



CHAPTER 3

U.S. POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

In the history of U.S. foreign policy, the Middle East as a region of interest is a relative newcomer. Although Americans have traveled to the region since the late eighteenth century—Mark Twain was a famous visitor—the U.S. government paid the Middle East little attention until the end of World War II. Since then, the United States has played an increasing role in Middle Eastern politics.

U.S. policy in the region has focused on six major objectives: ensuring the security of Israel; achieving an Arab-Israeli peace settlement; maintaining access by industrialized nations to Middle Eastern oil; blocking Soviet influence in the region (until 1989); countering terrorism; and in recent years promoting regime change in certain countries. With the breakup of the Soviet Union, the U.S. interest shifted to an uneasy combination of maintaining local stability and promoting democratization. This balance becomes even more delicate when teamed with efforts to secure the United States' traditional interests in the region. Since the late 1970s, U.S. policy has been complicated by the Islamist political ideology put forth by individuals, groups, and governments that challenge the paradigms through which foreign policy is analyzed and made in the United States and other Western nations.

Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, the United States has pursued an aggressive campaign against Islamist groups engaged in terrorism. Most notably, this has resulted in the invasion of Afghanistan and the overthrow of the Islamist regime there, as well as the subsequent ouster of the Saddam Hussein government in Iraq, based in

part on allegations that Iraq supported terrorism. The United States also has sought to prevent the spread of nuclear, chemical, and biological arms and has continued to promote economic and security ties with moderate Arab states.

These policy objectives have often been in conflict. In particular, the relationship between the United States and Israel has at times made other U.S. policy goals more difficult to pursue and achieve. For example, U.S. support for Israel during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war led to an Arab oil boycott against the United States. Ten years later the United States was selling tens of billions of dollars worth of advanced military hardware to the Gulf states responsible for the oil boycott. Regardless of the inherent contradictions, successive U.S. administrations have agreed that these major objectives must all be pursued, and they have retained public and congressional support. This chapter examines the mechanisms of the U.S. foreign policy making process and looks at the major events in U.S.–Middle East relations, touching briefly on the presidency of Woodrow Wilson, during which the modern era emerged, but concentrating on post–World War II events.

U.S. Foreign Policy Formation

U.S. foreign policy formation involves interplay between the president and close advisers, Congress, the foreign policy bureaucracies, and, to a lesser extent, the public. The president is the central figure in this process but is dependent on advisers. Those who contend for the president's

attention include the national security adviser, the secretary of state, the director of national intelligence, and special interest groups outside the government. Other entities involved in the process include the Agency for International Development (AID), the Defense, Treasury, and Commerce Departments, other members of the intelligence community, and international organizations of which the United States is a member. These participants seldom if ever agree on all points at the same time, and often they have conflicting policies for events or regions as well as different institutional agendas. There remains, however, enough overlap among their agendas to produce significant jurisdictional and resource conflicts, especially during the congressional appropriations process.

The Executive Branch

The Presidency

The executive branch of the U.S. government encompasses the presidency and various departments and independent agencies. Those most directly involved in foreign policy formation are the State and Defense Departments, the Central Intelligence Agency and other intelligence and national-security agencies, and the Agency for International Development. Smaller foreign policy entities whose focus is information dissemination and political, economic, or humanitarian development include the Department of State's Office of International Information Programs, the National Endowment for Democracy, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and the Peace Corps. These agencies are more instruments of policy, but their very existence speaks to the many ways in which the United States exerts its influence abroad. The most important foreign policy forum of the executive branch is the Office of the President, represented by the president and his National Security Council, headed by the national security adviser.

Presidents face many challenges in foreign policy formation and implementation. First, as

individuals, they bring different experiences to the Oval Office that shape their view of the world, including their conception of proper foreign policy making and implementation. However, these experiences have rarely made them experts in the operation of the international system. The typical post-World War II president has come to the White House via a state governorship, a stint in Congress, or the vice presidency and usually has been more comfortable with domestic politics and campaigning than with the larger world.

Additionally, presidents are too busy to learn the complexities of all international issues that might command their attention. Time demands, therefore, leave the president reliant on advisers to present information he can use without himself becoming an expert in international relations. Advisers must summarize complex situations quickly and neatly, knowing that the situations are never so neat.

Among advisers, competition is keen for the president's attention. The secretary of state and the national security adviser are selected by the president, who tends to favor one over the other. The relationship between these two advisers often affects their reception in the Oval Office, as well.

Presidential management styles influence decisions to fill these important roles and how the individuals will be used in decision making. Some presidents like to take charge of foreign policy decisions, regardless of their knowledge of international affairs. These presidents can foster a collegial atmosphere among advisers, where everyone cooperates (or respectfully disagrees) and consensus opinions emerge. Collegiality is achieved through careful selection of advisers who share a worldview or through a clear articulation of presidential policy preferences, both of which create clarity of purpose. Presidents John F. Kennedy, George Bush, and Bill Clinton have all employed this management style.

Alternatively, presidents who want close control of policy may select one key adviser, typically the national security adviser or the secretary of state, to consult more than all others when deciding foreign policy questions. In this case, th

personal relationship—perceptions of loyalty and trust—between president and adviser is crucial. Sometimes, however, advisers are more loyal than expert in the subjects about which they are to advise the president. Further, it is through this individual that policy directives are disseminated. The adviser or senior staff manager then must create a hierarchy of specialists to turn the president's directives into concrete policies and actions. The members of this hierarchy will tend to share similar worldviews, because the top leadership is interested in their activity and does not want to mediate disputes. This atmosphere fosters consensus thinking and may freeze out points of view that do not support it. Serious differences of opinion are likely to lead to the departure of one or more advisers. This was typical of the presidency of Richard M. Nixon from 1969 to 1974.

The alternative presidential managerial style is more hands-off, allowing advisers and subordinates to handle the details of foreign policy. In some cases, a president will give only general policy directives to his staff. Presidents who adopt this style tend to be more interested and competent in domestic policy. This is hardly surprising given the career path of most presidents, but it may allow policy to drift or be paralyzed by disputes between advisers. The presidency of Ronald Reagan is a notable example of this management style.

The National Security Council

The National Security Council (NSC) was established, along with the Department of Defense and the CIA, by the National Security Act of 1947. Its original purpose was to provide a coordinating mechanism for all national security and foreign policy information coming into the White House, providing comprehensive policy reviews and allowing policy officials a structured meeting forum. It functioned in this manner under the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, in the late 1940s and the 1950s, with an executive secretary and a staff of twenty. The NSC became more institutionalized under Dwight D. Eisenhower, with a staff hierarchy emerging. Two boards were

created, policy planning and operations, to formulate and implement foreign and national security policy. The executive secretary became the assistant for national security affairs, or more commonly, the national security adviser.

However, bureaucratic constraints soon hampered the creative problem-solving process needed to formulate policy. Under the Kennedy administration, from 1961 to 1963, the national security advising system became more personalized. While circumventing some bureaucratic problems of the NSC, personalization created new ones. President Kennedy valued direct contact with lower-level officials and interagency working groups, believing they were more responsive to his foreign policy directives. NSC staff appointments on the basis of personal loyalty to the president, rather than expert knowledge, became more common. This trend continued under Lyndon B. Johnson, who became president on Kennedy's assassination in 1963 and remained in office until 1969, during the period when the Vietnam War dominated U.S. foreign policy decisions. Johnson went further outside the formal NSC system than had Kennedy, and the NSC became a body to circumvent rather than to consult.

President Nixon came into office in 1969 with a plan to revitalize the NSC by creating a number of new committees and interagency bodies under the leadership of his national security adviser, Henry Kissinger. In effect, this system allowed Kissinger to engage or ignore the NSC as he preferred. Jimmy Carter, who spent four years in the White House beginning in 1977, replaced the Nixon system with two committees, one for long-term projects and planning, and the other for short-term work. However, the personal dimension introduced under Kennedy persisted, and over the course of his administration, Carter shifted away from the formal NSC system to weekly meetings with select advisers.

President Reagan, a two-term president from 1981 to 1989, echoing Nixon, pledged to make the NSC system less personal but wound up with an organization that had little role in the foreign policy process and was difficult to monitor. The

national security adviser took a back seat to the secretaries of state and defense and to the director of central intelligence. Reagan's lack of attention produced drift in the NSC and, when combined with the president's laissez-faire style of policy articulation, created conditions that allowed generally unaccountable officials to implement the illegal sale of arms to Iran and divert the profits to groups fighting left-wing governments in Latin America. At the same time, the NSC overall had become a bloated bureaucracy too occupied with procedure.

Presidents George H. W. Bush (1989–1993) and Clinton (1993–2001) had the most success in getting away from personalization in the NSC system. Both men created collegial teams of advisers who worked well together and avoided intramural battles typical of earlier administrations. However, collegiality is not always amenable to creative thinking and changing times. This especially was a factor for the Bush administration: the president's closest advisers agreed on their view of the world, and they liked it so well that they could not see that it was changing. Clinton led his foreign policy team through these shifts, seemingly making policy on a case-by-case basis, without the global outlook of the cold war or Bush's "new world order."

During the first term of President George W. Bush (2001–), the NSC was more subordinated to other agencies, and the role of his national security adviser was regarded as playing mediator between competing senior officials—particularly the vice president, the secretary of defense, and the secretary of state—and enjoying the personal trust of the president in providing advice on conflicting opinions from these senior officials.

The Department of State

The Department of State was formed in 1789 as the primary foreign policy organ of the new United States of America. Its employees today remain the primary representatives of the United States in foreign countries and international organizations, but its post-World War II domestic role has shifted from policy formation to information

processing and dissemination. Although the secretary of state remains an important figure in policy formation, his or her position in the hierarchy of presidential foreign policy advisers is often determined by loyalty to the president or to the department. Another factor is the secretary's relationship with other foreign policy figures, in particular the national security adviser. When conflict occurs between these two individuals, usually the secretary is isolated from the decision-making process.

As organs to implement policy, U.S. embassies abroad are for the most part highly effective. However, there are logistical and personnel issues that on occasion cause problems for policy implementation. First, the embassy is home not only to Department of State personnel, but also to representatives of up to forty-five different federal departments and agencies, all with their own reporting channels and some with different, even contradictory, policy objectives. This makes the job of the ambassador, which includes managing the embassy staff and ensuring coherent policy implementation, difficult, and the problem is compounded if the ambassador is not interested in the day-to-day embassy operations. Although most ambassadors are career Foreign Service officers, a significant number are political appointees who may feel more effective as the visible embodiment of the U.S. presence in their host country than as personnel managers. Additionally, political appointees to ambassadorships are not necessarily familiar with the countries to which they are assigned, although many serve with distinction. Sometimes lack of knowledge will unfortunately damage their credibility, and by extension, that of the Department of State and the United States.

Within the Department of State, five of the six offices overseen by undersecretaries are directly involved with discharging foreign policy. In addition, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) receives guidance from the secretary of state, and the permanent representative to the United Nations reports to him or her.

The office of Political Affairs manages bilateral and regional policy issues, integrating political, economic, and security matters into the United

States' bilateral relations. Among its regional bureaus, Near Eastern Affairs deals specifically with foreign policy and diplomatic relations toward Middle Eastern nations. The office of Arms Control and International Security concerns itself with the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, disarmament, regional security arrangements, agreements on forces, and arms transfer policy.

Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs oversees the Bureaus of Education and Cultural Affairs, Public Affairs, and International Information Programs in fulfilling what was once the mission of the United States Information Agency: explaining and advocating U.S. policy to foreign populations (as well as to domestic audiences) rather than to foreign governments. It carries out its responsibilities primarily through broadcasting, print material, and the Internet. It also administers the Fulbright educational exchange program. Before a government restructuring in the late 1990s, USIA also oversaw the well-known Voice of America, but it now operates under the Broadcasting Board of Governors, as does the al-Hurra satellite network and Radio Sawa, which are directed at the Arab world, and Radio Farda, which is aimed at Iran.

The office of Global Affairs coordinates policy on a number of international issues, including democracy, labor, human rights, narcotics, the environment, and population. USAID disburses U.S. foreign aid in the form of humanitarian, economic, and political development programs, which it carries out through field offices and subcontractors.

The Intelligence Community

The intelligence community is composed of several different agencies, some autonomous, some affiliated with cabinet-level departments. They have in common a mission to gather information considered valuable to U.S. interests, analyze it, and present conclusions to policy makers. While on the surface each of these agencies has a distinct role to play, in practice they overlap, resulting in interagency conflicts. The best known of the intelligence agencies is the Central Intelligence Agency, which is responsible for general

national security and foreign government information gathering. Other agencies include the National Security Agency (NSA), which is responsible for ensuring the security of sensitive U.S. signals traffic (cables, wires, and encrypted broadcasts) and for decoding and analyzing foreign communications. The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) is responsible for military intelligence. The National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) operates a system of reconnaissance satellites serving the intelligence community. NSA, DIA, and NRO are tied to the Department of Defense. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), a branch of the Justice Department, is responsible for foreign counterterrorism efforts, whether in the United States or abroad.

The goal of intelligence gathering is to provide forewarning to government officials, thereby limiting foreign affairs surprises, and to supply information for policy decisions. Another aspect of intelligence is covert operation, which is most closely associated with the CIA but is carried out by a number of agencies. Covert action can be a valuable and effective tool of foreign policy, but following a number of bungled operations in the 1970s and 1980s, presidents have been reluctant to use this tool to any significant degree.

Covert operations, when discovered, have also made for long-lasting anti-American sentiments abroad. In the Middle East, a well-known example occurred in Iran in 1953 when U.S. covert intervention helped ensure the failure of an attempt to replace the shah and contributed to long-lasting hostility to the United States by opponents of the shah and Iran's revolutionary government after 1979. More recently, as part of the Bush administration's "war on terror" after 2001, the CIA has assumed a more active role in operating Special Forces against military and terrorist elements in Afghanistan and Iraq. In addition, unmanned CIA aircraft have been used to assassinate terrorist leaders.

The failure of the intelligence community to ascertain that Iraq did not have weapons of mass destruction prior to the 2003 war—as well as alleged disagreement or opposition to Bush administration policy views in some sectors—produced a restructuring of intelligence leadership. A new

position of director of national intelligence was created in 2005 to oversee the entire intelligence community. Previously the director of the CIA had held a supervisory role over the community.

Congress

The job of Congress is to make the laws of the land, and in pursuit of this goal it has organized itself into committees and subcommittees, allowing members to become specialists in certain fields. Most members of Congress are not on committees dealing directly with international issues and spend little time—less than 5 percent by one estimate—considering foreign policy matters before voting on them. Another reason foreign affairs receives little congressional attention is the small constituency interested in international issues; some members consider assignment to these committees as an electoral liability. That said, Congress does consider foreign policy legislation, does have executive branch oversight responsibilities, does make billions of dollars in appropriations for foreign affairs, and is accordingly an important part of U.S. foreign policy making.

The committees most responsible for foreign affairs legislation are the House International Relations Committee, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, and all of their regional and functional subcommittees, such as on economic or human rights policy. The House International Relations Committee in the 109th Congress (2005–2007) has a subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee had a subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs.

Most policy initiatives originate in the executive branch. Congress, through the appropriate committee or subcommittee, deals with the legal details of the proposed initiative. Throughout this process, politics may be close to the surface, forcing participants to consider factors not directly related to the appropriateness or efficacy of the policy in question. Political factors include election considerations, public interest and percep-

tions, symbolic politics, and domestic concerns such as the presence of military personnel or manufacturing that might be affected by a policy. However, political considerations usually are essential as part of building public consensus for a policy, without which no foreign policy program will be effective, or often even possible to implement.

Relations between the legislative and executive branches also play a role. During the Clinton administration, a time of acrimonious executive-legislative relations, Congress on various occasions affected the foreign policy process by drawing out the confirmation hearings for ambassadors-designate and other appointees. One notable example was a year-long delay (including an ethics investigation from which no charges arose) in the confirmation of Richard Holbrooke as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

Institutional factors help and hinder Congress's ability to handle foreign policy issues. One is simply the volume of work that any Congress faces. No member is an expert on all issues on which votes occur, and most rely on leadership guidance, colleagues on specialized committees, and committee staffs and specialized agencies that provide information.

Congress plays other roles in the foreign policy process. The Constitution grants it the power to regulate foreign commerce, impose import taxes, and declare war. The latter has been a continuing source of contention between presidents, who assert their right to commit U.S. military forces as part of their power as commander in chief, and Congress, which has sought ways to limit this assertion, particularly since the Vietnam War.

The president has the right to enter into treaties, but they do not become U.S. law without the "advice and consent" of two-thirds of the Senate; this constitutional requirement allows the Senate to amend treaties and even permits Senate rejection of a treaty negotiated by the president. A notable example of the latter was the defeat of the League of Nations treaty negotiated by President Woodrow Wilson at the end of World War I. In practice, the executive branch has devised ways to circumvent this clause. There is no constitutional

definition of a treaty, and presidents have claimed the right to negotiate other types of international agreements. In some cases, the president receives prior approval to negotiate and reach an agreement; this is known as a statutory agreement. Congress has fulfilled its duty of providing advice and consent, but it has no say in the content of the agreement arrived at, and the agreement has the force of U.S. law. In other cases, the president will arrive at an executive agreement with a foreign power without the prior approval of the Senate. Most of these agreements have dealt with diplomatic issues or administrative concerns surrounding prior military commitments. However, this is an area in which the Senate has been trying to win back control, so far with little success.

The Public and Foreign Policy

The American public is involved in foreign policy making primarily in two ways: through public opinion polling and through lobbying. While the foreign policy stance of a candidate may influence a voter's choice, it rarely is of primary concern; domestic issues take precedence. Except for overriding events, such as the Vietnam war in the 1960s or the Persian Gulf War in 1991, the public has limited interest in or knowledge of foreign policy matters. Americans may become interested in foreign policy when it involves other issues of concern to them, such as the environment, local jobs, or human rights abuses. When foreign policy matters do catch domestic attention, Americans tend to look for policies that will generate immediate results. All of this allows policy leaders to shape public opinion, if they choose, but at the same time establishes a public indifference that is difficult to overcome until an issue is so urgent that considered policy debate and options get lost in the crises of the moment.

Lobbying plays a much larger role in the foreign policy process than do public opinion polls. The major lobbying force in U.S. Middle East policy is the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), which was founded in 1954 with the express purpose of lobbying Congress on

behalf of Israel, as its needs are perceived by the American Jewish community. It is widely regarded as the most powerful ethnic lobby in Washington, D.C., and is also active in every state. It provides timely, concise information to members of Congress, financially supports pro-Israeli candidates for office, and wages media campaigns against candidates perceived to be less sympathetic to its cause.

AIPAC succeeds in its lobbying efforts for a number of reasons: it has ample funds to spend on campaign contributions and advertising; it has access to the offices of the majority of members of Congress; and it understands the power of Jewish history, the Holocaust, and sensitivity about anti-Semitism to influence public opinion and decisions of elected officials. Charges of anti-Semitism have been leveled at candidates who oppose its positions. AIPAC is aided additionally by the interests it represents. Israeli and Jewish issues are easily focused, whereas Muslim and Arab Middle Eastern issues span a range of religious and regional variables. It should be noted that AIPAC is not the only Israeli or Jewish lobby in Washington, simply the wealthiest and most powerful.

There are Arab lobbying organizations also, the best-known member of which is the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee—National Association of Arab-Americans, originally two organizations. They merged in 2001. The NAAA was founded in 1972 as a response to AIPAC and served as a lobby organization and a political action committee. It did not, however, have the financial resources of AIPAC and was less successful in getting its members out in shows of support (or criticism) for policies on the Middle East. The ADC started as a grassroots organization drawing attention to issues affecting Arab Americans, and it continues to act as a watchdog group in addition to presenting Arab concerns before the executive and legislative branches. The Arab American Institute, founded in 1985, has become a vocal advocate on behalf of Arab Americans.

A problem for the Arab lobby is the diversity it represents. The Arab world comprises twenty-two states (including the North African countries and

the Palestinian territories), all with their own interests that often do not coincide. One might say that they are united behind the Palestinian cause, or in opposition to U.S. policy in Iraq, but on a particular issue each country pursues its own agenda. Arab Americans are even more diverse than their countries of origin: there are Christian and Muslim Arabs, recent immigrants and those whose families have been here for generations. Finally, oil companies and Iranian Americans have interests in the region, but they are not represented by either the Arab or Jewish lobbies. Consequently, the Arab lobby does not and cannot speak with one voice, a fact that greatly diminishes its effectiveness in lobbying Congress.

U.S. Middle East Policy

The Wilson Administration

President Woodrow Wilson set the framework for U.S. policy in the Middle East when he endorsed a 1917 letter from British foreign secretary Arthur Balfour to Lord Lionel Rothschild, a British Zionist leader, pledging that Britain would support the establishment in Palestine of a "national home" for the Jewish people, on the understanding "that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine." The U.S. Congress adopted a resolution approving the declaration in September 1922.

Wilson also strongly influenced the post-World War I peace settlement that established national boundaries for the Middle East. He conceived the interim League of Nations mandates, which led to the formation of most of the countries that exist in the Middle East today. In July 1922, the League of Nations approved an arrangement giving Great Britain a mandate over Palestine. The mandate, which went into force September 22, 1923, contained a preamble incorporating the Balfour Declaration and stressing the Jews' historical connection with Palestine. Britain was made responsible for placing the country under such "political, administrative, and eco-

nomie conditions as will secure the establishment of a Jewish National Home."

Between 1923 and 1939 more than four hundred thousand Jews immigrated to Palestine, causing resentment against the British among the Arabs. In 1939, however, Arab unrest and German and Italian attempts to improve relations with the Arabs led the British to issue a white paper that reduced the flow of Jewish immigrants to Palestine—primarily European Jews suffering from Nazi persecution—to fifteen thousand a year for five years. After that, no more Jewish immigration was to be allowed unless agreed upon by the local Arab population. Jews denounced the restrictions and tried to circumvent them.

The Truman Administration (1945–1953)

The United States led the post-World War II effort to lift the restrictions on Jews entering Palestine. In August 1945, President Harry S. Truman called for the free settlement of Palestine by Jews to a point consistent with maintaining civil peace. He also suggested in a letter to British prime minister Clement R. Attlee that an additional hundred thousand Jews be allowed to enter Palestine. In December both houses of Congress adopted a resolution urging U.S. aid in opening Palestine to Jewish immigrants and in building a "democratic commonwealth."

Meanwhile, Britain, eager to have the United States share responsibility for its Jewish immigration policy, joined with the United States in November to establish a commission to examine admission of European Jews to Palestine. Britain also agreed to permit an additional fifteen hundred Jews to enter Palestine each month.

