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In March, Public Forum Debaters will discuss the topic Resolved: The United States should no longer pressure Israel to work toward a two-state solution. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the most divisive issues in modern global politics. The personal nature of this issue to many in our community and around the world necessitates caution and sensitivity during debates. It’s important to make distinctions between the objective facts and opinions as facets of contention but both are relevant points for discussion. It’s also crucial to acknowledge that many debaters and judges already have established opinions on this resolution; some may think or advocate that the status quo or alternative solutions are the best way forward. I urge all our readers, no matter your opinion on this conflict, to challenge your own beliefs. The best way to avoid succumbing to bias is to explore every different perspective.

The key this month is establishing a clear comparative between the world of the pro and the con, but not just based on the quality of the proposed solution. The phrasing of the topic doesn’t limit you to only exploring the reasons that a two-state solution would be beneficial or detrimental. Instead, you can drive your debates to discuss the political philosophy of the United States in the context of the larger global community. Expound on the broader concepts of interventionism and soft power to determine whether the U.S. should pressure foreign nations to handle issues based on American interpretations. You can also discuss the decision-making process of our leaders to determine if public opinion should play a role in how the U.S. interacts with other countries on issues of foreign policy. Remember, we don’t just debate to win rounds, we debate to learn more about the world. This brief is full of arguments that will help you leap head first into researching this exceptionally deep topic.

Michael Norton
Editor-in-Chief
Public Forum Briefs
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**March 2017**

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Champion Briefs
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Public Forum Brief

Topic Analyses
Resolved: The United States should no longer pressure Israel to work toward a two-state solution.

Introduction

The March Public Forum Debate topic takes on one of America’s most important foreign policy issues. In my view, the resolution approaches the United States’ relationship with the conflict as a question of policy rather than forcing debaters to pick a side of the conflict. Indeed, it is possible to make “pro-Israel” or “pro-Palestine” (though I think this is probably a false dichotomy) arguments on either side. By framing it as a question of whether “The United States should” no longer support a two-state solution, the resolution asks debaters to consider what policy choice the United States should make, not necessarily what is purely best for Israelis or Palestinians. Having a solid grasp of the conflict’s history is incredibly important; virtually all of the current issues surrounding the conflict come from a specific moment or set of events in the conflict’s history, and the battles of a half-century ago hold an incredibly important place in today’s discussion. Thus, I will first review the conflict’s history and the history of United States involvement in the conflict before moving into a discussion of potential strategies and arguments on the resolution.

Historical Context of the Conflict and U.S. Involvement

What is now known as “The Israel-Palestine conflict” can trace its origins to the late 1800s. During that time, the Ottoman Empire loosely governed the area now called Israel/Palestine. Importantly, Ottomans relied heavily on local officials and nobles to govern areas; therefore, Arabs who lived in the area at the time viewed this area as a home and held
significant political power in the region. Beginning in the late 1800s, European Jews began to settle in modern-day Israel in response to increased discrimination against Jews in Europe. In 1917, Sir Arthur James Balfour, Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, penned a letter promising a “national home” for the Jewish People in Palestine. The British held control over Palestine between World War I and World War II, which allowed them to facilitate the immigration of more European Jews to Palestine. As a result, conflict between Arabs and Jews escalated, turning violent in the 1930s and 1940s. The question of a national home for the Jewish people became an international matter as a result of the Holocaust and the end of the British Mandate for Palestine; subsequently, the United Nations proposed a partition plan for the region to allow for both a Palestinian and Israeli state. Conflict between Arabs and Zionists culminated in 1948 when Arabs rejected the U.N. Partition plan for Palestine and went to war with Zionist settlers. This war led to the establishment of the State of Israel and set up the framework for the partition of the area into Israel and the Palestinian Territories, as well as leaving a large number of Arabs who had lived in Palestine as refugees.

Between 1948 and 1967, Arab countries largely did not respect Israel’s right to exist. Jordan, to the East, controlled the West Bank, and Egypt, to the Southwest, controlled the Gaza strip. ¹ This continued tension led to the 1967 “Six-Day” war in which Israel fought successfully against Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq. After this conflict, Israel’s occupation of the West Bank and Gaza strip began. The 1967 War formed the backdrop of the modern-day shape of the conflict as Israel gained control of the Sinai Peninsula, West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Golan Heights (you’re going to want to get familiar with the map for this topic).² Peace treaties with

Jordan and Egypt resolved issues of control over the Sinai Peninsula (it is now part of Egypt, which does not do a great job maintaining stability there). The West Bank and Gaza remained under Israeli control but maintained a level of autonomous self-government under the Palestinian Authority. The latter became officially recognized as an authority in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the Oslo Accords, an agreement between the United States, Israel and the Palestinians in 1993 that was supposed to provide a ‘framework for peace’ culminating in a two-state solution.³

Despite this framework, a few key issues persist as barriers to peace. After the 1948 War, a green line was drawn between Israel and the Palestinian territories delineating the modern territories of the West Bank and Gaza; however, since then, Israel has built a number of settlements beyond the Palestinian side of the green line in the West Bank. Former Secretary of State John Kerry insisted that the negotiations for peace start with the understanding that the Green Line function as framework for peace. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has continued to authorize the construction of settlements despite the Green Line’s importance to the peace process. Additionally, Palestinians have hesitated to recognize Israel as a Jewish state and have also expressed a desire for any solution to involve a large number of Palestinian refugees to have a right to return; Israel has objected to the latter on security grounds. Security continues to pose a large barrier to success in these negotiations, as Israel is concerned about attacks from Hamas, a terrorist organization that also has political and social services wings, from Gaza and wants to maintain a troop presence in a potential Palestinian State.⁴ The following map should help orient you to where things are in the region; more Israeli settlements have been built since 2007, when this map was made.

The United States involvement in the conflict began in earnest during and after the 1967 War. The two countries had always had an amicable relationship; the United States was the first to give “de-facto recognition” of the Jewish state in 1947 after the Palestinians rejected the United Nations partition plan. In the Cold War context, the United States was concerned with governments like those in Syria and Egypt, which exhibited socialist leanings and were generally not willing to align with the West in the Cold War. The volatility and leftism of the Arab world naturally led the United States to gravitate towards Israel, the only stable democracy in the Middle East at the time. The United States’ relationship with Israel has always been shaped by a sense of shared democratic and societal values as well as shared visions for regional security.

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In 1973, Richard Nixon provided military equipment to Israel, and at Camp David in 1979, Jimmy Carter presided over the signing of a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel. Throughout the 1990s, the Clinton administration hosted numerous peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians, the most important of which being the 1994 agreement on Palestinian self-government. The Bush and Obama administrations continued to push for peace between the Palestinians and the Israelis, and the goal throughout the 1990s to today has been the achievement of a two-state solution.\(^7\) The United States also gives significant amounts of military aid to Israel. The relationship between the U.S. and Israel has always been considered “special,” though the recent U.S. abstention from a U.N. resolution condemning Israeli settlements and former Secretary of State John Kerry’s pressure on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have increased tensions between the two countries. Some argue that the U.S. relationship with Israel is at an all-time low. While it likely will not be necessary to be able to regurgitate this history at the snap of a finger, the information is important for a few reasons: first, the pre-1967 green line is still viewed as important in peace discussions; second, many claims to territory on both sides are justified with ideas of historical “rights”; and third, the United States’ friendship with Israel and support for a two-state solution have been longstanding. All of this forms an important backdrop to the topic.

**Strategic Options**

Where does this leave us for the March topic? Simply put, moving away from supporting a two-state solution would mark a massive pivot in U.S. policy towards Israel and the Israel/Palestine conflict. However, the resolution does not pose a clear-cut alternative to the two-

state solution. As with most resolutions, the con has few options besides defending the status quo. If the pro must argue that the United States should no longer support a two-state solution, the con must argue that supporting the two-state solution (the status quo) is a good idea or is, at least, better than any of the alternatives. The pro can argue a few different things. In my mind, pro teams must argue that it is bad for the United States to continue to support a two-state solution. But the pro can also argue that the United States should not continue to support a two-state solution because supporting a two-state solution prevents the United States from a) completely disengaging from the conflict; b) supporting a one-state solution in which Israel controls the entirety of the territory; and/or c) supporting a bi-national, one-state solution in which Palestinians and Israelis govern together in one state that represents both the Jewish nation of Israel and the Palestinian nation. While on the surface, this may look like the pro has far more argumentative possibilities, these possibilities do come with a high burden of solvency. The remainder of this topic analysis will walk through the possibilities for pro and con advocacies.

**Affirmative Arguments**

The affirmative must argue that United States support for the two-state solution is harmful. While that sounds fairly simple, there are a few ways to do this. For framework, Pro teams can argue that we should prioritize either Palestinian interests, Israeli interests, or United States interests. Given that the topic poses a question of what the United States “should” do, the best strategy here is to argue that the judge should vote for the side that best supports U.S. foreign policy interests. More to the point, teams must prove that the U.S. should/should not support a two-state solution, not just that a two-state solution is good or bad. The easiest way to do this, therefore, is to make arguments that either support U.S. interests or fulfill some moral
objective that the U.S. could conceivably support. From this point, the pro can argue a) that Israeli interests are synonymous with United States interests and therefore there is no functional difference between U.S. interests and Israeli interests in terms of evaluating arguments; b) supporting democracy, peace, and human rights are the main priorities of U.S. Foreign policy and therefore that the judge should vote for the team that best upholds these values; or c) that the U.S. should do what is best for its own foreign policy, irrespective of Israel, Palestine, or ethical concerns.

The United States interest for Israel/Palestine is, at its core, to achieve peace in the region. There are a number of ways to argue that the two-state solution does not do this. By supporting a two-state solution as a matter of policy, the United States does not support other pathways to peace. A strong affirmative strategy first suggests that United States support for a two-state solution is actively bad; affirming the resolution therefore solves this problem. There are a number of problems with a two-state solution that are worth looking into: it is not very feasible given the barriers mentioned earlier in this topic analysis, which are posed by both sides. Some argue a two-state solution is unfair to Palestinians because the pre-1967 Green Line, commonly seen as the starting point for negotiations, was established by an Israeli victory in war.

More interesting, though, are the alternatives to a two-state solution. Discussing these alternatives, which are inherently not on the table if the U.S. has already chosen the two-state solution, offers numerous strategic arguments for the pro. First, the pro can argue that the United States should not be involved in the conflict at all. Some suggest that U.S. support for Israel, and involvement in the Middle East in general, motivates anti-American sentiment in the region, which breeds terror. As a result, it is possible to argue that United States involvement in the
conflict is unequivocally bad, and since withdrawing support for a two-state solution allows the United States to remove itself from the conflict entirely, there is an option for U.S. foreign policy opened up. A potential weakness here might be that the resolution does not address the billions of dollars in military aid the United States gives to Israel each year; thus, it is unlikely that affirming leads to a United States withdrawal from the region. Furthermore, there is little to suggest that the United States would reduce its involvement if it withdrew support for a two-state solution. However, it is still possible to argue that affirming represents a reduction in involvement.

Much of the research on alternatives to a two-state solution centers on a one-state, binational solution. While its details can be a bit murky, a one-state solution would have one democratic government representing two nations, Israel and Palestine. Culturally, this solution would ensure that the state represents Israel, the Jewish nation, and Palestine. Given the numerous conflicts over territory I have mentioned, a solution that effectively throws territorial concerns out the window in favor of a territorial and political state that represents both nationalities may have more solvency on the major barriers to peace (territory, security, and the preservation of the Jewish state) than a two-state solution. As Uri Davis writes, a binational solution “reconcil[es] both the rights of the Palestinian Arab people for national self-determination and their rights as the indigenous people of the country.”

To effectively argue for bi-nationalism on the pro, debaters would need to prove that a) U.S. support for a two-state solution precludes the pursuit of a bi-national solution and b) that preclusion is impactful because a bi-national solution is better. It might also be worth proving the feasibility of U.S. support for

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a bi-national solution. The pro can flat the end of U.S. support for the two-state solution as it is in the text of the resolution; fiatting a replacement policy requires some proof that the United States has the goals of peace, is open to the replacement policy, and will remain involved in the conflict after its support for the two-state solution concludes.

If debaters can prove that supporting Israel is something that the United States should do, it is possible to argue that the United States support of a two-state solution does not benefit Israeli interests (and, as a result, is not a policy that the United States should pursue). Given recent statements and actions by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, including the support and authorization of new settlements in the West Bank, there is some doubt that the Israel actually desires a two-state solution. In the eyes of some Israelis, the two-state solution therefore may not be in their interests. The result of withdrawing support for a two-state solution and not continuing to pursue peace may be the eventual annexation of the West Bank and Gaza by Israel. Debaters using this argument ought to bear that in mind.

**Negative Arguments**

On the level of framing, the resolution poses likely a very similar question to the negative: What is the best choice for United States policy? The negative thus must prove that it is a good idea for the U.S. in particular to support a two-state solution. As was the case for the pro, negative cases could argue either that the U.S. should act to preserve its foreign policy interests or for some reason should act in a specific moral way. As I said, the word “should” implies some sort of functionalist lens; therefore, teams should probably have in the back of their minds that the United States should do something.

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minds that all arguments should pass the litmus test “Is this proving that the United States should do this?”

Once again, it is easy to operate from the assumption that, because of the long-standing relationship and level of security cooperation between the United States and Israel, the United States should do what is in Israel’s best interests. Despite the fact that many in the current Israeli government do not support a two-state solution, debaters can argue that a two-state solution is in Israel’s best interests. Demographic shifts in the population suggest that by a certain point, the majority of the population in Israel/Palestine may become non-Jewish due to the high Palestinian birth rate. Thus, a two-state solution is necessary to preserve Israel’s character as both a Jewish and democratic state.

On the other hand, debaters can argue that the United States’ function is the conflict is not simply to preserve Israeli interests. Rather, the argument goes, the United States ought to pursue solutions that satisfy both sides and ensure a lasting peace in the region. The lack of a Palestinian state motivates much of the violence against Israel, and concerns about security largely drive Israeli military actions in Gaza and the West Bank. While settlements and control over Jerusalem pose formidable barriers to a two-state solution, if resolved amicably with two states, violence would likely decrease significantly. While the two-state solution’s solvency offers many argumentative possibilities on the pro, given that it is the best-researched and most commonly discussed solution, it probably has the advantage in terms of feasibility of implementation. After all, the framework is in place, and Israelis and Palestinians have come incredibly close to a solution in the past.

Conclusion

While a contentious issue, the March topic offers an opportunity to discuss one of the most important questions in American foreign policy. It is easy to grow pessimistic when reading about Israel and Palestine—the conflict has continued for so long that finding feasible solutions grows more challenging by the day. My main advice to you, then, is to use this topic as an opportunity to think innovatively. The resolution is broad enough to invite a full discussion of the conflict and peace process. Take advantage of that, and have the conversation. Read from sources you do not normally look at, and think twice before you cast away what seems like an obscure argument. Stalemates require obscure, creative solutions. Have fun!

Good Luck!

Martin Page

About Martin Page

Martin Page teaches history and coaches speech and debate at the Delbarton School in Morristown, NJ. He graduated from Princeton University in 2016 with a degree in History, where he studied extensively the history of the Middle East and immigration from the Middle East to the United States. As an undergraduate, his research focused on the intellectual history of the Zionist left, the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria, and the Arab-American community in New Jersey and around the United States. As a debate coach, he has guided students to champion Bronx, Yale, George Mason, NCFL Nationals, the Bronx Round Robin, and New Jersey States in addition to placing in the top six at Harvard, the Tournament of Champions, and NSDA Nationals. As a student, Martin was a Congressional Debater at Milton Academy in Massachusetts.
Resolved: The United States should no longer pressure Israel to work toward a two-state solution.

While this may seem like any other topic to many debaters, for others this may be the single most controversial and personal resolution ever chosen. The Israel-Palestinian conflict is one of the most divisive issues in American politics, and I encourage all debaters to be cautious when approaching this topic and the multitude of potential biased opinions/sources and wide variety of sensitive issues within it. In researching and strategizing for this topic, I strongly advise you to challenge your own biases as well as those of the authors you read; in the era of alternative facts, it’s easy to succumb to misinformation. Overall, this month’s topic should be a great chance for you as debaters to embrace a broad topic that covers one of the most pressing issues of modern international relations.

Israel was created in 1948 as a Jewish state, designed to be a refuge for the many Jewish people who were uprooted by World War II and the Holocaust. The establishment of Israel was controversial from the very beginning as world leaders were unsure where a new state could feasibly be created. Eventually, Israel’s current location was chosen to the immediate south of Lebanon and the immediate north of Egypt. While this location was less controversial than others among Western leaders, it was extremely unpopular among the local population in Palestine. Inevitably, the native Palestinians grew more and more unhappy with the presence of settlers on what they considered to be holy ground. Though many peace deals were agreed to over the past sixty-eight years, none of them have stuck. Israel has continued to settle new lands that Palestinian leaders consider to be theirs. In response, some Palestinians, predominantly those
who affiliate with the terrorist group Hamas have attacked Israel and its citizens. Neither side in this dispute is completely innocent. Blood has been shed on both sides of the border, and citizens of both Israeli and Palestinian descent are longing for a resolution. Unfortunately, an end does not seem likely in the immediate future.

Today, the debate largely revolves around ending the conflict that has endured for decades. Some advocates believe that Israel and Palestine are functionally one state. Others argue that citizens of Palestine deserve the right to determine their own future outside of Israel’s influence. The United States has been an unwavering ally of the Israeli government, providing military assistance and aid in large sums for many years. The U.S. has very close ties to Israel, the strongest democracy in the Middle East, not only because it’s an extremely strategic alliance, but also because many of its citizens have ties to Israel. The U.S. has historically defended Israel, though the Obama administration’s recent decision to abstain in a U.N vote to condemn Israel’s new settlements has created a sizable rift between the two nations. The Trump administration, on the other hand, has made it clear that the U.S. will stand by Israel, at least for the near future.

When debating this resolution, it’s important to consider the burdens upon the Affirmative. The resolution specifies that the U.S. should no longer pressure Israel to work toward a two-state solution, but it does not specify what it should do instead. As such, the affirmative has a wide array of alternatives that it can defend in place of pressuring Israel to accept this specific policy. The affirmative doesn’t have to argue that Israel is in the wrong, but rather that pushing Israel in this direction is the wrong way to end the conflict. Obviously, since you’re a PF debater, you know that you can’t run a plan on the Affirmative, but you are allowed to argue that pursuing a two-state solution interferes with other policies that would be more
effective for all involved. Conversely, the negative isn’t required to defend the status quo. The negative’s burden is simply to demonstrate that the U.S. shouldn’t stop pressuring Israel, not that the U.S.’s current attempts to pressure Israel are ideal. So long as the negative can demonstrate (1) that attempts to pressure Israel can work and (2) that there is a path to peace, it is not necessary for them to prove that these efforts are working now.

On the affirmative, there are a variety of different strategies for debaters to consider. Primarily, most argumentation will surround the central question of ending the conflict, but there are a number of other impacts to evaluate as well. First, Palestinians argue that without a two-state solution, they’re likely to be steamrolled by Israeli interests. Given the fiery religious dispute that underlies this conflict, it’s extremely unlikely that many of these discrepancies can be addressed internally. Second, it’s quite possible that pushing for a two-state solution only drags out the conflict. Israel and Palestine have been debating a two-state solution for decades with little to no progress, meaning that the violence and hatred continues. If Israel were to acknowledge that pursuing a two-state solution is fruitless, it would likely move toward a policy that could be more effective at ending the conflict. Furthermore, there are also U.S. interests to be considered. The U.S. is one of Israel’s most devoted supporters, so when other nations choose to distance themselves, the U.S. often finds itself in uncomfortable political dilemmas. Hypothetically, the affirmative can win even if the negative proves that the conflict gets worse simply by proving that the U.S.’ involvement does more harm than good, but it’s certainly an uphill battle as the impacts upon Israeli and Palestinian citizens are far more dire than mere political capital.
Strategically, establishing an alternative to the two-state solution is one of the best Affirmative approaches. If the negative is able to claim that a two-state solution is flawed, but represents the clearest path to peace, they’re likely going to win the debate. The affirmative is in no way obligated to provide an alternative, but doing so makes the terms of the debate clearer and prevents the negative from arguing that this policy is uniquely effective. Alternatives that have been proposed include a 3-state solution, backing away from Israel and the Middle East altogether, or simply moving forward with Palestine and Israel as one state. Similarly, the affirmative is far easier to defend if the negative is boxed into a specific form of advocacy. To win, pro teams should be establishing their own ground through alternatives and comparing that proposal against the least charitable incarnation of the two-state solution. Overall, the affirmative has a broad swath of strategies to select from, the key is developing one thoroughly enough that judges can easily discern what affirming the resolution means.

On the negative, debaters have several approaches to consider. The most effective strategy is to claim that peace cannot happen without a two-state solution. Though a solution seems improbable given the current political climate, there are strong arguments to be made that unless Palestinians are given a fair tract of land to govern on their own, the conflict will continue. If the negative can win this central line of advocacy, it becomes near impossible for the affirmative to win the debate. Developing this strategy can be done with many different arguments we’ve included in this month’s brief. First, one could argue that both Israelis and Palestinians are in favor of a two-state solution, making it essentially inevitable. Second, the U.S.’ role in the region allows them to mediate between the two actors, ensuring that neither takes drastic action. Third, both Israelis and Palestinians claim territory they do not control, meaning that until a new border is drawn that allows for compromise, neither side will be happy.
Additionally, even if the affirmative believes that the U.S.’ support for a two-state solution is ineffective, it’s likely that other states would step in to fill the U.S.’ shoes in the region if the U.S. backs down. Russia or China, for instance, would benefit substantially by aligning themselves with Israel and taking that ally away from the U.S. Broadly, the negative doesn’t have the array of alternatives that the affirmative has access to, but they do have a powerful narrative that can defeat virtually any affirmative argument on its own.

Strategically, the negative can’t allow the affirmative to pick and choose its battles. The affirmative can’t simply make assumptions about what the world would look like if the U.S. weren’t pressuring Israel toward a two-state solution. The negative must force the affirmative to demonstrate a feasible alternative, not simply a preferable one. Even if an ideal policy could hypothetically end the ongoing conflict, it’s very unlikely that such a policy would be feasible. Furthermore, in order for the negative’s central narrative to be effective, they must set up the debate such that ending the conflict is the only issue that matters in the round. If the affirmative is able to claim that the U.S.’ interests are more important than the lives of Israeli and Palestinian citizens, it’ll be much harder for the negative to win. Generally, the negative’s overall strategy should revolve around building that central narrative about ending conflict as much as possible, much as was true of previous International Relations topics earlier this year.

This month’s topic is obviously controversial, but it is also a fascinating opportunity to learn more about one of the world’s most challenging international dilemmas. Much like with any other topic, the key to winning this month will be researching as much as possible in order to develop a thorough understanding of the issue as well as a deep reserve of evidence. The arguments you’ll find in our brief this month are from individuals with diverse beliefs and
opinions on this specific topic. As such, you’ll find that there are many different ways to think about and approach this topic. On such a divisive topic, you’re bound to discover that there are endless hot takes on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While researching, keep in mind that this topic in particular is full of misleading information and statistics. I urge you to think critically and challenge everything you read, not only on this topic but also in the rest of life.

Good Luck!

Michael Norton

About Michael Norton

Michael Norton is the Editor-in-Chief of Champion Briefs' Public Forum Division, shaping the resources used by thousands of Public Forum students across the country. He competed for Falmouth High School in Maine for three years, graduating in 2012. At Falmouth, Michael helped turn his small, un-funded club into a four-time state champion. As a competitor, Michael was Maine state champion and two-time national qualifier, reaching deep elimination rounds at nationals both years. He also won the Sunvitational, the Blake Invitational, the Manchester Essex Invitational, the Harvard Round Robin, and the Harvard Invitational. Additionally, Michael competed in Parliamentary Debate while studying politics and philosophy at Brandeis. During his college debate career, Michael has won seven American Parliamentary Debate tournaments, chaired the Novice-Mentor committee, and semi-finaled at the APDA National Championship.
Resolved: The United States should no longer pressure Israel to work toward a two-state solution.

Introduction

The last few topics have uncharacteristically all been centered on international relations, and March is no exception. Also, unusually, the March topic is particularly politically controversial and is likely to intercede a large amount of identity and historical cleavages of which debaters should be aware for the purposes of having a constructive round and in order to avoid alienating judges or competitors. This is a particularly sensitive topic for a lot of people with valid arguments to be made on either side, and debates should be respectful of those differences and aim to be constructive instead of belligerent. Having a politically charged topic is not an excuse for upsetting an opponent or saying something offensive, rather it should be a chance for a debater to rise to the occasion.

The debate over the Israel-Palestine conflict is long and multifaceted. This tension manifests itself in contemporary policy nowhere more than the question of the two-state solution. For the purposes of this topic analysis, I suggest reading a book or doing research about the historical aspects of the conflict and how the modern lines of state sovereignty have been drawn. The debate involves grappling with the historical context of the region, international relations theory, and the details of the current situation. It is also important to be informed about American politics in regards to Israel, as this most assuredly colors the social and political backdrop of the topic. Because the issues in question are covered in depth by other, easily accessible sources and because the issues themselves are too complex for articulation within an eight page analysis, I am going to stay away from looking at the desert claims over land issued by Israel and Palestine.
and issues regarding human rights. I feel like any job I do to go into the internal components of the conflict, human rights abuses, terrorism, histories of trauma and conflict would be excessively simplistic and unfair, so I am going to attempt to stick to the IR implications of the topic.

**Strategy Considerations**

When generating a round-worthy strategy for the March topic, it is important to consider the effects of the U.S. pushing for a two-state solution on the actual formation of such a solution, and what the U.S.’s interests are in the region. In this manner, we can examine the effects that affirming or negating has on building a solution, what implications such a solution might have, and what the broader political consequences for the middle east, terrorism, and security writ large might be.

One point of debate is likely to be whether or not U.S. pressure is effective or counterproductive in actually making Israel adopt a two-state solution. These arguments can be used on either side. An affirmative team could conceivably run ‘The U.S. is effective at pushing Israel’ and ‘A two state solution is good’, OR ‘The U.S. is counterproductive at pushing Israel’ and ‘A two state solution is bad’. Either way, it seems intuitively important for teams to familiarize themselves with the warrants surrounding international pressures’ effects on Israel’s on policy making. What action the U.S. pressure will have on reaching the two-state solution, for many cases, is likely a prerequisite to accessing other impacts. These impacts are not strictly limited to the effects of the two-state solution, but also encompass broader questions of U.S. Israeli relations. Israel is arguably one of the U.S.’s best allies in the Middle East, and changes to the diplomatic status quo might have policy implications for how our relationship continues to evolve.
Why might U.S. pressure be important in reaching a two-state solution? This side is probably the more intuitive of the two. The U.S., as one of Israel’s biggest allies and constant patron of military aid and support, is likely in a good position to direct Israeli politics. Signaling disapproval with the status quo, or threatening to leverage military aid might make Israel more willing to find a two-state solution. The U.S. currently gives Billions of dollars in military aid to Israel, and also assists in technology sharing and other security functions. A team could make the case that this special and unique relationship gives the U.S. a certain degree of power in terms of influencing Israeli politics.

US support or pressure is also probably important in spearheading an international effort to pressure Israel into a two-state solution. This means doing things such as vetoing UN resolutions, organizing conferences, and other forms of diplomatic action. A term that is often aligned with this school of thought is *naming and shaming*, which is the idea that powerful actors can set the international agenda by taking a public stance against certain policies. Doing so creates a spotlight where journalists, government officials, and activists concentrate on the issues that are being shamed and work towards a solution. In places that do not have public attention, bad policies often continue and go unchanged, because the international community has created a climate of permissibility.

On the other hand, why might U.S. pressure be counterproductive in getting Israel to adopt a two-state solution? There is a strong case to be made that U.S. pressure isolates Israel and creates backlash from more conservative, less compromise ready elements within the administration. For instance, after the most recent UN vote to condemn settlements, which made headlines for being the first time the U.S. did not veto such a measure, Israel responded by doubling down on settlements and diplomatically isolating itself from nations that voted for the
measure. It is also true that despite international two-state formula, we will have a whopping 75 per cent of Israelis. Since the UN resolution, Israel has only increased the amount of settlements under construction and signaled to several nations involved in the resolution that their votes would result in diplomatic consequences.

It might also be argued that U.S. pressures to force Israel into a two-state solution have simply been ineffective. A combination of a lack of political will and history of failure in solving the issue have made U.S. efforts halfhearted and unlikely to succeed. While the United States tries to push for a two-state solution, it can also be argued that many of the policies being pursued such as aggressive military aid make the solution harder to achieve. This is important: stopping an ineffective policy frees up diplomatic resources and opens up space on the U.S. agenda to pursue other alternative solutions, or work on more day-to-day, salient measures of peace that might have more real effects of helping people who are involved in the Israel-Palestine conflict.

It is then important to consider what is valuable about the U.S.-Israel relationship and understand why the U.S. has historically committed an incredible amount of time and energy in securing and bankrolling Israel. The alliance between the two nations is unique and deep. Israel receives billions of dollars in military aid a year, as well as rights to buy U.S. military technology from missile systems to fighter planes. In return, the U.S. sees a number of benefits from the arrangement. First, Israel researches and improves upon military technology. The arrow and iron dome are two examples of different anti projectile systems that Israel has developed in part using U.S. technology that the U.S. stands to benefit from. Second, Israel shares military assets, including airpower and intelligence. Israel is an important ally in the war on terror because of their ability to gather regional data and has, in the past, launched strikes against nuclear
programs in Iraq and Syria which have been arguably important in the U.S.-led nonproliferation regime. The U.S. sees continued good relations with Israel as a means to continuing this mutually beneficial cooperation. Third, the U.S. has seen support for Israel as a means to support democracy abroad. While the effect and validity of support being tied to democracy promotion is questionable and hotly debated, it is important to understand that historically assistance to Israel has been seen as a way to support a democratic ally.

These questions are also important because they define our relationship with nations in the Middle East and beyond and the diplomatic objectives at stake within those relationships. This is important in understanding the broader implications of policymaking in Israel, because the conflict has ramifications for many nations in the Middle East and beyond including but not limited to Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and France. This can be important for policy that is external to the Israel efforts, Israel has not responded favorably to calls for a two-state solution.

**Affirmative Argumentation**

There are a number of possible angles to consider when generating an affirmative strategy. In order to come up with a strong understanding of the topic, a team might exhaustively consider how a two state solution impacts U.S-Israel relations and why such an impact would be significant.

One line of argumentation might be that U.S. pressures for a two-state solution undermine cooperation with Israel. The logic is fairly straightforward. Considering the political climate following the UN resolution, taking a strong stance on the two-state solution seems to be counterproductive. The two state solution faces intense opposition in Israel, with a substantial majority of citizens coming out against the options on the table. Israel has made no effort to work
with the international community and threatened nations that voted for the proposal. This is because a two-state solution is deeply unpopular in Israel, and current deals on the table seem to be prohibitive to both sides.

This has several possible effects. First, it may undermine the peace process. Efforts that diplomatically isolate Israel prevent the creation of either an inclusive one state solution, a three-state solution that brokers power with other Middle Eastern nations, or in the long run the creation of a viable two state solution. Second, it may radicalize Israel. An Israel that feels more and more alone internationally is liable to shift further to the right, as the current center-right coalition is displaced by members of the hardline right. This is because as international cooperation seems less inclusive to Israel’s interests, working with the international community becomes less attractive. This could mean less chance for peace as time goes on, as well as more punitive policies towards Palestinians. Lastly, it could mean a diminishment of the military technology and intelligence sharing that Israel has provided the U.S. in the past. This could be significant, because regional allies are important in resolving international conflict, like in Syria for instance, or coordinating how to best fight the war on terror.

A strategic stance to take as the affirmative may be to frame good U.S. Israeli relations as a prerequisite to whatever impacts the negative is linking in to. This should be compatible with most negative strategies. If a neg team impacts to a stable two state solution, for instance, it is easy to argue that a good U.S. Israel relationship is important for upholding any power sharing agreement that materializes in the future. If the negative is about promoting good policy in the Middle East, it is similarly simple to say that having social capital to leverage over Israel is necessary to do that. Smart affirmative teams will spend time to sit down and think of how their
impacts will interact with those on the other side and map out how to preempt them or otherwise use them to their advantage.

**Negative Argumentation**

There are some interesting arguments for negative teams to consider as well. Broadly speaking, it is important for teams to have a strong grasp of the diplomatic impacts of not being strongly in favor of a two-state solution.

If the United States withdraws pressure on Israel to find a two-state solution, it leaves a broad international coalition that firmly believes in the creation of a Palestinian state. The question then becomes what might this signaling effect have to the international community. For instance, such a withdrawal implies a reversal of U.S. support for Palestinian rights and a rift between the United States and the nations that support a free Palestine. Most significantly, these include many Middle Eastern nations such as Jordan, Lebanon, and Egypt, which are all important geostrategic allies.

Similar to the weighing analysis done for the affirmative, negative teams should think about how these decisions might impact our relationships. If withdrawing support means that we create problems with Middle Eastern states, it may mean that we lose the soft power to engage in multilateral agreements in the future. For starters, any lasting regional peace requires cooperation with our Middle Eastern allies. If Israel crafts a solution that displeases all the other regional powers, those powers will almost certainly act to undermine that solution or prevent it from reaching fruition. Second, having cooperation is important for other parts of the U.S. agenda such as waging the war on terror, working out a solution to the refugee crisis, or promoting democracy abroad. If undermining a two-state solution means undermining the U.S.’s position as
a cooperative partner in the region, it could mean a broader isolation of America from its strategic interests abroad.

These arguments are only the beginning of a long and multifaceted debate about Israel and Palestine. That being said understanding the international relations implications of an action is a prerequisite to engaging in debate about it.

Good Luck!

Jakob Urda

About Jakob Urda

Jakob Urda attended and competed for Stuyvesant High School. As a senior, Jakob captained the Stuyvesant High School debate team. Jakob has championed the NCFL Grand National Championship, GMU, Blake, Columbia, Ridge, Malcolm A. Bump memorial, and Scarsdale tournaments. He has also co-championed the Crestian Round Robin, was awarded first speaker at the Crestian, Scarsdale, Golden Desert, and Columbia tournaments, as well as second speaker at Bronx. Jakob has been ranked 1st in the nation by debaterankings.com and debatehelper.com, and accrued 12 bids to the Tournament of Champions his senior year. Jakob is attending the University of Chicago and is majoring in Political Science.
Resolved: The United States should no longer pressure Israel to work toward a two-state solution.

Foreword: We, at Champion Briefs, feel that having deep knowledge about a topic is just as valuable as formulating the right arguments. Having general background knowledge about the topic area helps debaters form more coherent arguments from their breadth of knowledge. As such, we have compiled general information on the key concepts and general areas that we feel will best suit you for in- and out-of-round use. Any strong strategy or argument must be built from a strong foundation of information; we hope that you will utilize this section to help build that foundation.

Introduction

In order to understand the nuances behind the two-state solution debate, it’s important not only to focus on the history of the region and the interwoven nature of the conflict, but also to look at the basis for the many disagreements.

Scham of the Jewish Virtual Library\textsuperscript{11} explains the traditional perspectives of Jews and Arabs who lay claim to the land known today as Israel.

“a) The legitimacy of the Zionist enterprise of returning Jews to Eretz Yisrael is based on Jewish descent from the ancient Israelites. The Jewish people has inherited their right to the land, religiously, legally, and historically. Jews have always looked and prayed toward Zion (Jerusalem), never relinquished their relationship to the land, and have always maintained a presence since ancient times, despite expulsions. Jews were treated as foreigners and persecuted wherever they were during their long Exile.

a) Judaism is a religion of revelation, like Christianity, and has no inherent tie to a particular land. Jews are not a nation but rather a community of believers. In any case, any Israelite presence was a short period in the long history of Palestine. Ultimately, religious myths, without presence and possession, are incapable of creating an ownership right. Palestinians are in fact, descendants of all previous inhabitants, including Israelites. Those Jews living in Palestine and the Muslim world before 1882 were well treated by Muslim neighbors and rulers.

b) Zionism was an authentic response to the persecution of Jews over millennia around the world. Jews did not come as colonizers, but rather as pioneers and redeemers of the land, and did not intend to disrupt the lives of the current inhabitants of the Land of Israel. All land for Jewish settlement was legally bought and paid for, often at inflated prices.

b) Zionism was an European colonialist enterprise like many in the late 19th century and was a European

ideology superimposed on the Middle East. Moreover, it is an ideology of expansion directed towards robbing Arabs of their ancestral land. Arabs were systematically expelled by Zionist settlers from the beginning.

c) The Arabs of Palestine were not a national group and never had been. They were largely undifferentiated from the inhabitants of much of Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. They had no authentic tie to the Land of Israel. Many only came for economic opportunity after the Zionist movement began to make the land fruitful and the economy thrive. In all the years of Arab and Muslim control from the 7th century, Palestine was never a separate state and Jerusalem was never a capital.

c) The ancestors of today’s Palestinians (Canaanites, Jebusites, and others mentioned in the Bible) were there before the Israelites, as shown by both biblical and archaeological evidence. Palestinians have lived continuously in the land since then. Certainly by the 1920s and likely much earlier, there was a Palestinian identity and nationality that differed fundamentally from other Levantine Arab peoples.”

