CHAPTER V

U.S. - ARAB LEAGUE DIMENSIONS
In 1982, when the Reagan plan was announced, the Jordanian option was given a serious consideration by the US government. The Lebanese crisis preceding the announcement of the Reagan plan clearly demonstrated that lasting peace in West Asia, could not be achieved without solving the Palestinian problem. "Since neither the US nor Israel was in favour of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank, the Reagan plan envisaged self government by the Palestinians in West Bank and Gaza in association with Jordan".  

The Israeli government rejected the plan. It called for a total freeze on Israeli settlements. The initial Arab response was not discouraging, as it became evident from the deliberations of the Arab leaders at Fez. Following the Fez summit, the negotiations took place between Yasser Arafat, the PLO Chairman and King Hussein to evolve a joint response to the Reagan plan. Weakened by his ouster from Lebanon, Arafat seemed to be more receptive to the idea, and an agreement with King Hussein appeared to be within reach, when the PLO leader backed out because of opposition from the hardliners within his own organization supported by Syria. By April 1983, the momentum generated by the Reagan plan was out of stream, with the breakdown of Hussein-Arafat negotiations. And the Jordanian option strategy was followed by the Seventeenth PNC in Amman where the Arab Summit met in November 1984.

Jordanian option strategy

The intifada and the strategy adopted by the PLO forced the Israelis to confront the Palestinian's collectivity directly. The cherished illusion of the "Jordanian option" and the perception of the conflict as an Israeli-Arab inter-state dispute had to be abandoned.

Despite of these obstacles, Palestinian leaders had managed to make policy. It took ten months of preparatory meetings during 1984 (in three different Arab capitals) for the PLO to decide to hold the Seventeenth PNC of Amman in November 1984. "The Amman Summit (PNC) was the most decisive expression of the PLO's intention to try the abortive "Jordanian option". This strategy of focussing on Jordan and the occupied territories did not achieve its main objective, which was on the diplomatic level". ²

The PNC was not the only policymaking forum of PLO (Palestine) and was often not the most important. Although its approval was essential for major changes, such as the shift to bistate solution in 1974 or in favour of the Jordanian option in 1984, or the historic declaration of independence in 1988.

The Jordanian option and the holding of the (17th PNC) Amman Summit, where the televised proceedings could be seen in the occupied territories, were in large measure devised to

make up for this absence although it was questionable whether they achieved much in this regard.

The Arab Summit in Amman 1984

The results of holding the Seventeenth PNC Amman Summit in Amman were the same. The PLO failed to achieve US recognition or to become an equal party to the Middle East settlement process as was hoped when the Jordanian option was first proposed. Inspite of intense opposition within Fateh when the idea was first raised in early 1982 and again in April 1983 when it provoked a major split in the movement, the core Fateh leadership was single-minded in pursuing this course to its unsuccessful end. It was deferred neither by the threat of a split, which took place in mid-1983, nor by Syrian opposition.3

The (17th PNC) Arab Amman Summit was thereafter held without these groups, primarily because it was felt that a large majority of Palestinians, notably those under occupation and in Jordan, were in favour. "The failure of this PNC and the Hussein-Arafat accord of 1983 to achieve US recognition doomed the Jordanian option, which in any case was torpedoed by Hussein's abrogation of the accord in 1986 of US-Israeli rejection of this approach".4

In 1985, after preliminary contacts with Jordan, Peres

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3 Ibid., pp. 77-78.
4 Ibid., p.78.
announced an Israeli peace initiative at the UN General Assembly. His proposal included a call for an International Peace Conference and a willingness to meet with Palestinian representatives. Reaction to the Peres initiative, which was in one sense the Israeli response to the short lived Hussein-Arafat accord of February 1985, highlighted the centrality of the Palestinian question. Israel's repeated refusal to negotiate with the PLO on the one hand and the PLO's rejection of the Jordanian demand to acknowledge UN resolutions 242 and 338 on the other hand. Further underlined that the issues of mutual recognition had become a serious obstacle to progress. In this respect the Palestinian issue came to loom larger, not only on the domestic and international fronts but also as a determinant of the government's policy on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Consequently, on the international front Shamir nurtured the new contacts established when he was foreign minister while consistently refusing to take any step to advance the peace process. The differences between Peres and Shamir came ahead in spring 1987 following the London meeting between Peres and Hussein. Peres's subsequent attempt to gain government approval for an international conference as laid out in the London agreements was stonewalled by the Likud, whose leaders insisted on the resurrection of the Camp David
framework.⁵

Global disinterest, Arab neglect (as evident in the resolutions of the Arab Summit held in Amman in spring 1987), PLO inaction, and the weight of the Israeli occupation combined to fuel the Palestinian uprising of late 1987. The intifada constituted a fundamental challenge to the status quo. It compelled Israelis to reassess an entire series of questions that had been ignored or repressed for well over a decade.

