Icahd-obstacles to peace, jeff halper

OBSTACLES TO PEACEA REFRAMING OF THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICTWritten and Presented ByJeff HalperCartography ByMichael Younan and PalMap of GSEMarch 2009Fourth Edition2Fourth Printing, 2009Design & Typesetting by ICAHDCover Pictures: Anne Paq / activestills. orgCover: e-qube Design StudioPrinted by Shmuel Tal, JerusalemPublished byICAHDPO Box 2030Jerusalem 91020Israel+972 2 : www.

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Although the Jews comprised only a third of the country??™spopulation (548, 000 out of 1, 750, 000) and owned only 6% of the land, they received55% of the country (including both Tel Aviv/Jaffa and Haifa port cities, the Sea of Galileeand the resource-rich Negev). In the area allocated to the Jewish

state, only about 57% ofthe population was actually Jewish (538, 000 Jews, 397, 000 Arabs). The Jewish communityaccepted the Partition Plan; the Palestinians (except those in the Communist Party) and theArab countries rejected it. Map 2: Israel and the Occupied Palestinian TerritoriesBy the end of the 1948 war ??" called the War of Independence by Israel and the Naqba(??? Disaster???) by the Palestinians ??" Israel controlled 78% of the country, including half theterritory that had been allocated by the UN to the Palestinians. Some 750, 000 Palestiniansliving in what became Israel were made refugees or ??? internally displaced??? people; under200, 000 remained in their homes. More than 418 villages, two-thirds of the villages ofPalestine, were systematically destroyed by Israel after their residents had left or beendriven out.

Of the Arab areas, now reduced to 22% of the country, the West Bank wastaken by Jordan and Gaza by Egypt. The 1949 Armistice Line, today known as the ??? GreenLine,??? de facto demarcates the State of Israel until today. Since 1988, when the Palestiniansrecognized Israel within that boundary, it has constituted the basis of the two-state option, with the Palestinians claiming a state on all the lands conquered by Israel in 1967: the WestBank, East Jerusalem and Gaza. Maps 3-7: Five Elements Defining the Palestinian BantusanIsrael defines its policy of ensuring permanent control over the Occupied Territories as??? creating facts on the ground.

??? In this conception, Israeli control must be made immunefrom any external or internal pressures to remove Israel from the Occupied Territories(which Israel vehemently denies is an occupation at all), as well as to foreclose foreverthe possibility of a viable and truly sovereign Palestinian

state. Nevertheless, even Sharonrecognizes that Israel needs a Palestinian state, since it can neither extend citizenship tothe Territories??™ three and a half million Palestinians nor deny it to them. It also needs aPalestinian state to relieve itself of the necessity of accepting the refugees.

A Bantustan, acantonized Palestinian mini-state controlled by Israel yet possessing a limited independence, thus solves Israel??™s fundamental dilemma of how to keep control over the entire countryyet ??? get rid of??? its Palestinian population (short of actual ??? transfer???). The contours of thatBantustan are defined by five elements comprising Israel??™s Matrix of Control as illustratedin the following maps: (1) Areas A and B; (2) the closure; (3) the settlement blocs; (4) theinfrastructure; and (5) the Separation Barrier/Wall. A full (if complex) picture of the Matrixof Control is depicted in Map 10, and the truncated Palestinian mini-state Israel is creatingin Map 11.

Map 3: Defining the Palestinian Bantustan. Element #1: West Bank Areas A, B and CIn the Oslo II agreement of 1995, the West Bank was divided into three Areas: A, under fullPalestinian Authority control; B, under Palestinian civil control but joint Israeli-Palestiniansecurity; and C, under full Israeli control. Although Area A was intended to expand untilit included all of the West Bank except Israel??™s settlements, its military facilities andEast Jerusalem ??" whose status would then be negotiated ??" in fact the division became apermanent feature.

Area A comprises 18% of the West Bank, B another 22%, leaving a full60%, Area C, including most of Palestinian farmland and water, under exclusive Israelicontrol. These areas, comprising 64 islands, shape the contours of

the ??? cantons??? Sharon hasproposed as the basis of the future Palestinian state. Taken together with Gaza, which Israelwill relinquish, the emerging Bantustan will consist of five truncated cantons ??" a northernone around Nablus and Jenin; a central one around Ramallah; a southern one aroundBethlehem and Hebron; enclaves in East Jerusalem; and Gaza. In this scheme Israel willexpand from its present 78% to 85-90%, with the Palestinian state confined to just 10-15%of the country. Map 4: Defining the Palestinian Bantustan. Element #2: The Closure and HouseDemolitionsAt the very beginning of the Oslo peace process Israel established an ever-constrictivesystem of permanent ??? closure??? over the Occupied Territories, a regime both arbitrary andcounter-productive.

Arbitrary because there was no particular rise in terrorism or securitythreats during this time; the security situation was certainly better than it was during the firstIntifada, when there was no closure whatsoever. And counter-productive because, ratherthan benefiting the Palestinians, it meant that the ??? peace process??? had actually impoverishedand imprisoned them, destroying their commerce and industry and de-developing theiremerging country. The permanent checkpoints depicted on the map, together with hundredsof other ??? flying??? checkpoints erected spontaneously throughout the Territories and earthenbarriers to the entrances to virtually all the Palestinian cities, towns and villages, present600+ obstacles to Palestinian movement on any given day. They serve to accustom thePalestinians to living in a collective space defined by Areas A and B. When these cantonsfinally become a truncated Palestinian state, the Palestinians will already be adapted toits narrow confines. So minimal will be the

Palestinians??™ expectations that the addition ofcorridors linking the cantons will given them the feeling of ??? freedom,??? thus leading themto acquiesce to the Bantustan. Israel??™s policy of house demolitions, by which over 24, 000Palestinian homes have been demolished since 1967, is designed to confine the Palestinianpopulation to the islands of A and B as well as small enclaves in East Jerusalem.