In April 1946, an Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry recommended the immediate admission of a hundred thousand Jews into Palestine and continuation of the British mandate until a United Nations trusteeship was established. Truman endorsed the proposal, but Britain stipulated that before it would agree to continue its mandate, underground Jewish forces in Palestine would have to disband.

On October 4, 1946, Truman released a communication sent to the British government in which he appealed for "substantial immigration" into Palestine "at once" and expressed support for the Zionist plan for creating a "viable Jewish state" in part of Palestine. Britain said it regretted that Truman's statement had been made public before a settlement was realized, fearing that the unqualified expression of U.S. support for a Jewish state would reduce chances of a compromise between indigenous Arabs and Jewish immigrants. Britain was tired of fighting a losing guerrilla war with Jewish groups seeking an independent state, and by 1947 it had given up on finding a mediated settlement. Britain turned the question over to the United Nations.

The United Nations set up the Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) to devise a solution. Its report, and the vote that the United Nations took on it, were among the first items on the young organization's agenda, and President Truman was concerned about Americans' perception of the United Nations following the vote. He was aware of U.S. sympathy for Jewish immigrants, who had suffered the horrors of the Holocaust, and was concerned also about domestic politics. The Democratic Party had lost the midterm elections of 1946, giving control of Congress to the Republicans. The next presidential elections were not far off, in 1948, and as a first-term president who had come to the office from the vice presidency on the death of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, he could not afford to alienate a potent voting bloc; nor did he wish to discredit the United Nations by having the United States, its most powerful member, vote against it on one of its first major resolutions. Therefore, when UNSCOP proposed partitioning Palestine into Arab and Jewish territories, he supported it. When the state of Israel declared its independence in May 1948, he quickly recognized it.

Throughout this period, Truman—already sympathetic to Jewish interests in Palestine—was lobbied strenuously by prominent American Jews who opposed any restrictions on immigration and wanted a Zionist state in Palestine. The Zionist lobby faced opposition from the State and Defense

Departments, who believed that the creation of a Jewish state without adequate consideration of the Arab population of Palestine, as well as other Arab interests in the Levant and the Arabian Peninsula, would lead to future diplomatic and military challenges to U.S. strategic interests in the region. The Department of Defense especially opposed the partition plan, believing that such a plan was doomed to failure, that the ensuing violence would invite Russian troops into the area (the cold war was just starting to heat up), and that any Arab-Jewish fighting would be a threat to the supply of oil. However, in part because many of Truman's closest advisers were pro-Zionist, these concerns did not prevail. In addition, Congress was pro-Zionist and could be counted on to support the new state on legislative questions.

While generally successful in its goals, the American Jewish lobby did not always prevail. For example, American Jews lobbied to delay postwar development aid to Britain because of perceived slow British action on increased immigration to Palestine. Truman resisted their pressure because of the historic friendship between Britain and the United States and because Britain was pushing for the United States to assume full military and financial responsibility in Palestine. Truman even thought that, on occasion, American Jews were too strident in their lobbying efforts, actually damaging their influence with him.

Following the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, the United States tried to persuade the new state to allow repatriation of Arab refugees to their homes in what were now Israeli towns: Haifa, Jaffa, and the surrounding coastal areas. Israel resented what it felt was interference in its internal affairs, and especially resented an arms embargo that Western nations established to placate Arab states. When Israel remained adamant on refugee repatriation, the United States supported creation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) to assist settlement of Arab refugees in surrounding countries. This policy position did not help the United States with Arab states, but Washington was considering larger issues of the cold war with the Soviet Union.

In 1950, fearing an expansion of Soviet influence in the region, the United States, Britain, and France jointly declared their continued interest in the region and backed their declaration with arms supplies and security guarantees for the Arabs. Their common declaration came even though the Western powers had little reason to fear Soviet influence over Arab states at that time, which were politically dominated by Britain—Egypt, Transjordan, and Iraq—and France—Syria and Lebanon. Additionally, another problem was brewing for Western allies: the Korean War began in June 1950 and turned U.S. attention to East Asia, where it would remain through the 1952 election of Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower. Even a coup in Egypt in July 1952, which deposed King Farouk, had little impact on U.S. Middle East policy, since the revolutionaries initially maintained good relations with the Western powers.

The Eisenhower Administration (1953–1961)

President Dwight D. Eisenhower, a Republican, came into office far less beholden to the American Jewish vote than his Democratic predecessor had been. His secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, was more concerned with cold war geopolitics and the global defense of Western interests than he was with the goals of Zionism, and his view informed Eisenhower's entire eight years in office. However, the U.S. worldview during the 1950s was not deeply shared by Israel and Arab states. Israel saw her neighbors as a more serious threat than the Soviet Union, a thousand miles distant. Arab states were interested in doing business with whichever nations met their needs, but because of their Islamic heritage had no love for communism. The clash between the U.S. and Israeli worldviews led the Eisenhower administration to penalize Israel for such actions as building a canal to divert the headwaters of the Jordan River (aid funding was suspended until construction was halted in late 1953). More seriously, the U.S. worldview caused it to see in Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser's turn to the nonaligned movement a

dangerous support for global communism. The U.S. perception proved incorrect because Nasser was initially willing to work with the West to achieve a peaceful settlement of Egypt's dispute with Israel over Gaza, but Egyptian willingness evaporated in the face of slow American negotiations and Nasser's need for a dramatic breakthrough to feed his revolutionary-visionary public image.

Also in 1953, and again with an eye to containing world communism, the United States oversaw the installation of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi as ruler of Iran. After World War II Western interests had installed the shah as ruler, but he lost power to a right-wing nationalist, Mohammad Mossadeq, in 1951. Mossadeq, to consolidate his position, nationalized the oil industry, at that time almost totally controlled by foreign companies that had been granted generous concessions by the shah. By 1953 Iran was suffering economically from the nationalizations, and Mossadeq was taking repressive measures. In August of that year, the shah fled the country, but his supporters in the military—with apparent backing from the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency—staged a coup that deposed Mossadeq and brought him back. The shah's return with U.S. support, and his policies over the following two decades, culminated in 1979 in the Iranian revolution led by Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini.

Nasser's attendance at the Bandung conference of unaligned nations in 1954, as well as an arms deal with the Soviet Union, via Czechoslovakia, prompted the United States on July 19, 1956, to rescind financial backing for a major Egyptian development project, the Aswan High Dam. Nasser responded on July 26—the fourth anniversary of the revolution and Farouk's departure from Egypt—by nationalizing the Suez Canal. Meanwhile, Soviet arms shipments to Egypt in 1955 and 1956 persuaded Israel that it must prepare for war against Egypt before the military balance shifted in Cairo's favor. However, Israel's request for U.S. arms was rejected by Eisenhower, who on March 7, 1956, warned that it could provoke an "Arab-Israeli arms race."

Nationalizing the canal posed an immediate threat to Israeli shipping and to Britain and France, which had controlled the canal. Israel felt perpetually at risk from her belligerent neighbors. France regarded Nasser as the inspiration for the Algerian uprising against French rule that had started in 1954. Britain accurately saw him as an anti-imperialist who had not only removed the pliant Egyptian monarchy but had influenced Jordan's King Hussein to exile the British head of the Arab Legion, in March 1956, thus greatly diminishing London's role in the Middle East. All three parties regarded Nasser's actions as a threat to their oil supplies.

The United States tried to mediate a diplomatic solution to this crisis but was distracted by the presidential elections in 1956, and Britain, France, and Israel found the confluence of circumstances too much in their interests to settle for a mediated solution. On October 29, Israel invaded the Sinai, the opening move in a planned strategy with Britain and France to recapture the Suez Canal by bringing in their troops as "peacekeepers." None of the three believed that the United States would respond as it did, by publicly denouncing the actions of three of her allies as imperialist meddling. However, the United States had other global political problems on its hands. The week before, two weeks before the presidential election, anti-communist disturbances had broken out in Poland and Hungary. The Eisenhower administration, which came into office on a strong anticommunist platform, was forced to watch Soviet troops roll into Budapest to put down the rebellion, lest it risk open confrontation with the Soviet Union.

An Anglo-French force invaded Port Said, at the northern end of the canal, on November 5, one day before the U.S. presidential election, which Eisenhower won in a landslide even in the midst of actions by friends and enemies abroad. The Soviet Union was conscious of the possibility for armed confrontation with the United States, which it was eager to avoid, and it recognized the restraint that Washington had shown in not interfering with its actions against its recalcitrant European clients. It also recognized the possibility of

the two superpowers being drawn into continued fighting at the Suez Canal. In this milieu, the Soviet and American delegates to the United Nations joined to condemn the Anglo-French-Israeli action as an imperialist challenge to world order. A United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) was deployed, allowing the Anglo-French forces to withdraw and providing a buffer between the Egyptian and Israeli militaries.

Negotiations to demilitarize the Sinai continued into 1957. The Israelis insisted on control of part of the Sinai to guarantee Israeli shipping through the Strait of Tiran to Eilat. However, Secretary of State Dulles, always weighing cold war considerations, believed that Israeli control in the Sinai would damage U.S. credibility with the Arabs and push them toward the Soviet Union. In the end, the United States received Egyptian guarantees that Israeli shipping through the strait would not be obstructed, and Israel made clear that violation of this commitment would lead to new fighting.

The following spring, in March 1957, Eisenhower announced a new doctrine that the United States would aid any state facing armed aggression from "the agents of international communism." He made the statement in the context of the then-popular "domino theory" of geopolitics, which postulated the fall of one country to communists would inevitably lead to the fall of others nearby, like toppling dominos. His doctrine opened the door in the 1960s to U.S. involvement in Vietnam, where the Vietnamese were still fighting their French colonial rulers, but it was the Middle East that provided the first real test of the Eisenhower Doctrine. On February 1, 1958, Egypt and Syria joined to form the United Arab Republic (UAR). On July 14, followers of Egypt's Nasser overthrew the British-installed Hashimite monarchy of Iraq. Jordan and Lebanon, small states with good relations with the United States, fearing for their political stability, invoked the Eisenhower Doctrine and requested arms and troops to maintain order. Eisenhower and Dulles, seeking stable, friendly regimes to counteract Nasser's power in the region, sent U.S. Marines to Beirut on July 15; Britain sent troops to

Amman to assist King Hussein. In Lebanon, the U.S. presence quelled disturbances and facilitated the election of Fuad Chehab, a moderate, pro-Western former general, to the presidency of the country. The marines left Lebanon in October.

The Kennedy Administration (1961–1963)

President John F. Kennedy's administration was involved in a number of important international incidents, but none in the Middle East. The United States, in its continuing confrontation with international communism, faced the Soviet building of the Berlin Wall, an unsuccessful invasion of Cuba in 1961 at the Bay of Pigs, and a Soviet-U.S. crisis in 1962 over Soviet missiles installed in Cuba. Kennedy also oversaw a U.S. troop buildup in Vietnam. On the domestic front, the civil rights movement was gaining momentum. The Middle East was barely a blip on the national radar screen.

The Johnson Administration (1963–1969)

President Lyndon B. Johnson came to office on the assassination of Kennedy in November 1963. The country was in turmoil, not only from the death of the president but from escalating violence surrounding the civil rights movement and increased U.S. troop involvement in Southeast Asia.

In the Middle East, significant events were developing. At the January 1964 Arab League summit meeting in Cairo, the assembled leaders created the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as an umbrella group and a means of controlling Palestinian aspirations for the liberation of Palestine. As the 1960s progressed, the low-intensity fighting increased along the Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Jordanian borders; Palestinian guerrillas would stage a raid on Israel, and the Israel Defense Force would shell suspected guerrilla hideouts and villages on the other side of the border. These exchanges continued until 1967.

The June 1967 War. Middle East tensions poured over again on June 5, 1967, with the start of

the Six-Day War. Diplomatic efforts immediately preceding the war had failed to lift a blockade of the Gulf of Aqaba that Egypt's Nasser imposed on May 23. The blockade halted most Israeli shipping and threatened to strangle the country's economy. Nasser imposed the blockade following his demand that the UN Emergency Force be removed from the Gaza Strip and the Gulf of Aqaba outpost at Sharm al-Shaykh. Evidence suggests that Nasser provoked the confrontation with Israel, even though much of his army was engaged in Yemen at the time, based on poor intelligence information from the Soviets suggesting an Israeli troop buildup and possible preparations to strike at Damascus. The United Nations relented and withdrew the Emergency Force from the whole of Sinai, not just those areas requested. At the same time, Nasser moved a substantial Egyptian force into the Sinai Peninsula, and Syria, Iraq, and Jordan signed a treaty of mutual defense and began to mobilize their forces.

Fearing an imminent attack, Israel decided to strike first. Its warplanes surprised Egyptian airfields, destroying the bulk of the Egyptian air force on the ground. Then, in a lightning move across the Sinai Peninsula, the Israeli army broke the Egyptian blockade of the Gulf of Aqaba and once again put Israeli soldiers on the banks of the Suez Canal. The Israelis destroyed hundreds of Egyptian tanks and artillery pieces in the Sinai. In the east, Israel's forces ousted Jordanian troops from the Old City of Jerusalem and seized control of all Jordanian territory west of the Jordan River. In the north, Israel captured the strategic Golan Heights, where the raiding and shelling had been taking place.

The 1967 war fundamentally altered the political balance in the Middle East. Israel's overwhelming victory stunned the Arabs and their Soviet backers and left Israel in a position of unparalleled strength. In contrast to 1956, when Israeli forces were withdrawn under Washington's pressure, Tel Aviv quickly announced that Israel would remain in the occupied territories until decisive progress toward a permanent settlement was made.

U.S. diplomatic efforts in the Middle East during the war failed. Washington had access to every capital in the region but little influence over the belligerents, even Israel. Arab states, while respecting the United States as a superpower, received most of their military equipment from the Soviet Union. Israel also respected the United States and needed both its private and public financial support, but France was Tel Aviv's largest arms supplier at the time. The United States was powerless to do more than persuade the parties. Nor could the United States become directly involved in the war because of the possibility of confrontation with the Soviet Union and because U.S. public opinion, while supportive of Israel, was increasingly against further overseas troop commitments, as Washington's military involvement in the Vietnam war was expanding and becoming more controversial.

A few hours after Israel's initial attack on June 5, Robert J. McCloskey, deputy assistant secretary of state for public affairs, declared that the U.S. position was "neutral in thought, word, and deed." The McCloskey statement met sharp criticism in Congress and from other supporters of Israel. Later the same day, George Christian, President Johnson's press secretary, said the McCloskey statement was "not a formal declaration of neutrality." And at a news conference Dean Rusk, Johnson's secretary of state, said the term "neutral" in international law meant that the United States was not a belligerent. He said it was not "an expression of indifference." Nasser, charging that U.S.-made aircraft had contributed to Egypt's defeat, severed diplomatic relations with Washington, as did six other Arab states.

On June 19, President Johnson, in his first major statement on U.S. Middle East policy since the outbreak of the war, outlined a five-point formula for Middle East peace: "the recognized right of national life; . . . justice for the refugees; . . . innocent maritime passage; . . . limits on the wasteful and destructive arms race; and . . . political independence and territorial integrity for all." Johnson also said Israeli troops "must be withdrawn" from the lands occupied during the war, but made clear

he would not press for a withdrawal to prewar lines in every respect.

On November 22, 1967, the United States voted with the rest of the UN Security Council members in unanimously approving Resolution 242. The document called for (1) withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied Arab areas; (2) an end to the state of belligerency between the Arab nations and Israel; (3) acknowledgment of and respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of every nation in the area; (4) the establishment of "secure and recognized boundaries;" (5) a guarantee of freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area; and (6) a just settlement of the refugee problem.

Although UN efforts to end the Arab-Israeli conflict once again foundered, the resolution remained the basis for subsequent UN peace initiatives. Before the 1967 war, Arabs had insisted that Israel return all lands in excess of the territory assigned to the Jewish state by the 1947 UN partition plan. After the 1967 war, however, Arabs gradually modified their demands by insisting only that Israel adhere to the principles of the 1967 Security Council resolution, which they interpreted as calling for Israel to return to its pre-1967 borders.

In mid-1968 the United States became Israel's leading supplier of arms through an amendment added to a congressional appropriations bill. This action reflected the increasing international isolation of Israel following the passage of Resolution 242 and Israel's subsequent noncompliance, as well as the continuing power of the American Jewish lobby to influence U.S. foreign policy.

The Nixon Administration (1969-1974)

Republican president Richard M. Nixon came into office at a turbulent moment in U.S. history. Opposition to the Vietnam war was strong and growing, and the civil rights movement, while having made enormous gains, was increasingly divisive in society and had turned violent in many cities following the assassination of a number of

leaders, particularly Martin Luther King Jr. In this environment, Nixon adopted a strong, hands-on leadership style, especially in foreign policy. He deliberately set up the Department of State to be an agent of policy execution rather than formation by choosing for secretary of state a man with little foreign policy experience, William Rogers. Nixon expected his primary adviser on Middle East policy to be his national security adviser, Henry Kissinger.

Renewed sporadic fighting developed in 1969 along the Suez Canal front after Egypt repudiated the 1967 cease-fire. During this "war of attrition" period Egypt tried to wear down the Israelis and bring about territorial withdrawals. Although frequently violated, the cease-fire technically continued on the other fronts.

In a departure from previous U.S. policy, Nixon agreed early in 1969 to a series of bilateral talks on the Middle East with the Soviet Union as well as to four-power talks including Britain and France. The talks were held in Geneva throughout the year but made little progress. In December 1969, Rogers proposed a peace plan that called for the return of the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt and direct negotiations between Israel, Jordan, and Syria regarding the return of their territories (the West Bank and Golan Heights). The Rogers Plan, as it came to be known, also specified that while Israel might physically control all of Jerusalem, Jordan should have a hand in the administration of the eastern half of the city, including the Old City. The plan was immediately rejected by the Israeli government, which became even more committed to retaining the territories gained in the 1967 war. The Arab states were at best lukewarm and said little, allowing Israel to take the blame for rejecting this peace proposal.

At the same time, the United States continued to support the efforts of UN envoy Gunnar Jarring to mediate a peace settlement. On January 25, 1970, Nixon reaffirmed U.S. support for Israel's insistence on direct peace negotiations with the Arabs. A few days later he asserted that the United States was "neither pro-Arab nor pro-Israeli. We are pro-peace." With the situation highly volatile

and scattered border clashes continuing, Rogers in June 1970 submitted another cease-fire proposal and called for resumption of UN mediation efforts to implement the 1967 Security Council resolution. Egypt and Jordan and then Israel agreed to a ninety-day cease-fire, beginning August 8, in conditionally accepting the U.S. formula for peace negotiations.

Once the agreement was announced, however, protests arose in many Middle East locations. Palestinian resistance groups and the governments of Syria and Iraq rejected the peace initiative and denounced Nasser for accepting it. In Israel, six members of the minority Gahal Party resigned from the cabinet of Premier Golda Meir. Palestinian commandos carried out a series of spectacular commercial aircraft hijackings. These hijackings, on September 6 and 9, 1970, terminated at a small field in the Jordanian desert and ended in the destruction of three aircraft, although the hostages were later released. They also led to the Black September incident, which ultimately led to the PLO's expulsion from Jordan. (*Jordan profile*, p. 305)

The United States limited its response to placing naval forces on alert in the Mediterranean. The events of Black September and the failure of the Rogers Plan changed Nixon's perception of the Middle East situation. Nixon had viewed the region in cold war terms, seeing Israel and Arab states as U.S. and Soviet clients, which could be manipulated by their mentors. The hostile Israeli response to the Rogers Plan changed his opinion. Further, Henry Kissinger did not favor the plan, which had the United States making deals with enemy regimes and endangering relations with a friendly one. Nixon was unprepared to back Rogers over Kissinger, who had good personal relations with the Israeli ambassador in Washington, Yitzhak Rabin, and may have communicated to him the administration's ambivalence about the Rogers Plan. Another factor in Nixon's reassessment of U.S. policy in the region was the influence of AIPAC in Congress and public sentiment in favor of Israel and against further international military involvement.

Another significant event at this time was the death of Egypt's Nasser from a massive heart attack after mediating an end to the fighting between Jordan, Syria, and the PLO. He was succeeded by Anwar al-Sadat, one of the last of the original participants in the 1952 revolution still in the government. Sadat was widely considered a transitional figure but instead set out his own agenda for Egypt, which did not correspond neatly with the Soviet Union's regional interests. He sought to rebuild Egyptian prestige and Arab pride, while the Soviet Union was more interested in limiting Western influence in the region and avoiding a confrontation with Washington. Sadat asked repeatedly and unsuccessfully for increased Soviet military aid to prepare for a war with Israel. The Soviets continued to press for a peaceful solution of the conflict, repeatedly stating their support for UN Security Council Resolution 242.

As Sadat's differences with the Soviet Union became more acute, he concluded that Egyptian and Soviet goals were incompatible. On July 18, 1972, Sadat ordered all twenty thousand Soviet military advisers out of Egypt, severely damaging the Soviet position in the Middle East. The Soviet Union responded by expanding ties to Syria, Iraq, and the PLO. Sadat hoped that his rejection of the Soviet Union would allow for better U.S.-Egyptian relations, but 1972 was an election year and Nixon was concerned about losing the Jewish vote if he became too friendly with an enemy of Israel; however, the two countries developed informal contacts.

Gulf Security. In early 1968 the British said they would withdraw from the Arabian Peninsula and the Persian Gulf as part of a "reevaluation" of their commitments east of Suez, raising for the United States the specter of Soviet movements to obtain a warm-water port. Because U.S. commitments in Vietnam precluded replacing British troops in the Gulf, the administration of Lyndon B. Johnson looked to Iran for regional security and stability. Johnson was willing to arm Iran for this purpose, believing it necessary to ensure U.S. access to oil supplies.

During the 1970s, while pursuing an Arab-Israeli peace agreement, the United States also was strengthening its strategic relationship with Iran and Saudi Arabia. These two nations, which successive U.S. presidents saw as bulwarks against potential Soviet expansion southward, were sold billions of dollars of sophisticated U.S. military equipment.

The United States had begun an arms supply relationship with Saudi Arabia in the 1950s, but it was the Nixon administration in the early 1970s that made the oil-rich kingdom one of the "two pillars" of U.S. policy in the Persian Gulf region. Between 1950 and 1987 Saudi Arabia purchased more than \$30 billion of U.S. defense articles. Much of this money was spent on sophisticated aircraft and ultra-modern air, naval, and army bases.

Washington viewed the shah as one of its most important allies because of the close proximity of his country to the Soviet Union, the growing U.S.-Iranian trade relationship, and close military and intelligence cooperation. Moreover, the U.S.-Israeli friendship was not an impediment to a relationship with the shah, as it sometimes was with Saudi Arabia and other Arab nations.

