

BOOK REVIEWS

Garfinkle, Adam. *Israel and Jordan in the Shadow of War: Functional Ties and Futile Diplomacy in a Small Place*. London: Macmillan, 1992.

Drysdale, Alasdair, and Raymond A. Hinnebusch. *Syria and the Middle East Peace Process*. New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1992.

War and Peace are Janus-faced conditions of world politics and the Middle East is perhaps the classical regional case study. The most protracted conflict in the area has been the (Palestinian) Arab-Israeli conflict focusing on territorial control over historical Palestine. Whether the development of the conflict or its resolution has been more convoluted is debatable; both aspects, however, have had copious attention.

The armistice agreements arrived at in 1949 between Israel and its Arab neighbors did little but extend the temporal period for the escalation of events. Diplomacy aimed at introducing a more stable region politically has captured the imagination of many statesmen although creative efforts have not always had commensurate results. A real effort at terminating the inter-state conflict, sans the "Palestinian Question," began with the Camp David Accords in September 1978 and the Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty in March 1979. Out of this effort, the Egyptian component in the conflict was removed from immediate view. Jordan has been the most tractable country to move toward settlement after Egypt, while Syria has been the most resistant to the necessity of political compromise — at least until the recent Persian Gulf War. Thus the two works under review here present a logical couple for substantive comparison.

Modern Palestine, as a British-created geopolitical entity is a symbiosis of Israel and Jordan. Banally expressed, as Britain brought Palestine in — albeit as a Mandate — so it took it out in 1922 when it was propitious to do so. Creating a Trans-Jordan from a Palestine never endeared the Zionists to the Palestinians or to Jordan's King 'Abdullah (there was never a discernable Moabite population) and the multiple and complex relationship was always conducted *sub rosa*. Garfinkle, the Coordinator of Political Studies at the Foreign Policy Research Center in Philadelphia, does a nice job of bringing together the purely historical relational pattern between the pre-state Zionist organization and the Hashemite family. There is an historical leap taken to the period immediately prior to the 1967 Arab-Israeli conflict. Jordan at this time found itself in a precarious position when its military was placed under control of an Egyptian military officer and here Garfinkle spends precious too little space between the conflict and the Civil War of 1970. Admittedly, Garfinkle says in the Preface that he did not try "fully to exhaust the high diplomacy of this period" since the purpose was "to shed light on the role or functional contacts in the diplomacy of the period." (p. xiii) The tenuous relationship between Israel, Jordan and the Palestinians is brought up through the *Intifada* and the Jordanian auto-absolution from the Palestinian claim to self-determination. The 1967 Arab-

Israeli conflict, the author charitably accounts, "was somewhat of an accident" (p. 51) in which Jordan became enmeshed without its fully intentional support; neither contention, however, is substantiated by Garfinkle convincingly. The conclusion, nevertheless, is a pleasant one: the pragmatism of Jordanian-Israeli relations will continue, to a large extent because of the role and presence of the large Palestinian population in Jordan which serves as a constant reminder of why the country is what it is. The book certainly is a contribution to the otherwise dark relationship and the paucity of materials in English describing it.

Until recently, Syria was the most virulent political and even military opponent to Israel's existence. Within the past few years, however, Syrian diplomacy has recognized the potential for achieving its immediate national goal vis-à-vis the Israelis, i.e., retrieval of territorial sovereignty over the Golan Heights, or a relatively low cost, i.e. better treatment of the Syrian Jewish population. The change in its orientation can be easily explained by the apparently new perception of the Arab States toward Israel that it is *de facto in situ* with or without American support and the Bush administration's rush into harm's way to aid Kuwait.

Professors Drysdale and Hinnebusch are certainly knowledgeable about Syrian political dynamics, having specialized in its study for some time. Their book is a byproduct of the prestigious Council on Foreign Relations which organized a study group in turn to hold a seminar and to conduct actual field work in Syria, especially on the role of Syria in the overall Middle East peace process. There is a clear recognition at the start "that there can be no comprehensive, lasting, or stable Middle East peace without a Syrian-Israeli peace." (p. 1)

The centralized Syrian regime under Ba'th domination and the control exerted by the country's leader, Hafez al-Assad, demands any serious study of the country begin at this point, which is exactly what the authors do. Syria, additionally, must be understood as a distinctive contributor to the development of Arab nationalism with a unique claim to Pan-Arab idealism. This ideology is then combined with the ultimate national interest of Syria which is deterred to no small degree by Israel, hence the need for Syria to reach an accord. Careful attention is paid to the composition of the Assad government and its aims and ambitions within the region. Here the authors outline the direction of Syrian foreign policy followed by a discussion of the intricacies of its relationship to Israel. From a micro analysis, the authors proceed, logically, with an examination within the context of the world's superpowers, concluding with options for US foreign policy.

The US must, despite reservations exhibited, remain in a leadership position in the peace process. In this role, the authors continue, the US must address, in some fashion, continued "Israeli occupation of Arab lands." (p. 209) The general boundaries the authors outline are a comprehensive peace settlement based upon the land for peace principle. At a lower level of abstraction, in order to gain Syrian confidence in the utility of the process, it should be involved as fully as reasonably possible. Other measures introduced are tempting but less supportable: continuous involvement of the CIS; if possible decouple the demand for an independent

Palestinian Arab state from Palestinian Arab participation, thus bringing the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation into discussions with Israel to insure the process remains dynamic. But by all means do not disengage from the overall process in the face of procedural distractions.

This is an impressive array of logical composition, persuasive perception, and cogent ideas.

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Cooley, John K. *Payback: America's Long War in the Middle East*. Washington, DC: Brassey's (US), 1991.

Payback is an examination of US foreign policy towards the Middle East in the aftermath of the Iranian revolution. The central focus of this work is the US confrontation with radical Islamic forces in Iran, the Gulf, and Lebanon. While most of the work involves Iran and Lebanon, the final chapters deal with the US confrontation with Iraq. As such the book is a useful contribution to the analysis of US foreign policy and renders the exceptionally valuable service of putting the Desert Storm crisis into a well-reasoned historical context.

One of *Payback's* most useful aspects is its detailed presentation of what Cooley calls the "secret war" between Iran and the United States. If the full scope of this conflict is "secret," this is only because groups identified in the Western press as "pro-Iranian" or "Iranian-inspired" would be better characterized as Iranian controlled. Cooley is not the first author to make this point, but he may have done the most professional job of documenting it. The destruction of the US embassy in Beirut, the murder of 241 marines, and the kidnapping of US nationals in Lebanon occurred at Teheran's orders. Other spectacular acts of terrorism that were planned by the Iranians failed by narrow margins. At least one US hostage abducted in Lebanon was imprisoned in Teheran while others were interrogated by Iranian Revolutionary Guards in Lebanon.

Cooley also does a good job of documenting and explaining the naval clashes between Iran and the United States in the Gulf, including the repeated sinkings of Iranian speedboats by US warships ensuring their own protection. He has also analyzed Iranian efforts to overthrow pro-Western Arab regimes in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere. Any problems understanding the US tilt toward Iraq prior to Desert Storm can be at least partially explained by examining the US confrontation with Khomeinism.

In making his presentation, Cooley draws on his long experience in the region and also quite frequently cited US intelligence sources. As a former