(It is also apolicy that impacts seriously on the Palestinian population within Israel.)Map 5: Defining the Palestinian Bantustan. Element #3: Israel??™s Settlement BlocsWhen Ehud Barak proposed to ??? jump??? to final status negotiations in 1999, he consolidatedthe settlements Israel sought to retain into ??? blocs,??? leaving the more isolated and lessstrategic ones vulnerable to dismantling. Thus, instead of dealing with 200 settlements, Barak had only to negotiate the annexation of seven settlement blocs: (1) the Jordan ValleyBloc; (2) the Ariel Bloc that divides the West Bank east and west and preserves Israelicontrol over the Territories largest water aquifer; (3) the Modi??™in Bloc, connecting the Arielsettlements to Jerusalem; a ??? Greater Jerusalem??? consisting of (4) the Givat Ze??™ev Bloc to thenorthwest of the city, (5) the expansive Ma??™aleh Adumim bloc extending to the northeastand east of Jerusalem and (6) the Etzion Bloc to the southwest; and (7) a corridor rising fromthe settlements in the south to incorporate the Jewish settlements in Hebron. While theextent of these settlements blocs is to some extent subject to negotiations, their function, however, is to further define and divide the Palestinian cantons. Representing some 25%of the West Bank, their annexation to Israel has been approved by the US in the bi-lateralBush-Sharon Exchange of Letters in April 2004.

(Within the settlement blocs are depictedboth the settlements themselves and the master plans that surround and extend them.)Map 6: Defining the Palestinian Bantustan. Element #4: The Infrastructure of ControlIn order to incorporate the West Bank and East Jerusalem permanently into Israel proper, a $3 billion system of highways and ??? bypass roads??? has been constructed that integratesthe settlement blocs into the metropolitan areas of Tel Aviv, Modi??™in and Jerusalem, whilecreating additional barriers to Palestinian movement. This ambitious project articulateswith the Trans-Israeli Highway, now being built along the entire length of the country, hugging the West Bank in its central portion.

Shifting Israel??™s population center eastwardfrom the coast to the corridor separating Israel??™s major cities from the settlement blocs itseeks to incorporate, the Trans-Israel Highway will become the new spine of the country, upon which the by-pass road network can be hung. The result is the reconfiguration of thecountry from two parallel north-south units ??" Israel and the West Bank, the basis of thetwo-state idea ??" into one country integrated east-west. Besides ensuring Israeli control, thereorientation of traffic, residential and commercial patterns further weakens a truncatedPalestinian mini-state; each Palestinian canton is integrated separately into Israel, with onlytenuous connections one to the other. Map 7: Defining the Palestinian Bantustan.

Element #5: The Separation Barrier/WallThe final defining element of the bantustan is the Separation Barrier, known by its opponentsas the Apartheid Wall both because it serves to make permanent an apartheid situationbetween Israelis and Palestinians, and because it rises to a massive

concrete wall of eightmeters (26 feet) when reaching Palestinian population centers ??" replete with prison-likewatch towers, gates, security roads, electronic fences and deadly armaments. While soldto the public as an innocent security device, the Barrier in fact defines the border betweenIsrael (including the areas of the West Bank and East Jerusalem Israel seeks to annex) andthe Palestinian mini-state. It follows not the Green Line but establishes a new demographicline that extends Israel eastward into the West Bank. Although the Barrier??™s overall routehas been moved closer to the Green Line in light of the International Court of Justice??™sruling, the addition of ??? supplementary security zones??? and ??? special security zones??? to theBarrier??™s complex still retains the convoluted route around the settlement blocs in order toensure they are on the ??? right??? side of the Barrier. When completed the Separation Barrierwill be five times longer than the Berlin Wall (some 700 kms versus 155), in places twiceas high and will unilaterally annex East Jerusalem and some 8% of the West Bank. As aninstallation costing over $3 billion, it is not designed to be dismantled.

Map 8: The Palestinian Bantustan in the Gaza StripThe Gaza Strip is a tiny area of land 45 km (30 miles) long and 5-12 km (3-9 miles) inlength, surrounded by Israeli settlements and electronic fences and gates. As of this writing??" almost four years after Sharon??™s plan of ??? disengagement??? was completed ??" its 1. 5 millionPalestinian inhabitants live on just 139 square miless.

Gazans, once farmers, are todayimpoverished, their lands cleared of fruit and olive trees and other crops as ??? securitymeasures.??? Some 75% of Gazans live on less than $2 a day, 80% are refugees living mainlyin squalid

camps. Gaza has one of the highest population densities in the world ??" 10, 665persons per square mile, almost four times the density of Bangladesh. Malnutrition amongchildren is rampant; most of its water is taken by the settlers or is highly polluted; and morethan 5, 500 homes have been demolished and tens of thousands of more damaged in thecourse of the second Intifada and Operation Cast Lead.

Gaza is divided into white, yellow, blue and green areas that divide Israelis and Palestinians. The settlements inside of Gazahave been removed, but post-??? disengagement??? Palestinians still live in a cage, blockadedby sea, fenced in by land, unable to travel by air, prevented from seeking employment inIsrael. Map 9: The Matrix of ControlWhen all the elements are put together, the full extent and complexity Israel??™s Matrix ofControl becomes evident.

This raises the major question before us: Is the Occupationreversible If it is not, if the Occupation can never be dismantled to the extent that a viablePalestine emerges, then should we continue supporting a ??? two-state solution??? To do soplaces us in a position of advocating for a Bantustan. If the Occupation is reversible, thenwe must ensure that the minimal conditions for a viable Palestinian state are achieved. Ineither case Israel??™s ??? facts on the ground,??? its Matrix of Control, are essential parts of thepolitical equation. Map 10: The Emerging Palestinian Bantustan in the West BankWhen the elements of the Matrix of Control are combined with American agreementfor Israel??™s annexing its major settlement blocs, the outlines of a Palestinian Bantustanclearly emerge. It is a mini-state of four islands occupying 10-15% of the country withno international borders, no

territorial contiguity, no freedom of movement internally orexternally, little economic viability, limited access to Jerusalem, no control of its wateror other major resources, no control of its airspace or even its communications sphere, ademilitarized entity lacking even the authority to enter into foreign alliances without Israeliapproval.