The "two pillar" policy involved a number of assumptions by Nixon and Kissinger, not all of which held up over time. One erroneous assumption was that Iran and Saudi Arabia were willing to work together to secure regional stability. By the mid-1970s, the price of oil, of vital concern to the industrialized world, increasingly was in dispute. The price rose dramatically in the wake of the next Arab-Israeli war, in 1973. Iran wanted to keep the price high, whereas Saudi Arabia was inclined toward moderation at oil pricing summits, even while supporting many events surrounding the 1973 war that helped push up the price. (*Middle Eastern Oil and Gas*, p. 179)

That both regimes were stable was another assumption later shaken by events. In 1975 King Faisal of Saudi Arabia was assassinated. Although the transition to the next in line maintained the stability of the monarchy and the Saudi regime, the event emphasized the fragility of governments in the region. Stability, however, did not prevail in

Iran when the shah's regime collapsed in 1979 in the face of a revolution led by Khomeini. (*The Persian Gulf, Chapter 4, p. 137; Iran and Saudi Arabia profiles, pp. 241, 387*)

October War (1973). The "no-war, no-peace" stalemate held until October 1973, when Arab frustrations over the deadlock triggered the fourth Arab-Israeli war. Egypt and Syria launched a coordinated attack during Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar. Egyptian and Syrian troops broke through Israel's forward fortifications and advanced into the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights.

The war that began on October 6, 1973, has different names. In Israel it is known as the Yom Kippur War. The Arabs sometimes call it the War of Ramadan, since it began during their month-long period of daytime fasting. Israel had good intelligence that troops were being mobilized for a possible strike, but its leaders were warned by Nixon that if Israel dealt the first blow it could not rely on U.S. assistance during the war. Further, the Israeli government was distracted and somewhat disorganized at the time. It was dealing with a terrorist incident in Europe, the foreign minister was in New York at the United Nations, the ambassador to the United States was in Israel on personal business, and the military was standing down for the holiday, a large number of troops having been granted home leave. While Israeli military action would have been possible, it is unlikely that Israel could have recreated the surprise first strike employed in 1967.

The U.S. government, dealing with its own problems at the time, wanted to avoid involvement in yet another Middle Eastern conflict. By October 1973, the initial Watergate scandal had come to light, involving charges of illegal action by Nixon and his top aides, including the use of government agencies to thwart investigations. The scandal was an all-consuming national issue that fed congressional impeachment proceedings against the president. Congress itself was in a hostile mood over the administration's conduct of the Vietnam war and had just passed the controversial War Powers

Resolution to limit presidential war-making power. Fighting continued in Southeast Asia. A U.S. rapprochement with China was barely a year old and still controversial. Henry Kissinger had recently become secretary of state, while keeping his portfolio as national security adviser, and, finally, Nixon's vice president, Spiro Agnew, was facing tax evasion charges that forced his resignation from office. All told, these events were impediments to the United States assuming more responsibilities in the Middle East.

Despite the success of the initial Egyptian and Syrian strikes into Israeli-occupied territory, Israeli forces recovered. They broke through the Egyptian lines and drove to the western bank of the Suez Canal. On the other front, they advanced to within twenty miles of the Syrian capital of Damascus. The United States carried out a massive airlift of war materiel to Israel, as the prolonged fighting stretched Tel Aviv's resources to the limits.

The United States and the Soviet Union joined in pressing for an end to the fighting. Following a visit by Kissinger to Moscow, the United States and Soviet Union jointly presented to the Security Council on October 21 Resolution 338, calling for an immediate cease-fire and implementation of the 1967 UN Resolution 242. Egypt and Israel agreed, and the cease-fire was expected to go into effect the next day. Regardless, the fighting continued, and Egyptian president Sadat, concerned for the fate of his army, called on the United States and the Soviet Union for troops to enforce the cease-fire. The main flashpoint was the city of Suez, at the southern end of the canal, where the Israeli army had surrounded the Egyptian army. On the evening of October 24 Soviet general secretary Leonid Brezhnev sent a message to Nixon proposing joint U.S.-Soviet supervision of the truce. Brezhnev warned, "If you find it impossible to act together with us in this matter, we should be faced with the necessity urgently to consider the question of taking appropriate steps unilaterally." The proposal was rejected by the United States, which preferred a UN observer force without big-power participation. In the early morning hours of October 25, the president placed

U.S. armed forces worldwide on alert in response to the possibility of a unilateral move by the Soviet Union to send troops to the Middle East. The crisis was defused later that day when Moscow agreed to a Security Council resolution establishing an international peacekeeping force without the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

The oil embargo imposed on the United States and Western Europe by the members of the Organization of Arab Oil Exporting Countries had an enormous impact on national economies. The decision to cut off the flow of oil was a direct response to the U.S. airlift of war goods to Israel during the fighting.

Kissinger Diplomacy Efforts. U.S. diplomacy was instrumental in achieving a cease-fire between Egypt and Israel and, under the Ford and Carter administrations, in brokering a series of agreements that led to a peace treaty between the former belligerents. Kissinger negotiated a six-point cease-fire agreement on November 11, 1973, that Egyptian and Israeli military representatives signed at kilometer 101 on the Cairo-to-Suez road. On December 21, 1973, largely through Kissinger's efforts, the Geneva conference on an Arab-Israeli peace was convened in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 338, which established the cease-fire. The talks were attended by Egypt, Israel, Jordan, the Soviet Union, and the United States. Syria boycotted the conference.

The first round of the conference ended the following day with an agreement to begin talks to separate Israeli and Egyptian forces along the Suez Canal. Egypt and Israel signed a troop disengagement accord January 18, 1974, and they completed their troop withdrawals on March 4. Meanwhile, efforts to negotiate a similar agreement between Israel and Syria were concluded May 31.

The Ford Administration. (1974–1977)

The Nixon administration came to an end on August 9, 1974, with the president's resignation

from office in the wake of the Watergate scandal. Throughout Nixon's presidency, his primary foreign policy adviser had been Henry Kissinger, and Kissinger remained secretary of state for Gerald Ford, who assumed the Oval Office from the vice presidency.

In early 1975 Kissinger sought a second-stage disengagement in the Sinai Peninsula, but after fifteen days of shuttling between Egypt and Israel he declared in March that his efforts had failed. When Kissinger returned to Washington, he and Ford made clear they were upset with Israel's negotiating position and said the United States would begin a "reassessment" of Middle East policy. Consideration of Israel's request for \$2.5 billion in U.S. aid was suspended pending the reassessment, widely seen as a thinly veiled form of pressure on the Israeli government to be more forthcoming in talks with Egypt. At the same time, the United States approved the sale of Hawk air-defense missiles to Jordan. The "reassessment" touched off a firestorm of protest from the American Jewish community, which organized a lobbying effort in the Senate and in the public to pressure the Ford administration to alter its stance toward Israel.

The United States' reassessment of its Middle East policy coincided with other important events. In Saudi Arabia, King Faisal, long regarded as a U.S. ally, was assassinated in March. This sign of instability in the United States' largest supplier of oil was disconcerting but did not seriously damage U.S.-Saudi relations. The third event in the Middle East in the spring of 1975 was the outbreak of the civil war in Lebanon, which was to continue for fifteen years and take the lives of nearly three hundred American soldiers. (*Lebanon profile*, p. 333)

Second Sinai Accord. Arab-Israeli negotiations began again in June 1975. President Ford met first with Sadat in Salzburg, Austria, and then with Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin in Washington. (Rabin had been elected to replace Golda Meir in June 1974). This time the talks were more successful, producing a second Sinai disengagement pact that Israel and Egypt signed on September 1. Israel agreed to withdraw from the Sinai mountain

passes and to return the Abu Rudeis oil fields to Egypt in return for Egyptian political concessions. The United States agreed to station an observation force in the Sinai.

Compared with the basic issues of recognition of Israel, the future of the Palestinians, permanent boundaries, the status of Jerusalem, and peace guarantees, the issues settled in the Sinai troop disengagement accords were minor. In two respects, however, the accords accomplished a major breakthrough. First, they brought the United States into the midst of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Somewhat hesitantly, Congress approved the stationing of U.S. technicians between the Israeli and Arab armies to monitor military activities. Second, they established a modest basis of trust between the two primary actors in the Arab-Israeli dispute necessary to pursue more basic issues.

The second disengagement agreement also resulted in considerable tension among the Arab parties to the conflict. Syrian president Hafiz al-Asad and the PLO denounced Sadat for agreeing to what amounted, in their view, to a separate, though partial, peace with Israel.

By late 1976 a new Arab strategy began to emerge. By presenting a moderate image to the world, Sadat and most of the Arab leaders hoped to affect U.S. policy and create the conditions for resumption of the Geneva negotiations. Even the Palestine Liberation Organization began to make gestures, however ambiguous, indicating a willingness to accept the existence of Israel if Israel returned the occupied territories to the Palestinians.

The Carter Administration (1977–1981)

Egyptian-Israeli Peace. By 1977 the United States had become the most influential participant in the Middle East conflict from outside the region. "The U.S. holds 99 percent of the cards," Sadat said repeatedly. Accordingly, the Arabs launched a major diplomatic effort in 1977 to persuade the United States that they no longer challenged Israel's existence, only its 1967 occupation of Arab lands and refusal to recognize "Palestinian rights." In February 1977, Sadat said in an interview, "I

want the American people to know that never before have the prospects for peace been better. Not in the last twenty-eight years—since Israel was created—have we had a better chance for a permanent settlement in the Middle East. We must not lose the chance."

In this atmosphere of renewed hope for achieving a comprehensive peace settlement, newly elected Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin came to the United States on July 19, 1977, for two days of talks with President Jimmy Carter. Although the atmosphere was cordial, it was clear that the new U.S. administration and the new Israeli government were far apart on many important issues. Begin refused even to consider agreeing to a Palestinian homeland; he had been elected on a platform of never returning the West Bank and Gaza to Arab sovereignty.

The initial Carter strategy for achieving a comprehensive peace settlement focused on reconvening the Geneva Conference, which had met in December 1973. The Soviet Union responded favorably, and the result was a joint statement on the Middle East, issued October 1, 1977, calling for a conference "not later than December 1977" to work out a full resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict "incorporating all parties concerned and all questions."

The Israelis reacted negatively to the prospect of bringing the Soviet Union into the forefront of the peace negotiations. In addition, the radical Arab governments in Algeria, Iraq, and Libya still rejected any direct negotiations with Israel. Israeli officials opposed the idea because, among other factors, they feared the Soviets might succeed in drawing the PLO into the negotiations.

The Egyptian reaction to the joint statement was equally cool. Since 1972, when Sadat expelled Soviet military advisers from Egypt, relations between Cairo and Moscow had turned increasingly sour. A Geneva Conference co-chaired by the Soviet Union was no more appealing to Egypt than to Israel. The unpleasant prospect of another conference was seen by some observers as one reason behind Sadat's momentous decision to visit Jerusalem and proffer his terms for peace.

Initial Peace Efforts. In addition to a desire to preempt Soviet involvement in the Middle East peace process, other reasons have been cited for Sadat's dramatic visit to Jerusalem on November 19, 1977. Analysts speculate that Sadat was motivated by a belief that another Middle East conflict would produce a 1967-type defeat for the Arabs. He also was thought to fear a radical upheaval in economically depressed Egypt, and he desperately wanted to get U.S. economic aid.

Sadat's initiative took the Carter administration by surprise. Only later did it give full support to the peace effort and abandon a comprehensive approach to back direct Egyptian-Israeli discussions for a separate agreement. Sadat's Jerusalem visit was followed by meetings between Israeli and Egyptian officials in Cairo. Then the leaders of the two nations met on December 25 in Ismailia, Egypt, where Begin presented his West Bank proposal. It offered only local "autonomy" for the Palestinians over a five-year period. Israeli troops and settlements were to remain. The plan contained no mention of eventual sovereignty for the West Bank, a critical point with Sadat.

Camp David Summit. The talks ended in a stalemate, followed by unproductive and lower-level discussions over the next few months. As negotiations broke down, the United States took urgent steps to rescue the situation, among them sponsoring a foreign ministers' conference at Leeds Castle outside London on July 18, 1978. The meeting was attended by U.S. secretary of state Cyrus R. Vance, Israeli foreign minister Moshe Dayan, and Egyptian foreign minister Muhammad Ibrahim Kamel. Although Vance saw some flexibility in the discussions, the conference did not produce concrete results. In August, with Egypt and Israel renewing strong criticism of one another, the United States became increasingly concerned that the impasse would jeopardize the fragile relations between the two nations and wreck any chance for peace in the Middle East. President Carter then invited the two leaders to Camp David, the presidential retreat in western Maryland, for informal face-

to-face talks aimed at breaking the stalemate. Both accepted immediately.

Carter's decision to call the Camp David summit was widely seen as a brash gamble that paid off beyond all expectations. The announcement of the summit came in August, when the president's popularity was at a low point. In thirteen days of arduous negotiations, Carter persuaded Sadat and Begin to make compromises that led to an agreement. Both Sadat and Begin later said Carter's firmness was the key to the breakthrough. The accords reached at Camp David represented agreements to agree, rather than an actual settlement of the issues dividing the two nations or the even broader disputes between Israel and other Arab nations. "This is one of those rare, bright moments of history," Carter declared as Begin and Sadat signed the historic accords on September 17, 1978. The parties had reached two agreements at Camp David, one dealing with Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula and peace arrangements between Israel and Egypt, and the other a "framework" for settling the future of the West Bank and Gaza.

By the end of 1978, however, success was threatened by a renewal of discord. As negotiations continued and the euphoria of the Camp David summit dissipated, both Israeli and Egyptian leaders found that agreeing to the specifics of a treaty while under pressure from domestic groups who opposed a settlement was more difficult than agreeing to a "framework" in the seclusion of the presidential retreat in the Maryland mountains. Carter repeatedly expressed frustration that Israel and Egypt would quibble over what he viewed as minor issues, but none of the issues were minor to either side. Israeli and Egyptian leaders were being asked to resolve disputes perpetuated by years of hostility and to give up positions they considered essential to their national interests. In return for a peace treaty, Israel was asked to give up territory that for more than eleven years had served as a buffer against one of its major enemies. Egypt was pressured by other Middle East nations not to sign a separate peace treaty with what they considered to be the Arab world's common enemy.

Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty. Shortly after the Camp David accords were signed, Secretary of State Vance optimistically predicted that a treaty establishing peace between Egypt and Israel could be concluded by November 19—the anniversary of Sadat's 1977 visit to Jerusalem. It soon became obvious, however, that negotiating the treaty would be a slow process. Predictions of a treaty signing were pushed back to December 10, the date Sadat and Begin were to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, and then to December 17, the date specified in the Camp David agreement. As the end of the year approached, officials stopped predicting when the treaty would be concluded.

Even before treaty negotiations began, disagreements developed over what actually had been said and agreed on at Camp David. Even before Begin had left the United States after the Camp David summit, he and Carter disputed the terms of an agreement on Israeli settlements on the West Bank and Gaza. Begin said Israel could establish new settlements after a three-month moratorium, but Carter said Begin had agreed at Camp David not to establish any new settlements during the five-year transition period. While they were being pressured by the United States to reach a final agreement, both Sadat and Begin also came under intense pressure at home not to make concessions. Other Arab nations, including Jordan and Saudi Arabia, warned Sadat not to renounce Palestinian rights in the rush toward a peace treaty. In Israel, Begin was sharply criticized for his apparent willingness to abandon Israeli claims to some of the territories occupied in the 1967 war.

As negotiations proceeded, the main questions became whether, and to what extent, the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel would be linked to the West Bank and Gaza issues. The United States and Egypt insisted that the treaty be linked to the resolution of the occupied territories issue. Israel wanted the treaty but did not want to include provisions dealing with the occupied territories. Begin fueled the Palestinian controversy early in the negotiations by announcing plans to expand Israeli settlements on the West Bank. Those plans were bitterly protested by Carter and Sadat and

then put aside, where they simmered throughout the peace talks.

At a summit meeting in Baghdad November 2–5, 1978, the hard-line Arab countries charged Sadat with treason, then offered Egypt \$5 billion if Sadat would cut off negotiations with Israel. Sadat refused the offer, making it clear he expected assistance from the United States instead. American officials were distressed that Saudi Arabia and Jordan, two moderate Arab nations, joined in the hard-line attacks on Egypt.

The Israeli cabinet on November 21 finally accepted a vaguely worded link between the peace treaty and the West Bank–Gaza issues, but it flatly rejected any timetable for Palestinian elections. With the disagreement over a timetable unresolved, the United States early in December offered a compromise that would have put the issues in a “side letter” rather than in the treaty itself. Under that compromise, the two sides would have agreed to begin negotiations on the West Bank and Gaza within a month of ratification of the peace treaty. A target date of December 31, 1979, was proposed for elections in the territories.

Throughout the negotiations, the PLO rejected all the timetables and self-rule proposals. PLO leader Yasir Arafat said his group was the only true representative of the more than one million Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza. He rejected Sadat's claim that the Egyptian leader was negotiating on behalf of the Palestinians. Just as important as the PLO objection was the refusal of Jordan's King Hussein to participate in the negotiations. Jordan had administered the West Bank before the 1967 war, and the Camp David accords were based on the assumption that Hussein would participate in the peace settlement.

Implicit in the negotiations was the assumption that the United States would provide substantial aid to both Egypt and Israel once a peace treaty was signed. Although peace in the Middle East generally was accepted as being in the long-term interest of all parties, the short-term costs were heavy for both Israel and Egypt. Israeli officials estimated that moving its military forces from the Sinai Peninsula to the Negev Desert in southern

Israel would cost approximately \$3 billion over three years, a huge sum for that nation. To help pay for that move, and for other costs of peace, the Israelis asked the United States for an additional \$3.3 billion over three years. At Camp David, Carter committed the United States to building two replacement military bases for Israel in the Negev.

For his part, Sadat quietly spread the word that he expected the United States to pay a major share of the cost of economic development in Egypt, possibly as much as \$10 billion to \$15 billion over five years. The United States had been providing Egypt \$1 billion a year.

After preliminary discussions among Vance, Israeli foreign minister Moshe Dayan, and Egyptian prime minister Mustafa Khalil in February 1979, Carter suggested that Begin and Sadat meet with him in a second round of summit talks at Camp David. The two leaders declined. Faced with the possible collapse of the treaty talks, Carter then invited Begin to meet with him alone in Washington. Begin accepted, and the talks opened March 1. Before leaving for the United States, Begin said Israel and Egypt remained far apart and accused the Carter administration of supporting Egyptian proposals that were "totally unacceptable to us." Among the points at issue were Sadat's insistence on Israeli acceptance of Palestinian autonomy for the West Bank and Gaza within a year; deletion of a clause in the Camp David accords giving an Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty priority over Egyptian treaties with other nations; and a delay, until all other treaty issues were resolved, in discussing Israel's request that Egypt supply Israel with oil from the Sinai oil fields. On February 17, Sadat said Egypt would make no further concessions in the peace treaty negotiations and that it was "now up to the Israelis."

On March 5, Carter announced that he would press his personal mediation efforts by visiting Cairo and Jerusalem. A White House statement said: "There is certainly no guarantee of success, but . . . without a major effort such as this the prospects for failure are almost overwhelming." Carter's Middle East trip bore fruit. After agreeing to most aspects of the compromise proposals put

forward by the U.S. president, the Israeli cabinet March 14 approved 15-0 the two remaining points that had blocked an agreement. The Egyptian cabinet approved them the next day. Under the terms of the agreement, Israel accepted an arrangement whereby Egypt would sell it 2.5 million tons of oil a year for an "extended period." For its part, Israel agreed to submit a detailed timetable for withdrawing its forces from the Sinai.

The Israeli Knesset gave its overwhelming approval of the treaty on March 22. The vote was 95-18. Both Carter and Sadat hailed the Knesset's action. On March 26, 1979, Israel and Egypt formally ended the state of war that had existed between them since Israel declared its independence in 1948.

The treaty provided for the normalization of relations between Egypt and Israel. It implemented the "framework" for a treaty agreed on at Camp David. Annexes to the treaty spelled out the details of further negotiations on trade, cultural, transportation, and other agreements and of a phased Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula. Egypt and Israel were to undertake negotiations on the future of the West Bank and Gaza. The negotiations on Palestinian self-rule, to be supervised by the United States, were to begin one month after the formal exchange of treaty ratification documents and were to be completed within one year. The treaty did not mention East Jerusalem, occupied by Israel since 1967 and claimed by both Israel and Jordan. Egypt insisted that East Jerusalem was part of the West Bank and thus subject to negotiation. Israel rejected that view.

Security, Oil Agreements. Two hours after the peace treaty was signed, Secretary of State Vance and Foreign Minister Dayan signed a "memorandum of agreement" in which the United States provided Israel with specific assurances if the treaty fell apart. The memorandum reaffirmed, and broadened, U.S. assurances given Israel at the time of the 1975 Sinai disengagement agreement.

If the treaty were violated, the memorandum stated, the United States "will consult with the parties with regard to measures to halt or prevent

the violation," and the United States "will take such remedial measures as it deems appropriate, which may include diplomatic, economic and military measures."

The agreement brought a sharp protest from Egypt. In a letter to Vance, Egyptian prime minister Khalil said Egypt was "deeply disappointed to find the United States accepting to enter into an agreement we consider directed against Egypt." The agreement "assumes that Egypt is the side liable to violate the treaty," Khalil said. In a March 28 statement, Sadat said the memorandum violated the Israeli-Egyptian accord and that it "could be construed as an eventual alliance against Egypt." The Department of State issued a response saying Khalil's complaints were "based on a misreading of the document." The agreement "does not assume that Egypt is likely to violate the pact," the response said. Carter administration officials emphasized that the United States would carry out the pledges only in response to a violation of the treaty by either Israel or Egypt, and it insisted the agreement did not constitute an alliance or a mutual defense treaty with Israel.

One of the most controversial assurances given by Carter to Israel was the guarantee to supply oil. At the time of the September 1975 Sinai agreement, President Ford agreed to guarantee Israel an adequate oil supply for a five-year period if that nation's normal supplies were cut off. As an incentive to sign the peace treaty, Carter agreed to extend the guarantee to fifteen years. Under the agreement, the United States was to supply Israel with enough oil "to meet all its normal requirements for domestic consumption." The promise was contingent on the United States being able to obtain enough oil "to meet its normal requirements." Israel was to pay the United States "world market prices" for any oil supplied under the emergency agreement.

Aftermath of the Treaty. On May 25, 1979, in keeping with the agreed timetable, Sadat and Begin met in Beersheba to begin the Palestinian autonomy negotiations. The goal of the first stage was full autonomy for the West Bank and Gaza

under a freely elected self-governing authority that would serve for a five-year transition period. Agreement on the region's final status was reserved for a second stage to begin not later than three years after the self-governing authority was inaugurated.

