

WHAT ROLE IS THERE FOR AMERICA TO PLAY IN THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN STALEMATE?

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Abstract: *As one of the thorniest issues still facing the international community, headed by the US administration, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has always been brought into play in different political speeches, gatherings or even round-table chats. This long-standing Arab-Jewish conflict has been taken up by the US Administration as one of the challenges to be solved by every US President coming to office ailing to prove their special talent for leadership. Therefore, choosing this paper to examine this conflict is done on the basis that it is a conflict which has been allotted an important position in a plethora of political discourses, and also because it is an ongoing conflict that has produced different and, sometimes, ambiguous academic and political discourses from the partisans of each side: Israeli and Palestinian. Furthermore, the aim of examining the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is to show that it is one of the major factors leading to conflict between the Arab-Muslim world and the Western-Christian one. In this respect, this present paper seeks to examine this conflict in light of the past and current US foreign policies in dealing with it.*

Keywords: *Israeli-Palestinian stalemate, US foreign policy, violence, settlements, the Middle East region.*

For years, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has occupied the attention of the international community owing to its difficulty and its complicated historical roots. In fact, different accounts of the nature of the conflict and its evolution have been provided by the partisans of each side, the Arabs and Jews, so as to convince the international community of the legitimacy and nobility of each side's cause and garner large numbers of sympathizers from across the globe. Though sketchy and complex as it may seem, the Israeli-Palestinian stalemate has long roots in the history of the Middle East region. Both Arabs and Jews claim their legitimacy and historical ascendancy over Palestine. As a result, most of the accounts provided as to the nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are blurred by partiality, insofar as any attempt to clear up the confusions and bias

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cloaking such an Arab-Jewish historical conflict are certain to be met with gradually increasing intricacy and hesitation.

In looking at this long Israeli-Palestinian clash, we shall limit ourselves to the most significant historical moments that have culminated in, a more or less everlasting conflict and stalemate. Historically, a turning point in the Arab-Jewish conflict was the British mandate of Palestine, primarily the “Balfour Declaration” of November 1917, that most significant historical incident, when Britain vowed to support the creation of a Jewish national home in Palestine. The declaration, in fact, was a consequence of lobbying by different European Zionist movements and organizations, and it was also the beginning of a succession of violent events and wars between Arabs and Jews.

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations Special Commission on Palestine recommended the partition of Palestine as an attempt to broker a two-state solution, which would entail the creation of an independent Palestinian state alongside an independent Jewish state of Israel. At the time, the U.S played a major role in supporting the decision of the United Nations when the President Harry S. Truman approved of the partition of Palestine owing to the growing pressure exerted on him and his administration by the lobby organizations, such as “the Israeli-American Friendship League”, “the American Jewish Committee” and “the American Jewish Congress” among many other pro-Israeli organizations.¹ It is worth noting that the U.S has always undertaken to support Israel with its ambitious plans, and almost every president who came into office has helped Israel financially, militarily and logistically in order, on the one hand, to ensure its ascendancy over the Arabs in the Middle East and, on the other hand, to benefit from the geopolitical strategic role played by Israel in containing the spread of the USSR in the Middle East. For these and other reasons, “America’s strong bonds with Israel are well known,” President Barrack Obama publicly emphasized, adding that, “This bond is unbreakable.”²

Given the ongoing conflicts between the Palestinians and the Israelis, the international community has repeatedly decided to organize official negotiations between both opponents mediated by an international contingent known as the Quartet on the Middle East.³ A special envoy, Tony Blair, represents the Quartet. The Arab League is another important actor, which has proposed an alternative peace plan, that is, the Egyptian mediated efforts, for Egypt is a founding member of the Arab League and has historically been a key participant as both an opponent to Israel and a strategic host for Palestinian refugees through the check point of Rafah.⁴

¹ Tahir Shash, “The American relations with the Arab world and Israel,” *The American Empire I*, ed. Rida Hilal, Cairo, The Islamic House of Publication, 2001, p. 319.

² Barrack Obama, A New Beginning, Oregon Local News, at <http://www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2009/06/text_of_president_barack_obama_2.html>, accessed 04 June 2009, 06 July 2015.