At the core of this debate is a question of who can claim what with regards to the country of Israel today. To better get an idea of how Israel came to be, it’s key to look to it’s history.

The BBC in 2017 does a good job of documenting the history of Israel’s relations with one of it’s earliest alliances with the British.

“1917- Britain seizes Palestine from Ottomans. Gives support to "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine through the Balfour Declaration, along with an insistence that "nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities". 1920 - San Remo Allied Powers conference grants Palestine to Britain as a mandate, to prepare it for self-rule. European Jewish migration, which increased in the 19th century, continues. 1922 - Britain separates Transjordan from Mandate Palestine, forbids Jewish settlement in former. 1939 - British government White Paper seeks to limit Jewish migration to Palestine to 10,000 per year, excepting emergencies. 1940s - Nazi Holocaust of the Jews in Europe prompts efforts at mass migration to Palestine. Jewish armed groups in pursuit of independent Jewish state fight British authorities. 1947 - United Nations recommends partition of Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, with international control over Jerusalem and its environs. 1948 - Israel declares independence as British mandate ends. Admitted to United Nations. 1948-1949 - First Arab-Israeli war. Armistice agreements leave Israel with more territory than envisaged under the Partition Plan, including western Jerusalem. Jordan annexes West Bank and eastern Jerusalem, Egypt occupies Gaza. Around 750,000 Palestinian Arabs either flee or are expelled out of their total population of about 1,200,000. 1949-1960s - Up to a million Jewish refugees and immigrants from Muslim-majority countries, plus 250,000 Holocaust survivors, settle in Israel.

1967 June - After months of tension, including border skirmishes, Egypt's expulsion of the UN buffer force from Sinai and its closure of the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping, Israel launches a pre-emptive attack on Egypt, and Jordan and Syria join the war. The war lasts six days and leaves Israel in control of east Jerusalem, all of West Bank, Gaza, Golan Heights and Sinai. Jewish settlements are set up in all of these areas in coming years, with government approval.”

Highlighted are especially important notes that help explain why the situation in Israel has gotten to the point that it has.

Beauchamp of Vox in 201513 explains the most important factor in the transformation of the Jewish state. “A secular Austrian-Jewish journalist, Theodor Herzl, was the first to turn rumblings of Jewish nationalism into an international movement around 1896. Herzl witnessed brutal European anti-Semitism firsthand, and became convinced the Jewish people could never survive outside of a country of their own. He wrote essays and organized meetings that spurred mass Jewish emigration from Europe to what's now Israel/Palestine. Before Herzl, about 20,000 Jews lived in Israel/Palestine; by the time Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany, the number was about eight times that.”

A combination of factors, from the rise of Zionism in response to the horrors of the Holocaust to the Balfour Declaration gave way to the modern state of Israel. Across the pond, the US was developing its own relationship with the new state.

Reuters in 201014 provides a decent timeline of US-Israeli relations.

“1948 - President Harry Truman becomes the first world leader to recognize the newly-born Israel.
1956 - Furious at Israel's capture of the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip from Egypt in a campaign with France and Britain, President Dwight Eisenhower threatens to suspend vital U.S. financial aid to Israel unless it withdraws.
1967 - The United States stands behind Israel in the Six-Day War with surrounding Arab states, but relations are clouded by Israel's attack in international waters on the Liberty, a U.S. spy ship. Thirty-four American seamen are killed and 174 wounded.
1973 - President Richard Nixon rushes to Israel's aid with an airlift of military hardware after Egypt and Syria, which lost territory in the 1967 conflict, launch the Yom Kippur war.
1975 - The U.S. administration of President Gerald Ford threatens to reappraise U.S. ties with Israel unless it signs a "disengagement" treaty with Egypt to pull back from the Sinai peninsula, captured in 1967.
1979 - President Jimmy Carter hosts signing of peace treaty between Israel and Egypt, concluded in talks at Camp David.
1981 - U.S. condemns Israel's bombing of Iraq's nuclear reactor at Osirak.

1982 - In a telephone call to Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, President Ronald Reagan expresses what a spokesman calls "outrage" over Israeli bombing raids in Beirut during a war in Lebanon, and pressures him into a ceasefire.

1990 - Secretary of State James Baker says U.S. growing weary of Israeli foot-dragging over peace negotiations with the Palestinians and recites White House telephone number, urging both sides "to call us when you are serious about peace".

1991 - President George Bush Sr. pressures Israel to stay out of first Gulf War, concerned that an Israeli attack on Iraq would cause a U.S.-led coalition to disintegrate.

1993 - President Bill Clinton hosts, on the White House lawn, a handshake between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat at the signing of a Declaration of Principles on interim Palestinian self-government.

1994 - Clinton witnesses the signing of a peace treaty between Israel and Jordan.

1995 - Clinton wins Israeli hearts in tearful eulogy at funeral of assassinated Rabin, saying in Hebrew "shalom haver", or "goodbye friend".

1998 - Clinton hosts summit between Arafat and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at Wye River, Maryland. Netanyahu agrees to hand over more occupied land to Palestinian control, including part of the West Bank city of Hebron.


2003 - President George W. Bush announces "road map" peace plan, three years after start of Palestinian uprising, setting an outline for end to violence and return to statehood talks.

2003 - Bush sides with Israel in attempting to sideline Arafat, saying Palestinians are being "betrayed by leaders who cling to power by feeding old hatreds and destroying the good work of others".

2004 - Bush writes in letter to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon that "existing major Israeli population centers" -- an indirect reference to Jewish settlement enclaves in the West Bank -- make it "unrealistic" to expect Israel to return to armistice lines drawn in 1949."

The issue of Israeli settlements in the West Bank has grown especially large in the last few years.

Myre of NPR in 2016 clarifies, “The term "settlements" may conjure up images of small encampments or temporary housing, and many have started that way. But they now include large subdivisions, even sizable cities, with manicured lawns and streets filled with middle-class villas often set on arid hilltops. Israel is constantly building new homes and offers financial incentives for Israelis to live in the West Bank. When the Israelis and Palestinians first began peace talks after a 1993 interim agreement, the West Bank settlers numbered a little over 100,000. Today they total around 400,000 and live in about 130 separate settlements (this doesn't include East Jerusalem, which we'll address in a moment). They have grown under every Israeli government over the past half-century despite consistent international opposition. Hard-line leaders like Netanyahu have actively supported them. Moderates and liberals have also allowed settlements to expand, though usually at a slower rate. The settler movement is a powerful political force, and any prime minister who takes it on risks the collapse of his government.”

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Growth of settlements and outposts in the West Bank

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2000 | 2010 | 2016

SOURCE: Americans for Peace Now

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Myre continues. “Settlements complicate efforts for a two-state solution. Critics of settlements say they've intentionally been established in every corner of the West Bank, giving the Israeli military a reason to be present throughout the territory and making it impossible to create a viable Palestinian state. The settlement locations and the roads that connect them make Palestinian movement difficult. The settlements are just one of many obstacles to a peace deal. Drawing boundaries, the status of Jerusalem, the fate of Palestinian refugees, and myriad security questions — including terrorism — are equally challenging, if not more so. And as the settlements grow, it will be increasingly difficult to remove a large number of them, a tactic known as "creating facts on the ground."

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Fisher of The New York Times in 2016\textsuperscript{19} elaborates on the additional obstacles to the peace process. “There are four issues that have proved most challenging. Each comes down to a set of bedrock demands between the two sides that, in execution, often appear to be mutually exclusive.

1. **Borders:** There is no consensus about precisely where to draw the line. Generally, most believe the border would follow the lines before the Arab-Israeli war of 1967, but with Israel keeping some of the land where it has built settlements and in exchange providing other land to the Palestinians to **compensate.** Israel has constructed barriers along and within the West Bank that many analysts worry create a de facto border, and it has built settlements in the West Bank that will make it difficult to establish that land as part of an independent Palestine. As time goes on, settlements grow, theoretically making any future Palestinian state smaller and possibly breaking it up into noncontiguous pieces.

2. **Jerusalem:** Both sides claim Jerusalem as their capital and consider it a center of religious worship and cultural heritage. The two-state solution typically calls for dividing it into an Israeli West and a Palestinian East, but it is not easy to draw the line — Jewish, Muslim and Christian **holy sites are on top of one another.** Israel has declared Jerusalem its “undivided capital,” effectively annexing its eastern half, and has built up construction that entrenches Israeli control of the city.

3. **Refugees:** Large numbers of Palestinians fled or were expelled from their homes in what is now Israel, primarily during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war that came after Israel’s creation. They and their descendants now number five million and believe they deserve the right to return. This is a **nonstarter for Israel:** Too many returnees would end Jews’ demographic majority and therefore Israel’s status as both a Jewish and a democratic state.

4. **Security:** For Palestinians, security means an end to foreign military occupation. For Israelis, this means avoiding a takeover of the West Bank by a group like Hamas that would threaten Israelis (as happened in Gaza after Israel’s 2005 withdrawal). It also means keeping Israel defensible against foreign armies, which often means requiring a continued Israeli military presence in parts of the West Bank.

With all of this in mind, it’s also important to note that this subject is incredibly polarizing. Focusing on the empirics and facts may be the safest bet in appealing to most judges. The history and analysis of the issues presented represent just some of the basic ideas behind the proposed two-state solution. If an Israeli state and an Arab state are to co-exist peacefully side by side, some of these points need to be addressed.

Works Cited

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Champion Briefs
March 2017
Public Forum Brief
Frameworks
Affirmative Framework 1

We observe that the stability of any solution is a prerequisite to that solution producing good impacts for any of the parties involved. This is because if a situation is unstable and conflict breaks out, the solution may collapse.

Habbib Sama of Columbia writes that “. However, given the discontinuous nature of the territory under the current proposal for the state of Palestine, a two-state solution is doomed to fail”

In order for our opponents to access the benefits of a solution, they must show that that solution is stable in the long run. However, stability alone is necessary but insufficient for the negative to generate impacts, because a stable two state solution must also produce good outcomes for those involved. Therefor if the affirmative can prove that a two-state solution is bad for the parties involved, or is not stable, then they should win the round.

• **Explanation:**
  - This framework sets up an asymmetric burden structure that puts the negative at a disadvantage. While the affirmative only has to show that either a two-state solution is unstable, or that it produces bad outcomes, the negative has to prove a two-state solution does both.
  - This framework lets pro teams organize their speeches in the last two rounds. Speeches can be framed as ‘First, why a two-state solution would fail’, and ‘Second, why a two-state solution would produce bad outcomes’

• **Answer:**
  - A two-state solution IS stable. The easiest way to fight this framework is to bite into it, because a substantial body of literature exists to show why a solution would be workable.
  - The status quo is unstable. If the impact of a two-state solution not working is instability, the pro needs to distinguish that from the status quo where the occupation seems to be failure.
Affirmative Framework 2

We observe that the US ought to act in its national best interest, which means prioritizing the interests of its citizens.

Steven Heyman of the Duke Law Review writes:

“More broadly, proponents argued that the national government had inherent authority to protect its citizens. "Allegiance and protection are reciprocal rights," asserted Senator Trumbull: How is it that every person born in these United States owes allegiance to the Government? Everything that he is or has, his property and his life, may be taken by the Government of the United States in its defense or to maintain the honor of the nation; and can it be that... the people of our day have struggled through a [civil] war, with all its sacrifices and all its desolation, to maintain it, and at last... we have got a Government which is all-powerful to command the obedience of the citizen, but has no power to afford him protection?305 "American citizenship," Trumbull concluded, "would be little worth if it did not carry protection with it."' The nation must have authority to protect fundamental rights.”

Citizenship is a contract between an individual and the state that establishes the state’s role in protecting the individual in exchange for goods and services. Because citizen welfare is the foremost national concern whichever side best shows that the American Citizen’s fundamental life and liberty are maximized should win this round.

• **Explanation:**
  o This framework is likely to be fairly common on the topic, and narrows the scope of the debate to US interests. This still means that an affirmative team needs to define and defend their conception of US interests, and how they are better served in a pro world.

  o This allows affirmative teams to run cases that they already know link into the best interests of American citizens, while negative teams may be unprepared and not have relevant impacts.

• **Answer:**
  o Negative teams can either link into this framework by showing that their benefits are compatible with US interests, or respond by saying that the US has obligations outside those to its citizens. For the former, the two-state solution can help America through increasing regional stability and alliances, and for the latter the US routinely acts to uphold international commitments and treaties other than what would simply pay out to our citizens the most.
Affirmative Framework 3

We observe that a strong Israel is in the United States best interests

Israel is by far the strongest partner that the US has in the middle east. Israel has assisted in intelligence, counterterrorism, and nuclear nonproliferation. Israeli technology and business are consistently a boon to the US economy and defense sector, and Israeli has proven a valuable diplomatically for supporting US causes in the UN and abroad. Therefore whatever team strengthens and preserves the US Israeli relationship ought to win the round.

Many pro impacts will to varying degrees be related to strengthening Israel, a valuable ally in the region. It may be strategic for teams impacting to Israeli strength to come out and do the weighing at the top, to better frame and contextualize the debate.

- **Explanation:**
  - The point of this framework is to set up a weighing mechanism that excludes negative arguments. By starting with the weighing, affirmative teams can group their opponent’s arguments as less critical to US interests, forcing the negative to engage in an uphill battle

- **Answer:**
  - First, the two-state solution in the long run will be good for US Israeli relations. This is because the two-state solution will bring stability to the region, accommodate Israeli interests, and put an end to the diplomatic pressure Israel has faced.
  - Second, the two-state solution will produce better allies for the US in the long run, because it will deal with a major concern that other middle eastern powers have in regards to the US
Negative Framework 1

We observe that you should prefer impacts that help those who are the most disadvantaged. This is for a few reasons. First, because those who are disadvantaged have a higher marginal utility from the gains of a settlement. That means that if you are more disadvantaged, a solution that gives you resources gives you disproportionately more welfare than if those goods had been given to someone who was less disadvantaged.

Second, because those who are disadvantaged often have their fundamental human rights abridged, which is a far greater harm than simply not having preferences accommodated.

Therefore, it is insufficient for either team to show ‘net gains’ in their world. Teams must instead show both that their world is good, but also that those who live in their world are those who need the help the most.

- **Explanation:**
  - This framework is fairly straightforward: We ought to care about those that need it the most. This puts the affirmative on the defensive as they either have to find a way to link in, or come up with a reason to not prefer the disadvantaged

- **Answers:**
  - First, an affirmative team can argue that they do deal with the most disadvantaged and therefore link in to the framework.
  - Second, a team could make the case that we ought to look to some different group to evaluate impacts, such as American citizens.
Negative Framework 2

We observe that the most important impact is creating long term allies in the middle east.

While Israel has always been a US ally, including amidst decades of support for a two-state solution, the same has not been true for other regional powers. The US’s relationship with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Jordan has been much more touch and go, at some times high and at some times low.

This is critical because multilateral cooperation is essential for solving problems in the middle east. Terrorism, commodities trading, and security all require reliable, committed partners. This is an impact far larger than the two-state solution itself, because it spans multiple nations and disciplines. Whoever forms reliable partners in the middle east ought to win this round.

- **Explanation:**
  - This framework centers the round around impacts that the negative is familiar with. Namely, increasing cooperation with the gulf states. This also puts the affirmative at a disadvantage if they have chosen to concentrate on Israeli specific impacts.

- **Answer:**
  - The Affirmative can try to link into this framework, or fight it. By linking in the affirmative must find ways that their advocacy also help cooperation with middle eastern powers. Alternatively, the aff could argue that Israel is the most important ally in the picture and so we should focus on impacts to that particular ally.
Negative Framework 3

We observe that we ought to value the upholding international law.

International law is the most important impact in the round because it is agreed upon and contractual. The moral school of thought, contractarianism, states that while different actors have different conceptions of what is ‘good’ or ‘just’, contracts are the only way of generating real moral obligations because they outline what the common areas of morality are between different parties, and are agreed upon. The US should always uphold its commitments and agreements abroad. While our opponents may make arguments about what different obligations may look like, always prefer obligations that take the form of laws or contracts because they are explicitly consented to and we can be one hundred percent sure what the exact obligation is.

- **Explanation:**
  - This framework limits the ground to exclude pro offense. While it takes a lot of reading and work to understand the nuances of contractarianism, if teams take that leap it will be hard for opponents to fight back.
  
  - Generate offense out of a number of international agreements that arguably necessitate a two-state solution. These range from prior settlements to the Rome Statute, and are all interesting and important to explore.

- **Answer:**
  - Pro teams can argue that the most important contract is the social contract, the agreement between a government and its people. While it may be important to follow written contracts, the fundamental agreement that gives the state its power is the one in which the government agrees to uphold the rights, liberties, and priority of its own people.
Champion Briefs
March 2017
Public Forum Brief

Pro Arguments with Con Responses
**PRO – Two-state solution only creates an illusion of progress**

**Argument:** Talks of a two-state solution only buy time for Israel to keep oppressing the Palestinians.

**Warrant:** Two-state talks only provide cover for Israel.


Those who continue to portray a two-state solution as a possibility are - inadvertently or otherwise - providing Israel with cover to continue wiping Palestine off the map, because the point of no return seems to forever be on the horizon, and as long as that is the case, Israel can avoid blame for passing the point of no return.

**Warrant:** We have already passed the point of creating a Two-state Solution.


In reality, we passed it long ago. There was national upheaval in Israel about evacuating several thousand settlers from the Gaza Strip. This renders impossible the prospect of evacuating several hundred thousand from the West Bank and East Jerusalem, even if there was the political will to do so, which there has never been. There is nothing radical about highlighting this. Netanyahu himself made clear in his last election campaign that there would be no Palestinian state under his watch - it is this pledge to his electorate that should be taken seriously, not his faux declarations to international audiences about seeking peace.
Warrant: One-state is the reality and two-states only provides an illusion of peace


There needs to be a paradigm shift in the way people view the conflict and ways to solve it. That involves acknowledging that Israel has created a one-state reality, and finding ways to make that state equitable rather than a vehicle for the apartheid system that exists today. This is actually easier than with two-states, because issues of separation - borders, settlements, East Jerusalem, resources - no longer become the insurmountable obstacles they currently are. Nevertheless, the debate over the desirability of one state for both peoples is moot given that the two-state solution is no longer feasible.
**Warrant:** The current state of illusion only justifies and covers up oppression.


Now, as then, negotiations are phony; they suppress information that Israelis, Palestinians and Americans need to find noncatastrophic paths into the future. The issue is no longer where to draw political boundaries between Jews and Arabs on a map but how equality of political rights is to be achieved. The end of the 1967 Green Line as a demarcation of potential Israeli and Palestinian sovereignty means that Israeli occupation of the West Bank will stigmatize all of Israel. For some, abandoning the two-state mirage may feel like the end of the world. But it is not. Israel may no longer exist as the Jewish and democratic vision of its Zionist founders. The Palestinian Liberation Organization stalwarts in Ramallah may not strut on the stage of a real Palestinian state. But these lost futures can make others more likely. **THE assumptions necessary to preserve the two-state slogan have blinded us to more likely scenarios. With a status but no role, what remains of the Palestinian Authority will disappear.** Israel will face the stark challenge of controlling economic and political activity and all land and water resources from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. **The stage will be set for ruthless oppression, mass mobilization, riots, brutality, terror, Jewish and Arab emigration and rising tides of international condemnation of Israel.** And faced with growing outrage, America will no longer be able to offer unconditional support for Israel. Once the illusion of a neat and palatable solution to the conflict disappears, Israeli leaders may then begin to see, as South Africa’s white leaders saw in the late 1980s, that their behavior is producing isolation, emigration and hopelessness.
Warrant: The Two-state solution only exists as a façade for all sides in the conflict to forward their own political interests, not an actual solution to the conflict.


All sides have reasons to cling to this illusion. The Palestinian Authority needs its people to believe that progress is being made toward a two-state solution so it can continue to get the economic aid and diplomatic support that subsidize the lifestyles of its leaders, the jobs of tens of thousands of soldiers, spies, police officers and civil servants, and the authority’s prominence in a Palestinian society that views it as corrupt and incompetent. Israeli governments cling to the two-state notion because it seems to reflect the sentiments of the Jewish Israeli majority and it shields the country from international opprobrium, even as it camouflages relentless efforts to expand Israel’s territory into the West Bank. American politicians need the two-state slogan to show they are working toward a diplomatic solution, to keep the pro-Israel lobby from turning against them and to disguise their humiliating inability to allow any daylight between Washington and the Israeli government. Finally, the “peace process” industry — with its legions of consultants, pundits, academics and journalists — needs a steady supply of readers, listeners and funders who are either desperately worried that this latest round of talks will lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state, or that it will not.

Analysis: The U.S. pressuring for a two-state solution is only a mechanism for the U.S. and every actor to save face and not deal with the underlying issues of the conflict. Whereby that is true the impact of the argument is the continuation of structural oppression of all involved in the conflict. This means that the Aff can weigh U.S. no longer pushing the solution as at least risk solvency on the issues at hand, instead of the perpetuation of the status quo.
A2 – Two-state solution only creates an illusion of progress

**Answer:** There is no other option

**Warrant:** Different interests of both peoples can only be met with a two-state solution.


“The Arab Peace Initiative, with its vision of a comprehensive peace and an opportunity to build a regional security framework, can also be an important forum for dialogue. I have just made my eleventh visit to Israel and Palestine. **During my trip, I reminded the leadership on both sides of the imperative of taking prompt action to restore hope in a peaceful future and to preserve the two-State solution — the only way to meet the national aspirations of both peoples.** Israel’s settlement enterprise, illegal under international law, continues to expand in the West Bank including East Jerusalem, undermining trust and constituting a significant threat to a viable Palestinian State. The continued designation of land in Area C for exclusive Israeli use; the steady expansion of settlements; the legalization of outposts; and the alarming spike in demolitions in 2016 are systematically jeopardizing the viability of a future Palestinian State and raise serious concerns about Israel’s commitment to the two-State vision.”
Warrant: there is UN backing for a two State solution.


The United Nations remains committed to supporting a negotiated, just, comprehensive and enduring two-State resolution for the people of Israel and Palestine. I personally commit to working with their leaders and the international community to advance their essential goals, until the last day of my tenure as Secretary-General of the United Nations. In this spirit, please accept my best wishes for a successful event that looks at past peace initiatives and lessons learned, current peace initiatives, and the way forward.

Warrant: There is no other hope.


The French said the conference, which has been derided by Israel, was not designed for detailed peace talks but to broadly set out the parameters of an agreement and lay out the economic incentives available for each side if they re-engaged in talks. Jean-Marc Ayrault, the French foreign minister, said “the talks process had come to a grinding halt. There is no peace possible if we do not reaffirm the the two-state solution. There is no other option.” Any solution, the communique said, would have to fully end the occupation that began in 1967 and satisfy Israel’s security needs.

Analysis: Even if the illusion of the Two-state solution is terrible, if you successfully prove that we have absolutely no other option then you are the team that access risk solvency by saying at least we try to impose a solution.
PRO – A one-state solution would improve Israel’s image

Argument: Israel’s current positions towards Palestine make them very unpopular worldwide. Letting Palestinians become a part of their government and providing them with representation would be a saving grace to their reputation, and the U.S. should push them towards this end rather than forcing a two-state solution.

Warrant: Israel’s position towards Palestine is extremely hostile


Ehud Barak, Israel's defence minister, last night delivered an unusually blunt warning to his country that a failure to make peace with the Palestinians would leave either a state with no Jewish majority or an "apartheid" regime. His stark language and the South African analogy might have been unthinkable for a senior Israeli figure only a few years ago and is a rare admission of the gravity of the deadlocked peace process. There have been no formal negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians in more than a year, but Barak was speaking at a rare joint event with the Palestinian prime minister, Salam Fayyad, as part of an annual national security conference in the Israeli city of Herzliya. The pair shook hands and both were warmly applauded. Barak, a former general and Israel's most decorated soldier, sought to appeal to Israelis on both right and left by saying a peace agreement with the Palestinians was the only way to secure Israel's future as a "Zionist, Jewish, democratic state". "As long as in this territory west of the Jordan river there is only one political entity called Israel it is going to be either non-Jewish, or non-democratic," Barak said. "If this bloc of millions of Palestinians cannot vote, that will be an apartheid state." He described Israel and the Palestinian territories as the historic "land of Israel" to which Israelis had a right.
Warrant: This negative position towards Palestine pushes the rest of the world to have extremely negative views about Israel.


With 50 percent of respondents ranking Israel negatively, Israel keeps company with North Korea, and places ahead of only Iran (55% negative) and Pakistan (51% negative). The 2012 Country Ratings Poll was conducted among 24,090 people worldwide, and asked respondents to rate whether the influence of 22 countries was “mostly positive” or “mostly negative.” Evaluations of the Jewish state, already largely unfavorable in 2011, have worsened in 2012. Out of the 22 countries polled, the majority in 17 of them view Israel negatively, while only three (the US, Nigeria and Kenya) view Israel positively. In Kenya, negative ratings of Israel fell by 10 points to 31%, while the country experienced an even larger increase in positive ratings of Israel, rising 16 points to 45%. Negative perceptions of Israel in EU countries have continue to rise, reaching 74% in Spain (up 8%), 65% in France (up 9%), while in Germany and Britain the negative views remain high but stable (69% and 68% respectively). In other Anglo countries, perceptions of Israel are worsening, including in Australia (65%), and Canada (59%). Among Muslim countries, perceptions of Israel have continued to deteriorate. Of particular concern for Israel is the country sitting on its southern neighbor, Egypt, where 85% of the population views Israel negatively, up 7% since 2011.
Impact: A one-state solution rather than a two-state solution would force Israel to give Palestinians some representation, as they would be under the jurisdiction of the Israeli government.


The first advantage would be the end of the occupation, and by extension the oppression, of the Palestinian population. If Israel has no desire to relinquish the land or grant Palestinians the independent state they desire, then the only remaining option would be to grant Palestinians citizenship and incorporate them into the political system. Palestinians are clearly aware incessant settlement activity would mean an independent state is no longer a feasible option. Any state created under the present circumstances would be nothing more than a non-contiguous, potentially unstable entity which would be dwarfed by a much more powerful and advanced neighboring Israel. Furthermore, past Israeli proposals of an independent Palestinian state would have actually meant giving up more land than what Palestinians already possessed. The prevailing argument among many Israeli leaders has been there are “no partners for peace” on the Palestinian side, and that Palestinians have rejected generous Israeli proposals in the past - namely at Camp David in 2000. However, this argument has been debunked as myth by various independent, as well as Israeli observers, who were present at the summit and concluded that Israel never attended seeking any sort of compromise, rather they were looking for Palestinian concessions.
Impact: A one-state solution Israel would be forced to provide Palestinians with democracy, by virtue of it being their best available option.


Abandoning the idea of an independent Palestinian state and demanding equal rights would place the onus of negotiating a just and final solution squarely on the shoulders of the Israeli state. A scenario which would leave the Israelis with the choices of withdrawing to the 1967 borders, committing ethnic cleansing or mass expulsion against the Palestinians, or maintaining the status quo of an apartheid-like system in the occupied territories— all options Israel is either unwilling or unable to pursue. What would benefit Palestinians most in this situation would be the demand for full democracy, even it means the end of Palestinian national aspirations; a likely predicament that has not escaped the attention of many Israelis. As former prime minister Ehud Olmert states, "More and more Palestinians are uninterested in a negotiated, two-state solution, because they want to change the essence of the conflict from an Algerian paradigm to a South African one. From a struggle against 'occupation,' in their parlance, to a struggle for one-man-one-vote. That is, of course, a much cleaner struggle, a much more popular struggle - and ultimately a much more powerful one.”

Analysis: As Israel continues to favor a solution that is hostile towards Palestinians, the world is left thinking that they are an aggressor, which will not help their international relations in the long run. The best thing for the Israelis to do in this scenario would be to push instead for a one-state solution in which Palestinians are benefitted, as it would send a message to the rest of the world that they are not the aggressors. This will allow Israel to benefit in the long run from good relations with other nations. A good way to weigh this argument would be to examine it in terms of short term versus long term benefits - in the short run Israel may benefit from its current approach towards Palestine, but in the long-run a one-state solution would benefit them more.
A2 – A one-state solution would improve Israel’s image

**Answer:** A two-state solution would be better at preventing conflict, improving Israel’s image worldwide due to the lack of conflict.

**Warrant:** Most in both regions prefer a two-state solution, meaning more would be happy if this route were taken.


Sharp disagreement persists about the contours of a resolution, including differences over borders, security arrangements, Palestinian refugees, Israeli settlements, and the status of Jerusalem. That’s why many are skeptical that Secretary of State John Kerry will succeed in his quest for a lasting agreement that brings the conflict to an end. Nevertheless, according to a December 2013 joint Israeli-Palestinian poll, 63 percent of Israelis and 53 percent of Palestinians support the idea of two separate nations, co-existing side by side. But nothing is ever easy in the Middle East, not even reconciling the results of public opinion polling. A recent survey by Zogby Research Services revealed that only about one-third of Israelis and Palestinians currently see a two-nation solution as feasible.
**Warrant:** In the past, moves towards a one-state solution, even inadvertently, have led to conflict.


“Twenty-three years ago, almost to the day, the first Oslo Accord was signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation,” the Secretary-General told the Security Council in a briefing on the situation in the Middle East. Let me be absolutely clear: settlements are illegal under international law. The occupation, stifling and oppressive, must end. “Unfortunately, we are further than ever from its goals. The two-state solution is at risk of being replaced by a one-state reality of perpetual violence and occupation,” he warned. Despite warnings by the international community and the wider region, leaders on both sides have failed to take the difficult steps needed for peace, the UN chief said. Just yesterday, militants in the Gaza Strip fired yet another rocket into Israel, and in response, Israel fired four missiles at targets in Gaza. “Such attacks, and the response they elicit, do not serve the cause of peace,” he warned.
Warrant: A two-state solution is favored by Palestinians and has a good chance of success


Obstacles to the decolonisation of the Palestinian territories are certainly real, but should not be overstated. The settlements themselves take up very little space. It is the settlement blocs which dissect Palestinian territory, seize key natural resources and render unviable an independent state on the land that remains. Palestinian negotiators have produced detailed maps showing how, with those obstacles largely removed, an exchange of land equivalent to 1.9% of the West Bank could leave 63% of Israeli colonists in situ, and the Palestinians with a contiguous, viable state (black areas to be annexed to Israel; orange areas to the future Palestinian state – Source: Palestine papers)

The offer is a generous one, given that Israel's colonisation of the territories is illegal, as confirmed by the International Court of Justice in 2004. Ten years ago, the Arab League offered Israel full recognition in exchange for its withdrawing to its legal borders and agreeing a just solution for the Palestinian refugees, a formula agreed by the Palestinian leadership but rejected by Israel. While formally opposed to such a settlement, even Hamas has indicated that it would accept it if ratified by the Palestinian people who, though despairing of their situation, continue to favour a two-state settlement. The problem is less the two-state solution than Israel's rejectionist stance, which benefits from crucial backing, or acquiescence, from its patron in Washington, as well as the EU states. Vigorous and well-targeted public pressure on Israel and its western allies is required so as to change the strategic calculus for Israel, and render it in its own interests to withdraw to its legal borders.

Analysis: If a one-state solution perpetuates conflict, the U.S. should keep pushing a two-state solution to lessen tensions in the region.
Answer: The U.S. supports Israel’s policies, and as it is the primary provider of aid to Israel they should be less concerned with how others view them.

Warrant: There has, contrary to pro arguments, been an increase in support for Israel over the years rather than a decline.


Americans have consistently shown more support for Israel than for the Palestinians over the past 15 years. However, sympathy for Israel increased in 2006 to 59%, from 52% the year before, in a Gallup poll conducted shortly after the January 2006 Palestinian elections in which Hamas -- which the U.S. government has classified as a terrorist group -- won the majority of parliamentary seats. Support for Israel has since remained at 58% or higher. All major demographic and political subgroups of Americans lean toward Israel over the Palestinians on this question. However, several characteristics are related to the extent of public support for Israel. Chief among these are religious preference and party identification. Gallup finds a 31-percentage-point difference in sympathy for Israel between Protestants (72%) and nonreligious Americans (41%), and a 26-point difference between Republicans (79%) and Democrats (53%). That contrasts with a 19-point difference between highly religious and nonreligious Americans, and an 18-point difference between older and younger Americans.
**Warrant:** Most Americans feel that Israel and Palestine should create a two-state solution, meaning we are pushing a proposal that Americans favor.


Americans are somewhat more optimistic that Israel can “coexist peacefully” with an independent Palestinian state. More Americans (50%) say that there is a way for Israel and an independent Palestinian state to coexist peacefully than say that there is not (42%). Optimism about a peaceful, two-state solution is somewhat greater today than in August 2014 (43%), shortly after the end of weeks of hostilities between Israel and Hamas. As with Mideast sympathies, there are age and partisan differences in views of prospects for a two-state solution. Six-in-ten adults younger than 30 say a way can be found for Israel and an independent Palestinian state to coexist peacefully. Among those 65 and older, just 41% say the same. **Most Democrats (61%) say it is possible for an independent Palestinian state to coexist peacefully with Israel. Just 38% of Republicans agree; most (55%) say such an outcome is not possible.**

**Analysis:** If the majority of Americans support Israel over Palestine, it should not be a problem that Israel supports a solution benefitting one particular group over another. The same is true if most Americans value a two-state solution.
Argument: The U.S. should stop forcing Israel into a two-state solution, as a one-state solution will more effectively give Palestinians fair rights and representation.

Warrant: A one-state solution is the likely option absent a two-state plan.


Indeed, Palestinian officials are reluctant to officially jettison support for a two-state solution because the idea still has the support of the international community. In recent years, the United Nations and international bodies have recognized a “state of Palestine” in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. For most Palestinians, that remains the dream. But many like Samer Abd al-Kareem Omar say they are willing to part with the dream of an independent state if it means economic prosperity, physical security and equality. In a cafe full of water-pipe smoke across from Al Birah, Omar, a 40-year-old computer teacher, said his family lost several acres of agricultural land to the construction of Israel’s West Bank barrier. Omar traverses military checkpoints daily. For him, a single “undeclared state” already exists, he said. “The two peoples live together. What is wrong with living on equal footing? This is the ideal situation,” he said. “People need to look after their future and their personal interests—national claims are not everything.”
**Warrant:** A one-state solution would force Israel to give Palestinians some representation, as they would be under the jurisdiction of the Israeli government.

<http://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1110&context=cc_e_tds_theses>.

The first advantage would be the end of the occupation, and by extension the oppression, of the Palestinian population. If Israel has no desire to relinquish the land or grant Palestinians the independent state they desire, then the only remaining option would be to grant Palestinians citizenship and incorporate them into the political system. Palestinians are clearly aware incessant settlement activity would mean an independent state is no longer a feasible option. Any state created under the present circumstances would be nothing more than a non-contiguous, potentially unstable entity which would be dwarfed by a much more powerful and advanced neighboring Israel. Furthermore, past Israeli proposals of an independent Palestinian state would have actually meant giving up more land than what Palestinians already possessed. The prevailing argument among many Israeli leaders has been there are “no partners for peace” on the Palestinian side, and that Palestinians have rejected generous Israeli proposals in the past - namely at Camp David in 2000. However, this argument has been debunked as myth by various independent, as well as Israeli observers, who were present at the summit and concluded that Israel never attended seeking any sort of compromise, rather they were looking for Palestinian concessions.
**Impact:** Israel would be forced to provide Palestinians with democracy, by virtue of it being their best available option

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Abandoning the idea of an independent Palestinian state and demanding equal rights would place the onus of negotiating a just and final solution squarely on the shoulders of the Israeli state. A scenario which would leave the Israelis with the choices of withdrawing to the 1967 borders, committing ethnic cleansing or mass expulsion against the Palestinians, or maintaining the status quo of an apartheid-like system in the occupied territories— all options Israel is either unwilling or unable to pursue. **What would benefit Palestinians most in this situation would be the demand for full democracy, even it means the end of Palestinian national aspirations; a likely predicament that has not escaped the attention of many Israelis.** As former prime minister Ehud Olmert states, "More and more Palestinians are uninterested in a negotiated, two-state solution, because they want to change the essence of the conflict from an Algerian paradigm to a South African one. **From a struggle against `occupation,' in their parlance, to a struggle for one-man-one-vote. That is, of course, a much cleaner struggle, a much more popular struggle - and ultimately a much more powerful one.**"89
Impact: A one-state solution would, under a democracy, arguably make Palestinians the majority, giving them a great deal of say under their new government.


If Abbas really wants radical change for the Palestinians’ plight, he should **dissolve the Palestinian Authority and hand control of the West Bank to Israel** — as he has repeatedly threatened to do — and then encourage Palestinians to demand annexation with all rights, protections and benefits granted to other Israelis. Given the one-state reality on the ground, removing the illusion of sovereign Arab institutions would render Israel responsible for the population it has subjugated for the last 70 years. A failure to rise to this challenge would expose it as an apartheid state. **Israel justifies its mistreatment of Palestinians by claiming that Arabs are not its responsibility**; whether they live within Israel or the occupied territories, they all ultimately belong in the unsettled West Bank and should be provided for by their own government — an attitude emphasized by Israel’s recent nationality law, which defines the country as an explicitly, perhaps exclusively Jewish state. **But in a unified Israel, Arabs would be the majority if afforded the same right to return that the Jewish diaspora has; there are 3 million registered Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. And demographic projections suggest Jews will soon be the minority even without considering the Palestinian diaspora. Accordingly, Palestinians would have much more leverage in a one-state scenario; their quest would then be for equitable power sharing and civil rights.**

Analysis: Though it’s strange to think that sacrificing sovereignty may actually provide more rights, in this case a one-state solution may be the best way to benefit the Palestinians. This argument is a bit more technical, so make sure to take the time to explain exactly why removing autonomy would give Palestinians more political sway. The weighing for this argument centers around the gained political power for Palestinians, which is more theoretical than a lives impact regarding the level of conflict. As a result, be prepared both to explain this point clearly and weigh it against lives arguments.
A2 – A one-state solution gives Palestine more representation

Answer: A two-state solution is possible.

