial Israeli losses. Irregular and inaccurate communications between Cairo, Egypt, and Damascus, Syria, and between Moscow and these Arab capitals, inhibited additional Arab military successes.

By mid-October, Israel had mobilized its troops and launched a series of counterattacks on both fronts.[60] Despite severe initial casualties, Israeli forces retook the land that Syria had captured and pushed past the Syrian border, soon making their way within artillery range of Damascus. Meanwhile, Israel launched a counter offensive against Egypt, crossing the Suez Canal, advancing into Egypt, and surrounding Egypt's Third Army. By the end of the war, Israeli forces had advanced to within 100 km (60 mi) of Cairo and 40 km (25 mi) of Damascus. However, Israel saw no political reason to occupy the two Arab capitals.

### 4.4.4   Ceasefire and Disengagement

The precarious state in which the Arab armies found themselves hastened the war's conclusion. It also prompted immediate intervention by the United States, which had supplied weapons to Israel during the fighting, and by the Soviet Union, which had supplied the Arab forces. Israel's threat to eradicate the Egyptian Third Army prompted U.S. secretary of state Henry Kissinger to visit Moscow to negotiate a cease-fire resolution with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev. On October 22 the UN passed the resolution, which also called for direct negotiations between the Israelis and Arabs. Israel and Egypt both broke the terms of the cease-fire, and Israel continued its encirclement of the Egyptian Third Army. Brezhnev, viewing an Egyptian defeat as potentially destabilizing to Sadat's government, implied in communications with U.S. president Richard Nixon that Israel's failure to halt military actions would prompt a Soviet response, including intervention to preserve the Third Army. In response, Kissinger asked for and received Nixon's permission to put American troops on a nuclear alert. Both the Soviets and the Americans almost immediately stepped back from a confrontation. A final cease-fire took effect on October 25.

Israel's desire to have its prisoners of war returned, combined with the precarious existence of the Egyptian Third Army, hastened military talks between Israel and Egypt. These talks took place at Kilometer 101 of the Cairo-Suez Road from October 28 until late November. Kissinger, desiring greater American participation, arranged a Middle East peace conference with the United States and the Soviet Union as cochairs, to continue the negotiations. The conference convened in Geneva, Switzerland, on

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[60]. Heiman,L. *Infantry in the Middle East War.* (Infantry, 1968),  pp.4 -13 and 16-22.

December 21. Although Jordan participated, Syria declined to attend, and the PLO was not invited. After two days of public posturing, the conference was suspended and failed to reconvene.



Yom Kippur War (1973)

During the next two years, Kissinger used a negotiating technique called "shuttle diplomacy," flying back and forth between the Arab capitals and Israel and acting as a mediator. This technique yielded the first Egyptian-Israeli military disengagement agreement, calling for Israel's withdrawal back across the Suez Canal and the restoration in January 1974 of a UN peacekeeping force in the canal zone. (The UN force had been instituted after the 1956 war and was in place until 1967.) In May 1974 Syria and Israel, with Kissinger's help, concluded a disengagement agreement by which Israel returned Syrian territory captured in the 1973 war, along with the town of Al Qunay irah in the Golan region. It also established a UN buffer zone between Israeli and Syrian forces in the Golan. A second Egyptian-Israeli agreement was concluded in September 1975.

**4.4.5   War Summary**

The war aims of the Arabs were comparatively limited from a military point of view, but had as a prime purpose political gains. The immediate military purpose of the

Arabs was to neutralise Israeli air strength by creating a surface-to-air missile system capable of  so doing; by canceling out Israel's advantage from operating along interior lines of communication by mounting a simultaneous attack on both fronts; and by capturing a limited area from the Israeli while causing heavy casualties. The political purpose of Egypt and Syria was to strike two heavy blows against Israel in order to break the log-jam which had occurred in the Arab-Israeli conflict since the cease-fire in August 1970. Although the war yielded no immediate territorial concessions, it had many far-reaching effects on the wider Arab-Israeli conflict. While Arab casualties were far greater than Israeli casualties, both sides claimed victory. The Arab forces had proven that they could launch a successful coordinated attack. With their initial gains, they shattered the myth of Israel's invincibility that had persisted since the 1967 war. Meanwhile, despite significant early losses, Israel had successfully regrouped in a matter of days, pushing the Arab forces back beyond the 1967 borders. The  war  also caused internal problems in Israel. The Israeli military's lack of readiness called into question the capabilities of the country's leaders. The results of an ensuing investigation were highly critical of the military, prompting the resignations of Israeli prime minister Golda Meir and defense minister Moshe Dayan.

The deception plan mounted by the Egyptians and Syrians marked out as one of the outstanding in the course of military history and indeed the most important –was the strategic and tactical surprised they achieved. On the other hand the static defense of IDF proved to be very vulnerable and was comparatively easy prey for a surprise attack. Next mistake seems to have been in launching previously planned counter-attacks. There were two fatal errors on the part of the Israelis that first was that in intelligence evaluation and second was the stubborn assumption of the Israeli defence and military establishment that the unrealistic and unfavourable ratio of forces along the borders was adequate to hold any Egyptian or Syrian attacks.[61] However, the two main successes of the IDF were in blocking the Arab advances in the course of a few days and mounting attacks. This was the first war in which the various types of missiles-surface-to-surface, surface-to-air, air-to-surface and sea-to-sea-were used on a major scale, and during which there took place the first naval missile battles in history. Indeed,the entire science of military strategy and technique has had to be re-evaluated in the light of the lessons of this war.

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[61]. Van Creveld, *Military Lessons of the Yom Kippur War:Historical Perspectives.* (Sage Publications, London, 1976), pp.45-75.

The 1973 war also marked the first successful use of oil as a political weapon in the Arab-Israeli conflict. From October 1973 to November 1974, the oil-producing Arab countries maintained an embargo on oil exports to Western nations friendly to Israel, causing gasoline shortages and inflated oil prices. The embargo had a particularly negative effect on the U.S. economy. Thus Yom Kippur War gains in history a great historical significance. It ushered in a new era of military conflict.

While the war did not affect Syria's close alignment with the Soviet Union and strong opposition to the United States and Israel, it initiated drastic changes in Egypt's foreign relations. Kissinger's newly developing relationship with Sadat reduced Soviet influence over Egypt and brought the country closer to the United States. Each successful agreement also generated trust between Israel and Egypt. Both of these developments established the foundation for the U.S.-brokered Camp David Accords in 1978, which led to a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel in 1979. However, Egypt's improved relations with the United States and Israel also led to its separation and isolation from inter-Arab affairs in the 1980s. Meanwhile, the diplomatic successes of the United States in the aftermath of the war made it the preferred mediator, confidant, and diplomatic guarantor of Arabs and Israelis alike in future negotiations.

# CHAPTER - 5

# WAR OF ATTRITION (1967-70)

## 5.1    The Background

The conclusion of the Six Day War, with its resultant trauma for the Arab world, created an atmosphere, particularly in Israel, indicating that an end had been reached in the wars of Israel with the various Arab countries. Indeed, as was pointed out at the end of the previous chapter, the imminent opening of peace negotiations was envisaged. From a military point of view, Israel was now in a much stronger position than it had ever been and, in the eyes of most Israelis, this fact enhanced the prospects for peace negotiations. This time Israel would be negotiating from strength.

