

# **Alternative Political Approaches To Israeli-Palestinian Coexistence**

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Dedicated to Judah L. Magnes and all pioneers  
of true coexistence

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## INTRODUCTION

Several years ago, I came across, on the Internet, a special issue of the *Boston Review* (December 2001/January 2002) presenting a forum on binationalism in the Israel-Palestine context.<sup>1</sup> As I read the various articles, I realized that I had come across other articles, elsewhere, on the same topic. Then I came upon Ehud Tokatly's HopeWays website, which includes a variety of approaches to Israeli-Palestinian coexistence.<sup>2</sup> Seeing the website crystallized my growing determination to promote the compilation of a comprehensive compendium of alternative approaches to Israeli-Palestinian coexistence, a compendium that would research the literature and bring forth many additional proposals that I sensed were also "out there."

In midsummer 2004 at the 2004 Biennial Convention of the United Nations Association (USA) in New York City, I helped to introduce a Palestine-Israel resolution that included a provision calling for the publication of a compendium of alternative Palestine-Israel coexistence proposals. The resolution passed, and as a step toward its implementation, I continued my personal research on this topic.

I subsequently came upon much highly relevant material, some of which had been included in an August 2005 publication of the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs<sup>3</sup> and some of which surfaced in the report of a forum in the Fall/Autumn 2005 *Arab World Geographer*.<sup>4</sup> In 2006, after moving from Upstate New York to Chicago, my research accelerated as I also met many scholars and activists from both the Middle West and the East and West coasts

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<sup>1</sup> "New Democracy Forum: Fitting the Pieces Together?" special issue, *Boston Review* 26 (December 2001/January 2002), <http://bostonreview.net/archives.html>.

<sup>2</sup> "HopeWays' Peace Voices Analysis," HopeWays, [http://hopeways.org/e\\_index.htm](http://hopeways.org/e_index.htm), under the tab Peace Voices.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Mahdi Abdul Hadi (head of the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs [PASSIA]), ed., *Palestinian-Israeli IMPASSE: Exploring Alternative Solutions to the Palestine-Israel Conflict* (Jerusalem: PASSIA Publications, August, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> *The Arab World Geographer* 8, no. 3 (Autumn 2005), <http://users.fmg.uva.nl/vmamadouh/awg/>.

of this country, as well as the Middle East itself. Then, in late April 2007, I concluded the first draft of the paper below and conducted a workshop on this topic at the first national convention of Jewish Voice for Peace, in Oakland, California.

It is my conviction, based on a principle I learned from Arthur E. Morgan, first chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and a foremost social planner, that as wide a range of alternatives as possible should be examined before making decisions, particularly in cases of important public policy. Thus, I hope that the material here presented will be a modest but useful contribution toward carrying out that conviction and principle in the context of one of the world's most difficult problems.

Further research on Palestine-Israel alternatives, including under both official and unofficial auspices, will very likely come upon needed corrections, additional options, different ways of categorizing the alternatives, and perhaps even ways of combining elements from two or more of the proposals, ultimately leading to a comprehensive, effective solution.

## **TWO STATES**

### **Geographically Separated States**

Separation along the lines of June 4, 1967: The chief example of this is the Arab Peace Initiative, adopted at the March, 2002, Beirut Summit. Partial contents of the initiative are “. . . full Israeli withdrawal from all territories occupied since 1967, including the Syrian Golan Heights to the lines of June 4, 1967 as well as the remaining occupied Lebanese territories in the south of Lebanon. . . . Achievement of a just solution to the Palestinian refugee problem to be agreed upon in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolution 194. . . . The acceptance of the establishment of a Sovereign Independent Palestinian State on the Palestinian territories occupied since June 4, 1967 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with East Jerusalem as its capital. . . . Establish normal relations with Israel in the context of this comprehensive peace. . . . rejection of all Palestinian patriation which conflict with the special circumstances of the Arab host countries.”<sup>5</sup>

Separation with some land swaps: This concept reflects a growing Western consensus of reciprocal territorial exchanges; a shared Jerusalem; no (or extremely limited) "right of return" of refugees; and demilitarization of the Palestinian state.<sup>6</sup> An example is the Geneva Accord, a model framework for peace drawn up by Israelis and

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<sup>5</sup> “Text of Arab Peace Initiative Adopted at Beirut Summit” (“official translation of the Saudi-proposed Arab peace initiative adopted at the annual Arab summit in Beirut, as published on the Arab League internet site”), Agence France-Presse [AFP], March 28, 2002, <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/AllDocsByUNID/5a7229b652beb9c5c1256b8a0054b62e>.