³ Israeli settlement. n.d., at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli_settlement>, accessed 25 January 2015. Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Reative Commons Attribution-Share Alike, at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli%E2%80%93Palestinian_conflict>, accessed 05 June 2010, 09 July 2015.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

The current U.S administration of Obama has expressed its will to broker negotiations and peace talks between the Palestinians and Israelis, and thus put an end to a conflict that has been ongoing for many years, if not decades. To that effect, when Obama first came into office, he stated in 2009 in his famous speech in Cairo that violence has been a daily staple of the reality of the Israeli-Palestinian stalemate. To that effect, Palestinians are required to stop their violence against the Israelis, while the Israelis should stop the construction of new settlements on the Palestinian land.⁵

In fact, Israel has always dubbed Palestinian violence an attempt to “derail the peace process”, while the Israeli crackdown on Palestinians and the ongoing construction of its settlements have been considered by the Palestinians to be provocative issues that should be prioritized by the U.S administration. In this sense, this paper attempts to bring to light the different implications of Palestinian violence as well as the continued construction of Israeli settlements and their ensuing results on the relationship between the Arab-Muslim and Western-Christian world.

The enduring nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has called for the co-operative and coordinated efforts of the international community, led by the U.S, in order to find an appropriate peaceful solution, which will enable both opponents to coexist. In fact, it should be noted that from its beginning, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been one of the most intricate and vexing conflicts posing multiple obstacles, well beyond the expectations of the great powers trying to resolve it. Arguably, no other conflict combines so complex a mixture of religious fervor, national aspirations, historic and economic grievances, territorial rivalry and geopolitical factors.⁶ Consequently, such a complicated mixture as comprises the Israeli- Palestinian conflict has had its effects beyond the Middle East region in the sense that the U.S, for instance, has been involved in guiding and influencing the peace process between the Israelis and Palestinians. This is the case given that the support of the Israeli government with military equipment and financial funds by the U.S has been for the purpose of securing American interests in the region.⁷ This American involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian impasse is furthered by the fact that many American leaders have brokered peace talks between the Palestinians and Israelis, such as the Oslo Accords in 1993 and the Camp David Summit convened by U.S President Bill Clinton. Therefore, the U.S has historically been involved in this conflict by attempting to seek stability in the region. This stability, however, will not be tangibly felt unless the Israelis are safe in their homes and the Palestinians no longer violently threaten the very existence of their neighbors. Palestinian violence has, in fact, been considered by the U.S and its allies to be a daily staple of the Israeli-Palestinian stalemate for years.

⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶ Michael Goldfarb, Crisis guide_ the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – council on foreign relations, n.d., at <http://www.cfr.org/publication/13850/crisis_guide.html>, accessed 06 June 2015.

⁷ See Karima Kirles, “The United States and Israeli: Very Special Relationships,” *The American Empire II*, ed. Rida Hilal, Cairo, The Islamic House of Publication, 2001.

The current U.S administration does not accept or consider violence and intimidation against the Israeli civilians to be a step towards peace. In May and June 2009, President Barrack Obama avowedly expressed his distress as regards the continuous threats posed by the Palestinians' violence against their Israeli neighbors, and he therefore stressed that "Palestinians must abandon violence," he also emphasized that, " Hamas must put an end to violence, recognize past agreements, and recognize Israel's right to live."⁸ His underpinning rationale in condemning the Palestinian violence is that, "resistance through violence and killing is wrong and does not succeed."⁹ What is really striking about Obama's emphasis on abandoning violence is his willingness to inform Palestinians that resistance can have better, more efficacious results if done by means of diplomacy and negotiation rather than violence.

In this connection, Hamas must recognize past agreements, such as the former Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's letter of recognition of Israel's right to exist. Such a letter of recognition was deemed to be a crucial milestone in the Israeli-Palestinian relationships, particularly during the Oslo accords of 1993. Therefore, recognizing past agreements, according to the U.S, is envisaged as a crucial diplomatic way towards resolving the conflict, and it is better than violence. However, an incident which happened just after the Oslo accords was the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, an Israeli official "who signed the Oslo accord against the will of many of his compatriots,"¹⁰ by a right wing Israeli in 1995. Revealing as it may be, the gunning down of Yitzhak Rabin undermined the Israeli tendency to pursue its war against Palestine, since its interests and ambitious plans in the Middle East were incomplete, and any attempt to find a peaceful solution between the two rivals gets nipped in the bud. Meanwhile, the assassination of the former Egyptian president Anouar Sadat, who launched and brokered a peace initiative between the Israelis and Palestinians in 1977, uncovered a growing rift between what the Israeli officials declare in public and what they concretize in real life situations. In this account, an Israeli Newspaper has declared: "The moment of truth has arrived, and it has to be said: Israel does not want peace. The arsenal of excuses has run out, and the chorus of Israeli rejection already rings hollow. Until recently, it was still possible to accept the Israeli refrain that "there is no partner" for peace and that "the time isn't right" to deal with our enemies. Today, the new reality before our eyes leaves no room for doubt and the tired refrain that "Israel supports peace" has been left shattered."¹¹

