

PART ONE

Palestine, Peacemaking,
and Partition

Chapter 1

Just Stability, or a Just Peace?

I can feel it in my bones that there's an answer out there if you can only find it.

—American secretary of state George Shultz (April 3, 1988)

The term *ripeness* has gained tremendous currency among students and practitioners of international conflict resolution. This wide acceptance doubtless traces in the first instance to the commonsense logic behind the idea, and to its very simplicity, but also to an awareness among researchers that the causes of hostility have been overemphasized: why wars start rather than why, how, and when they end—or can be induced to end.

The conflict termination process itself demands further investigation. In particular, those terms of settlement that make termination possible as well as the kinds of outcomes that can be anticipated. What, for example, determines success or failure in peacemaking? Why do formal peace pacts take hold and stick in some cases and break down in others, sometimes unraveling almost the next day? Which formulas tend to work best? Which are the most durable?

Conflicts Ripe for Resolution

In essence, the theory of ripeness claims that in negotiating, especially in actually resolving political disputes, we have the capacity to engineer diplomatic breakthroughs. Breakthroughs as genuine as they are dramatic, based upon the existence, or nonexistence, of readily identifiable preconditions.¹ I. William Zartman argues that a conflict is ripe for resolution when it becomes a “hurting stalemate” for both antagonists.² Fen Osler Hampson is willing to settle for “a level playing field.”³ Other scholars prefer to emphasize the positive by stipulating a convergence of expectations or by keynoting the availability of incentives and inducements.⁴

Popularity aside, the general notion of ripeness still lacks precision. Whether from the standpoint of its analytical rigor, its predictive powers, or, for that matter, its political utility, it is not an easy concept to operationalize.

Richard Haass, an early proponent of the ripeness school of conflict resolution, postulates four essentials to major diplomatic progress: a shared perception of either the need or the desirability for an accord, the readiness of both parties to compromise, their domestic enforcement capabilities, and a mutually acceptable approach or process.⁵ While certainly a step in the direction of making the ripe-unripe distinction more concrete, nevertheless, Haass's criteria still remain too broad.

International statesmen, also those already sensitized through years of experience to the critical importance of timing, would heartily welcome guidance from scholars. Most particularly, first, in gauging the preferred *stage* of fighting (or bargaining) when the timely application of concerted diplomatic leverage is going to have the most telling effect upon the outcome of the quarrel and, then, within that given stage, the precise *moment* for acting and intervening.

Regrettably, these specific signposts for distinguishing an optimal moment of true ripeness from *prematurity* and, on the other hand, *postripeness*, remain unclear. And, in the abiding absence of such markers, the great majority of contemporary regional and interstate disputes, as well as internal ethnic and intercommunal ones, continues to yield the bitter fruits of elusive peace. Missed opportunities either because seized upon too early or too late.

Equally important is a second distinction: between merely suspending or deferring a lethal dispute, and ending it definitively—between, in short, conflict *management* and dispute *settlement* or conflict *resolution*. To truly qualify for the latter category, a commitment by an outside third party or set of intermediaries must go considerably beyond addressing only a single aspect or dimension of the larger dispute. So, too, must that commitment, once made, refuse to settle for stopgaps and quick fixes that so often pass for diplomatic window dressing. It has got to aim at answering all outstanding differences.

Add two further criteria. A terminated conflict and a durable peace cannot be artificially hastened. Just as, strictly speaking, it is not advisable that the terms of settlement be coerced or imposed—whether by one adversary on the other or by a third party on both.

For these reasons, the maximalist goal—conflict resolution—stands apart: qualitatively different and extremely rare. Far more common, and

readily (some might say, all too conveniently) available to would-be peacemakers, is an otherwise impressive sliding scale of juridical, diplomatic, and humanitarian half-measures ratcheting upwards from momentary cease-fires and improvised truces to more ambitious and semipermanent interim agreements like armistice, separation of forces, and nonbelligerency. Whatever may be said for each of these “regimes,” they are in fact essentially short-term “neither war, nor peace” palliatives concentrated at the lower spectrum of peacemaking. They focus above all on the continued absence of armed hostilities, and for as long as possible.