<sup>6</sup> Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski (professor, former US national security adviser), speech at Chicago Council on Global Affairs, April 4, 2007, [http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/podcast\\_details.php?podcast\\_id=26](http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/podcast_details.php?podcast_id=26).

Palestinians in 2003.<sup>7</sup> Sovereignty Shift Lines (S.S.L) is a proposal by Elad Rubin to uphold the Palestinian “Right of Return” and the “Jewish Right of Inhabitancy” by allowing Palestinian refugees to return to parts of Israel that would be equal in size to the areas occupied by settlements in the territories. Jews and Palestinians would have sovereignty over their own areas.<sup>8</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski has proposed that Palestinians give up their right of return from Jordan.<sup>9</sup>

### **Coterminous States (States with Identical Borders)**

Dual state: “Israel and Palestine would be two states superimposed on one another,” suggests Mathias Mossberg. Both individuals and geographic units would have free choice as to which state to belong to. Citizenship would not be bound by territory, but by choice. Geographic units could be like Swiss cantons, with an administrative structure like Switzerland’s.<sup>10</sup> Sam Greenlaw has proposed One Country, Two Systems, modeled “on the Chinese experience with Hong Kong and Macao” and borrowing details from Switzerland.<sup>11</sup> Deb Reich has talked of “parallel sovereignty. . . Nowhere is it written that there must necessarily be a 1:1 ratio between a given sovereign nation and a given land area. It’s a longstanding assumption, but it’s not a law of nature. If we so choose, we can dispense with ‘exclusive sovereignty’ in favor of ‘non-exclusive sovereignty’ or ‘parallel sovereignty.’”<sup>12</sup>

Condominium: “In international law, . . . a condominium is a political territory (state or border area) in or over which two or more sovereign powers formally agree to share equally *dominium* (in the sense of sovereignty) and exercise their rights jointly, without dividing it up into ‘national’ zones.”<sup>13</sup> A possible example is Jerusalem as the capital for both Palestinians and Israelis. Ervin Kedar’s USIP – United “State of Israel” and Palestine (Condominium) – is based on joint sovereignty.<sup>14</sup> So is Parity for Peace,

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<sup>7</sup> Geneva Initiative – Israeli Palestinian Conflict Peace Agreement, <http://www.genevaaccord.org/HomePage.aspx?FolderID=11&lang=en>.

<sup>8</sup> Elad Rubin (author), “S.S.L. – Sovereignty Shift Lines: A Solution for the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict,” HopeWays, [http://hopeways.org/e\\_index.htm](http://hopeways.org/e_index.htm), under the tab Peace Voices; Peaceways, <http://www.peaceways.net/peacelines.htm>.

<sup>9</sup> Alex Spillius, “Barack Obama supporter accuses Jewish lobby members of McCarthyism,” Telegraph.co.uk, May 27, 2008, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newsttopics/uselection2008/2033694/Barack-Obama%27s-consultant-accuses-Jewish-lobby-members-of-McCarthyism.html>.

<sup>10</sup> Mathias Mossberg (vice president for programs, East-West Institute), “Instead of Two States Side by Side, Why Not One Superimposed on the Other?” *The Guardian*, July 4, 2006. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2006/jul/04/israel>. Mossberg is now calling his proposal Parallel States.

<sup>11</sup> Sam Greenlaw (database architect and Oracle DBA), “One Country, Two Systems,” HopeWays, [http://hopeways.org/e\\_index.htm](http://hopeways.org/e_index.htm), under the tab Peace Voices.