Several meetings were held in 1980, but little progress was made. Sadat suspended Egyptian participation in mid-August after the Knesset passed a law confirming Jerusalem's status as Israel's "eternal and undivided capital." Early in 1981 Israel requested a resumption of the talks, but a new U.S. administration reacted cautiously. President Ronald Reagan's position contrasted sharply with that of the Carter administration, which had placed great emphasis on the negotiations and, through its special envoy, had been instrumental in keeping the negotiations alive.

The Israeli Sinai withdrawal was more successful. Under the terms of the treaty, once withdrawal was completed in April 1982, the United States was obligated to organize a peacekeeping force if the United Nations did not do so. The United Nations subsequently declined, largely because of opposition from the Soviet Union. "Normal relations" between Egypt and Israel officially began January 26, 1980, by which time Israel had withdrawn from two-thirds of the Sinai. Borders were opened between the two countries, travel was permitted, and embassies were established.

When the peace treaty was signed in March 1979, there was little doubt that the so-called hard-line Arab states—Algeria, Iraq, Libya, South Yemen, Syria, and the Palestine Liberation Organization—would condemn the treaty. Both Egypt and the United States anticipated some criticism from traditionally pro-Western, pro-Sadat Arab nations such as Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Morocco, and the Persian Gulf states. The moderates might not like the treaty, but, it was thought, they would seek to minimize any anti-Sadat or anti-American measures that the hard-liners demanded.

A day after the Washington signing, however, nineteen members of the Arab League—Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, the Palestine Liberation Organization, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia,

Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, the Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen), and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen)—met in Baghdad and adopted a package of tough political and economic sanctions against Egypt. Of the twenty-two Arab League members, only Oman and the Sudan, close allies of Sadat, boycotted the meeting. Egypt was not invited. Within weeks, all of the Baghdad participants had severed diplomatic ties with Egypt. Egypt was also expelled from the Arab League, the Islamic Conference, and many other Arab and international organizations.

Hostage Crisis. Late in 1979, less than eight months after the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, a group of Iranian students took hostage a large number of Americans, producing a crisis that paralyzed Carter's administration and creating its biggest foreign policy embarrassment.

Although U.S. arms sales had strengthened the shah militarily, by the late 1970s his repressive regime in Iran faced enormous domestic opposition. On January 16, 1979, the shah left Iran for what turned out to be a permanent exile. The revolution that led to his departure was capped by the return to Iran of the exiled charismatic religious leader Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini on February 1. On April 1 of that year, Iranian voters approved the establishment of an Islamic republic. (*Iran profile, p. 241*)

On November 4, 1979, Iranian students seized the U.S. embassy in Tehran, taking sixty-six hostages. They released thirteen of the hostages later in the month and released one hostage in July 1980. Fifty-two Americans were held for 444 days. The students demanded that the shah, who was receiving medical treatment in the United States, be returned to Iran to stand trial. The students were backed by Khomeini and his Revolutionary Council.

Carter took several steps to pressure Iran to free the hostages. On November 14, 1979, he froze all Iranian assets in domestic and overseas branches of U.S. banks. In April 1980, he severed relations with Iran and instituted trade sanctions.

On April 25, a U.S. rescue mission ended in disaster after it was aborted because of equipment failure. Two of the departing aircraft collided on the ground and eight U.S. servicemen were killed. The shah died of cancer in Egypt on July 27, but the hostage crisis continued, fueled by the virulent anti-American sentiments of the Iranians and the exploitation of those sentiments by Iran's leaders for domestic political purposes.

The frustration of the American people at Carter's inability to free the hostages contributed to his defeat in the 1980 election by Ronald Reagan. The hostages were released January 20, 1981, a few minutes after Reagan took the presidential oath of office. Following release of the hostages, Reagan largely ignored Iran during his first term, aside from ritual denunciations of terrorism and calls for an end to the Iran-Iraq war.

Soviets in Afghanistan. On December 24, 1979, less than two months after the U.S. embassy in Tehran was seized, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan to prop up a pro-Soviet government, taking the United States by surprise. Carter said in a December 31 television interview that the invasion changed his opinion of the Soviets more than any other event. On January 20, 1980, he called the invasion the "most serious threat to peace since the Second World War."

Although the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan did not constitute a strike into the heart of the Persian Gulf oil-producing region, many analysts saw it as a serious threat to the security of the Gulf and its oil supplies. With the Soviets in Afghanistan and the Iranian hostage crisis continuing, the importance of Persian Gulf security rose in the Carter administration.

On January 23, 1980, Carter announced what would become known as the Carter Doctrine. In his State of the Union address, he warned that "An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force." The statement was a direct challenge to the Soviet Union.

Moscow's Afghanistan adventure ironically harmed rather than advanced Soviet interests in the Middle East. Islamic nations, including Iran and Saudi Arabia, regarded the invasion as proof of Soviet aggressiveness and lack of respect for Islam. The Soviet Union retained influence with some Arab states through its arms sales and its ability to act as a counterweight to the United States, but Soviet credibility was severely damaged. Saudi Arabia and the small Gulf states, in particular, moved toward a closer relationship with the United States in response to the Soviet invasion.

The Reagan Administration (1981–1989)

During President Reagan's first term, his administration continued efforts to mediate Middle East peace. It concentrated on getting Jordan and "moderate" Palestinians into the peace process with two goals in mind: a second peace treaty between Israel and an Arab country, and an agreement giving Palestinian residents of the West Bank some form of political autonomy.

Almost from its first days in office, the Reagan administration was forced by events to focus on Lebanon, a country that had suffered nearly ten years of civil war and occupation by Syrian and Israeli troops and the forces of the Palestine Liberation Organization. U.S. prestige and power in the region suffered badly in the early 1980s when the administration's diplomatic and military efforts did not bring peace to war-torn Lebanon. Moreover, continued hostility toward Israel by the Arab states wiped out the optimism engendered by the 1979 peace treaty between Israel and Egypt. The 1981 assassination of Egyptian president Sadat removed from the scene the United States' most loyal and important ally in the Arab world. (*Egypt profile, p. 221*)

Meanwhile, domestic political consensus about policies the United States should pursue in the region disintegrated. The administration and Congress clashed repeatedly as Reagan and his advisers shifted from diplomacy and mediation to an increased reliance on the use of American troops and large arms sales to moderate Arab states.

Reagan brought to office a vigorous anticommunist view of the world. In his campaign he charged that earlier administrations were too accommodating to the Soviet Union, allowing U.S. strength and reputation to decline. He identified Moscow as the source of most major international political problems, including those in the Middle East. Reagan, in contrast to Carter, placed relatively little importance on the role of developing nations in U.S. foreign policy. The focus of Reagan policy, rather, was on countering communism.

Reagan viewed Israel as the most reliable friend in the region, and he believed Israel's democratic system made it a natural ally for the United States. Few of Reagan's senior advisers had Middle East experience, and during the first months of the administration, important Middle East policy-making posts remained vacant. An overall U.S. approach to the Middle East would not emerge until after Israel's invasion of Lebanon in June 1982. The administration placed the Arab-Israeli conflict on a back burner, partly because it wanted to wait for the June 1981 Israeli elections and partly because there was no pressing need to do otherwise.

Strained Relations with Israel. Despite Reagan's inclinations toward a close relationship with Israel, Israeli air strikes in mid-1981 against Iraq and Lebanon precipitated a temporary U.S. suspension of F-16 aircraft deliveries to Tel Aviv. The use of American-made jets in the raids raised the question of whether Israel had violated a U.S. law limiting U.S. arms to defensive purposes. Beyond that, however, the air strikes had political repercussions in the United States, raising doubts about Israel's normally unquestioned support in Congress and the country.

Using American-made F-16 bombers escorted by F-15 fighters, Israel on June 7, 1981, attacked and destroyed the Osirak nuclear reactor under construction near Baghdad, Iraq. Israeli prime minister Begin called the raid "an act of supreme, legitimate self-defense," claiming Iraq planned to use the facility to produce nuclear weapons that would threaten Israel. Critics, including many

members of Congress, labeled the strike as aggression and accused Begin of launching the raid to bolster his chances in Israel's June 30 general election. The Reagan administration June 10 suspended delivery of four F-16s scheduled to be shipped to Israel June 12. Not since Eisenhower in the 1950s had an American president postponed aid in response to an Israeli action.

Nevertheless, this demonstration of U.S. displeasure did not alter the fundamental relationship between the United States and Israel. On June 16, Reagan said Israel appeared to have violated the defense-only legal requirements but added, "I do think one has to recognize that Israel had reason for concern in view of the past history of Iraq."

In July 1981, Reagan broadened the suspension of F-16 aircraft deliveries to Israel amid intense clashes between Israel and the PLO in southern Lebanon, where Israel had conducted air and commando raids to quell PLO artillery and rocket fire against Israeli border settlements. Although the attacks and counterattacks spanned nearly two weeks, the catalyst for Reagan's action was Israel's July 17 bombing of a PLO headquarters in downtown Beirut, an air strike that reportedly killed more than three hundred persons and wounded eight hundred.

The most direct U.S. criticism of Israel came July 23 from Deputy Secretary of State William P. Clark, who said Begin "is making it difficult for us to help Israel. Our commitments are not to Mr. Begin, but to the nation he represents." Defense secretary Caspar W. Weinberger said Begin's actions "cannot really be described as moderate at this point." The Beirut attack also damaged, at least temporarily, Israel's support in Congress.

On August 24, U.S.-Israeli relations were strained further when Reagan formally notified Congress of his intention to sell Saudi Arabia five airborne warning and control system (AWACS) planes. He had first signaled the possibility of such a sale on April 21.

Nevertheless, propelled by the desire of Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Jr. to form a "strategic consensus" to counter Soviet expansion

in the region, Israeli prime minister Begin met with Reagan in September 1981 to discuss improved ties.

At the end of November, Israeli defense minister Ariel Sharon met with Secretary of Defense Weinberger to make final a "strategic memorandum of understanding." The memorandum was designed to counter Soviet-inspired political instability and pledged the signatories to meet threats in the Middle East "caused by the Soviet Union or Soviet-controlled forces from outside the region." It provided for military cooperation and coordination between Israel and the United States, but it did not obligate the United States to aid Israel if the Jewish state were attacked by the Arab states.

Although the Likud Party in Israel hailed the agreement, the opposition Labor Party was critical, claiming that it did nothing to ensure Israel's security and only committed Israel to defending U.S. interests in the region.

Debate over the merits of the agreement would soon become irrelevant. On December 14, 1981, the Israeli Knesset voted 63-21 to extend Israeli law to the Golan Heights, thereby annexing the territory it had occupied since 1967. Reagan strongly criticized the action and, in response, ordered that the memorandum of understanding with Israel not be implemented.

Israel Invades Lebanon. On June 6, 1982, Israeli armed forces invaded Lebanon with the stated purpose of creating a twenty-five-mile-wide buffer zone in southern Lebanon free of Palestinian guerrillas. In the initial stages of the war the United States appeared ambivalent toward the Israeli moves. After Israel went beyond its self-declared twenty-five-mile limit, however, the administration began to voice opposition.

The administration's immediate concerns were to prevent the war from expanding to include Syria. Philip Habib, Reagan's special envoy, who had already conducted a number of the negotiations between the Arabs and Israelis vis-à-vis Lebanon, returned in an effort to prevent hostilities from expanding. On June 9, Israel and Syria fought a massive air battle over Lebanon's Bekaa Valley,

in which Israel destroyed Syrian surface-to-air missiles and decimated the Syrian air force. After this crippling blow, Moscow and Washington engaged Syria and Israel, respectively, in intense dialogue to prevent an all-out ground war. On June 11, Israel and Syria signed a cease-fire, thus ending the brief encounter between the two. Even though the administration opposed Israel's invasion, it seemed to support some of its goals. U.S. officials said they would seek the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon. This expansion of the original U.S. request that Israel pull out of the country reflected Israel's goal of ending the PLO and Syrian presence in Lebanon.

In spite of Israel's original claim to only a twenty-five-mile buffer zone, its armed forces continued their advance until they reached the outskirts of Beirut and surrounded thousands of PLO guerrillas in West Beirut. Quiet opposition to Israeli actions ended when the Israelis reached Beirut. Reagan made clear that the United States did not want Israel to enter Beirut, an Arab capital.

Divisions within the Reagan administration over Middle East policy widened during the war. Although opposed to the invasion, Haig saw benefits in the Israelis' eliminating the PLO presence in Lebanon and in their pressuring the Syrians to leave. This, he thought, would change the political conditions in Lebanon, enabling the Lebanese government to regain control of the country. Then, on June 24, 1982, Haig abruptly resigned. Most analysts suggest that internal administration conflict over Lebanon war policy was the final dispute in a long list of disputes for Haig.

The nomination of George P. Shultz as Haig's replacement was widely seen as portending changes in the administration's view of the Middle East. During Reagan's presidential bid in 1980, Shultz, who had been advising on other issues, was critical of the candidate's views toward Israel. Shultz stated often that the United States should have a "balanced approach" to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

With the Israelis on the outskirts of Beirut, the administration tried to reassure friendly Arab states that Israel would not enter Beirut. In attempting to negotiate an end to the crisis, Habib

managed to conclude a number of cease-fire agreements, all of which were broken almost immediately. Habib eventually secured agreement for PLO forces to leave Beirut, but the evacuation did not occur until after the Israelis engaged in a day-long bombardment of the city on August 12.

Although the PLO had agreed in principle to leave Beirut, the final agreement was delayed while negotiators hammered out details of the evacuation and searched for a destination. President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria refused to allow the PLO to come to his country. Jordan also refused to take the PLO because of tensions dating back to the Jordanian civil war in 1970, when factions of the PLO attempted to overthrow King Hussein.

Finally, Habib got all the parties to agree to a PLO evacuation of West Beirut to various Arab countries, including Syria, which would be monitored by a multinational peacekeeping force of American, French, and Italian troops. In addition, the United States guaranteed the safety of the Palestinians living in the refugee camps in and around Beirut.

The U.S. Marines in the multinational force left Lebanon September 10, after the PLO evacuation was completed. On September 14, Lebanon's president-elect, Bashir Gemayel, was assassinated, and his brother Amin was nominated to take his place. In apparent retaliation during the following days, Phalange militiamen massacred hundreds of Palestinian civilians in the Shatila and Sabra refugee camps in Beirut. The violence prompted Reagan to send a contingent of twelve hundred marines back into Lebanon September 29 as part of a multinational peacekeeping force. Some members of Congress criticized the president's action as an evasion of the requirements of the 1973 War Powers Resolution, since he had refused to seek congressional approval for the deployment of troops in Lebanon. The War Powers Resolution proscribed the use of U.S. forces in hostile situations for more than ninety days without congressional authorization.

Reagan's Peace Initiative. In 1982 Reagan tried to revitalize the Arab-Israeli peace process

that began at Camp David in 1978. However, Reagan's Middle East peace initiative, launched in a televised speech September 1, made little headway. Reagan said the United States would support self-government for Palestinians on the West Bank of the Jordan River and in the Gaza Strip in association with Jordan, but not in an independent state or under Israeli sovereignty. He also called upon Israel to "freeze" further Jewish settlement in the West Bank and Gaza as a prelude to resuming negotiations under the 1978 Camp David accords. He added, however, that Israel could not be expected to pull back totally from the occupied territories.

The president pledged U.S. support for the Camp David plan for an interim agreement to provide self-government for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza for five years while Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and the United States negotiated the ultimate status of the territories. "The final status of these lands must, of course, be reached through the give and take of negotiations," Reagan said. "But it is the firm view of the United States that self-government by the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza in association with Jordan offers the best chance for a durable, just and lasting peace."

Reagan said the U.S. position was based on the principle "that the Arab-Israeli conflict should be resolved through negotiations involving an exchange of territory for peace," as set out in United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 in 1967. Reagan ruled out the possibility of PLO participation in the negotiations. This continued the long-standing U.S. policy of refusing to recognize or deal with the PLO until that organization repudiated violence and terrorism, accepted Israel's right to exist, and declared its support for UN Resolutions 242 and 338. Israel promptly rejected the Reagan plan. Jordan's King Hussein initially gave it cautious support and opened talks with PLO chairman Arafat. Hussein failed, however, to secure permission from the PLO to negotiate on behalf of West Bank Palestinians, and by April 1983, when the Palestine National Council meeting in Algiers rejected the plan, Hussein backed away from further involvement.

Lebanon Linkage. The Reagan administration linked its initiative to a resolution of the Lebanese crisis. It viewed the possible resolution of the Lebanese situation as a first step in a broader Middle East peace. Fears grew in Congress, however, that the United States was getting too deeply involved in Lebanon and the lives of marines stationed in that country were in danger. That concern was confirmed when the U.S. embassy in Beirut was the target on April 18, 1983, of a bomb attack that killed sixty-three persons, including seventeen Americans.

The Reagan administration was intent on reducing Syrian influence in Lebanon and moving peace negotiations forward. To achieve these goals, U.S. officials sought an agreement between Lebanon and Israel. A long and difficult series of negotiations, involving top Israeli, Lebanese, and American officials, produced an agreement that in the end came to naught. The agreement, signed in Lebanon and Israel on May 17, 1983, was not called a treaty because the Lebanese were concerned about Arab reaction. Moreover, formal diplomatic relations were not to be established immediately. The agreement did, however, provide for an end to the state of war that had formally existed since 1948, a buffer security zone in south Lebanon to protect Israel, and absorption into the regular Lebanese army of the pro-Israeli militia, led by Sa'ad Haddad, that operated in southern Lebanon. It also ensured Israeli air superiority and established in both countries semi-diplomatic missions that would have immunity privileges. Last, the agreement provided for negotiations to reestablish normal relations between the nations.

The United States, in a separate letter to Israel, promised to guarantee the agreement, acknowledged Israel's right to retaliate against attacks from Lebanese territory, and assured the Israelis that they did not have to withdraw until Syria and the PLO pulled out. The pact had a very short life. Even though it was signed by both parties and the Israeli Knesset ratified it, the Lebanese parliament delayed action. The Syrians, who were never part of the negotiations and who saw their influence in Lebanon being undercut, refused to accept the

agreement, which rendered it meaningless. Without a withdrawal by Syria and the PLO, the Israelis would not withdraw. Under increasing Syrian pressure, Gemayel's government abrogated the accord.

U.S. policy in Lebanon continued to focus on preserving Amin Gemayel's government, which was being opposed with increasing hostility from forces within Lebanon. Reagan's limited use of U.S. air and naval power to support Gemayel in late 1983 and early 1984, however, drew criticism from Congress. It also undermined what little legitimacy the United States had left with the Lebanese people—it was supporting a government that was without legitimacy except among the Maronite segment of the population. The Gemayel government was too closely linked with Israel, with the siege of Beirut, and with the atrocities committed in Sabra and Shatila to have legitimacy among any other confessional group. U.S. air strikes and naval bombardments against Syrian and Lebanese Shiite forces appeared only to increase Lebanon's chaos, further endanger U.S. peacekeepers, and undermine the status of the United States as a Middle East mediator. On October 23, 1983, 241 U.S. Marine and Navy personnel were killed in Beirut when a suicide truck-bomb crashed into their barracks. Lawmakers and the public pressured the administration to withdraw the marines from Beirut and end U.S. military involvement in Lebanon. That withdrawal, announced on February 7, 1984, concluded the U.S. policy of trying to support Gemayel's teetering government. Syrian domination of Lebanese affairs became nearly complete.

Bouts with Terrorism. Ronald Reagan entered office in 1981 just as the American hostages were being released by Iran. Reagan had vowed his administration would give no quarter to terrorists, but during 1985 and 1986 a wave of Middle East violence against the United States and other Western nations dominated headlines, pressuring the Reagan administration to back up with action its hard-line rhetoric. On June 14, 1985, Arab gunmen hijacked Trans World Airways Flight 847

from Athens to Rome with 153 people aboard. The hijackers forced the pilot to fly to Beirut, where one American was killed and thirty-nine Americans were held hostage. The hijackers and their Shiite supporters demanded, among other things, that Israel release some 700 Shiite prisoners it was holding. Over the following two weeks of the crisis U.S. officials avoided both negotiating with the terrorists and publicly pressuring Israel to release the prisoners. Nevertheless, it appeared at one point as though U.S. officials were privately pushing Israel in that direction. The American hostages were freed at the end of the month, and Israel began releasing its prisoners. Israeli officials, however, pointedly noted they had intended to release the Shiites prior to the hijacking.

A second hijacking in 1985 caused even wider international ripples. On October 14 gunmen identified as being members of the Palestinian Liberation Front (PLF), a faction of the PLO, seized the Italian passenger liner *Achille Lauro*. The gunmen surrendered to Egyptian authorities a few days later and released the hostages, but not before they killed an elderly, wheelchair-bound American passenger.

In accordance with its stern antiterrorist campaign, the United States sought to capture the hijackers. U.S. intelligence sources soon learned that the terrorists were on an Egyptian airliner heading toward Tunisia, where it was denied permission to land, and then to Athens. Under orders from President Reagan, U.S. F-14 fighters intercepted the Egyptian airliner and forced it to land in Sicily where Italian authorities took the hijackers into custody to await trial. Then, much to the United States' astonishment and anger, the Italians released Muhammad Abu'l Abbas, the leader of the PLF, who the Egyptians said acted as a mediator but the United States claimed was the mastermind of the hijacking.

Although Syria and Iran had been implicated in supporting terrorist activities, the Reagan administration focused its antiterrorism efforts on Libya. That nation was of less importance to U.S. strategic interests than Iran and did not have a major role in the Arab-Israeli peace process, as did

Syria. Moreover, the unpredictable political ideas of Libyan leader Col. Mu'ammār al-Qadhafi and Libya's aggression in Africa—Libya and Chad had a long-running border dispute that frequently escalated to violence—had alienated many Arab governments and caused the Soviets to keep their Libyan allies at arm's length. Military action against Libya, therefore, was likely to involve fewer risks than action against Iran or Syria.

In 1985 Abu Nidal, a Palestinian who had defected from the mainstream of the PLO, moved his base of operations from Syria to Libya. In December 1985, members of his group attacked the check-in counters of El Al airlines at the Rome and Vienna airports with automatic weapons and hand grenades. They killed eighteen persons and wounded more than one hundred. On January 7, 1986, Reagan announced there was "irrefutable evidence" that Libya had supported the Palestinian terrorists who carried out the attack. He ended economic activity between the United States and Libya and ordered American citizens to leave Libya. The next day he froze Libyan assets in the United States. The United States had little success, however, in persuading its European allies to enact similarly tough sanctions against Tripoli.

In March Reagan ordered the U.S. Navy to conduct maneuvers in the Gulf of Sidra off the coast of Libya in defiance of Qadhafi's declaration that the gulf was Libyan territorial waters. While it may be argued under international law that the gulf is in fact Libyan, the question has never been put in front of a lawmaking body, and the United States does not recognize the claim. During the maneuvers Libya fired anti-aircraft missiles at U.S. planes. In response, U.S. planes bombed several Libyan ships and a Libyan missile installation.