This is not to gainsay any of these efforts or to disparage such partial gains as are achieved through them. Indeed, many respected analysts, possibly exhibiting a heightened sense of realism, are perfectly content to live with containing interethnic and other disputes, what Fearon and Laitin refer to as “cauterizing.”⁶

Rather, the aim at the outset of this study is to insist upon differentiation. Distinguishing between what scholars contrast as “negative peace”—the prevention, cessation, or absence of war or hostilities in general—and “positive peace”—the elimination of the underlying structural causes and conditions that gave rise to the violent conflict in the first place.

Stability must never be confused with *peace*. Most emphatically, the two are not synonymous. Whether applied to the Middle East, or any other international trouble spot, peace and stability profoundly differ from each other in the respective degree of political commitment and resolve and, hence, again, of conflict resolution as opposed to “merely” or “simply” moderating and ameliorating lethal conflicts.

Judged by this strict twofold standard of (a) timing and (b) intent, it is more readily understandable why the diplomatic record discloses far fewer genuine peace breakthroughs than ad hoc arrangements, more false starts than finish lines. Also, why too many Nobel prizes for promoting peace have been ceremoniously awarded prematurely. A useful starting point, therefore, is to note what ripeness is not.

Druckman and Mitchell observe with admirable conciseness that international conflicts persist unresolved due to “an unwillingness to arrive at solutions acceptable to all the disputing parties and their constituencies.”⁷ Albeit couched in negative, dysfunctional terms, their statement highlights certain key variables. Deconstructed, “unwillingness” clues us to a poisoned atmosphere marked by intransigence (the opposite of conciliation and compromise) among the “disputing,” highly contentious parties, with “all” signifying an arbitrary, indeterminate number of them. Failure to reach consensus on “solutions” that are “acceptable” applies,

in turn, to substance, i.e. the absence of a peaceful exit strategy; whereas “arriv[ing] at” alludes, in the last instance, to technique—an as yet unfinished and possibly unsatisfactory peacemaking process.

These shortcomings might just as easily be turned around to underscore their *presence* rather than their *absence*. So that heading the peacemaker’s agenda will be (a) building confidence, (b) compromising goals, (c) ranking the parties concerned, (d) processing peace, (e) yet packaging the peace as well. Once rephrased into positive terms, the above sentence in fact encapsulates the essential ingredients for a paradigm of ripeness.

Five Steps to a Diplomatic Breakthrough

Peacemaking is both a matter of consecutive phases and of controlling for variables. These latter factors intrude in and throughout each of the successive phases, from prenegotiation to what former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali was fond of calling, and right in stressing, “post-conflict peace building,” otherwise known as normalization of relations. Moreover, any of the several variables can exercise either a positive or a negative influence at each equally sensitive and delicate stage.

Building upon the work of Haass, Zartman, and others, when reduced to essentials, the war-ripeness-peace correlate, and with it the conflict termination process, can now be seen as really a function of five determinants. First and second, the identity and cultural profile of the belligerents and their respective interests, objectives, and capabilities. Third, the climate prevailing at any particular moment, as affected by self-perceptions as well as the principals’ attitudes toward each other. Fourth, the range of bargaining procedures, “good offices,” and negotiating “tracks” at their disposal. Plus, fifth, the repertoire of final status peace solutions.

It is also important to appreciate that these variables are interactive as well as interdependent. Which is another way of saying that all five are equally important. A composite theory of ripeness insists that if the warring sides are to move from situations of pure conflict (the pole of enmity) toward pacific dispute settlement followed by normalization (the pole of amity),⁸ major adjustments ought to occur, by right, in each and every one of the five categories if not simultaneously, then at least cumulatively, and in order to create that optimal moment of exquisite diplomatic full-bodied ripeness.