If Israel has succeeded in rendering the Occupation permanent, it is not becauseof the logistical difficulties in removing the settlements. A Peace Now poll found that fully90% of the settlers (most of whom live in the Territories for economic and ??? quality of life??? reasons) would leave if they were offered comparable housing inside Israel. It is only thewill if the international community to force the Israel government to abandon its settlemententerprise that is lacking.

If that is the case, the international community is confrontedwith two stark choices: either to accept and condone a new apartheid situation, or towork towards another just and sustainable solution ??" a single democratic state in the entirecountry, a regional confederation or some other option. It is to be hoped that apartheid, the only ??? solution??? Israel is offering by rendering its Occupation irreversible, will not beacceptable. Map 11: Three Alternative BantustansThe problem is not obtaining a Palestinian state. Israel itself desperately needs a Palestinianstate, since it can neither bestow citizenship on the Palestinians nor deny it to thempermanently. In order to retain its Jewish character yet control the entire country, Israel mustsomehow ??? relieve itself??? of the Palestinian population.

The only way out (except for transfer, which is impossible in the present circumstances) is to establish a Bantustan. Sharon hassuggested a Bantustan (he calls it a plan of ??? cantonization???) on 40% of the West Bank, buthas indicated that he is willing to unilaterally ??? give??? the Palestinians 60%, perhaps even abit more. Labor, wishing to make a Bantustan cosmetically acceptable, would offer up to85% of the Occupied Territories, knowing that Israel needs just a strategic 15% to retaincontrol. Map 12: Moveable Borders: 1947, 1949, 1967 and OnThese maps illustrate the changing borders at the expense of the Palestinians over the years. The picture that emerges is one of displacement, whether actually driving the Palestiniansout of the country or confining them to a sort of reservations. Map 13: Municipal Jerusalem, with the Separation BarrierIn 1967 Israel annexed an area of 70 sq.

kms., which it called ??? East??? Jerusalem, to the38 sq. kms. that had comprised Israeli ??? West??? Jerusalem since 1948, even though thePalestinian side of the city under Jordan was just 6 sq. kms.

It gerrymandered the municipalborder according to two principles: incorporating as much unbuilt-upon Palestinian landas possible for future Israeli settlements (the ??? inner ring??? of settlements depicted in blue), while excluding as much of the Palestinian population as possible so as to maintain a 72%Jewish majority in the city. As the concentrations of Palestinian population show (in brown), the municipal border cut in half a living urban fabric of communities, families, businesses, schools, housing and roads. Its placement of settlements prevents the urban development ofPalestinian Jerusalem ??" the economic and cultural as well as religious

center of Palestinianlife ??" transforming its residential and commercial

areas into disconnected enclaves. There aretoday more Israelis living in ???

East??? Jerusalem (more than 200, 000) than Palestinians.

SincePalestinians cannot live in ??? West??? Jerusalem, Israeli restrictions on

building (combined withan aggressive campaign of house demolitions) have

confined that population to a mere 6%of the urban land ??" although they

are a third of the Jerusalem population. Discriminatoryadministrative and

housing measures have led to the ??? Quiet Transfer??? of thousands

ofPalestinian families out of the city, and to the loss of their Jerusalem

residency. Map 14: The Three Jerusalems: Municipal, Greater and

MetropolitanThe ??? inner ring??? of settlements that defines municipal

Jerusalem is today being linked withan ??? outer ring??? of settlements to

transform Jerusalem from a city into a region that controlsthe entire central

portion of the West Bank. ??? Greater Jerusalem,??? the master plan of

whichwas formalized already in 1995, extends the city far into the West

Bank. Yet an even moreextensive ??? Jerusalem??? exists: Metropolitan

Jerusalem. Though not intended for annexation, itforms a planning unit

designed to ensure that Ramallah and Bethlehem remain

undevelopedsatellite cities dependent upon Israeli Jerusalem even if they

eventually fall across a politicalborder separating Israel from Palestine.

Indeed, by creating extensive buffer zones betweenthe city of Jerusalem and

the surrounding West Bank, Israel is eliminating the economicheart of any

Palestinian state. In this way Israel keeps all the developmental potential

ofthe city — and the country as a whole ??" firmly in its hands, rendering the

Palestinian state anon-viable entity existing on a Third World subsistence level.

The map also shows the ??? E-1??? area, 4000 acres annexed to Ma??™aleh Adumim in a combinedmove by the Netanyahu and Barak governments. With the addition of E-1, Ma??™alehAdumim??™s master plan extends entirely across the West Bank from Jerusalem to Jericho, effectively severing the northern West Bank from the south. Palestinian traffic will likelybe diverted into Israeli territory (along the ??? Eastern Ring Road??? now being constructed inEast Jerusalem), allowing Israel to control Palestinian movement even in the event that aPalestinian state emerges. E-1 reveals the subtle, sophisticated and effective use of planningfor control employed by Israel. Map 15: The Colonization of Jerusalem??™s Old CityThe settler movement has long had its eyes set on increasing Jewish control inside theOld City of Jerusalem. Few parts of the Old City are without settler encroachment. EvenDamascus Gate, the famous entrance to the Muslim Quarter, is framed with settlementsincluding a house owned by former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon (No.