<sup>12</sup> Deb Reich (translator and author), “Peeling the Onion: Parallel Sovereignty for Palestine/Israel,” CounterPunch, Oct. 30, 2002, <http://www.counterpunch.org/reich1030.html>.

<sup>13</sup> Wikipedia, “Condominium (international law),” [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Condominium\\_%28international\\_law%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Condominium_%28international_law%29) (accessed April 26, 2007).

<sup>14</sup> Ervin Y. Kedar (professor), “USIP – The United ‘State of Israel’ and Palestine (Condominium),” HopeWays, [http://hopeways.org/e\\_index.htm](http://hopeways.org/e_index.htm), under the tab Peace Voices.

Esther Riley's detailed proposal for two states on the same land, with 50-50 bilateral governance and equal access by all individuals to resources.<sup>15</sup> Under both plans Palestinians and Jews could claim the whole area between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River as their state. The right of return of both Jews and Palestinians would be respected, and people could live anywhere they wanted. Kedar's condominium has a unifying name, USIP. Parity for Peace does not: Jews can call the whole place Israel, and Palestinians can call the whole place Palestine. Both plans envision separate legislatures. Under Parity for Peace, the legislature of each state could legislate for its citizens in narrow matters such as marriage, but for all matters concerning the common territory, the legislatures of the two states would come together, 50-50, to make the laws. The USIP proposal envisions that each state will have separate laws, administrative departments, courts, and police units, and separate brigades in the USIP armed services. Coordination will come through the USIP Condominium Council, with equal representation from both sides. The policies of the council are enforced by a joint Israeli-Palestinian National Guard. Under Parity for Peace, all governmental units are fully integrated, with positions of power rotated between the states.

Zionist binationalism: Speaking at a roundtable discussion in London in the summer of 1947, Jewish philosopher Martin Buber said, "A solution giving to either side the right of domination would lead to a sudden catastrophe. The only solution that would not lead to a catastrophe, but only to a difficult situation for some time, is the creation of a bi-national state. That is, putting Jews and Arabs together in a kind of condominium and giving them the maximum of common administration possible in a given hour. They would have equal rights, these two nations, as nations, irrespective of numbers."<sup>16</sup>

## ONE STATE

### Centralized Unitary State

Mazin B. Qumsiyeh proposes a state with majority rule; a single, centralized national tier of government; and a human rights agenda. Such a state would have a ". . . democratic, egalitarian system anchored in a constitution guaranteeing equality."<sup>17</sup> Virginia Tilley states that "mutual guarantees would have to ensure both Arab and Jewish collective interests, particularly in the transition."<sup>18</sup> Ali Abunimah envisions a state that allows all the people to live in and enjoy the entire country while protecting their distinctive communities and addressing their particular needs.<sup>19</sup> Daniel Gavron's State of Jerusalem

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<sup>15</sup> Esther Riley (author, editor), Parity for Peace in Israel/Palestine, <http://www.parityforpeace.org/>.

<sup>16</sup> Paul Mendes-Flohr, ed., *A Land of Two Peoples: Martin Buber on Jews and Arabs*, University of Chicago Press edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. 205.

<sup>17</sup> Mazin B. Qumsiyeh (professor and author), *Sharing the Land of Canaan* (London and Sterling, VA: Pluto Press, 2004), p. 214; see also <http://qumsiyeh.org/>.

<sup>18</sup> Virginia Tilley (associate professor, Hobart and William Smith College), *The One-State Solution* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2005), p. 220.