Without prejudice to the exact sequence by which each piece of the puzzle is put into place, in the end such transformations involve:

Redefining Core Goals Genuine progress is possible only when authoritative leaders in the respective camps show themselves capable of acting rationally, and actually demonstrate this pragmatic behavior by acknowledging limits to the politically possible. Above all, there has got to be the readiness to make concessions. Need we add that in the instance of Palestine, where for some the ideological is indistinguishable from the theological, as painful as making allowances to one's adversary may be, even more delicate and embarrassing for the true believer to swallow, and rationalize to the faithful, are adjustments in one's own ideology.

Nonetheless, this admittedly difficult and often bitter learning process involves substituting realism for dogmatism, accepting one's own deficiencies, and adapting to real-world constraints. It is best tested if it leads, in turn, to rescaling core goals. Here each antagonist needs to be prodded into resetting partisan priorities and encouraged to move from entrenched positions, maximum expected returns, and insistence upon unilateral victory (zero-sum) to mutual accommodation (nonzero-sum) and compromise. Because it is compromise that marks the key difference between what is desirable and what, in the end—or at least for now, is attainable.

Breaching, Then Lowering Psychological Barriers Parallel efforts similarly must be made at improving the political and negotiating atmosphere. For starters, if only because poor or nonexistent communication only heightens the likelihood of misinformation, miscalculation, error, and fiasco—a lesson branded on our consciousness by the military annals of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Change at the attitudinal level requires substituting deeply ingrained patterns of hostility and categorical denial of "the other" as implacable foe and archenemy. For some experts a change of basic dispositions and an overall improved climate must precede genuine diplomatic movement, whereas others tend to see a change of heart among peoples in conflict as the necessary and welcome derivative of such diplomatic initiatives.

For both schools of thought Anwar Sadat's journey to Jerusalem in 1977 qualifies as the exceptional grand gesture transforming relationships in one bold stroke. For the most part, however, such change is better achieved through a controlled sequence of iterated symbolic goodwill gestures and tit-for-tat concessions. Though certainly far less dramatic, prisoner-of-war exchanges, conciliatory statements, or any comparable steps come under the recommended larger category of graduated confidence-building measures that aim at replacing long-standing distrust with

reciprocal trust. Establishing this basic willingness to cooperate is, to be sure, merely a prelude to the respective sides actually sitting down to face each other across the conference table in order to intensify the give-and-take process now underway.

Reaching Procedural Agreement Nor is any real movement possible in getting beyond media posturing and stylized prenegotiation without first gaining a working consensus on the so-called modalities and technical questions inherent in any process of negotiation. This is what “talking about talking” is all about. Place of venue? Level of representation? Civilian or military delegations? Secret meetings in the back channel or public sessions? Face-to-face or brokered proximity talks? Bilateral or multilateral? Step-by-step versus comprehensive? Single-tiered and strictly political, or employing technical experts in track 2 diplomacy as well? And have we mentioned agenda setting?

Lest one assume the more channels the better, let us note that the law of diminishing returns applies here as well. Too many venues operating at one time often results in overload and confusion. This is reflected in the absence of coordination among delegation members, in contradictory messages signaled to the opposite delegation, and at times even in finding inconsistent positions tabled by representatives of one side in the different negotiating forums. Still, the main point is that alternative bargaining formats, but also diplomatic channels, must be inaugurated and then kept open for facilitating ongoing communication, meaningful dialogue, and more regularized negotiation.

Taking a Second Look at the Alignment of Players There is considerable merit in pausing (preferably at the outset, of course, and prior to the launching of the high-stakes diplomatic mission) to reconsider for a moment (a) the identity, (b) the rank order, and (c) the vested interests of participating first, second, and third parties. Such periodic reassessments of the players are advisable particularly in protracted conflicts that have gone through any number of evolutionary changes and those that have expanded into regional multiactor contests.