6 on the map). Map 16: Settlement activity in East JerusalemThe Israeli government, the Municipality of Jerusalem, and settler organizations are workingto strengthen the control settlements and Israeli infrastructure have in East Jerusalem. Individual properties are bought, stolen and confiscated by settlers and large swaths ofland are expropriated by the government for new, large settlements. Just as the governmentwants to establish facts on the ground with settlements surrounding East Jerusalem, so toodo the East Jerusalem settlements movements, led by the Elad and Ateret Cohanim

groups, wish to surround the Old City of Jerusalem with a sufficiently dense Jewish population toprejudice the status of the land in future negotiations. TABLE OF CONTENTSForwardReframing the ConflictThe Matrix of Control: Ruling Palestine While Getting Rid of the PalestiniansDemolishing homes, demolishing families, demolishing peaceBarak??™s ??? Generous Offer??? The Palestinians Reject Autonomy; Israel Moves Toward ApartheidThe Saudi Initiative Revisited: The Bantustan Takes On UrgencyApartheid, Warehousing or.

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Israeli Violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention3. The Saudi Initiative (The Arab Peace Initiative)4. The Road Map5. Israel??™s 14 ??? Reservations??? to the Road Map6. Sharon-Bush Exchange of Letters7.

Bush-Sharon Agreement: Congressional Approval8. The Prisoners??™ DocumentBibliographyAbout the author and the cartographer34374757738610311812313213714915315515716216316716917418017FORWARDThis manual grew out of tours of the Occupied Territories given by ICAHD over the yearsfor diplomats, journalists, study missions and activists. As might be expected of a workthat began as a guidebook, it presents a ??? grounded analysis??? of Israel??™s Occupation ofthe West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza. It describes the basic ??? facts on the ground:??? the settlements, the web of highways, many of them restricted to Israelis only, others forseparate Palestinian traffic, the maze of

checkpoints and other obstacles to movement, policies of house demolition and land expropriation, the creation of a ??? Greater??? IsraeliJerusalem, Israeli control of Palestinian water and other natural resources (including theairspace and even the electro-magnetic sphere), the ??? Separation Barrier??? and more.

Butit then goes on to examine what we call Israel??™s ??? Matrix of Control,??? a layered system ofadministration, planning, law and policies (such as economic ??? closure???) which, togetherwith the facts on the ground, lay the infrastructure for permanent Israel control of theentire country from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean. Throughout we also identify theideological underpinnings, military logic and ultimate goals of Israeli policies of expansionand control. Moving from description to analysis, we ask: Where is Israel headed in its four decadeold(and counting) Occupation Are we moving towards a genuine attempt to resolve ourcentury-long conflict with the Palestinians or, more chillingly, towards a state of permanently??? warehousing??? them We also examine the mechanisms by which Israel has managedto perpetuate its control over the Palestinians and their lands, what we call ??? framing??? inparticular: How officials of successive Israeli governments and their spokespeople succeedin ??? selling??? their country??™s heavy-handed control over millions of people deprived of theirlands and rights as somehow justifiable How they convince not only its own peoplebut also otherwise liberal people abroad ??" political leaders, journalists, academics andmuch of the Diaspora Jewish community, not to mention the ??? man on the street,??? ??" tosupport policies which are manifestly unjust, which plainly violate international law andfundamental

human rights and which serve to destabilize relations between the West andthe entire Muslim world How do they succeed in casting Palestinian resistance as base??? terrorism??? while casting Israel, one of the world??™s strongest military powers and one itslongest standing Occupying Powers, as a mere victim Finally, and most important, wepose here the question of whether it is still possible to end the Occupation and salvagethe two-state solution, or do we have to begin considering other options Will the newObama Administration depart from American policy over the past half-century of offeringabsolute support to Israel no matter what the political costs More pointedly, will the ObamaAdministration succeed in persuading Congress, Israel??™s bi-partisan trump card, to supporta more assertive policy of finally ending the Occupation in favor of a just and lasting peaceAnd what is our role as peace-makers and concerned members of the international civil18society in bringing about the end of this increasingly bloody and globally destabilizingconflictBesides imparting information and addressing these fundamental questions, this book isintended to help advocates of a just peace ??? reframe??? the conflict in ways that offer just, workable and sustainable (if often creative) solutions to the conflict. Since this is a bookpublished by a critical Israeli peace and human rights organization focused on endingthe Occupation, it does not hesitate to place responsibility for resolving the conflictmainly at Israel??™s doorstep.

This is not to absolve the Palestinians of responsibility; it simplyrecognizes the tremendous imbalance of power between the two sides, and thus of theirrespective abilities to end the conflict. Thus our reframing stresses three key elements: thatan Occupation indeed exists and is the center of the

conflict (since 1967 Israel has officiallydenied that fact); that Israel is the strong party in the conflict, the only one that can actuallyend the Occupation, and which therefore can be held accountable for its policies andactions (rather than Israel??™s disingenuous presentation of itself as the victim); and that theOccupation is pro-active, a vehicle for establishing Israel??™s permanent control over theentire country, not defensive or reactive. Our reframing also critically questions the conceptof ??? terrorism??? and its role in the conflict. Only by reframing the conflict, we believe, willwe be able to formulate an approach which will effectively lead to its just end. Towardsthat goal we also suggest alternative outlines of a just peace based on a regional win-winapproach. The picture presented here is bleak. While early signs that Obama is treating the conflictseriously are encouraging (the appointment of George Mitchell as his envoy, in particular), there is little evidence, given Netanyahu??™s recent election and the formation of his extremelyhard-line government, that anything less than major pressure applied by the US on Israel willend either the Occupation or the conflict ??" and that pressure remains a distant possibility atbest.

Still, this book is not defeatist. Every occupation, every instance of oppression, can beended. The action-oriented campaigns sponsored by ICAHD and its partner organizations, Palestinian and Israeli, seek to mobilize your support in our common struggle to achieve ajust peace. The Occupation challenges all of us ??" governments, faith-based communities, trade unions, human rights organizations, activist groups and concerned individuals alike. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, we contend, is far more than a localized war between twopeoples in a remote land.