The Hussein-Arafat understanding, though focusing attention on issues of mutual recognition, nevertheless allowed Israel to proceed with independent steps on the West Bank. The emergence of Syria, Israel's main military antagonist, at the centre of major disagreements in the Arab world further reduced the urgency for drastic policy changes.⁶

The uprising eliminated the maintenance of the status quo as a viable policy, and Hussein's disengagement from the West Bank not only foreclosed the Jordanian-Palestinian confederal option in the near future but also paved the way for the declaration of Palestinian statehood on November 15, 1988. The special session of the United Nations General Assembly in


Geneva in December was the deterioration in Israel's international position. Yasser Arafat's renunciation of terror and his reiteration of the PLO's acceptance of UN resolutions 242 and 338 prompted the opening of the US-Palestinian dialogue which indicated the first major shift in US policy on the conflict in over a decade. And the new character of Soviet-US relations suggested the likelihood of greater superpower coordination in the region.

As a result, by the end of the first year of the intifada, very little actual progress was registered either in the management of the conflict or in the resumption of the peace process. The Jordanian options were impossible and annexation was undesirable. This left autonomy, a Palestinian state, or some combination of the two as the most obvious choices, without eliminating the possibility of examining other alternatives, such as unilateral withdrawal from Gaza or as "Jordan is Palestine" option. The diplomatic initiative by Palestine was the Hussein-Arafat accord. This intensified contacts between Fateh officials and the Jordanian government. Arafat held talks with King Hussein and Crown Prince Hassan on 3 January 1985, and a meeting of the Jordanian-Palestinian steadfastness committee took place on 14 January 1985.

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8 Aaron David Miller, "Palestinians and the intifada: One year later", *Current History*, Ibid., p.73.
Jordan-PLO Agreement 1985

It was announced on 11 February 1985 that agreement on a joint peace initiative had been reached between Arafat and King Hussein at talks in Amman. The initiative would be based on the principle of "territory in exchange for peace and on the establishment of a confederal relationship between an autonomous Palestinian entity and Jordan". 9

Reacting to the 11 February announcement, Shimon Peres, the Prime Minister of Israel, confirmed his willingness to have "talks without preconditions" with King Hussein. He however, warned that there was no possibility of his entering into talks with Palestine.

The PLO executive committee, in approving the terms of the accord (they received full Arab support) in February, stressed the joint position stemmed from a rejection of Camp David, the Reagan plan and Resolution 242. It should be pointed out here that Resolution 242 had traditionally been an anathema that referred only to the Palestinian refugee problem, implicitly excluding consideration of a Palestinian state and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. 10 However, according to King Hussein, Arafat subsequently accepted Resolution 242 as the basis of future peace negotiations. Arafat, however, made no public


declaration of acceptance. 11

In an apparent effort to resolve conflicting interpretations of the agreement, the Jordanian government published the full text of the accord (Appendix 4).

At a press conference, a Jordanian spokesman said that the text called for "the achievement of a just and peaceful settlement of the Middle East crisis" based on total "Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967" as provided for in UN Security Council resolution confirmed that the PLO had accepted Resolution 242. Though the text of the accord gave land in exchange for peace, a central tenet of that Resolution, as its first principle. Though arguments regarding the precise meaning of the agreement persisted, it was a major attempt by the PLO to recognize Resolution 242 and Israel's right to exist. Syria, Libya and the rebel PLO factions predictably rejected the Amman agreement, one of the reasons being Palestine's implicit acceptance of Resolution 242. 12

The reaction of the Reagan Administration was also equally predictable. In an interview with the New York Times on 2 March, Arafat criticized the US government's shameful response in refusing to recognize the (Jordanian-Palestine) Hussein-Arafat agreement. 13 The US did not find the

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12 Ibid.

recognition of Resolution 242 as adequate. In a statement before the sub-committee on Europe and the Middle East of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Richard W. Murphy, said on 4 April 1985:

Jordan and PLO have reached agreements on a joint approach that... could be a helpful step in the process leading towards direct negotiations between Jordan and Israel with the participation of representative Palestine.