Four distinctions or categories come to mind: (1) the level of preoccupation and overriding concern with what is at stake, (2) the extent of past or present involvement, (3) degrees of moderation, measurable by one’s willingness to compromise, and (4) how critical—indeed, indispensable—any particular player is for either warmaking or peacemaking. Taking stock of the *dramatis personae* in itself can make an important contribution toward ripeness and clarity, for there is bound to be a degree

of confusion if not recrimination over whose claims have priority the longer the dispute and the greater the number of self-professed interested and intervening sides that, along the way, have somehow been able to get themselves, so to speak, into the act.

Be they states, governments, prominent individuals, national movements, or transnational organizations, each has an ax to grind and an agenda to promote by proclaiming a stake in the outcome and a right to participate in its determination. International peacemaking, and especially international peace conferences, represent political high drama; therefore even bit players will be anything but reticent in vying for a larger role and in seeking greater prominence on an increasingly crowded stage. All the more imperative that we be clear about the cast of characters—to mix metaphors, the scorecard. Clarity, similarly, about each one's designated role assignment, extending from passive observer through convenor, honest broker and intermediary to active facilitator and guarantor.

One aspect of this more careful and discriminating hierarchy of actors and their assigned parts is the debate over the wisdom of purposely inviting outside mediators: intervention or interference? Representative of the pro-interventionists, the late Israeli diplomat Gideon Rafael was adamant in insisting, "Experience shows that neither the termination of war nor the initiation of peace is achieved without the energetic engagement of a third party."⁹ This categorical viewpoint is invalidated, of course, by the Sadat initiative, by the unbrokered Israeli-Jordanian dialogue, and by the Oslo channel.

Perhaps the argument should really center on the nature and degree of third-party involvement. There is no gainsaying, for example, the positive influence of the Norwegians in nurturing the Oslo dialogue. Nevertheless, their major and lasting contribution derives from having served as facilitators rather than in interceding on the more substantive issues or in taking a stand of their own on contentious political questions.

The author is partial to direct negotiation for achieving the best results. We Middle Easterners do in fact understand each other and the rules of Middle Eastern negotiating behavior, certainly far better than Europeans or Americans. The job of outsiders ought to be to concentrate on getting Israelis, Arabs, and Palestinians into the same room and to provide positive reinforcement when called upon to do so. I am therefore inclined to take a dimmer view of external mediatory offers as interference—well-intentioned for the most part, but interference nonetheless.

Be that as it may, perhaps most crucial to orchestrating a serious peace drive by screening the participants is the ability when called upon to dif-

ferentiate those purporting to be “directly concerned” parties from those who really are. This latter distinction is easily blurred and sometimes entirely overlooked. Nevertheless, the contrast lies between actors whose commitment is total and whose concerns (legitimacy, sovereignty, security, etc.) qualify as nothing short of vital—and by every right therefore deserve to be assigned absolute highest priority—and, in a separate column, the countless other secondary, less directly concerned third parties. These extend from borderline countries and regional actors to extraregional alliances, global powers and international governmental or non-governmental organizations.

To insist upon clarification in no way negates the right of supporting actors with possibly legitimate concerns to be consulted and even actively engaged or the contribution such outside systemic representatives and actors can make in backing the peace process and its later implementation. Rather, we argue for aligning the concerned parties by degree of *direct* involvement and the *gravity* of interests at stake instead of according to political clout, great power status, or institutional affiliation.

Terms of Settlement Selecting one key that opens the door to lasting peace becomes the final requisite. Clearly, every peacemaking process has got to have an exit strategy to save it, and those participating in it, from merely “going through the motions.” This mandates the need for an overarching design, a grand peace strategy for getting from here (conflict) to there (peace).