This, indeed, explains the intricate nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which has been an enigma despite the coordinated efforts of the international community, headed by the U.S, to resolve. The fact that Israel does not want peace and that the different crimes it commits in the name of peace testify to its unwillingness to accept a Palestinian state living by its side, as well as its unlimited

⁸ B. Obama, *op. cit.*

⁹ *Ibidem.*

¹⁰ M. Goldfarb, *op. cit.*

¹¹ Gideon Levy, Israel Doesn't Want Peace, *Haaretz*, at <<http://www.haaretz.com/printedition/opinion/israel-doesn-t-want-peace-1.217576>>, accessed 10 June 2010. 10 July 2015.

ambitious Zionist colonial project in the Middle East. Therefore, "I write as someone who served loyally in the Israeli army in the mid-1960s and who has never questioned the legitimacy of the state of Israel within its pre-1967 borders," Avi Shlaim added by emphasizing that, "what [he] utterly rejects is the Zionist colonial project beyond the Green Lines."¹² Here, mention can be made of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza strip in the aftermath of the June 1967 war, which clearly had very little to do with security rather than territorial expansionism. Jewish newspapers, academicians and laymen, among many others, in their protest against the Israeli Zionist projects as well as against the killing and intimidation of innocent Palestinians, have voiced these and other points of view. Therefore, many past and present facts have demonstrated at length the unwillingness of Israel to reach a peaceful solution with the Palestinians. Many are the pretexts provided by Israel to explain its refusal of peace. Palestinian violence or "terror" is one of the excuses provided so as to pave the way for Israeli terror against the Palestinians, the most frequent victims of whom are children, women and the old. In this sense, Gideon, Levy explains: "Terror, used as the ultimate excuse for Israeli refusal [of peace], only helps Olmert keep reciting, *ad nauseum*, 'If they [the Palestinians] don't change, don't fight terror and don't adhere to any of their obligations, then they will never extract themselves from their unending chaos.'" As though the Palestinians haven't taken measures against terrorism, as though Israel is the one to determine what their obligations are, as though Israel isn't to blame for the unending chaos Palestinians suffer under the occupation."¹³

The message behind Olmert's emphasis on fighting terror is clearly meant to urge the Palestinians and the Israelis alike to fight the Hamas movement. It is Hamas that has always caused trouble for the Israelis. In 2006, Hamas won control of the Palestinian Legislative Council, where it constituted the majority party. Hamas's unwillingness to concur in recognizing Israel's existence as a legitimate political entity has been an unnecessary annoyance to the Israelis and American officials alike. This disinclination was further stressed in June 2009 when Hamas leaders met with the former U.S President Jimmy Carter and declared anew that "[they] do not in any way recognize Israel."¹⁴

In fact, many Palestinians, mainly those supporting Hamas, oppose the existence of Israel as a political entity because of Israeli despotism and the restrictions on Palestinian political freedom, economic freedom, civil liberties and the quality of life. Many feel that their own opposition to Israel was justified by Israel's arrogant and oppressive crimes against the Palestinians. A revealing example of the Israeli oppression and inhuman treatment of the Palestinians is the Israeli imposed economic sieges on the Gaza Strip since 2007; not to mention the violent and barbaric Israeli raids on the Gaza strip on many different occasions, which culminated in the death of thousands of Palestinians. Israel has ignored international

¹² Avi Shlaim, "How Israel Brought Gaza to the Brink of Humanitarian Catastrophe", *The Guardian*, at <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jan/07/gaza-israel-palestine>>, accessed 07 June 2007, 13 July 2015.