It is nothing less that conflict with fundamental significancefor the global community. Being emblematic for the Muslim world as a whole ??" the??? clash of civilizations??? from a Muslim point of view, an American and Western-backedoccupation and not merely an Israeli one ??" it is inconceivable that stability be restored tothe broader Middle East and security to the West unless this conflict is resolved. No lessimportant, Israel??™s Occupation represents a profound challenge to a global system based oninternational law and universal human rights.

What does it mean to peoples the world overif a regime of control, displacement, a denial of fundamental rights and repression actuallyprevails, in defiance of international law and more than 200 UN resolutions If occupationand repression actually defeat a people??™s aspirations for freedom and fundamental human19rights, then what are the implications for oppressed peoples in other parts of the world farfrom public attentionFail here, and we will have a much tougher time prevailing over oppressive regimes in thefuture. Indeed, as 9/11 dramatically illustrated, in a global reality it is impossible to insulateourselves, the privileged of the world, from the effects of grievances, suffering and violencein even the furthest corners of the earth. This manual is intended to empower you to acttogether with us, Israelis and Palestinians seeking a just peace in the Middle East, to bestowupon all of us a truly new, inclusive, just and peaceful ??? world order.

??? 20REFRAMING THE CONFLICT??? Kill as many Arabs as possible and talk as much as possible about peace.???-The formula of political strategist Reuven Adler used to lead Sharon and Olmert to powerand repeated in Livni??™s successful election campaign of 2009. When it comes to resolving

conflicts such as that pitting Israeli Jews against PalestinianArabs, framing is more important than the facts. Everyone agrees that around 2800Palestinians and less than 35 Israelis were killed in the Israeli assault on Gaza in December, 2008/January, 2009, and in the two years leading up to it. Most Israeli Jews, however, sawthemselves as innocent victims of terror while viewing the Palestinians as terrorists whomerely got what they deserved. Palestinians, by contrast, see their dead and woundedas casualties of a struggle for independence and victims of Israeli State Terror. In theireyes, while the Israeli dead were the unfortunate victims of their own government??™srepressive policy of Occupation, they, the Palestinians, had been left by both Israel and theinternational community with little choice but to strike out and resist.

Both peoples professa desire for peace, yet both blame the other for the continuing conflict. These are not minordifferences, but the very ground on which political solutions can or cannot be formulatedand successfully promoted. Israel??™s ??? Security??? FramingIsraeli governments ??" all of them, Labor, Likud and Kadima together ??" have advancedamong the Jewish public a framing based solely on Jewish rights and security. Briefly, itgoes like this: The Jews of ancient times (including the Hebrews, Israelites and Judeans, since the term??? Jew??? appears in the Bible only in the Book of Esther) constituted a nation with all thetrappings of nationhood.

They had a country that encompassed greater or lesser parts of theLand of Israel, a language, a religion, a national history, a literature and, above all, a tribalsense of identity based on ties of blood. After two abortive revolts against the Romans, thenation-tribe was exiled from its country. For two

millennia it existed among the nations asa people apart ??" alien, persecuted, ghettoized, clinging to its national identity and longingfor its return to Zion.

In the late nineteenth century, spurred by nationalist movementsthroughout Europe, Zionism emerged as the national expression of Jews seeking a return tothe Homeland from which they had been forcibly expelled so many centuries before. Thisright of return, of self-determination, conforms to that of all other nations who have soughtpolitical independence in the past two centuries. After a period of nation-building, the State of Israel arose triumphantly in 1948, defeating fiveArab armies. Since then the tiny state, a Western (albeit Jewish) democracy, has persevereddespite constant Arab threats to its existence. Throughout, Israel has aspired to peace, only21to be frustrated by its intractable enemies.

All its actions against the Palestinians and otherArabs are merely reactions of self-defense foisted upon the small Jewish state. David andGoliath. Israel desires peace, but it has no Palestinian ??? partner.??? The Palestinians want onlyto throw the Jews into the sea.

What is wrong with this story First off, if you notice, there is no mention of Occupation, all ??? Arab??? resistance (the term ??? Palestinian??? does not enter into the framing, since it admitsto another people living in ??? our??? country which we do not wish to acknowledge) cast asmere ??? terrorism.??? But it also contains elements not stated explicitly, without which onecannot understand Israeli policy. According to mainstream Zionist ideology, the entireLand of Israel ??? belongs??? exclusively to the Jewish people, an

assertion that nullified anyPalestinian rights or claims to the country, together with their very identity as a people andhistoric presence in a place called ??? Palestine.??? Since the Palestinians understandably wouldhave none of this, their very assertion of Jewish exclusivity made them, in fact, permanentenemies ??" at least enemies until such a time as Israel would acknowledge their own nationalpresence. Unwilling to do this, Israel then found itself burdened by a permanent ??? securitythreat??? which, paradoxically, required it to gain and maintain control of the entire country, thereby eliminating the possibility of a viable Palestinian state and perpetuating the conflicteternally.

From right to left Israeli political and military leaders have inculcated among theJewish public the conviction, almost a fixed assumption, that there is no political solutionto the conflict, that one ??? side??? or the other must ??? win??? ??" and that side has to be, of course, Israel. Needless to say that a broader implication of this is that Israel belongs to the Westernworld and has little if any interest in integrating into a hostile Middle East. This framing has great implications. Since the Arabs ??" all of them, including Arab citizensof Israel ??" are Israel??™s permanent enemies, there can never be genuine or lasting peace.??? I argue,??? says Alan Dershowitz (2003: 7), perhaps Israel??™s most strident advocate, ??? that itis impossible to understand the conflict in the Middle East without accepting the realitythat from the very beginning the strategy of the Arab leadership has been to eliminate theexistence of any Jewish state, and indeed any substantial Jewish population, in what is nowIsrael.