<sup>19</sup> Ali Abunimah (editor, Electronic Intifada), *One Country: A Bold Proposal to End the Israeli-Palestinian Impasse* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, Metropolitan Books, 2006); see also <http://www.electronicintifada.org>.

establishes in all of the Holy Land a pluralistic multiethnic democracy “based on the principle of one-person-one-vote.”<sup>20</sup>

## **State with Strong International Governance**

Theodore Patterson’s Co-existence through Acceptance calls for “strong international political governance.”<sup>21</sup>

## **Consociational State**

As described in Wikipedia, a consociational state is “. . . a state which has major internal divisions along ethnic, religious, or linguistic lines, yet nonetheless manages to remain stable, due to consultation among the elites of each of its major social groups. Consociational states are often contrasted with states with majority rule. Classical examples of consociational states are Belgium, Switzerland, Israel, and the Netherlands.”<sup>22</sup> (NOTE: Elsewhere, Belgium, Switzerland, and India are commonly considered to be federations, and the Israel example is controversial.) Recent developments in South Africa, Bosnia, and Northern Ireland are in the direction of consociation. Moammar Gadhafi has proposed a state composed of both Palestinians and Israelis that allows both to move “wherever they will.”<sup>23</sup> A consociational state would recognize the need for mutual security—“Viewing themselves as ‘pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian’, they conceive Jewish/Israeli or Palestinian security as unattainable absent a secure life for the other.”<sup>24</sup> In a consociational state equality of rights could not be undone by majority vote—“It is a land of two peoples who live there or should live there by equal national right; any political institution must be based solely on a political arrangement which cannot be changed for the worse by majority vote.”<sup>25</sup>

## **Decentralized Unitary State**

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<sup>20</sup> Daniel Gavron (author, journalist), “The State of Jerusalem: Opportunity and Challenge for Israelis and Palestinians – and Others,” HopeWays, [http://hopeways.org/e\\_index.htm](http://hopeways.org/e_index.htm), under the tab Peace Voices.

<sup>21</sup> Theodore A. Patterson (author), “Coexistence Through Acceptance – UN Involvement and Citizen Empowerment,” HopeWays, [http://hopeways.org/e\\_index.htm](http://hopeways.org/e_index.htm), under the tab Peace Voices.

<sup>22</sup> Wikipedia, s.v. “Consociational state,” [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consociational\\_state](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consociational_state) (accessed April 26, 2007).

<sup>23</sup> Moammar Gadhafi (Libya’s leader), “Isratine: Peace Proposal by Moammar Gadhafi?” HopeWays, [http://hopeways.org/e\\_index.htm](http://hopeways.org/e_index.htm), under the tab Peace Voices.

<sup>24</sup> Mark A. LeVine (professor of modern Middle Eastern history, culture, and Islamic studies, University of California, Irvine), “The New Jewish Bi-Nationalism,” October 14, 2006, History News Network, <http://hnn.us/blogs/entries/30789.html>.

<sup>25</sup> Yosef Luria (journalist), in Solveig Eggerz, “More Than a Nation: The Cultural Zionism of Martin Buber,” *Issues of The American Council For Judaism* (Fall 1998), [http://www.acjna.org/acjna/articles\\_detail.aspx?id=98](http://www.acjna.org/acjna/articles_detail.aspx?id=98).

“The political power of government in [unitary] states may well be transferred to lower levels, to regionally or locally elected assemblies, governors and mayors (‘devolved government’), but the central government retains the principal right to recall such delegated power.”<sup>26</sup>

## LINKED GOVERNANCE

### Binational State

Federal government: "In a bi-national state, Jews and Palestinians would coexist as separate communities in a federal arrangement. Each people would run its own affairs autonomously and be guaranteed the legal right to use its own language, religion and traditions. Both would participate in government in a single parliament, which would be concerned with matters of supra-communal importance, defense, resources, the economy, and so on. Such a state could be modeled on the cantonal structure of Switzerland or the bi-national arrangement of Belgium. In the Palestine/Israel case, the cantonal structure would be based on the present demographic pattern of the country where densely populated areas like the Galilee would become Arab cantons, and Jewish ones like Tel Aviv would be Jewish cantons, and so on. This leaves a number of practical issues to be resolved, as for example, the exact composition and powers of the parliament, the exercise of the right of return for Jews and that for Arabs and so on."<sup>27</sup>

Unitary or federal government: “A bi-national state is a state made up two nations whose constitution recognizes both as state-forming nations, irrespective of their size. The constitution of such a state can be unitary or federal, as long as it is based on two nations being legally recognized as state-forming nations.”<sup>28</sup>