Warrant: A two-state solution, given world wide support, is the most likely option.


The territory question is also wrapped up in other overlapping but distinct issues: whether the Palestinian territories can become an independent state and how to resolve years of violence that include the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, the partial Israeli blockade of Gaza and Palestinian violence against Israelis. The two-state solution would establish an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel — two-states for two peoples. In theory, this would win Israel security and allow it to retain a Jewish demographic majority (letting the country remain Jewish and democratic) while granting the Palestinians a state. Most governments and world bodies have set achievement of the two-state solution as official policy, including the United States, the United Nations, the Palestinian Authority and Israel. This goal has been the basis of peace talks for decades.
Warrant: A two-state solution is no less likely than a one-state solution


The case for a single, bi-national state is now reasonably familiar. Israel's illegal settlements are so entrenched that uprooting them to make way for a viable Palestinian state has become impossible. We should therefore call instead for a single, democratic state in the whole of the former British Mandate for Palestine. But the logic is incomplete. Declaring the two-state solution unrealistic does not, by itself, make self-evident the greater feasibility of one bi-national state. The latter would entail the end of Israel, and of Zionism, as we understand those terms today. Is this really a more likely scenario than the colonial infrastructure in the occupied territories being dismantled? Recent polls showing alarming levels of racism in Israeli public opinion, reflected in the new hard-right alliance between Likud and Yisrael Beitenu, suggest a polity that is not currently minded to dissolve itself under any amount of political pressure.
Warrant: A two-state solution is favored by Palestinians and has a good chance of success


Obstacles to the decolonisation of the Palestinian territories are certainly real, but should not be overstated. The settlements themselves take up very little space. It is the settlement blocs which dissect Palestinian territory, seize key natural resources and render unviable an independent state on the land that remains. Palestinian negotiators have produced detailed maps showing how, with those obstacles largely removed, an exchange of land equivalent to 1.9% of the West Bank could leave 63% of Israeli colonists in situ, and the Palestinians with a contiguous, viable state (black areas to be annexed to Israel; orange areas to the future Palestinian state – Source: Palestine papers)

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Answer: A two-state solution would provide Palestinians with complete autonomy, a far better deal than being forced to give up their lands

Warrant: A two-state solution would give Palestinians their own state, allowing them complete political freedom


The Israeli-Palestinian peace process has been stymied since the failure of the Camp David summit in 2000, followed by the onset of the second intifada. The current, off-again/on-again, process of negotiation is not very encouraging. There are serious questions whether the leadership on either side has the capacity to make the concessions required for a final-status agreement. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu by now seems to recognize the necessity of a two-state solution, as proclaimed in his Bar-Ilan speech on June 14, 2009, but it is not clear whether his conception of the future Palestinian state meets the minimum conditions of his Palestinian interlocutors — for example, on issues of Jerusalem, borders and settlements. Recall that in the 1990s, he was proposing Palestinian autonomy over enclaves in the West Bank and added: "If the Palestinians want to call it a state, let them call it a state." Today, he himself seems prepared to call it a state. But it is not clear how much closer he is to accepting the conditions required for a viable Palestinian state. Apart from his own ideological reluctance to move in that direction, the survival of his coalition depends on right-wing and religious parties, which limit his freedom of movement.

Analysis: A one-state solution may have the ability to provide Palestinians with some rights under another government, but a two-state solution provides them with complete autonomy. This is certainly preferable, and as a result the U.S. should keep pushing for it.
PRO – Pressure on Israel damages the American-Israeli alliance

**Argument:** U.S. pressure on Israel for a two-state solution puts tension on the Israeli-American relationship. This is especially damaging because Israel is our longest standing ally in the Middle East.

**Warrant:** Israelis do not support a two-state solution.


“To start with, as some of us predicted at the outset, the two-state formula, which has been the flavor of the day since 2009, has not worked. We are as far from any peace between Israel and its Palestinian neighbors as ever. Even the so-called “peace process” has been exposed as a sham. Obama’s peace envoy, the honorable George Mitchell, pulled out as fast as he could. And last week it was the turn of Tony Blair, the Peace Quartet envoy, to throw in the towel. **There is no evidence that a majority of Israelis want a two-state formula. In fact, if we add up votes won by all parties implicitly or explicitly opposed to the two-state formula, we will have a whopping 75 per cent of Israelis. Thus what Netanyahu mastered enough courage to say aloud is what most Israelis think in silence.”**
Warrant: The Israeli government is shifting away from acceptance in the two-state solution. This has contributed to rising tension between the U.S. and Israel.


“Over the past week, differences between Israel and the United States have boiled over into a scalding diplomatic confrontation between these closest of allies. The dispute reflects not any change in American policy, but a dangerous evolution in Israeli policy, under the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, away from an acceptance of a negotiated two-state resolution to Israel’s conflict with the Palestinians. The dispute also arises from Mr. Netanyahu’s lamentable practice of making his government a more nakedly partisan player in American politics than any foreign government in memory, save Russia.”
**Warrant:** Obama’s aggressive pushes for a two-state solution have set back American-Israeli relations.

<http://www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org/2015/06/19/how-we-alienated-a-valuable-ally/>.

“The other traditional doctrine of Israeli-American relations that ambassador Oren claims Obama rejected was that of the “no surprises” principle. Obama discarded this doctrine no more than four months following his inauguration, demanding Israel to cease all settlement construction and called for the acceptance of a two-state solution. The following June, Obama toured the Middle East, skipping Israel, and gave his famous “A New Beginning” speech in an attempt to mend relations with the Muslim world. It is here that he announced his support for the creation of a Palestinian state, for Iran’s right to nuclear power, and his goal to revive peace talks. The speech was written without previous consultations with Israel, as it has been historically the case. In his article, Oren also accuses Obama of reversing nearly 40 years of U.S. policy by allowing mutual land swaps in order to revert back to pre-1967 borders, a stance promoted heavily by the Palestinians. Netanyahu was hesitant to allow this measure, but realized that he would be required to sacrifice parts of the ancestral Jewish homeland in order to reach a compromise. Netanyahu eventually agreed to a 10-month cease on all settlement construction, but Abbas did not enter the negotiations until very late in that period and the initiative failed again. The Prime Minister was taken aback by Obama’s public spurn of Netanyahu on more than one occasion.”
**Impact:** U.S.-Israeli relations are very important for cooperation on a wide range of security issues, including terrorism and nuclear proliferation.


“Israel continues to help the United States deal with traditional security threats. **The two countries share intelligence on terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and Middle Eastern politics.** Israel's military experiences have shaped the United States' approach to counterterrorism and homeland security. **The two governments work together to develop sophisticated military technology, such as the David's Sling counter-rocket and Arrow missile defense systems, which may soon be ready for export to other U.S. allies.** Israel has also emerged as an important niche defense supplier to the U.S. military, with sales growing from $300 million per year before September 11 to $1.1 billion in 2006, due to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Israel's military research and development complex has pioneered many cutting-edge technologies that are transforming the face of modern war, including cyberweapons, unmanned vehicles (such as land robots and aerial drones), sensors and electronic warfare systems, and advanced defenses for military vehicles.”
Impact: Israel has consistently taken the side of the United States on critical global issues.


“Israel has always sided with the United States on major global issues. At the United Nations and in other international institutions, the two countries’ voting patterns are virtually identical, as are their policies on human rights and international law. Beginning with the Korean conflict and throughout the Cold War, Israel backed America’s military engagements, and it has maintained that support in the struggle with radical Islam. In times of danger, especially, Israel has responded to America’s needs. Acceding to Richard M. Nixon’s request to intervene to save Jordan from Syrian invasion in 1970, Israel mobilized its army, and in 1991, in spite of missile attacks from Iraq, Israel honored George H.W. Bush’s request not to retaliate.”

Analysis: This argument is convincing because of the strong historical record of the U.S.-Israel alliance and the growing perception of tensions enveloping this critical alliance. Moreover, it can be weighed well against Con arguments in favor of a two-state solution in terms of probability: whether or a two-state solution will ever be viable is hard to predict from the status quo, but clear damage from U.S. pressure exertion on Israel is already manifesting. In addition, it’s very clear that Israel has been an indispensable ally in the Middle East for the United States, which gives this argument strong weight in terms of magnitude as well. You could argue that even if U.S. pressure on Israel does succeed in leading to a two-state solution, the potential loss of Israel as an ally would affect U.S. foreign policy on a much wider scope of issues, ultimately leading to an overall negative impact.
A2 – Pressure on Israel damages the American-Israeli alliance

**Answer:** Pressure for a two-state solution is not damaging the American-Israeli alliance.

**Warrant:** Most Israelis actually support a two-state solution, according to very recent polls taken by a respected polling group.


“Despite widespread perceptions that the two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is all but doomed and that growing numbers of Israelis support annexation of the West Bank, a new survey shows that a strong majority in the country still favor the creation of an independent Palestinian state. The survey, conducted earlier this month and just after outgoing U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry outlined his vision for a solution to the longstanding conflict, was commissioned by J Street, the U.S.-based pro-Israel, anti-occupation organization. **It was carried out by Smith Consulting, a respected Israeli pollster.** The survey found that more than two-thirds of Israelis – 68 percent – support a two-state solution. The survey was carried out among a representative sample of 500 Israelis, both Jews and Arabs. **In a survey commissioned by J Street two years ago, 62 percent of Israelis said they favored a two-state solution, indicating that if anything, the idea is gaining support.**
Warrant: Netanyahu is still committed to the two-state solution.


“Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu remains "absolutely committed" to the two-state solution for Israel and the Palestinians, his spokesman David Keyes, said Thursday morning while speaking out against Secretary of State John Kerry's speech claiming Israel's settlements are putting the policy in jeopardy. "What was so disappointing about Secretary Kerry's speech was that it did not deal with the core conflict of why this conflict continues to rage," Keyes told CNN's Don Lemon on the "New Day" program. "That has precisely nothing to do with Jews in the West Bank and everything to do with the Palestinian leadership's continued refusal to recognize a Jewish state." Netanyahu has called on Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to meet "hundreds of times" for peace talks, said Keyes, and has invited Abbas to speak in the Knesset, Israel's national legislature. "President Abbas said no to recognizing Israel as a Jewish state, and no to direct relations, and no to condemning the hate speech that is a daily occurrence on Palestinian media," said Keyes. "Instead of focusing on the actual barriers to peace, this has basically done a bait and switch.""

Analysis: This response takes out the initial link in the Pro argument: that Israel is no longer in favor of a two-state solution. If most Israelis and the government still support this solution, then U.S. pressure towards the solution won’t generate the harsh backlash that Pro describes. Thus, the implications of this response are that the Pro team can no longer access the impact to their argument.
Answer: Even if U.S. pressure for a two-state solution does some damage on Israel-American relations, the alliance will endure.

Warrant: The U.S.-Israeli alliance is strong and resilient; as a relationship, it goes far beyond politicians and issues of the moment. Any problems can be fixed relatively quickly.


“Second, Israeli concessions to the Arabs are effectively forever while relations with Washington fluctuate. Once the Israelis left south Lebanon and Gaza, they did so for good, as would be the case with the Golan Heights or eastern Jerusalem. Undoing these steps would be prohibitively costly. In contrast, U.S.-Israel tensions depend on personalities and circumstances, so they go up and down and the stakes are relatively lower. Each president or prime minister can refute his predecessor's views and tone. Problems can be repaired quickly. More broadly, the U.S.-Israel bond has strengths that go far beyond politicians and issues of the moment. Nothing on earth resembles this bilateral, "the most special" of special relationships and "the family relationship of international politics." Like any family tie, it has high points (Israel ranks second, behind only the United States, in number of companies listed on NASDAQ) and low ones (the Jonathan Pollard espionage affair continues to rankle a quarter century after it broke). The tie has a unique intensity when it comes to strategic cooperation, economic connections, intellectual ties, shared values, United Nations voting records, religious commonalities, and even mutual interference in each other's internal affairs. From Israel's perspective, then, political relations with the Arabs are freighted but those with Washington have a lightness and flexibility.
Warrant: The U.S.-Israeli alliance is a special relationship built on strong historical ties that can surpass any disagreement in the long-term.


And since there has been a lot of distortion and misrepresentation of our policy recently, let me take this opportunity to address our relationship with our ally Israel. Like any two nations, we will have of disagreements, but we will always resolve them as allies. And we will never forget that since the first minutes of Israeli independence, the United States has had a special relationship with Israel. And that will not change. Why? Because this is not a commitment of Democrats or Republicans; it is a national commitment based on shared values, deep and interwoven connections, and mutual interests. As President Obama declared in Cairo, "America's strong bonds with Israel are well known. This bond is unbreakable." They are the bonds of history -- two nations that earned our independence through the sacrifice of patriots. They are the bonds of two people, bound together by shared values of freedom and individual opportunity. They are the bonds of two democracies, where power resides in the people. They are the bonds of pioneers in science, technology and so many fields where we cooperate every day. They are the bonds of friendship, including the ties of so many families and friends. This week marked the 62nd anniversary of Israeli independence -- a nation and a people who have survived in the face of overwhelming odds. But even now, six decades since its founding, Israel continues to reside in a hostile neighborhood with adversaries who cling to the false hope that denying Israel's legitimacy will ultimately make it disappear. But those adversaries are wrong.
Analysis: This mitigate the impact of the Pro team’s argument by using some of its own rhetoric. If the U.S.-Israel alliance is truly built on such a strong historical record, then it can overcome any short-term tensions fostered by U.S. pressure for a two-state solution. You could further that it’s unlikely for the two-state solution to be a deal breaker in the U.S.-Israeli alliance because at the end of the day, Israel also gains from the alliance through protection against Iran and other regional actors; the Israeli government unlikely to simply throw this away because the U.S. is attempting to push a certain direction in the peace process. In fact, you can turn this argument against them with an application of one of your case arguments: if U.S. pressure ultimately results in a more stable Israel, then in the long-term the alliance should be even stronger.
PRO – Now is the wrong time to pursue a two-state solution

Argument: The political conditions of the United States as well as the facts on the ground in Israel and Palestine make the status quo a bad time to pursue a two-state solution;

Warrant: There are many pre-conditions that need to be met for a two-state solution to work, including Israeli Arab peace and a reconciliation of Palestinian political positions.


“Security is the most important issue to Israel. Due to the increasing threat to Israeli civilians posed by Hamas and other militant Islamist Palestinian groups, Israelis do not trust Palestinians and are thus unwilling to make any concessions that will further compromise Israel's security. The involvement of Arab states as reliable counterparts will strengthen Israeli willingness to compromise if they have reason to believe that a stable and enduring agreement is achievable. On the Palestinian side, a lack of internal consensus remains challenging—especially the ideological and political gaps between the two major Palestinian camps, Hamas and Fatah. As a result, Palestinians are unable to make inevitable compromises. Hamas' extreme ideology holds all sides hostage. Ironically, its extremism also holds Hamas itself hostage. Hamas desperately needs a ladder that enables it to adopt a more pragmatic approach that will allow it to compromise its control in Gaza without formally compromising its ideology. The involvement of proactive Arab states will provide that crucial ladder. Put aside the concept of an Israeli-Palestinian agreement Arab involvement will also enable Palestinians to exit the Cul-de-Sac by broadening the consensus base; Palestinians can digest compromises on issues that are at the core of a Palestinian narrative (primarily the Palestinian narrative known as the right of return, that is totally unacceptable to Israel) if this is done within a larger Arab consensus framework.

Hopelessness and endless conflict can be replaced by a peaceful future, but only if we act differently. We must put aside the concept of an Israeli-Palestinian agreement in favor of an Israeli-Arab agreement as the only realistic means to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Such agreement is achievable today more than ever before.”

**Warrant:** Israeli demands for what a two-state solution would look like are harmful for Palestine.


“And no one else is allowed to define its parameters. Israel's ever-expanding settlement enterprise, which controls around half of the West Bank - including its water aquifers and most fertile land - and has made a Swiss cheese out of the Palestinian territory - must be largely maintained. Preconditions and obligations Israel must keep illegally annexed East Jerusalem - whose boundaries have been expanded to comprise some 10 percent of the West Bank - as well as the Jordan Valley, which comprises about another 30 percent. Whatever is left for a Palestinian state must be "demilitarised" - in other words remain defenceless - and recognise Israel as a Jewish state. This demand was not made of Egypt or Jordan, and would further imperil Israel's Palestinian citizens, who comprise more than 20 percent of the population and are already treated as second-class. If all these criteria - and others - are met, then Netanyahu is all ears, because he knows that the end result would not be a state in any sense of the word. That the Palestinians would not - and could not - accept such a "state" is precisely why he can claim to support its creation, because he knows it will never come to that. Do not call them preconditions, though - he does not like them, and apparently only the Palestinians have them. In reality, while Israel's entail flouting international law, that of the Palestinians - a halt to settlement expansion - is simply adherence to it.”
Warrant: Without deconstruction of Israeli settlements, a two-state solution is impossible


“U.S. President Barack Obama, in an interview aired on Israeli television on Tuesday, said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's policy backing settlements in occupied territory is making a future Palestinian state impossible.

"Bibi says that he believes in the two-state solution and yet his actions consistently have shown that if he is getting pressured to approve more settlements he will do so regardless of what he says about the importance of the two-state solution," Obama said, referring to Netanyahu by his nickname. Some 570,000 Israelis now live in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and in East Jerusalem, together home to more than 2.6 million Palestinians. Israel captured the West Bank and East Jerusalem in the 1967 Middle East war. It later annexed East Jerusalem in a move not recognised internationally”
Impact: Unless the settlements go first, Palestinians will have no reason to negotiate. Any true state development will lead to conflict.


“The Palestinian leadership is confronted with this new reality and is deeply concerned that this may create in the coming months an irreversible reality on the ground that would make Palestinian statehood on the 1967 lines virtually impossible. A senior PLO official close to President Mahmoud Abbas told Al-Monitor on condition of anonymity that Abbas was more furious and dismayed by the lack of reaction to the settlement announcement than by the expected announcement itself. "Israel's continued settlement and occupation policies go unpunished by the international community. Netanyahu now has a 'license to kill' the two-state solution." He told Al-Monitor that following the official announcement on the 2,500 housing units, the Palestinian leadership held special deliberations. Following these deliberations, it was decided that only the Palestinian leadership could make Israel pay a price for the occupation.”

Analysis: The resolution can easily be interpreted that the United States should stop pushing for a two-state solution right now. Many affirmative teams will be ready to discuss the benefits of a two-state solution, all of which you can concede if you want to. But that assumes that everything goes smoothly in the negotiation process and based on the current Israel Palestine dynamics, it doesn’t seem like that is likely anytime soon.
A2 – Now is the wrong time to pursue a two-state solution

**Answer:** It doesn’t matter how likely a two-state solution is to be passed, the benefits should be evaluated.

**Warrant:** A two-state solution seems like the only path forward long term.


“A**re there other solutions? There are, but they involve such drastic costs that the United States and many other governments consider all but the two-state solution unacceptable.** There are multiple versions of the so-called one-state solution, which would join all territories as one nation. One version would grant equal rights to all in a state that would be neither Jewish nor Palestinian in character, because neither group would have a clear majority. Skeptics fear this would risk internal instability or even a return to war. Another, advocated by some on the Israeli far right, would establish one state but preserve Israel’s Jewish character by denying full rights to Palestinians. Under this version, Israel would no longer be a democratic state. With few viable or popular alternatives, the most likely choice may be to simply maintain the status quo — though few believe that is possible in the long term.”
Warrant: A two-state solution will likely lead to Palestinian rights as well.


“For a long time Netanyahu paid lip service to a Palestinian state, but in recent years he has all but dismissed the notion. Meanwhile, he continues to aggressively move Israelis into the occupied territories, declaring his government more “committed to settlements than any in Israel’s history.” Given Donald Trump’s clear signals on the issue, there’s every reason to worry his administration will support this trend that serves neither Israel nor the region as a whole. Israel can hardly expect to flourish in the long run while acting as a permanent occupying force over millions of people denied both citizenship and hope. It certainly cannot expect to do that while remaining true to its democratic traditions and ideals. Kerry is right that Netanyahu’s approach to settlements undermines the possibility of a two-state solution. His is a warning very much in Israel’s interests. However difficult the path, a Palestinian state remains key to the long-term security of Israel and stability in the region.”

Analysis: No matter whether the conditions for a two-state solution are perfect right now, the policy is the only really feasible one in the long term. There isn’t really a reason for the United States to stop pursuing it in favor of peace building, per say, as the end goal is still to give Palestinians some level of freedom and sovereignty.
**Answer:** Now is the time to remain dedicated to the two-state solution. In the future, it might be out of reach.

**Warrant:** Without a two-state solution being the end goal, recent progress cannot last.


“The admission of Palestine to the United Nations as a non-member Observer State in 2012 was a historic milestone. Today, 137 States recognize the State of Palestine. Its flag flies at the United Nations Headquarters here in New York and in regional offices across the globe. These are important symbols, no doubt. But they will only have true significance, I am sure you agree, if we see progress in ending the Israeli occupation and resulting in two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. Sadly, in many ways the last 10 years can be described as a lost decade for Israeli-Palestinian peace-making. If the stalemate continues or deepens, the two-state solution may well slip out of reach. A decade after Gaza was taken over by Hamas – whose violent actions against Israel we condemn – its people remain separated from the West Bank. Despite numerous initiatives and the formation of a Palestinian Government of National Consensus, the divide undoubtedly continues to run deep. After three violent conflicts and crippling restrictions imposed by Israel, 2 million Palestinians in Gaza are struggling with a crumbling infrastructure and a paralyzed economy. Tens of thousands of people are still displaced, awaiting reconstruction of homes destroyed. Gaza remains a humanitarian catastrophe. The economic and environmental toll continues to ravage lives and to undermine peace and stability.”
**Warrant:** Even those who many have thought would be opposed to a two-state solution are now seeming to be in support of it.


> “With that in mind, we urge all parties to refrain from taking unilateral actions that could undermine our ability to make progress, including settlement announcements,” the official added. “The administration needs to have the chance to fully consult with all parties on the way forward.” Trump plans to bring up the peace process in his meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House scheduled for February 15. Trump looks forward to those discussions, White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer said in response to this report. "The American desire for peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians has remained unchanged for 50 years," Spicer said. "While we don’t believe the existence of settlements is an impediment to peace, the construction of new settlements or the expansion of existing settlements beyond their current borders may not be helpful in achieving that goal”

**Analysis:** The volatile political climate in the U.S. and the Middle East makes pursuing a two-state solution now more vital than ever. Despite what some affirmative teams might try to claim, the United States is still committed to pursuing negotiations between Israel and Palestine, and making equitable agreements work between the two nations.
PRO – A two-state solution incites Israeli backlash

Argument: The Two-state solution incites Israeli backlash to U.S. policy.

Warrant: Israel doesn’t want a Two-state solution.


Israel must keep illegally annexed East Jerusalem - whose boundaries have been expanded to comprise some 10 percent of the West Bank - as well as the Jordan Valley, which comprises about another 30 percent. Whatever is left for a Palestinian state must be "demilitarised" - in other words remain defenceless - and recognise Israel as a Jewish state. This demand was not made of Egypt or Jordan, and would further imperil Israel's Palestinian citizens, who comprise more than 20 percent of the population and are already treated as second-class. **If all these criteria - and others - are met, then Netanyahu is all ears, because he knows that the end result would not be a state in any sense of the word.** That the Palestinians would not - and could not - accept such a "state" is precisely why he can claim to support its creation, because he knows it will never come to that.
**Warrant:** Israel is hostile to current U.S. policy


An hour after Kerry finished talking, **Netanyahu lashed out at the American diplomat, accusing him of advancing the Security Council resolution and giving “a skewed speech against Israel.”** “For over an hour, Kerry dealt obsessively with the settlements and almost didn’t touch on the root of the conflict — the Palestinian opposition to a Jewish state in any boundaries,” Netanyahu said in a statement. In a counter-speech delivered at 9 p.m. in Jerusalem, **Netanyahu said he has “no doubt” the alliance between the U.S. and Israel “will endure the profound disagreement we have had with the Obama administration.” But he said “Israelis do not need to be lectured about the importance of peace by foreign leaders,” and adding that peace would only come about through direct negotiations.**

**Warrant:** Israel is making demands of the U.S.


He also **demanded that the United States prevent additional resolutions against Israel from being discussed at the Security Council.** The dueling speeches laid bare the ever-straining relationship the Obama administration has had with Netanyahu. Obama and Netanyahu have never been close; tensions peaked with the 2015 Iran nuclear accord, struck between world powers and Tehran. Israel maintains the historic deal is a threat to the Jewish state.
Pro Arguments with Con Responses

Warrant: Israel trying to call out the U.S. on its commitment.


A day earlier, Israeli officials pledged to reveal proof that the United States was behind the Security Council resolution that condemned Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory. Kerry’s speech came just hours after Israel, reportedly under Netanyahu’s instruction, delayed approving hundreds of new homes in East Jerusalem. Netanyahu has been criticized by Israeli opposition leaders for the deteriorating foreign relations and his reaction to the Security Council resolution. Kerry repeated Washington’s denials that it drove the U.N. vote, and rejected the notion that the U.S. abstention that isolated Israel. That, he said, is Israeli policy’s doing.

Warrant: Tensions are rising right now.

Condemnation from Israeli officials came before Kerry was finished talking. Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan, a senior Israeli Cabinet minister, called the secretary of state’s comments a “pathetic step” that would heighten tensions. “It is an anti-democratic step because it’s clear that the administration and Kerry’s intention is to chain President-elect Trump,” Erdan told Israel Army Radio. But the real tension, said Jessica Rosenblum, vice president of communications at the self-described pro-Israel, pro-peace J Street nonprofit, is between those who support decades of policy for a two-state solution, and the administrations of Netanyahu and, soon, Trump. Both, she said, appear to be moving away from that plan for peace.
Analysis: The argument is straightforward, inciting backlash from one of the U.S.’s allies has detrimental not only in current Middle Eastern policy but global diplomatic issues the U.S. would like to involve itself in. Commitment of allies and strategic alignment with them is very important, without it the whole neoliberal world order is at risk. This argument may allow you to impact to things outside of just the space of Palestine and Israeli, giving you easy weighing on scope.
A2 – A two-state solution incites Israeli backlash

Answer: Israel is committed to a two-state solution

Warrant: Netanyahu wants a two-state solution.


Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu remains "absolutely committed" to the two-state solution for Israel and the Palestinians, his spokesman David Keyes, said Thursday morning while speaking out against Secretary of State John Kerry's speech claiming Israel's settlements are putting the policy in jeopardy.

Warrant: Palestine won’t recognize a Jewish state. Israel may not be the obstacle.


"What was so disappointing about Secretary Kerry's speech was that it did not deal with the core conflict of why this conflict continues to rage," Keyes told CNN's Don Lemon on the "New Day" program. "That has precisely nothing to do with Jews in the West Bank and everything to do with the Palestinian leadership's continued refusal to recognize a Jewish state." Netanyahu has called on Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to meet "hundreds of times" for peace talks, said Keyes, and has invited Abbas to speak in the Knesset, Israel's national legislature.
**Warrant:** Israel isn’t the obstacle to solving the conflict, it’s Palestine.


Also, there could already have been a Palestinian state, said Keyes, but every time one was offered over the years, "they said no." "The reason is simple, because the conflict is not about the creation of a Palestinian state," the spokesman continued. "It's about the existence of a Jewish state." Abbas has said peace talks can begin when the Israelis quit building settlements, Lemon pointed out, but Keyes said that even when Netanyahu stopped the building, Abbas "didn't take that too seriously."

**Analysis:** By proving that the issue isn’t with Israel and that Israel is committed to the two-state solution proves that there is no incentive for Israel to lash back against the U.S. It also proves that any backlash has nothing to do with a two-state solution, but some other externality.
**PRO – US pressure causes Palestine collapse**

**Argument:** U.S. pressure in the region is causing Palestinian state collapse.

**Warrant:** U.S. pressure and support of Israel suffocating Palestine


There are three ways that the PA could break up, according to a study conducted in 2013 by a respected Palestinian research organization. The study concluded that, as reported by Haaretz: One, the least likely scenario, is a voluntary decision by the Palestinian leadership to dissolve it. The second is collapse as the result of Israel’s punishing economic, military and political power, and political and economic pressure, mostly American, in response to Palestinian steps that violate the status quo, such as petitioning the International Criminal Court or leading a non-militarized uprising. The third possibility is a breakup that results from internal Palestinian unrest and rebellion.
**Pro Arguments with Con Responses**

**March 2017**

**Warrant:** Collapse would cause instability.


The consequences of such a collapse would be severe and immediate. As Kerry noted, "There are some 30,000 Palestinian Authority security forces in the West Bank, and Israel’s security officials acknowledge their key role in preventing the situation from spiraling out of control, including by the way during the turmoil of three wars with Gaza." **In other words, without the PA, much of the West Bank would suddenly be without a government, including security forces. This would be a disaster for Palestinians in many ways, but the one concern that I heard Israelis raise over and over is that there would be no one to keep a lid on unrest or violence.**

**Warrant:** Collapse would create a power Vacuum for Hamas

Williams, Jennifer. “Israel’s security officials acknowledge their key role in preventing the situation from spiraling out of control, including by the way during the turmoil of three wars with Gaza.” In the latter scenario, people I spoke to expected that a security vacuum in the West Bank would allow Hamas to take over there. Israel would likely respond as it did to Hamas's takeover in Gaza, by sealing off the territory and putting it under a full blockade. In Gaza, this has been followed by a decade-long humanitarian crisis, sent unemployment as high as 43 percent, and contributed to periodic and deadly violence between Israel and Gaza.

Repeating this in the West Bank would thus be a humanitarian catastrophe for Palestinians there. It would also be a security disaster for Israel. Hamas uses Gaza to launch rockets into neighboring towns in southern Israel; doing the same from the West Bank would bring major Israeli cities such as Jerusalem and Tel Aviv under much greater threat.
Warrant: Collapse may cause full Israeli occupation of the region.


The other way that Israel might respond is by replacing the PA with direct Israeli rule of PA-administered areas. Direct rule by a foreign power is not pleasant: not for the people being occupied, certainly, but also not for the soldiers tasked with occupying them. This could risk a third intifada, or Palestinian uprising, and even if Palestinians accept direct Israeli rule, it would still impose significant new burdens on both Palestinians and Israelis. Kerry, in his speech in December, laid out the potential costs for Israel if the PA should collapse: Without the PA security forces, the IDF could be forced to deploy tens of thousands of soldiers to the West Bank indefinitely to fill the void. Are Israelis prepared for the consequences this would have for their children and grandchildren who serve in the IDF when the inevitable friction leads to confrontation and violence?

Analysis: U.S. pressure is actively harming the Palestine. The U.S. at least stopping pressure for a two-state solution signals that the U.S. isn’t the most dominant force and is not trying to smother Palestine, potentially stopping collapse. This argument is also very easily weighable, as Palestinian state collapse would prevent any benefits of a two-state solution from ever occurring and would also be one of the largest security risk as around the world in recent history.
A2 – US pressure causes Palestine collapse

**Answer:** The Collapse is inevitable

**Warrant:** there is growing discontent with the Palestinian authority absent U.S. pressure.


It's not just that PA President Mahmoud Abbas is 80 years old and there is no clear successor in line to replace him. **Palestinians are distrustful of Abbas personally, but more than that, they are fed up with the entire PA system.** Some 20 years after the PA was established as a temporary measure meant to bring Palestinians closer to peace and a state, the conflict persists. Palestinians increasingly see the PA as a tool of the Israeli occupation, which many doubt will ever end. A recent poll shows just how disaffected Palestinians have become with the status quo. The poll, conducted by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PCPSR) in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip from December 10 to 12, found that 68 percent of the public supports abandoning the Oslo agreement (which includes the establishment of PA rule). Similarly, 64 percent said the PA should stop all security cooperation with Israel. And 65 percent of respondents said they want Abbas to resign.
Warrant: Palestinians prefer uprising to the status quo.


Finally, the poll found that 66 percent of surveyed Palestinians (71 percent in the Gaza Strip and 63 percent in the West Bank) believe that an armed uprising would serve Palestinian interests in ways that negotiations could not. All this suggests that the PA's ability to keep the current violence from boiling over into a full-fledged intifada is diminishing, as is Palestinians' faith in the ability of the PA to produce positive results — namely, a peace deal with Israel, an end to the occupation, and the creation of an independent Palestinian state.
**Warrant:** U.S. intervention not the only cause.


There are three ways that the PA could break up, according to a study conducted in 2013 by a respected Palestinian research organization. The study concluded that, as reported by Haaretz: **One, the least likely scenario, is a voluntary decision by the Palestinian leadership to dissolve it.** The second is collapse as the result of Israel’s punishing economic, military and political power, and political and economic pressure, mostly American, in response to Palestinian steps that violate the status quo, such as petitioning the International Criminal Court or leading a non-militarized uprising. **The third possibility is a breakup that results from internal Palestinian unrest and rebellion.**

**Analysis:** This response proves that it is not U.S. pressure causing the collapse of the PA, but other underlying tensions and problems that have almost nothing to do with the U.S. This severs the aff link to the resolution and makes sure that the aff cannot win off of this argument.
PRO – A two-state solution ignores underlying tensions

Argument: A two-state solution would be impossible to implement, and so the U.S. continually hounding Israel to make it possible is a fruitless effort

Warrant: A two-state solution doesn’t consider the realities of the Israeli and Palestinian conflict as it stands today


Yet these two-state solution proposals do not take into consideration the situation on the ground, in such a way that it is impossible to imagine how an independent and viable Palestinian state would be established. But while the two-state solution has yet to be totally ruled out, the United States must be considering an alternative solution more appropriate for Israel. This alternative solution would be based on Israel’s continued control over 60% of the West Bank and the establishment of a Palestinian state composed of isolated areas in the West Bank separated from each other by the territories taken over by Israel, including the Gaza Strip. Given that these isolated areas are not viable on their own, their economic and social ties and their connection to the outside world would be via Jordan. Moreover, the Gaza Strip will also expand in Egypt’s direction, knowing that Israel has always wanted this to happen, while Jerusalem would remain under full Israeli control. Although Jordan and Egypt rejected similar ideas, we suppose that the United States would be pushing for something similar — that is, a plan that would reassure Israel and give something to the Palestinians. A large number of Palestinians are afraid that their leadership, which was not elected and which does not represent them and which, according to them, seeks to stay in power whatever the cost to the national cause, would agree on a similar plan. These concerns may be exaggerated, but they make the debate about the one-state solution more urgent.
Warrant: A two-state solution is impossible due to the territorial divides between Gaza and the West Bank


It has been the United States’ stand that a two-state solution will ensure the greatest long-term peace for the territorial disputes between Israel and Palestine. This is based on the premise that the sectarian and religious divides are too entrenched for the different populations to coexist within one state. However, given the discontinuous nature of the territory under the current proposal for the state of Palestine, a two-state solution is doomed to fail. Would a Palestinian citizen need to pass through an entirely separate and hostile state to reach one part of her country from another? What security precautions would be taken to ensure that Palestinians traveling from Gaza to the West Bank would be safe in “foreign” Israel? Essentially, the clouds of Israel’s continued occupation of the West Bank and siege of Gaza, combined with persistent Palestinian attacks against Israeli security forces and civilians, along with the unrealistic territory propositions, clog any drives toward a two-state solution.
Warrant: A two-state solution would be impossible because Israel will never be willing to give up what they consider their territory.