The Jordan-PLO framework agreement could have been more specific on some issues, such as UN Security Council Resolution 242.14

In response to Washington’s indifference, Arafat said on 14 May that the PLO would publicly accept Resolution 242 if the US would endorse the Palestinian’s right of self-determination.15

Mubarak’s proposal

On 25 February, 1985 President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt stated that he had urged President Reagan to invite representatives of the Israeli government and of the proposed Jordanian-Palestinian joint negotiating team, to take part in preparatory talks in Washington on the basis of the February peace initiative. He added that he would be prepared to hold


such a meeting in Cairo. Responding to President Mubarak's proposals, Peres apparently modified his earlier position, stating that he would be prepared to hold direct talks with a joint "Jordanian-Palestinian team" on the condition that the latter did not include any representative of the PLO. On 28 February, Mubarak further suggested that the USA should first hold preparatory discussions with the Jordanian-Palestinian side, and then bring the Israelis for further talks leading to the convening of an international peace conference. The PLO rejected the proposal as it deviated from the accord with Jordan. Peres stated in March that the proposed talks should involve direct negotiations between Israel and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian team, with proviso that the latter should not include any PLO members.

The Reagan Administration held by its refusal to negotiate with Palestine (PLO) (when Mubarak finally conceded that the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation would include PLO members) unless it accepted Resolution 242 and therefore, implicitly, Israel's right to exist. When Mubarak travelled to the USA on 9 March, Reagan told him that he favoured direct negotiations between Israel and Jordan on the basis of

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18 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, vol. 31, no.12, December 1985, p.34074.
Resolution 242.\textsuperscript{19} This 'Jordanian option' would be used later by the Reagan Administration even more vigorously thereby trying to prop up Jordan as an alternative to the PLO. Furthermore, Reagan knew that bilateral talks between Israel and Jordan would preclude the role of the Soviet Union in the Middle East. In the same way Shultz said in an address before the annual policy conference of the AIPAC on 21 April 1985:

\begin{quote}
The only way to achieve a genuine, lasting peace is through direct negotiations between the Arab states and Israel. No other procedures can substitute. No further plans or preliminaries are needed.

We will support a negotiated settlement by which the Palestinian people will achieve their legitimate rights and just requirements. We will not support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.\textsuperscript{20}
\end{quote}

The Palestinian representation, however, remained central to the peace process in the Middle East when George Shultz visited the Middle East from 10-13 May, he was faced with this problem. The US Administration was reported at this time to be willing to accept members of the Palestine National Council (PNC) as part of the delegation, provided that they were not members of any guerrilla group.\textsuperscript{21} In fact, while in Jordan, Shultz was presented with a list of Palestinians who were not PLO members, for possible inclusion in a joint Jordanian-

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\textsuperscript{21} \textit{Keesing's Contemporary Archives}, n.18, p.34075.
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Palestinian delegation. This idea was dropped on 12 May when the Israeli government portrayed the PNC as a constituent part of the PLO. This only showed the extent of Israeli influence over American action in the Middle East. However, it should be pointed out that Shultz was denied the economic pressure, which he could have brought to bear upon Israel over the issue of Palestinian representation, when the Reagan Administration finally decided to recommend to Congress, just before Shultz left Washington that Israel received the additional $1,500 million in emergency aid which it had requested. The purpose of the whole exercise was to lend legitimacy to Jordan as the representative of the Palestinians.