Alternative Palestinian Agenda: Nasser Abufarha's detailed “Proposal for an Alternative Configuration in Palestine-Israel” characterizes the configuration as “a Federal Union that guarantees access to the whole space of Palestine-Israel, and at the same time protects the national identity and cultural expression of both societies through sovereignty over designated territories based on the natural landscape and current demographics of this shared space.”<sup>29</sup>

Horizontal/vertical combination: Meron Benvenisti suggests “a combination of horizontal division (sharing in government) and a vertical division (partitioning of the territory). What I see is a federal structure that will include all of historic western Palestine. Different ethnic cantons will exist under that structure. It's clear, for example,

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<sup>26</sup> Wikipedia, s.v. “Unitary state,” [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unitary\\_state](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unitary_state) (accessed April 26, 2007).

<sup>27</sup> Ghada Karmi (academic and author), “A Secular Democratic State in Historic Palestine,” first published in *Al-Adab* (Lebanon), July 2002, One-State.org, <http://web.archive.org/web/20040805065028/http://www.one-state.org/articles/2002/karmi.htm>.

<sup>28</sup> Susan Hattis (editor of the Knesset website), “Roundtable – Bi-Nationalism,” <http://www.passia.org/meetings/2000/biNation.html>.

<sup>29</sup> Nasser Abufarha (anthropologist and entrepreneur), “Proposal for an Alternative Configuration in Palestine-Israel,” Alternative Palestinian Agenda, <http://www.ap-agenda.org/initiative.htm>.

that the Palestinian citizens of Israel will have their own cantons. They will have their own autonomy, which will express their collective rights. And it's clear, on the other side, that the settlers will have a canton. The executive of the federal government will strike some sort of balance between the two national groups.”<sup>30</sup>

## Federation

Central government: “A federation is a union comprising a number of partially self-governing states or regions united by a central (‘federal’) government. In a federation, the self-governing status of the component states is constitutionally entrenched and may not be altered by a unilateral decision of the central government.”<sup>31</sup>

Symmetric federalism: Every component state of a federation possesses the same powers.<sup>32</sup>

Asymmetric federalism: “Some federations are called *assymmetric* [sic] because some states have more autonomy than others, although they have the same constitutional status.”<sup>33</sup>

Non-territorial federalism: Ehud Tokatly’s Non-Territorial Federalism grants all national groups “a considerable measure of control over their lives, thus allowing all citizens, Jews and Arabs of all kinds, to enjoy a just, pluralistic society with a stronger, more democratic government.”<sup>34</sup>

Swiss vertical division: The basic division of Swiss politics is the “gemeinde” or “commune,” whose semi-sovereignty, in relation to the canton, is similar to the canton’s semi-sovereignty in relation to the federation.<sup>35</sup>

Other proposals: Elon Jarden calls for a federal constitution, with several cantons, as determined by its established assembly, in accordance with demographic patterns of the country’s regions.<sup>36</sup> Amos Shuvelli suggests a federal constitution under which cantons will enjoy a greater or lesser level of autonomy and in which 50 percent of the

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<sup>30</sup> Meron Benvenisti (geographer and academic), “Cry the Beloved Two-State Solution,” *Ha’aretz*, August 6, 2003, <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/objects/pages/PrintArticleEn.jhtml?itemNo=326313>.

<sup>31</sup> Wikipedia, s.v. “Federation,” <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federation> (accessed April 26, 2007).

<sup>32</sup> Wikipedia, s.v. “Federation,” <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federation> (accessed March 27, 2007).

<sup>33</sup> Wikipedia, s.v. “Federation,” <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federation> (accessed April 26, 2007).

<sup>34</sup> Ehud Tokatly (author, media expert, editor of HopeWays), “Community Democracy,” HopeWays, [http://hopeways.org/e\\_index.htm](http://hopeways.org/e_index.htm), under the tab Peace Voices.

<sup>35</sup> Jonathan Steinberg (reader in modern European history, University of Cambridge), *Why Switzerland?* 2nd. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.78.