As a result of the Six Day War, the area controlled by Israel had increased some four-fold. In the north in the Golan Heights, the Israeli forces controlled an area some twenty miles in depth, which removed the Syrian artillery threat to Israeli villages, and furthermore increased Israeli control of one of the three main sources of the River Jordan. In the West Bank of the Jordan, the front-line had hitherto cut the capital city of Jerusalem in half and had brought Tel Aviv, the centre of Israeli commerce and the area of Israel's densest population, to within artillery range of the armistice lines. It created a ten-mile-wide waistline opposite Natanya. Now, Israeli forces were deployed along the natural frontier of the River Jordan. A Jordanian attack against Israel would now have to take into consideration not only the river crossing, but an ascent of some 3,000 feet over a distance of some 40 miles into the Judean Hills through most inhospitable barren territory before reaching any centres of population. In the south, Israel controlled the Sinai Desert, which included at its southernmost tip the strategically placed Straits of Tiran at the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba. The area included the oilfields of the Gulf of Suez capable of supplying a high percentage of Israel's oil requirements. Most important of all, this vast wasteland provided an ideal buffer to guarantee Israel's security against any recurring threat from Egypt. The electronic warning period given to Israel in respect of an air attack from Egypt had increased four-fold, to sixteen minutes.[62] (Indeed, the vital importance of

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[62]. Chaim Herzog, *The Arab-Israeli Wars,* (Published in US Random House, New York, 1982), pp.195-223.

the Sinai as a buffer area was demonstrated when the Egyptians attacked across the Suez Canal in 1973.)

Israel's belief that the war had come to an end and that peace would now reign along the borders was soon dispelled. Three weeks after the conclusion of hostilities, the first major incident occurred on the Suez Canal. Thus began a war, known as 'The War of Attrition'. While not as spectacular as a conventional war (and it did not therefore attract worldwide attention), this was waged from 1967 until the cease-fire between Israel and Egypt in August 1970. Many actions in this 'war' were to prove to be complete innovations in the history of warfare. The anti-aircraft defence system that protects the Soviet empire was tested out by the Israel Defence Forces flying Western- type aeroplanes, and was found wanting. The battlefield around the Suez Canal became a major proving ground for the military equipment of the two superpowers. In many ways — from the point of view of the development of military equipment and science — the War of Attrition was perhaps more significant than other struggles in which Israel was hitherto involved.

At the beginning of July 1967, the United Nations Security Council was in session on the Middle East conflict. The Soviets emphasized to the Egyptians, with an eye to the discussions in the United Nations that it was important to create the impression that the war was not over: hence Israel would be pressurized to withdraw in order to enable the Egyptians to open the Suez Canal to international shipping. The first shots were fired on Saturday 1 July 1967. On 1 July, an armoured infantry company commanded by Major Uriel Menuhin advanced northwards along the dyke in order to drive off an Egyptian ambush, which had sited itself on the eastern bank of the Suez Canal in the general area of Ras El-Aish, some ten miles south of Port Said. Despite the fact that it was attacked by artillery and armoured fire from the west bank of the Canal, the Israeli force continued to carry out its mission and drove off the Egyptian forces. However, in the ensuing artillery engagement, Major Menuhin was wounded and later killed. In total, the action cost the Israelis one killed, the unit commander, and thirteen wounded.[63]

Thus it continued, battle being joined with the Egyptians intermittently engaging Israeli patrols along the eastern bank of the Canal with flat-trajectory fire from tanks, coastal artillery fire from Port Said, and field artillery fire. At times, these actions escalated, and Israeli air units were thrown into the combat to deal with the sources of

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[63].*Ibid.*

Egyptian fire. During one of these engagements, 120 Egyptian troops attempted to cross in rubber dinghies at the northern end of the Canal, but they were repulsed by Israeli forces. The fighting that broke out in this area included naval operations off the coast of Sinai opposite Rumania, in which the Israeli naval flagship Eifat and two torpedo-boats were engaged by Egyptian torpedo-boat.- Two of the Egyptian torpedo-boats were sunk in one such engagement.On 11 July, Israel and Egypt agreed to establish United Nations observation posts on both sides of the Canal. Israel maintained that the cease-fire line ran down the middle of the waterway. Accordingly, on 14 July, Israeli naval dinghies were lowered into the Canal to the south of Kantara as a test probe to see if the Egyptians would accept the Israeli definition of the cease-fire line. The Egyptians opened fire on them and there followed a major tank and artillery exchange with the Israeli Air Force also joining in the battle. Israeli dinghies and Israeli ships were hit. In the air battles that ensued, four Egyptian MiG-17s and three MiG-21s were shot down by the Israeli Air Force. Israel suffered some nine men dead and 55 wounded. This phase came to an end in mid-July, and thereafter no naval forces were introduced by either side into the Canal.

Gradually, life settled into a routine along the Canal, and relationships even began to develop between the forces on the opposing sides. Visitors at the time were amazed to see soldiers of the two armies sitting peacefully engaged in fishing, each on their side of the Canal. In many cases, the troops talked to each other and exchanged at first epithets and later pleasantries across the Canal.

## 5.2    'Defensive rehabilitation' Phase

At this stage the Arab political policy towards Israel was established at the Khartoum Summit Conference. On 1 September 1967, this Conference laid down the basis for Arab policy in "the three noes" resolution': no recognition of Israel, no negotiations with Israel and no peace with Israel. Addressing a mass demonstration in the square before the People's Assembly in Cairo, President Nasser declared that all that had be taken by force, and added an additional 'no' to the three of Khartoum: 'no concessions on the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people'. He formulated Egyptian military policy as one based on three phases: the 'defensive rehabilitation' phase, the 'offensive defence' phase and, finally, the 'liberation' phase.[64] He made it perfectly clear for all who would

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[64]. *Ibid*.

listen, that the lull along the Canal was a temporary one and that the hostilities would be resumed when it suited the Egyptians.

The second major outbreak of hostilities began in September 1967, when the Egyptians opened fire from the fortified Green Island in the north of the Gulf of Suez on Israeli shipping traversing the waters within the Israeli sector. The Egyptians wanted to emphasize their adherence to the decisions of the Khartoum Conference and to symbolize Nasser's determination to maintain this policy. The fire spread, and heavy artillery battles developed along the Suez Canal as far north as Kantara, which, together with Ismailia and Suez, came directly under fire. Thousands of citizens abandoned their homes and, as the fighting developed over the months, a major refugee problem was created for Egypt, reaching proportions of some 750,000 people.

Again, a lull set in. After this brief outbreak, the guns fell silent until, in the autumn of 1967, an event once more focused world attention on the Egyptian front. On 21 October 1967, the Israeli flagship, the destroyer Eilat, was patrolling at a distance of 141/2 nautical miles off Port Said. At 17.32 hours, a Six surface-to-surface missile was fired from a Komar-class Egyptian missile-boat anchored inside Port Said harbour. Eilat's radar had not revealed any suspicious activity or movement because the attacking missile-boat was in fact anchored inside the harbour and, despite evasive action ordered by the captain of the vessel when the missile was sighted, the missile hit the ship in the area of the boiler, killing and wounding officers and crewmen and cutting-off the electric current. The ship began to list. Two minutes later, a second missile hit Eilat, causing additional damage and casualties. Shortly thereafter she sank.