The U.S. show of strength in the Mediterranean, however, did not deter further terrorist violence. On April 2, a bomb blew a hole in the side of a TWA jet over Greece, killing four people. On April 5, a bomb exploded in a Berlin discotheque frequented by U.S. military personnel. The blast killed two persons, including an American soldier, and wounded more than two hundred.

After intelligence indicated that Qadhafi played a role in the Berlin attack, Reagan ordered an air strike against Libya. On the night of April 14 U.S. F-111 bombers based in Britain and carrier planes in the Mediterranean staged a large-scale raid on Libya. The warplanes' targets included a naval academy, air bases, and Qadhafi's home and headquarters. The raid killed at least fifteen people, including Qadhafi's infant daughter, and injured sixty.

One U.S. F-111 bomber was shot down, and its two crewmen were killed. The attack was overwhelmingly supported by the American public and Congress. A *Washington Post*-ABC News poll showed 76 percent of Americans surveyed approved of the strike. The U.S. attack, however, did not receive the same approval overseas. The British government was the only European government to support the bombing, which was widely condemned in the Arab world as well. France had refused to allow U.S. bombers based in Britain to fly over its territory. Moscow canceled a scheduled visit to Washington by Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze to protest the strike.

The raid did not end terrorist attacks against the United States. Indeed, on April 17 one American and two British hostages in Lebanon were found executed in retaliation for the attack, and the same day an Arab tried unsuccessfully to smuggle a bomb on board an Israeli airliner in London. Nevertheless, Libyan involvement in terrorism appeared to decline after the raid.

Iran-Contra Scandal. In addition to bombings and hijackings, the Reagan administration had to contend with the kidnappings of Americans by Iranian-backed Shiite groups in Lebanon. During 1984 and 1985, nine Americans had been kidnapped there. Although a few had been released, the Shiite groups continuously held several Americans captive.

The administration was particularly concerned with the fate of William Buckley, the CIA station chief in Beirut, who was kidnapped in March 1984. Intelligence reports indicated that Buckley was being tortured to extract his knowledge of

U.S. antiterrorist operations. While not of the magnitude of the 1979 Iranian hostage crisis, the plight of Buckley and the other American hostages in Lebanon frustrated the Reagan administration and led it to seek their release through methods that conflicted with the administration's policy of not dealing with terrorists.

In 1985 the Reagan administration began considering secret arms sales to Iran through Israel as a way to win the release of U.S. hostages and open a dialogue with "moderate Iranians." Reagan authorized three shipments of U.S. antitank and anti-aircraft missiles from Israeli stockpiles to Iran in the late summer and fall. The shipments coincided with the release of one U.S. hostage in September 1985.

On January 17, 1986, Reagan signed a secret finding authorizing a covert U.S. diplomatic initiative to Iran. The document identified three goals of the plan: "(1) establishing a more moderate government in Iran, (2) obtaining from them significant intelligence not otherwise obtainable, to determine the current Iranian Government's intentions with respect to its neighbors and with respect to terrorist acts, and (3) furthering the release of the American hostages held in Beirut and preventing additional terrorist acts by these groups." During 1986 U.S. representatives communicated with Iran through intermediaries and on one occasion traveled to Iran to seek the release of hostages in Lebanon. During these dealings the United States transferred (with Israel's assistance) additional arms and spare parts for military equipment to Iran. Although two American hostages were released during 1986, three more were kidnapped to take their place.

On November 3, *al-Shiraa*, a Beirut magazine, reported on the secret trip by U.S. representatives to Iran earlier in the year. This disclosure led to investigations in the United States that uncovered the Iranian initiative and forced Reagan to admit on November 13 that the United States had shipped arms to Iran. Although Reagan insisted that he had not traded arms for hostages, the initiative appeared to undercut his administration's policy of not negotiating with terrorists. Moreover,

critics charged that Reagan had undermined U.S. standing in the Persian Gulf region, where moderate Arab nations such as Saudi Arabia had been opposing Iran in its war with Iraq. The revelation that the world's leading antiterrorist had sent arms to a nation that had been implicated in terrorist activities weakened U.S. credibility and international determination to fight terrorism.

On November 25, the Iranian initiative was further complicated by the disclosure that National Security Council officials had used some of the proceeds from the arms sales to aid the Nicaraguan contra rebels, despite a U.S. law prohibiting such assistance. This revelation transformed what had been an embarrassing and contradictory policy into a full-fledged scandal. Although a number of his top-level aides were implicated, no conclusive evidence was found that Reagan himself had known of the diversion of funds to the contras.

In 1987, at the request of Kuwait, U.S. ships began escorting reflagged Kuwaiti vessels through the Persian Gulf. The Reagan administration hoped the naval escorts of ships threatened by Iranian air power in the continuing Iran-Iraq war would restore confidence in the United States among the Gulf states, put pressure on Iran to end the fighting, and ensure the flow of oil from the Gulf. The escorts brought U.S. ships and planes into direct conflict with Iranian forces on a number of occasions. U.S. naval forces destroyed several Iranian ships and oil platforms in retaliation for Iranian attacks and minings in the Gulf.

The U.S. presence, however, did lead to tragedy on July 3, 1988, when the USS *Vincennes* mistook an Iranian airliner for an attacking Iranian war-plane and shot it down after the airliner failed to respond to several warnings. All 290 passengers and crew were killed.

Later in July, Reagan's high-risk policy in the Gulf was partially vindicated when Iran accepted a cease-fire in the eight-year war with Iraq. Although the U.S. naval presence in the Persian Gulf had not been the dominant factor in pushing Iran to end the war, the escorts had helped check Iranian aggression in the Gulf and reestablish some measure of U.S. credibility with the Gulf

states. The cease-fire officially began on August 20, allowing the United States to reduce its naval presence in the Gulf.

Intifada and the Shultz Plan. The Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza in December 1987 gave new impetus to U.S. peacemaking efforts in the Middle East. This uprising, known as the intifada, differed from previous violence in the occupied territories in that it pervaded all areas of the West Bank and Gaza and became a permanent feature of life there. Palestinian youths armed with stones daily confronted Israeli soldiers. (*Arab-Israeli Conflict, Chapter 2, p. 13*)

In response to the intifada, Secretary of State Shultz took up Middle East peacemaking with a new urgency in early 1988. He made several trips to the Middle East, where he shuttled between capitals promoting his plan to start Arab-Israeli negotiations. His plan called for talks between Israel and a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation. By the fall the two sides were to agree on arrangements for local elections that would give Palestinians in the occupied territories some autonomy over their affairs for a period of three years. By December the parties were to begin talking about what and how much occupied territory Israel would eventually relinquish. The plan also called for an international peace conference attended by all five permanent members of the UN Security Council, including the Soviet Union. Shultz's plan was not greeted enthusiastically by Israel's Likud government, which opposed the idea of giving up occupied territory.

In July King Hussein stunned the international community and dealt a blow to Shultz's peace proposal by renouncing Jordan's claims to the West Bank and relinquishing administrative responsibility for it to the PLO. Hussein's action virtually foreclosed Jordan's participation in the peace process, which many Israeli and U.S. leaders had regarded as essential for progress toward a settlement. With Hussein out of the picture and U.S. and Israeli elections approaching in the fall, Shultz's peacemaking efforts made no progress.

U.S.-PLO Dialogue. In a 1975 memo to Israeli leaders, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger confirmed that the United States would not negotiate with the PLO until it renounced terrorism, acknowledged Israel's right to exist, and accepted UN Resolutions 242 and 338. Successive administrations abided by this approach to the PLO. Yasir Arafat and his organization refused to meet U.S. conditions, and the United States along with Israel rejected any participation by the PLO in Middle East negotiations.

In late 1988, however, Palestinians under occupation, the Soviet Union, Egypt, Jordan, and other moderate Arab states pushed Arafat to adopt a more moderate stance toward Israel and peace negotiations. The intifada had not only raised questions about the viability of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza but also had increased international sympathy for the Palestinian cause. The PLO determined that it could best take advantage of the intifada by being less confrontational and searching for recognition of a new Palestinian state. Meanwhile, King Hussein's renunciation in July 1988 of Jordan's ties to the West Bank had caused the United States to take a more careful look at the prospect of negotiating with the PLO.

On November 15, 1988, in Algiers, the Palestine National Council (PNC) declared an independent Palestinian state. The PNC accepted UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 but issued ambiguous statements about its willingness to recognize Israel and renounce terrorism. The Department of State rejected contentions by the PLO that it had satisfied U.S. conditions for a U.S.-PLO dialogue. Nevertheless, the PNC's statements led to a month of diplomatic activity in which the PLO inched its way toward meeting the U.S. conditions.

On November 26, progress toward a U.S.-PLO dialogue appeared to be scuttled when Shultz announced that he would deny Arafat a visa to enter the United States to address the United Nations. The General Assembly, however, voted overwhelmingly to hold a session in Geneva, Switzerland, so Arafat could address the body. In

Arafat's UN speech on December 13 he came closer than ever before to uttering the precise words that Shultz wanted to hear, but Shultz again rejected Arafat's statement as insufficient.

Then on December 14 Arafat held a hastily arranged press conference in which he "renounced" rather than just "condemned" terrorism, accepted UN Resolutions 242 and 338 without qualification, and affirmed "the right of all parties concerned in the Middle East conflict to exist in peace and security, including the states of Palestine, Israel and their neighbors." Four hours later Shultz announced that Arafat's words had finally satisfied U.S. conditions and that "the U.S. is prepared for a substantive dialogue with the PLO." Shultz instructed the U.S. ambassador in Tunisia to begin negotiations with representatives of the PLO.

Although the PLO and the United States made little progress in the first eight months of their negotiations, the talks significantly changed the Middle East peace process. They reaffirmed the position of the United States as the dominant outside peacemaker in the Middle East and made Palestinian nationalism more sensitive to American opinion. The meetings between Israel's closest ally and its most bitter enemy also put pressure on Israeli leaders to construct peace proposals of their own. In addition, the talks gave Arafat's Fatah branch of the PLO something to lose if it engaged in terrorist acts, since the dialogue was conditioned on a PLO renunciation of terrorism.

The Bush Administration (1989–1993)

Despite its early protests over Israel's use of American weapons and the opening of a dialogue with the PLO, a move the Israeli government vigorously protested, the Reagan administration strongly supported Israel. The election of George Bush, Reagan's two-term vice president, seemed to promise continuity in U.S.-Israeli relations and Washington's approach to achieving Middle East peace. It became evident early on, however, that Bush and his foreign policy team would be less patient with Israel than Reagan had been.

At two congressional appearances in March 1989, Secretary of State James A. Baker III said that Israel some day might have to negotiate with the PLO about the status of the occupied territories, an approach that the Israeli government had consistently rejected. Then in a May speech to the annual AIPAC convention, Baker said: "For Israel, now is the time to lay aside, once and for all, the unrealistic vision of a greater Israel. Israeli interests in the West Bank and Gaza—security and otherwise—can be accommodated in a [peace] settlement. Forswear annexation; stop settlement activity; allow [Arab] schools to reopen; reach out to the Palestinians as neighbors who deserve political rights."

Although Baker's comments came within a speech that was pro-Israeli and he was reiterating long-standing U.S. positions, his blunt tone angered Israeli leaders and caused staunch American supporters of Israel to worry that the Bush administration was trying to put more distance between itself and the Jewish state.

While increasing the pressure on Israel to negotiate, the Bush administration nevertheless maintained the traditional strong U.S. support of Israel at the United Nations. On June 9, the United States vetoed a UN Security Council resolution that denounced Israel for violating the human rights of Palestinians in the occupied territories. In addition, the Bush administration opposed efforts to grant the PLO the status of a state in UN organizations. When the PLO petitioned for membership in the World Health Organization (WHO), an affiliated agency of the United Nations, the United States threatened to withhold its contribution to the WHO as well as to any other international organization that admitted the PLO.

Shamir Election Plan. After a U.S.-Israeli summit in April 1989, Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Shamir feared that Bush might accept the long-standing Arab demand for an international peace conference, where Israel perceived itself at a disadvantage. As an alternative, Shamir advanced a plan to hold elections in the occupied territories to select local Palestinians who would represent

their people in peace negotiations with Israel. Many Palestinian leaders as well as conservative Israelis had rejected the idea, but Bush backed it as the best option for advancing the peace process. Jordan's King Hussein gave a qualified endorsement to the proposal in April 1989.

On June 8, Ambassador Robert H. Pelletreau Jr., the U.S. envoy to Tunisia who was holding regular talks with the PLO in Tunis, urged the PLO to accept Shamir's election plan. The PLO refused to endorse the plan but indicated some interest in it. Administration officials had hinted that if the PLO accepted the Israeli election proposal, the United States would upgrade its dialogue with the PLO to higher-ranking officials.

Ariel Sharon, the leader of the right wing of Shamir's own Likud Party, however, opposed the plan and maneuvered to force Shamir to accept conditions that most observers believed would make it unacceptable to any Palestinian leader. On July 5, before a Likud Party convention, Shamir accepted the hard-line conditions of party conservatives, which stated that Arab residents of East Jerusalem could not vote in the elections or run for office; no elections would be held until the Palestinian uprising ended; Israel would not give up any territory and no Palestinian state would ever be established; and Israel would continue to build Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. Because a large faction of his party backed the riders, Shamir could not reject them without risking a no-confidence vote from his party. The Labor Party, the junior member of Israel's unity government, threatened to resign over the riders, but it did not do so, partly because the United States urged it to remain in the government.

The Bush administration responded to the Likud's move by warning that if the vote plan were crippled by unreasonable conditions, it might have to consider organizing an international conference to reinvigorate the Middle East peace process. Baker told reporters July 8, "Our calculus all along has been that if things totally bog down, if you can't make progress with this election proposal, then we would have to look a little bit more closely at the prospects for an international con-

ference. There is an awful lot of support for that out there from other countries. We have always said that an international conference, properly structured, at the right time, might be useful."

In response to the new Israeli conditions, PLO leader Arafat announced his organization would no longer consider supporting the Shamir plan.

In early September, nearly six months after Shamir had floated his plan, Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak offered a ten-point proposal to bring together Israeli and Palestinian negotiators in Cairo. Movement on Shamir's plan had halted, and Mubarak hoped to restart the process on a new track. After struggling with Mubarak's proposal for several weeks, the divided Israeli government rejected it on October 6 over the proposed rules for the composition of the Palestinian delegation.

Struggles with Lebanese Hostages. By 1989 pro-Iranian groups in Lebanon were holding eight Americans hostage. With a civil war raging, authority in the country had effectively fallen into the hands of the many private militias. Despite extensive efforts, no American hostages had been released since 1986, when it was disclosed that the Reagan administration had sent arms to Iran in the hope that Tehran would use its influence to have the hostages freed in Lebanon.

For some time, Iran had been indicating its desire to improve relations with the United States. Bush repeatedly made clear, however, that no improvements could be made until the hostages were released. Beginning in late April, several of the American hostages were released, with Bush making a point of publicly thanking Iran and Syria for their efforts.

On July 28, 1989, Israeli commandos abducted Shaykh Abd al-Obeid, a spiritual leader of the pro-Iranian Shiite Hizballah group that was holding several Americans and Israelis hostage in Lebanon. In response, a Shiite organization released a videotape that purported to show the hanging of Lt. Col. William R. Higgins, a U.S. Marine being held hostage in Lebanon.

U.S. investigators determined that the man in the video was Higgins, although they could not

verify when he had been hanged. The Shiite group threatened to kill another hostage unless the Israelis released Obeid. The Israelis offered to trade Obeid and other Shiite prisoners for all Israeli and Western hostages being held by the Shiites. The Bush administration, while saying it would not make concessions to terrorists, explored ways to gain the release of the remaining U.S. hostages in Lebanon and welcomed an offer in August from the Iranian government to help secure their freedom.

Soviet Immigrants. For decades the United States had pressed the Soviets to allow Jews and other oppressed groups to emigrate freely. The few that were permitted to leave were automatically offered refugee status in the United States on the presumption that they had a "well-founded fear of persecution." Beginning in 1989, the trickle became a flood as the Soviet Union relaxed its emigration restrictions.

In response to the wave of immigrants and because of the internal changes in that country, the United States no longer admitted refugees from the Soviet Union without specific proof of persecution. On October 1, President Bush capped Soviet immigration at fifty thousand a year, redirecting much of the flood to Israel, which welcomed the immigrants with open arms. The same day, Israel announced that it did not have the resources to handle the huge influx and formally asked the United States for loan guarantees so that it could borrow money cheaply to build housing for the new arrivals.

By January 1990, immigration had accelerated to more than one thousand a week. Noting that a "big Israel" would be needed to handle the flood of immigrants, Shamir indicated that the refugees could be a factor in Israel's decisions regarding the status of the occupied territories. "This is the best thing that could happen to Israel," he declared.

In response to fears that Likud would use the influx to further settle the occupied territories, Shamir said, "The Government has no specific policy of directing immigrants to Judea, Samaria [the biblical names for the West Bank] and the

Gaza Strip, just as it is incapable of preventing immigrants from opting for living in those places. . . . Every immigrant is free to choose his place of residence as he pleases." Nevertheless, huge new settlements began to appear in the territories. Arab countries, the United States, and the Soviet Union became alarmed that the growth of the settlements might lock in the West Bank as a permanent part of Israel. King Hassan II of Morocco declared that "the nightmare of Soviet Jews' emigration to the occupied territories, haunting the Arab nation, is considered a catastrophe." Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev began to hint that the flow of refugees would be cut if they were being settled on the West Bank.

In February 1990, Moscow bowed to Arab pressure and—despite U.S. appeals—refused to allow direct flights from Moscow to Tel Aviv, which would have accelerated the flow even further. American Jewish groups feared that in the unstable Soviet Union, political forces might abruptly turn against the refugees and stop the flow at any time. Thus, they sought every means to move the immigrants out of the Soviet Union as fast as possible.

Stalled Diplomacy. On March 13, 1990, Israel's national unity government fell when Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir dismissed Finance Minister Shimon Peres, head of the Labor Party, and the rest of the Labor Party ministers followed him out of the government. This left Shamir as head of a caretaker government until new elections could be held. The immediate cause of the collapse was U.S. efforts to restart the peace process.

Baker had worked with the PLO and Egypt for a year to arrive at a formula acceptable to all in order to choose a Palestinian negotiating team. He now had his formula. Baker had proposed that Israel allow one Palestinian with a second address in East Jerusalem to be on the negotiating team. Likud and Labor's disagreement over accepting this proposal led to the collapse. Earlier in the month, Bush had stated that "the foreign policy of the United States says that we do not believe there should be new settlements in the West Bank or in

East Jerusalem." Likud officials later said that accepting the Baker proposal in light of President Bush's statement could be seen as backing down from their stance that the status of Jerusalem is not negotiable.

On June 8, after elections in which Likud came out ahead of Labor by a razor-thin margin, Shamir announced the formation of a new government coalition of Likud and several small rightist parties, the most conservative government ever in Israel. Sharon, an outspoken advocate of expanded settlement in the occupied territories, was appointed housing minister, in charge of a massive program of building new housing for the refugees still pouring in. With Shamir one of the most moderate members of the government, few observers expected a serious return to the peace process.

On June 13, Shamir laid down new and more rigorous preconditions for Palestinian negotiators, prompting a furious rebuke from Baker. If that is going to be the Israeli approach, Baker stated, "there won't be any dialogue and there won't be any peace, and the United States of America can't make it happen." If the Israelis did not make a good-faith effort to restart the process, Baker said, then the United States would simply "disengage" from Middle East diplomacy and Shamir could "call us when you are serious about peace."

On June 20, President Bush announced the suspension of the eighteen-month-old U.S. dialogue with the PLO as a result of an attempted terrorist attack against Israel on May 30. Six speedboats carrying Palestinian guerrillas tried to attack a beach in Tel Aviv but were thwarted by Israeli forces. Although he distanced himself from the attack—for which the Lebanon-based Palestinian Liberation Front took responsibility—PLO chairman Arafat refused to condemn the attack, despite repeated U.S. prodding.

Pelletreau, the U.S. ambassador to Tunisia, who was conducting the talks, stated that the United States was operating under the assumption that Arafat spoke in the name of the PLO and its constituent groups and that it was the PLO's responsibility to exercise control over those groups. In the event of a terrorist action by one of its members,

Washington expected the PLO to publicly condemn the action and discipline those responsible. Despite the setback for the peace process, Bush felt that he had no choice but to break off the talks, given Arafat's weak response to the attack. Combined with the hard line taken by the new Israeli government, most observers felt that the peace process was essentially stopped. Neither side seemed able or willing to make the necessary gestures to break the deadlock. For emphasis, at the same time that Bush announced the end of talks with the PLO, he repeated Baker's statement that the Israelis should "call us" when they get serious about peace.

During 1990 the flow of immigrants increased to more than ten thousand a month, holding close to this level through 1991—even during the Gulf war. On June 24, as a result of further U.S. and Soviet pressure, the Israeli government stated that as a matter of policy it would not settle immigrants on the West Bank or Gaza Strip. Nevertheless, the settlements in the territories continued to grow.

On October 2, after a full year of hesitation, Baker announced that the United States had agreed to provide Israel with the requested housing loan guarantees as a result of private assurances that none of the aid would be used in the territories. Relations between the United States and Israel, which had steadily worsened since Bush's inauguration, warmed noticeably.

Persian Gulf War. The invasion and occupation of oil-rich Kuwait by Iraq in August 1990 set in motion a crisis that would remain at the forefront of the international agenda for seven months. President Bush responded to the invasion by pulling together an international coalition authorized by the United Nations Security Council to oppose Iraq. Nearly forty nations contributed combat forces, transport assistance, medical teams, or financial aid to the joint effort to force Iraq from Kuwait. The Persian Gulf crisis was the first major test of the effectiveness of the UN Security Council to confront international aggression in the post-cold war era. (*The Persian Gulf, Chapter 4, p. 137*)

In his August 8 speech announcing the first deployment of U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia, Bush declared that the U.S. would stand behind four principles in its campaign against Iraq: the unconditional withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait; restoration of the Kuwaiti monarchy; stability in the Persian Gulf; and protection of U.S. citizens abroad. Bush and Secretary of State Baker directed a major diplomatic initiative aimed at Security Council adoption of a resolution to authorize the use of force against Iraq if it did not withdraw from Kuwait. The campaign culminated in the Security Council's adoption on November 29 of Resolution 678, which set January 15 as the deadline for Iraq to pull out of Kuwait. After that, the resolution authorized member states to use "all necessary means" to enforce previous UN resolutions demanding the withdrawal.