<sup>36</sup> Elon Jarden (author), “Federation – Not Separation,” HopeWays, [http://hopeways.org/e\\_index.htm](http://hopeways.org/e_index.htm), under the tab Peace Voices.

parliament is elected on a regional/canton basis and 50 percent on a national or party basis.<sup>37</sup>

## Confederation

Weaker central government: “. . . an association of sovereign states or communities, usually created by treaty but often later adopting a common constitution. Confederations tend to be established for dealing with critical issues, such as defense, foreign affairs, foreign trade, and a common currency, with the central government being required to provide support for all members.”<sup>38</sup> “Currently, a confederation is considered a state or entity similar in pyramidal structure to a federation but with a weaker central government. A confederation may also consist of member states which, while temporarily pooling sovereignty in certain areas, are considered entirely sovereign and retain the right of unilateral secession.”<sup>39</sup>

Two States-One Nation: Kamal Nawash proposes creating a confederation of two sovereign states—Israel and Palestine—united by a government with limited powers. The confederation (which he calls a nation in the sense that the United States of America is a nation) would be called the United States of Israel and Palestine. Although the states would be geographically distinct from each other, Israelis and Palestinians would be able to live and work anywhere in the confederation, but their votes would count only in the state in which they had citizenship. Each state would have equal representation in the national parliament, regardless of the size of its population. The president or prime minister would be elected by the parliament, and because no one could get more than 50 percent of the votes without votes from the other side, no extremist could win. In time, the states could decide to turn more powers over to the national government, as happened in the USA.<sup>40</sup>

The Confederation of the Levant: Fred Foldvary’s confederation would have (a) courts to resolve interstate disputes and a police force for law enforcement; (b) a foreign service for defense and foreign affairs (although Israel and Palestine would still be able to maintain diplomatic relations with foreign states, with gradual transference of some military to the confederation “as it gains confidence in its viability”); and (c) a two-house legislature, with one elected on the basis of population and the other with a fixed number of representatives per state.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Amos Shuveli (author), “Is There a Hope in This Country?” HopeWays, [http://hopeways.org/e\\_index.htm](http://hopeways.org/e_index.htm), under the tab Peace Voices.

<sup>38</sup> Wikipedia, s.v. “Confederation,” <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confederation> (accessed April 26, 2007).

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Kamal Nawash (Palestinian American lawyer), “Issues: Israel/Palestine,” Issues: Free Muslims Coalition, <http://freemuslims.org/issues/israel-palestine.php>.

<sup>41</sup> Fred E. Foldvary (lecturer in economics at Santa Clara University), “Peace Through Confederal Democracy and Economic Justice,” Peace Through Justice and Self-defense, <http://www.foldvary.net/works/globcon.html>.

Confederation including a binational state: Presented as a “species of binationalism,” Jerome M. Segal proposes a three-state confederation comprising a Jewish State of Israel, an Arab State of Palestine, and a Binational State of Israel-Palestine, each state having veto power in the confederal government. The binational state would be created by land ceded by Israel and Palestine from their areas of “original sovereignty” as defined by Segal: Israel’s would be the territory it controlled before the 1967 War, and Palestine’s would be the West Bank and Gaza, but not East Jerusalem, which would be under confederal sovereignty. All adults would have to choose which member state to have citizenship in, and it would be possible for them to hold citizenship in two or even three states if they met the eligibility requirements. Israeli citizenship would be open to “any current citizen of Israel (Jewish, Palestinian or otherwise)” and some opportunities would be offered to some Palestinian refugees for permanent residency and/or *citizenship*. Palestinian citizenship would open to “all Palestinians, whether residing in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem or outside, whether refugees or not” and, at the discretion of the Palestinian government, citizenship could also be offered to “Israelis currently residing within the original territory of Palestine (e.g., settlers).” Citizenship in the binational state would be open to anyone eligible for citizenship in Israel or Palestine, whether they chose to become citizens of those states or not. All current citizens of Israel and their descendants would have permanent residency rights in Israel even if they didn’t opt to become citizens of Israel. All citizens of the member states would be able to work, travel, and own property anywhere in the confederation.<sup>42</sup>