¹³ G. Levy, *op. cit.*

¹⁴ See note 3.

calls for lifting the siege, and recently it has imposed another siege on the Gaza Strip to which the international community reacted in a new way, by sending some ships, the Freedom Flotilla, carrying pro-Palestinian activists and humanitarian aid bound for blockaded Gaza. Israel surprised everybody by sending its warships and attacking these aid-carrying ships which aimed to break the siege of Gaza, in the process killing more than sixteen people and injuring more than fifty. As has become customary, Israel appealed to excuses to explain what had happened, claiming that its soldiers were defending themselves against the activists who attacked them with rocks and knives when they boarded the ships.¹⁵

As a superpower, the U.S has always tried to broker peace talks between the Israelis and Palestinians but of no avail. Promises of resolving this issue have been made by different American presidents in different political speeches, but reality always belies such promises. If we consider for instance, the attacks on the Freedom Flotilla by Israeli soldiers, the only thing which Barrack Obama could offer to Mahmud Abas, during his visit to the White House, was another promise of attempting to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian problem and that this would be in the United States' national interest. Furthermore, Barrack Obama in his first State of the Union speech to Congress in Washington forgot to mention the Israel-Palestinian conflict, which he had vowed to take care of upon taking office. If this reveals anything, it is the fact that the U.S indifference towards this issue is based on the security of Israel and its ascendancy over the Middle East region¹⁶. Hence, Israel will not stop its aggression and terror against the Palestinians and will not listen to the international community's calls for the abandonment of violence as long as the White House remains on its side. Therefore, the answer to what the U.S is urging, that the Palestinians to stop their violence, is simple: to assure the ascendancy of the Israelis over the Palestinians.

In effect, one cannot deny the fact that the pathways trodden by the international community, led by the U.S., to broker peace talks between the Palestinians and the Israelis are always the same. In so doing, focus has been placed on a number of occasions on building bridges so as to reach peace regardless of the official or partisan discourse. In this respect, we should bear in mind the Oslo accords; a peace initiative for which Yitzhak Rabin paid with his blood and also that of Anouar Sadat in 1977, which culminated in his assassination. However, the hope for peace – if any – may lie in the hands of academics, NGO's and Humanitarian organizations, among many others. We have to bear in mind that most of the pressure exerted on the Israeli government is done not by Palestinian rockets, but by the inside work done by humanitarian organizations and NGOs based in Israel.¹⁷ Jewish academics, fighting a very bitter war on behalf of justice (a war they could have been better without), are the "bricks" that can lead to peace.

Having discussed the question of the Palestinian violence and its implications for Israeli and American political discourses, we now turn to an equally significant

¹⁵ Rian, Israel attacks Pro-Palestinian aid flotilla, at http://www.newsfit.info/news_Israel-attacks-Pro-Palestinian-aid-flotilla_file_86302.html, accessed 31 May 2010, 16 March 2015.

¹⁶ T. Shas, *op. cit.*, p. 327.

¹⁷ See the points of view of Jerrold Kessel, and Pierre Klochendler.

issue involved in the Israeli-Palestinian stalemate. This concerns the matter of the continued construction of Israeli settlements on Palestinian lands and the reaction of the U.S towards this. In fact, the problem of Israeli settlements in parts of Palestine has instigated a hot conflict that fuels the already exacerbated relationship between Israelis and Palestinians. The Israeli settlements are Israeli civilian communities in the Israeli-occupied territories, that is, the lands that were captured from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria by Israel during the 1967 6-day War. Such settlements currently exist in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. In fact, Israeli policies towards these settlements have ranged from active promotion to strategic removal or temporary freeze.¹⁸ This explains the fact that the Jewish settler population is estimated to have grown from about 20,000 in 1982 to more than 600,000 presently¹⁹.

The continued expansion of the Israeli settlements at the expense of forcibly evacuating the Palestinian citizens, such as the current expansion of settlements in East Jerusalem, has been a key issue in the Israeli-Palestinian stalemate. The ongoing construction of settlements by Israel is frequently identified as an obstacle to the peace process by different countries, among which the U.S is prominent. This can be seen by Barrack Obama's statement, when he declared in his speech to the Islamic world that, "the United States does not accept the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlements," and "it is time for these settlements to stop."²⁰

It is true that relations between Israel and the Obama administration have been chilly precisely because of the settlement issue; and it is also true that Barrack Obama has been less friendly towards the country than previous U.S leaders. Many international intergovernmental organizations have declared the continued construction of the Israeli settlements to be a violation of different rules and international laws. For example, it is worth noting that "The Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, every major organ of the United Nations, the European Union, and Canada, have declared that the settlements are a violation of international law [...] Non-governmental organizations including Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch have also characterized the settlements as a violation of international law".²¹

The settlements have on several occasions been a source of tension between Israel and the international community, particularly the U.S. Given the long-time "special relations"²² between the U.S and Israel, a key American ally in the Middle East region²³ the latter has been making use of this relationship to legitimize its colonial Zionist project in Palestine, thereby ignoring the international calls to stop its violence against the Palestinians and abide by international laws and conventions. The U.S has, indeed, stood in the way of UN Security Council

¹⁸ See Meron Benvenisti.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁰ Obama, Barrack. Recently, "The White House condemned Israel's approval of 1,600 new settlement homes in disputed East Jerusalem," CBS News World.