Eilat, previously Zealous of the Royal Navy, a destroyer displacing 1,710 tons, had seen active service in the Second World War before being sold to Israel in 1956. Of 199 crew members aboard Eilat, 47 were listed as killed or missing and 90 were wounded. The incident aroused world-wide interest, because it was the first occasion in history in which a warship had been sunk by missile fire. The age of naval missiles had dawned. This encounter foreshadowed the first naval missile battles in history between the Israeli Navy and the Egyptian and Syrian Navies in the 1973 War. This had been a planned, premeditated attack..Four days later, on 25 October 1967, a heavy concentration of Israeli artillery opened up along the southern end of the Suez Canal: the Egyptian refineries in Suez, petrol depots and petrochemical installations came under fire and went up in flames. For a period of days, all attempts to extinguish the fire failed, as benzine and asphalt burned, destroying plant, buildings and factories. The Egyptians themselves

estimated the loss in the region of over £36 million ($100 million) and announced that 11 people had been killed and 92 wounded

September 1968 saw the conclusion of the first phase proclaimed by Nasser, namely that of 'defensive rehabilitation'. During this period, the Soviets succeeded in reorganizing the Egyptian Army and in completing its re-equipment. Within a comparatively short period, the Egyptian Army regained the total strength it had enjoyed before the outbreak of war in June 1967. Now, however, because of the more modern equipment which had been supplied, it was much stronger, for it had improved considerably its military posture by absorbing MiG-21 fighters in place of the MiG-17s and MiG-19s, and T-54 and T-55 tanks in place of the T-34 and T-54 tanks that had been lost to Israel in the Six Day War. This resupply of the Egyptian Army was paralleled by a larger Soviet involvement in Egypt. Mindful of the shortcomings of the Egyptian Air Force, and anxious to involve the Soviet military command as deeply as possible in the defence of Egypt, Nasser even proposed to the Russians that a Soviet Air Force general assume command of the air defences of Egypt. However, aware of the complications from an international point of view to which such a move could give rise, the Russians turned down the proposal. Meanwhile, considerable quantities of Soviet aid continued to flow to Egypt as the Egyptian Army recovered physically, and from an equipment point of view, from the setbacks of the 1967 War. The stage was set now for the opening of the next phase in Nasser's plan.

## 5.3    `Offensive defence' Phase and the Bar-Lev Line

The economic damage that had been caused to Egypt as a result of the War was enormous. The blocking of the Suez Canal, the extensive damage caused to the cities along the Canal and the complete cessation of tourism, not to mention continued total mobilization of one of the largest armies in the world, combined to have a crippling effect on Egypt's economy. The losses caused to its economy during that initial period were estimated at approximately £250 million ($750 million). However, the massive Soviet aid made available to Egypt, and also the combined aid of the oil-rich Arab countries, which came to a total of approximately £90 million ($250 million) a year, enabled Egypt to overcome some of its economic difficulties.

The new phase opened at the beginning of September 1968.[65] Some 150,000 Egyptian troops were by now concentrated along the Suez Canal. The Egyptian commanders and the Soviet advisers considered that the time had now arrived for action to raise the morale of the Army and eliminate the psychological effects of the 1967 defeat. The move coincided with Nasser's drive to raise the morale in the country as a whole, and to enhance the prestige of the Army. The time had now come, it was felt, to imbue the defensively-minded Egyptian forces with a new spirit, for morale was at a low ebb. On 8 September 1968, an Israeli patrol discovered a mine just north of Port Tewfik, at the southern extremity of the Canal, and exploded it. This was the signal for a co-ordinated Egyptian fire-plan along 65 miles of the canal to be activated. Over a thousand Egyptian artillery pieces together with mortars and tanks opened a highly-concentrated barrage on Israeli targets along the Canal. Israel's losses in the sudden onslaught were 28 men killed and wounded. On the Egyptian side, the civilians had been warned to take shelter in advance, but the Egyptians admitted the loss of 26 dead and 104 wounded. This offensive was coordinated with a major propaganda offensive on the part of the Egyptians who hailed it as 'a great victory'.

The Egyptians disposed of a wide range of conventional Soviet artillery. Because the Israeli units were so heavily outgunned by the Egyptians along the Canal, the strategy of indirect approach was chosen by the Israelis. On the night of 31 October, Israeli commandos flown in by French Sud 321 helicopters penetrated to the heart of the Nile valley some 220 miles from the nearest Israeli-held area, and attacked three targets — the bridges of Qena and Najh Hamadi across the Nile and an electric transformer station near Najh Hamadi. These were some 300 miles south of Cairo and 150 miles north of Aswan. The operation against the bridges and the transformer station was a complete success, and it served to emphasize the existence of the 'soft under-belly' of Egypt. The warning was a clear one: wide areas of Egyptian territory were wide open to Israeli attack.

This lull gave Israel the much-sought-after opportunity to improve its defensive posture along the Suez Canal and to create the fortifications necessary to withstand the massive artillery barrages to which the Israeli forces had been subjected.[66] Intensive discussions took place in the Israeli General Staff on the type of fortification system that should be built along the Canal. Egyptians, at the same time it gave the Israeli forces the advantage of observation and an ability to deal immediately with any crossing attempt by

[65]. Naor,M. *The War After the War,*(Ministry of Defence Publications, Tel Aviv, 1971), pp.12-145.
[66].*Ibid.*

the Egyptians. Gavish gave the conclusion that it would be advisable to hold positions  on the water front, particularly at all points that were probable. Adan set about planning the defence of the line along the Suez Canal. He drew up the original plans for the fortifications, which were to be built in such a way as to give a maximum degree of observation (good visual observation by day and electronic observation by night) while exposing a minimum number of troops to enemy artillery fire. He planned individual fortifications for fifteen troops, at a distance of seven miles from each other, with mobile armour patrolling between them and with artillery and armour deployed to the rear ready to move forward and destroy any attempt to cross. These fortifications were conceived as a warning outpost system.

Gavish accepted Adan's plan, with the provision that at the northern end of the Canal all possible crossing points be covered by groups of fortifications. It was always Gavish's opinion that, if the Canal was to be considered a physical barrier, there was no option but to establish a physical presence along it. In his view, one of the main dangers that Israel would have to face would be a sudden Egyptian move to gain a foothold, however narrow, along the east bank, followed by an attempt to achieve an immediate cease-fire by international agreement. Furthermore, since the Israeli concept invariably called for mounting a counter-offensive into the enemy's territory, it was important for them to be sited in force along the Canal itself, rather than to be in a position that would require fighting before they reached it.In the ensuing debate there was no suggestion of leaving the Canal, but there was an argument as to the mode of deployment, with General Sharon supporting the system of mobile defence along the Canal.[67] General Bar-Lev decided in favour of the fortifications, and the team headed by Adan proceeded to supervise the construction of the line, which was finished on 15 May 1969.

Thus the so-called `Bar-Lev Line' came into being. The creation of this line was the largest engineering operation ever undertaken in Israel. Every effort was made to take advantage of the lull that the Israeli raids in depth in Egypt had forced on the Egyptians. Already, before the completion of this line the Egyptians began to appreciate its significance. Accordingly, they began to interfere with the work on the Israeli side by sniping, patrolling, mining and other hostile activities. In March

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[67]. Ibid.

1969, it became obvious that the Egyptians were preparing to renew the battle along the Canal and, in mid-March, the artillery barrages increased in frequency. Nasser announced with a fanfare the opening of the 'liberation' phase of the 'War of Attrition'. It was to continue almost without let-up for a year and a half until the cease-fire in August 1970.