If anything, it is hard to exaggerate the importance of the designated “peace construct,” which is nothing short of indispensable. First, these constructs serve as a compass in authoritatively pointing the way out of war traps. Second, as a manual for steering the negotiations in the right direction and toward a final destination. Third, in framing appropriate settlement terms. Fourth, as a guide for drawing the territorial peace map and for delineating peace borders. Fifth, as the blueprint for an entirely new set of economic and other relationships governing normalization in the postsettlement phase. Hence, in a very real sense the construct is itself the solution.

What lies at the end of the road is just as important as limiting the number of passengers (the “directly” concerned parties) or the diplomatic roadmap for getting there. Only a clear sense of the outcome—the ultimate destination and exact exit point from the conflict—might prevent negotiation from becoming a sterile exercise, and from breaking down at a later point once impatience sets in. Likewise, frustration, disillusion-

ment, or travel fatigue resulting from constant motion devoid of any sense of progress or impending arrival. This is particularly the case when the atmosphere remains charged with suspicions of deception and betrayal every step of the way. And especially when one of the adversaries, but possibly both, still cling doggedly to inflated expectations that express themselves in the plenary talks as mutually exclusive objectives.

Admirable as they may be, professing to desire a negotiated settlement, longing for peace, and praying for peace are, in themselves, platitudes. So, too, the truism that talking is better than fighting. We do not “arrive at” peace but must drive concertedly toward it. Absent one of these five *political* determinants and any diplomatic initiative, no matter how well-intentioned, is going to prove singularly exasperating and counterproductive. And what is worse: prejudicial, in the last analysis, to the cause of peace.

Testing for Middle East Ripeness

This then is a checklist of mandatory conditions for the timely settlement of disputes by peaceful means. This composite is supported by the theoretical literature on conflict resolution and distilled from the cumulative practical experience in recent decades with international peacemaking. It is equally applicable in principle therefore to all outstanding political and international disputes.

When next applied to the case-specific Palestine problem and its larger Arab-Israel zone of conflict this line item list of particulars for making ripeness happen underlines the not inconsiderable diplomatic inroads made in the pivotal years 1991–1994 by the Madrid-Oslo peace process.

For the better part of this century, in a national rivalry turned bloody quarrel, threatened and actual resort to armed conflict has predominated. Meaningful communication between the respective Arab and Israeli sides—“the best of enemies”—has been absent for the most part. Consequently, hoping to register even modest diplomatic gains, let alone a breakthrough, under such adverse conditions has meant that intellectual creativity as well as diplomatic skills of necessity be targeted almost exclusively at the most basic technical, procedural, and attitudinal dimensions of the conflict.¹⁰

Moreover, process-oriented diplomacy, in its focus primarily on the mechanics of negotiation, has long enjoyed a certain cachet and respectability among theorists and Middle East practitioners. They readily subscribe to the “building blocks” incrementalist approach to conflict res-

olution in general, and Palestine in particular, seeing this as the height of diplomatic prudence. Besides, what with the record of deadlock and derailment so predominant, Arab-Israel peacemaking by its very nature all but dictates working assiduously at the lower levels of peacemaking. Here success is pitched more often than not in minimalist terms like arresting the downward spiral and repairing “crises of confidence.”

Well into the 1990s Middle East statecraft could still be safely characterized as “an intense diplomatic busyness that focuses on process and never reaches issues of substance.”¹¹ By mid-decade, however, four of the five core preconditions were closer to fulfillment than ever before.

The start of 1993 found Arab and Israeli leaders talking to each other within the Madrid framework. Because this was done in a conciliatory, businesslike atmosphere, around the negotiating table and at a proliferating number of public forums, the first three prerequisites were painstakingly but no less effectively being met. One, removing psychological obstructions. Two, adopting peace and mutual security as the prize to be coveted over total and unconditional victory. Three, pursuing alternative channels for meaningful exchange.

Still remaining to be clarified in August 1993 were the last two pieces missing in the puzzle of Middle East ripeness, namely, the principals and the principle. The Oslo declaration supplied the first, although not necessarily the second—at least not explicitly.