²¹ U.S. Condemns New Israeli Settlements. CBS News World, 09 March 2010. <<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2010/03/09/world/main6282500.shtml>>. Accessed 26 March 2015.

²² Tahir Shash, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 319.

resolutions condemning Israeli actions and vetoing every single resolution critical of Israeli violence. The problem of the Israeli settlements, however, has frequently been a source of disagreement between the U.S and Israel. For instance, “in 1991 there was a clash between the administration of George Bush senior and Israel, when the U.S. delayed a subsidized loan to pressure Israel not to proceed with the establishment of settlements in the Jerusalem-Bethlehem corridor.”²⁴ At the time, the George Bush senior’s administration “voted in favour of six resolutions critical of Israel.”²⁵

Moreover, the current U.S administration is against the Israeli continued expansion of settlements. A case in point is President Barack Obama’s, as well as George Mitchell’s (America’s special envoy to the Middle East) opposition to the settlements, which they have expressed on a number of occasions. As a result, Israel agreed to 10-month freeze on new settlement construction in an attempt to proceed with peace talks with the Palestinians. Although Israel has agreed under heavy American pressure, “it has refused to suspend construction already under way in Jerusalem.”²⁶

The questions that should be asked then are the following: What makes Israel so audacious as to turn down an American demand to stop its settlements? Is not America a superpower or “the world’s cop” which is entitled to dictate the rules to be strictly followed by others? As a matter of fact, these and other queries may not be comprehensively answered unless one investigates the basic mechanisms of the general working of the American system or, in other words, the different mechanisms that produce decisions in America. In fact the American political system is one of the most complicated systems in the world in that it is predicated upon strict rules and obligations that do not allow decisions to be made by a single power. Many people may think that the president is the only one who has the final right to decide on what the policies of the U.S should be, and that nobody is going to overturn a resolution issued by the president. The American president is often thought of, especially in the Arab world, as having the power to stop Israel’s aggression and unilateral moves with regard to the construction of settlements by virtue of the right of veto, which he has been granted by the American constitution.

The president can veto every single decision issued by Congress and with which he does not agree. However, the truth is that every president bears in mind a variety of considerations before using the right to veto. Among such considerations is the balance of power in Congress; that is, there should always be a majority of two thirds of Congress voting for the president’s resolutions.²⁷ Otherwise, if

²⁴ See Israeli settlement. n.d. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli_settlement>. Accessed 25 January 2015.

See also Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Wikipedia: Reative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike, 05 June 2010. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli%E2%80%93Palestinian_conflict>. Accessed 09 July 2015.

²⁵ Guardian.co.uk. US gives Abbas private assurances over Israeli settlements. Guardian.co.uk, 29 April 2010. <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/apr/29/israel-settlement-building-peace-talks>>. Accessed 25 March 2015.

²⁶ Halkin, Hillel. More than that, “On 15 October 2009, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that he had ended talks with the Americans over the settlements.” (CBS News World).

²⁷ Rosalie Targonski, *Outline of U.S. Government*, New York, Office of International Information Programs, 2000, p. 72.

two thirds or the majority of Congress vote against the president's resolutions, then he cannot implement them and his right of using the veto will cease to have the same importance.²⁸ Therefore, every single president avoids using the right to veto by taking into consideration these realities so as to preserve his status as commander-in-chief.

In addition to what has been said, there are many key elements involved in understanding the working of the American political system. For the time being, this work shall limit itself to two of them, which are perceived to be of capital importance to understanding the reasons why, for example, some of Obama's promises in different speeches should not be taken for granted. In this regard, the first key element in understanding the working of such a political system is the federal nature of the U.S, which consists of a balance between the three American political institutions, that is, the executive, the legislative and the judicial institutions. The second key element is that of the pressure groups and their role in the American decision-making.