## 5.3    The 'liberation' Phase

The relative quiet that had reigned along the Suez Canal since October 1968 was broken in March 1969.Several Egyptian aircraft penetrated Israeli air space on reconnaissance, and one of them was shot down. A concentrated artillery exchange developed and spread along the Canal, on the second day of which the Egyptian Chief of Staff, General Abd al Muneim Riadh, and several of his staff officers were killed while in a forward position in Ismailia supervising the new offensive. Once again, casualties were suffered by both sides, and Egyptian towns, ships in the Gulf of Suez and installations sustained further considerable damage. After a short lull for a few weeks, the Egyptians renewed the War of Attrition on 10 April 1969; thereafter, it continued without respite for a period of sixteen months.At this point, President Nasser declared that Egypt no longer recognized or adhered to the cease-fire that had been in existence since 1967. Indeed, on 1 May in his annual May Day speech, Nasser declared that 60 per cent of the Bar-Lev Line had been destroyed by Egyptian fire and that the Egyptian Army had now moved from the phase of 'active defence' to the `liberation' phase. The War of Attrition was now on with a vengeance.[68]

The Egyptian policy was based on evaluations of what they considered to be certain basic vulnerabilities in the Israeli national character and military approach. Basing themselves on the assumption that the Israeli armed forces have always shown their true strength in a war of movement in which speed and manoeuvrability are of the essence, the Egyptians came to the conclusion that the Israel Defence Forces would be at a disadvantage in a static war of attrition, in which manoeuvrability was of little value and in which Egypt possessed a marked superiority over Israel in the main weapon for such a type of war, artillery. The Egyptians were also aware of the extreme sensitivity of the Israeli population to loss of manpower. They realized that, by creating a constant drain on Israeli

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[68]. Safran,N. *From War to War:The Arab-Israeli Confrontation,* (New World Press, New York, 1969), pp.120-165.

manpower by means of attrition, they would be striking at what they considered to be the Israeli Achilles' heel. Accordingly, their purpose was to wear out the Israel Defence Forces by constant attack and thus to bring about a reduction of morale both in the Israeli armed forces and in the civilian hinterland; to destroy as much of Israel's war equipment as possible; and to impose as heavy an economic burden as possible on Israel. This situation, they believed, would ultimately soften up the Israel force to such a degree that sooner or later situations would be created in which it would be possible for chosen Egyptian forces to cross the Canal and seize a bridgehead on the eastern bank. Furthermore, there was a consideration that the continuous conflagration along the Canal would keep the issue alive before the United Nations and thus intensify political pressure on Israel.

To meet this military policy, Israel enunciated its own policy, which was best expressed by the vast expenditure invested in the Bar-Lev Line along the Suez Canal, with its complex system of fortresses, patrol roads, and earth walls, approach roads, underground control centres and tank and artillery positions all sited for mutual support. The first principle of Israel's defence was to ensure complete control of the water line along the Canal and to be in a position to beat back any Egyptian attempt to cross the Canal or to establish a bridgehead. The second purpose of such a system of defence along the Canal was to keep to an absolute minimum the number of casualties Israel would have to suffer. For this purpose, the Israeli fortresses were constructed to withstand the heaviest possible Egyptian barrage. Furthermore, the new deployment would be such as to enable Israel to wage its 'counter-War of Attrition' against the Egyptians and force them to return to an acceptance of the cease-fire.[69]

The Egyptians, for their part, conducted a very active strategy of offensive operations, which were carried out with increasing frequency, on the Israeli-held east bank of the Canal. Mines were laid and units crossed to ambush Israeli patrols and traffic moving along the north-south road parallel to the Canal. In July, one of the many Egyptian attempts succeeded in penetrating an Israeli tank laager south of Port Tewfik, inflicting eleven casualties. It was during this phase, on 24 May 1969, that an Egyptian MiG-21 was shot down while flying at a height of 22,000 feet by an Israeli-operated Hawk ground-to-air missile. This was the first time in the Middle East conflict that a Hawk missile had been used to bring down an enemy aircraft; first deployed in the

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[69]. *Ibid.*

United States air defence system in 1959, the Hawk missile had been in Israeli service since 1964.By July 1969 it became evident to the Israeli commanders that their counter-plan was not  having the desired effect, and so a new approach was decided upon. This envisaged massive air retaliation coupled with stepped-up raids of a scope not mounted hitherto.

## 5.4    `Flying artillery'

From a military point of view, the most significant change in Israeli policy was the decision to throw the Israeli Air Force into the battle and utilize it as 'flying artillery' rather than to increase the strength of ground artillery. This policy was to prove later to have been a grave error. Preconceived concepts that placed excessive emphasis on armour and air as against a more balanced force came to expression at this point, with results that were to prove very costly in the 1973 Yom Kippur War. While this policy was to prove to have been a major error in Israeli calculations from a long-range, strategic point of view, from a short-range tactical point of view it proved to be an unmitigated success. But, in the longer term, it created an imbalance in the Israel Defence Forces, with insufficient emphasis on supporting arms such as artillery and armoured infantry. The Egyptians' preponderance in artillery continued to be a major factor in the balance of power. Israeli air operations inevitably brought on an Egyptian air reaction, and dogfights developed along the Canal.

In the course of July 1969, five Egyptian aircraft were shot down: two MiG-21s, one Sukhoi Su-7 and two MiG-17s (the latter pair by anti-aircraft fire). The main Israeli targets were the Egyptian artillery emplacements and the SAM-2 surface-to-air missile bases that protected them. In less than two months after the opening of the Israeli air offensive, the Israeli Air Force completed over 1,000 sorties against Egypt, as against 100 Egyptian sorties in the same period, during which the Israelis lost three aircraft as against a loss of 21 by the Egyptians. Meanwhile, the war raged along the Canal. Sniping, patrols, ambushes and intermittent shelling were all taking their toll and casualties on both sides rose. Between 8 and 11 September 1969, the Israelis mounted an operation that once again was unusual in its scope and nature. It opened with Israeli frogmen sinking two Egyptian torpedo-boats at anchor at Rasa-

Sadat on the Gulf of Suez.[70] Next day, an Israeli armoured battalion task force sailed across the Gulf of Suez in tank landing craft bound for the Egyptian coast on what was to prove to be one of the most imaginative operations undertaken to date by the Israel Defence Forces — an armoured raid in depth into Egypt. Landing at dawn on 9 September 1969 at A-Dir on the western shore of the Gulf of Suez, the armoured task force took the Egyptians by complete surprise. By early morning, the force had reached its main objective, a military camp known as Ras Abu-Daraj. In the course of the assault, which was backed up by Israeli air attacks, the camp installations were destroyed, including the main objective of the raid, the Iadar tower in the camp.

This raid came as a great shock to the Egyptians, emphasizing once again the vulnerability of the Egyptian defence system and the fact that Israel did not feel bound to fight along fixed lines. For over ten hours, th Israeli armoured force had operated at will in Egyptian territory, traversing some 30 miles in the process, destroying twelve Egyptian outposts and warning stations and inflicting over 100 casualties on the Egyptian forces. It proved to have been one of the more daringly conceived Israeli operations, well planned, with a high degree of inter-arm co-operation. By the time the Egyptians fully appreciated what was happening, the triumphant Israeli force was on its way back to the Sinai. Nasser himself suffered a heart attack after this operation, and there were major changes in the Egyptian Command, including the dismissal of the Chief of Staff and the commander of the Navy.