Although the Oslo Accords purported to lay the groundwork for a new Palestinian state, in reality, neither party remained faithful to the agreement—Israeli forces redeployed to the occupied areas and in retaliation, Hamas attacked Israeli officers. Today 1.8 million Palestinians, including 1.2 million refugees, are crammed into Gaza, just 25 miles long and eight miles at its widest.6 Israeli settlers continue to move into the West Bank, and there are no signs of construction halting. Most recently, in January 2016, Israel confirmed 153 new housing constructions in several illegal settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.7 Around 500,000 settlers currently live in more than 100 communities built since Israel occupied the West Bank and East Jerusalem in 1967.8 As a result, United States secretary of state John Kerry has openly warned Israel that without a peace deal, Israel could become “an apartheid state.”9 Although his words angered officials in Jerusalem and members of the organized Jewish community in the United States, former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, among others, regularly sounds a similar warning.10 Similarly, Zionist Union leader Isaac Herzog declared that the two-state solution was not feasible.11 Moreover, even Prime Minister Netanyahu has acknowledged that under his leadership, a fully sovereign Palestine is simply out of the question.12 Evidently the plausibility of a two-state solution continues to decline as neither political will nor on-the-ground reality favor it. Furthermore, the Israeli leadership is well aware of the threat that a Palestinian state would bring Israel to the International Criminal Court for war crimes, a risk few Israelis are willing to take.
Warrant: A two-state solution will fail because Palestinians can’t successfully unite to form one nation


Moreover, Palestinian support is divided between their own parties. For example, the Palestinian Authority (PA) is generally regarded as a weak government that deals poorly with opposing parties, such as Fatah. If given statehood status, the PA shows little promise of conducting itself according to democratic norms. It is internally divided by corruption and competition over political gains, and displays fickle leadership. A two-state solution could magnify the pre-existing flaws of PA-Fatah-Hamas relations. In 2010, Netanyahu publically acknowledged that peace cannot exist without Hamas supporting PA president Mahmoud Abbas to negotiate on its behalf. That is why Hamas’ support—if not its inclusion—in creating a solution will be imperative for the successes of any sustainable peace. These realities outline how a two-state solution begins to look more and more like opening Pandora’s box, rather than a peaceful end to the conflict. For now, Netanyahu is doing his best to sit happily on the box.
Impact: A two-state solution will never be achieved, and attempting to do so will only result in a raw deal for both parties


In fact, a genuinely sovereign Palestinian state will not be realized any time in the foreseeable future, and quite likely never will be. The obstacles to meaningful Palestinian statehood are constantly mounting, most tangibly in the form of Israel’s illegal settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Some 600,000 Jewish settlers now reside there — three times as many as at the beginning of the Oslo peace process in 1993, and their numbers are growing rapidly. Continuing to chase the two-state mirage under these circumstances will only enable continuing Israeli colonization of the West Bank and entrench a new form of systematic ethno-religious discrimination, where only Jews enjoy full rights — to travel, housing, employment, education, and other basics of a free life.

Analysis: If a two-state solution isn’t possible, the U.S. continuing to push Israel and Palestine into such a situation will only result in failure for all involved. This is perhaps the most basic arguments for any pro team, because it makes the most intuitive sense - if something isn’t possible, it shouldn’t be attempted. The simple nature of this argument makes it a good one to use for more inexperienced judges, who will have no problem whatsoever in understanding the reasoning. However, it’s not very offensive, so be prepared with other arguments to supplement this if you decide to run it.
Answer: A two-state solution is possible

Warrant: A one-state solution is the less likely option


The problem with a one-state solution lies in the feasibility of its implementation more than in the will to implement it, since there are major obstacles standing in its way. There is a strong international consensus over a two-state solution, in addition to Israel’s determination to remain a Jewish state conferring to its Jewish citizens precedence over others. Reaching an international consensus over an alternative one-state solution to replace the two-state solution that was accepted will be arduous and slow. Given that time is in the favor of Israel alone, the priority for the Palestinians should be to start taking action right away. The current situation could not be any better for Israel and its allies, since there is a weak Palestinian leadership creating a sense of illusory equality between the occupied and the occupier, which releases Israel from its legal responsibilities as an occupying power. Furthermore, there is a long peace process, which provides cover for the Israeli occupation, in addition to an international idleness and a divided Palestinian people incapable of resistance. Thus, Palestinians are the biggest losers from this situation and they must seek to change it.
Warrant: A two-state solution is no less likely than a one-state solution

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/nov/02/israel-palestine-two-state-solution>.

The case for a single, bi-national state is now reasonably familiar. Israel's illegal settlements are so entrenched that uprooting them to make way for a viable Palestinian state has become impossible. We should therefore call instead for a single, democratic state in the whole of the former British Mandate for Palestine. But the logic is incomplete. Declaring the two-state solution unrealistic does not, by itself, make self-evident the greater feasibility of one bi-national state. The latter would entail the end of Israel, and of Zionism, as we understand those terms today. Is this really a more likely scenario than the colonial infrastructure in the occupied territories being dismantled? Recent polls showing alarming levels of racism in Israeli public opinion, reflected in the new hard-right alliance between Likud and Yisrael Beitenu, suggest a polity that is not currently minded to dissolve itself under any amount of political pressure.
Warrant: A two-state solution is favored by Palestinians and has a good chance of success


Obstacles to the decolonisation of the Palestinian territories are certainly real, but should not be overstated. The settlements themselves take up very little space. It is the settlement blocs which dissect Palestinian territory, seize key natural resources and render unviable an independent state on the land that remains. Palestinian negotiators have produced detailed maps showing how, with those obstacles largely removed, an exchange of land equivalent to 1.9% of the West Bank could leave 63% of Israeli colonists in situ, and the Palestinians with a contiguous, viable state (black areas to be annexed to Israel; orange areas to the future Palestinian state – Source: Palestine papers) The offer is a generous one, given that Israel's colonisation of the territories is illegal, as confirmed by the International Court of Justice in 2004. Ten years ago, the Arab League offered Israel full recognition in exchange for its withdrawing to its legal borders and agreeing a just solution for the Palestinian refugees, a formula agreed by the Palestinian leadership but rejected by Israel. While formally opposed to such a settlement, even Hamas has indicated that it would accept it if ratified by the Palestinian people who, though despairing of their situation, continue to favour a two-state settlement. The problem is less the two-state solution than Israel's rejectionist stance, which benefits from crucial backing, or acquiescence, from its patron in Washington, as well as the EU states. Vigorous and well-targeted public pressure on Israel and its western allies is required so as to change the strategic calculus for Israel, and render it in its own interests to withdraw to its legal borders.
Analysis: If a two-state solution is just as likely as a one-state solution, there’s no reason for the U.S. to stop pushing a two-state narrative.

Answer: A two-state solution is better than a one-state solution.

Warrant: A two-state solution is the least bad option available.


Democracy is the worst form of government except for all the others, Winston Churchill famously observed. And Churchill knew something about Palestine, too. His logic is relevant. In the solution department — and, trust me on this one, solution departments in capitals all over the world won’t stop trying on Palestine — two-states is by far the least objectionable outcome. Not that it’s problem- or risk-free. But the other alternatives — the one state illusion, the Jordan option, Israel’s annexation, and the status quo option — are much worse. Whether it’s just as a talking point or an actual initiative, the two-state paradigm is here to stay.
Warrant: A two-state solution would be the best economic option for both groups


Advocates for the two-state solution claim the need to separate hostile parties. A recent RAND study estimated the economic costs and benefits of a two-state solution based on present trends, and found that over a decade with a two-state solution, Israel’s gross domestic product would be $123 billion larger than it would otherwise be (a 5 percent increase), and that the Palestinian economy of the West Bank and Gaza would be $50 billion (49 percent) larger.

Analysis: If a two-state solution has benefits beyond those of a one-state solution, it is the preferable option and the U.S. should continue to pursue it.
PRO – A two-state solution is impossible

**Argument:** The political reality of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict creates a system where a two-state solution can’t occur.

**Warrant:** Israeli settlements make a true Palestinian state impossible.


U.S. President Barack Obama, in an interview aired on Israeli television on Tuesday, said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu policy backing settlements in occupied territory is making a future Palestinian state impossible. "Bibi says that he believes in the two-state solution and yet his actions consistently have shown that if he is getting pressured to approve more settlements he will do so regardless of what he says about the importance of the two-state solution," Obama said, referring to Netanyahu by his nickname.

**Warrant:** Trump’s planned actions discount the Palestinian state, only furthering the current unequal balance of power.


Israel expects to receive more favorable treatment from Obama's successor, President-elect Donald Trump. **Trump has denounced the Obama administration's Israel policy and has vowed to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, riling the Palestinians. He has also named as U.S. ambassador to Israel a lawyer who raised money for a major Jewish settlement.** Relations between Netanyahu and Obama have been strained for years over their differences regarding settlement-building and Iran nuclear deal's with world powers signed in 2015.
Warrant: Settlements blur the line between boundaries.


Some 570,000 Israelis now live in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and in East Jerusalem, together home to more than 2.6 million Palestinians. Israel captured the West Bank and East Jerusalem in the 1967 Middle East war. It later annexed East Jerusalem in a move not recognized internationally.

Warrant: Netanyahu’s demands for coming to the negotiating table are almost impossible to meet.


Israel must keep illegally annexed East Jerusalem - whose boundaries have been expanded to comprise some 10 percent of the West Bank - as well as the Jordan Valley, which comprises about another 30 percent. Whatever is left for a Palestinian state must be "demilitarised" - in other words remain defenceless - and recognise Israel as a Jewish state. This demand was not made of Egypt or Jordan, and would further imperil Israel's Palestinian citizens, who comprise more than 20 percent of the population and are already treated as second-class. If all these criteria - and others - are met, then Netanyahu is all ears, because he knows that the end result would not be a state in any sense of the word. That the Palestinians would not - and could not - accept such a "state" is precisely why he can claim to support its creation, because he knows it will never come to that.
Warrant: Netanyahu openly rejects a Palestinian state


There is nothing radical about highlighting this. **Netanyahu himself made clear in his last election campaign that there would be no Palestinian state under his watch - it is this pledge to his electorate that should be taken seriously**, not his faux declarations to international audiences about seeking peace. **His government comprises individuals and parties that openly reject a Palestinian state.** People are not listening. They do not want to listen. Delusion is always simpler, more comforting. It suits them, and it suits Israeli officials.

Analysis: If a two-state solution is impossible then there is no point in discussing it further and no point in the U.S. pushing it farther. This argument is most effectively used as a NIB (necessary but insufficient burden) to a neg case as if they can’t prove feasibility they can’t generate offense.
A2 – A two-state solution is impossible

Answer: Two-state solution only chance at any sort of solvency.

Warrant: Different interests of both peoples can only be met with a two-state solution.


“The Arab Peace Initiative, with its vision of a comprehensive peace and an opportunity to build a regional security framework, can also be an important forum for dialogue. I have just made my eleventh visit to Israel and Palestine. During my trip, I reminded the leadership on both sides of the imperative of taking prompt action to restore hope in a peaceful future and to preserve the two-State solution — the only way to meet the national aspirations of both peoples. Israel’s settlement enterprise, illegal under international law, continues to expand in the West Bank including East Jerusalem, undermining trust and constituting a significant threat to a viable Palestinian State. The continued designation of land in Area C for exclusive Israeli use; the steady expansion of settlements; the legalization of outposts; and the alarming spike in demolitions in 2016 are systematically jeopardizing the viability of a future Palestinian State and raise serious concerns about Israel’s commitment to the two-state vision.
Warrant: there is UN backing for a two State solution.


The United Nations remains committed to supporting a negotiated, just, comprehensive and enduring Two-State resolution for the people of Israel and Palestine. I personally commit to working with their leaders and the international community to advance their essential goals, until the last day of my tenure as Secretary-General of the United Nations. In this spirit, please accept my best wishes for a successful event that looks at past peace initiatives and lessons learned, current peace initiatives, and the way forward.

Warrant: There is no other hope.


The French said the conference, which has been derided by Israel, was not designed for detailed peace talks but to broadly set out the parameters of an agreement and lay out the economic incentives available for each side if they re-engaged in talks. Jean-Marc Ayrault, the French foreign minister, said “the talks process had come to a grinding halt. There is no peace possible if we do not reaffirm the the two-state solution. There is no other option.” Any solution, the communique said, would have to fully end the occupation that began in 1967 and satisfy Israel’s security needs.

Analysis: This Answer is best used with a try or die narrative. If you make the point clear that the two-state solution is the only feasible and favorable outcome and that even if it appears impossible trying is better than failing, then the neg can still generate offense despite this argument.
PRO – The US looks like it’s playing favorites in the conflict

**Argument:** Because the U.S. backs a two-state solution, many both in Palestine and in the U.S. feel that America is being unfair and unjust to Palestinians. This hurts our credibility and standing both at home and abroad.

**Warrant:** The U.S. gives Israel (rather than Palestine) colossal sums of aid money


WASHINGTON — The United States agreed Wednesday to provide Israel a record $38 billion in new military aid over the next decade. The pact is a sign of the two nations' close alliance despite major differences over Iran's nuclear program and other policies. The agreement, which equates to $3.8 billion a year, is the largest bilateral military aid package ever and includes $5 billion for missile defense, additional F-35 joint strike fighters and increased mobility for its ground forces. The aid package “is just the most recent reflection of my steadfast commitment to the security of the state of Israel,” President Obama said in a statement. It will make “a significant contribution to Israel’s security in what remains a dangerous neighborhood,” Obama said. “The continued supply of the world’s most advanced weapons technology will ensure that Israel has the ability to defend itself from all manner of threats.”

National Security Adviser Susan Rice said the package was good for the U.S. as well. "When our partners and allies are more secure, the United States is more secure," Rice said at a signing ceremony Wednesday at the State Department.
**Warrant:** The one-state solution that the U.S. is ignoring would force Israel to give Palestinians some representation

<http://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1110&context=cc_tds_theses>.

The first advantage would be the end of the occupation, and by extension the oppression, of the Palestinian population. If Israel has no desire to relinquish the land or grant Palestinians the independent state they desire, then the only remaining option would be to grant Palestinians citizenship and incorporate them into the political system. Palestinians are clearly aware incessant settlement activity would mean an independent state is no longer a feasible option. Any state created under the present circumstances would be nothing more than a non-contiguous, potentially unstable entity which would be dwarfed by a much more powerful and advanced neighboring Israel. Furthermore, past Israeli proposals of an independent Palestinian state would have actually meant giving up more land than what Palestinians already possessed. The prevailing argument among many Israeli leaders has been there are “no partners for peace” on the Palestinian side, and that Palestinians have rejected generous Israeli proposals in the past - namely at Camp David in 2000. However, this argument has been debunked as myth by various independent, as well as Israeli observers, who were present at the summit and concluded that Israel never attended seeking any sort of compromise, rather they were looking for Palestinian concessions.
**Warrant:** Under the one-state solution that America is ignoring, Israel would be forced to provide Palestinians with democracy, by virtue of it being their best available option.


Abandoning the idea of an independent Palestinian state and demanding equal rights would place the onus of negotiating a just and final solution squarely on the shoulders of the Israeli state. A scenario which would leave the Israelis with the choices of withdrawing to the 1967 borders, committing ethnic cleansing or mass expulsion against the Palestinians, or maintaining the status quo of an apartheid-like system in the occupied territories— all options Israel is either unwilling or unable to pursue. **What would benefit Palestinians most in this situation would be the demand for full democracy, even if it means the end of Palestinian national aspirations; a likely predicament that has not escaped the attention of many Israelis.** As former prime minister Ehud Olmert states, "More and more Palestinians are uninterested in a negotiated, two-state solution, because they want to change the essence of the conflict from an Algerian paradigm to a South African one. **From a struggle against 'occupation,' in their parlance, to a struggle for one-man-one-vote. That is, of course, a much cleaner struggle, a much more popular struggle - and ultimately a much more powerful one.”89
Impact: Because we won’t consider the best option for Palestinians, they feel that we are abandoning them


MANY PALESTINIANS BELIEVE THE UNITED STATES IS ABANDONING THEM IN FAVOR OF ISLAMISTS. We encountered a widespread view in the West Bank that the United States has shifted its support to Islamists in the region—particularly the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Hamas in Gaza.

PALESTINIANS FEAR THE TWO-STATE SOLUTION IS SLIPPING AWAY. The frustrations of recent years have led many to support unrealistic alternatives to the two-state solution. RIGHT-OF-RETURN DOES NOT HAVE TO BE A STUMBLING BLOCK. While right-of-return is an important symbolic issue, most Palestinians would be willing to give it up if presented with an otherwise acceptable peace package.
Impact: The U.S. refusing to consider approaches that help Palestinians makes it seem as though we’re abandoning Palestinians.


Views of the war in the United States can feel similarly skewed, resistant to the whole picture, slanted through cultural inclination and political diktat. It is still hard to say that the killing of hundreds of Palestinian children represents a Jewish failure, whatever else it may be. It is not easy to convey the point that the open-air prison of Gaza in which Hamas has thrived exists in part because Israel has shown a strong preference for the status quo, failing to reach out to Palestinian moderates and extending settlements in the West Bank, fatally tempted by the idea of keeping all the land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River. Oppressed people will respond. Millions of Palestinians are oppressed. They are routinely humiliated and live under Israeli dominion. When Jon Stewart is lionized (and slammed in some circles) for “revealing” Palestinian suffering to Americans, it suggests how hidden that suffering is. The way members of Congress have been falling over one another to demonstrate more vociferous support for Israel is a measure of a political climate not conducive to nuance. This hardly serves America’s interests, which lie in a now infinitely distant peace between Israelis and Palestinians, and will require balanced American mediation. Something may be shifting. Powerful images of Palestinian suffering on Facebook and Twitter have hit younger Americans. A recent survey by the Pew Research Center found that among Americans age 65 or older, 53 percent blame Hamas for the violence and 15 percent Israel. For those ages 18 to 29, Israel is blamed by 29 percent of those questioned, Hamas by just 21 percent. My son-in-law, a doctor in Atlanta, said that for his social group, mainly professionals in their 30s with young children, it was “impossible to see infants being killed by what sometimes seems like an extension of the U.S. Army without being affected.”
Analysis: The U.S. has continually favored policies that support Israel but harm Palestinians, and this push for a two-state solution is one among many that leaves Palestinians without the benefits they could be accruing. Be careful running this argument, because as the poll above indicates, the vast majority of Americans still think that we should be supporting Israel far more than Palestine. However, if you’re prepared to weigh the lives and democracy impacts that could be garnered by removing the two-state solution, as well as the harm to United States image worldwide, this is a good argument for you. Make sure to explain the links clearly, as they’re not as intuitive as some for other arguments.
A2 – The US looks like it is playing favorites in the conflict

Answer: The majority of Americans think that we should support Israel more than we support Palestine, meaning that we are doing what the people want us to do.

Warrant: The majority of Americans support Israel over Palestine


Views of Israel and the Palestinians have become more ideologically polarized. In early September 2001, just before the 9/11 terrorist attacks, there were only modest partisan and ideological differences in Israeli-Palestinian sympathies. But since then, and especially over the past decade, the share sympathizing more with Israel than with the Palestinians has increased among all ideological groups, with the exception of liberal Democrats. Today, majorities of conservative Republicans (79%) and moderate and liberal Republicans (65%) say they sympathize more with Israel than with the Palestinians, while just 4% and 13%, respectively, sympathize more with the Palestinians. This is the case for conservative and moderate Democrats as well – far more have a more sympathetic view of Israel (53%) than of the Palestinians (19%). Liberal Democrats, however, are more divided, with four-in-ten (40%) sympathizing more with the Palestinians, versus a third (33%) with Israel.
Warrant: There has, contrary to pro arguments, been an increase in support for Israel over the years rather than a decline.


Americans have consistently shown more support for Israel than for the Palestinians over the past 15 years. However, sympathy for Israel increased in 2006 to 59%, from 52% the year before, in a Gallup poll conducted shortly after the January 2006 Palestinian elections in which Hamas -- which the U.S. government has classified as a terrorist group -- won the majority of parliamentary seats. Support for Israel has since remained at 58% or higher. All major demographic and political subgroups of Americans lean toward Israel over the Palestinians on this question. However, several characteristics are related to the extent of public support for Israel. Chief among these are religious preference and party identification. Gallup finds a 31-percentage-point difference in sympathy for Israel between Protestants (72%) and nonreligious Americans (41%), and a 26-point difference between Republicans (79%) and Democrats (53%). That contrasts with a 19-point difference between highly religious and nonreligious Americans, and an 18-point difference between older and younger Americans.
Warrant: Most Americans feel that Israel and Palestine should create a two-state solution, meaning we are pushing a proposal that Americans favor.


Americans are somewhat more optimistic that Israel can “coexist peacefully” with an independent Palestinian state. More Americans (50%) say that there is a way for Israel and an independent Palestinian state to coexist peacefully than say that there is not (42%). Optimism about a peaceful, two-state solution is somewhat greater today than in August 2014 (43%), shortly after the end of weeks of hostilities between Israel and Hamas. As with Mideast sympathies, there are age and partisan differences in views of prospects for a two-state solution. Six-in-ten adults younger than 30 say a way can be found for Israel and an independent Palestinian state to coexist peacefully. Among those 65 and older, just 41% say the same. Most Democrats (61%) say it is possible for an independent Palestinian state to coexist peacefully with Israel. Just 38% of Republicans agree; most (55%) say such an outcome is not possible.

Analysis: If the majority of Americans support Israel over Palestine, it should not be a problem that we support a solution benefitting one particular group over another. The same is true if most Americans value a two-state solution. The obligation of the American government is to speak for its own people - it’s the most important thing to weigh!
Pro Arguments with Con Responses  

March 2017

**Answer:** A two-state solution would provide Palestinians with complete autonomy, a far better deal than being forced to give up their lands

**Warrant:** A two-state solution would give Palestinians their own state, allowing them complete political freedom


The Israeli-Palestinian peace process has been stymied since the failure of the Camp David summit in 2000, followed by the onset of the second intifada. The current, off-again/on-again, process of negotiation is not very encouraging. There are serious questions whether the leadership on either side has the capacity to make the concessions required for a final-status agreement. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu by now seems to recognize the necessity of a two-state solution, as proclaimed in his Bar-Ilan speech on June 14, 2009, but it is not clear whether his conception of the future Palestinian state meets the minimum conditions of his Palestinian interlocutors — for example, on issues of Jerusalem, borders and settlements. Recall that in the 1990s, he was proposing Palestinian autonomy over enclaves in the West Bank and added: "If the Palestinians want to call it a state, let them call it a state." Today, he himself seems prepared to call it a state. But it is not clear how much closer he is to accepting the conditions required for a viable Palestinian state. Apart from his own ideological reluctance to move in that direction, the survival of his coalition depends on right-wing and religious parties, which limit his freedom of movement.

**Analysis:** A one-state solution may have the ability to provide Palestinians with some rights under another government, but a two-state solution provides them with complete autonomy. This is certainly preferable, and as a result the U.S. should keep pushing for it.
PRO – A three state solution would be preferable to two-state

Argument: Pressure by the United States in favor a two-state solution is not only misguided but dangerous if it moves Israel away from a better option. There are many kinds of proposals for a three-state solution, some that incorporate neighboring states like Jordan and Egypt, and all of them hold more promise for peace than the two-state solution.

Warrant: A solution involving a three-way confederation with Jordan, Palestine, and Israel would allow Palestinians to easily relocate. Moreover, neither Jews nor Arabs would feel like they’d have to be giving up their claims to traditional territory, which would be under the joint ownership of the confederation.


Palestinians living in Israel and Jordan would not need to relocate to acquire Palestinian citizenship. They could be residents of any state in the confederation, but citizens of whichever one they chose to adhere to. They would pay part of their taxes to the country of their national identity and part to the state of their residence. They would vote in the national elections of their choice but also have a voice in local affairs as residents of each of the three states. Palestinians in refugee camps in Syria and Lebanon and in temporary shelters in Jordan could be accommodated in the West Bank or Jordan. Palestine would have a capital in East Jerusalem and a share in the government of the municipality, which is already a de facto binational jumble. And importantly, neither Jews nor Arabs would have to feel that they were giving up their claims to precious soil that belonged to their forebears — a crucial psychological consideration — since the entire land of the confederation would belong to them all.
Warrant: Such an initiative would capitalize on strong regional ties and allow all parties to safeguard their interests.


“Such an initiative would not be a return to the old "Jordan is Palestine" plan of earlier decades. We have no intention of forcing unwanted change on the Jordanian kingdom. We value our relationship with the Jordanian and Egyptian governments, and we work very closely with them on a variety of matters of mutual concern in our tumultuous region. The ties between our countries are so strong that we have been able to successfully weather breakdowns in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, the regional instability of the Arab Spring, and even uncomfortable incidents such as the killing of a Jordanian judge at a border crossing this year. Instead, it should be up to the Jordanians, Egyptians, and Palestinians — in agreement with Israel — to determine the final configuration of their joint entities. A number of possibilities exist that could allow all sides to maintain their own national identities while creating an umbrella framework that safeguards the interests of all parties involved.”
Warrant: One iteration of the three-state solution would avoid the creation of a Palestinian state and instead extend Egyptian and Jordanian borders to include Palestinian enclaves. The benefit to this option would be to take away the control of Palestinian territory of dangerous terrorist groups like Hamas, which may have significant influence under a two-state solution.


“The solution to the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a three-state plan involving Israel, Jordan and Egypt. The implementation of this annexation plan, followed by full sovereignty, is imperative to ensure that Israel’s borders, citizens and livelihood remain safe and secure. Under the three-state solution, Arab-Israelis residing within Israel would be welcome to join the official new State of Israel. The remaining enclaves of Palestinian towns and villages in Judea and Samaria would become part of either Egypt or Jordan, and the Egyptian and Jordanian borders would extend accordingly to these designated towns. President Obama and numerous other political figures have continually called for a “two-state solution” to the Israel-Palestinian conflict. However, Israelis have become more realistic. Many remain hopeful for peace, but after experiencing the terror that occurred when Israel withdrew from Gaza and Hamas took over, they are skeptical that the trading of land for peace with the Palestinians is a viable solution. In fact, I would argue that an independent Palestinian state in Judea and Samaria would pose a grave threat to Israel. It is highly probably that control of the Gaza Strip by Hamas -- and its troubling connection to Iran-- would be extended to the West Bank and result in yet another terrorist state in Israel’s backyard.”
Warrant: Yet another kind of three-state solution would involve the separation of Gaza and the West Bank as two separate political entities, East and West Palestine. This plan has numerous advantages, including saving costs on governance, strengthening regional ties, and limiting the scope of the Jerusalem debate.


“Some of the biggest hurdles are about managing and connecting Gaza and the West Bank. By treating the two regions as separate states it would create much simpler negotiations with all parties involved. I maybe missing something here but there seem to be a list of pluses in taking this route. 1. **No need for creating a physical connection between the state, saving hundreds of millions for upgrading education, health care and governance.** 2. In addition to recognizing and working with Israel, **East Palestine (Gaza) would end up strengthening ties with Egypt and West Palestine (West Bank) with Jordan and Syria.** 3. The two-states would end up competing for peace within the global community. Nothing like a bit of competitive compassion to speed up the process. 4. **If one of the states decided to continue a military approach then the other would become a safe haven for families and individuals seeking a more peaceful solution.** Extremism would be contained and with the ability to move freely between East and West people would vote with their feet. 5. **The debate surrounding Jerusalem will be confined to West Palestine and not connected to activities going on in East Palestine.** East and West Pakistan will be the example given by many who disagree, but let’s remind ourselves that the bloodshed in 1971 is going on continuously as we speak in this region. The end result was the creation of a peaceful Bangladesh, a troubled yet semi-stable Pakistan and a strong India.”
**Warrant:** Some regard the separation of Gaza and the West Bank as so important that it’s necessary for the present stability and the future of Israeli-Palestinian relations. This solution has become more and more present in scholarship on the topic.


“Eiland, in any case, now regards the independence of Gaza from the West Bank as a convenience for tactical purposes. But it is neither this nor the "nightmare or fiasco" suggested by Afrasiabi. Nor should it be regarded as a temporary phase, to be overcome sometime in the future. **Rather, the permanent separation between Gaza and the West Bank is a necessary condition for both present stability and any future settlement of Israeli-Palestinian relations.** So an "all-out Israeli military invasion and reoccupation of Gaza" would be very unwise, if it ended Gaza's current independence. To give further credit, there have been some commentators who perceived separate independence as a beneficent prospect, such as S.C. Denney in 2008, Colin P. Clarke in 2009 and Ori Z. Soltes (who drew attention to the parallel with Pakistan) in 2010. They proposed this, however, as a new basis for negotiations. But just as the Palestinians fail to negotiate unity, they will resolutely refuse to negotiate disunity. Forget about negotiations, in this regard. Rather, note the reality of three states and reinforce it until it becomes irresistible. Something like this was recommended by Bruce Bialosky in 2009.
Analysis: There are many ways that a three-state solution has been proposed and could work in the real world. Your strategy could be to highlight several different kinds of three-state solutions, without picking a specific advocacy, with a general explanation of how they are all superior to a two-state solution. Conversely, you could focus more in depth on one of the various proposals and its benefits. No matter what, there are a couple important things you should keep in mind with this argument. For one, make sure to show respect for the territorial and religious disputes between Palestinians and Israelis; this goes for any argument you run on this topic, but is especially important when you’re offering your own take on a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This issue is very personal for many people, and requires a sensitive, balanced approach so that you do not alienate or marginalize any set of people or opinions. Furthermore, this argument will likely be challenged on the basis of probability: even if the United States were to end pressure for a two-state solution, it doesn’t necessarily follow that a three-state solution would occur. You can respond to this with the last card about how a three-state solution has become increasingly prominent in scholarly discussions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and an analysis about how pressure towards a two-state solution uniquely detracts from the probability of a three-state solution. Finally, when it comes time to weigh this argument, capitalize on the unique benefits that a three-state solution offers, such as engaging regional ties with Jordan and Egypt, and describe how those features offer a more viable and stable end to the conflict than a two-state solution ever could.
A2 – A three state solution would be preferable to a two-state solution

**Answer:** Even without U.S. pressure for a two-state solution, three-state solution is unlikely to occur.

**Warrant:** A three-state solution would weaken Israel’s strategic position in the West Bank. Moreover, Egypt is unlikely to accept the role of policing Gaza if Israel is unwilling to negotiate on the West Bank.


“Former US ambassador to the UN John Bolton proposed that the Palestinian territories should be added to the neighboring Arab states, which would mean Gaza becoming a part of Egypt and the West Bank a part of Jordan. In essence, this would mean going back to the pre-1967 situation, which is a core demand of all Arab countries. A three-state-solution would partly reverse Israel’s gains of the 1967 war: the West Bank settlements and the “separation wall” would probably have to be removed, the deep wells given to Jordanian control, and it is likely that the old town of Jerusalem would have to be ceded. Millions of Palestinian refugees could return. **However, if the three-state-solution does not lead to a regional, long-term pacification, the loss of the West Bank would weaken Israel’s strategic position.** Therefore it is likely that Israel might accept this solution only for Gaza, which has nothing to offer but is costly to control. **But it is unlikely that Egypt would accept the role of policing Gaza if no similar steps are undertaken in the West Bank. The three-state-solution would bury the idea of a Palestinian nationality and strengthen Pan-Arabism, which is not necessarily in the interest of western powers.**”
**Warrant:** Jordan doesn’t want to absorb the West Bank due to social identity issues.


“While the prospect of having to absorb the West Bank may be remote, Jordan does not want to have to do so, fearing it would destroy the fabric of society in the country, where about half the population is of Palestinian origin. This kind of formula means a Palestinian loss of their land and a Jordanian loss of their identity,” Mr. Odeh said. The fight has accelerated a regionwide battle for influence among Muslim states that was heating up even before the Israeli military attacked Gaza in response to rocket fire from Hamas. The greatest enmity has developed between Iran and Egypt, though just a few months ago it appeared the two were moving toward normalizing diplomatic relations, which had been downgraded when Iran named a street after Anwar el-Sadat’s assassin. “The horrible crime of the Zionist regime in Gaza has once again revealed the bloodthirsty face of this regime from disguise,” Iran’s supreme religious leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said late last month.”
**Warrant:** Following the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak, Egypt has become even more unwilling to align itself with American-Israeli interests.

<http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/comment/a-window-opens-but-egypt-refuses-responsibility-for-gaza>.

“Yet the equation is clearly changing. **With Mr Mubarak's overthrow, Egypt's policy towards the Palestinians is no longer the extension of Israeli and American priorities that it has been for three decades, reduced from a national cause to a security file.** As the recent reconciliation agreement between Fatah and Hamas demonstrates, **Cairo is once again marching to the beat of an indigenous drummer, its policies increasingly dictated by Egyptian rather than Israeli-American interests.** Tellingly in this respect, Egypt did not invite the EU to resume control of the border crossing, instead treating this as a purely inter-Arab matter in which Europeans serving Israeli interests have no business interfering. Yet the ascendancy of Egyptian priorities also explains why Cairo is unlikely to go very much further in lifting the blockade of Gaza than it already has. The viciousness of Mr Mubarak and his security chief Omar Suleiman's methods obscured what remains an Egyptian strategic priority: a refusal to once again assume responsibility for the Gaza Strip, and opposition to further fragmentation of the Occupied Territories and the nascent Palestinian polity.”

**Analysis:** The implications of this response are fairly straightforward: without regional support for the three-state solution, it’s inviable as an option, and thus the Pro team’s impacts won’t manifest in the real world. To build upon this response, you could couple it with some analysis either from your case or other evidence about how a two-state solution has a better probability of occurring. Make sure to do a direct comparison between their logic and yours.
Answer: A two-state solution is the only option for real peace.

Warrant: The right of Palestinians to their own state and near unanimous international support demand a two-state solution.


“Regardless of how the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has evolved over time, coexistence remains the single fact that will not change short of a catastrophe. **Neither side can dislodge the other by any means, including the use of force, as has been witnessed since 1948. Israel and the Palestinians must choose to either live in peace or in a state of constant hostilities and bloodshed. The Palestinians’ right to a state of their own, coupled with unanimous international support, makes the two-state solution the only viable option.** The Israeli settlements, however, and the resulting interdispersion of their population throughout the West Bank have led many to believe that the only solution left is the creation of one democratic state in which Israelis and Palestinians coexist with equal political and social rights.

Analysis: With so much international support behind the two-state solution, it’s unlikely that any other kind of plan can truly be realized. This means that even if a three-state solution is better than a two-state solution, a two-state solution is the best we can hope for. You can also use the issue of Palestinian rights to self-determination to throw doubt on the possibility of a three-state solution, which often requires rejecting the concept of a united Palestinian state. Some of your judges may not believe in the Palestinians’ right to their own state, but you can press this analysis further by saying that without a unique Palestinian state, peace is unlikely to be sustainable; many Palestinians will not rest until they perceive that their right to self-determination has been upheld. As with any argument focusing on ethnic or national identities, be respectful of the issues you’re talking about.
PRO – A two-state solution could devolve into violent conflict

**Argument:** There’s no practical way to draw out a sustainable two-state solution for Israel/Palestine. Far from being a viable end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a two-state solution would ultimately collapse into war.

**Warrant:** Israelis and Palestinians have contradictory visions for the two-state solution that would lead to conflict.


“The two-state slogan now serves as a comforting blindfold of entirely contradictory fantasies. The current Israeli version of two-states envisions Palestinian refugees abandoning their sacred “right of return,” an Israeli-controlled Jerusalem and an archipelago of huge Jewish settlements, crisscrossed by Jewish-only access roads. The Palestinian version imagines the return of refugees, evacuation of almost all settlements and East Jerusalem as the Palestinian capital. Diplomacy under the two-state banner is no longer a path to a solution but an obstacle itself. We are engaged in negotiations to nowhere. And this isn’t the first time that American diplomats have obstructed political progress in the name of hopeless talks.”
**Warrant:** Proposals for a two-state solution don’t properly consider the situation on the ground. They fail to identify how an independent and viable Palestinian state would be established.


“Yet these two-state solution proposals do not take into consideration the situation on the ground, in such a way that it is impossible to imagine how an independent and viable Palestinian state would be established. But while the two-state solution has yet to be totally ruled out, the United States must be considering an alternative solution more appropriate for Israel. This alternative solution would be based on Israel’s continued control over 60% of the West Bank and the establishment of a Palestinian state composed of isolated areas in the West Bank separated from each other by the territories taken over by Israel, including the Gaza Strip.”
**Warrant:** A two-state solution would generate new security issues for both Israelis and Palestinians.


“It has been the United States’ stand that a two-state solution will ensure the greatest long-term peace for the territorial disputes between Israel and Palestine. This is based on the premise that the sectarian and religious divides are too entrenched for the different populations to coexist within one state. **However, given the discontinuous nature of the territory under the current proposal for the state of Palestine, a two-state solution is doomed to fail. Would a Palestinian citizen need to pass through an entirely separate and hostile state to reach one part of her country from another? What security precautions would be taken to ensure that Palestinians traveling from Gaza to the West Bank would be safe in “foreign” Israel?** Essentially, the clouds of Israel’s continued occupation of the West Bank and siege of Gaza, combined with persistent Palestinian attacks against Israeli security forces and civilians, along with the unrealistic territory propositions, clog any drives toward a two-state solution.”
**Warrant:** Rhetoric coming out of the Israeli government currently suggests they would not tolerate the existence of a Palestinian state.


“Those who continue to portray a two-state solution as a possibility are - inadvertently or otherwise - providing Israel with cover to continue wiping Palestine off the map, because the point of no return seems to forever be on the horizon, and as long as that is the case, Israel can avoid blame for passing the point of no return. In reality, we passed it long ago. There was national upheaval in Israel about evacuating several thousand settlers from the Gaza Strip. This renders impossible the prospect of evacuating several hundred thousand from the West Bank and East Jerusalem, even if there was the political will to do so, which there has never been. There is nothing radical about highlighting this. **Netanyahu himself made clear in his last election campaign that there would be no Palestinian state under his watch - it is this pledge to his electorate that should be taken seriously, not his faux declarations to international audiences about seeking peace. His government comprises individuals and parties that openly reject a Palestinian state.** People are not listening. They do not want to listen. Delusion is always simpler, more comforting. It suits them, and it suits Israeli officials.”
Warrant: Recent experiences in the fragmentation of Arab states point to dangers in a two-state solution.

International Middle East Media Center. "Two-state Solution Failed, Now What?"
<http://imemc.org/article/74511/>.