…The goal has always been the same: eliminating the Jewish state and transferringmost of the Jews out of the area.??? The best Israelis can expect, then, are tenuous periods ofquiet, a fragile security based solely upon their military superiority and control of the entirecountry ??? from the [Jordan] river to the [Mediterranean] sea.??? Any possibility of peace withthe Palestinians is ruled out in this framing; the Israeli public is sentenced to a war withthem until they either submit to Israeli dictates or are driven out of the country altogether ??" the central demand of Avigdor Lieberman??™s ??? Israel Is Our Home??? party, whose rise to powerin the February, 2009, elections was due in large part to its attraction for Jewish youth. Indeed, the implications of the security framing explain the ferocity by which Israelsuppressed the second Intifada and attempted to pacify Gaza, the unrestrained use of militaryforce against a civilian population and a degree of destruction so greatly disproportionateto the actual threat. The ??? Arabs??? must be put in their place.

They must be disabused ofthe notion that they are equal partners in a peace process. As far back as 1923, longbefore organized popular Palestinian resistance to Zionism emerged, Ze??™ev Jabotinsky, the22founder of Revisionist Zionist and the ideological father of today??™s Likud Party, formulatedthe seminal ??? Iron Wall??? doctrine evident today in Israel??™s political and military policies.??? Every indigenous people,??? he wrote, will resist alien settlers as long as they see any hope of ridding themselves of the dangerof foreign settlement. This is how the Arabs will behave and go on behaving so long asthey possess a gleam of hope that they can prevent ??? Palestine??™ from becoming the Land ofIsrael.??? [The sole way to an

agreement, then,] is through the iron wall, that is to say, theestablishment in Palestine of a force that will in no way be influenced by Arab pressure....

A voluntary agreement is unattainable.... We must either suspend our settlement efforts orcontinue them without paying attention to the mood of the natives.

Settlement can thusdevelop under the protection of a force that is not dependent on the local population, behind an iron wall which they will be powerless to break down. In more recent times the Iron Wall doctrine has been reaffirmed, if in even more brutalterms. In 2002, during the second Intifada, Moshe (??? Boogie???) Ya??™alon, the Israeli army Chiefof Staff, declared: ??? The Palestinians must be made to understand in the deepest recessesof their consciousness that they are a defeated people.??? The exclusivist Zionist securityframing explains the why Israel chooses to take ??? unilateral steps??? in trying to impose itsown ??? solution.??? The exclusivist security framing also explains why Israeli governments adopt, in the words ofthen-Prime Minister Ehud Barak (also a former Chief of Staff), a ??? take-it-or-leave-it??? approachto negotiating with the Palestinians, why they have destroyed Palestinian infrastructure withimpunity, including more than 25, 000 homes in the Occupied Territories since 1967 andtens of thousands more of its own (Arab) citizens within Israel, and why they are able toimprison an entire people within a wall that, in the words of a prominent Israeli militaryhistorian, Martin van Crefeld, should be so high ??? even the birds cannot fly over it.??? All this has given rise to what the Israeli sociologist Baruch Kimmerling (2001: 109) calls??? civilian militarism,??? a central component of Israeli culture.

Conflict and war, he argues, have become ??? a self-evident and routine part of everyday life.??? Civilian militarism is systematically internalized by most statesmen, politicians and thegeneral public as a self-evident reality whose imperatives transcend partisan or socialallegiances. The gist of civilian militarism is that military considerations, as well as mattersthat are defined as national security issues, almost always receive higher priority thanpolitical, economic or ideological problems. Thus, dialectically, making peace is also amilitary matter [the election slogans ??? Peace with Security being prime examples]..

.. This, then, helps explain why 85% of Israeli Jews support the construction of the Wall andmore than 80% supported the assault on Gaza. It addresses a question frequently askedby visitors when they view the suffering and destruction caused by Israel in the Occupied23Territories: ??? Why, especially given what the Jews have suffered in the past, does the Israelipublic allow this??? The answer is framing, a combination of an exclusive claim to the land, denial of the rights and very existence of another people there, and an entrenched notionthat the ??? Arabs??? are and will always be Israel??™s enemy ??" and no reference at all to occupationor any form of oppression that might explain ??" or justify ??" Palestinian resistance.

If, as EhudBarak and most other Israeli leaders say, is true, that there simply is no political solution tothe conflict because of ??? them??? (not, of course, because of us), then there is nothing left butto accept the bitter fact that peace is impossible. Although not committed to the GreaterLand of Israel ideology or to the Occupation (two-thirds of Israeli Jews supported the

Oslopeace process), the Israeli Jewish public is reduced to demanding one thing of its leaders: personal security. If not peace, then peace and quiet. They support whatever brings themthat: a Palestinian state in all of the Occupied Territories or loading the Arabs (citizens ornot) on trucks and shipping them out of the country Whatever works, the suffering and thefate of the Palestinians being of little concern. ??? We??™ve offered them peace,??? Israeli Jews say,??? and they refused in violence.

They deserve no sympathy. They deserve anything they get. The hell with them. They brought their suffering on themselves.

??? Or, as David Ben-Gurion said after the outbreak of the Palestinian Revolt in 1936: A comprehensive agreement is undoubtedly out of the question now. For only after totaldespair on the part of the Arabs, despair that will come not only from the failure of thedisturbances and the attempt at rebellion, but also as a consequence of our growth in thecountry, may the Arabs possibly acquiesce to a Jewish Eretz Israel. Finally, the security framing leaves out, or misrepresents, the issue of power. Israel hasmanaged, in a wonder of framing, to successfully present itself as the victim, the haplesslittle kid in what Netanyahu calls ??? a tough neighborhood of bullies.??? This is a crucial part ofthe security framing since it relieves Israel of all responsibility. A victim, after all, is a victimand cannot be held accountable, since his or her actions come merely out of self-defense. Being a victim, however, is a very powerful place to be.

Israel can be a regional superpowerand an occupying power, yet have responsibility. Indeed, it is the flight from responsibilitythat impels the

security framing. Casting itself as the victim only distorts the power balance between Israel and the Palestiniansand the fundamental fact that only Israel can end the Occupation and thus, through goodfaithnegotiations with the Palestinians, the conflict as a whole.