The most spectacular operation in this period was undoubtedly the assault on the radar station at Ras-Arab for the purpose, not of destroying the position, but of capturing and removing the equipment, the total weight of which was seven tons. The acquisition of this latest P12 type of Russian radar would prove to be invaluable for the Israelis and for the Western powers in electronic countermeasure warfare.[71] For the first time, the military establishment of Israel (and of many Western countries) were afforded an intimate view of a Russian P12 radar installation.The opening days of 1970 afforded evidence of the fact that the Israeli strategy of counter-attrition was beginning to have its effect upon the Egyptians. The daring Israeli raids had to a degree knocked the Egyptian Command off balance, and the

[70]. *Ibid.*
[71]. Bar-Simon Tov,Yaacov, '*The Istaeli-Egyptian War of Attrition,1969-70,'* pp.25-70.

immediate effect of the massive use of Israeli air power proved to be very telling indeed. The Egyptians activated their surface-to-air missile system based on the Soviet SAM-2 type missile, but, three times in the course of the period between the opening of the offensive in July 1969 and January 1970, the Israeli Air Force succeeded in destroying a considerable part of the Egyptian air defence system. Israeli aircraft were beginning to range far and wide inside Egypt and to engage Egyptian targets in depth. The effect on the Egyptian public was marked, and the internal effect on Nasser's regime became a matter of concern for him. In the Kremlin and elsewhere in the Soviet empire, they watched with growing concern as Western-type equipment flown by Israeli pilots operated with comparative impunity against a system of air defence similar to that protecting the Communist bloc against the West.

The Israeli counterattack against the War of Attrition waged by the Egyptians and the other Arab countries in violation of the cease-fire agreement was proving to be a considerable success in its first phase, namely from July to September 1969. During this period, Israel achieved complete superiority in the air as a result of a number of decisive air battles. This was followed by the second phase, which entailed the destruction of Egyptian anti-aircraft missile and radar defences in order to give Israel a comparatively free hand over Egyptian air space. The third phase was basically a psychological phase, that of bringing home the facts of the situation to the average Egyptian citizen by means of attacks on military installations in the neighbourhood of Cairo and other cities and, what was perhaps of greater importance, to the second line of Egyptian forces including reserve formations and units riot directly affected by the fighting along the Suez Canal. This phase began on 7 January 1970.

Meanwhile, as Israeli attacks were being mounted in depth against Egypt, the battle along the Canal and the Gulf of Suez was being waged sporadically. On 22 January, units of the Israel Defence Forces attacked and occupied the island of Shadwan, situated some 20 miles from Sharm El-Sheikh in the straits linking the Gulf of Suez with the Red Sea. The cumulative effect of such attacks against Egypt on all sectors was having its effect and, indeed, the Israeli forces along the Canal suffered the lowest number of casualties in January 1970 in any given month since the opening of the War of Attrition: six killed. A growing tone of concern could now be detected in Egyptian public statements. Nasser appealed to the Soviet Union.

## 5.5    Soviets and SAMs

In December 1969, the Soviet Chief of Anti-Aircraft Forces had come to inspect the somewhat embarrassing situation that had been created by the failure of Soviet-supplied weapons to withstand the Israeli air attacks. Nasser made a secret visit to Moscow in January 1970, emphasizing the seriousness of the situation that had developed and appealing for additional Soviet aid. During this visit, he posed the military dilemma facing the Egyptians as well as the problems that might face his regime if the Israeli attacks were to persevere. Soviet response was immediate and unhesitant. Indeed, the Soviets seized on Nasser's desperate situation to develop their own plans for additional penetration in the area. By mid-February, some 1,500 Soviet personnel had arrived with consignments of the latest anti-aircraft system, including the new SAM-3 missiles.[72] These missiles, with their increased mobility and effectiveness, were manned by Soviet and not Egyptian troops and were sited both in the Canal zone and in depth in Egypt. The Soviet forces in Egypt rose to some 15,000 troops, which were engaged in air defence, manned missile and air installations, and assumed responsibility for the protection of Egyptian strategic depth, initially by missiles and later with Russian-piloted aircraft. Thus was created a situation whereby Israeli penetration of Egyptian air space could spell a clash with Soviet forces. The SAM-3 missile was designed especially for use against low-flying aircraft; it could be mounted on a mobile platform or sited in heavily-protected underground bunkers. Because it was complementary to the longer range SAM-2 missile it effectively closed many of the 'holes' in the Egyptian defence system and made the task of the Israeli Air Force that much more difficult.

During this period in early 1970, the battles, patrolling activities by both sides, mining and artillery attrition were intensified along all the sectors. During February, in Israel's southern port of Eilat, Egyptian frogmen operating from Aqaba in Jordan succeeded in sinking an Israeli Navy auxiliary vessel and damaging a landing craft; an Egyptian patrol in depth succeeded in taking prisoner two Israeli canteen employees; and an Israeli force crossed the Canal at Al-Kaf, south of Port Said, attacking artillery batteries and bunkers. Early in the month, an Israeli mixed patrol of armour and infantry, moving along the eastern bank of the Canal, was ambushed by an Egyptian patrol that had taken up positions on the Israeli

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[72]. *Ibid.*

side of the Canal. In the ensuing action, the commander of the Israeli force and four of his troops were killed, and a short battle ensued. Some days later, an Israeli patrol engaged an Egyptian reconnaissance unit that had penetrated as far as the Mitla Pass: all the Egyptians were either captured or killed. At the same time, the Egyptian Air Force mounted its `hit and run' attacks across the Canal and, in one of these attacks, caused eleven Israeli casualties. The increased air activity over the area of the Canal led to many dogfights during the month of February, in the course of which eight Egyptian and two Israeli aircraft were shot down. The month of March saw the fighting grow in intensity, as in air battles the Egyptians lost twelve aircraft. Meanwhile, the process of 'Sovietization' was growing, as additional Soviet forces poured into Egypt and the new anti-aircraft system became more operative and effective. In an attempt to exert pressure on the Egyptians and induce them to agree to a cease-fire, Moshe Dayan, Israel's Minister of Defence, proposed to the Ministerial Defence Committee that Israel carry out air attacks on army bases deep inside Egypt. According to Dayan, the attacks during the months of January, February and March 1970 had caused Egyptian morale to collapse and confronted Nasser with a dilemma: on the one hand he realized that his army was in no position to prevent the Israeli operations and, at the same time, he was not prepared to declare a ceasefire and enter into peace negotiations with Israel.In his memoirs,Dayan points out that Nasser then flew to Moscow and asked the Russians to send him Soviet troops.[73]

From a short term point of view, the Israeli deep penetration bombing had contained a certain logic; but, from a long term point of view, it would appear to have been a major error. Politically, it failed to achieve its objectives, for Nasser's authority was in no way damaged. Although Egyptian installations were at times in ruins, the Egyptians persevered with attacks along the Canal. Whether or not the natural course of events would have led to increased Sovietization in Egypt, it is difficult to say, but there is no doubt that the Israeli decision to bomb Egypt in depth constituted a major turning-point in the Middle East, and created a situation that encouraged President Nasser to open up Egypt, not only to Soviet advisers, but also to Soviet combat units. In April 1970, Soviet-piloted MiG-21s began to fly operationally in defence of central Egypt to protect these areas from Israeli air

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[73]. Moshe Dayan, *The Story of my Life,* (Jerusalem, 1976), p.449.

attacks. The voices of Russian pilots became commonplace on the ether in the Middle East. And, indeed, to avoid the danger of a clash with aircraft of the Soviet Air Force, Israeli air attacks in depth over Egypt ceased in April 1970. The renewed Egyptian offensive, mounted with the knowledge of an immediate Soviet air back-up over Egyptian air space, created a swing of the pendulum in the battle: in the three months of March, April and May 1970, 64 Israeli troops were killed and 149 wounded, while Egyptian ambushes on the Israeli bank of the Canal cost Israel eighteen dead, six wounded and six prisoners. As the fighting rose in intensity, the Israeli Air Force, adapting itself to the new situation created by this new Soviet deployment in Egypt by adopting new tactics to deal with the ground-to-air missile system, launched its most intensive bombing attacks to date over a period of eleven days, beginning on 30 May, against the Egyptian positions along the Canal. Within a period of one week, more than 4,000 bombs were dropped on Egyptian positions and, on the seventh day of successive bombing on the northern sector, the Israeli Air Force attacked for a continuous period of some 14 hours.