“In this context, the statements made by US President Barack Obama a few weeks ago to Benjamin Netanyahu, that it is no longer possible to return to negotiations between the Palestinians and Israelis during what remains of his presidential term, could be understood as Washington abandoning the political process in the Middle East. It has reached an impasse and failed. The statements made by several US officials and analysts concur with this; the two-state solution has ended, not only as an Israeli option, but also as an international option. A few days ago, former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said that the establishment of a Palestinians state is no longer a valid matter and is not beneficial, rather it is harmful in light of the fragmentation of Arab countries that have been established for decades and centuries as well as Daesh’s control of areas within such countries. This matches Israel’s claim that the two-state solution is out of the question in case the Palestinian state falls into the hands of Daesh and other extremist movements.”
Analysis: This argument suggests that a two-state solution, rather than bring a peaceful end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, would bring a host of new security issues that would ultimately worsen conflict in the long-term. Try to make sure that you’re balanced when you’re making this argument; focus on how it would exacerbate hostility on both sides, rather than giving the appearance of a one-sided conflict formation. An example you could use is the continuing tension between Pakistan and India following partition, manifesting in several conflicts including current disputes over Kashmir. Con teams will likely try to respond to this argument with a sort of “try-or-die” analysis, arguing that the status quo is descending into conflict without any alternatives; the two-state solution at least provides a chance for hope. To counter this, you can show the existence of alternatives like one-state or three-state solutions that are more viable. Alternatively, you should call out “try-or-die” types of analyses for what they are: overblown rhetoric to justify bad policymaking. Even if the status quo is bad, that does not justify introducing new risks to the conflict with a two-state solution. This argument can be weighed effectively because if you can win the link that a two-state solution will at best fail or at worse collapse into further violence than present in the status quo, you can argue that the impacts rooted in most Con arguments about violence will only become worse.
A2 – A two-state solution could devolve into violent conflict

Answer: A two-state solution has the highest potential for peace.

Warrant: The two-state solution isn’t perfect, but given the complex issues of land partition, it’s really the best chance for long-term peace.


“To be sure, I still count myself among the dying breed of those who believe fervently in the two-state solution—two-states living side by side in peace and security, each enjoying sovereignty and political independence in part of the land that both claim as their exclusive national homes. This is still the best, by far, of all possible outcomes of the dispute. This is not to say that the two-state solution is without faults. Thus far, the two sides have not been able to agree on critical details, and there is no guarantee that achieving two-states would assure peaceful relations. But the two-state solution, based on partition of the land, appears to offer the best chance for long term peace. I would dump all Plan B’s and C’s in a heartbeat if leadership emerged in Israel and Palestine—and in the United States—that proved willing to move toward a two-state outcome.”
Pro Arguments with Con Responses

March 2017

Warrant: A two-state solution is the only way to affirm the equal rights of both peoples. One-state would be violent and divisive.


“British recognition of Palestine acknowledges the Palestinian right to self-determination, affirmed by the UK 18 years ago at the Berlin European council. Far from delegitimising Israel, it reaffirms our 1950 recognition of Israel on the borders created two years before, unless both parties agree to any change. I commend a petition asking our government to recognise Palestine. If we mean what we say about two-states, we need to will the means. By recognising both states in the two-state solution, we legitimise both. Affirming the equal rights of both peoples is consistent with our values and in our national interest. One-state – separate and unequal – would be unjust, unstable and violently divisive: an avoidable disaster for Israelis, Palestinians and us. Five years ago, the then foreign secretary William Hague said: “We reserve the right to recognise a Palestinian state bilaterally at a moment of our choosing and when it can best help bring about peace”. I’ve said it before, but never has it been more true – now is the time.”
**Warrant:** The U.S.-Israeli alliance is a special relationship built on strong historical ties that can surpass any disagreement in the long-term.


Over the course of the past two decades, the status quo between Palestinians and Israelis has been defined by a simmering conflict that is prevented from erupting by the pursuit of a political process or, at the very least, by the appearance of serious negotiations. While the negotiations have served the purpose of keeping peace, lack of progress has regularly resulted in episodic violence. The current impasse in negotiations, in the midst of a multitude of interconnected bubbling regional conflicts, brings us perilously close to explosion. **The only policy that actually offers a solution which would permanently end the conflict is the one of a two-state solution based on the ‘67 borders.** However, turning that policy into reality is impeded by the politics of Israel, Palestine and the United States, all the places that must come to agreement if we are to have any hope. Leaders do not seem prepared for painful compromises they must make, and for the public pushback they will face. On both sides, the loudest public voices are the vociferous and cynical lamentations of professional victims warning politicians against “betrayal” of sacred and historic “rights.” The fates of Sadat and Rabin linger in the minds of the leaders who prefer to lead and to live.

**Analysis:** This response can be used to effectively outweigh the Pro argument being made here: even if the two-state solution is imperfect, it is the only solution workable towards peace. Continuation of the status quo is simply not an option. You can combine the analysis here with similar types of arguments that you might be running in your own case to really flesh out your narrative.
**Answer:** The alternative to a two-state solution would result in far worse outcomes.

**Warrant:** A one-state solution would not meet the interests of either side of the conflict.


In what appeared to be an implicit criticism of Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump and nationalist, anti-immigrant leaders in Europe, Ban criticized politicians for scapegoating foreign migrants, especially Muslims, and engaging in “cynical and dangerous political math.” “Muslims in particular are being targeted by stereotyping and suspicion that have echoes of the dark past,” he said. Ban also voiced particular frustration that efforts to welcome an independent Palestinian state during his tenure have foundered. “It pains me that this past decade has been lost to peace. Ten years lost to illegal settlement expansion. Ten years lost to intra-Palestinian divide, growing polarization and hopelessness.” “This is madness. **Replacing a two-state solution with a one-state construct would spell doom: denying Palestinians their freedom and rightful future, and pushing Israel further from its vision of a Jewish democracy towards greater global isolation.**”

**Analysis:** This response is similar to the last one but takes a slightly different angle by focusing on the specifics of why the one state solution, often considered the primary alternative to the two-state solution, would be far worse than a two-state solution. By denying Palestinian freedom and damaging Israeli democracy, you could say that the one-state solution would provide even more impetus for conflict than the Pro team claims a two-state solution would create.
PRO – One-state solution prevents more conflict

**Argument:** The U.S. should stop forcing Israel into a two-state solution, as a one-state solution will better prevent conflict between Israelis and Palestinians

**Warrant:** A one-state solution is the likely option absent a two-state plan


It has been the United States’ stand that a **two-state solution** will ensure the greatest long-term peace for the territorial disputes between Israel and Palestine. This is based on the premise that the sectarian and religious divides are too entrenched for the different populations to coexist within one state. However, given the discontinuous nature of the territory under the current proposal for the state of Palestine, a **two-state solution is doomed to fail**. Would a Palestinian citizen need to pass through an entirely separate and hostile state to reach one part of her country from another? What security precautions would be taken to ensure that Palestinians traveling from Gaza to the West Bank would be safe in “foreign” Israel? **Essentially, the clouds of Israel’s continued occupation of the West Bank and siege of Gaza, combined with persistent Palestinian attacks against Israeli security forces and civilians, along with the unrealistic territory propositions, clog any drives toward a two-state solution.**
Warrant: The conflict between Israel and Palestine perpetuated by a two-state solution would be extremely costly to both states.


While there are clear economic advantages to a two-state solution, the study considers the volatility of a two-state relationship and includes an estimated cost of an all-too-possible violent uprising. Such a conflict would cost Israeli GDP some $250 billion (equivalent to 10 percent), and the West Bank and Gaza $46 billion (46 percent). Without knowing these figures, former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said that the establishment of a Palestinian state is no longer a valid matter and is not beneficial. Rather, he believes it is harmful in light of the fragmentation of Arab countries that have been established for decades and centuries, as well as ISIS’s control of areas within such countries.3 Thus, the premise of a two-state solution is damaging to the peace process itself whereas a one-state solution allows for a more preventive response to future conflicts. Moreover, if Palestine obtains statehood, any attacks against its neighbor can provide Israel with a *casus belli*. Without learning how to coexist with Israelis first, a two-state solution may put the region in even more peril. Any acts traced to Hamas will threaten the safety of a new state from its inauguration and cause even more grievances. Without including Hamas in the political process, the organization will continue to be a thorn in the side of both Israel and Palestine. Hamas has shown clear political clout in Gaza and has a functioning military wing to support its political agenda.4 By continuing to disregard Hamas in elections and peace negotiations, mediators are perpetuating the cycle of violence, most recently seen in the October 2015 knife intifada. This exclusion only prolongs the peace stalemate as it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to destroy Hamas, because it is so deeply rooted.5
Impact: The creation of a two-state solution will not be able to solve the conflict


Segregation, discrimination, and military repression are never the answer in the long-term because they fail to address the roots of the conflict; they merely prolong an inevitable clash which is bound to occur in the future. Even if Israel were to reverse decades of policy and decides to allow the creation of a Palestinian state it would not necessarily be the most viable option at this point. Despite the many difficulties, a one-state solution could carry a great deal more benefit for Israelis and Palestinians than a partitioning of the land- a fact many Jewish intellectuals recognized very early on. However, there are a still a variety of issues and problems of a single state that simply cannot be ignored.

Impact: In order to create peace, the U.S. should instead force a one-state solution


A single state solution does not guarantee a sufficient end to the conflict which would ultimately satisfy both parties, but what it does offer is the opportunity for a constructive, alternative vision to the failure of the already doomed two-state settlement. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has once again demonstrated that security can never be achieved through violence and repression. Lasting peace can ultimately be realized only through negotiation and dialogue, and this conflict is no different. Partition and segregation has proved to be an ineffective method thus far; therefore, the time has come to begin accepting a single state based on true democratic values and principles remains the only viable option.
Impact: Without solving the root cause of the problem, the conflict will never improve


But the two-state solution's biggest flaw is that it ignores the main cause of the conflict: the Palestinian dispossession of 1948. Today more than 5 million dispersed refugees and exiles long to return. It is fashionable to ignore this, as if Palestinians have less right to repatriation than the displaced Kosovars so ardently championed by NATO in 1999. As recognized by the Western powers then, the right to return was fundamental to peacemaking in the Bosnian crisis. It should be no less so in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Yet the present peace process aims to preserve a colonialist Israel and make Palestinian dispossession permanent. This is not only illegal and unjust, it is also short-sighted. As the early Zionist thinker Vladimir Jabotinsky warned in 1923, native resistance to dispossession is irrepressible and Zionism would only survive with constant force to quell it. Israel has heeded the lesson well. With an oppressive military occupation ruling over the West Bank and Gaza, it has herded Palestinians into ghettos and prisons, aiming to paralyze any resistance. The response to this brutality is misery, expressed by some in violence against Israelis, and continuing instability in the region. American collusion with Israel has led to growing anti-Americanism among Arabs and Muslims. If the aim of the peace process is to resolve the conflict properly, then we must tackle the root of the problem: the creation of an exclusive state for one people in another people's territory.

Analysis: If a two-state solution ultimately leads to more conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, it’s not an approach that should be pursued. As conflict is the primary reason that we’re involved in the region in the first place, this argument is not only intuitive but cuts right to the heart of the issues in the region today. If more conflict would be prevented by one approach, you can either way it as the most important point because conflict is the premise of the debate, or because this argument most directly deals with lives. Either way, it’s a good argument for weighing.
A2 – One-state solution prevents more conflict

Answer: A two-state solution is possible

Warrant: A one-state solution is actually the less likely option


The problem with a one-state solution lies in the feasibility of its implementation more than in the will to implement it, since there are major obstacles standing in its way. There is a strong international consensus over a two-state solution, in addition to Israel’s determination to remain a Jewish state conferring to its Jewish citizens precedence over others. Reaching an international consensus over an alternative one-state solution to replace the two-state solution that was accepted will be arduous and slow. Given that time is in the favor of Israel alone, the priority for the Palestinians should be to start taking action right away. The current situation could not be any better for Israel and its allies, since there is a weak Palestinian leadership creating a sense of illusory equality between the occupied and the occupier, which releases Israel from its legal responsibilities as an occupying power. Furthermore, there is a long peace process, which provides cover for the Israeli occupation, in addition to an international idleness and a divided Palestinian people incapable of resistance. Thus, Palestinians are the biggest losers from this situation and they must seek to change it.
Warrant: A two-state solution is no less likely than a one-state solution

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/nov/02/israel-palestine-two-state-solution>.

The case for a single, bi-national state is now reasonably familiar. Israel's illegal settlements are so entrenched that uprooting them to make way for a viable Palestinian state has become impossible. We should therefore call instead for a single, democratic state in the whole of the former British Mandate for Palestine. But the logic is incomplete. Declaring the two-state solution unrealistic does not, by itself, make self-evident the greater feasibility of one bi-national state. The latter would entail the end of Israel, and of Zionism, as we understand those terms today. Is this really a more likely scenario than the colonial infrastructure in the occupied territories being dismantled? Recent polls showing alarming levels of racism in Israeli public opinion, reflected in the new hard-right alliance between Likud and Yisrael Beitenu, suggest a polity that is not currently minded to dissolve itself under any amount of political pressure.
Warrant: A two-state solution is favored by Palestinians and has a good chance of success

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/nov/02/israel-palestine-two-state-solution>.

Obstacles to the decolonisation of the Palestinian territories are certainly real, but should not be overstated. The settlements themselves take up very little space. It is the settlement blocs which dissect Palestinian territory, seize key natural resources and render unviable an independent state on the land that remains. Palestinian negotiators have produced detailed maps showing how, with those obstacles largely removed, an exchange of land equivalent to 1.9% of the West Bank could leave 63% of Israeli colonists in situ, and the Palestinians with a contiguous, viable state (black areas to be annexed to Israel; orange areas to the future Palestinian state – Source: Palestine papers) The offer is a generous one, given that Israel's colonisation of the territories is illegal, as confirmed by the International Court of Justice in 2004. Ten years ago, the Arab League offered Israel full recognition in exchange for its withdrawing to its legal borders and agreeing a just solution for the Palestinian refugees, a formula agreed by the Palestinian leadership but rejected by Israel. While formally opposed to such a settlement, even Hamas has indicated that it would accept it if ratified by the Palestinian people who, though despairing of their situation, continue to favour a two-state settlement. The problem is less the two-state solution than Israel's rejectionist stance, which benefits from crucial backing, or acquiescence, from its patron in Washington, as well as the EU states. Vigorous and well-targeted public pressure on Israel and its western allies is required so as to change the strategic calculus for Israel, and render it in its own interests to withdraw to its legal borders.

Analysis: If a two-state solution is just as likely as a one-state solution, there’s no reason for the U.S. to stop pushing a two-state narrative. This response won't necessarily gain you any offense, but is a good segue into the response below.
**Answer:** A two-state solution would be better at preventing conflict

**Warrant:** Most in both regions prefer a two-state solution, meaning more would be happy if this route were taken


Sharp disagreement persists about the contours of a resolution, including differences over borders, security arrangements, Palestinian refugees, Israeli settlements, and the status of Jerusalem. That’s why many are skeptical that Secretary of State John Kerry will succeed in his quest for a lasting agreement that brings the conflict to an end. Nevertheless, according to a December 2013 joint Israeli-Palestinian poll, 63 percent of Israelis and 53 percent of Palestinians support the idea of two separate nations, co-existing side by side. But nothing is ever easy in the Middle East, not even reconciling the results of public opinion polling. A recent survey by Zogby Research Services revealed that only about one-third of Israelis and Palestinians currently see a two-nation solution as feasible.
Warrant: In the past, moves towards a one-state solution, even inadvertently, have led to conflict.


“Twenty-three years ago, almost to the day, the first Oslo Accord was signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation,” the Secretary-General told the Security Council in a briefing on the situation in the Middle East. Let me be absolutely clear: settlements are illegal under international law. The occupation, stifling and oppressive, must end. “Unfortunately, we are further than ever from its goals. The two-state solution is at risk of being replaced by a one-state reality of perpetual violence and occupation,” he warned. Despite warnings by the international community and the wider region, leaders on both sides have failed to take the difficult steps needed for peace, the UN chief said. Just yesterday, militants in the Gaza Strip fired yet another rocket into Israel, and in response, Israel fired four missiles at targets in Gaza. “Such attacks, and the response they elicit, do not serve the cause of peace,” he warned.

Analysis: If a one-state solution perpetuates conflict, the U.S. should keep pushing a two-state solution to lessen tensions in the region. This response is useful in not only removing your opponent's offense, but getting some of your own.
PRO - A two-state solution leaves Palestine crippled

Argument: Unable to recover from the many struggles Palestine will face as a truly independent state, odds are it will collapse.

Warrant: The Palestinian government cannot support itself.


“An IMF team has just completed a 13-day visit to East Jerusalem and Ramallah to assess the state of the economy in the West Bank and Gaza. The statement issued at the end of the trip by Karen Ongley, who led the team, does not make for happy reading, setting out as it does numerous issues which the Palestinian Authority (PA) is struggling to grapple with. The IMF is predicting economic growth of around 3.25% this year, slightly down on last year’s figure and far below the level needed to create all the jobs that are required. Unemployment is currently running at 27% across the two territories but it is worse in Gaza, where almost two-thirds of young people are jobless. Some donor-funded reconstruction projects are moving ahead in Gaza, but overall donor aid has been declining and the Palestinian Authority is facing a financing gap of around $500m for this year. “Reversing the decline in donor aid will be crucial to avoid too rapid budget compression and free up resources for investment,” said Ongley in her statement.”
Warrant: Palestine could become a failed state.


“After twenty years of support, with combined agencies providing the highest per capita funding ever given to a state or population, the Palestinian Authority (PA) has failed to construct the infrastructure required to establish a functional, sustainable quasi-state. Beyond the longstanding exogenous concerns of Hamas seizing the Gaza Strip in 2007, and Israel’s actions in Area C and in the policy arena (which certainly bear some burden of responsibility), we explore the future potential of this ongoing failure, following Michael Eisenstadt’s observation about the “four Fs”—fawda (chaos), fitna (extreme, violent internal strife), falatan (lawlessness) and fassad (corruption). It is vital to consider the role of a failing state in the context of a region struck by upheaval and harmed by a rise in the number of failing states, especially considering the risk of weak states generating yet more no-man’s-land in the regional and global struggles between Shia and Sunni Islam, or perhaps even between moderate Sunnis and Salafi-jihadist Sunnis.”
Warrant: Israeli aid is one of the only things keeping Palestine from collapse.


“With evidence already accumulating months ago that the Authority was facing economic collapse, however, Israel didn’t wait for the outcome of U.S. elections. To stave off fresh unrest and violence in Gaza—and the growth of even more radical Palestinian political factions on its doorstep—it entered the breach. Under the internationally backed Oslo Accords reached in the 1990s, Israel levies taxes on goods and services imported into the territories. It collects health, social security and other benefits from firms in Israel that employ Palestinians, and then transfers these taxes and revenues to the Palestinian Authority each month, taking a fee for doing so. Using that mechanism, Israel so far this year has transferred about one billion shekels ($262 million)—or nearly 8% of Palestinian total Palestinian revenues—in one-off payments to the Authority, according to the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and a person familiar with the transfers. The two sides also agreed in September to restructure $500 million in debts that the Authority owed to the state-owned Israel Electric Corporation for power supplied to the West Bank, another indication of their deeply intertwined economies. Meanwhile, to boost the Authority’s tax revenue, Israel has issued work permits to Palestinians to work in Israel.”
Impact: The collapse of the Palestinian Authority will surely spell the loss of millions of lives in both Israel and Palestine.


“The consequences of such a collapse would be severe and immediate. As Kerry noted, "There are some 30,000 Palestinian Authority security forces in the West Bank, and Israel’s security officials acknowledge their key role in preventing the situation from spiraling out of control, including by the way during the turmoil of three wars with Gaza." In other words, without the PA, much of the West Bank would suddenly be without a government, including security forces. This would be a disaster for Palestinians in many ways, but the one concern that I heard Israelis raise over and over is that there would be no one to keep a lid on unrest or violence. I heard two ways that people thought this could play out; both sounded very bad for Israelis and Palestinians alike. Either Israel would feel compelled to retake Palestinian cities and institute direct military rule over the West Bank or Israel would withdraw completely — perhaps even leading it to seal off the West Bank as it did with Gaza. In the latter scenario, people I spoke to expected that a security vacuum in the West Bank would allow Hamas to take over there. Israel would likely respond as it did to Hamas's takeover in Gaza, by sealing off the territory and putting it under a full blockade. In Gaza, this has been followed by a decade-long humanitarian crisis, sent unemployment as high as 43 percent, and contributed to periodic and deadly violence between Israel and Gaza. Repeating this in the West Bank would thus be a humanitarian catastrophe for Palestinians there. It would also be a security disaster for Israel. Hamas uses Gaza to launch rockets into neighboring towns in southern Israel; doing the same from the West Bank would bring major Israeli cities such as Jerusalem and Tel Aviv under much greater threat. The other way that Israel might respond is by replacing the PA with direct Israeli rule of PA-administered areas. Direct rule by a foreign power is not pleasant: not for the people being occupied, certainly, but also not for the soldiers tasked with occupying them. This could risk a third intifada, or Palestinian uprising, and even if Palestinians accept direct Israeli rule, it would still impose significant new burdens on both Palestinians and Israelis.
Analysis: Essentially the argument can be run in two ways. First, you could argue that Israel should be the state in charge of the territory under a single state solution because the government is very apparently significantly more stable. In many ways, Israel is already supporting some of the Palestinian citizenship, so they are probably not going to have much difficulty accommodating to a single state solution. You could similarly say that the government in charge of Palestine would need to be more stable to pursue a full two-state solution, so right now the U.S. should worry about preventing the creation of a failed state more than anything.
A2 – A two-state solution leaves Palestine crippled

**Answer:** Israel’s occupation is the reason for Palestine’s woes

**Warrant:** The occupation of Palestinian lands prevents access to international markets as well as economic development

“**Occupation imposes a heavy cost on the economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which might otherwise reach twice its current size,**” reads the report released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) on Tuesday. The report, which analyses the economy of the occupied Palestinian territories of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip for 2015, underlines Israeli “restrictions on the movement of people and goods; systematic erosion and destruction of the productive base; losses of land, water and other natural resources”, as some of the main factors hindering the territories’ ability to thrive. It adds that the separation of the Palestinian market from international markets, the blockade on Gaza, expansion of illegal Israeli settlements and the construction of the separation wall on Palestinian land, are further causes for the underdeveloped state of the Palestinian economy. “In 2015, Israel withheld Palestinian fiscal revenue for four months, donor aid declined and Israeli settlements continued to expand into the Occupied Palestinian Territory, while poverty and unemployment remained high,” according to the report.”
Warrant: Employment for Palestinians is often hard to come by due to Israeli attacks.


“Israel had discriminatory policies against Palestinians living in Jerusalem, making it difficult for them to find employment and often forcing them to leave the city, she said. Palestinians had continued to suffer from the excessive use of force and lack of protection against Israeli settler attacks. There were reports of possibly unlawful and extrajudicial killings of innocent people posing no danger to life. Detention of Palestinians was often coupled with violations of their rights and international humanitarian law. Reports of medical negligence in detention had continued to emerge. In the West Bank, Palestinians had continued to be displaced, mainly due to home takeovers, harassment and violence. Israel’s illegal presence in the Occupied Territory violated international humanitarian law and the Palestinian’s right to self-determination. On the Left Bank, Israeli policies had left Palestinians little access to water. The cumulative impact of almost 50 years of occupation and long-standing Israeli restrictions had stifled economic activity and resulted in an aid-dependent economy. That was indicated by the 26 per cent unemployment rate and 1.6 million people currently facing severe food insecurity, which was particularly alarming in Gaza.”

Analysis: While Israel might be giving the Palestinian Authority some level of assistance, it’s occupation in Gaza and continued sabotage of the Palestine people’s prosperity has no doubt contributed to poverty in the region. A two-state solution solves because it makes cut in stone Palestinian sovereignty and would spell an end to Israeli occupation of a sovereign land.
Answer: The threat of “Palestinian terror” is overblown.

Warrant: Palestinians are often the victims in bloody skirmishes.

Seumas Milne “It's Palestinians who have the right to defend themselves” *The Guardian*
20 November 12.
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/nov/20/palestinians-have-right-defend-themselves>.

“In fact, an examination of the sequence of events over the last month shows that Israel played the decisive role in the military escalation: from its attack on a Khartoum arms factory reportedly supplying arms to Hamas and the killing of 15 Palestinian fighters in late October, to the shooting of a mentally disabled Palestinian in early November, the killing of a 13 year-old in an Israeli incursion and, crucially, the assassination of the Hamas commander Ahmed Jabari last Wednesday during negotiations over a temporary truce. Israel's prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, had plenty of motivation to unleash a new round of bloodletting. There was the imminence of Israeli elections (military attacks on the Palestinians are par for the course before Israeli polls); the need to test Egypt's new Muslim Brotherhood president, Mohamed Morsi, and pressure Hamas to bring other Palestinian guerrilla groups to heel; and the chance to destroy missile caches before any confrontation with Iran, and test Israel's new Iron Dome anti-missile system. So after six days of sustained assault by the world's fourth largest military power on one of its most wretched and overcrowded territories, at least 130 Palestinians had been killed, an estimated half of them civilians, along with five Israelis. The goal, Israel's interior minister, Eli Yeshai, insisted, had been to "send Gaza back to the middle ages".
**Warrant:** Most of the international community has no become anti-Palestine. Especially with the election of Donald Trump. Any threat from a failed Palestinian state would likely be met with overwhelming force.


“He warned Palestinians against suing Israel in the International Criminal Court (ICC) or International Court of Justice (ICJ) – threatening severe steps, including cutting off aid, closing PLO offices in Washington, even restoring the organization to terrorist group status, contemptuous of their fundamental rights, one-sidedly supporting Israeli state terror. He’s using the power of his presidency to cow Palestinians into submission, making a mockery of claiming he aims to achieve “the ultimate deal,” unattainable for half a century – Israeli/Palestinian peace at last. His message to Palestinians was sent by phone through the US consulate, not the White House or State Department. He signed an executive order to execute a congressional resolution drafted during Obama’s tenure. In 2015, a clause was added to foreign aid legislation – cutting off US aid if the PLO or dominant Fatah faction sues Israel in an international tribunal. According to an unnamed Palestinian source, “(d)espite that resolution by Congress, the Palestinian leaders were counting on petitioning the court as a means of halting the settlements.” “But the messages arriving from Washington in recent days made clear that any such step by the Palestinians would lead to a severe American reaction, so much so that some talked about returning the PLO to the list of terrorist organizations””

**Analysis:** Many are concerned of the security threat that Israel poses to Palestine, but realistically, the Palestinian Authority would have so much to lose from a massive attack on Israel including backlash from the United States – especially with the election of Trump. Odds are they would clamp down on terror and radicalism pretty quickly if given full sovereignty.
PRO – US enables oppression

**Argument:** The U.S. doesn’t actually pressure Israel to create a solution, they just enable Israel to continue its agenda.

**Warrant:** U.S. only pressures to save face


*American politicians need the two-state slogan to show they are working toward a diplomatic solution, to keep the pro-Israel lobby from turning against them and to disguise their humiliating inability to allow any daylight between Washington and the Israeli government.* Finally, the “peace process” industry — with its legions of consultants, pundits, academics and journalists — needs a steady supply of readers, listeners and funders who are either desperately worried that this latest round of talks will lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state, or that it will not.
Warrant: U.S. has actively blocked a Two-state solution


During that war, of course, Israel invaded and began its occupation of Gaza and the West Bank—an occupation that persists still today nearly five decades on. The ethnic cleansing also continues incrementally as Palestinians’ homes are demolished or life is otherwise made so miserable for them that they are forced to relocate in order for Jewish settlements to be built, “facts on the ground” designed to prejudice the outcome of negotiations under the US-led so-called “peace process”. And while the media report on the “peace process” as though the US was truly an objective mediator, the truth, also scarcely concealed beneath the thin veil of rhetoric, is that it is the process by which the US and Israel block implementation of the two-state solution, in favor of which there is otherwise a consensus among the international community.

Warrant: The U.S. is protecting Israel instead of pressuring them.


The world superpower also uses its weight to protect Israel from censure for its perpetual violations of international law, acting to prevent Israeli officials from being held accountable for their crimes. For example, in the aftermath of “Operation Cast Lead”, the US sought to bury the report of a UN fact-finding mission (the so-called “Goldstone Report”) that found both Israel and Hamas had committed war crimes. The US’s goal was to ensure that the report’s recommendations were not implemented—particularly the recommendation to refer the matter to the International Criminal Court (ICC) absent credible investigations by the Israeli government and Hamas governing authority into allegations of war crimes, which never occurred (the IDF’s self-investigations, needless to say, were rightfully recognized by the international community as a whitewash).
Warrant: The U.S. actively prevents international pressure


There is a popular view that the Israel-Palestine conflict is inevitable, too complicated for a practical solution to ever be found, which leads to resignation that it will just persist forever. This view is mistaken. **There is a solution, which is for international law to be applied. This is the outcome that Israel and the US have fought so aggressively to prevent under the “peace process”, which is premised upon the rejection of the applicability of such treaties as the UN Charter and the Geneva Conventions and, instead, elevates Israel’s wants over Palestinians’ rights.** Hence the accommodative reporting in the mainstream media describing East Jerusalem as “disputed” territory, etc., ad nauseum.

Analysis: This argument acts as a straight link turn on most neg arguments. The neg will go up and say pressure key to creating a solution, but if you prove that U.S. pressure is actually counterproductive then you not only generate offense off of your own impacts but also steal theirs by saying that negating only keeps the status quo and doesn’t solve anything.
A2 – US just enables oppression

**Answer:** U.S. wants tangible peace.

**Warrant:** Ending conflict key to larger U.S. middle eastern strategy.


From there one can see why, in many ways, the United States feels a greater urgency and drive for the peace talks than do the Palestinians and Israelis themselves. Here, neither side believes the other is serious about real compromise and each actively cultivates a sense of historic victimhood. **Washington, by contrast, deeply believes that ending this conflict is the key to unlocking its own regional strategic dilemmas.**

**Warrant:** U.S. ending conflict would enable better relationships with the greater region.


The answer has a number of levels, but the most important is this: **The United States believes that if it can end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, its fraught relationship with the Muslim world will greatly improve, thereby allowing America to accomplish much that is currently eluding it in places like Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan, not to mention easing its role as the prime guarantor of Israel’s own security.** Gen. James L. Jones, who stepped down recently as President Obama’s national security adviser, often told visitors that if he had to pick one foreign policy issue to tackle, it would be the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, because its resolution would help with all the others.
Warrant: The U.S. doesn’t want more bloodshed.


Finally, there is future violence. Ten years ago, when peace talks led by President Bill Clinton at Camp David fell apart, the second Palestinian uprising broke out, leading to exploding buses, suicide bombings and harsh Israeli countermeasures. Thousands — most of them Palestinians — were killed. Israeli military and intelligence officials say that while the forces General Dayton helped train are the most professional Palestinian security men ever, their discipline and professionalism could break down without the prospect of an independent state.

Analysis: This contests the link into the aff argument. If the U.S. isn’t in fact just an actor trying to empower Israel but is instead trying to push for peace then this 1. Delinks the aff argument and 2. Acts as a link into a peace creation argument. The evidence is also nuanced enough to say that it is in the U.S.’s geostrategic interest to create peace, as opposed to prolong it, which is a more compelling argument to people that are more pro-U.S., as most of your judges will be.

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Champion Briefs
March 2017
Public Forum Brief

Con Arguments with Pro Responses
CON – A two-state solution prioritizes civilians

**Argument:** A two-state solution stabilizes civic society and protects civilians at risk for military or state violence.

**Warrant:** Majority of world leaders will only support the advancement of peace through a two-state solution.


The creation of a Palestinian state remains the only acceptable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, according to the resolution of an international meeting in Paris convened to signal frustration at the stalemate in peacemaking. The final statement reaffirmed that Israel’s 1967 borders would be the basis for any agreement, offered incentives to both sides and told them to avoid steps that work against that solution. It welcomed the recent United Nations Security Council resolution condemning Israeli settlements, but didn’t call for any follow-up action at the UN. “The two-state solution continues to have widespread support, and is still the objective of the international community,” Hollande said. **But the two-state solution is threatened by the continued building of settlements, by the weakness of the peace camp, by mistrust between the two sides, and by the terrorists who have always feared a peace settlement.** The participants also said they’re ready to offer economic and political incentives to buttress a peace agreement, including a kind of “European special privileged partnership,” according to the final statement, which didn’t provide details.
**Warrant:** Current military operations into Gaza are incur civilian casualties and impact to long term harms.


Between 8 July and 27 August, more than 2,100 Palestinians were killed in the Gaza Strip, along with 66 Israeli soldiers and seven civilians in Israel. The UN says the *vast majority of Palestinian deaths are civilian*. But figures from previous operations over the past six years in the densely populated Gaza Strip show it is not the first time civilians have paid a heavy price. The UN says at least 2,104 Palestinian died, including 1,462 civilians, of whom 495 were children and 253 women. **An Israeli government official told the BBC that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) had killed 1,000 "terrorists" during the assault on Gaza. The point is that it is hard to say with certainty at this stage how many of the dead in Gaza are civilians and how many were fighters.** This is in no sense the fault of the UN employees collecting the figures - their statistics are accompanied by caveats and described as preliminary and subject to revision. Israel's military had put the overall Palestinian death toll at 1,166, of whom it said 295 were "uninvolved" civilians. **The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights estimates that 1,417 Palestinians died, 926 of whom were civilians. An Amnesty International report into the operation said lives were lost because Israeli forces "frequently obstructed access to medical care." It also condemned the use of "imprecise" weapons such as white phosphorous and artillery shells.**
Warrant: US and international pressure is key to pursuing a solution that protects civilian lives at risk.


This conflict is emphatically not between equals, but between the occupier and the occupied. Israel is creating new facts on the ground “leading towards one state and perpetual occupation” as Kerry warned. Before asking what Britain can do now to promote a just peace, it is worth saying what won’t work. Quiet diplomacy, for one. We’ve tried that. Quiet diplomats get ignored. Second, US-led shuttle diplomacy, such as Kerry conducted for nine months. The US is necessary but not sufficient to resolve this conflict. And while no one can be sure what hand President Trump will play, the omens are bad. And we can’t leave it to the two conflicting parties to sort it out. The Middle East peace process became just that – a process. Direct unconditional negotiations between the strong and the weak only leave the weak, weaker. That’s not how to end the occupation. It will need an initiative by the international community, shaping the outcome, providing security guarantees, upholding the law, ensuring a better tomorrow for both peoples. The Paris conference should develop a wider consensus based on security council resolution 2334 and re-commit all Arab states to recognising Israel in return for a sovereign Palestine.
Warrant: US pressure is key to incentivizing Israeli military and security institutions to recognize the rights of Palestinians.


It is not enough to offer more carrots to both parties, hoping that both will bite. Israel has had a surfeit of carrots over the decades. Incentives to the Palestinians are contingent on ending the occupation – which only Israel can do. If we mean what we say about two states, we need to will the means. By recognising both states in the two-state solution, we legitimise both. Affirming the equal rights of both peoples is consistent with our values and in our national interest. One state – separate and unequal – would be unjust, unstable and violently divisive: an avoidable disaster for Israelis, Palestinians and us. Five years ago, the then foreign secretary William Hague said: “We reserve the right to recognise a Palestinian state bilaterally at a moment of our choosing and when it can best help bring about peace”. I’ve said it before, but never has it been more true – now is the time.
Warrant: Retracting US Pressure will entrench the status quo stalemate, destabilizing both Israeli and Palestinian society.


With few viable or popular alternatives, the most likely choice may be to simply maintain the status quo — though few believe that is possible in the long term. A common prediction, as Mr. Kerry stated, is that Israel will be forced to choose between the two core components of its national identity: Jewish and democratic. This choice, rather than coming in one decisive moment, would probably play out in many small choices over a process of years. For instance, a 2015 poll by the Israel Democracy Institute found that 74 percent of Jewish Israelis agreed that “decisions crucial to the state on issues of peace and security should be made by a Jewish majority.” That pollster also found that, from 2010 to 2014, Jewish Israelis became much less likely to say that Israel should be “Jewish and democratic,” with growing factions saying that it should be democratic first or, slightly more popular, Jewish first. Many analysts also worry that the West Bank government, whose scant remaining legitimacy rests on delivering a peace deal, will collapse. This would force Israel to either tolerate chaos in the West Bank and a possible Hamas takeover or enforce a more direct form of occupation that would be costlier to both parties. This risk of increased suffering, along with perhaps permanent setbacks in the national ambitions of both Palestinians and Israelis, is why Nathan Thrall, a Jerusalem-based analyst with the International Crisis Group, told me last year, “Perpetuating the status quo is the most frightening of the possibilities.”

Analysis: Without US pressure, the situation in Palestine and Israel stalemates as it is right now, inciting more violence and destabilizing both Palestinian and Israeli society. Pressure from the US is the only progressive moves towards a solution that protects civilians across the spectrum rather than retrenching the already violent and unstable status quo.
A2 – A two-state solution prioritizes protecting civilians

**Answer:** The two-state solution is not possible anymore.

**Warrant:** There is no longer political support from the Israeli government to pursue a two-state solution.


There is plenty of blame to go around. The **Palestinian leadership is divided between two governments that cannot come to terms.** The leadership in the West Bank lacks the political legitimacy to make far-reaching but necessary concessions, and the leadership in Gaza does not even recognize Israel, whose citizens it frequently attacks. The United States, which has brokered talks for years, has taken more than a few missteps. And most important, the current Israeli leadership, though it nominally supports a two-state solution, appears to oppose it in practice. **Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister since 2009, endorsed the two-state solution in a speech that year. But he continued to expand West Bank settlements and, in 2015, said there would be “no withdrawals” and “no concessions.”** Mr. Netanyahu appears personally skeptical of Palestinian independence. His fragile governing coalition also relies on right-wing parties that are skeptical of or outright oppose the two-state solution. **Israeli public pressure for a peace deal has declined.** The reasons are complex: demographic changes, an increasingly powerful settler movement, outrage at Palestinian attacks such as a recent spate of stabbings, and bitter memories of the Second Intifada in the early 2000s, which saw frequent bus and cafe bombings.
**Warrant:** Palestinians are starting to consider steps towards a one-state solution.