Confederation alongside two states: Josef Avesar’s plan, The Israeli-Palestinian Confederation, calls for a coalition of representatives from Israel and the Palestinian territories (or state) that would act alongside the existing Israeli and Palestinian governments. The confederation would serve as a mechanism for establishing projects of mutual benefit. Israel and Palestine would be divided into 300 districts, each sending one delegate to the confederation legislature. Fifty-five percent of the Israeli legislators and 55 percent of the Palestinian legislators would have to agree in order for any measure to pass. The governments of both Israel and Palestine would have a veto over any confederation legislation, even if the relative sizes of their populations change.<sup>43</sup>

Regional confederation: Various plans have been proposed, including for Palestine/ Israel/Jordan; Palestine/Israel/Jordan/Lebanon (and possibly Syria); and a wider Confederation of Middle Eastern States, such as was promoted for many years by *New Outlook Magazine*, a now defunct organ of the Israeli Mapam Party. Early on, Joseph Abileah proposed a Jordan/Palestine/Israel Confederation, with economic

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<sup>42</sup> Jerome M. Segal (senior research scholar at the University of Maryland’s Center for International and Security Studies), “A Binational Confederation,” *Boston Review*, December 2001/January 2002, <http://bostonreview.net/BR26.6/segal.html>.

<sup>43</sup> Tom Tugend (contributing editor), “Lawyer Floats Own Peace Plan at UCLA,” *The Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles*, March 17, 2006, <http://www.jewishjournal.com/home/searchview.php?id=15573>; The Israeli Palestinian Confederation, <http://www.aboutipc.org/>; Josef Avesar, “The Israeli-Palestinian Confederation Proposal,” in “Future Options,” special issue, *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture* 14, no. 2 (2007); <http://aboutipc.org/ThePlan.htm>.

integration facilitating a solution to the refugee problem, an immediate irrigation system in the Syrian Desert, a religious council forming a second parliamentary house, and being open to any other country in the Middle East.<sup>44</sup>

Two-Stage Solution: Jeff Halper believes that a two-stage approach might be a way to mitigate problems inherent in the two-state solution as it is currently unfolding. Stage 1 would be a Palestinian state alongside Israel, giving the Palestinians self-determination but probably not a state that would be viable or be able to meet the social and economic needs of a large influx of refugees. Stage 2 would be a regional confederation between Israel, Palestine, and Jordan that would likely lead to a wider Middle East confederation or Middle East Union. Citizens of the member states would have the right to live and work anywhere they wanted within the confederation but as citizens of their own countries. Halper believes that the implementation of Stage 2 within a reasonable period of time—say ten years—should be guaranteed by the international community at the time Stage 1 is implemented.<sup>45</sup>

Confederation with shared, rotating head of state: Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem Abu El-Assal says that after the State of Palestine is established, Israel and Palestine should work toward the establishment of a confederation with a common currency, open borders, and even a shared head of state. While each state would have its own government and prime minister, the presidency of the confederation would be rotated between Israel and Palestine, as it is in the European Union.<sup>46</sup>

EU membership: Avraham Burg suggests that the European Union could eventually offer EU membership to an Arab regional entity, including Israel and the Palestinians, as a peace incentive.<sup>47</sup>

## OTHER

### Allowing Individual Dissociation

Noam Chomsky has suggested “parallel national institutions throughout the whole territory with a free option for each individual; and also the option of dissociation from national institutions with retention of full rights for those who prefer.”<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Joseph Abileah (professor, author), “Joseph Abileah – Confederation in the Middle East,” *The Mondcvitan* (Spring 1972), The Hugh and Helene Schonfield World Service Trust, <http://www.schonfield.org/5536.html>.

<sup>45</sup> Jeff Halper (Israeli anthropologist and coordinator of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions [ICAHD]), *An Israeli in Palestine: Resisting Dispossession, Redeeming Israel* (London: Pluto Press, 2007), pp. 225-229; also, Jeff Halper, “Towards a Middle East Union,” <http://icahd.org/eng/articles.asp?menu=6&submenu=2&article=132..>

<sup>46</sup> Andrew West, “Bishop’s Vision for an Israel-Palestine Confederation,” *Eureka Street*, October 30, 2006, <http://www.eurekastreet.com.au/article.aspx?aeid=1852>.