Congress supported the president's actions from the start of the crisis, but at times lawmakers were wary. They generally endorsed Bush's economic embargo against Iraq and his deployment of hundreds of thousands of troops to Saudi Arabia to ward off a possible Iraqi invasion of that country. Many members, however, opposed an early resort to force, hoping instead that the pain of severe economic sanctions would force Iraq to abandon Kuwait.

Most Americans backed Bush's initial deployments of troops to Saudi Arabia. As the crisis continued, however, public support for Bush's strategy weakened as fears of a recession and a long stalemate in the desert increased. A *New York Times*/CBS News public opinion poll taken October 8–10 showed that 57 percent of Americans supported the president's Gulf policies, as compared with 75 percent in early August.

War Decision. Many journalists, politicians, and scholars who followed the administration's policy explanations commented that Bush had failed to make a coherent case for the need to use force if Iraq refused to withdraw from Kuwait. The difficulty the Bush administration was having in explaining its actions stemmed partly from the nature of the Iraqi threat and partly

from the administration's haphazard presentation of the motivations behind its policy.

Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait certainly did not threaten American shores. Instead, it threatened U.S. interests overseas, the international economy, and principles of international law. No single reason for going to war against Iraq was compelling by itself. The Iraqi invasion required citizens to weigh a complex balance sheet of variables for and against the use of force, instead of responding to a ringing cry to arms in the interest of national defense. Moreover, for Americans who saw Iraq as a threat but had doubts about the wisdom of war, continuing to enforce severe economic sanctions against Iraq offered a compromise option through which a person could oppose both Saddam's acts and the launching of what might be a bloody war in the desert.

During the crisis the Bush administration expanded on the reasons the president cited in his August 8 speech for his strong response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Often the justifications were moral. Bush announced that the United States would not stand for Iraq's brutal aggression against Kuwait. The administration cited Iraq's duplicity before the invasion; Kuwait's peaceful history; reports of atrocities by Iraqi troops; and Iraqi efforts to depopulate Kuwait, strip it of its valuables, and annex it to Iraq. Bush stressed that the Iraqi invasion was an opportunity to establish a "new world order" in which collective action would deter and combat aggression and uphold international law. In mid-November growing concerns among Americans about the economy led the Bush administration to emphasize the importance of liberating Kuwait to the economic health of the nation. Baker said November 13 that the administration policy in the Gulf was motivated by economic concerns: "If you want to sum it up in one word, it's jobs. Because an economic recession worldwide, caused by the control of one nation—one dictator, if you will—of the West's economic lifeline [oil], will result in the loss of jobs for American citizens."

Similarly, when public opinion polls in late November showed that Americans were more

concerned about Iraq's potential for developing nuclear weapons than any other aspect of the Gulf crisis, administration officials focused on the Iraqi nuclear threat. Bush aides noted that Iraq's aggressive nuclear research program could succeed in developing rudimentary nuclear weapons within several years. Some experts disputed that Iraq could build nuclear weapons that quickly, but the prospect of a nuclear-armed Iraq some time in the future was a potent argument for going to war against Iraq.

The deployment of large numbers of U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia also triggered a constitutional debate on the division of war powers between the executive and legislative branches in the United States. Most lawmakers asserted that because the responsibility to declare war rested with Congress, the president did not have the power to launch a military offensive against Iraq without prior congressional approval—unless Iraq attacked U.S. forces. The administration disputed this assertion, claiming that the president's role as commander in chief empowered him to order offensive actions against Iraq.

The president, however, promised to consult closely with Congress with regard to his Gulf policy. In January 1991, when war became likely and Bush appeared to have enough votes in Congress to win approval for the war option, he sought to unite the government and the country behind his policies by asking Congress to authorize an attack against Iraq if one became necessary in his judgment. The request satisfied most members of Congress that the president had not usurped their war-making role.

In early January last-ditch diplomatic efforts to persuade Iraq to withdraw failed. As the U.S.-led coalition prepared for war, Congress debated resolutions authorizing the president to use force to expel Iraq from Kuwait. The debate concluded January 12 with the adoption of identical resolutions (S.J. Res 2, H.J. Res 77) authorizing Bush "to use United States armed forces" to end Iraq's "illegal occupation of, and brutal aggression against, Kuwait." The Senate voted 52-47 for approval; the House vote was 250-183.

Once the UN deadline had passed, Bush acted swiftly. On January 16, he ordered coalition forces to begin a sustained bombing campaign against Iraq. On February 24, after thirty-eight straight days of bombing, the allies launched a ground offensive into Kuwait and Iraq that overwhelmed Iraqi defenders with surprising ease. On February 27, Bush announced a cease-fire and declared Kuwait liberated.

Aftermath of the War. By most measures the U.S.-led coalition's war against Iraq was enormously successful. Kuwait was liberated and the legitimate Kuwaiti government was restored to power; coalition forces sustained fewer casualties than almost anyone predicted; Iraq's offensive military potential and nuclear weapons research facilities suffered serious setbacks; the wave of terrorism that Saddam had threatened to loose upon his enemies had not appeared; and the international community had demonstrated that it could collectively respond to aggression.

The victory was less complete than it might otherwise have been, however, because Saddam Hussein managed to retain power despite the ravages his leadership had brought to his country. His repression of dissent, frequent purges of the military and his Baath Party, and efforts to prevent anyone from accumulating too much authority had blocked the emergence of rival centers of power in Baghdad that could lead a coup against him. Though toppling Saddam had never been a stated purpose of the coalition military effort, his continued belligerence toward his own people and the international community created perceptions that President Bush had stopped the war too soon.

The Bush administration and the United Nations settled into the task of containing a weakened but still dangerous Iraq. As of the fall of 1999 the United Nations continued to maintain stringent, U.S.-backed economic sanctions against Iraq, and its inspectors engaged in a long-running struggle to force Saddam to reveal and relinquish the elements of his massive effort to develop nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

Even in defeat, Saddam managed to create headaches for the United States and the international community by refusing to cooperate fully with nuclear weapons inspectors sent to Iraq under the terms of the cease-fire agreement. Iraq's conventional military strength had been sharply reduced by the war, but policy makers worried that if Iraq acquired a nuclear weapon it could again menace the region. Inspectors determined that Iraq's program to develop nuclear bombs was far more extensive and advanced than the Bush administration or independent experts had predicted.

Iraqi Rebellions. Soon after the cease-fire with the U.S.-led coalition forces was declared, Iraq was torn by civil violence. Realizing that much of the Iraqi military's best equipment and some of its best units had been destroyed, Kurdish resistance fighters in northern Iraq and Shiite Muslim rebels in southern Iraq began waging open warfare against Iraqi troops loyal to Saddam. With the war for Kuwait over, Saddam Hussein ordered what was left of his military to put down the rebellions.

During the Persian Gulf War, Bush had repeatedly said that he would welcome the overthrow of Saddam. Many commentators noted that his statements may have contributed to the confidence of Iraqi rebels that the United States would come to their aid. During the postwar insurrections, however, Bush emphasized that he had never promised to intervene in Iraq's internal affairs. "We're not going to get sucked into this by sending precious American lives into this battle," Bush said April 4. "We have fulfilled our obligations."

When the Iraqi army brutally turned back the Kurdish and Shiite rebellions, however, large numbers of Kurd and Shiite refugees were placed in peril. The Bush administration took limited measures designed to prevent disaster, including authorizing food and supply drops to refugees hiding in the mountainous border regions, providing financial aid to assist refugees, and warning Iraq that interference with refugee relief efforts would not be tolerated. Democratic critics in Congress, some of whom had originally opposed going to war, urged Bush to take more

effective steps to protect the Kurds, including banning Iraqi armed helicopter flights. The anti-Iraq coalition had prohibited any use of Iraqi combat airplanes since the end of the Gulf war, but it had not banned flights by armed helicopters.

Bowing to the necessities of a human tragedy, Bush announced on April 16 that U.S., British, and French forces would go back into Iraq to aid the Kurdish refugees, setting up tent cities and assisting the refugees in moving to them.

The deployment of an estimated sixteen thousand U.S., British, and French troops in the resettlement operation risked Bush's commitment to avoid interference in Iraq's internal affairs. Bush justified the deployment saying, "I think the humanitarian concern . . . is so overwhelming that there will be a lot of understanding about this." Iraq was not understanding, calling the plan interference in its internal affairs.

In late April the United States broadened the scope of its relief efforts, providing direct aid for the first time to an estimated 1 million people who had fled from southern Iraq into neighboring Iran. Allied forces also greatly expanded the size of a security zone established for hundreds of thousands of Kurdish refugees. The allies, encountering no resistance from Iraqi forces, created a safe haven for the refugees that encompassed more than 1,800 square miles in northern Iraq. Nonetheless, this did not allay Kurdish fears of reprisals from Hussein's government.

Throughout the period, Congress supported Bush's plans to aid the Kurdish refugees, approving nearly three quarters of a billion dollars to pay for the massive aid effort.

Toward a Peace Agreement. The U.S.-led coalition's victory over Iraq produced a situation quite different from that called for by the Iraqi-dominated Arab summit of the previous summer. Instead of having its role in the Middle East limited, as the summit wished, the United States emerged from the Gulf crisis with its prestige and influence greatly strengthened, improving the climate for diplomatic achievement. The Bush administration recognized that it now had an

opportunity to advance the Arab-Israeli peace process and other U.S. goals.

The U.S. position also had improved because of the continuing disintegration of the Soviet Union. Moscow was increasingly turning inward to address its domestic political and economic crises. Since its withdrawal from Afghanistan, completed in 1989, it had shown much less interest in an assertive role abroad. Soviet allies in the Middle East, especially Syria, could no longer expect financial or diplomatic backing from their patron. The United States was the only remaining superpower. By the end of 1991 the Soviet Union had completely dissolved. Its main successor state was not in a position to project military or financial influence into the Middle East.

Within weeks after the war, Baker began the first of numerous shuttle trips to Middle East capitals, hoping to achieve consensus on a Middle East peace conference. Baker chose not to press the U.S. advantage by demanding that Israel and the Arab states attend, but rather sought to create an atmosphere where real progress could be made. Yet, in two trips to the region, he found little support for the conference among Middle East nations, particularly in Israel and Syria. Outside of the region, however, support had begun to develop. Soviet foreign minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh announced his government's willingness to co-sponsor a conference. The European Community also expressed its interest in attending.

Baker's first breakthrough came with the announcement on May 10 that the Gulf Cooperation Council—which represents Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman—was willing to send an observer to a peace conference between Israel and its neighbors. The real turning point for the conference, however, came with the announcement by Hafiz al-Asad on July 18 that Syria would participate, although a number of issues remained regarding the conference format. Within days, Lebanon and Jordan followed suit—Palestinian willingness to participate had never been in question since they had few other options—and Baker found himself

with a full deck of Arab participants. Only Israel's Yitzhak Shamir still refused to commit.

For Shamir, Syria's acceptance created a serious dilemma. Rejecting the conference could well cause irreparable damage to Israel's already sagging relationship with the United States, putting at risk the \$3 billion in annual aid Israel received. Attending the conference, however, might cause his fragile right-wing coalition government to collapse.

The Conference Format. While setting up the conference Baker became bogged down, not in the substance of what the participants would discuss but in the procedural issues and the format. Syria had insisted that any talks be held in the framework of an international conference, with the participation of the United Nations, the United States, and the Soviet Union. This would blur the fact that Syria was doing what it had always refused to do in the past—sitting down at a table with Israel.

Israel rejected such a format, instead calling for the conference to be no more than a one-day ceremonial affair without UN participation, before proceeding to direct bilateral talks with each of its neighbors. It also rejected Soviet participation until the Soviet Union consented to reestablish the diplomatic ties it had cut off in 1967. From the Israeli view, Palestinians could participate only as part of the Jordanian delegation. Allowing a separate Palestinian delegation might imply that Israel was amenable to the formation of a Palestinian state—something the Shamir government absolutely opposed.

The Syrians ultimately accepted a procedural compromise that was largely on the Israeli terms. The full conference would break up after a day of ceremonial speeches into three bilateral negotiations: Israel-Lebanon, Israel-Syria, and Israel-Jordan/Palestinians. On the question of reconvening, Syrian foreign minister Faruq al-Sharaa blurred this concession by noting that "our interpretation is that a conference in practice does not finish its plenary session until it fulfills its objective. That is peace. It can adjourn, but it does not

finish until it fulfills its objective." The UN would be represented at the full conference by a single observer who would not be permitted to speak.

Shamir Agrees to Attend. On July 23, still suspicious that the Syrian concessions were not genuine, Shamir gave Baker a tentative yes to attending the talks, with the condition that he be allowed a veto over the list of Palestinians with whom Israel would negotiate. Shamir was adamant that no PLO member or Palestinian from East Jerusalem be allowed to participate; since Israel had annexed the area, its residents lived in Israel proper, not the territories. This was especially problematic because much of the Palestinian leadership within the territories lived in East Jerusalem. Nevertheless, with some fine-tuning of the Palestinian delegation still to be worked out, the Israeli cabinet voted on August 4 to attend the proposed conference.

On October 18, the United States and the Soviet Union issued formal invitations to a conference to be held October 30, 1991, in Madrid. The opening session would last three days and include only ceremonies and speeches. Then, in mid-November, multilateral talks would open for all governments in the region to discuss topics such as arms control, water rights, and the environment.

The same day invitations were issued, Israel and the Soviet Union announced the resumption of full diplomatic relations. Consular ties had been established in 1987 and relations had slowly crept forward from that time. Nevertheless, Israel had long refused to allow the Soviets a role in Middle East peace making until diplomatic formalities were fully restored. The Palestinian team ultimately was composed according to Israeli specifications, mostly of medical persons, writers, and academics from the territories with no formal links to the PLO. They would be formally part of the Jordanian delegation. To Israel's frustration, however, a second team of Palestinian "advisers" with close PLO ties also showed up in Madrid to coordinate with the primary delegation, and in fact the PLO leadership in Tunis had selected the Palestinian members of the joint delegation.

Peace Negotiations. On October 30, 1991, the Madrid conference opened as scheduled with speeches by the two sponsors, Presidents Bush and Gorbachev. The following day, representatives of each delegation spoke. The rhetoric, on the whole, was inflammatory—sinking at times to the level of name-calling—with little to indicate that the sides were in a mood to compromise. Despite invitations and counter-invitations to do so, no one walked out of the conference. The opening session was formally completed on November 1. The delegates went home on November 4 with no agreement on where—or if—the talks would resume.

Despite the harsh tone of the conference, most observers were upbeat in their views. One commentator used the metaphor of the talking dog to explain the significance of the conference: It's not what he says that counts, the amazing thing is that the dog speaks at all. The fact that such implacable enemies had even sat down and listened to speeches together mattered. On November 22, the United States issued invitations to the participants to continue the peace talks in Washington as a compromise location on December 4. However, because the invitations were issued on the eve of a meeting between Bush and Shamir, the Israelis perceived the timing as a snub. They bitterly complained that they had been effectively ordered to show up in Washington on the prescribed day. In response, they proposed that the direct talks be delayed five days, then be moved quickly to a site in or near the Middle East.

When December 4 arrived, all of the Arab delegates were in Washington, but the Israeli delegates did not arrive until five days later, as promised. Opposition parties in Israel heaped scorn on Likud for this behavior.

Finally, on December 10, the negotiators were ready to sit down and begin one-on-one talks. The Palestinians insisted, however, on breaking away from the Jordanian delegation and meeting separately with the Israelis. Until this issue was resolved, neither delegation would enter the meeting room. After a week spent in a Department of State corridor discussing the ground rules, the talks adjourned December 18.

In mid-January 1992 the talks resumed. Although the participants finally had reached the meeting rooms, they spent much of their time talking past one another with little result. In the three months since Madrid, what little initial enthusiasm there had been for the talks seemed to have dissipated. By prior agreement, no U.S. official was present in the room for any of the talks. Baker had insisted from the start that he had no intention of forcing an American solution on the parties; they would have to hammer one out on their own. His strategy, however, seemed to be producing few results.

Israeli intransigence was in part the result of the shaky political ground under the Shamir government. When the topic of interim Palestinian self-rule came up in the talks, it caused two small right-wing parties to announce their departure from the government on January 19, leaving Shamir without a majority in the parliament. Bowing to the inevitable, Shamir scheduled early elections for June 23, staying on until then as the head of a caretaker government. Shamir's political weakness relieved the U.S. pressure for concessions until after the elections. Any chances for a breakthrough in the bilateral talks were effectively put on hold until June.

On January 28–29, the first session of regional multilateral talks took place in Moscow. Although separate from the bilateral talks, they originally had been intended to take place in mid-November. Most observers expected little from the Moscow talks, but at least they threw no new snares into the peace process. Other Arab states from the Persian Gulf and the Maghrib also took part in the talks on economic cooperation, water sharing, refugees, the environment, arms control, and other regional concerns. Syria and Lebanon declined to attend, arguing that such matters should not be discussed with Israel until after diplomatic normalization had taken place.

In late February and April two more rounds of bilateral talks took place in Washington. These rounds achieved little, but the United States had insisted on them, fearing a gap of too many months would stall the “momentum” of the talks.

In May the five sets of multilateral talks that had opened in Moscow in January (refugees, environment, water, arms control, and economic development) met in five different capitals with more than twenty participants. Israel boycotted the refugee talks, complaining that the participation of Palestinians from outside the territories violated the agreement worked out in Madrid.

Israeli Elections and U.S. Ties. With Baker's frustration at Likud intransigence, and Shamir's complaints that U.S. pressure to stop building settlements was interference in Israeli affairs, U.S.-Israeli ties had sunk to nearly historic lows. Once Israeli elections were announced, Bush and Baker made little secret of their anger at Shamir and their hopes for a Labor victory. They were confident that with Labor's more flexible approach to territorial compromise more could be achieved at the peace negotiations.

Bush's sharpest weapon against Shamir was the long-delayed loan guarantees. On March 17, Bush effectively buried them and placed the blame on the Shamir government, declaring, “We're simply not going to shift and change the foreign policy of this country.” The loss of the loan guarantees was a blow to the Israeli economy, but it alarmed Israelis more as an indication that Shamir had allowed something to go seriously wrong in Israel's strategic relationship with the United States, which had rarely denied Israel anything it asked for. This was certainly a factor in the sweeping electoral victory of Yitzhak Rabin and the Labor Party on June 23. Also, Israelis had grown tired of the Likud vision of a “Greater Israel” and were no longer willing to pay the price in blood and resources. Another significant factor in Likud's defeat, besides blame for the loss of the loan guarantees, was an awareness that long-standing ties with the United States were not to be taken for granted.

With the new government in place, U.S.-Israeli tensions eased immediately. Within days of his election, Rabin began to dramatically scale back settlement activity in the occupied territories and moderate the harsh statements of the Likud government. Even Hanan Ashrawi, one of the Palestinian

negotiators, noted that there had been a "shift of tone" from Israel. However, Rabin refused to tie his hands by categorically stopping new building, declaring that he would continue to build "security" settlements but not "political" settlements, although the difference was never clear. Nevertheless, Baker reciprocated by hinting that the loan guarantees might now be possible and telling Israel's Arab negotiating partners that with this new compromise on settlements by Israel, it was time for them to show some flexibility.

On August 10 at Bush's family retreat at Kennebunkport, Maine, Bush and Rabin announced that they had reached agreement on terms for the U.S. loan guarantees and that another round of the peace negotiations would open in Washington on August 24. Rabin indicated his hopes that the new round would continue for a full month and begin to include discussions of the terms for Palestinian autonomy, leading to some future "territorial compromises."

As was hoped, the August 24 round did last a full month, with nearly all of the talk on substantive issues. Procedural questions, which had tied previous rounds in knots, were quickly resolved by the new Israeli negotiating team, which had shown up with a concrete thirty-three-page proposal for establishing Palestinian autonomy. Nevertheless, despite substantial progress, no breakthrough was achieved. Another short round of negotiations was squeezed into late October, but with U.S. elections and the looming defeat of George Bush overshadowing everything else, little was accomplished.

The Clinton Administration (1993–2001)

With the election of Bill Clinton to the presidency, many observers feared for the future of the peace process. Clinton was far more sympathetic to Israel than Bush had been, and it was unclear whether the Arabs would find him a credible mediator. Baker's Middle East team would soon leave the Department of State, delaying talks while the new administration filled vacancies and formed policy, despite Clinton's early insistence that there would be no delay.

Recognizing that almost nothing had been achieved in more than a year of talks, Clinton's secretary of state, Warren M. Christopher, sought to change the U.S. role from mediator to active participant. He could not persuade the two sides to adopt a U.S.-proposed statement of principles. Meeting in late June 1993, they still showed little interest in Christopher's proposals.

Declaration of Principles and Jordanian-Israeli Peace. In mid-August, reports began to appear in the Arab press about PLO and Israeli officials meeting secretly, bypassing the stalled official negotiations in Washington. On August 29, the reports were confirmed by announcements that Israeli foreign minister Shimon Peres and Mahmoud Abbas of the PLO had been meeting secretly in Oslo, Norway, with the assistance of Norwegian foreign minister Johan Jorgen Holst, and had reached rough agreement on mutual recognition and establishment of Palestinian autonomy in Gaza and Jericho within six months, with other areas to be added later. After an interim period of five years, the final status of the territories would be determined.

The sudden turnaround caught almost everyone by surprise. Hard-liners on both sides began to complain. Israeli settlers declared that they would shoot Palestinian policemen. Hamas supporters called Arafat a traitor for agreeing to start with such a tiny piece of land and without clear guarantees for the withdrawal of Israeli forces. Clinton and Christopher, also caught off guard, promised their support and invited the sides to Washington for a formal signing ceremony.

Official talks resumed in Washington on August 31, although they were effectively superseded by negotiations continuing in Norway. Members of the Palestinian team complained that they had not been informed of the Norwegian negotiations. On September 1, Jordanian officials hinted that they would be ready to sign a peace agreement with Israel once it inked a deal with the Palestinians. Although technically at war with Israel since 1967, Jordan had formally relinquished its claims to the West Bank in 1988. Its

remaining disputes with Israel were minimal, involving only a few small slivers of borderland.

Whereas most Arab leaders moved to support the plan, Syria continued to voice its suspicions. President Hafiz al-Asad did not personally condemn the agreement, but he allowed the Palestinian movements based in Damascus to attack it, making clear where he stood.

On September 13, 1993, at a sun-drenched ceremony on the White House lawn, Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO chairman Yasir Arafat, veterans of numerous Arab-Israeli wars, shook hands, and their foreign ministers signed the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, the first ever agreement between Israel and the PLO, recognizing each other and agreeing on the outlines of a plan to end their long conflict. Although the agreement specified that the Israeli withdrawal from some occupied territory would begin on December 17, many of the details remained to be worked out.