The peace initiative was launched by the Jordan-PLO agreement. King Hussein went to Washington and held talks with Reagan during 29-31 May 1985. Hussein put forward a four-stage plan. Under the terms of the plan, the USA would first meet a Jordanian-non-PLO Palestinian delegation. Arafat would then be prepared to make a formal declaration of Palestine's readiness to recognize and negotiate with Israel if the USA

22 Middle East and North Africa, 1993, p.46.

publicly stated its support for Palestinian self-determination within the context of a Palestinian-Jordanian confederation, as proposed by the February accord between Arafat and Hussein. The US would then hold a second meeting with a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, including PLO representatives, at which the terms of the third and the fourth stages of the plan, an international conference under the auspices of the permanent members of the UN Security Council, leading to direct negotiations between Israel and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, would be discussed.24

"Peres criticised the conference proposal as a device to evade direct negotiations".25 In a speech to the Knesset (Israeli parliament) on 10 June, Peres called for direct negotiations with Jordan, "under conditions of equality", within the framework of a five stage time table as follows: (i) informal contacts in the USA with U.S., Egyptian and Jordanian officials and non-PLO Palestinians; (ii) the establishment of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian-Israeli Committee to prepare an agenda for a peace conference; (iii) confirmation of the support of the five permanent members of UN Security Council for direct negotiations; (iv) the nomination of authentic Palestinian representatives from the occupied territories (West Bank and Gaza) who will represent the stance of the inhabitants and who will be acceptable to

all sides; (v) three months of a peace conference which would include direct talks between Israel and a Jordanian delegation containing the Palestinian representatives as well as Jordanian officials. Peres's proposals were described by the US State Department as maintaining the momentum toward direct negotiations.

Cairo Declaration 1985

The failure of the diplomatic initiative in 1985 reinforced arguments that the US was not serious in its pursuit of negotiations. This led to a series of terrorist activities. "The outrageous murder of three Israeli civilians at Larnaca in Cyprus on September 15, 1985". Israel blamed the PLO, and a fortnight later launched a bombing attack on the organisation's office in Tunisia.

The guerrillas surrendered to the Cypriot authorities. It subsequently emerged that only two of the guerrillas were Arabs, and that the other, Mr. Ian Davison was a British citizen. The attack was condemned by the PLO, which denied any involvement in it. The Israeli government, which had refused to negotiate with the guerrillas, claimed that the operation had been mounted by members of force 17. And in retaliation, Israeli aircraft bombed the PLO headquarters at Borjcedria,


27 "Transcript of a White House Press Briefing, October 2, 1985", in US, Department of State, American Foreign Policy Current Documents, 1985, n. 23, p. 516.
South of Tunis on 1 October. \(^{28}\) (The Tunisians share concerns over the role played in the region by Libya). "Several Libyan-trained and backed Tunisians attempted to seize the central town of Gafsa and launched a general uprising against the government". \(^{29}\) "The attack was condemned by Arab League countries, the European Community and others. The US reaction, however, was that it was a legitimate response to terrorism". \(^{30}\) On 7 October, an Italian cruise ship, the Achille Lauro, was hijacked in the eastern Mediterranean by four Palestinians belonging to the Abu Abbas faction of the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF). The demand of the hijackers was the release of 50 Palestinian prisoners from Israel. They killed an elderly American Jewish passenger, Leon Klinghoffer. The action was swiftly condemned by the PLO, which persuaded the hijackers to give themselves up. They surrendered to the Egyptian authorities. President Mubarak gave them into the custody of Abu Abbas, to be tried by the PLO. The US accused Abu Abbas of planning the Achille Lauro operation and criticized Mubarak for allowing him to go free - An Egyptian Boeing 737 enroute to Tunis, with the hijackers, Abbas and another PLO official on board, was on the night of 10-11


\(^{29}\) "Transcript of a White House Press Briefing, June 17, 1985, Visit of President Habib Bourguiba to Tunisia" in US, Department of State, American Foreign Policy Current Documents, 1985, n.23, p.535.

October intercepted by four US navy F-14 fighter aircrafts and forced to land at the Signella NATO airbase at Sicily, Italy, where the Palestinians were taken into custody by the Italian authorities. The US plan to take all of them to the US for trial was thwarted by Italy who prevented the Americans from taking custody of the Palestinians. The Italians subsequently allowed Abu Abbas to leave the country.

On 7 November, in a statement which became known as the "Cairo Declaration" Arafat said that he was opposed to all forms of terrorism, and cited a declaration by the PLO in 1974 which condemned all outside operation. "He promised that any PLO member who undertook such an operation would be punished". Arafat insisted however, that armed struggle would continue in territory occupied by Israel.

Algiers-Arab Summit 1988

In continuation of the spirit expressed at the 1988 Arab Summit, the Nineteenth PNC met in Algiers from 12-15 November 1988. It was attended by all major factions: (Fateh, the PFLP, the DFLP, the ALF, the PPSF, the PLF and the PCP).