Israel, and the pre-stateZionist community that preceded it, has always enjoyed disproportionate power, control??" and responsibility. Since the turn of the twentieth century the Zionist movement garneredinternational support denied to the Palestinians and other Arabs, as well as economicand military superiority. Israel is the regional super-power. It is a state recognized by theinternational community with an economy three times larger than Egypt, Palestine, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon put together, more than 40 times the size of the Palestinians??™ ($80+ billioncompared to less than $2 billion). It has a formal military alliance with the world??™s largest24superpower, from which it receives more than $3 billion in annual military assistance. It isthe world??™s fourth largest nuclear power, possessing up to 300 nuclear warheads. And it isan occupying power. The Palestinians, by contrast, have no state, no functioning economy, no army, not even the ability to move freely from village to village within their own areas.

This asymmetry of power, even within the Arab world as a whole ??" a world with whichit has largely achieved peace, at least on the governmental level ??" thrusts upon Israel anasymmetry of responsibility. A Rights-Based Reframing of the ConflictNeedless to say, as progressive Israelis who do not accept the notion of ??? permanent enemies??? or other attempts to mystify the conflict for self-serving reasons, we find Israel??™s securityframing

neither acceptable nor true; neither is it helpful for achieving a just and lastingpeace. Our reading of the history of the region, our understanding of how the securityframing justifies and enables Israel??™s Occupation, our experiences with Palestinians whocertainly do desire peace if it is accompanied by a just solution to the conflict whichincludes their own narrative and national claims, as well as our commitment to theprophetic Jewish values of social justice, all lead us to a very different framing, one basedon universal human rights and a conviction that every political conflict has a solution. It isa reframing that offers hope of a better future for both peoples rather than ceaseless conflictand suffering that envisions one side ??? winning??? over the other. Our reframing, then, starts with the obvious proposition that two peoples live in Palestine/Israel, each aspiring to national self-determination yet each having to recognize thecollective existence and rights of the other. While holding different visions of desirableand possible solutions to the conflict ??" some of us favor a two-state solution, some a binationalor democratic state, others a regional confederation ??" we share the belief that theconflict can be ended in a way that respects and protects both sides (although we tend notto accept the notion of ??? sides;??? one of the slogans of the Israeli peace camp is: ??? We refuseto be enemies???). We reject, then, not only the premise that the ??? Arabs??? are our permanent enemies but eventhe proposition that Jews and Arabs have been enemies ??? from time immemorial??? or that weare embroiled in a ??? clash of civilizations.??? We reject as well the notion that terrorism lies atthe root of the conflict.

Both the PLO and the Arab League, after all, have recognized Israelwithin the 1967 borders, Israelis and Palestinians have engaged in prolonged negotiationsin the past and Israel has achieved peace with many Arab and Muslim countries and issteadily expanding its relations throughout the Arab and broader Muslim worlds. We alsoinsist, in opposition to the security paradigm which asserts that Israel??™s policies and actionsare only defensive in nature, which they are not. There is no reason why Israel shouldnot be held accountable for an Occupation which is pro-active and intended to establishpermanent Israel control over the entire country while denying the Palestinians a viablestate of their own. 25Framing is a powerful weapon.

Our task, if we aspire to bring about peace and securityfor both peoples, is to debunk the security framing while replacing it with a moreconstructive and inclusive one based on universal human rights. Reframing is not easy. In any debate, the party which succeeds in framing the issue and determining the termsof the discussion (such as ??? terrorism???) wins, since by capturing the logic of the debate itsarguments lead inexorably to its desired conclusions. Here Israel enjoys a great advantage. Its framing, lavishly funded by state agencies, painstakingly constructed by PR agencies andcommunicated by professional spokespeople, benefits from a grossly unbalanced access tothe media. The other side to the discussion, that of the Israeli peace camp or the Palestiniansthemselves, lacks the resources, access and image to make their voices heard.

We are thusthrust into the weak position of refuter, left only to respond to Israel??™s charges yet withoutthe space to present a coherent, credible and

persuasive alternative framing of our own. Confined to countering the arguments of the ??? framer,??? respondents (called the ??? negativeside??? in debates) invariably come across as defensive, inarticulate and unconvincing. Given Israel??™s success in presenting its case in a clear and concise manner, it is imperativethat we step back from merely rebutting in order to present a coherent and compelling??? reframing??? of our own. In contrast to Zionist exclusivity and Israel??™s security framing, ouralternative rights-based framing (though it is by no means the definitive one) may be put asfollows: Two peoples defining themselves in national terms and claiming the right of selfdeterminationare locked in a bloody contest over both fundamental claims to the countryand ways in which they can share it. Both consider themselves the native inhabitants. Herethe symmetry ends. We must break the narrative of ??? both peoples??? so as to see the verydifferent positions of each side and the asymmetry of power between them.

Israeli Jews represent the dominant party and have since well before 1948. They possessa state that has been recognized, by the Palestinian leadership, the Arab League and theinternational community alike, on 78% of the territory between the Mediterranean and theJordan River. Since neither its national existence nor its right to live in security within the??? Green Line??? is challenged, the cause of Israel??™s continued war against the Palestinians isover control of the entire country, coveted by Israel for religious and national reasons, aswell as (it claims) security concerns.

Israel seeks to be a Jewish state which neverthelesspermanently controls all of Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria (the West Bank). Israel??™s attemptto deny

its occupation and to make its presence permanent flies in the face of

internationallaw which defines an occupation as a temporary situation of

conquest that has to beresolved through negotiations, and is patently illegal.

Israel has adopted a unilateralposition, backed by its policy of creating ???

facts on the ground,??? that prevents, or at beststunts, any Palestinian state,

since Israel has never officially acknowledged the Palestinians??™right to

self-determination. Similarly, the right of Palestinian refugees??™ to return

to theircountry and homes is guaranteed in international humanitarian law.