Many analysts have speculated on the reasons why Israel and the PLO were finally able to come together. Although U.S. pressure for negotiations had brought the parties together, it did not bring about a settlement. On the Palestinian side, Arafat feared being forced out. The PLO had alienated its wealthy Arab backers with its support of Iraq's Saddam Hussein, and the rise of Hamas in the territories challenged its popularity among Palestinians. Without a dramatic move, Arafat might soon have found himself marginalized. The secrecy of the talks allowed Arafat to negotiate without the pressures from radical elements in the PLO. Rabin, for his part, had come to power promising peace and yet had presided over worsening violence and stalled talks. Failure to deliver an agreement with at least one of Israel's enemies would have sooner or later threatened his government's mandate. Also, the intifada had made Israel realize that it could no longer control the occupied territories indefinitely under the system in place.

The Clinton administration remained committed to expanding the Middle East peace process, though it generally steered away from issues related to implementation of the Israeli-Palestinian

agreement. With certain elements of Clinton's foreign policy being sharply criticized by Republicans and commentators, the administration viewed the Middle East as a bright spot. Christopher sought to build on this hope through shuttle diplomacy between Syria and Israel, and Clinton lent the prestige of his office to the effort by meeting with Syria's Asad on January 16, 1994, in Geneva. By the fall of 1994, however, an agreement had not been reached. Should the Syrians and Israelis agree on a staged Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights, Clinton was expected to station U.S. troops in the area as part of an international peacekeeping mission.

The Clinton administration also pledged financial aid to the Palestinian Authority (PA), the quasi-governmental entity established to administer the areas evacuated by the Israelis. In 1993 it promised \$500 million over five years for the development of Gaza, Jericho, and any additional areas coming under Palestinian autonomy. Congress, however, would have to appropriate the money. Half of the amount would be in the form of loans, the other half in grants. The United States also continued talks with the PLO. Like other donors, the United States had considered placing conditions on its aid to the Palestinian Authority to help ensure democratization and the efficient use of funds for development purposes.

Jordan and Israel finally reached an agreement in July 1994. Once again, although the accord had been negotiated without U.S. involvement, Washington played host to the formal signing ceremony. On July 25, King Hussein and Prime Minister Rabin signed the Washington Declaration at the White House, ending the state of war between their two countries. That ceremony was followed on October 26 by the signing of a formal peace treaty between Jordan and Israel on their border. President Clinton attended the signing.

Containment of Iraq and Iran. Threats from Iraq and Iran continued to pose a challenge for the United States. Although Iraq remained severely weakened from the Gulf war and still besieged by

the UN embargo, Saddam Hussein remained in power. In early October 1994, Hussein demonstrated that he could still command the world's attention: He deployed Republican Guard troops close to the Kuwaiti border, leading Clinton to respond by deploying 36,000 U.S. troops to the Gulf region. The Iraqis then pulled back. The Iraqi maneuver, part of an apparent plan to pressure the United Nations to lift sanctions, actually weakened support in the international community for an early lifting of sanctions.

Under the Clinton administration's policy of dual containment, Iran was regarded as a threat at least as great as Iraq, and probably greater. The United States sought to slow the development of Iranian military technology and weapons of mass destruction by lobbying nations to tighten controls on technology and weapons going to Iran. The United States also opposed World Bank loans for Iran and rescheduling of bilateral Iranian debt. Nevertheless, the United States had not precluded exploratory talks with Tehran, even as it used diplomacy to weaken Iran.

Trouble at Home, Trouble Abroad. Midterm congressional elections in November 1994 stunned Democrats, as Republicans captured the House and Senate for the first time in more than forty years. Moreover, the GOP majority in the House was strongly conservative, aggressive, and disinclined to work with Clinton's Democratic administration. Although the GOP focused primarily on domestic issues, such as tax cuts, an increasing strain of isolationism could be seen in the foreign policy outlook of important Hill leaders. The president's position was damaged further by slowly unfolding campaign finance and sex scandals, which hardened Republican resolve not to work with Clinton on any issues, foreign or domestic.

A crisis had been brewing in Eastern Europe since 1991 involving the ethnoreligious problems of the Balkan states of the former Yugoslavia, but the Clinton administration largely had left the issue to the European community. By 1994 it had become obvious that the European powers alone could not solve the conflict, and the brutal war

between Bosnian Muslims, Catholic Croats, and Orthodox Christian Serbs was taking a huge toll on the civilian population of the region. Refugees from the fighting were overwhelming European humanitarian assistance. The United States was drawn into the effort to mediate the conflict. In the Muslim world, the United States had been criticized for years because of upholding an arms embargo against the Bosnians, a policy that many Muslims believed was based on religious racism. By summer 1995, the fighting in Bosnia was entering a new stage, so the United States began preparing an intensive diplomatic push for a solution. The combatants and a joint U.S.-European negotiating team convened at Dayton, Ohio, and worked out an agreement in November 1995.

On November 4, three days after the Dayton negotiations got under way, Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated while leaving a political rally in Tel Aviv's main square. His assassin, Yigal Amir, was a right-wing Israeli vehemently opposed to the peace process. Foreign minister Shimon Peres became acting prime minister, overseeing a caretaker government until elections could be held. A spate of terrorist incidents immediately before polling for a new government in Israel appeared to influence the election, in which Israeli voters by a margin of less than 1 percent elected Benjamin Netanyahu, Likud leader and a hard-line opponent of the peace process.

Terrorism became the focus of U.S. policy in the Middle East in 1996 following a series of incidents in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. President Clinton called on the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and Gaza to detain individuals responsible for attacks but blamed most incidents in the Palestinian territories and Lebanon on Iran, which he accused of providing funding, weapons, training, and ideological support to Islamist groups in the region.

Americans voted to elect Clinton to a second term in November 1996 despite scandals and acrimonious relations with the Republican Congress. Through 1997 the Clinton administration tried to maintain some momentum in the Arab-Israeli

peace process but was increasingly frustrated by the hard-line Israeli stance on security and land-for-peace issues. By 1998 the Arab states were taking a wait-and-see attitude toward the peace process. Efforts by Clinton officials to restart stalled Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Lebanese bilateral tracks proved wholly unsuccessful.

In October 1998, the administration convened a conference at the Wye River Plantation in Maryland, with the goal of getting PLO chairman Arafat and Israeli prime minister Netanyahu to discuss implementing land, security, and economic issues to which the Israelis and Palestinians had already agreed. The Wye River talks were acrimonious and nearly ended in stalemate, but Clinton was determined to get the peace process back on track. He personally involved himself in the negotiations, reprising President Carter's role in the negotiations that led to the Camp David Accords. His secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, was also present for the negotiations. It took the arrival of King Hussein of Jordan, however, to move the parties toward agreement. The king was at the time receiving treatment for cancer at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, but left his hospital bed to attend the conference at Clinton's invitation. The Wye River Memorandum, signed October 23, 1998, at the White House, laid ground rules for further land transfers in the West Bank, the opening of the Gaza airport, and cooperative security arrangements. It also set a deadline of May 4, 1999, for the conclusion of permanent status negotiations for the West Bank and Gaza.

Although the Wye gathering was an important event in the administration's Middle Eastern efforts, the United States spent much of 1997 and 1998 working on other foreign policy fronts, particularly UN reform and Iraq. Continuing pressure from congressional conservatives to alter U.S. relations with the United Nations forced Clinton officials to push the international body to reform its procedures toward more efficiency and better responsiveness to crises. They asserted that the United States did not want to always act alone, placing U.S. troops in danger, to help settle international disputes. The United Nations pointed to

the hypocrisy of the U.S. position, because no nation owed the organization more money in back dues than did the United States. Congress continued to refuse to appropriate funds to pay the arrears.

In 1997 and 1998 the United States focused its attention in the Middle East on Iraq's increasingly adamant refusal to comply with UN weapons inspectors, which threatened the humanitarian oil-for-food program in that country and sparked a renewed U.S. and British bombing effort that drew strong criticism, even from U.S. Arab allies. A low-profile campaign of aerial attacks on Iraqi sites continued without much attention until late 1999, when France began to make an issue of them. Even that did not stop Britain and the United States from carrying out what was essentially low-grade warfare against Iraq. (*The Persian Gulf, Chapter 4, p. 137*)

The United States repeatedly charged Iraq with withholding humanitarian aid from its own population in order to score public relations points, and by 1999 rumors had surfaced that some humanitarian aid supplies were being resold on the black markets of neighboring states.

Camp David and Taba Talks. President Clinton was determined to bring about an Israeli-Palestinian agreement before he left office. To that end, he invited Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak and PLO chairman Arafat to Camp David in an attempt to broker a final settlement. Barak, who had defeated Netanyahu in a fractious election in 1999, was a former chief of staff of the Israel Defense Forces and a protégé of the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin. He had, however, been slipping in public opinion polls and in support in the Knesset and was desperately in need of a dramatic breakthrough to boost his prospects. Arafat was not enthusiastic about the summit, arguing that the Palestinians needed more time to prepare, but Clinton pressured him to attend.

The three leaders spent two weeks, from July 11 to July 25, 2000, sequestered at Camp David. Barak brought what he termed a final peace plan, featuring a sovereign Palestinian state based on

the return of 92 percent of the West Bank (by Israeli calculations), all of Gaza, and some parts of East Jerusalem. The plan also called for Israel's annexation of Jewish settlements in East Jerusalem, an Israeli presence at Palestinian border crossings, and Israeli control of West Bank air space. Refugees would be allowed only a truncated right of return, to the new Palestinian state not to former Palestinian land in Israel. Arafat refused to agree to Barak's suggestions despite Clinton's attempts to persuade him.

Following the failure to reach agreement at Camp David, many people in Israel and the United States, following the lead of Barak and Clinton, laid the blame on Arafat, charging that the Israeli offer at Camp David was the "most generous" ever made—a Palestinian state in Gaza and most of the West bank with its capital at East Jerusalem, the removal of many Israeli settlements in the West Bank, and joint administration of the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif in East Jerusalem. Arafat was accused of starting the al-Aqsa intifada that erupted later, in September, and of sustaining it so that he would not have to agree to a settlement.

Not surprisingly, the account by Palestinians and other observers differed dramatically from Clinton's and Barak's. They contended that Barak's offer did not address all the disagreements over the territories to be returned, the precise status of Jerusalem, and Israeli settlements in the West Bank. Barak, they claimed, came to Camp David with a final and nonnegotiable plan that he demanded Arafat sign on to. That plan, they pointed out, would essentially divide the West Bank into three areas separated by Israeli settlements, prohibiting Palestinians' movement. In addition, it did not provide full sovereignty over the Arab areas of East Jerusalem or satisfy Palestinian demands regarding the right of return of Palestinian refugees. The intifada, they said, was a spontaneous rebellion flowing from long pent-up frustration over Israel's continuing occupation and confiscation of Palestinian land and, in the immediate sense, from the provocative visit of Ariel Sharon, the hard-line leader of the Israeli opposition party Likud, to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif.

Despite the post-summit spin, Palestinian and Israeli negotiators met on several occasions in August and September 2000, and on December 23, 2000, President Clinton offered his own plan. It would create a sovereign Palestinian state in Gaza and 97 percent of the West Bank, give Israel sovereignty in East Jerusalem over Jewish areas and give Palestine sovereignty for Arab areas, reassure Israeli security concerns by insisting that the Palestinian state be demilitarized and allow Israeli early warning stations to remain in the West Bank. It also offered compromises on Palestinian refugees. As a result, Israeli and Palestinian negotiators met at Egypt's Taba resort January 21–27, 2001. Using the Clinton plan as a starting point, the talks came close to achieving an agreement but were suspended until after the Israeli elections, following Barak's resignation, which he had submitted on December 10 in order to seek a new mandate.

In the meantime, clashes and violence between Israelis and Palestinians strained the atmosphere for peace. Israel had responded quite forcefully to the Palestinian protests surrounding Sharon's visit to the Haram al-Sharif. When two Israeli soldiers were killed in Ramallah on October 12, the IDF used helicopter gunships to attack Palestinian Authority offices. Former U.S. senator George Mitchell was appointed by the administration in October to head a commission to investigate the violence.

The Likud Party won national elections in early 2001. As a result, Ariel Sharon became prime minister. Instead of resuming talks, Sharon declared the Camp David process "null and void" and asserted Israeli sovereignty over all of Jerusalem. He also said he would accept a Palestinian state on 42 percent of the West Bank. Prospects for peace receded, and the Palestinian intifada dragged on, becoming increasingly violent. Israeli tactics became increasingly repressive. Actions against settlers and Israeli troops by such underground groups as the Tanzim and the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, both loosely associated with Fatah, the dominant faction in the PLO, and the suicide bombings carried out largely by Hamas and Islamic Jihad were met by Israeli occupation of Palestinian towns, the destruction of homes of suspected

attackers and of Palestinian Authority infrastructure, and the arrest or “targeted killing” (assassination) of Palestinians believed to be involved as leaders in perpetrating attacks.

Other Relations. U.S. relations with the rest of the Middle East under the Clinton administration were mainly untroubled. Close economic and political ties marked relations with Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf Cooperation Council states. The United States expressed support for the Algerian government during its civil war with Islamic extremists. Relations with Syria, never very good, continued to be frosty, particularly as efforts to achieve an Israeli-Syrian peace remained at an impasse. Clinton met with Syrian president Asad in March 2000 in an apparent attempt to convince him to allow Israel to retain part of the Golan in a peace deal. Asad rejected the measure, reiterating his long-expressed demand for a return to the 1967 prewar border. The Clinton administration continued to seek to tighten sanctions on Iraq after the 1998 air strikes but with little effect.

The George W. Bush Administration (2001–)

The attacks of September 11, 2001, are undoubtedly the determining factor in the course of U.S. Middle East policy under the administration of George W. Bush. As a presidential candidate on the campaign trail, Bush appeared wary of internationalism and multilateralism and such endeavors as nation building and peacekeeping. As a result of al-Qaida’s strike on the United States, Bush in 2005 found himself involved in three nation-building exercises and having issued proclamations of a U.S. foreign policy determined to hold nations accountable and to bring democracy to the four corners of the earth in conjunction with a global “war on terror.”

The al-Aqsa Intifada and Israeli-Palestinian Relations. Having watched the active efforts of President Clinton fail to achieve a breakthrough in the long-running Arab-Israeli conflict, the initial policy of the George W. Bush administration

seemed to be one of keeping a distance from it. Ultimately, however, its hand was forced by the conflict’s violence.

The Bush administration continued the U.S. policy of strong support for Israel. Financial assistance to Israel has averaged about \$3 billion annually since 1985. Although ties between the Sharon government and the Bush administration were close, and Bush appeared to support Sharon’s hard-line approach to the Palestinian Authority, the administration’s decision not to appoint a special envoy to the region represented a clear reluctance to become overly involved.

As the al-Aqsa intifada wore on, and Israelis and Palestinians became increasingly bitter, negotiations essentially ended for a time after Prime Minister Sharon refused to deal with Arafat, and the Israeli army, having launched a major incursion into the occupied territories, confined Arafat to Palestinian Authority headquarters in Ramallah. Nevertheless, the United States made several attempts to restart negotiations.

The September 11 attacks led Bush to turn his attention again to the peace process. In part, U.S. relations with the Palestinian Authority were soured by Washington’s tendency to view Hamas and Islamic Jihad as terrorist groups in the same camp as al-Qaida. Bush followed Sharon’s lead in refusing to deal with the PA until it reined in these groups. On June 24, 2002, Bush said that the United States would support the creation of a Palestinian state once Palestinians had selected a new leadership “not compromised by terror” and steps toward democracy were introduced.

Arafat, relenting to pressure and deciding against further isolation, appointed Mahmoud Abbas as prime minister on March 7, 2003. Sharon and Abbas both made conciliatory gestures. With the appointment of Abbas as prime minister, in April 2003 the Bush administration made public the so-called road map, a three-phase, three-year peace plan developed by the Quartet—the European Union, Russia, the United Nations, and the United States. The Palestinians accepted it, and Israel accepted it in principle, with changes. Bush met with Abbas, Sharon, and

Al-Qaida

Al-Qaida shocked the United States, and indeed the world, with its attack of September 11, 2001. Osama bin Laden, the organization's founder, is one of many sons of a successful Saudi Arabian contractor of Yemeni origin and one of thousands of Muslim volunteers who fought the Soviet Union in Afghanistan between its 1979 invasion and 1988 withdrawal. These so-called Arab Afghans, who traveled to Afghanistan to join the fight, returned to their homelands radicalized by their experiences and conversion to a worldview of an Islamic world under threat from nonbelievers.

Bin Laden began organizing and gathering followers on his return to Saudi Arabia. He and Abd al-Aziz Azzam, a Palestinian religious theorist, agreed that the organization they had established in Afghanistan should carry on. Thus evolved al-Qaida (meaning the base, or foundation). The creation of a corps of Islamist volunteers to fight non-Muslims wherever they threatened Islamic lands and to overthrow Islamic governments perceived as being corrupt and anti-Islamic were two of al-Qaida's principal goals.

After Azzam's assassination in 1989, bin Laden became the unquestioned head of al-Qaida, with prominent roles also played by two Egyptians—blind cleric Umar Abd al-Rahman (whose followers in Egyptian Islamic Jihad assassinated President

Anwar al-Sadat in 1981) and Ayman al-Zawahiri (another key figure in Islamic Jihad who facilitated its merger into al-Qaida).

With bin Laden's ideology growing more extremist and recruiting more followers, the Saudi government stripped bin Laden of his Saudi nationality in 1994, but by then he had already found refuge in a sympathetic Sudan, then dominated by an Islamist movement. When he continued to build his network, establish alliances with like-minded groups, and attract even more followers, international pressure forced Sudan to expel him. Afghanistan's Taliban regime invited him to settle there, where he took up residence and established training camps in terrorism and guerrilla warfare for al-Qaida members.

In 1998 bin Laden and Zawahiri issued a *fatwa*, declaring that because the United States had declared war on God and his messenger, Muslims should, as part of their duty, carry out attacks on Americans where possible. The organization had struck U.S. targets beginning in 1993 with the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York. They killed six people and wounded hundreds. Umar Abd al-Rahman, a key figure in the attack, was arrested and imprisoned for his role. Al-Qaida subsequently carried out the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, in which

King Abdallah II of Jordan in Aqaba in June 2003 to discuss the plan. Efforts to improve the situation on the ground inevitably failed, and neither side proved willing or able to implement even the first phase of the road map. (*Arab-Israeli Conflict, Chapter 2, p. 13*)

Faced with domestic opposition to his hard-line policies, Sharon announced plans to withdraw Israeli forces and settlements from Gaza and a few West Bank settlements and asserted that the separation barrier that Israel had begun to build on and around the West Bank would be continued. In April 2004, Bush announced his support for Sharon's disengagement plan, and at the same

time stated that it was unrealistic to expect a return to the 1949 armistice borders, meaning that Israel should be allowed to retain some areas of the occupied territories, and that the Palestinian refugees should not expect fulfillment of the right of return. The Palestinians were troubled by what appeared to be a break in U.S. policy calling for the two sides in the conflict to reach mutual decisions on such issues.

After Arafat's death in November 2004, Abbas succeeded him as head of the Palestine Liberation Organization and easily won election as president of the Palestinian Authority on January 9, 2005. Sharon and Abbas subsequently declared their

several hundred people died. The organization was also implicated in the killing of U.S. servicemen in Saudi Arabia and Somalia. In October 2000, the group exploded a bomb next to the USS *Cole*, in the port of Aden, Yemen, killing seventeen American sailors.

Planning and preparation for the September 11 attacks began long in advance. The first participants in the plot arrived in California in early 2000; others arrived later, bringing the total to six, and were scattered around the country. Most of these six enrolled in flight training schools, with some expressing particular interest in flying large commercial aircraft. bin Laden and al-Qaida then prepared a "muscle" group whose job would be to seize control of the various aircraft so that the first six could pilot them into the targets. There were in all nineteen hijackers who participated in the attacks.

The presence of fifteen Saudis among the nineteen has been ascribed to either the preponderance of Saudi recruits in al-Qaida's ranks or a deliberate attempt by bin Laden to harm relations between the United States and Saudi Arabia. The tactical leader of the plot was an Egyptian, Mohammed Atta. A French citizen of Moroccan origin, Zacarias Moussaoui, was suspected of being a potential twentieth hijacker, but he was in U.S. custody on September 11.

Early on the morning of September 11, 2001, five of the group boarded an American Airlines plane in Boston bound for Los Angeles. Shortly afterwards and a few gates away, another four boarded a United

Airlines plane, also bound for Los Angeles. Meanwhile, five more boarded an American Airlines flight departing Washington for Los Angeles. The last four boarded a United Airlines flight in Newark also headed for Los Angeles. Transcontinental flights carry a maximum amount of fuel.

Shortly after the planes took off, the muscle groups used box cutters to take control of the planes, and the other hijackers took command of the cockpits. They flew the two airplanes that had taken off from Boston into the World Trade Center, one into each of the two towers, both of which collapsed, killing more than 2,000 people. The Washington aircraft crashed into one side of the Pentagon outside Washington, killing more than two hundred people. The Newark aircraft crashed in the Pennsylvania countryside after passengers rushed the hijackers and prevented them from reaching their target, variously believed to be either the U.S. Capitol or the White House. The toll from the multiple attacks reached 3,126 dead, many of them New York police and firefighters killed when the World Trade Center towers collapsed in the midst of their rescue efforts.

Within a few days, the George W. Bush administration created the Homeland Security Council. After wrangling between the executive and legislative branches, the council evolved into the Department of Homeland Security and was charged with immigration, border control, transportation security, and other similar tasks.

intentions to end Israeli-Palestinian violence, entering into an informal truce.

As secretary of state in Bush's second term, Condoleezza Rice visited Israel and the Palestinian territories a month after Abbas's election, and she appointed Lt. Gen. William Ward as her Middle East security coordinator. She, however, was pointedly absent from a summit of Sharon, Abbas, King Abdallah II of Jordan, and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt on February 8, 2005, declaring that the involved parties, and not the United States, should take responsibility for the peace process. On February 21, President Bush stated that Palestinian democracy was a necessary prerequisite for establishing a Palestinian state.

On a Sharon visit to Crawford, Texas, in April 2005, Bush pushed the Israeli leader to adhere to the road map and gained his agreement to dismantle "illegal" settlement outposts in the West Bank. Although Sharon indicated his commitment to the creation of a Palestinian state after the elimination of Palestinian attacks, he also emphasized that the status of major settlements was not negotiable. President Bush appeared again to indicate that he did not oppose retention of some settlements by Israel.

Earlier assertions by some administration officials that the overthrow of Saddam Hussein in Iraq would enable progress on the Israeli-Palestinian front had not been proven true in mid-2005.