As the Israeli attacks intensified, the Soviets decided upon a new strategy of air defence. They planned a completely new defensive system to deal with the Israeli attacks. At the end of June, a major redeployment of Soviet-Egyptian air defences of the air space over the Suez Canal and in its vicinity was completed. The effect was immediate: on 30 June, two Israeli aircraft were shot down during an attack on the Canal area; one of the pilots was rescued by helicopter from Egyptian territory, and three aircrew members were taken prisoner. On 5 July an additional plane was shot down with the crew being taken prisoner. Hitherto, the Egyptian air defence had been spread out and deployed all along the 100-mile length of the Suez Canal. Now, the Russians had created a box some 20 miles deep and 45 miles long covering the central and southern sectors. Missiles were sited in 'packs' that gave mutual covering fire, and the entire system was reinforced by heavy concentrations of conventional anti-aircraft weapons. A solution was found to the vulnerability of the SAM-2 missile, sited as they had been in fixed positions in easily-discernible concrete emplacements. Now, many missiles could be fired at single targets, unlike the situation that had obtained hitherto in Egypt and in Vietnam, where only one or two missiles were launched against single aircraft. Moreover, the SAM-2 Guideline missile was of an improved range and was far more accurate than its predecessor

Once the skies of Cairo became the responsibility of Soviet-piloted MiG-21s, the Egyptians could concentrate a greater number of antiaircraft batteries along the Canal. But, despite the losses now being incurred, the Israeli Air Force continued to attack this new system, destroying five SAM batteries early in July. The new anti-aircraft deployment in Egypt was not only a reply to the immediate problems facing the Egyptians in their attacks of the Canal, but was the expression of a strategic development that would only be fully appreciated three years later on 6 October 1973, with the opening of the Egyptian offensive in the Yom Kippur War. It was clear that the next phase would be to leapfrog towards the Canal, a move that would place the missiles in a position to be effective over the front-line yet be out of range of Israeli artillery. Thus, they would be a factor in Israel's attacks against the Egyptian artillery concentrations. It became clear that, in addition to a policy of achieving air parity with Israel, the anti-aircraft capability of the Egyptian forces along the Suez Canal had become a vital element in developing future Egyptian offensive strategy.

As the Soviet penetration grew, Soviet involvement in the fighting in the air defence of Egypt increased considerably. A marked improvement in the air-defence system of Egypt was evident. The number of air battles increased, and Russian-piloted aircraft tangled on 25 and 27 July with Israeli aircraft. On 30 July, an air battle developed between Israeli forces and Soviet-piloted MiG-21s. An Israeli patrol was flying over the northern sector of the Gulf of Suez when it came under attack from eight MiG-21s flying in two formations; in the course of the dogfight that ensued, five Soviet aircraft were shot down for no loss on the part of Israel. According to Moshe Dayan,[74] the Israeli pilots thought the Soviet pilots lacked experience and flexibility: they behaved in battle as they had been taught in training exercises, and stuck to the book, flying in pairs, close together, and not breaking off fast enough.There was considerable consternation in the Soviet Union, but the Egyptians openly rejoiced at the Soviet discomfiture: they heartily disliked their Soviet allies, whose crude, gauche behaviour had created bitter antagonism, and whose officers looked down on the Egyptian officers, treating them with faintly-concealed disdain

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[74]. *Ibid.*

## 5.6    The Cease-fire

Meanwhile, political negotiations had been afoot on the basis of the United States' so-called 'Rogers Plan'. Originally proposed by the American Secretary of State, William Rogers, in December 1969, this plan envisaged a peace treaty between Israel, Egypt and Jordan, in which there would be almost complete Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories, leaving open the questions of the Gaza Strip and Sharm El-Sheikh. An acceptance of this plan required an agreement for a cease-fire for a period of three months. Nasser returned from a visit to the Soviet Union in July a frustrated and very sick man. He was beginning to realize the scope of the political cost for Russian involvement in Egypt. The strain and cost of the War of Attrition were beginning to tell, and he believed he could use a cease-fire to advance his military plans. He announced that he was willing to accept the Rogers Plan, and Jordan joined him in accepting a cease-fire. On 31 July 1970, Israel also accepted the American initiative and agreed to the cease-fire, which came into operation at midnight on 8 August 1970.Nasser's acceptance of the proposals came as a surprise to many. Dr. Henry Kissinger[75] feels that Nasser may have feared an Israeli pre-emptive strike. However, on 28 September 1970 President Nasser died, and this immediately affected the military situation and developments in the area. Contrary to what Nasser had originally planned and intended, the cease-fire was to remain in force until his successor moved the Egyptian forces across the Suez Canal on 6 October 1973.

Thus came to an end a bitter and hard-fought conflict in which the Israeli and the Egyptian armies had been pitted against each other for some three years. This war was a decisive proving ground for new weapons, new methods and new military strategies in many fields. Indeed, the whole strategy and theory of modern air-defence was tested in a brutal confrontation, and a new policy was evolved by the Russians that was to withstand the test of war in 1973. For, on the basis of the new system that had proved itself in July 1970 along the Suez Canal, the Russians created a more developed and sophisticated system both in Egypt and in Syria, a system to which was added the highly-mobile SAM-6 missile. Unlike the SAM-2 and SAM-3, this was proof against many of the electronic countermeasures activated by the Israeli forces.

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[75]. Kissinger, Henry. *White House Years,*(Boston, 1979), p.582.

Israel, for its part, had withstood the battles despite the heavy casualties it had incurred between June 1967 and August 1970 — more than 500 killed and 2,000 wounded on all fronts — and had adapted itself to a hitherto alien type of warfare. When the cease-fire due to last for 90 days commenced, the Israeli Command decided to take advantage of this period of grace in order to reconstruct those parts of the Bar-Lev Line that had been damaged in the War of Attrition and to strengthen it. General `Arik' Sharon had in the meantime taken command in the south, relieving General Gavish; and, following his suggestions, a second line of fortifications was constructed some five to seven miles behind the Line. Extensive works were undertaken, and a very considerable effort was invested in order to create the necessary infrastructure, for a total cost of approximately £200 million (5500 million).

The period of quiet that continued along the Canal from 1970 to 1973, the dramatic decision of Nasser's successor, President Anwar el Sadat, to expel the Russians in July 1972, a failure to read correctly the intelligence picture, and an inability to show sufficient flexibility in evaluation , all these led to the lowering of the Israeli guard over the years. The original concept of the Bar-Lev Line was frittered away, and its implementation was weakened considerably. And all the time, Egyptian preparations were advanced discreetly and inexorably.