Israel’s adoption for the first time of a serious Palestinian option featuring mutual recognition and the attendant nurturing of an official direct, ongoing bilateral Israeli-Palestinian dialogue, regardless of how fitful and acrimonious, has profoundly altered the list and hierarchy of players. The cast of leading actors is now clear. The resident Israeli and Palestinian communities, represented by their chosen leaders, are in fact the only two directly concerned parties and, therefore, the two chief negotiating parties. Nor is there really any reverting to former positions such as assuring Palestinian rights by cutting a deal with Jordan as spokesman for the Palestinians or subsuming Palestinian representatives within an all-Arab delegation.

Hereafter, barring any total dissolution of the Oslo peace bonds, the focus of academic thought and of creative statesmanship narrows down to the one factor still conspicuously outstanding. It is the unfinished business of a central guiding principle and ordering concept necessary for outlining the terms of future Israeli-Palestinian coexistence.

Relative to the other four variables, this question of the indispensable peace construct has gone largely unaddressed. Conventional wisdom on Arab-Israel peacemaking has traditionally favored evasive inaction when-

ever, and wherever, the matter of the final terms of settlement is broached. Interestingly, this studied silence finds an echo in the theoretical literature on peacemaking and conflict resolution where the critical importance of peace constructs tends to be downplayed. Indeed, it often goes unmentioned, even in the more extensive and itemized listings of what goes in to making for ripeness.

Whether because premature, too contentious, or both, it has been deemed prudent to wrap the essential nature of the final settlement and its geopolitical configuration in layers of constructive ambiguity while deferring their delineation and unveiling to a later, and of course unspecified, stage.

The Oslo timetable, by explicitly mandating permanent status talks for May 1996, and agreement by May 1999, presently lends an air of urgency to otherwise desultory academic inquiry, however.

Territorial Compromise: Designated Exit Strategy

The central thesis underlying the research for this project is straightforward, albeit with one all-important philosophical-political qualification or reservation. Let us assume: (a) “all wars must end” and so, therefore, (b) objectively somewhere there has got to be a prescription for permanent Arab-Israeli peace (a hidden, elusive solution rather than one entirely missing and nonexistent). To the extent that the historic struggle over Palestine is indeed soluble, then, partition is the logical and, at the moment, foremost candidate.

It is also arguably the sole hope for some semblance of normalcy for the two peoples inhabiting this pitifully small notch of coveted territory on the eastern fringes of the Mediterranean Sea. Barring an agreed formula for sharing the land by subdividing it, the remaining choices are ill-starred. Perpetual strife in an uncompromising winner-take-all situation is one. Or, at the opposite extreme, Israelis and Palestinians mutually waiving nationalist aspirations in favor of extensive Arab-Jewish assimilation and integration that, in cultural and religious terms, must sound offensive and demeaning to some ears, and to others preposterous for being utopian and totally divorced from reality.

In which case, we are left with only some form of territorial reshuffling and redistribution that would promote the cause of ethnic and communal disengagement—promote, though not entirely achieve, full separation on account, as we shall see, of the great Arab-Jewish intermix and the existence of nearly one million Israeli Arabs inside Israel proper.

That we arrive at partition only out of necessity and through a process of elimination disqualifying other peace construct candidates is in itself a point worth underscoring. At this late date there is surely nothing particularly uplifting or inspiring about partition.

On the one hand, Israeli and Palestinian bedrock nationalist positions all but dictate a separatist partition. In recent years Arab and Jewish majority sentiment, articulated and amply documented in a steady flow of public opinion surveys, powerfully suggests a deep craving for being left alone to develop parallel but separate cultures and economies and—simply put—to be out of each other’s hair. On the other hand, it is just as patently clear that physical, geographic, and demographic conditions (in contrast to the former Czechoslovakia or, conceivably, Cyprus) all but defy a neat territorial separation and ethnic disentanglement—a “clean cut”—short of large-scale population transfer, as did indeed happen in the case of India-Pakistan and also Cyprus.