Once limited to small groups of politically independent weekly protesters against Israel’s military occupation, the idea is now being widely discussed. **Palestinian intellectuals, businessmen and political officials who long championed the two-state solution are starting to strategize about what some argue is an already existing one-state reality.** “Because of the lack of a political horizon, the inability of the sides to sit down together, because of the reality on the ground of expanding settlements and road checkpoints, people started to believe that the two-state solution is dead,” said Bashar Azzeh, a youth activist and marketing director at the Wassel Group, a Palestinian logistics company. “Some people are saying: Let’s demand full human and civil rights rather than national rights; then maybe the international community will listen to us.” A poll this month by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research found a nearly 10-percentage-point jump over the last three months of Palestinians who say the two-state solution is no longer viable. Support for a one-state solution has advanced in the same period to 36% from 32%.

**Analysis:** Insofar as there is declining political support for the implementation of a two-state solution across the board, pursuing an unpopular solution may render more violence in the long term as both parties remain resistant.
Answer: A two-state solution would hurt Palestinians.

Warrant: Hamas would constitute a governing power in a two-state scenario for Palestinians.


One day after celebrating a landmark reconciliation accord for Palestinian unity, Khaled Meshal, the Hamas leader, said on Thursday that he was fully committed to working for a two-state solution but declined to swear off violence or agree that a Palestinian state would produce an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. “The whole world knows what Hamas thinks and what our principles are,” Mr. Meshal said in an interview in his Cairo hotel suite. “But we are talking now about a common national agenda. The world should deal with what we are working toward now, the national political program.” He defined that as “a Palestinian state in the 1967 lines with Jerusalem as its capital, without any settlements or settlers, not an inch of land swaps and respecting the right of return” of Palestinian refugees to Israel itself.

Analysis: An imposed two-state solution may empower Hamas’ hold over the Palestinian people rather than a legitimate government authority. This comparatively worsens the human rights situation for Palestinians as Hamas remains a volatile power largely associated with indiscriminate violence.
CON – We must act now to achieve a two-state solution

**Argument:** The two-state solution must occur quickly or it will never occur at all. The US is key to this

**Warrant:** Israel has settled a huge amount of Palestinian land


**Settlements are communities of Jews that have been moving to the West Bank since it came under Israeli occupation in 1967.** Some of the settlers move there for religious reasons, some because they want to claim the West Bank territory as Israeli land, and some because the housing there tends to be cheap and subsidized. **Settlements are generally considered to be a major impediment to peace.** About 500,000 Israelis live in the settlements, of which there are about 130 scattered around the West Bank. Roughly 75 percent of settlers live on or near the West Bank border with Israel. **Some of the settlements are vast communities that house tens of thousands of people and look like suburban developments.** Some look like hand-built shanty outposts. The map on the right shows settlements as blue boxes; red dots mark recent settlement construction activity. **Settlements create what Israelis and Palestinians call "new facts on the ground."** Palestinian communities are split apart and their connection to the land weakened, while Jewish communities put down roots in territory meant for Palestinians. In effect, it blurs or constrains the boundaries of any future Palestinian state. For some settlers, this is the point: they want the West Bank fully incorporated as Israeli territory and are trying to make that happen. **The settlements and military occupation required to defend them makes life really difficult for Palestinians.** Palestinians are excluded from certain Israeli-only roads and forced to go through a number of security checkpoints.
**Warrant:** This is causing the window for a two-state solution to close quickly. Politicians in support of the two-state solution will also leave office soon.


And so, for as long as the security situation remains stable—hardly a given considering the growing boldness of protesters in the West Bank and the increasing range of rockets fired from Gaza—Israel has arrived at a strange moment of opportunity. Beneath the apathy and the rising enthusiasm for the right lies a latent but very real desire for peace, waiting to be mobilized. In fact, what many Palestinians don’t understand is that Israelis will never be more open to a peace agreement than they are now. But what many Israelis don’t understand is that they will never have a better partner than Mahmoud Abbas. Abbas must sometimes wonder what his long career as a peacemaker has yielded.

A December poll showed Palestinians preferred Hamas’s approach to ending the Israeli occupation over that of Abbas by a two-to-one margin. As he exits, so will an entire generation of Palestinian leaders who grew up alongside Jews, fought them for decades, and then made a strategic decision to work for rapprochement. “We’re not sustainable anymore,” Saeb Erekat, the chief Palestinian negotiator, told me. Not just unsustainable, but unlikely ever to be replicated: “This is your dream leadership of Mahmoud Abbas and Salam Fayyad,” he said. “This is a dream team! Do you think Palestinians will agree to another leadership like this in the next six hundred years?” Dan Rothem, an Israeli map expert, has illustrated how Israel could actually create a functioning border using a combination of natural and manmade barriers. As settlers increase their presence in predominantly Arab neighborhoods, that solution is becoming obsolete. Tractors are at work on Givat Hamatos, a Jewish neighborhood that would sever Beit Safafa, one of the largest Arab enclaves, from the rest of Arab East Jerusalem. Givat Hamatos, Rothem said, “drives a dagger” into the possibility of drawing a border through Jerusalem. (The only remaining option, to make Jerusalem an open city, would be a security nightmare.) The plan to place the Old City under a five-nation consortium, agreed upon in principle by Abbas and Olmert, is similarly at risk, as Israel continues to encircle the area with settler outposts and national parks.
**Warrant:** Settlements have increased sharply in the past year and will only grow more


**Israel has embarked on the construction of 1,195 new settlement units in the West Bank for the first six months of 2016—a 40 percent increase on the previous six month period,** an anti-settlement watchdog said Wednesday. Peace Now, an organization that monitors Israel’s settlement activity in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, cited official figures from Israel’s Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS) that showed an increase from 850 settlement construction starts between July and December 2015. **The figure for January to June in 2016 was higher than any period from January 2014 onwards.**
Warrant: Settlements ruin any chance of diplomacy in the future. We must act before it’s too late.


Israel recently confirmed that it would appropriate a large tract of fertile land in the occupied West Bank. The land is near Jordan, in an area where Israel already has many illegal settlement farms built on land Palestinians seek for a state.

Ban said he was “deeply troubled” by reports that the Israeli government had approved plans for more than 150 new homes in “illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank”.

“These provocative acts are bound to increase the growth of settler populations, further heighten tensions and undermine any prospects for a political road ahead,” Ban told a United Nations security council meeting on the Middle East.

Samantha Power, US ambassador to the United Nations, said Washington also strongly opposed settlement activity.

“Steps aimed at advancing the Israeli settlement programme … are fundamentally incompatible with the two-state solution and raise legitimate questions about Israel’s long-term intentions,” Power told the council.

Riyad Mansour, the chief Palestinian delegate at the United Nations, called on the security council take action against Israeli settlements.

“It must involve measures by all states and go beyond not rendering aid or assistance to holding Israel accountable for its actions,” Mansour said.
Warrant: This has almost reached the point of irreversibility


Diplomats and international monitors are increasingly concerned that the drive, which has seen Israel settle more than half a million of its people at a cost of tens of billions of dollars, may be reaching the point of irreversibility.

The ongoing expansion further diminishes the prospect of any significant progress being made when foreign ministers from 20 countries meet in Paris this week to discuss how to revive Middle East peace efforts, given the settlements have been a central obstacle for at least two decades.

On Monday, in a sign that he is aware of the growing international pressure, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he was in favor of parts of the Arab peace initiative, a proposal put forward by Saudi Arabia in 2002 that would grant Israel recognition in exchange for withdrawing from the West Bank and East Jerusalem, among other steps.

Yet while some momentum may be building, there is scant indication the settlement enterprise can be halted, let alone reversed, leaving a fundamental barrier in the path to peace.
Warrant: The US needs to take real action to end this, not simply condemn it


President George H.W. Bush withheld loan guarantees that Israel needed to absorb Soviet Jewish immigrants until Israel agreed not to settle the immigrants in the occupied territories. And during the Clinton administration, the U.S. Congress passed legislation to deduct the amount of money Israel spent on settlement-related activity from U.S. assistance to Israel (apart from security aid). Most recently, the administrations of George W. Bush and Barack Obama have called on Israel to freeze all settlement activity, including “natural growth.”

Yet Israel has continued to expand its settlements. Except for a ten-month period in 2009-10 when the country imposed a moratorium on new housing starts, it has largely ignored U.S. views. In response, the United States has offered periodic condemnation, but no actions to back up its words.

Not only has the United States taken few serious measures to dissuade Israeli settlement activity, but it effectively continues to subsidize it. U.S. law and regulations prohibit official U.S. aid to Israel from being spent in the occupied territories. But money is fungible. U.S. aid flows into Israel’s entire budget, and thus frees up money that can fund settlement activity.

There is a solution to this problem—one that was made law for a period in the 1990s: to deduct, dollar for dollar, the amount of money budgeted by Israel for settlements from official U.S. (non-security) assistance. Israel could still make its own decisions regarding how much to spend on settlements, but U.S. aid would not subsidize such spending.

These moves would have a significant political impact in Israel, as opponents of the settlements would use the change in U.S. policy to galvanize support for their views. In the short term, it might not lead to a peace breakthrough, but it would send a critically important message of U.S. seriousness on a core issue in the peace process.

For almost five decades now, Israel has defied international pressure and U.S. advice and continued to expand its settlements in the occupied territories. **Without a halt to the settlements**, as well as an end to Palestinian terrorism and incitement, **a peace deal remains as far away as ever**. The settlements represent a policy of choice, not of necessity, and will do little to guarantee Israel’s long-term security. **It is long past time for the United States to match its words with deeds.**

**Analysis:** The US has long condemned the policy of Israeli settlement, and yet Israel has done nothing and continued to expand settlements. It is past time that the US put real pressure on Israel in order to put an end to the settlement process. If we do not do this now, the chance for a two-state solution fades away entirely. This argument works best when paired with arguments about why the two-state solution is the ideal or best solution, as this provides the inherency as to why US action is necessary.
A2 – We must act now to achieve a two-state solution

**Argument:** The US took concrete action in the UN, yet it has not changed the situation.

**Warrant:** Israel does not care about the actions the UN takes.


Israel could advance plans this week for thousands of more homes in settlements in annexed east Jerusalem in defiance of a landmark UN resolution demanding an end to such activity. The resolution, which passed after the United States took the rare move of abstaining, infuriated Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu who lashed out at President Barack Obama and vowed not to abide by it. **On Wednesday, a Jerusalem planning committee is to discuss issuing building permits for 618 housing units in the mainly Palestinian eastern sector of the city, according to the Ir Amim NGO, which monitors settlement building.**

Jerusalem deputy mayor Meir Turjeman, who also heads the committee, has reportedly also spoken of seeking to advance plans for some 5,600 other units at earlier stages in the process. **On Tuesday he told AFP there were no plans to call off discussions in response to the UN vote.** The hundreds of building permits were on the agenda before the resolution was passed.

"We'll discuss everything that's on the table in a serious manner," he said. And on his Facebook page Turjeman: "I'm not concerned by the UN or anything else trying to dictate our actions in Jerusalem."
Analysis: The UN resolution passing is the most concrete action the US has ever taken to discourage settlement. Yet Israel has done nothing. This shows several things. Firstly, the uproar over just this shows that the US is not likely to take any more intense action over the settlement controversy which means that they are likely to have no effect. Secondly, the few actions the US have taken have been met only with derision from Israel and backlash in the US leading to no real change.
Argument: The two-state solution is already gone

Warrant: The number of settlers has already become too high


A question for declared supporters of the two-state solution, which means almost everyone, from U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry to Prof. Shlomo Avineri: You all say that this solution is in great danger, maybe even in its death throes. So what needs to happen for you to admit that it has breathed its last? What else needs to happen for you to declare it dead? Another 10,000 settlers? Or 20,000? Another five years of stalemate? When will you admit it?

Most people know the truth but refuse to admit it. They know that the number of settlers has reached a critical mass. They know that no party in Israel will ever evacuate them. And without all of them being evacuated – and this, too, is something they know – there is no viable Palestinian state.

They know that settler Israel never intended to implement the two-state solution. The fact is that all Israeli governments – all of them – continued the settlement enterprise.

It’s hard to begin again from scratch. The two-state solution was ideal. It guaranteed relative justice to both sides and a state for each nation. But Israel did everything it could to destroy it via the settlements, the one irreversible factor in the equation of the Israel-Palestine relationship.

That’s why the world’s anger at the settlements has suddenly increased: It knows they are irreversible. Yet two-state supporters, both in Jerusalem and in Washington, never did anything to stop them when it was still possible. The conclusion is unavoidable: declaring the death of the two-state solution. But instead, they continue waiting for a miracle.
**Warrant:** Settlements, fear, and hardline leaders have destroyed any hope for the two-state solution


One is the view that the election of a hard-right government in Israel last year and the recent American election that gave the Republican Party unified control of the government are two points on a continuum of rising nationalism that has swamped democracies worldwide. Because Israel’s slide was driven so much by the Palestinian conflict that has swallowed the Middle East for generations, it was easy for the casual observer to miss its connection to the wave that has brought nationalists to power elsewhere, mostly in Europe. (One irony: Israel’s founding in 1948 was driven by Jews who had fled the consequences of the last tide of nationalism to wash away Europe’s old order.)

This knowledge results in some genuine illiberalism, in an effort to keep up the pretense that Israel is both a democracy and a Jewish-majority state. Israel accomplishes this illiberalism largely by denying full personhood and voting rights to Palestinians living in the West Bank. **Meanwhile, the country’s hard-right government talks about a one-state solution to the conflict, with Palestinians as permanent non-citizens stuck in a sort of limbo in the West Bank and in Gaza. To give Palestinians full citizenship and voting rights would eventually mean the end of a Jewish majority in Israel, which sort of negates the nation’s reason for existing in the first place.**

Israel has been making the one-state solution inevitable with continued construction of settlements that have turned the West Bank into a sort of disconnected archipelago, with the Palestinian population isolated in pockets cut off from each other. The lack of contiguous land has pretty much made the geographic formation of a Palestinian state impossible. But for the purposes of diplomacy, the United States

has long pretended otherwise, even as it pushed Israel to freeze construction of new settlements.

**Which brings me to the second point. One reason Israel refuses to stop building settlements and colonizing the West Bank is stubbornness born of existential fear.** It is the mindset of “Why should we do anything first if the Palestinians don’t want to negotiate with us, or even recognize our right to exist?”

**Warrant:** Israel is quickly growing more hardline, religious, and the settler agenda is growing


During the five years I spent researching the conflict in Israel and Palestine for my recent book, *The Two-State Delusion: Israel and Palestine*, it became increasingly clear that while talks over the past 25 years have focused on borders, settlements, Jerusalem and the right of return of refugees, **demographic changes may have made the idea of a two-state solution obsolete even before such a solution could be worked out.**

The birth rates of Haredim, or ultra-Orthodox Jews, and of Palestinian-Israelis exceed those of Orthodox and secular Jews.

Twenty years ago, 60 percent of Jewish Israeli children attended secular schools. Today, that number is 40 percent, and the trend shows no sign of leveling off.

With more religious education, it’s perhaps not surprising that Israel’s best demographers foresee an increasingly religious Israel. The Haredim will account for 20 percent of the population by 2030, and between 27 percent and 41 percent in 2059, according to Israel’s Central Bureau of Statistics.

Moreover, a comprehensive survey conducted on behalf of Germany’s Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Foundation, in cooperation with the Macro Center for Political Economics in Tel Aviv, of youth aged 15 to 18 and 21 to 24 suggest this age group is far more right wing than their parents.

In particular, these young people are less tolerant of Palestinian-Israelis. When given a choice between an Israel that is more democratic and less Jewish or less democratic and more Jewish, they chose the latter.

The rate of settler recruitment to combat units in the IDF is 80 percent higher than the rest of country. In 2011, two-thirds of draftees from West Bank settlements served in combat units, compared with 40 percent from the rest of country.

As The Christian Science Monitor recently observed, “The percentage of officer cadets who are religious has grown tenfold since the early 1990s.” Ten years ago, Orthodox Jewish men accounted for 2.5 percent of military graduates. Today, that figure has grown to more than 25 percent.

Harel noted the potential for mass disobedience in the face of such orders was making many Israeli politicians and senior officers have second thoughts before ordering soldiers to take actions against settlers. In the succeeding five years, with the continuing disproportionate influx of settler recruits to the IDF, the question is more pertinent.

Analysis: The two-state solution is no longer a realistic way to end the conflict. Israel’s hardliner government will only grow increasingly extremist in future years as religious groups grow quickly and religious education becomes far more common. The settlers also present a problem as they make it effectively impossible to draw borders. While the argument above assumes that this problem has not hit its peak, it is likely grown too large to actually be solved. This is particularly important with the settlers entering the army in huge numbers as they would be likely to disobey orders to evacuate settlers. This means that even if the settler problem is not too large it is likely impossible to evacuate settlers which would be necessary. All of this is irrelevant however, as Israel’s hardliner government and increasingly intolerant population will continue to expand settlements and oppose a two-state solution.
CON – Democracy promotion in the Middle East

**Argument:** Palestine has been a critical part of United States democracy promotion in the region. By pressuring Israel into a two-state solution, we create a stable, democratic Palestine.

**Warrant:** Palestine’s democratic capability has been inhibited by Israeli occupation.


Now a Fatah mayor is back in charge. People in Qalqilya voted for Othman Dawood in the last local elections that took place in the West Bank in 2012. Yet he complains that his powers to tackle his town's economic hardships are restricted. "**We're a democratic society. It's in our blood,**" Mr Dawood says. "We have long had different political factions and ideologies. There are public consultations. But in the end we cannot have a real democracy under Israeli occupation." The mayor points to a large map on the wall that shows Qalqilya virtually encircled by the separation barrier that Israel has built in and around the West Bank. The barrier in general is made up mainly of chain-link fence topped with barbed wire, but in some areas consists of 8m- (25ft-) high walls. **Israel says the barrier is needed to protect it from Palestinian attackers but it also restricts the movements of ordinary Palestinians** and cuts them off from profitable agricultural land. "The biggest disagreement between the Palestinian political factions is about how to end our conflict with Israel and establish an independent Palestinian state," Mr Dawood says. "Hamas wants a military solution, Fatah a negotiated solution. We are divided and this makes us weak."
**Warrant:** The violence inflicted upon Palestine is disproportionate, and not only breeds hate but prevents peace.


**Armed groups in Gaza** in August summarily executed at least 25 Palestinians whom they accused of collaborating with Israel. Hamas authorities in Gaza conducted arbitrary arrests and tortured detainees. The authorities permitted some local human rights organizations to operate, but suppressed political dissent, freedom of association, and peaceful assembly. In 2014, Israeli forces killed 43 Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, as of October 31, including unlawful killings of protesters and others who posed no imminent threat to life. Following the June abduction and killing by Palestinian suspects of three Israeli teenagers, Israeli authorities conducted hundreds of apparently arbitrary arrests and punitively destroyed three family homes. Israeli authorities demolished hundreds of homes under discriminatory policies and practices, forcibly displacing hundreds of Palestinian residents in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, as well as Bedouin citizens of Israel. Israeli authorities took inadequate action against Israeli settlers who attacked Palestinians and damaged their property in 307 incidents in 2014 as of December 1, the UN reported. Israel continued to expand unlawful settlements in the occupied West Bank and unlawfully appropriated 400 hectares of land. It also imposed severe restrictions on Palestinians’ right to freedom of movement and arbitrarily detained hundreds of Palestinians, including children and peaceful protesters.
Con Arguments with Pro Responses

March 2017

Warrant: Israeli occupation has created a culture of hate that has prevented a stable government from being Palestine’s main focus.


According to Foxman, Palestinian and Israeli societies are fundamentally different. Palestinian discontent is “fanned and incited into hatred by a widespread, unfettered support for violence against Jews and Israel”. He was echoing a sentiment common in Israel, and famously voiced in the late 1960s by the then prime minister, Golda Meir. She suggested that even harder than forgiving the Arab enemy for killing Israel’s sons would be “to forgive them for having forced us to kill their sons”. In a bout of similar self-righteousness, many Israelis berate Palestinian parents for putting their children in danger’s way by allowing them to throw stones at Israeli security forces. The implication is that Palestinians – as a result of either culture or religion – value life less than Israelis. Strangely, Israelis rarely question the implication of the decision taken by one in 10 of their number to live in illegal colonies on stolen Palestinian land. The settlers choose to put themselves and their children on the front lines too, even though they have far more choices than Palestinians about where to live. In fact, neither Israelis nor Palestinians can claim to be above a culture of hate. As long as Israel’s belligerent occupation continues, their lives together in one small patch of the Middle East will continue to be predicated on bouts of violent confrontation.
**Warrant:** Achieving a stable government in Palestine would be critical for future success of democracy promotion.

<http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1005&context=intlstudies_honors>.

For a number of reasons, the case of Palestine is particularly important for US democracy promotion efforts. When compared to the approach the US has taken towards countries like Egypt and Jordan – key American allies in the region –, the American demand for democratic change has been much more forceful towards the Palestinians and has been articulated in tandem with security objectives. Most importantly, the US has made Palestine a test-case for the spread of democracy in the Middle East. In 2002, President Bush declared that —if liberty can blossom on the rocky soil of the West Bank and Gaza, it will inspire millions around the globe who are equally weary of poverty and oppression and —[are] equally entitled to the benefits of democratic government. Consequently, until 2006 and Hamas‘ electoral success, the US was the largest individual donor to the Palestinian Legislative Council, providing training for 80 percent of Palestinian parliamentarians.

**Analysis:** Overall, Palestine’s government has failed to be sufficiently democratic. A large part of this has to do with a lack of state capacity to protect itself from violence. The occupation that Israel has on Palestinian land has been one that Palestine cannot prevent due to their lack of a stable government. However, Palestine’s democratic transition has been a crux of United States democracy promotion. By succeeding in creating a real state with a stable government, it improves United States credibility and increases the chance of democracy promotion being successful in the region. This also has to do with the positive light that would be shed on US foreign policy that doesn’t currently exist now.
A2 – Democracy promotion in the Middle East

**Answer:** The United States has failed to promote democracy in a trustworthy manner.

**Warrant:** The US lacks too much moral credibility to be successful in aiding government transitions.


**Strategic and moral credibility are interrelated:** Consistently generating good outcomes goes a long way toward bolstering one’s reputation. Even if the methods for achieving an objective seem questionable, they tend to be justified retrospectively if things turn out all right. In the interim, people are much more willing to extend the benefit of doubt to those with a strong track record of success. Conversely, **moral credibility can help make up for occasional bad outcomes** — an agent is afforded slack when things go awry if it’s perceived as being genuinely well-intentioned. **However, when there are glaring inconsistencies between a government’s declared aspirations** (say, promotion of democracy and human rights) and their means of realization (imposing Western socio-economic models at the expense of indigenous self-determination) — especially when paired with a general failure to realize stated objectives (producing chaos rather than order, be it liberal or otherwise) — **these** generate suspicion about its real intentions and motives. Part of what contributes to America’s cycle of diplomatic and military failures in the Middle East is an underlying distrust of the United States among most Arabs, which inspires widespread ambivalence or resistance to U.S. efforts in the region. **The source of this deficit has nothing to do with U.S. follow-through or resolve,** as foreign policy hawks love to allege. **One can be consistent with regards to backing up threats, etc. while still being a hypocrite in the moral sphere. Indeed, this is precisely the problem America faces.**
Warrant: The US has violated international law and has repeatedly failed to uphold their word.


It further fuels skepticism when America attempts to fight ISIS — a group largely empowered by previous U.S. support for other non-state actors in Iraq, Libya, and Syria — by training and arming new, ineffective, and unpopular proxy militias. Moreover, these new groups are often aligned with, and trained in, Saudi Arabia — the power most responsible for proliferating the ideology embraced by the so-called “Islamic State.”

It seems disingenuous when the U.S. condemns Russia for funding non-state actors in Ukraine, or Pakistan for doing so in Afghanistan, or Iran in Lebanon — even as America expands its own support of insurgents in Syria. The Arab public is outraged when U.S. policymakers decry human rights violations elsewhere while continuing to support Israel and shield it from international accountability for its occupation of the West Bank or its wars on Gaza. And it doesn’t help at all when the Obama administration, among other failings, declines to prosecute clear and grievous infractions like torture by its own intelligence agencies, while calling for regime change in other countries for the same sorts of infractions. When American representatives lecture others about upholding the very international rules and norms the U.S. government systematically and unapologetically violates through its drone strikes and mass surveillance, enhanced interrogation, and extraordinary rendition programs, others will not take American rhetoric or ideals seriously.

Analysis: In the global sphere, especially within the Middle East, there is a severe lack of trust about what our aspirations are and their means of realization. Thus, there are many countries that no longer trust our intentions or our motives. As a result, even if Palestine could somehow create a stable government, there would be no chance for further success of democracy promotion because there have been too many failures in the past.
Answer: Palestine’s government is not of concern to the United States

Warrant: The United States needs to protect Israel before it protects Palestine.


“No nation in history has succeeded in preserving its integrity and sovereignty without meeting the challenge of ever-advancing armaments,” Mr. Gilder points out. “But many American intellectuals still imagine that the United States is different, that it is possible or desirable for us to negotiate an ‘end to the arms race.’ … An end to the arms race would deprive the capitalist countries of their greatest asset in combating barbarism.” Mr. Gilder is convinced that the forces targeting Israel and America also are “targeting capitalism and freedom everywhere.” Capitalism, he says, requires freedom. And any democracy not resting on a solid capitalist foundation is doomed. “Without an expanding capitalist economy,” he writes, “democracy becomes dominated by its zero-sum elements — by mobs and demagogues.” Over the centuries, such mobs and demagogues have, many times, turned against Jews. Today, “they have turned against Israel.” Sometimes, the root cause is simply greed and envy. But often it is the economically and morally misguided belief that “social justice” necessitates the dispossessing of the “haves” and redistribution to the “have-nots” in the interest of “equality of outcome.” Mr. Gilder’s thesis is straightforward: the future of freedom, democracy, capitalism, America, the West and the tiny state of Israel is tied together in a single knot. Israel is, Mr. Gilder contends, “not only the canary in the coal mine — it is also a crucial part of the mine.” If Americans will not defend Israel, they will “prove unable to defend anything else. The Israel test is finally our own test of survival as a free nation.”
Analysis: Israel is our ally, and that is a clear differentiation that must be made between Israel and Palestine. The affirmative should stress that Palestine’s government ultimately impacts the United States very little. However, the future of the Israeli government is directly tied to the United States, and the United States should be backing the country that matters most to our global aspirations and our global security.

Answer: Palestine’s government is unstable.

Warrant: There are four different dimensions that must exist before Palestine could be considered a successful democracy.


Due to the number of restrictions on its sovereignty, the PA is, in effect, a quasi state whose existence is dependent upon the international community and a successful peace process. Frisch and Hofnung identifies four basic dimensions to building a successful developmental state. The first involves the accumulation of enough power to monopolize violence and ensure security. The second surrounds the cultivation of a civil society strong enough to contain the accumulation of power and prevent rent-seeking. The third element involves building and enhancing state capacity and giving these priority over projects designed for immediate increases in economic welfare. And the fourth element involves developing the capacity to implement economic policies. An assessment of the PA shows these elements were stunted. The PA is an institution in limbo: it can neither ensure security for Israel, nor security, development, and democracy for its own people.

Analysis: The affirmative should force the negation to accept that Palestine needs a stable government in order to have a two-state solution. In this case, the negative now can argue as to how difficult it would be for Palestine to improve in all the aspects that are necessary for a true democracy. Given that Palestine is so far from being a stable government, it is nearly impossible to expect that the four dimensions it needs will ever exist.
CON – Lack of US presence leads to Russian influence

**Argument:** As the United States has been struggling with whether to pressure for a two-state solution, Moscow has begun to stake a claim in the area.

**Warrant:** Moscow recently held a meeting with the intention of uniting Hamas and Fatah under one government.


“Moscow, in turn, seeks to extend its role as a mediator in the Middle East beyond the Syrian agenda. Testifying to this were the first intra-Palestinian meeting, the 2015 intra-Syrian consultations and Syria-related cooperation with Turkey and Iran. **Thus, the Kremlin’s courtesy is developing into a clear alternative to America’s straightforward approach, which is typified by irksome lecturing.** The Moscow talks produced a Jan. 17 joint statement that Palestine should soon see the formation of a national unity government. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas’ consultations with the parties’ officials would determine the particular structure of this government. **Russia’s leading Orientalist, Vitaly Naumkin, who moderated the meeting, believes that under a positive scenario the government could be established by this summer,** followed by elections for the Palestinian National Council. Palestinian diasporas worldwide, as well as residents of the Gaza Strip, West Bank and East Jerusalem, would be able to cast their ballots. The participants think these steps could help overcome disunity among Palestine’s political establishment and society. **The moves could also help resolve the conflict, because the Israelis would be deprived of their argument concerning the absence of a Palestinian representative to talk with, which they perennially use to justify their reluctance to conduct bilateral talks.”
**Warrant:** Palestine has turned to Russia due to lack of United States pressure and willingness to start talks.


The two sides have a bloody history, having imprisoned dozens for alleged links to rival parties. Namely, in 2007, deadly clashes erupted among party sympathizers after Hamas won the elections in Gaza, as seen in the deadly clashes between party sympathizers in 2007 following the Hamas victory in the Gaza elections. of 2007 which brought an end to al-Fatah's rule. **Hamas is considered a terror organization by the U.S. and Israel, while al-Fatah is the most favored Palestinian faction.** After talks regarding a unified government attempt in 2014 failed in less than a year, doubts emerged over the future of the national coalition. However, senior al-Fatah official Azzam al-Ahmed reportedly said: "Today the conditions for [such an initiative] are better than ever." There are some remarkable points which explain why it happened now and is better than ever. **First, Russia is the broker for the talks. Contrary to the U.S., Russia does not consider Hamas a red line and is open to contact with the group.** For instance, Al-Jazeera's Moscow correspondent Natasha Ghoneim said, "Historically, peace talks have been dominated by the U.S. They are looking for a different approach and Russia certainly offered it." Moreover, for the first time, thanks to the good relations between Moscow and Tehran, the Iranian-backed Islamic jihadists were also involved in the negotiations.
**Warrant:** New elections to unite the government are now planned, without United States help or contribution.


The Palestinian National Authority said Tuesday that local elections that had been due to be held in the West Bank and Gaza last October will now take place on May 13. The Hamas movement which controls the Gaza Strip has been at odds with president Mahmoud Abbas’s Fatah party over the organisation of their first competitive polls in a decade. “Today, at a regular meeting, the council of ministers decided to hold elections on May 13, to be held in the West Bank and Gaza,” local government minister Hussain Al Araj said. The elections were postponed after a court decision last year with Fatah and Hamas trading blame over the delay. **The rival parties have not contested an election since 2006 parliamentary polls,** which Hamas won — sparking a conflict that led to near civil war in Gaza the following year. Reconciliation attempts have repeatedly failed, and Hamas boycotted the most recent municipal elections in 2012.
Warrant: Palestine drew away from the United States after feeling as if they needed a new solution.


**Elgindy said the "most important factor" prompting the unity agreement is the leadership change in Washington DC.** "President Abbas may be looking to shore up his domestic position, and to insulate himself from what he sees maybe as a very hostile administration coming into Washington," he said. Al Jazeera's Natasha Ghoneim, reporting from Moscow, said the agreement in Russia signals the Palestinians "looking away" from the United States, which has been involved in the peace process for decades. **"Historically, peace discussions have been dominated by the US. They are looking for a different approach, and Russia certainly offered a different approach,"** she said. Meanwhile, a Palestinian leader who is close to Hamas leadership told Al Jazeera that "things are far from clear or final yet." **"In principle, all of the Palestinian factions have agreed to form a national unity government, including Hamas, and to establish a new Palestinian National Council. But Abbas has yet to make a decision that will take concrete steps in that direction."**
**Warrant:** A lack of US pressure on Israel will cause a divide and will allow other countries to take control of the situation.

http://time.com/4638117/trump-israel-palestinian-resolution-2334/

After a prolonged stasis, it seems likely that for the first time since the Cold War we are about to see a serious break in international consensus on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The E.U. will likely adopt a much firmer posture toward Israel, while the U.S.—with its legislative and executive branches now aligned with the Israeli right-wing—allows Netanyahu to drop even the pretense of support for a two-state solution. The Quartet—established in 2002 and made up of the United Nations, the United States, the European Union, and Russia—cannot be expected to function in such an environment. Amid international disorder and rancour, suddenly the Israelis and Palestinians take centre stage. The world has failed these people, but was never going to save them from themselves anyway. A conflict ends when the people at its center look over the precipice, and recognise that compromise is a life-or-death imperative. We are hurtling toward that precipice now, and all eyes must turn toward the 14 million Arabs and Jews, intertwined and roughly equal in number, who live between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. Real change will require ordinary citizens stepping up, getting organised, and demanding a genuine break from history. Their fate is in their own hands. Despite all their internal dysfunction, looking at the state of the world in 2017, that could be very good news indeed.
Warrant: Russia has the ability to influence Palestine.


Indeed, as reported by international media, Russia is not standing in Israel’s way when it bombs Hezbollah-linked targets in Syria, but Putin is providing legitimacy to Palestinian groups that Israel views as “forces of terror.” For 11 years, since Hamas' 2006 election victory in Gaza, Israel has had the backing of a decision made by the Middle East Peace Quartet — Russia, the United States, the United Nations and the European Union — banning contacts with the organization until such time as it commits to renouncing violence, recognizing Israel and honoring all Israeli-Palestinian past agreements. When Hamas rejected these conditions, Quartet members made sure to conduct any contacts, which have been denied, with the group’s members behind closed doors. Russia is now publicly flouting these rules. The Palestinians view this as the first step toward neutralizing, and perhaps even dismantling, the Quartet, which has aged prematurely. The agreement between senior Hamas and Fatah officials reached in Moscow is critical of the Quartet. That Russia succeeded in brokering an agreement where the Quartet failed strengthens this criticism and challenges the “Made in the USA” label often attributed to the group. Abu Marzouk said that Russia has a central role in influencing the Quartet, which he claims is controlled by the United States. Ahmed went even further, announcing that the Palestinians had severed ties with the Quartet given its “failure to find practical solutions for the Arab-Palestinian struggle.”

The United States' renewing the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue under its auspices in accordance with the so-called Kerry plan, while pushing Russia and the other two Quartet members aside, was perceived in Moscow as “underhanded,” Magen wrote in a 2014 position paper for the Institute of National Security Studies.
Analysis: The United States used to dominate the Israel-Palestine region when it came to political decisions and peace talks. However, the United States has stopped putting pressure on Israel, and has not been pushing for a two-state solution. As a result, Russia has stepped into the arena. This means that the West no longer has the ability to influence the situation as long as we sit on the sidelines. Moscow pushed for a unity government between the Fatah, the Palestinian Jihad, and Hamas. This unity government is not something the United States has ever approved of, and will happen unless the United States gives Palestine a different solution. This has resulted in an increase in terrorism promotion by Russia.
A2 – Lack of US presence leads to Russian influence

**Answer:** Given current political climates, Palestine doesn’t want the United States to be involved.

**Warrant:** The new US administration has given Palestine a reason to seek help from other nations.


The Palestinian leadership and the US have had a close relationship since the establishment of the PA in the early 1990s, to which the US has sent hundreds of millions of dollars in aid. Kidwa, who is considered a contender to succeed PA President Mahmoud Abbas, added that the Palestinian leadership should also declare, in the event that US President Donald Trump follows through with his campaign promise to move the embassy, that the US is no longer a broker in the Middle East peace process and turn to the UN. “It would be necessary for the Palestinian side to make clear that it no longer officially considers the United States an interlocutor and that it cannot cooperate with it directly or through the Quartet,” Kidwa stated, adding that it would also be imperative “to go to the Security Council to raise a complaint against the United States of America.” In every round of bilateral negotiations, including the most recent talks mediated by former secretary of state John Kerry, the US has been the primary peace broker between the Israeli and Palestinian negotiating teams. The Palestinian leadership launched a campaign two weeks ago to mobilize the international community against the relocation of the US Embassy to Jerusalem.
**Warrant:** A massive amount of Palestinian funding from the US was frozen.