The American constitution is a federal system that is predicated upon the principles of checks and balances. That is to say, the American constitution is meant to organize relations between the three American institutions, executive, legislative and judicial, in a way that will give the right to each one to control and supervise the others in every step they take with regard to American well being. In this way, no institution can have the right to take a decision alone without consulting with the other institutions, which seems to be, at once, a relation of partnership and supervision. In this sense, the president has the right to propose to Congress a law that he considers to be necessary and expedient for American well-being; and the majority of Congress can decide on whether to pass that law or turn it down. The president also has the right to appoint the judges of the Supreme Court, and it is for the congress to grant its approval or not. Once the judges are nominated, Congress cannot remove them. On the contrary, these appointed judges are the only power that can turn down any resolution of Congress by finding it to be unconstitutional. As well, the Supreme Court acts as a policeman checking the constitutionality of laws and rules passed by either the executive or legislative branches.

Sometimes there are times when the U.S president is given the right by the constitution to take a decision without the approval of the Congress. For instance, in time of war or in areas having to do with the U.S national security, which requires only the single voice of the president, the approval of the Congress is not necessary. Still, Congress has got "the power of the purse."²⁹ That is to say, in times of war, Congress has to vote to allot a military budget so as to support the decision of the president. In a case where the Congress does not approve the spending money on a war, the president's decision will not be effective, even if there is a national security argument.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 78.

²⁹ Manar Achorbaji, "The Main Introductions to the Analysis of the Mechanisms of the American System," *The American Empire III*. Cairo, The Islamic House of Publication, 2002, p. 184.

Bearing in mind such an intricate American political system, pressure or lobby groups make good use of their money so as to obtain a decision for their favour. Drawing on a famous saying of Tip O'Neil, an American congressman who asserted that "the American policy is a local one",³⁰ meaning by this that whoever wants to affect decision in America should work at the level of the grassroots, that is, in the constituencies of the American decision makers. In so doing, lobby groups, such as those working for the well-being of Israel, tend to spend their money on sponsoring the presidential electoral campaigns, which cannot, most of the time, be financed by the person running for presidential election. As a result, the winner in the elections tends to do some favors to those pressure groups in return to what they have done to help him/her to win the elections. Such favors, most of the time, range from appointing some representatives of the pressure groups to the president's administration, to taking decisions that favor some countries, such as the case of Israel.³¹

Mindful of the pressure that Congress can exert on the president's decisions, pressure groups try to establish close relations with some congressmen. This can be done through different means. For instance, they endeavor to have at least one representative in Congress, leaking sensitive information to them about other Congress members. Building on this, pressure groups tend to contact some congressmen and offer to help them with their electoral campaigns and provide information that can affect their membership of Congress. In this way, lobby groups gain a lot of voices in Congress to support their aims. In cases where Congressmen may refuse to yield to what the lobby groups propose, they may succumb to their constituencies' demands. In so doing, pressure groups work at the level of the grassroots by trying to rally people representing different electoral districts behind their plans and ideas. Such plans and ideas, which are, most of the time, propagandistic, are instilled in peoples' minds by means of the media. As a result, such people representing the electoral districts put pressure on their representatives in Congress to make them listen to what the pressure groups want. This way of putting pressure on the congressmen by their constituencies is known as the "triangulation system"³².

Bearing in mind such a complex decision making system in America, one can understand the extent to which Israel is resolute in pursuing the construction of settlements on Palestinian lands, thereby ignoring even U.S calls to stop them. When the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, said that he had ended talks with the Americans over the settlements, he surely was convinced that America could not really affect Israeli decisions, as long as these decisions are subject to pressure from pro-Israeli organizations. Therefore, every single move the Israelis make is in accordance with their higher national interests with which even the U.S cannot interfere.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 183.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 198.

³² *Ibidem*, p. 213.

To bring the Israeli-Palestinian discussion into an end, it should be stated that the aim behind such an analysis of the American political system is to make explicit the fact that American decisions are not an independent ones. Rather, there is the culture of pressure that repeatedly echoes through the American society; in the sense that anyone desires to achieve something should learn the policies of lobbying first. In a nutshell, instead of saying that it is American principles, which are being spread throughout the world, one should rather say that it is the lobby principles, which are being infused worldwide, so to speak. The victims here are always the Palestinians, especially the children and women killed during the Israeli raids.

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