As of 1999 the inhabitants of historic Palestine are united for separation but deeply divided over what separation requires and what it means. This, for the uninitiated, is Israel-Palestine’s malignancy. And herein lies the essence of the Middle East peacemaker’s dilemma when, undiverted and no longer appeased by ambiguity, we turn our attention to fifth-dimensional prescriptive peace formulae.

These cruelties aside, there is one immediate feature about partition in its Palestinian context that evokes curiosity and commands scholarly attention. I refer to the sheer persistence of the partitionist theme. The chronology of the Palestine conflict over the course of the last sixty years and more confirms my point. Territorial partition’s phoenixlike recurrence and revival are the more remarkable given the fact that offers of partition have been spurned time and again by at least one or more of the principals.

Indications are that partition’s long-standing *political* shortcoming—its categorical rejection by at least one of the directly concerned parties—is about to be corrected, however. To an unprecedented extent official Israeli and Palestinian mainstream positions do give the appearance of being in closer alignment—most decidedly not over the wisdom and justice of partition but on the sheer necessity and immediacy for as clean a “cut” as politically and humanly possible.

Alan Dowty puts partition’s present status in correct perspective when he observes, “If expulsion is unthinkable and integration is impossible, logic leads back to partition: to separate, independent (though intertwined) political destinies for Jews and Arabs in the Land of Israel/Palestine.”¹²

His formulation captures the essentials: unacceptable extreme solutions; the reasoning behind, and for partition; its previous record (“back to partition”); the incongruous pairing of cooperation, deriving from two peoples being coiled together, with separation and independence; equal sensitivity to the needs and aspirations of both peoples; the spatial, geographic variable. All of which lead to one overriding conclusion: partition.

But one that still leaves two critical gaps. Necessarily first, the psychological and political one. Between awareness of the need for parting ways and parting with real estate and the readiness to actually undertake its negotiation and implementation. Even if this gap can satisfactorily be filled in, Arab-Israeli peacemaking dare not ignore the other gap: between the theory and prescription of partition, and the doing of partition. The latter requires screening off the area designated for repartition. Naming and empowering the direct partitionists. Delineating the exact lines of division and degrees of separation. Preparing for each phase in the partitioning sequence. Assessing ahead of time the anticipated consequences of disengagement and fragmentation and planning how to fund the estimated costs of carrying out Palestine’s difficult repartition.

Should territorial compromise and dividing Palestine indeed prove to be the thrust of efforts in coming months, in order not to be left behind by the accelerated pace of diplomatic events the partitionist solution of territorial redivision requires prompt but also careful scholarly reconsideration.

In addition to enriching the debate currently rejoined over the pros and cons of a territorial settlement in Palestine’s future, the proposed study of partition—its premises, record, praxis, and *problematique*—also has much wider application. As in the case of Yugoslavia, and in the parallel instance of Czechoslovakia in 1992–93, for example, there are profound lessons to be derived from the Israeli-Palestinian experience. About how to negotiate compromise, about the dynamics of nation building and breakdown, about bifurcation and unification, about the laws of sociopolitical integration and disintegration.

In the most immediate, obvious and human sense, the lives of millions of Arabs and Israelis are at stake in the current peacemaking effort—beyond that, the stability of the entire Middle East region. In the larger sense, though, the politics of repartitioning Palestine are about connecting and disconnecting. Separating . . . but separating together. Two self-determined states, yet forced to function as a single economic unit and, possibly, even one mutual security regime. Similarly, the ongoing, unfinished process of compromising Palestine will teach us a great deal about

the interplay between nation, state, ethnic community, society, and country and the connection—or perhaps disjunction—today between land, strategic depth, and security, for example.

Should unitary, federative, and integrationist models prove inapplicable, then political and social science could be confronted by a politics of balkanization, secession, and fragmentation à la Bosnia at once so divisive, violent, and destabilizing as to make advocacy of territorial partition for Israel/Palestine seem the lesser evil.