The Trump administration has informed the Palestinian Authority that it is freezing the transfer of $221 million which was quietly authorized by the Obama administration in its final hours on January 20, a senior Palestinian source has told The Times of Israel. US officials conveyed to PA Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah on Tuesday that the funds were not expected to be handed over in the immediate future, said the source, who spoke on the condition of anonymity. On Tuesday, the State Department said it was reviewing the last-minute decision by former secretary of state John Kerry to send the funds to the Palestinians despite objections to the transfer by congressional Republicans. The department said it would look at the payment and might make adjustments to ensure it comports with the Trump administration’s priorities. The Obama administration had for some time been pressing for the release of the money for the Palestinian Authority, which comes from the US Agency for International Development, known as USAID, and is to be used for humanitarian aid in the West Bank and Gaza to support political and security reforms, as well as help prepare for good governance and the rule of law in a future Palestinian state, according to the notification sent to Congress. Even without the $221 million, the Palestinian source noted that in 2016 the PA received $250 million from the US government. These funds included $180 million from USAID, $25 million to support Palestinian hospitals and $45 million to pay for fuel purchased from Israel.

**Analysis:** The United States would need to pressure Israel and support Palestine in order to create a proper two-state solution. However, by withdrawing funding from the Palestinians that was meant for humanitarian aid, it is nearly impossible to say that the US is supporting Palestine. By angering the Palestinian authority and preventing the growth of their nation and their nation’s security, we have effectively stated that we are pulling away from the situation and withdrawing our support. Thus, with Palestine disapproving of the US as an interlocutor, the US needs to completely withdraw from the situation.
Answer: Israel doesn’t believe the efforts by the United States will work.

Warrant: It is impossible to put pressure on a country and expect positive results when the country doesn’t believe the strategy will ever work.

Cohen, Ben. "Why the Palestinian Question won’t be resolved by the Paris conference.”  

But hey, that’s nothing that a bit of “civil society dialogue” can’t fix, eh? I don’t want to be unfair here, because there have been some wonderful efforts to encourage dialogue between Arab and Jewish citizens of Israel, but for that approach to work, you need to first recognize the humanity in each other. What would actually get discussed at these dialogues, anyway? An Israeli asking a Palestinian, “Why are your preachers calling us sons of apes and pigs again?” Maybe none of this matters anymore. **Maybe Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is right when he says that the Paris conference is the “final gasp” of a failed strategy.** He has good reason, after all, to believe that, especially having heard the condemnation of Resolution 2334 from Secretary of State-designate Rex Tillerson. **Yet while the change of administration in Washington may strengthen Israel’s diplomatic position for the immediate period, and while the Palestinians will have to get to the back of the line in terms of international priorities, the Palestinian question itself will not disappear. In many ways, it will find its status enhanced.**

Analysis: The Paris conference was one of the last attempts by the United States to broker peace between Palestine and Israel. However, Israel walked into this conference believing that this was a last ditch effort at a failed strategy. As a result, they weren’t willing to work toward success and they weren’t motivated to actually find a solution because they knew that the United States and the conference as a whole wasn’t going to follow through. The lack of resolve that has been shown by the United States is irredeemable, and thus the US can no longer be the interlocutor.
CON – Increases support for right wing politics in Israel

**Argument:** Absent pressure for a two-state solution from the United States, extremist right wing politics gain ground in Israel and risk depriving Palestinians of all rights.

**Warrant:** Right wing politics have empowered settler expansion.


Anyone who doesn’t think so hasn’t looked at the map or studied the history of the settlement movement. **Right-wing Israeli settlers have been quite open for decades about their patient approach to claiming Jerusalem and the West Bank by strategically placing settlements to prevent the creation of a viable Palestinian state.** Since 2009, when Mr. Obama took office, the number of Israeli settlers in the West Bank has grown to around 400,000, a gain of more than 100,000, and the number of settlers in East Jerusalem has grown to roughly 208,000, from 193,000, according to Americans for Peace Now. During the same period, construction has begun on over 12,700 settlement units on the West Bank.
Warrant: Right wing politicians seeking to annex the West Bank dismiss international calls for a two-state solution if the US supports their expansionist agenda.


A spokeswoman for the 28-nation bloc reiterated the EU’s support for the two-state solution on Thursday, the day after U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry tore into Israel for settlement-building. EU spokeswoman Maja Kocijancic says Kerry’s remarks “all send one key message: The international community does not give up on peace in the Middle East.” In a farewell speech, Kerry defended President Barack Obama’s move last week to allow the U.N. Security Council to declare Israeli settlements illegal, a move that caused an extraordinary diplomatic spat. Israel’s right wing Thursday dismissed Kerry’s speech on the conflict with the Palestinians as a parting shot of little consequence, especially with Donald Trump soon taking office. One minister repeated his assertion that a Palestinian state will be “off the agenda” once expected ally Trump takes over, while others from what is seen as Israel’s most right-wing government ever mocked Kerry. “Palestine will be taken off the agenda,” Education Minister Naftali Bennett of the hard-line Jewish Home party told the Ynet news site. He repeated his call for Israel to annex most of the West Bank, which would destroy any hope for a two-state solution — long the basis of negotiations and which Kerry passionately defended Wednesday.
Con Arguments with Pro Responses

March 2017

Warrant: The rise of right wing politics under Netanyahu threaten Palestinian rights.


In a lengthy, at times bitter speech boiling over with frustration, outgoing Secretary of State John Kerry on Wednesday accused the Israeli government of risking future prospects for peace with the Palestinians by adopting the right-wing agenda of the mushrooming Israeli settler movement. Using language rarely heard from a U.S. secretary of state, Kerry warned that the settlers’ growing political power would eventually force Israel to make a fateful choice: “Israel can either be Jewish or democratic – it cannot be both – and it won’t ever really be at peace.” And he blasted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in strident terms, calling his ruling coalition “the most right-wing in Israeli history, with an agenda driven by the most extreme elements.” Those elements, Kerry said, are now “defining the future of Israel, and their stated purpose is clear. They believe in one state: greater Israel.” Kerry painted a dark picture of what that future might look like: “millions of Palestinians permanently living in segregated enclaves in the middle of the West Bank, with no real political rights, separate legal, education, and transportation systems, vast income disparities, under a permanent military occupation that deprives them of the most basic freedoms.”
Warrant: A Trump administration that abandons calls for a two-state solution empowers right-wing politics in Israel.


Right-wing leaders in the Israeli government have seized on the election of Donald Trump to push forward assertive new legislation that would legalize Jewish settlements in the West Bank built on privately owned Palestinian land. Believing that the time to act is now, as the U.S. president-elect begins to shape his foreign policy, top Israeli ministers voted unanimously Sunday in favor of a bill that would allow Israeli settlements and outposts that were built on property owned by Palestinians to avoid court-ordered demolitions. On Monday, Israeli politicians dug in for a fight over the legislation, which would retroactively offer legal protection to thousands of homes built both in long-established settlements and in newer wildcat outposts that were constructed on private Palestinian land. Naftali Bennett, Israel’s education minister and the leader of the pro-settler Jewish Home party, said the Trump victory means that “the era of the Palestinian state is over,” a direct challenge to the official government position of backing a two-state solution. Bennett and his allies view the full legalization of the settlements built on Palestinian land as only a first step. Bennett wants Israel to formally annex the 60 percent of the West Bank where the Jewish-only settlements are located, thereby ending any prospect for a viable Palestinian state.
Warrant: The rise of right wing politics in Israel has entrenched anti-Arab racist sentiments.


While anti-Arab racism is not rising among Israelis as a whole, according to research by Haifa University, what has happened is that, since the violence of the Second Intifada, Israelis have become much less eager to challenge anti-Palestinian racism on the Israeli far-right - they've become, in other words, more tolerant of intolerance. This has allowed far-right anti-Arab movements to fester, even as they've remained small minorities within Israeli society. The horrific murder of Mohammed Abu Khdeir was, for many Israelis, a wake-up call - an indication of just how ugly these movements had become.

But, for many Palestinians in the West Bank, the murder was shocking but the existence of an increasingly violent Israeli far-right was not.
**Warrant:** The result of entrenching this racism and far right extremism is targeted violence.


They’ve been burdened for years with the violence of a different sort of anti-Arab movement, but one that has grown in the same climate of mainstream Israeli indifference: *"price tag" attacks by fundamentalist settlers.* And while the murder of Khdeir was an isolated but grisly act, **the price tag attacks have been less deadly but far more frequent, with 400 in 2011 alone.** As Israelis wake up to one form of anti-Arab violence, the far-right soccer-hooligan nationalism of La Familia that killed Khdeir in Jerusalem, they may also want to look to the other Israeli anti-Arab movement wreaking havoc just across the Green Line.

**Right-wing extremists have been a significant force in Israeli politics.** The openly racist Kach Party won a seat in the Knesset in 1984, and was polling even higher in the 1988 elections before being banned from participating. Baruch Goldstein, a significant Kach member, killed 29 worshippers at a mosque in the Cave of the Patriarch in the West Bank city of Hebron. Jewish radical Yigal Amir assassinated Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995, while the minister was in the midst of a major push for a peace deal. The murder of Mohammed Abu Khdeir is of a piece with the ultra-violent Goldstein and Amir tradition. **However, the sort of settler violence that has been on the rise is usually lower profile: burning down Palestinian property, scrawling graffiti on mosques, or physical assaults on Arabs that stop short of deadly force.** These so-called "price tag" attacks have been getting worse in recent years. **According to the UN, settler attacks on Palestinians doubled (from 200 to over 400 per year) between 2009 and 2011.**
**Warrant:** The goal of this targeted violence is the end of any processes towards a two-state solution.


**The desired endpoint of this is the demolition of the two-state solution, which would grant separate states to Israelis and Palestinians.** For an independent Palestine to be viable, a significant number of the Israeli settlers in the West Bank would have to leave (some settler communities along the Israeli border would likely be allowed to stay as part of a land-swap). If the settlers can convince the Israeli government and public that uprooting enough of the roughly 500,000 West Bank settlers will be more trouble than it's worth, they will have practically ended any chance for a viable Palestinians state.

**Analysis:** This argument explains how, absent pressure for a two-state solution, the power and political legitimacy of right wing politics that seek to enforce violence and exclusion of Palestinians may intensify. The Negative can frame this argument as a scenario that gets much worse on the Affirmative side, as the US either adopts an uncertain stance on the conflict, or sides with the radical policies of right-wing groups in Israel. The Negative can then weigh out that this is the worst impact scenario because these right-wing groups are the clearest link to violence in the status quo.
A2 – Increases support for right wing politics in Israel

Answer: Political support for right wing politics increased even amidst calls for a two-state solution.

Warrant: Increase political support for expanded settlements were ignited due to the US abstention from a UN resolution condemning settlements.


The American abstention has triggered more than the usual amount of outrage, name-calling and threats from Mr. Netanyahu and his allies. Personalizing the dispute to an astonishing degree, they have accused Mr. Obama of betraying Israel. They’re wrong. Many of Mr. Netanyahu’s accusations and those of his supporters misrepresent the history of Israeli-American relations, malign Mr. Obama and his secretary of state, John Kerry, and confuse what should be a serious debate over the future of a negotiated peace between Israelis and Palestinians, which seems further away every day. With less than three weeks before Mr. Obama leaves office, Mr. Kerry on Wednesday finally gave the speech he wanted to give two years ago — a passionate, blunt and detailed warning about why the two-state solution is in jeopardy and how it might yet be salvaged before incalculable damage is done to Israel and the region.

Inconveniently for Mr. Netanyahu’s claim that the Security Council resolution was the result of perfidy by Mr. Obama, the measure was adopted 14 to 0, with support from Russia, China and Egypt, among others. It declared that the settlements, in territory that Israel captured from Jordan during the Arab-Israeli War of 1967, have no legal validity; affirming longstanding United Nations and American policy, it cited the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, which prohibits any occupying power from transferring its own people to conquered territory.
Warrant: Obama’s presidency encouraged more settlement expansion.


Supporters of Mr. Netanyahu argue that Mr. Obama has now only inflamed the Israeli right and encouraged more settlement-building, as if this Israeli government would otherwise show restraint. This is the cynical logic of the settlement movement: When the world is silent, Israel can build settlements; when the world objects, Israel must build settlements. Under any scenario, settlements will grow, and the possibility of a two-state solution will recede. Settlements are certainly not the only impediment, or even the principal one, to negotiations today. The Palestinians remain divided and their leadership malicious or hapless, with Hamas, which advocates terrorism, reigning in the Gaza Strip, while the Palestinian Authority, rife with corruption, governs ineptly in the West Bank. But the settlements are an obstacle to any eventual deal, and they are Israel’s responsibility.

Analysis: This answer essentially de-links the argument by pointing out the rise of right wing politics in Israel still gained ground even during an American administration that favored a two-state solution. The Affirmative can argue that settlements will continue to expand regardless of US pressure of a two-state solution, and that the same harmful impacts will materialize on either side of the debate, making this a potentially non-unique argument.
**Answer:** Right wing politics in Israel champion a one-state solution that is becoming increasingly preferred.

**Warrant:** Right wing groups are emboldened by Trump’s election to pursue a one-state solution.


Ethnic privilege for Jews is currently institutionalized not only in the segregated Jewish communities Israel has established in the West Bank, but also in more than 35 laws within Israel that bestow benefits exclusively to its Jewish citizens. A growing number of forward-looking Palestinians and Israelis are rejecting Jewish ethnic privilege as both ethically insupportable and politically unsustainable, and are opting for equal rights. That is the position of a number of the participants in a “one state” conference held recently at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School. Recognizing that Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs are destined to live together, the conference participants were seeking ways to share power equitably between the two communities. Not all support for a single state emanates from progressive thinkers, however. Members of Israel’s right wing are also beginning to seriously mull the advantages of a single state: no borders would have to be drawn, Jerusalem would remain undivided, and Jewish settlements in East Jerusalem and the West Bank — at least if desegregated — could remain where they are. Current Knesset speaker Reuven Rivlin, for example, stated in a 2010 interview in the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*: “I would rather Palestinians as citizens of this country over dividing the land up.” He further advocated “true partnership” between Jews and Palestinians and relations based on mutual respect and absolute equality.
Con Arguments with Pro Responses

Warrant: Both Palestinians and Israelis increasingly prefer alternatives to the two-state solution, including a one-state solution.


The terms of the compromise included a demilitarized Palestinian state, an Israeli withdrawal to the Green Line with equal territorial exchange, family unification in Israel of 100,000 Palestinian refugees, West Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine, and splitting sovereignty of occupied East Jerusalem’s Old City between Jewish and Muslim holy sites. In terms of the nature of peace talks, 44 percent of Palestinians said they preferred multilateral negotiations while 40 percent of Israelis said they preferred bilateral negotiations, in line with the views of their respective governments. Meanwhile, a quarter of Israelis and 35 percent of Palestinians told the pollsters they supported a one-state solution. All past efforts towards peace negotiations have failed to end the decades-long Israeli military occupation or bring Palestinians closer to an independent contiguous state.

Analysis: While this argument doesn’t have to concede that right-wing politics on the rise in Israel are necessarily a good thing, one could argue that the platforms they support in establishing a one-state solution or alternative peace talks to the agenda pushed by the United States is increasingly preferred by both sides of the conflict. Although violence may be emboldened by the rise of right wing groups, Affirmative teams can argue that a one-state solution that awards equal rights to both parties cuts down on this violence in the long term.
CON – Palestinian Rights

Argument: Palestinians would lose their rights if Israel were to be given full control of the territory.

Warrant: Palestinians living under Israeli rule already face discrimination from the government.


“There are more than 50 laws that discriminate against Palestinian citizens of Israel. directly or indirectly, based solely on their ethnicity, rendering them second or third class citizens in their own homeland. 93% of the land in Israel is owned either by the state or by quasi-governmental agencies, such as the Jewish National Fund, that discriminate against non-Jews. Palestinian citizens of Israel face significant legal obstacles in gaining access to this land for agriculture, residence, or commercial development. More than seventy Palestinian villages and communities in Israel, some of which pre-date the establishment of the state, are unrecognized by the government, receive no services, and are not even listed on official maps. Many other towns with a majority Palestinian population lack basic services and receive significantly less government funding than do majority-Jewish towns.

Since Israel's founding in 1948, more than 600 Jewish municipalities have been established, while not a single new Arab town or community has been recognized by the state. Israeli government resources are disproportionately directed to Jews and not to Arabs, one factor in causing the Palestinians of Israel to suffer the lowest living standards in Israeli society by all socio-economic indicators. Government funding for Arab schools is far below that of Jewish schools. According to data published in 2004, the government provides three times as much funding to Jewish students than it does to Arab students.
Warrant: The Israeli government often encourages anti-Palestinian hate speech.

Ahmad Tibi “NETANYAHU MUST END ANTI-ARAB INCITEMENT AND CONFRONT ISRAEL’S DENIAL OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS” Newsweek

“In March 2015, Netanyahu was re-elected with a campaign full of incitement, including slogans denying the rights of the Palestinians to have a state, as well as racist references to us, Palestinian citizens in Israel. Netanyahu also used a shooting incident against Jewish citizens in Tel Aviv three weeks ago as a way to further isolate Palestinian citizens of Israel. In contrast, when Israeli-Jewish terrorists set fire to the home of the Dawabsheh family in July 2015, settlers weren’t singled out by the government. On the contrary, no homes were demolished, no residency rights were threatened and no incitement was made. This is one of the many examples that help us all understand that the logic of the Israeli government is not one of peace and coexistence but one of apartheid and colonization. Fans of Netanyahu’s football team, Beitar Jerusalem, have mastered incitement against Palestinians. Supporters of a team that is “proud” of never having hired “an Arab,” have constantly incited against Palestinians, Islam, Christianity, coexistence between Arabs and Jews and even against myself personally. The “sanctions” they have received for such nasty behavior are almost non-existent.
Impact: An Israeli one-state solution would likely involve subjugation of Palestinians.

Daoud Kattab “Israelis lean right toward one-state solution” Al-Monitor 8/20/15.

“A host of other right-wing Israelis have different formulas they believe will ensure the permanent Jewishness of the future state without the need for continued military occupation. They are all supporters of some type of annexation (whether a gradual or one-time act) of the West Bank to Israel but refuse to annex the heavily populated Gaza Strip and, of course, they are totally against the return of any Palestinian refugee while supporting the right of Jews to return to this Jewish state. There are many different streams of Jewish “one-staters.” Rivlin’s idea is that while the state would be a Jewish state, it could have two distinct parliaments, thus making it more of a confederation but under Israeli Jewish auspices. Tel Aviv journalist and editor Naom Sheizaf explained how this concept is seen in Israel. Writing for +972 Magazine, Sheizaf said, “The Israeli right thinks of it as a Jewish state with a large Arab minority, while many Palestinians envision a Palestinian state with a large Jewish minority, and intellectuals discuss models that have little support on the ground.”

Analysis: I understand that many of you and many of your judges are going to be very pro-Israel. This is a divisive topic of discussion and I would say 80% or above of the population that keeps up with current events in the United States has a strong opinion one way or the other. The problem is, Israel is almost certainly the occupying body across the disputed territory and there is at least some evidence of discrimination against Palestinian citizens who have settled in Israel. A one state solution would very likely be a pro-Israel anti-Palestine solution given how many world powers support Israel heavily. Especially with the Trump administration’s stance on the Israel-Palestinian conflict, it’s safe to say the Israeli government would have the upper hand into and coming out of negotiations and when it comes to governing over the Arab minority, their track record isn’t fantastic.
A2 – Palestinian Rights

**Answer:** A Two-State Solution would likely hurt Palestinians in a similar fashion.

**Warrant:** Pro-Israeli groups in support of a two-state solution often advocate for extreme losses for Palestine.


“A powerful pro-Israel policy group with ties to the Obama administration and the Israeli military intelligence establishment is promoting plans for a "two state solution" that would subordinate Palestinians to Israeli military rule, supervised by a permanent U.S. military presence. The plans have been put together by the Israel Policy Forum (IPF), a New York-based advocacy group founded in 1993 at the behest of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, to promote the Oslo peace process. Shortly after taking office in 2009, President Obama adopted the IPF’s Middle East “roadmap.” Among the plan’s recommendations are the complete demilitarization of Palestine, despite it being defined as a "sovereign" territory, a comprehensive border surveillance infrastructure, and a permanent U.S. military operation to police the Jordan River. Security First—for Israel The Forum’s Two State Security project has commissioned Commanders for Israeli Security (CIS)—a network of over 200 former senior Israeli military and intelligence officials—and the Center for a New American Security (CNAS) in Washington DC, to produce studies on a two-state solution. The CNAS report, published in May, describes itself as the “product” of “numerous consultations and workshops with former and current Israeli, Palestinian, Jordanian, and American security officials and negotiators. The report’s precondition for its two-state vision is the elimination of Hamas in Gaza, although this is asserted vaguely as follows: “Part of the challenge is that transition in Gaza would first require the Palestinian Authority [PA] to reassert governance and security control of Gaza—an issue beyond the scope of this

study.” Within this scheme, the PA is viewed as a proxy force which enforces internal security across the West Bank and Gaza on behalf of Israel. The internal Palestinian security system would include, the report proposes, three key components: a “non-militarized Palestinian security force (PASF)”; a small “Palestinian counterterrorism (CT) unit trained and equipped to a level analogous with a Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) unit of a large American city”; a “full-spectrum, self-contained Palestinian counter-terrorism system composed of vetted and protected personnel, including intelligence officers”; and joint Israeli-Palestinian operations centres between “Israeli security forces (ISF) and PASF for sharing intelligence, identifying potential targets, and coordinating operations.”

**Analysis:** A two-state solution given the current power balance between Israel and Palestine would probably mean large concessions for Palestine and less so for Israel. Palestinians would suffer greatly and the state that would be formed would probably collapse rather quickly. Palestine as it exists right now is already failing in many respects, give it full sovereignty with less than equitable access to land in the Middle East and it could go over the edge.
**Answer:** Tensions between Israel and Palestine have gotten to a point where a two-state solution probably still wouldn’t create peace.

**Warrant:** A two-state solution has become impractical

Steve Inskeep “Palestinians Ask: The Two-State Solution Or The Two-State Illusion?”

*NPR*. 13 March 15.

<http://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2015/03/13/392765111/palestinians-ask-the-two-state-solution-or-the-two-state-illusion>

“There is no point in the peace process. There is no point in the two-state illusion," he said. "The two-state solution is no longer possible. We have 600,000 Israeli settlers living in the West Bank and East Jerusalem," land the Palestinians want for a future state. "Who is going to take them out? I don't see any Israeli government in the foreseeable future who will be able to make that kind of decision," he added. Israelis who support a two-state solution say it's still possible, and the most likely scenario would involve a land swap. Israel would keep some of the West Bank settlements, and in exchange, the Palestinians would get the same amount of land in what is now Israel. But Aweidah is still skeptical. "That wouldn't resolve the issue. It's not workable. It's just not workable. It won't be a sustainable solution," he said. So what is the way forward? "One-state solution. A rainbow state. A state for all of its citizens. A new South Africa. It's the only solution that would actually work," he said. This is a position you hear more frequently these days from Palestinians. In Aweidah's view, a single state would be a binational, democratic state.”
**Warrant:** Many Palestinians feel that a two-state solution won’t guarantee their protection from abuse.


“But Hamdallah’s sentiment does not seem to be echoed on the Palestinian street, where confidence in the two-state solution has taken a drastic hit. Issa Amro, head of Youth Against Settlements, a Palestinian-led organization in Hebron, told Mondoweiss that most Palestinians feel disenfranchised by the continuous cycle of negotiation attempts. “The majority of the Palestinians don’t have any faith in the Paris Peace conference because no matter what, the conference won’t force Israel to fulfill its obligations to international law or human rights treaties,” Amro said. He added that any attempts at negotiating a solution at the moment are futile because in his opinion, as Israel is not interested in ending the occupation in the near future. “Israel doesn’t want one-state, two-state, or any other solution right now, so the first step, before any negotiations, should be to hold Israel accountable for its behavior,” he said.

**Analysis:** Separating groups of people does not in any way mean a reduction in bigotry. Violence could surely break out between Israelis and Palestinians after a two-state solution is put into place. If either side doesn’t have a sufficient resolution to their grievances met, this is all the more likely.
CON–Improves US relations with other countries

**Argument:** Many countries around the world support a two-state solution and condemn Israel’s current actions and desire for one state.

**Warrant:** The UN Secretary-General has stated that a two-state solution is the only way forward.


MOSCOW, 1 July — As a vicious tide of terror and extremism swept the Middle East, the international community must stay focused on resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the two-State solution as the only viable way to make that happen, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in his message to the United Nations Meeting in Support of Israeli-Palestinian Peace, which opened this morning in Moscow.

“It will demand difficult decisions from both parties. However, it is precisely because of the dangers that lurk in the Middle East today that both sides must show leadership and personal commitment to peace and negotiations,” Mr. Ban said in a message delivered on his behalf by Nickolay Mladenov, United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process.

The two-day meeting, convened under the theme “The two-State solution: a key prerequisite for achieving peace and stability in the Middle East” by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, aimed to mobilize support for a just and comprehensive solution to the question of Palestine. It will explore ways to foster the conditions needed for a successful political process and review international efforts to achieve the two-State solution — including those within the framework of the Arab Peace Initiative, the Quartet, the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and other multilateral organizations — as well as in the context of the United Nations.
Warrant: The UN and most countries recognize Palestine as a state already


As the Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, and I now near the end of our tenure at the end of next month, it is worth openly and honestly reflecting on achievements, but also on missed opportunities over the last decade. The institution-and capacity-building programme of the State of Palestine, supported by the international community, not least by this key Committee, has been a notable advance, no doubt. We must protect what has been accomplished and continue to support efforts to meet the needs of all Palestinians in a future State.

The admission of Palestine to the United Nations as a non-member Observer State in 2012 was a historic milestone. Today, 137 States recognize the State of Palestine. Its flag flies at the United Nations Headquarters here in New York and in regional offices across the globe.

These are important symbols, no doubt. But they will only have true significance, I am sure you agree, if we see progress in ending the Israeli occupation and resulting in two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. Sadly, in many ways the last 10 years can be described as a lost decade for Israeli-Palestinian peace-making. If the stalemate continues or deepens, the two-state solution may well slip out of reach.
Warrant: Other international organizations have expressed support for the two-state solution.


The much discussed Paris Middle East Conference ended Sunday with a rather bland statement reaffirming support for a two-state solution, and a call to stop violence and “ongoing settlement activity.” Some 70 countries and international organizations, including the foreign ministers of more than 30 states, attended the conference, which included neither Israeli nor Palestinian participants.

Warrant: Other countries in the Middle East want Israel to support a two-state solution


The pragmatic Arab countries are today mainly preoccupied with the rise in power and influence of Islamic fundamentalist movements, primarily the Islamic State (IS) and al-Qaeda. That focus has shifted the governments' attention away from the Palestinian issue. The only exception is Egypt and its leader, President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi. In his Sept. 28 UN speech, Sisi said the establishment of a Palestinian state on the 1967 borders with Jerusalem as its capital “will effectively eliminate one of the most important factors contributing to the region's instability and one of the most dangerous pretexts used to justify extremism and terrorism.”
**Warrant:** Countries in the Middle East support a two-state solution, partially because they feel it will be helpful to defeating ISIS.


A two-state solution to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians is vital to the defeat of the Islamic State, King Abdullah of Jordan argued Friday, saying that the decades-long dispute only served to benefit the jihadist group.

“[T]he community of nations cannot talk about universal rights and global justice, but continue to deny statehood to Palestinians,” he told the Munich Security Conference, an annual gathering of foreign and defense policy leaders, referring to IS by an Arabic acronym.

“This is why reaching a two-state solution should remain a priority for us all,” he said.
**Warrant:** Israel’s treatment of Palestinian’s has made them one of the world’s most disliked countries, and even created an international boycott


Non-Muslim countries recognize Israel's legitimacy and maintain diplomatic relations with it, but most are critical of Israel's treatment of the Palestinians and ongoing occupation of the West Bank. Global public opinion at present is generally more sympathetic to the Palestinian cause, creating real concern among Israelis that an international boycott movement, called BDS, could pick up some support. It's clear that West Bank settlements are a key cause of Israel's poor global standing. Most of the world believes that Israel's continued control of the West Bank is an unlawful military occupation, and that settlements violate the Fourth Geneva Convention. Though this view is supported by most legal scholars, Israel and pro-Israel conservatives dispute it. They argue that the West Bank isn't occupied, and even if it were, the Fourth Geneva convention only prohibits "forcible" population transfers, not voluntary settlement. The BDS movement, which coalesced in 2005, aims to capitalize on international anger with Israel. The movement's strategy is to create costs to Israel's Palestinian policy through boycotts of Israeli goods and institutions, divestment from Israeli companies, and sanctions on the nation itself (hence the name BDS). BDS plans to continue boycotting Israel until 1) all of the settlements are dismantled, 2) they believe Palestinians have been given equal rights inside Israel's borders, and 3) Palestinians refugees are granted the "right of return," which means to return to the land and homes they used to inhabit in what is now Israel.
**Warrant:** Public opinion is against Israel


Israel retained its position as one of the world’s most negatively-viewed countries, according to BBC’s annual poll published Wednesday night. With 50 percent of respondents ranking Israel negatively, Israel keeps company with North Korea, and places ahead of only Iran (55% negative) and Pakistan (51% negative).

The 2012 Country Ratings Poll was conducted among 24,090 people worldwide, and asked respondents to rate whether the influence of 22 countries was “mostly positive” or “mostly negative.” Evaluations of the Jewish state, already largely unfavorable in 2011, have worsened in 2012. Out of the 22 countries polled, the majority in 17 of them view Israel negatively, while only three (the US, Nigeria and Kenya) view Israel positively. In Kenya, negative ratings of Israel fell by 10 points to 31%, while the country experienced an even larger increase in positive ratings of Israel, rising 16 points to 45%.

Negative perceptions of Israel in EU countries have continue to rise, reaching 74% in Spain (up 8%), 65% in France (up 9%), while in Germany and Britain the negative views remain high but stable (69% and 68% respectively). In other Anglo countries, perceptions of Israel are worsening, including in Australia (65%), and Canada (59%).

Among Muslim countries, perceptions of Israel have continued to deteriorate. Of particular concern for Israel is the country sitting on its southern neighbor, Egypt, where 85% of the population views Israel negatively, up 7% since 2011. In Asian countries, public opinion on Israel is growing increasingly antagonistic. In China, just 23% of those surveyed view Israel positively compared with 45% negatively. In India, overall opinion has shifter from being divided in 2011 to leaning negatively. In South Korea, negative views of Israel rose a full 15% (to 69%), while positive views decreased 11% (to 20%) People viewing Israel negatively around the world cite the Jewish state's foreign policy as the main factor influencing their perception, while those who view Israel positively cite culture and Jewish traditions.
Analysis: Israel has become one of the most disliked countries across the world because of its foreign policy actions, particularly those involving Palestinian relations. This is important because most countries support a two-state solution, and a two-state solution would solve Israel’s international law violations which prompts the UN to act against them. Due to this lack of international support, Israel struggles to maintain diplomatic alliances and is quickly growing more and more disliked. If this trend continues the consequences for Israel could be severe.
A2 – Improves US relations with other countries

**Argument:** Many countries that historically supported Palestine have switched to Israel as it is far more beneficial

**Warrant:** India switched for economic and military reasons


The tongue-in-cheek video underscored serious business. **Rafael won a $1 billion contract that year to provide India with surface-to-air missile systems, and along with other Israeli companies it has supplied New Delhi with an estimated $10 billion in military gear over the last decade, according to the Economic Times. Israel now ranks second only to Russia as the biggest supplier of military equipment to India.** In keeping with the metaphor of the Rafael video, outgoing Israeli ambassador Alon Ushpiz last June hailed his country’s relationship with India as one in which “two intimate partners who trust each other start thinking of challenges together and solutions together and what follows together.”  
**There was no such coziness two decades ago, when India refused even to keep an embassy in Israel.** But where protests and public denunciations of Israeli excesses were once routine, today many commentators see India’s traditional support for Palestinians as anachronistic and inimical to the national interest.
Warrant: Israel can always find trading partners that don’t care about the conflict and will still invest in Israel

<https://www.ft.com/content/045dca8a-6725-11e3-a5f9-00144feabcd0>.

In the last week of November, Israel was locked in a tense, politically charged set of negotiations with EU diplomats over a €1.5bn package of loans from Brussels. The talks were bound to be difficult: the Europeans had already stipulated that the money would go only to organisations that did not do business in Jewish settlements on occupied Arab land.

The Mexican trip was part of a broad strategic push by Israel into emerging markets, where it hopes there will be more interest in its technology than the conflict over its borders. As Israel’s political relations fray with the EU – and some question its relationship with the US – Mr Netanyahu’s government is seeking to diversify its economic relations by strengthening ties with faster-growing countries. Another government official, reflecting on a recent visit by Chinese politicians to Israel, put matters more bluntly: “They don’t care about the [Palestinian] issue,” the official said. “They want to talk about three things: Israeli technology, Israeli technology and Israeli technology.”

Israel’s economic pivot to the east and south is a welcome development for the majority of Israelis who reject Europe’s growing drive to isolate their country economically over its Palestinian policies.

But Israel’s shift could – if it succeeds – be bad news for the international “Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions” movement, which favours a full economic boycott of Israel to press it to make peace.

Analysis: Israel has far more to offer other states than Palestine does. This is true both economically and militarily. As a result of this, states like India that have historically supported Palestine could be easily persuaded to support Israel. This just goes to show that while countries may condemn Israel internationally, they will do little in the real world to act on this.
Argument: Israel international standing does not matter.

Warrant: The important states care about Israel and the others matter very little. Israel would likely violate even more international law if Palestine were a state.


Secondly, a caveat is in order. Many people argue that Israel’s international standing and legitimacy – and ultimately the country’s power – are significantly harmed by its heavy-handed military responses, and that it should be in Jerusalem’s long-term interest to stop shelling Palestinian areas, to move forward in earnest with the peace negotiations, and, more generally, to stop treating Palestinians as second-class citizens.

Such arguments, while certainly carrying some moral merit, unfortunately rest on a faulty interpretation of how the (realist) world really works. For a start, in terms of legitimacy, Israel really does not have much more to lose. The vast majority of the world’s states consistently react strongly and unequivocally to the brutal treatment of Palestinians by Israel – in times of peace as well as war. These reactions, however, are impotent and inconsequential.

The consequential states – that is, the major powers and, in particular, the U.S. – notably and equally consistently, albeit for many different reasons, signal a profound understanding of Israel’s security concerns, even if not all of them always wholeheartedly support Israel’s way of dealing with its concerns. In other words, Israel are, tacitly at least, allowed to do pretty much whatever they want toward the Palestinians; negative repercussions are far and few between. And in any case, legitimacy takes a backseat role for Israel every time the country’s perceived core national security is under threat.

One should also note that the ability of Israel largely to disregard “world opinion” is fundamentally linked with Israel’s military capabilities. For example, the reactions of Arab states to the conflagration in Gaza is merely rhetorical; never have these countries, many of which have consistently been spearheaded by relatively incompetent regimes, represented a cohesive alliance *militarily* capable of actually doing anything of note to reverse Israel’s policies and grand strategy. In an anarchic, realist world of security competition between self-interested sovereign states, the relative distribution of military strength constrains the actions of states – and so it shapes the future of regional and world affairs.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict would, if Palestine were to become a sovereign state, suddenly become an *interstate conflict* – which is to say an international dispute or (very likely) war. *In terms of international law, and consequently in terms of the expected or required involvement of the “international community” in the dispute or war, this would complicate matters greatly for Israel.*
Warrant: Attempts to delegitimize Israel have little effect on the actual conflict


However, the (de)legitimization game played between Palestine and Israel has only to a rather low degree—if any—affected developments on the ground. It is also not very likely that even the remarkable achievements of Initiative 194 bear the potential to significantly cross the lines of symbolic success. It is telling that Sweden, the first and so far the only member of the European Union that—in response to Initiative 194—has fully recognized Palestine, maintains excellent relations with Israel, according to its Foreign Minister Margot Wallström.[5] From a diplomatic perspective, Sweden went rather far—still, the impact on the harsh reality of occupation appears to be negligible.

Firstly, the Arab/Palestinian-Israeli conflict was in a sense the mother of all regional conflicts in the Middle East in the second half of the 20th century—in the 21st century this is no longer the case. In the perception of both regional and powerful external actors, particularly the US, other issues have become increasingly more important: the “war against terrorism” and socio-economic and political regional conflicts embellished as religious conflicts between Sunni and Shia (cf. Sluglett 2015). Thus, due to changed perceptions and despite an arguably increased urgency in terms of human suffering, the relevance of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for regional and international relations is in decline.

Analysis: The argument that other countries do not support Israel has extremely small impacts in the real world. Israel makes its policy decisions based on a realist perspective which means that it bases its decisions on real world actions. While countries may use their words against Israel, they rarely act against them. In fact, countries like Sweden will condemn Israel while still maintaining economic and diplomatic relations with them. This combined with the decreasing international focus on the conflict makes the impacts of this argument fairly irrelevant.
CON – A two-state solution protects Israel from security threats

Argument: A two-state solution grants Israel legitimacy among regional powers in the Middle East and balances external security threats.

Warrant: A two-state solution increases Israel’s security in the region by recognizing Palestine.


In addition, a negotiation with Palestine would improve Israel’s reputation in the Middle East and help Israel reach its goal of “enduring legitimacy” in the region. Given its nuclear arsenal and conventional military strength, occupying the West Bank no longer serves an essential security purpose for Israel. Israeli forces should relinquish the occupied territories and allow the creation of a viable Palestinian state, a step that would help re-legitimize Israel in the eyes of the international community. Many countries in the Middle East refuse to acknowledge Israel’s existence, but most have pledged to do so if a two-state solution is reached. Despite inevitable disputes and obstacles, in the end Israel stands to benefit from an independent and secure Palestine derived from a two-state solution.
**Warrant:** A two-state solution protects Israel from the external threat of Iran.