The PNC issued a declaration of independence proclaiming Palestinian sovereignty over the occupied territories, intended to fill the vacuum created by Hussein's move. It also approved a new political programme for the PLO to join settlement negotiations and to make possible dialogue with the

US. In accepting the 1947 partition resolution as a basis in international law for a Palestinian state; in not mentioning the Palestine National Convenant of 1964 or armed struggle; and in calling for a political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict; involving an independent Palestinian state and arrangements for the security and peace of all states in the region.\footnote{Quoted in Rashid Khalidi, n.2, p.79. See For text of Resolutions, \textit{Journal of Palestine Studies} (Washington, D.C.), vol. 18, no.2 Winter 1989, pp. 213-223.}

The establishment of independent state of Palestine, with its capital at Jerusalem, on the basis of the UN General Assembly Resolution (181 of 1947), it also declared its intention to set up a provisional government as soon as possible and until then, its authority would rest with the PLO Executive Committee. New York Times published the Palestinian cause:

Under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of the permanent member states of the United Nations Security Council and all the parties to the struggle in the region, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, on an equal footing, and by considering that the international conference will be held on the basis of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the assurance of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people and, self-determination in application of the principles and provisions of the United Nations concerning the right of peoples’ to self-determination and the inadmissibility of the seizing the lands of others by force or military invasion, and in accordance with the resolutions of
the UN regarding the Palestinian issue.\textsuperscript{33}

The PNC was making an effort to place the occupied Palestinian territories including Arab Jerusalem, under the supervision of the United Nations for a limited period, to protect our people, the attainment of a comprehensive peaceful solution, and the achievement of security and peace for all through mutual acceptance and satisfaction, and to enable the Palestinian state to exercise its effective authority over these territories.

It also urged the Security Council to draw up and guarantee the arrangements for security and peace among all the affected states in the region, including the Palestinian state. Further, the Summit announced its rejection of terror in all its forms, including state terror, confirming its commitment to its previous resolutions in this regard, to the resolution of the Arab Summit in 1988, UN resolutions 42/159 of 1988, and to what appeared in the Cairo declaration issued on November 7, 1985 in this regard only.\textsuperscript{34}

The newly declared Palestinian state received immediate recognition from all the Arab states (except Syria), the non-aligned movement, the Arab League, (the Organization of African Unity, Organisation of Islamic Conference, the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries as well as


\textsuperscript{34} New York Times, 17 November 1988.
the General Assembly) and the People's Republic of China.

Israel announced the declaration and immediately launched a diplomatic campaign against the new state. The US said that the PLO statements were "an advance" but were "too vague". It considered that the PLO had still not met three longstanding conditions allowing its participation in Middle East peace negotiations.\textsuperscript{35}

While the rest of the world (except Israel) including the western European allies of the US hailed the PLO's clarification of its policies and its constructive peace initiative, the United States downplayed to the point of dismissal, the majority of Palestinian proposals and rejected out of hand, the possibility of an independent Palestinian state.\textsuperscript{36} Further, "the possibly implied or indirect reference to Israel's right to exist is not sufficient. Recognition must be clear and unambiguous. And the statement on terrorism is a restatement of previous positions".\textsuperscript{37}

In response to all these developments, the U.S. State Department on 26 November 1988 refused to grant an entry visa to Arafat so that he could address the UN General Assembly in New York. Arafat, had addressed the UN once before, in 1974:

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.


U.S. Government has convincing evidence that PLO elements engaged in terrorism against Americans and others. Mr. Arafat, as Chairman of the PLO, knows of Condones and lends support to such acts, he, therefore, is an accessory to such terrorism.

Arafat continued with his diplomatic initiatives in a joint declaration with American Jews in Stockholm and Geneva on 7 December 1988, Arafat maintained, while explaining the PNC declaration, that the PNC established the independent state of Palestine and accepted the existence of Israel as a state in the region. However, the US reaction was, as usual, negative. Shultz said flatly, they haven’t met these (American) conditions, therefore there is no basis for opening a dialogue with the PLO. In his address to the UN General Assembly in Geneva on 13 December 1988, Arafat presented a three-point peace initiative calling for (i) an international conference under UN auspices, (ii) an UN peacekeeping force to supervise Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories; (iii) a comprehensive settlement based on UN Resolutions 242 and 338. He also declared that he condemned terrorism in all its forms.