September 11, 2001. After President Bush returned to Washington on the evening of September 11, 2001, he announced in an address to the nation, "We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them." Before the day ended, Bush convened a "war council," announcing that it was time for the country to defend itself. It was agreed that anyone supporting al-Qaida should be the focus, so the Taliban regime in Afghanistan became a primary target. The administration approached Pakistan and secured agreement from it to end all support to the Taliban and assist the United States in eliminating al-Qaida. The United States delivered an ultimatum to the Taliban to hand over Bin Laden and shut down all al-Qaida camps or face attack. There was some discussion in the administration of acting against Iraq, but it was quickly dropped. Instead, plans began for a ground invasion of Afghanistan and the formation of a coalition of countries to fight terror wherever it occurred.

On September 20, Bush addressed the country before a joint session of Congress and accused al-Qaida not only of the September 11 attacks but also of the attacks on the U.S. embassies in 1998 and on the USS *Cole* in 2000. Asserting that a U.S. goal was to attack terrorists everywhere, as well as their supporters, he declared, "The Taliban must act, and act immediately . . . to hand over the terrorists, or they will share in their fate." He added, "Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make: either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists."

In the following days, the military completed a plan for attacking Afghanistan codenamed Operation Enduring Freedom. U.S. forces moved into the region, including Uzbekistan and Pakistan, which border Afghanistan. On October 7, the next phase of the operation began, involving CIA and Special Forces working with Afghan opposition groups to strike at key Taliban and al-Qaida targets. A few weeks later, more intensive operations got under way, including the use of ground troops alongside Afghan opposition militias. The city of Mazar-i Sharif in northern Afghanistan was cap-

tured on November 7, and the Taliban evacuated the capital, Kabul, four days later. By early December, all of Afghanistan's major cities had fallen, and on December 22, Hamid Karzai, a Pashtuni leader from Kandahar and former deputy foreign minister, was installed as the chairman of an interim administration for the country.

Efforts to find and eliminate remaining pockets of al-Qaida continued. In December, the United States used Afghan allies to fight al-Qaida forces in the Tora Bora cave complex. Muhammad Atif, al-Qaida's military commander and principal planner of the September 11 attacks, was killed in an air strike. In March 2002, a three-week battle raged with al-Qaida fighters in the mountainous Shah-i Kot region. As a result of the fighting, remaining al-Qaida members fled to the border region with Pakistan and across the border into adjacent tribal areas. Among those fleeing were the principal leaders, Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri, who remained at large through mid-2005 and periodically issued videos and audio recordings from their hiding places, threatening their enemies and exhorting their sympathizers to carry on the fight.

This phase of the Bush administration's "war on terror" had two prominent consequences: the establishment of a new government in Afghanistan and the capture of numerous non-Afghans accused of membership in or having connections to al-Qaida. Karzai, after heading the interim administration, was elected president of Afghanistan on October 9, 2004. The government's direct control of Afghan territory was limited largely to the areas around Kabul and Kandahar in the south, while the tribal leaders who had opposed the Taliban and cooperated with the United States operated mostly autonomously elsewhere in the country. Elements of the Taliban also remained active. U.S. forces are still stationed in Afghanistan and have been joined by a NATO peacekeeping force, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). In April 2005, President Karzai stated that his government would like to establish a formal security arrangement with the United States that would include permanent U.S. military bases.

The United States denied prisoner-of-war status to the approximately 700 captives from the Afghan campaign, choosing instead to declare them "enemy combatants," and transport them to a U.S. military base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, while holding others at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan and on Diego Garcia Island in the Indian Ocean. Nearly a quarter of the detainees were believed to be Saudi. U.S. authorities interrogated the men in secret, without access to attorneys and the possibility of trial in special military tribunals. Some were "rendered," or transferred informally, to allied countries for further interrogation. On Guantanamo, the United States held them in a specially built prison known as Camp Delta, which replaced a wire-cage setup known as Camp X-Ray. By early 2005, none of the detainees had been convicted of an offense; a few had been released to their home countries, including Britain, France, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia.

The revelation in April 2004 that American soldiers had abused prisoners in the Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad redirected the spotlight onto the situation of the Guantanamo prisoners. In subsequent months, it came to light that some of the severe interrogation techniques used in Iraq had been practiced on prisoners at Guantanamo and in Afghanistan. Most of the prisoners at Abu Ghraib and Camp Bucca prisons in Iraq were suspected of criminal activity, not terrorism.

Criticism of the Bush administration's detention practices was initially most vocal in the human rights and legal communities, which charged it with denying prisoners basic human and civil rights and acting in violation of the Geneva Conventions, of which the United States is a signatory. With the revelation of abuses at the various detention facilities, the chorus of criticism broadened. In mid-2005, several members of Congress opened debate on whether it was time to close Guantanamo because of the harm it had done and likely will continue to do to the image of the United States abroad and its role, alleged by some, in contributing to anti-American sentiment.

The Neo-Conservatives and Iraq. Among the political appointees in the Bush administration were a number of so-called neo-conservatives, or "neo-cons." Many of the original neo-cons had once been liberals, but then decided to leave the Democratic Party in the 1960s. They differed from traditional conservatives in promoting an activist agenda for social change in such areas as welfare reform and ending affirmative action. More recent neo-cons are more likely to be Republicans advocating a foreign policy employing the aggressive use of force to defend and expand U.S. national interests and reshape the world to the United States' benefit. In a unipolar world, this means that alliances are less important than the application of force and power. Neo-cons view international institutions, such as the United Nations, with suspicion, because they put limits on U.S. action. They also defend the use of U.S. power to advance the spread of democracy throughout the world, and in the Middle East in particular.

Bush administration neo-cons were concentrated in the Pentagon, which assumed a more central and broader role in U.S. foreign policy than in any previous administration. The neo-con ranks were generally said to include Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Douglas Feith, the head of the Defense Advisory Board Richard Perle, and Lewis "Scooter" Libby, chief of staff to Vice President Richard Cheney. Another neo-con, Elliott Abrams, was subsequently given the Middle East desk on the National Security Council. Although not regarded as neo-cons, Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security John Bolton agreed with many of the same views. In 1992, during Cheney's tenure as secretary of defense, Wolfowitz and Libby drafted a Defense Planning Guidance that advocated a strategy of preemptive attacks and a rise in defense spending to make the U.S. unchallengeable.

In the Bush administration, Secretary of State Colin Powell and his deputy, Richard Armitage, provided an unequal balance as the realists, holding that U.S. interests were best served by

coordination with allies and friends and that military power should be used only when necessary to defend vital U.S. interests. National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice was characterized as a pragmatist who saw her job as relaying information to the president and arbitrating differences of opinion.

The neo-con influence on Middle Eastern affairs dates back to a 1996 advisory paper for Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu in 1996 written by Perle and Feith. The paper, "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm," called for rejection of the Oslo process and advocated a U.S.-Israeli condominium for dominating the Middle East through their combined military power. At the top of the list sat the removal of Saddam Hussein. Even before George W. Bush first took office, the neo-cons were arguing that the first priority of the United States in the Middle East should be removing Saddam Hussein. After the inauguration, the administration chose to leave Israeli-Palestinian matters on the back burner and turn its attention to the possibility of regime change in Iraq, arguing that the disappearance of Hussein's regime would make the Palestinians more malleable at the negotiating table.

After the attacks of September 11, the advice of the neo-cons was translated into U.S. policy. Planning began for a war on Iraq in addition to the campaign in Afghanistan. Wolfowitz became a principal architect of the Iraq War. After months of hinting at military action and a failed attempt to secure a UN Security Council resolution authorizing action against Iraq, the United States and its allies (principally Britain) launched an attack on Iraq on March 19, 2003. It took only a few weeks to topple Hussein's Baathist regime, but the chaos and determined resistance to the U.S. presence soon ended any ideas of a quick withdrawal. Instead, the United States was forced to maintain more than 100,000 troops in Iraq while creating a civilian authority to administer the country and eventually transfer sovereignty to Iraqis. The Department of Defense handled postwar Iraq policy and planning for the administration, while extensive planning by

the Department of State for postwar reconstruction went ignored. Following the war, the influence of the neo-cons could be seen also in the sharp words the administration aimed at Syria and talk of striking Iranian nuclear facilities.

Iraq: Exit Strategy. With the seemingly inexorable cost of the U.S. presence in Iraq, in terms of casualties and financial drain, many people began to raise the question of an exit strategy. Some commentators called for an immediate exit, contending that the occupation was doomed to failure, that the absence of weapons of mass destruction proved the invasion to have been a mistake, and that Americans and Iraqis would benefit from U.S. withdrawal. Some estimated that the United States would be obliged to remain in Iraq for at least ten years. The Bush administration steered clear of providing a timetable but continued to pledge that U.S. forces would remain as long as they were needed. In the meantime, the heavy demands of the deployment produced considerable strain on U.S. military capabilities overall. Military personnel were kept in uniform beyond their enlistment periods and increasing numbers of National Guardsmen and Ready Reserves were called up to help share the burden on extended and repeat tours of duty to Iraq and Afghanistan. By June 2005, more than 1,700 U.S. military personnel had lost their lives in Iraq and more than 12,000 had been wounded.

On the military side, the United States managed to persuade twenty-nine nations to contribute 28,000 personnel to Iraq after major conflict. A year after the war, eleven of these countries had withdrawn all or most of their troops. Spain withdrew its troops in the aftermath of the al-Qaida-inspired Madrid bombing in May 2004, and Italy already had indicated that it would reduce its numbers before the accidental U.S. shooting in March 2005 of an Italian journalist just freed from her kidnappers. The Netherlands, Poland, and Ukraine also began withdrawing troops in 2005. (See the box "Military Contributions of Select Countries for the 2003 Iraq War and Postwar Presence," p. 161.)

The Bush administration made some effort after the war to reach out to countries that had opposed the war, such as France, Germany, and Russia. At the United Nations, the administration supported UN Security Council Resolution 1483 (May 6, 2003), providing for a UN special representative to coordinate activities of UN personnel in Iraq and calling on nations to contribute forces to provide security. Resolution 1500 (August 13, 2003) legitimized the establishment of the Interim Governing Council, while Resolution 1511 (October 16, 2003) authorized a “multinational force under unified command,” that is, U.S. command. This did not encourage countries to volunteer troops, because they still retained perceptions of a U.S. monopoly on decision making. NATO provided training for Iraqi security forces and logistical support but shied away from sending peacekeeping troops because of opposition from some of its European members.

Relations with Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia has been one of the United States’ closest allies in the Arab world for more than sixty years. Since British withdrawal from the Gulf in 1971, and particularly since the emergence of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, Washington’s security support and extensive armaments and training provided to the kingdom have been the focal point of its Gulf security architecture. A major reason why the United States went to war with Iraq in 1991 was to prevent an Iraqi invasion of Saudi Arabia’s massive oil fields. Although oil is the strongest link between the two countries—Saudi Arabia is the world’s largest oil exporter, intermittently the largest source of U.S. crude oil imports, and the most powerful voice in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries—the United States has relied upon Saudi political assistance in the Arab world, played a leading role in Saudi development, been one of the kingdom’s principal trading partners, and host to thousands of Saudi students.

There have always been strains in the relationship, however. To Saudi frustration, U.S. ties to Israel have always taken precedence. U.S. popular opinion of Saudi Arabia has been largely negative

because of its strict segregation of women, human rights abuses, and perceptions of “rich oil shaykhs” gouging the American consumer. September 11 multiplied these strains. Not only was Osama bin Laden of Saudi origin, but so were fifteen of the nineteen hijackers. Furthermore, it was alleged that prominent Saudis had provided funding to al-Qaida, whether knowingly or not, that the kingdom had promoted its austere Wahhabi version of Islam in Muslim communities around the world, and that its textbooks had preached hatred of non-Muslims.

Saudi Arabia’s leaders also faced strong domestic opposition to its close relationship with the United States. Since the Persian Gulf War of 1991, Saudi Arabia had provided military facilities and basing for U.S. troops and operations in the region. As Islamist pressure grew, most people in the Gulf objected to U.S. support for Israel, and Washington increasingly seemed likely to launch an attack on Saddam Hussein, the presence of U.S. forces in the kingdom became increasingly problematic. Even bin Laden railed against the presence of “infidel” soldiers in the homeland of Islam. As a consequence, the United States situated the regional headquarters of the U.S. Central Command—which includes the Middle East and Central Asia in its sphere of responsibility—at al-Udayd in Qatar prior to the Iraq War. Washington also shifted its center of air operations for the Middle East from Prince Sultan Air Base near Riyadh to al-Udayd in late April 2003. Despite their problems, the Saudi and U.S. governments remained committed to continued cooperation. There is some concern that frequent attacks from the local al-Qaida organization might challenge the survival of the regime.

Outlook

The start of the second term of the Bush administration recorded significant personnel changes. Colin Powell resigned as secretary of state and was replaced by national security adviser Condoleezza Rice. Stephen Hadley, Rice’s former deputy on the National Security Council, replaced

Arms Transfers

In recent years, the United States has been the largest seller of arms in the world. During the period 2000–2003, it had \$35.8 billion in arms transfer agreements with developing countries, the largest market for international arms transfers. This amount represented 46.8 percent of all such agreements. Russia ranked second during the same period, with more than \$21 billion (27.5 percent of the total) in agreements.

The Middle East had long been the largest recipient of arms in the developing world, accounting for \$34.1 billion (44 percent) in arms transfer agreements during 1996–1999. During 2000–2003, however, it ranked second, behind Asia, with \$24.6 billion (37 percent) in agreements. Given the close political and security ties between the United States and the Gulf Cooperation Council states, it is not surprising that U.S. sales accounted for an overwhelming 75.6 percent (\$18.6 billion) of arms agreements in the Middle East during 2000–2003. Russian sales accounted for 8.1 percent (\$2 billion). During the period 1996–2003, France's 12.6 percent (\$7.4 billion) in arms transfers was second to the United States, which led the market with 59.5 percent (\$34.9 billion). The downturn in total arms transfer agreements to the Middle East from \$34.1 billion during 1996–1999 to \$24.6 billion during 2000–2003 reflected the final phases and deliveries of arms ordered in the aftermath of the 1991 Persian Gulf War, as well as budgetary crises in many of the Gulf states caused by low oil prices.

Significant agreements signed by the United States in 2003 with Middle Eastern countries included a co-production program with Egypt involving 125 M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tank kits for \$790 million; a number of light infantry vehicles (LAWS) with Saudi Arabia for \$316 million; an

AH-64D Apache Longbow helicopter with Israel; two Reconnaissance Systems with Oman; and six C-130E aircraft with Pakistan.

During the period 1996–2003, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) concluded \$15.7 billion in arms transfer agreements totaling 10.4 percent of the value of all developing world agreements. China ranked first for the period 2000–2003, dropping the UAE to second place. Arms transfer agreements for the Gulf states during 2000–2003 were \$400 million for Bahrain, \$500 million for Iran, \$200 million for Iraq, \$2.2 billion for Kuwait, \$1.2 billion for Oman, none for Qatar, \$3.4 billion for Saudi Arabia, and \$8.1 billion for the UAE. Saudi Arabia ranked seventh among developing world countries, and Kuwait ranked tenth.

During 2000–2003, Saudi Arabia received \$23.9 billion in arms deliveries (\$16.6 billion from Britain, France, Germany, and Italy, \$6.3 billion from the United States, and \$1 billion from other sources). Egypt received \$5.4 billion in deliveries (\$4.8 billion from the United States); Israel received \$3.2 billion (\$2.9 billion from the United States); the UAE received \$2.6 billion (\$1.9 billion from Britain, France, Germany, and Italy); Kuwait received \$2.1 billion (\$1.1 billion from the United States); and Iran received \$600 million (\$200 million from Russia). The value of U.S. arms deliveries to Saudi Arabia was considerably less than they had been for the period 1996–1999, when they totaled \$16.6 billion. Arms deliveries to Saudi Arabia during 1996–2003 constituted 32.4 percent of the developing world's total.

Note: All figures in 2004 U.S. dollars.

Source: Richard F. Grummett, "Conventional Arms Transfers to Developing Nations, 1996–2003," U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, Report RL32547, August 26, 2004.

her at NSC. John Negroponte, the U.S. ambassador to Iraq who had replaced CPA administrator Paul Bremer, was recalled to Washington to assume the new position of director of national intelligence. Zalmay Khalilzad, a naturalized Afghan who had been serving as ambassador to

Afghanistan, was named to replace Negroponte. Bush nominated Paul Wolfowitz as head of the World Bank and John Bolton as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

Little change was expected in U.S. Middle East policy. The United States remained committed to

the peace process and to continued strong support for Israel. In early 2005, the Bush administration began speaking openly about the establishment of a Palestinian state while chiding Israel about its settlement policy. There were indications that the Bush administration might assume a more active role in the negotiating process.

States of Concern. Two years after the Iraq War, the insurgency raged on, tying down more than 100,000 U.S. troops and draining the U.S. Treasury of billions of dollars every month. Despite growing public concern over mounting American deaths, many observers were of the opinion that a U.S. presence would be required in Iraq for as long as a decade. The United States and Iran remained at loggerheads: the U.S. continued to impose trade sanctions on Iran and grow increasingly concerned over signs that Iran was seeking to build nuclear weapons.

Syria represents another regional concern. After lauding Syria for its cooperation in the "war on terror," following the end of the Iraq War the Bush administration charged Syria with providing refuge for former Iraqi officials and failing to take adequate steps to prevent the infiltration of Islamist insurgents into Iraq. Matters reached a head when former Lebanese prime minister Rafiq al-Hariri was assassinated in Beirut on February 14, 2005. The United States accused Syria of being behind the assassination and welcomed the large Lebanese demonstrations demanding that Syria evacuate its military and intelligence contingents from Lebanon, where they remained although the Lebanese civil war had been brought to an end more than a decade prior. Under mounting international and Lebanese pressure, Syria, to great surprise, subsequently withdrew the last of its troops in April 2005, though it is suspected that elements of its intelligence apparatus remained. The Bush administration continued to put pressure on Damascus concerning its border with Iraq and over Lebanon after its withdrawal. In spring 2005, the two countries had cut military and intelligence cooperation, with relations having reached the low level of "diplomatic contact."

The United States has long been concerned about Mu'ammār al-Qadhafi's government in Libya. Its apprehensions centered on Libya's ties to radical Palestinian groups and the Irish Republican Army and its support of terrorist activities—most notably its apparent orchestration of the bombing of a Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. The George W. Bush administration opposed Libya's efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction, and on December 19, 2003, following a long period of negotiations with Britain and the United States, Libya announced its intention to terminate all such efforts.

Military Presence in the Region. There were few signs that the United States intended to reduce its large military presence in the Persian Gulf region in the near future. While the level of troops might be gradually reduced in Iraq as security improves there, such a measure remained outside the realm of possibility in mid-2005, and the question of permanent U.S. bases in Iraq remained a matter of conjecture. An arrangement for the long-term U.S. use of Iraqi military facilities was hinted at for several years after the Iraq War. The nature of such an arrangement, however, would depend on termination of the postwar insurgency and negotiations with a permanent Iraqi government.

The U.S. military established the regional command center for the U.S. Central Command in Qatar prior to the Iraq War, and the United States continued to make use of al-Udayd base and another Qatari base at al-Sayliyah. It also maintained a sizeable military presence in Kuwait, particularly as Kuwait provided the gateway to move personnel, equipment, and supplies into Iraq. The U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet is based out of Bahrain and use is made of facilities and prepositioned equipment in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman. There were also signs that a return to use of Yemeni facilities might be a possibility.

War on Terror. The September 11 attacks abruptly forced the Bush administration to refocus much of its attention from domestic matters to foreign policy. Bush set the tone of his new foreign

policy when he declared a global “war on terror” and urged allies and the “civilized world” to join in the campaign, warning that those who were not with the United States on this matter would be regarded as against it.

The “National Security Strategy of the United States of America” released on September 17, 2002, articulates the Bush administration’s view of the world and the role it wants the United States to play in it. This document promises that the United States will “champion aspirations for human dignity; strengthen alliances to defeat global terrorism and work to prevent attacks against us and our friends; work with others to defuse regional conflicts; prevent our enemies from threatening us, our allies, and our friends, with weapons of mass destruction; ignite a new era of global economic growth through free markets and free trade; expand the circle of development by opening societies and building the infrastructure of democracy; develop agendas for cooperative action with other main centers of global power; and transform the United States’ national security institutions to meet the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century.”

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of the policy statement was the emphasis on the right to preemptive action. Noting that deterrence had been an effective defense against the use of weapons of mass destruction during the cold war, the document contended that the risk it now confronted was rogue states and terrorists who saw weapons of mass destruction as weapons of choice. Therefore,

To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively. The United States will not use force in all cases to preempt emerging threats, nor should nations use preemption as a pretext for aggression. Yet in an age where the enemies of civilization openly and actively seek the world’s most destructive technologies, the United States cannot remain idle while dangers gather.

It also declared, “While the United States will constantly strive to enlist the support of the international community, we will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of self-

defense by acting preemptively against . . . terrorists, to prevent them from doing harm against our people and our country.” This strategy underpinned U.S. policy toward Iraq and the decision to go to war despite widespread opposition. It also seemed to rest behind the administration’s stream of strong words to Syria and Iran regarding those countries’ support for Iraqi factions and Iran’s pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability.

Democratization. The Bush administration took office asserting that one of its principal goals in the Middle East was to advance the prospects for democracy. The overthrow of Saddam Hussein and the introduction of a democratic government in Iraq was to be the opening move in regional transformation. While previous U.S. administrations had proclaimed democratization as a goal, the Bush administration was willing to use military means and threats to force reluctant regimes to reform.

The administration created the Middle East Partnership Initiative to fund programs that advanced change and then launched the Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative to establish a forum for discussing and advocating democratic reforms. Arab governments resisted U.S. pressure as interference, and Arab intellectuals expressed their concerns that too rapid change as advocated by the United States would destabilize societies and lead to chaos. Critics of the administration pointed out that the United States was urging change and reform on those governments it did not like while maintaining close ties with repressive governments, such as Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, that were vital to the U.S. economy and regional security concerns.

Another major obstacle to the success of the United States as a force for positive change in the Middle East was the widespread hostility of most of the region’s peoples toward it. The 2003 war against Iraq aroused strong opposition in most of the world, especially in Arab nations. A public opinion poll in six Arab states friendly to the United States registered that only 4 to 13 percent of respondents had a favorable opinion of the United States. Arab satellite television channels,

including al-Jazeera (Qatar), al-Arabiya (UAE), and Abu Dhabi Television, regularly broadcast news and video of the violence in Iraq, the Abu Ghraib abuses, and Israeli actions against the Palestinians, which many Arabs believe has received the approval of the United States. Large numbers of Iraqis indicated that while they were

glad to see the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, they were less than happy with the United States as an occupier of their country. Rather than seeing the United States as an agent of democratization in the region, many Middle Easterners see it as an intruder with its own agenda and a negative foreign policy.