## 5.7    War Summary

The Israelis fought the War of Attrition along three borders. That with Jordan flared up considerably in the north Jordan valley area, with PLO units operating, on occasions supported by Jordanian units, with impunity from Jordanian territory against Israel. This sector saw some major operations, such as the Israeli operation against the central PLO training and operational camp in Karameh in the Jordan valley in Jordan. It only quieted down after King Hussein, after escaping an assassination attempt on him by the PLO, and realizing that the PLO had created a `state within a state' and that his throne was thereby gravely endangered, launched an all-out attack on the Palestinians in August and September 1970. At that point Syrian armoured units under the guise of Palestinians invaded Jordan. As the Syrian invasion of Jordan developed and the Jordanian Army fought off the attackers in an attempt to stem the invasion, clear and unequivocal indications were given both to the Syrians

and the Soviet Union that neither the United States nor Israel would view with equanimity a Syrian invasion of Jordan. At one stage, the United States, which was acting in close concert with Israel, indicated that it would approve Israeli intervention by military force to save King Hussein's forces. Both an air intervention and the use of ground forces were contemplated. Meanwhile, an Israeli mobilization, American troop dispositions in Europe and elsewhere, and the movement of the United States Sixth Fleet to the Levant coast, with numerous flights from the Fleet to Israeli airports, had been noted by the Russians. All of these moves, together with the indications that Israel might be obliged to move, impressed the Russians sufficiently to advise the Syrians to pull back. To this must be added the brave resistance put up by the Jordanian Army, and in particular by the 40th Armoured Brigade, which had acquitted itself so well in the northern part of the West Bank during the Six Day War.The PLO in Jordan was eliminated as a military force.[76] The organization moved from Jordan to Lebanon. With its departure, the War of Attrition along the Jordanian front came to an end, but began to develop from Lebanese territory. The stage was set for the decimation of the Lebanese state by the PLO and its occupation later by the Syrian armed forces.

Nasser had planned to use the three months of the cease-fire for a breathing space, in which he could make the necessary dispositions of the anti-aircraft missile forces in the Canal area to enable him to take advantage of the new situation created and make some spectacular move across the Canal. He, of course, took into consideration the fact that the Israeli Air Force would be neutralized by a new deployment of the Soviet-supplied anti-aircraft forces. However, he died before he could implement his plan. He was replaced by President Anwar el Sadat, who was generally regarded as a stop-gap appointment until somebody strong could take over. But Sadat soon proved himself to be the wily and courageous man that the world grew later to know. He was the first Arab leader ever to talk of a possible peace with Israel. At the same time, however, he began to lay the plans for a major operation across the Suez Canal, which he believed would be essential if he were to hope to break the political log-jam that had developed in the area and had brought about a stalemate between Egypt and Israel.Carefully, Sadat made his plans and prepared Egypt for war. He realized at a certain point that he required complete

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[76]. *Ibid.*

freedom of action to be able to go to war, and therefore decided to free himself from Russian supervision and restraints: in July 1972, he expelled the Russian military personnel from Egypt. (Thereafter, he did not neglect to mend his fences with the Russians, however, in order to guarantee his military sources of supply.) Sadat set in motion all the moves towards war — the political planning, the military planning and the outstandingly clever and sophisticated deception plan that he had evolved. This plan included a strict observance of the cease-fire along the Suez Canal, a situation which President Sadat rightly appreciated must lead to a lowering of the Israeli guard. At the same time, he began to exercise units of the Egyptian Army in the actual tasks and operations they would have to perform on the day of the Canal crossing. Many units, for a period of almost three years, rehearsed daily the function that they would perform on the day of the opening of the October or Yom Kippur War.

Israel was lulled into a false sense of security. The Egyptian leadership did everything it could to encourage the Israelis in their preconceived notions so as to strengthen this sense of security. And thus, as quiet descended along the Suez Canal and Egyptian and Israeli troops gradually returned to the peaceful occupations of fishing opposite each other in the Canal, and even at times developing a camaraderie between the troops of the opposing armies, President Sadat set in motion the preparations for the next Middle East war.

# CHAPTER - 6

# SUMMARY, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

## 6.1 Summary

Throughout recorded history the land of historic Israel and Palestine, located on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, was conquered many times by invaders. The area is the homeland of the Jewish people, who immigrated to the area beginning in the 13th century BC as Hebrew tribes. The tribes confederated as the Israelites who ruled much of the area from the 11th century to the 6th century BC. The Jews formed an identity as the people of the covenant but subsequently came under the rule of others until they succeeded in establishing an independent Jewish state called Judea in 168 BC. The Romans expelled the Jews from Judea in 135 AD. In subsequent centuries many Jews maintained the idea of regaining control of the area, which they considered home. In the 1890s Theodor Herzl, a Jewish journalist living in Austria, advocated reestablishing a Jewish state in Palestine. Herzl believed Zionism (the reuniting of Jewish people in Palestine) would match "a people without a land with a land without a people." Palestine was already inhabited, however. The countryside was home to Arabs, most of them Muslims, while the larger towns contained both Arabs and Jews. Some of the Jews were long established there, while others were religious pilgrims from Europe who had come to live near the holy sites in Jerusalem and other cities. The land was ruled on the 15$^{th}$ century by the Ottoman Empire until WW I after which it was placed under British Mandate for Palestine.

The idea of state for Jews was first initiated with the Belfour Declaration where it was stated " *the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people."* In April 1920, the conference of the Allied Powers assigned the Mandate for Palestine to Great Britain, providing therein that the Mandatory should, inter alia, be responsible for implementing the Balfour Declaration. During the period from 1936–1939, known as the Great Arab Revolt or the "Great Uprising" thousands of Jewish-farmed acres and orchards were destroyed, Jews were attacked and killed. In the wake of the strike and the Peel Commission recommendation of partition of the country into a small Jewish state and an Arab state to be attached to Jordan. From 1936 onward the British government

facilitated the training, arming, recruitment and funding of a range of security and intelligence forces in collaboration with the Jewish Agency and Palestine Arabs. Mean while the Palestine partition commission under sir John Woodhead had in November 1938 set out three possible principles on which partition might theoretically be effected with suggested boundaries. Since neither party was prepared to abate its extreme demands, the British government proposed its own solution in the Macdonald White Paper of May 1939. In 1940 Ben Gurion went to the United States to promote his plan which was based on three things: opposition to the policy of the White Paper, the formation of a Jewish army, and the conversion of Palestine into a Jewish Commonwealth after the war. In May 1942, a congress of American Zionists unanimously endorsed the proposals but following British counter measures, the Jewish agency modified the Biltmore Program in favour of "a viable Jewish State in a adequate area of Palestine". The British having failed to bring about a compromise between the Jews and the Arabs, resolved to refer the Palestine problem to the United Nations.

On 29 November 1947 the United Nations General Assembly approved a plan, UN General Assembly Resolution 181, to resolve the Arab-Jewish conflict by partitioning Palestine into two states, one Jewish and one Arab. Each state would comprise three major sections, linked by extraterritorial crossroads.The Jews accepted the plan however the Palestines rejected and thus civil war broke out in the Mandatory Palestine. On 14 May 1948, David Ben-Gurion declared the independence of the state of Israel, and the 1948 Palestine war entered its second phase, with the intervention of several Arab states' armies the following day and thus started the War of Independence.

In this war Arab forces (including the armies of Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq as well as Palestinian guerrillas) had expected an easy victory over the small and isolated Jewish state, but despite heavy casualties Israel won. In 1949, Israel signed separate armistices with Egypt on 24 February, Lebanon on 23 March, Transjordan on 3 April, and Syria on 20 July and finally ended the war. The Suez crisis was provoked by Egypt's nationalization of the strategic waterway that led to Sinai war with active intervention of Britain,France and Israel which also triggered the diplomatic intervention of both the United States and the USSR. It was finally defused through the placement of a United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) peacekeeping force in the canal zone. Six-Day War was an armed conflict in June 1967 between Israel and the Arab states of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. In six days, Israel conquered the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza Strip,

West Bank, and Golan Heights, which became collectively known as the Occupied Territories. . As a result, the Six-Day War was followed by what has come to be known as the War of Attrition with three phases as 'Defensive Rehabilitation','Offensive Defense,' and the 'Liberation' phase working one after the other step by step. Although cease-fire agreements eventually ended this situation, the region remained volatile. Arab-Israeli War of 1973, armed conflict between Israel and the Arab countries of Egypt and Syria, fought during the month of October 1973. Egypt and Syria initiated the conflict to regain territories that Israel had occupied since the Six-Day War of 1967. Although both sides suffered heavy losses during the 1973 war, Israel retained control of the territories.