Shamir dismissed the speech as a monumental act of


deception. The US State Department said that the PLO continued to be ambiguous on the key issues which must clearly be addressed in order for the United States to enter a substantive dialogue with the PLO. Then on 14 December after Arafat's Press Conference, Shultz announced that the US would enter into substantive dialogue with the PLO.

The intifada and King Hussein's renunciation of claims on West Bank played a major role in the US announcement. Further, Gorbachev's increasing role in the Middle East forced the Reagan Administration to give a veneer of evenhandedness in its policy towards the Middle East. However, as Secretary Shultz said on 14 December:

> Nothing may be taken to imply an acceptance or recognition by the US of an independent Palestinian State. The status of the West Bank and Gaza cannot be determined by unilateral acts of either side but only through a process of negotiations. The US does not recognise the declaration of an independent Palestinian state. It is important to emphasize that the US commitment to the Security of Israel remains unflinching.\(^{41}\)

After the announcement of the US initiative, Washington upped the ante increased its state in its demands of the PLO. Originally, the PLO had been required to renounce all forms of terrorism, however, on 18 December, Michael Armacost, under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, said the United States expected Arafat not only to speak against terrorism but also to "expel from the PLO" anyone involved in

terrorist acts and to distance the organization from any elements close to the PLO linked to terrorism. "We are not talking simply about condemning. We are talking about dissociation and expulsion", he said in an interview. 42

In the same way, Murphy said in another interview "we will expect the PLO leadership to dissociate itself, to discipline up and including expelling those (involved in terrorism) from the organization". 43

For a time, a more serious attempt at sophistication seemed to be in the offing: a redefinition of the Palestinian problem. New Israeli plans in early 1989 called for free political elections in the occupied territories, army withdrawal from populated areas, and self-rule. 

To acknowledge, however, that Palestine was the homeland of the entire Palestinian people, almost five million strong, was insupportable. Such was the irony of history. It was the Zionist claim to Palestine as the homeland of the entire Jewish people and demands for unlimited Jewish immigration that incensed the Palestinians more than political demands for a "Jewish national home". 44

U.S. recognition is very far from being a Palestinian

42 "Under Secretary Armacost’s interview on Face the Nations", Ibid., p.54.

43 "Assistant Secretary Murphy’s interview on this week with David Brinkley", Ibid., p.56.

Balfour Declaration; that after raising all the flags on all the Palestinian embassies around the world, they will find that Israel holds the higher cards in the game of nations and that a Palestinian state will not be achieved by the "justice of the nations".

By the end of 1986 the national unity government had set in motion a flurry of international and regional activity. The issue of foreign policy and the peace process from immediate questions of security and the administration of the territories. Nevertheless, in the process the equivocal nature of the Israeli position became more apparent. Although a modus vivendi had been achieved with Lebanon and Jordan, relations with Egypt deteriorated following the killing of seven Israeli tourists at Ras Bourka in October 1985. The September 1986 agreement to refer the outstanding dispute over Taba to international arbitration and the return of the Egyptian Ambassador (withdrawn during the Lebanon war) to Tel Aviv only partially alleviated the strains in Israeli-Egyptian interactions.45

The most recent sign of Mr. Arafat’s associations with terrorism was the presence at the Algiers session of the Palestine National Council of "Abu Abbas, a member of the Executive Committee of the PLO who has been convicted by the Italian judicial system of the murder of an American citizen, 

45 Shimon Peres, "Israeli views of Egypt and the peace process", in Quandt, The Middle East: Ten Years After Camp David, n.5, pp. 187-216.
Mr. Leon Klinghoffer".  

Moreover, as informal dialogue with the Arab League and particularly with the Palestinians (including members of the PLO) increased in quantity and frequency, the Knesset outlawed discussions with members of Palestinian liberation groups.

The U.S. opened the dialogue to use it as a bargaining chip. There was no change in US policy as it did not recognize the Palestinian state. Nor did it pressurize Israel into recognizing the PLO. That the dialogue was undertaken to give the appearance of change of policy of the United States could be gauged from its restricted agenda, i.e. terrorism.

46 "US Determination on Arafat's Visa Application", in US, Department of State, American Foreign Policy Current Documents 1988, n.37, p.397.