Israeli insistence thatthey may return only to a Palestinian state (if there is

one) violates those rights. 26The Palestinians??™ position, though lacking

today an authoritative voice due to deliberateattempts on the part of Israel

to either fragmentize their leadership or eliminate it, does notpresent as

clear and comprehensive a framing as the Israeli one. In principle, it sees

theentire country as Palestine but recognizes the existence of Israel as a

given and is willingto accept a two-state solution by which the Palestinian

state encompass all the OccupiedTerritories, the 22% of the country

conquered by Israel in 1967 (with some minor borderadjustments). Israel

must also recognize the refugees??™ Right of Return and acknowledgeits

role in creating the refugee problem, although the Palestinians are willing to

negotiatethe actual return. The two-state solution is far from just (leaving

the Palestinians with lessthan a quarter of their historic homeland). Still, all

Palestinian factions ??" including Hamas??" have indicated it is one with

which they could live. It represents a compromise that couldbe ??? sold??? to

both peoples, but if Israel continues to resist it, we must be prepared for

atransition to a one-state struggle for equal civil rights.

Only the Palestinians can signal thatswitch. This reframing rests on a number of key re-conceptualizations: Israel as the strong party in the conflict. Re-casting Israel as the strong party in theconflict rather than as a victim enables us to demand accountability under internationallaw ??" demanding, in particular, that the Fourth Geneva Convention be applied ??" as wellconformity to UN resolutions. It also facilitates effective campaigns of boycotts, divestmentand sanctions on the part of citizens and governments aimed at bringing pressure to bearon Israel to change its policies. The Occupation as a pro-active policy.

A peace and human rights reframing must place theOccupation properly at the center of the political discussion over the conflict. It must thengo on to make a telling point: rather than simply defensive responses to Palestinian terrorism, Israel??™s occupation policies represent a pro-active claim to the entire country. Below Iwill make the claim that no major element of Israel??™s ??? Matrix of Control??? ??" settlements, infra-structure, the closure, land expropriation and house demolitions, the destruction ofPalestinian agriculture and other policies of economic de-development or the constructionof the Wall ??" can be explained in terms of security and defense. The contention that Israelwould be willing to meet Palestinian demands for self-determination if only Palestinian??? violence??? ends is simply wrong. The issue is Israel??™s exclusive claim to the entire country, not security.

Only a win-win scenario will secure a just and lasting peace. Whatever the ideological claimsor disparities of power between the sides, one thing is certain: neither the Israelis nor thePalestinians will defeat the other. The

notion that Palestinians and Israelis are enemies, thatthey constitute two irreconcilable ??? sides,??? leads nowhere. It ignores the political sourcesof the conflict, without which there is, indeed, no solution. It also contradicts the globalrealities in which we live: the inadmissibility of neo-colonialism, intertwined economies, 27international law and much more. The fall of the Soviet Union, of apartheid South Africa, of the Shah, of Marcos, of the Latin American generals, of the Greek colonels, of Milosevic??" all exemplify the ultimate inability to sustain unjust regimes over time.

Only a win-winscenario based on universal human rights can address the fundamental elements underlyingthe conflict and offer ways out. The Israeli people do not support the settlements or seek a ??? Greater Israel.??? The pro-active, expansionist policy of Occupation, it must be stressed, does not represent the will of themajority of Israelis. Palestinian citizens of Israel aside, polls consistently show that two-thirdsof Israeli Jews desire ??? separation??? from the Palestinians ??" ??? us here, them there??? as Barak??™selection slogan had it ??" even if that means dismantling the settlements. True, the secondIntifada and subsequent events strengthened Israeli distrust of the Palestinians, expressedin wide popular support for the construction of the Wall and attacks such as those on thecities of the West Bank and on Gaza, but it arises from a simple desire for personal securityrather than from any ideological aspiration to control the ??? Greater Land of Israel.??? Israel??™sunique system of proportional elections also tends to disenfranchise the public by grantingtremendous autonomy to the political parties that make up all government coalitions. Itgives far greater power to tiny single-issue groups, such as settlers, than to large but

lessorganized sectors of society. Thus the ??? disconnect,??? so evident in the 2009 elections thatimposed on the public an extreme right-wing government, between a populace desiringpeace and territorial compromise (albeit with ??? separation???) and its governments??™ policiesof territorial expansion and military ??? victory??? over the Palestinians.

Both the Palestinians and the wider Arab and Muslims worlds support a just peace. Thecontention that the Arabs do not want peace, a view that makes sense to people givenPalestinian attacks on Israeli civilians, not to mention the post-9. 11 stereotype of Arabs andMuslims as supporters of terrorism, finds no empirical support. Hamas, Islamic Jihad, theal-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade and other Palestinian ??? rejectionist??? groups that reject peace withIsrael and have turned to violent means of resistance represent about the same proportionof Palestinian society in the Occupied Territories ??" say 15-20% ??" that extreme settler andother right-wing rejectionist groups represent in Israeli society. In the 1996 elections tothe Palestinian Authority, on the other hand, Arafat and the supporters of the Oslo process, who conceded 78% of historic Palestine to Israel, won more than 90% of the vote. Wemust also be careful not to confuse resistance to Occupation and a struggle for liberation??" even an armed struggle employing controversial tactics ??" with a rejection of peace itself. While Israel succeeds in framing Palestinian resistance as mere terrorism and uses it toargue that the ??? Arabs??? are not ??? partners in peace,??? Palestinians cannot allow themselvesto be imprisoned forever in an apartheid-style Bantustan with no hope of any future forthe coming generations.

This is why the adjectives ??? just??? and ??? viable??? are integral parts ofany sustainable ??? peace,??? as evident in the acceptance by Hamas and Islamic Jihad of thePrisoners??™ Document,??? forged among all the Palestinian factions in 2006, in which peacewith Israel is agreed to in exchange for all the Occupied Territories. That Israel has a longstandingpeace treaty with Egypt and Jordan and functional ties with many other Arab andMuslim nations must also be factored in. 28An emblematic conflict with glob