<sup>47</sup> Donald Macintyre, “Holocaust Is Over, Leading Israeli Tells Likud,” *The Independent*, November 1, 2008, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/holocaust-is-over-leading-is%5Craeli-tells-likud-981758.html>.

## The Brazilian Contribution

Claude G. S. Martins has suggested that “the international community can assist in relieving the population pressures on the region’s environmental conditions through providing all communities with opportunities to emigrate to other countries. Brazil, for instance, can offer a new base for Jewish and Palestinian communities, in which the national cultural identity of both can remain intact regardless of their physical location of residence and which will not require individuals to give up their current citizenship, nor their national aspirations.”<sup>49</sup>

## Comprehensive Comparative Analyses

The Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs has published a book on alternative solutions to the conflict,<sup>50</sup> and *The Arab World Geographer*, a quarterly journal published by the Department of Geography at the University of Akron, in Akron, Ohio, has an issue devoted to the viability of the two-state solution and possible alternatives.<sup>51</sup> The *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics Economics and Culture* has a special issue entitled “Future Options.”<sup>52</sup> The HopeWays website presents and categorizes a number of options.<sup>53</sup> The *Boston Review* has a special issue on binationalism.<sup>54</sup>

## CONCLUSION

It is hoped that this "work in progress" will be a help to those searching for the best solution. It is a start, but needs the following:

1. An examination of many other plans that have been put forward
2. A conglomeration of essentially identical plans
3. A fleshing out of sketchily described proposals
4. A weeding out of clearly inadequate or ill-conceived ideas
5. An examination of the variety of cases where two or more peoples share the same territory (e.g., Switzerland, Belgium, Ireland, South Africa, and Malaysia)

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<sup>48</sup> Noam Chomsky (professor, linguist), *Peace in the Middle East?* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), as quoted in Fred Foldvary, “Peace Through Confederal Democracy and Economic Justice,” *Peace Through Justice and Self-defense*, <http://www.foldvary.net/works/globcon.html>.

<sup>49</sup> Claudia G. S. Martins (Brazilian geographer), “The Brazilian Contribution to Palestinian-Israeli Peace,” HopeWays, [http://hopeways.org/e\\_index.htm](http://hopeways.org/e_index.htm), under the tab Peace Voices.

<sup>50</sup> Dr. Mahdi Abdul Hadi (head of the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs [PASSIA]), ed., *Palestinian-Israeli IMPASSE: Exploring Alternative Solutions to the Palestine-Israel Conflict* (Jerusalem: PASSIA Publications, August 2005).

<sup>51</sup> *The Arab World Geographer* 8, no. 3 (Autumn 2005), <http://users.fmg.uva.nl/vmamadouh/awg/>.

<sup>52</sup> “Future Options,” special issue, *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture* 14, no. 2 (2007), [http://www.pij.org/current\\_hp?id=p63](http://www.pij.org/current_hp?id=p63)

<sup>53</sup> “HopeWays’ Peace Voices Analysis,” HopeWays, [http://hopeways.org/e\\_index.htm](http://hopeways.org/e_index.htm), under the tab Peace Voices.

<sup>54</sup> “New Democracy Forum: Fitting the Pieces Together?” special issue, *Boston Review* 26 (December 2001/January 2002), <http://bostonreview.net/archives.html>.

6. An integration of both case examples and written proposals into a well-developed organization of political alternatives
7. Brainstorming sessions that might lead to new constructs and combinations
8. A thorough comparison and ranking of alternatives in terms of how well they meet the essential needs of both Palestinians and Israelis

A broadly based and balanced research team could build upon what has been started, and—working in conjunction with a negotiating team—come up with one or a few options that all sides could live with and that could succeed.

*Howard Cort is a retired social planner who is convinced that to best solve a major public policy problem, all alternatives must be considered. Input and suggestions for this website are welcomed, including the best way to categorize the different types of approaches.*