Besides this major wars Israel has also been the victim of many terrorists attacks by PLO in the 70s and 80s and Hamas and Hezbollah at present.Camp David Accords and Oslo Accords have to some extent paved the way for peace process but the recent abduction with killing of Israeli soldiers which led the invasion of Lebanon in 2006 have again triggered the symptom of previous wars.

## 6.2    Conclusions

a)    Throughout recorded history the land of historic Israel and Palestine, was located on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea and was conquered many times by the invaders.Thus changing the map to various forms.

b)    The area was the homeland of the Jewish people, who immigrated to the area beginning in the 13th century BC as Hebrew tribes who confederated as the Israelites.

c)     Palestine was already inhabited, however. The countryside was home to Arabs, most of them Muslims, while the larger towns contained both Arabs and Jews.

d)     Based on these evidences and to get support from Arabs during the WW I Belfour Declaration was made which promised " *the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people"* which actually sowed the establishment of present day Israel.

e)      The UN Partition Plan, 1947, was of course the legitimate solution which had not been baised to both Jews and Arabs but when it was  not accepted by Arabs it thus started civil war.

f)      Israel's announcement of Independence on 14 May 1948 was a rightful step since it  was as per the UN Partition Plan 1947; no matter what  hardships and consequences it had to bear for its existence and identity.

g)      All Arab-Israel Wars 1948,1956,1967,1973 and War of Attrition (1968-70) were nothing but the escalation of 1947 civil war with the first war being the cause of the next.

h)      The War of Attrition can be an important strategy to prepare for future war by constant engagement with  enemy in the first phase, gaining moral in the second phase and finally offensive initiative in the third phase though immediate situation don't favour you.

i)      Oil can be used as an important weapon during the war as done by the Arabs in the Yom Kippur War 1973.

j)      Though for Arab nations it was just gain or loss of territory but to Israel it was the war for its existence.In other words war was for 'Just Cause'.They fought with their hearts and minds and hence were victorious in all  successive wars.

k)      Camp David Accords and Oslo Accords have of course paved a tremendous role in the conflict settlement in Middle East but these are at times shattered by terrorist activites of  PLO, Hamas and Hezboullah that zeoparadise the complete peace process.

l)      The role of United Nations cannot be undermined in maintaining peace in the region right from the period of Partition Plan 1947 till date.

### 6.3 Recommendations

a)      As have been historically found  that Jews as Israelites were living in Palestine as Hebrew tribes right from the 11th century BC, its better that both except the existence of either.

b)      The UN Partition Plan, 1947, was of course the legitimate solution which had not been biased to both Jews and Arabs as it was planned considering its historical background.

c)      As the Arab-Israel Wars proved more fatal to the Arabs than the Israelis, the Arabs should not create such environment that triggers the conflict and escalate into war, leading their ultimately defeat.

d)      The War of Attrition can be an important strategy to prepare for future war by constant engagement with  enemy in the first phase, gaining moral in the second phase and finally offensive initiative in the third phase though immediate situation don't favour you.

e)      Taking various terrorist organisation as PLO,Hamas, Hezboullah etc as their lauching pad to get lost territory by Syria and Palestatians will never fulfill their aim instead deteriorate the ongoing  peace process.

f)      To follow United Nations terms and conditions always enhances  peace in the region.

g)      To respect others existence and identity leads to the existence of own as well which is the basic principle of  all living being as ' *To live and to let live'*.

# ANNEX - 1

## UN General Assembly Resolution 181

1.  The Mandate for Palestine shall terminate as soon as possible but in any case not later than 1 August 1948.

2.  The armed forces of the mandatory Power shall be progressively withdrawn from Palestine, the withdrawal to be completed as soon as possible but in any case not later than 1 August 1948. The mandatory Power shall advise the Commission, as far in advance as possible, of its intention to terminate the mandate and to evacuate each area. The mandatory Power shall use its best endeavours to ensure that an area situated in the territory of the Jewish State, including a seaport and hinterland adequate to provide facilities for a substantial immigration, shall be evacuated at the earliest possible date and in any event not later than 1 February 1948.

3.  Independent Arab and Jewish States and the Special International Regime for the City of Jerusalem, set forth in Part III of this Plan, shall come into existence in Palestine two months after the evacuation of the armed forces of the mandatory Power has been completed but in any case not later than 1 October 1948. The boundaries of the Arab State, the Jewish State, and the City of Jerusalem shall be as described in Parts II and III below.

4.  The period between the adoption by the General Assembly of its recommendation on the question of Palestine and the establishment of the independence of the Arab and Jewish States shall be a transitional period.

# ANNEX - 2

## United Nations Security Council Resolution 118

United Nations Security Council Resolution 118, adopted on October 13, 1956, after noting the declarations made before it and the accounts of the development of the exploratory conversations on the Suez question given by the Secretary-General and the Foreign Ministers of Egypt, France and the United Kingdom the Council agreed that any settlement of the Suez question should meet the following requirements:

1. There should be free and open transit through the Canal without discrimination, overt or covert--this covers both political and technical aspects
2. The sovereignty of Egypt should be respected
3. The operation of the Canal should be insulated from the politics of any country
4. The manner of fixing tolls and charges should be decided by agreement between Egypt and the Users
5. A fair proportion of the dues should be allotted to development
6. In case of disputes, unresolved affairs between the Suez Canal Company and the Egyptian Government should be settled by arbitration with suitable terms of reference and suitable provisions for the payment of sums found to be due.

# ANNEX - 3

## United Nations Security Council Resolution 242

The Security Council,

*Expressing* its continuing concern with the grave situation in the Middle East,

*Emphasizing* the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in the area can live in security,

*Emphasizing further* that all Member States in their acceptance of the Charter of the United Nations have undertaken a commitment to act in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter.

1. *Affirms* that the fulfillment of Charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which should include the application of both the following principles:

   (i) Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;

   (ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force;

2. *Affirms further* the necessity:

   (a) For guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area;

   (b) For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem;

   (c) For guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarized zones;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to designate a Special Representative to proceed to the Middle East to establish and maintain contacts with the States concerned in order to promote agreement and assist efforts to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement in accordance with the provisions and principles in this resolution;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council on the progress of the efforts of the Special Representative as soon as possible.

# ANNEX - 4

## United Nations Security Council Resolution 340

*The Security Council*

*Recalling* its resolutions 338 (1973) of 22 October and 339 (1973) of 23 October 1973,

*Noting with regret* the reported repeated violations of the cease-fire in non-compliance with resolutions 338 (1973) and 339 (1973),

*Noting with concern* from the Secretary-General's report that the United Nations military observes have not yet been enabled to place themselves on both sides of the cease-fire line,

1.  *Demands* that immediate and complete cease-fire be observed and that the parties return to the positions occupied by them at 1650 hours GMT on 22 October 1973;

2.  *Requests* the Secretary-General, as an immediate step, to increase the number of United Nations military observers on both sides;

3.  *Decides* to set up immediately, under its authority, a United Nations Emergency Force to be composed of personnel drawn from States Members of the United Nations except the permanent members of the Security Council, and requests the Secretary-General to report within 24 hours on the steps taken to this effect;

4.  *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Council on an urgent and continuing basis on the state of implementations of the present resolution, as well as resolutions 338 (1973) and 339 (1973);

5.  *Requests* all Member States to extend their full co-operation to the United Nations in the implementation of the present resolution, as well as resolutions 338 (1973) and 339 (1973).

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