But if the two-state solution — an independent Palestine existing adjacent to Israel — becomes a reality, Israel stands to benefit from improved security and potentially from improved Middle East relations, according to a research paper authored by Stephen Walt, Belfer Professor of International Affairs. A two-state solution would also improve Israel’s security vis-à-vis Iran, according to Walt. “By removing Iran’s main source of leverage,” he writes, “and by facilitating rapprochement between Israel and countries such as Saudi Arabia (that have their own concerns about Iran), a two-state solution may in fact be the best way to minimize the threat that Iran now presents.”

**Warrant:** A two-state solution, properly engineered, serves the security interests of both Palestinians and Israelis.


The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that well-thought-through security measures in the context of the two-state solution can provide Israelis and Palestinians with a degree of security equal or greater to that provided today by Israel’s deployment into the West Bank, and that such measures can be consistent with Palestinian needs for sovereignty and dignity. In the context of a two-state agreement, Israel would still have the right and ability to defend itself by itself as any sovereign state does. **But the intent of this proposed security architecture is to build in a multilayered system so that the need for unilateral Israeli action is vastly reduced to rare emergency situations.**
Warrant: A secure two-state solution provides multiple benefits to both sides of the current conflict.


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<th>What the Parties Achieve From the Proposed Security System</th>
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Warrant: Improvements in regional security forces on both sides have made a two-state solution increasingly possible.


Nevertheless, there are some important bright spots that should not be overlooked. Over the past few years there has been significant improvement and professionalization of the Palestinian security forces. In spite of high social tension and strong opposition, the PASF has remained professional and persistent in its security mission. With continued training and support, and under conditions of hope associated with a negotiated solution, the PASF can be expected to play a crucial role in ensuring the security of the future state of Palestine and contribute to Israel’s security in the process. The leaders of these forces have built strong relations with leaders of their counterpart Israeli security services, and the close cooperation between the two has been a key feature of improved security for both Israelis and Palestinians. Another important development has been the quietly improving security relationship between Israel and several Arab states. This convergence has been driven primarily by common interests in countering Iran and dealing with the new wave of instability wracking the region. These common interests reinforce the potential of the Arab Peace Initiative, which offers Israel normalization of relations with the Arab world in exchange for a final status agreement. A central issue to consider is how to convert this potential opportunity into action, and take advantage of improving relations between Israel and its Arab neighbors to improve the environment for Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, starting with the foundational area of security.

Analysis: This argument proves that, given certain security measures, a two-state solution actually produces the safest outcome for both sides of the current conflict. Palestinians achieving statehood alleviates the pressure on Israel from regional adversaries that currently condemn its existence because it fails to recognize Palestine. Teams can argue that Israel is inherently threatened by regional countries on the basis of denying Palestinian statehood, meaning that recognition solves this security dilemma.
A2 – A two-state solution protects Israel from security threats

**Answer:** Israel’s security is threatened by an ongoing security dilemma.

**Warrant:** Israel’s security still remains at risk, meaning they will never retract forces out of occupied territories if it further compromises this security.

<http://www.academia.edu/5063206/Cooperation_Competition_and_the_Security_Dilemma_The_Case_of_Muslim_States_and_Israel>.

Despite the founding goals of the OIC, the Middle Eastern region has seen little improvement in the security dilemma since the inception of the organization. The conflict between Palestinian and Israel continues, the likelihood of Iran emerging as a nuclear-armed threat to Israel increases, and Israel’s repression over the United States to attack to Iran still stands as a threat of the entire region stability. Hezbollah attacks in Israel also continue, and recently, Lebanon fought with Israel over border disputes in 2006. Egypt also withdrew its ambassador from Israel because Israel killed five Egyptian police officers in August of 2011.
Warrant: Ongoing violence still threatens Israel.


The Middle East conflict has its wider layers, not only confined to Israel and Palestine. Since its creation in 1948, Israel suffers from this security dilemma and construes Arab world its enemy. The war of 1967 further polarized the relations. Some of the countries in the region do not recognize the Israeli state, further abetting the security complex of Israel. But that in no way justifies violence in the region, and Israel’s enlarging settlements in West Bank. The building of settlements by Israel is not under the purview of international law. The ideal scenario of two-state solution is far receding from reality with these developments. Mahmoud Abbas, considered to be a moderate is marginalized by the extremist Hamas. This lack of unity among Palestinian leaders makes their bargaining position before Israel weak. The violence last month killing more than hundred people in Gaza did not add anything to the conflict discourse in the region, except death and destruction. Diplomatically Egypt could reassert its regional balancer role with the US in declaring a ceasefire, but on the ground the conflict remained the same or rather further protracted.
**Warrant**: Security remains the priority for the current administration in Israel, meaning the two-state solution is not feasible.


But words aren’t enough. Insisting seriously on negotiations only now that the Palestinian Authority has taken matters to the UN, **Netanyahu has made a thoroughly disappointing effort toward peace** – and it’s putting Israel in serious danger. With the Israeli-Palestinian conflict now framed by the world community as a question of Palestinian statehood, Israel is quickly losing the capital to determine the terms of a two-state solution. While it would make most practical sense for Israel to annex major settlement blocs, retain sovereignty over a united Jerusalem, and continue security collaboration with the Palestinian Authority, the chance for these issues to be resolved in Israel’s favor continues to wane. More than a few critics have gone a step further, proclaiming the death of the two-state solution, and with it, the end of Zionism.

**Analysis**: This answer analyzes what it would mean for Israel to pursue a two-state solution. Insofar as Israel may have to make certain compromises on its current force structure for security to allow for Palestinian statehood, the Affirmative can argue that Israel will never accept this compromise. As long as Israeli security is plagued by an ongoing security dilemma, recognizing Palestinian statehood will be far down the list of acceptable compromises to make.
CON – A two-state solution will decrease terror in the region

Argument: Working toward a two-state solution provides stability within the Palestinian government, and prevents terror from taking over the area and creating more violence.

Warrant: Israel’s military attacks against Palestine have caused Palestinian terror response by Hamas, regardless of peace deals.


“HAMAS and Fatah in April 2011 agreed to form an interim government and hold elections, reaffirming this pledge in February 2012. HAMAS departed its long-time political headquarters in Damascus in February and dispersed throughout the region as Syrian President Bashar al-Asad’s crackdown on opposition in the country made remaining in Syria untenable for the group. In May 2012, HAMAS claimed to have established a 300-strong force to prevent other Palestinian resistance groups from firing rockets into Israel. Conflict broke out again in November. While HAMAS had worked to maintain the cease-fire brokered by Egypt that ended the week-long conflict, other Palestinian militant groups flouted the cease-fire with sporadic rocket attacks throughout 2013 and 2014. Fatah and HAMAS in April 2014 agreed to form a technocratic unity government headed by PA Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah and to hold legislative elections within six months. HAMAS has not renounced violent resistance against Israel even while pursuing reconciliation with Fatah. In July 2014, the uneasy calm between HAMAS and Israel broke down completely after three Israeli teenagers were kidnapped and killed in the West Bank in June—deaths ascribed by Israel to HAMAS—and a Palestinian was killed by Israeli settlers in revenge. Retaliatory rocket attacks by HAMAS’s military wing and other Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip escalated into the longest and most lethal conflict with Israel since 2009.”
Warrant: A two-state solution would decrease terror by securing borders.


In contrast to these nonviable scenarios, the fence currently being built by the Israeli Ministry of Defense will not cause disproportionate demographic pain for either party. Approximately 76 percent of Israeli settlers will be incorporated into 12.5 percent of West Bank territory on the Israeli side of the barrier, near the Green Line, while less than 1 percent of West Bank Palestinians will be "stranded" in these Israeli areas. Under this arrangement, 99 percent of the West Bank Palestinian population will be left in the remaining 87.5 percent of West Bank territory, the vast majority of which would be contiguous. Moreover, the MOD fence can result in numerous positive consequences if implemented properly. First, it can drastically reduce the frequency of terrorist attacks within Israel, which have repeatedly undermined attempts to resume negotiations. In fact, completed portions of the fence have already curtailed terrorist infiltration from the areas that they cover. Second, in light of the currently dysfunctional political situation, the MOD fence is the best means of facilitating an eventual two-state solution. Aside from disentangling the two hostile populations, the barrier has the potential to become an effective provisional border.
Warrant: Peace through a two-state solution will prevent extremist terror.


More broadly, he said that in a tense regional environment, it was imperative to consolidate peace wherever possible, urging political leaders in Lebanon to work with the Prime Minister to resolve the presidential crisis. He welcomed the restoration of calm along the “Blue Line” and in the area of operation of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). On the Golan, he urged the parties to the Disengagement Agreement to refrain from actions that could escalate the situation across the ceasefire line. While some might say the volatility in the Middle East made it too risky to seek peace, the greater peril was not seeking a solution to the Palestinian question. “The parties must act — and act now — to prevent the two-State solution from slipping away forever,” he stressed. Upholding that vision offered the only means by which Israel could retain its Jewish majority and democratic status. Amid a relentless wave of extremist terror across the Middle East, Israelis and Palestinians had an opportunity to restore hope in a region torn apart by intolerance and cruelty, he said. “I urge them to accept this historic challenge in the mutual interest of peace.”
Warrant: Hamas gained popularity due to lack of the US to form a two-state solution.


In the years since then, the secular nationalist Fatah lost support among Palestinians to its radical Islamist rival, Hamas. Factors contributing to this include (1) Fatah’s inability to achieve Palestinian aspirations either through violent or peaceful means; (2) the incompetence and corruption of the Fatah-dominated Palestinian Authority; and (3) Hamas’s growing ability to deliver social services more effectively and efficiently than the Palestinian Authority. Thus Hamas won the 2006 Palestinian parliamentary elections. Hamas is a Sunni Islamist group. It does not seek a two-state solution, but calls for the destruction of the single Palestinian state. In addition to opposing Israel, it is engaged in a long drawn-out power struggle with Fatah. While Fatah still controls (in conjunction with Israel) the West Bank, Hamas was able to seize control over the Gaza Strip after Israel unilaterally withdrew from it. The Mideast Quartet (the United States, the EU, the UN, and Russia) responded to the Hamas electoral victory by offering to work with Hamas if it met three conditions: renounce violence, recognize Israel, and abide by existing Mideast peace agreements. Hamas rejected all three conditions; its spokesman stated that “the Quartet should have demanded an end to occupation and aggression,…not demanded that the victim recognize the occupation and stand handcuffed in the face of the aggression.”
Warrant: Hamas will continue violence until a solution is reached

Hamas pursues this policy, though, not just because this allows it to look more “principled” than Fatah or even because this is its preference. The Hamas leadership is well aware that Fatah’s renunciation of armed struggle against Israel combined with its inability to negotiate a settlement with it acceptable to the Palestinians served to discredit Fatah and allowed Hamas to gain popularity and strength. Hamas fears that if it, too, foreswore violence, as the Quartet insists, there is no guarantee it would be any more successful in negotiating an agreement with Israel that the Palestinian population would accept. Even attempting this would leave the door open for a rival Islamist group to do to Hamas what Hamas did to Fatah. One such potential rival already exists: Islamic Jihad. And, just as al-Qaeda affiliates (such as al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, al-Qaeda in Iraq, and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb) have arisen elsewhere, an al-Qaeda in Palestine might arise to challenge Hamas if it seeks to compromise with Israel but is unable to wrest concessions from it. Of course, more radical Islamist movements may gain strength vis-à-vis Hamas even if the latter remains committed to its uncompromising position, but fails (as it surely will) to achieve positive results for the Palestinian people. Whether they realize it or not (and, unfortunately, some do not), all the current major players in the Israeli/Palestinian conflict—Israel, America and its allies, Fatah, and even Hamas—have an interest in achieving a negotiated settlement acceptable to both Israelis and Palestinians. Their failure to achieve it means that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is at risk of becoming much more deeply enmeshed in the “War on Terror” and perhaps even irresolvable—an outcome that would benefit al-Qaeda and its affiliates.
Analysis: When it comes to the state of the Palestinian government, the reason that Hamas has been successful in running the region is due to the failure of the United States to truly put pressure on Israel to make a two-state solution. Hamas has shown its people that the situation has been unsuccessful. The negation should stress that should the world of the affirmative become reality, this would further increase Hamas’ popularity and would increase the terror that exists in the region. Creating a true border and two true states is the only way to maintain peace and prevent terror from sprawling across the region.
A2 – A two-state solution decreases terror in the region

**Answer:** The main reason for failure of the two-state solution is the lack of pressure on Palestine.

**Warrant:** Hamas has continually rejected a two-state solution.


One day after celebrating a landmark reconciliation accord for Palestinian unity, Khaled Meshal, the Hamas leader, said on Thursday that **he was fully committed to working for a two-state solution but declined to swear off violence** or agree that a Palestinian state would produce an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. “The whole world knows what Hamas thinks and what our principles are,” Mr. Meshal said in an interview in his Cairo hotel suite. “But we are talking now about a common national agenda. The world should deal with what we are working toward now, the national political program.” He defined that as “a Palestinian state in the 1967 lines with Jerusalem as its capital, without any settlements or settlers, not an inch of land swaps and respecting the right of return” of Palestinian refugees to Israel itself. **Asked if a deal honoring those principles would produce an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Mr. Meshal said, “I don’t want to talk about that.”** He added: “When Israel made agreements with Egypt and Jordan, no one conditioned it on how Israel should think. The Arabs and the West didn’t ask Israel what it was thinking deep inside. All Palestinians know that 60 years ago they were living on historic Palestine from the river to the sea. It is no secret.”
Warrant: There has been no cooperation effort made by Hamas on behalf of Palestine.


Hamas said it never gave Abbas or anyone else a mandate to agree to the two-state solution. The Islamist group said that in 2006, all Palestinian factions agreed to the establishment of Palestinian state on the pre-1967 lines and the return of Palestinian refugees to their homes inside Israel “without recognizing the Zionist entity or its legitimacy on the land of Palestine.” It added that “resistance in all shapes, first and foremost armed struggle, will remain the only effective way to achieve the goals of the Palestinian people” and liberate their land.” It reiterated its call to Abbas to immediately halt the negotiations with Israel, as well as all security coordination with the IDF in the West Bank. It also urged him to release Hamas prisoners from PA jails in the West Bank.

Analysis: Direct statements from the government of Palestine show that there is no attempt at cooperation. Although there will have to be some kind of ‘meet in the middle’ agreement, Palestine has held fast to their belief that they will make no sacrifices in order to push forward an agreement. Although both sides have had their doubts, Israel has not had this same kind of definitive pushback. Thus, the United States is putting pressure on Israel to work with a government that has definitively stated they will not accept a deal, putting Israel in an impossible situation.
Answer: Efforts by the United States have resulted in inaction.

Warrant: The United States has only caused more crises within Palestine.


Asmaa al-Ghoul reports from the Gaza Strip that “initiatives” by political leaders have become excuses for inaction, rather than calls to action. Ghoul writes, "These political initiatives, which have engulfed the Palestinian political action, did not solve the accumulated crises in the Gaza Strip crisis — reconciliation is stalled, electricity is cut for more than 12 hours a day and the Rafah crossing remains closed and is only opened at intervals. All of this makes the initiatives seem like a mere public show.” Iran, meanwhile, seems poised to enhance its own position as a broker or spoiler on the Israeli-Palestinian fault line, a trend we have been covering in this column and in Palestine Pulse for over three years. Back in November 2012 we wrote, “Iran revealed that it has the wherewithal to shift the equation and provide some payback [in Gaza], even in those areas where its adversaries allegedly hold sway.” Shlomi Eldar reports that Iran’s ambassador to Beirut has shrewdly offered aid and support to the families of Palestinians who died committing attacks against Israelis.

Analysis: Recognizing the effect of past United States actions is key to understanding whether the status quo is a good system to stick with. However, it is clear that these initiatives which have been put forth again and again by the United States have fell flat. They have not limited the amount of violence and terror in the region, and has not brought either side closer to a two-state solution.
CON – Two state solution is the only path to peace

Argument: Any other path into the future will inevitably fail or result in violence and oppression. We must focus on the two-state solution

Warrant: A single state cannot work based off of the demographics


It focuses on the level of acrimony between the United States and Israel, as if the future of Israel as a democratic Jewish state depended on whether the U.S. government walked in lock-step with the Israeli government. There is a reason for acrimony: the failure of the Israeli government to face up to one undeniable fact, the demographic bomb that lies ahead.

As Secretary Kerry pointed out in his speech on Dec. 28, “There are a similar number of Jews and Palestinians living between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. They have a choice. They can choose to live together in one state, or they can separate into two states. But here is a fundamental reality: If the choice is one state, Israel can either be Jewish or democratic — it cannot be both — and it won’t ever really be at peace.”

The settlements are not the only obstruction to the two-state solution. Another lies in the seats in the Knesset, occupied by right-wing Israeli political parties that want to perpetuate the 50-year occupation of the West Bank as a prelude to annexing it. Without their existence and support, Netanyahu would be out of office. But the clock on the demographic time bomb continues to click toward an Arab majority. The two-state solution may be difficult to foresee now, but it is the only vehicle for avoidance of long-term violent struggle between Arabs and Jews in that land.
Con Arguments with Pro Responses

Warrant: The international community has agreed that the two-state solution is the only way forward.


France is hosting more than 70 countries on Sunday at a Mideast peace summit, in what will be a final chance for the Obama administration to lay out its positions for the region.

According to a draft statement obtained by The Associated Press on Friday, the conference will urge Israel and the Palestinians “to officially restate their commitment to the two-state solution.”

It also will affirm that the international community “will not recognize” changes to Israel’s pre-1967 lines without agreement by both sides.

The draft says that participants will affirm “that a negotiated solution with two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security, is the only way to achieve enduring peace.”

On Thursday, French President Francois Hollande said the conference aims at ensuring the support of the international community for the two-state solution as a reference for future direct negotiations.
Warrant: One state can only lead to conflict and discrimination


With the Jewish and Arab populations between the Jordan River and Mediterranean Sea at near-parity, demographic trends preclude Israel from maintaining control over all of Greater Israel while remaining a democratic state and a homeland for the Jewish people. As then-Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said in November 2007, “If the day comes when the two-state solution collapses, and we face a South African-style struggle for equal voting rights, then, as soon as that happens, the State of Israel is finished.”

The two-state solution represents the best way to ensure that Israel remains a democracy and a national home for the Jewish people. The two-state solution has been American policy across four administrations and has been endorsed by each of the most recent Israeli and Palestinian leaders.

There is no such thing as a “one-state solution,” only a “one-state nightmare.” Neither Israelis nor Palestinians have given up or are prepared to give up on their national aspirations, and polls show majority support on both sides for a two-state solution.

Because neither Israelis nor Palestinians want to share the land or share their government and civil institutions, condemning them to a one-state solution means condemning both sides to unending conflict and civil war. Only a two-state solution can end the conflict and guarantee both sides self-determination and a peaceful future.

A two-state solution is the only way to guarantee Israel’s security in the long term. Nobody can or should guarantee an end to all violence once a peace deal is reached. But it is clear that without a two-state solution, violence will continue. Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory has not made it secure; in fact the opposite is the case. A negotiated two-state solution will

ensure that Israel has secure, defensible, universally recognized borders. It will include strong and enforceable security arrangements as well as an international effort that holds the parties responsible for maintaining their commitments. The solution should also recognize the right of the Jewish people to statehood and recognize the right of the Palestinian people to statehood, without prejudice to the equal rights of the parties’ respective citizens.
Warrant: Other alternative plans will not succeed or will lead to more conflict


In the absence of progress toward two states, are there better alternatives than throwing in the towel and looking at annexation as Plan B? The search for alternative Plan B’s is a fool’s errand. Some of those ideas are creative, but none of them will be accepted by both sides. For example, one Plan B variant du jour rests on the premise of a “regional solution”—that is, having Israel and the Arab world reach a comprehensive peace agreement that includes a resolution of the Palestinian issue. Sounds good, except it makes no sense.

“Maintaining the status quo” is a non-starter, because status quos are never static—as the events of recent years prove, they tend to get worse. How many Intifadas or stabbings will it take for the people of Israel to believe their own security chiefs, who recognize that these actions are born of frustration over the occupation and related grievances? Why should Israelis believe that the majority of Palestinians are interested in peace when Hamas—opposed to Israel’s very existence—still rules Gaza and commands significant popular support, and while the Palestinian Authority is crumbling and hardly represents anyone anymore? And how long will it take Palestinian supporters of armed and violent resistance to recognize that their abortive efforts to destroy Israel and indiscriminate attacks on Israeli civilians are repugnant: targeting civilians is a morally unacceptable tactic for any resistance movement.

And so it is for all other Plan B’s. Several years ago, my Princeton graduate students embarked on an effort to find a viable alternative to the two-state solution; and they told me at the outset that they intended to prove that such an alternative existed. In the end, they failed and returned to the idea that the only viable solution was to partition the land into two states. Others, too, have tried to find alternatives, and some retain the hope that their policy proposal might win the day. I wish them well—for I really do believe in peace, whether it’s via two states or otherwise. But I have no confidence they will succeed.
**Warrant:** A two-state solution is the only possible way to truly achieve peace


"Those who say that the two-state solution is dead are not serving the interests of peace and certainly not serving the interests of Israel and the Palestinians," says former top White House adviser and peace negotiator Dennis Ross.

"There's no such thing as a one-state solution as it relates to peace. That's a contradiction in terms. The idea that one could somehow ignore the demographic reality is anathema to me. The idea that you can somehow wish away the Palestinians is an illusion."

**Analysis:** This argument provides a huge amount of offense for the negative team. Rather than simply arguing that the two-state solution is a good option, it also argues that it is the only option. This forces an affirmative team to either find a better solution or defend the status quo, neither of which are particularly easy. This argument would pair well with contentions supporting the idea that US pressure would lead to a two-state solution as it then forms an effective narrative of saying that the US could be the leader in a push to the only viable Middle Eastern peace plan.
A2 – Two state solution is the only path to peace

Argument: The two-state solution will not lead to peace

Warrant: Historically two-state solutions have not solved conflict, merely frozen it


The race to save the two-state solution is misplaced. Two-state solution, as its troubled legacy in South Asia amply demonstrates, is unlikely to deliver peace. When India surrendered to the Muslim demand of a two-state solution, resulting in the creation of an independent sovereign state of Pakistan, its leaders thought that such an arrangement offered the only route to a stable future. But the creation of a new state of Pakistan brought neither peace nor stability. India and Pakistan have fought four wars so far, and the fifth one is going on in Kashmir right at this moment. Two-state solutions do not resolve conflicts; they merely freeze them. It is time that the West, instead of beating the old drum, injected some fresh thinking into resolving the Israel-Palestine imbroglio.

Analysis: The reason the two-state solution exists as an idea is in order to promote peace. However, this is idealistic and would not truly succeed. In past examples of warring nations being divided up into two-states we see that border conflicts and ideological struggles remain in place. This argument shows that while the two-state solution may assume everything is solved once the states are split, this is simply not true.
**Con Arguments with Pro Responses**

**March 2017**

**Argument:** Alternatives to the two-state solution do exist and could be implemented.

**Warrant:** A confederate solution solves many of the two-state solutions challenges yet delivers similar benefits.

"Hope Fades for a Two-state Solution. Is There Another Path to Middle East Peace?"


Moreover, despair is rooted in the mistaken notion that there are no other options. **But there is another way. It combines elements of both one-state and two-state solutions.**

It is a confederal approach, proposing two sovereign states, with an open border between them, freedom of movement and residency, and some limited shared governance. Call it the two-state solution 2.0.

**In addition to proposing an open border, another key distinction between this approach and the traditional two-state solution is the idea of de-linking citizenship and residency.** While each state would decide its own citizenship policies, including laws of return, citizens of one state could be permitted to live as residents in the other (as in the European Union), with each state setting limits on the number of non-citizens granted residency.

**This would open up a new way of addressing the intractable issue of Palestinian refugees.** Israeli Jews adamantly oppose the right of return of Palestinian refugees to Israel proper because they view it as bringing about the end of Israel’s Jewish majority; Palestinians just as resolutely insist on it – indeed it has become the symbolic centrepiece of their national struggle. **These maximalist positions have been among the main reasons why negotiations have failed.** In a confederal approach, however, Palestinian refugees who wish to return could live in Israel as residents, but would exercise their full citizenship rights, such as voting in national elections, in Palestine. De-linking citizenship and residency also helps address the thorny problem of Jewish settlers, who number more than half a million in the West Bank and East...
"Hope Fades for a Two-state Solution. Is There Another Path to Middle East Peace?"

_Jerusalem._ Under a traditional two-state solution, even if Israel were allowed to annex some large settlement blocs, it would still have to remove tens of thousands of settlers, possibly up to 100,000, many of them messianic religious Zionists. Some would fiercely resist evacuation and might even employ violence. In a confederate model, by contrast, Jewish settlers could live as Israeli citizens in a Palestinian state, as long as they were law-abiding residents; and the Palestinians would not have to give up large chunks of territory since they would have sovereignty over the settlements.

A final significant difference between the traditional two-state solution and a confederation is the idea of establishing some joint institutions and legal mechanisms to facilitate cooperation between the two states, not only in security matters but also in areas such as economic development and management of shared resources (water, for example). This would help promote economic equality and prosperity, instead of fostering conditions for state failure if a new Palestinian state was simply left to fend for itself. Close security cooperation would be essential. But it would take place between two independent states, unlike today’s security cooperation, where the Palestinian Authority is widely perceived by Palestinians to be acting as the contractor of a foreign military ruler.
Warrant: The two-state solution does not solve and we need to focus on better alternatives


While the two-state solution might provide an answer to Israel’s identity crisis, it does little in terms of solving both the humanitarian and human-rights crisis facing Palestinians. In the best-case scenario, a Palestinian state would be demilitarized and have not a semblance of the sovereignty afforded to every other state in the international system. It would, more or less, be under glorified occupation. Palestinian refugees would not be permitted to return to their homes. The status of Jerusalem, having become so marred by Israeli settlement-building, would likely be indivisible and largely off limits to the Palestinian statelet.

Recognizing that we have a “one-state problem” is the key to peace. The first step is ending discrimination in the law based on ethnicity or religion throughout the entirety of the territory. Palestinians must be part of shaping any future state they will live in, and they can do so only on equal footing with their Jewish counterparts before the law, not under military occupation. For the next steps, numerous historic examples of multi-ethnic democracies exist, including those that made transitions from parallel situations. South Africa is one. It is important to note that while each case is different, and no analogy is perfect, lessons learned from those experiences and examples can inform the path forward for Israelis and Palestinians, even as they simultaneously take into consideration the uniqueness of this case.

Standing in the way of any progress will be two-state absolutists, who refuse to rethink and reevaluate failed policy and strategy because of an irrational or ideological commitment to it. This is dangerous stuff. Absolutism is innovation’s mortal enemy. It’s time to start thinking outside the Zionist box and look for solutions that secure the human rights and equality of all involved, and not simply the political demands of the stronger party.
Analysis: The argument presented above that a two-state solution is the only way forward is false on face value. In fact, it is this ideology that has prevented real change. Not only do real alternatives exist like the confederate state or a single state with equal rights, we harm these ideas by focusing on the two-state solution. This solution is unrealistic and possibly harmful, we need to stop thinking of it as the only way towards peace and begin to evaluate and consider other options that create less conflict during negotiations.
CON – Without US pressure, Israel will expand settlements

**Argument:** US pressure needs to remain a key deterrent for Israel to reconsider settlement expansion.

**Warrant:** Settlements have continued to expand as pressure for a two-state solution has waned.


In his nearly 80-minute-long speech, Kerry, who tried and failed to revitalize the moribund peace process, warned that Israel’s rapidly growing settler population — nearly 600,000 Jews live in East Jerusalem and the West Bank — could kill off any last chance at a two-state solution to the conflict and endanger Israel's future as a Jewish and democratic state. Kerry rolled out a string of depressing statistics to bolster his case. He noted that the settler population in the West Bank alone — not including East Jerusalem — had increased by nearly 270,000 since the 1990s-era Oslo peace accords and by 100,000 since President Barack Obama took office in 2009. He also pointed out that the Israeli government recently approved the construction of a new settlement well east of the separation barrier dividing Israel and the West Bank — one that will be closer to Jordan than Israel.
**Warrant:** These settlements in occupied territory are considered illegal.


International humanitarian law is very clear that occupation must only be temporary; the Israeli settlements are in direct violation of this principle. For instance, the settlements are in breach of Article 49 of the 4th Geneva Convention, which forbids an occupier from transferring its own civilians into the territory it occupies. Additionally, according to Article 55 of the Hague Regulations, the occupying power’s role is to safeguard occupied properties and maintain the status quo. As the international development organization Diakonia explains, the construction of settlements violates this article because of the major changes it inflicts upon the occupied territory. And, according to Article 43 of the Hague Regulations, the occupying power must uphold order and safety while respecting the laws of the occupied country. Yet as Diakonia also explains, the settlements actually undermine public order and violate existing laws.
Warrant: Donald Trump’s pick for ambassador to Israel supports settlement expansion.


President-elect Donald Trump announced Thursday that he will nominate New York bankruptcy lawyer David M. Friedman as his ambassador to Israel, saying in a statement issued by his transition office that Friedman’s “strong relationships in Israel will form the foundation of his diplomatic mission.” A senior Trump adviser on Israel during the campaign, Friedman has been outspoken in describing as “legal” Jewish settlements in the West Bank, which every U.S. administration since 1967 has considered illegitimate. Liberal Jews have returned his views in kind. J Street, the Washington-based organization that supports a two-state solution, said it was “vehemently opposed” to the nomination. Calling the proposed nomination “reckless,” Ben-Ami said it puts “America’s reputation in the region and credibility around the world at risk. Senators should know that the majority of Jewish Americans oppose the views and the values this nominee represents.” Settlements have expanded under Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who also says he wants a peace deal.
Warrant: Settlements continue to expand under the Trump administration.


In the two weeks since President Trump took office, an emboldened Israeli government cast off international criticism and approved the construction of thousands of new settler homes in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem. And Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced plans to build an entirely new West Bank settlement, despite a commitment to the United States dating to the 1990s that Israel would not do so. Mr. Netanyahu’s aggressive promotion of major new settlement construction has come amid intense pressure from within his right-wing coalition. Political rivals to Mr. Netanyahu’s right have used the Republican sweep in the American elections to push harder away from the two-state solution and in favor of the settlements.

Analysis: Israel’s government is already largely ruled by right wing political forces that support settlement expansion into occupied territories. Without any competing international pressure to produce a two-state solution, Israel will continue to capitulate to these political forces and build settlements that largely threaten their international legitimacy and destabilize occupied territories.
A2 – Without US pressure, Israel will expand settlements

**Answer:** Even with US pressure for a two-state solution, settlements still grew.

**Warrant:** Under President Obama, calls for a two-state solution did not deter settlement expansion.


Through eight years of escalating criticism from the world’s most powerful leader, *Israeli construction in these sacred, militarily occupied hills never stopped*. Thousands of homes were built. Miles of roadway. Restaurants. Shopping malls. A university. *Israeli settlements may be illegal in the eyes of the U.N. Security Council and a major obstacle to Middle East peace in the view of the Obama administration. But every day they become a more entrenched reality on land that Palestinians say should rightfully belong to them.* As the parched beige hilltops fill with red-tiled homes, decades of international efforts to achieve a two-state solution are unraveling. *And global condemnations notwithstanding, the trend is poised to accelerate.* Already, Israel has a right-wing government that boasts it is more supportive of settlement construction than any in the country’s short history. Within weeks, it will also have as an ally a U.S. president, Donald Trump, who has signaled he could make an extraordinary break with decades of U.S. policy and end American objections to the settlements. All the while, much of the world has opposed the settlements as an illegal infringement on occupied land. U.S. governments — Democratic and Republican alike — have urged Israel to halt the project and allow negotiations to dictate control of land that Palestinians say is vital to the viability of a future state. *Today, about 400,000 Israelis live in approximately 150 settlements scattered across the West Bank. That’s up from fewer than 300,000 when Barack Obama was elected. An additional 200,000 Israelis live in East Jerusalem, which Palestinians want as their future capital.*
Warrant: Even the international community pushing for a two-state solution, Netanyahu vows to expand settlements.


Undeterred by a resounding defeat at the United Nations, Israel’s government said Monday that it would move ahead with thousands of new homes in East Jerusalem and warned nations against further action, declaring that Israel does not “turn the other cheek.” Just a few days after the United Nations Security Council voted to condemn Israeli settlements, Jerusalem’s municipal government signaled that it would not back down: The city intends to approve 600 housing units in the predominantly Palestinian eastern section of town on Wednesday in what a top official called a first installment on 5,600 new homes.

Analysis: This argument proves that US pressure is not enough to deter Israeli settlement expansion in occupied territories. Under President Obama, international pressure for a two-state solution failed to deter the forces of the right with political forces in Israel that support settlement expansion, and this may increase with support that Netanyahu has from Trump.
Answer: The Trump administration refuses to take an official stance on settlement expansion and the two-state solution.

Warrant: The lack of an official stance by the White House means settlements will continue to expand with or without US pressure.


This time the White House did speak out. In an official statement delivered by White House spokesman Sean Spicer on Thursday, the administration offered the gentlest of critiques. “While we don’t believe the existence of settlements is an impediment to peace,” he said, “the construction of new settlements or the expansion of existing settlements beyond their current borders may not be helpful in achieving that goal.” Spicer added that the president “has not taken an official position on settlement activity” and will seek to discuss it with Netanyahu when the two meet later this month.

While these remarks were widely interpreted as an official rebuke, that Trump wasn’t willing to declare an official position on settlements is a notable departure from some five decades of U.S. policy. Since the settlement enterprise began in earnest in the 1970s, every president has declared American opposition to it. Back in December, when the United States controversially abstained from a vote on UN resolution that condemned Israeli settlements, former U.S. ambassador to the UN Samantha Power started her speech ahead of the vote by quoting Ronald Reagan’s declaration that “the United States will not support the use of any additional land for the purpose of settlements during the transitional period.”
Warrant: Mixed messages on the two-state solution means Netanyahu will continue with plans to build settlements.


According to The Jerusalem Post, an unnamed Trump official had a more forceful response to Netanyahu’s announcement. “[W]e urge all parties to refrain from taking unilateral actions that could undermine our ability to make progress, including settlement announcements,” the official told the paper. “The administration needs to have the chance to fully consult with all parties on the way forward.” But given the significance of Netanyahu's recent declarations, these anonymous remarks don’t exactly convey urgency.

Analysis: The argument here is that settlement expansion in occupied territories is not contingent on US pressure for a two-state solution. This is explicitly proved by statements from the Trump administration, whereby Trump has discouraged settlement building but Netanyahu still plans to proceed. The same issues pervaded the Obama administration, when an arguably stronger call for a two-state solution was not enough to deter the inception of settlements in the West Bank.
CON – Tensions with Israel will escalate

**Argument:** If the US stops pressuring Israel to pursue a two-state solution, Israel will continue to build settlements in the West Bank.

**Warrant:** US foreign policy in Israel has always aligned with pursuing a two-state solution.


Secretary of State John Kerry rebuked Israel for its settlement policy and warned in unusually harsh terms that a two-state solution was in serious jeopardy as the Obama administration raced to preserve its approach to the Middle East weeks before President-elect Donald Trump takes power. Mr. Kerry’s speech on Wednesday—in which he defended a U.S. decision to allow a United Nations resolution condemning Israel’s settlements—was seen by Israeli leaders as a parting shot from an unfriendly American administration in its final weeks. But the address appeared equally intended as a message to the incoming Trump team. Mr. Kerry spelled out principles that have long been largely consistent in American policy—the goal of Israel existing alongside a separate Palestinian state, the notion that the settlements are an impediment to peace, and the idea that Jerusalem should be the capital of both an Israeli and a Palestinian state.
Warrant: The new administration may not have a clear stance on expanded settlements, allowing for more potential conflict between leaders.


President Trump is encouraging Israel to hold off on new settlement construction. The surprising statement came after the Israeli prime minister vowed to build the first new settlement in the West Bank in any years. The White House says while it doesn't see settlements as an obstacle to peace between Israelis and Palestinians, the construction of new settlements and the expansion of those beyond their current borders may not be helpful. That's a shift from previous comments by Trump, who had seemed to be giving Israel a green light to build more housing for Jewish settlers in areas the Palestinians hope will become part of a future state.

Warrant: The expansion of settlements directly undermines a two-state solution.


“President Obama and I know that the incoming administration has signaled that they may take a different path,” Mr. Kerry said at the State Department. “But we cannot in good conscience do nothing, and say nothing, when we see the hope of peace slipping away.” The secretary condemned Palestinian violence, but his comments were most striking for taking direct aim at Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and denouncing his government’s policy of steadily building homes for Jewish settlers in the Palestinian territories, which he said undermined the potential for a two-state solution.
Warrant: Donald Trump’s pick for ambassador to Israel risks American credibility in the region.


President-elect Donald Trump announced Thursday that he will nominate New York bankruptcy lawyer David M. Friedman as his ambassador to Israel, saying in a statement issued by his transition office that Friedman’s “strong relationships in Israel will form the foundation of his diplomatic mission.” A senior Trump adviser on Israel during the campaign, Friedman has been outspoken in describing as “legal” Jewish settlements in the West Bank, which every U.S. administration since 1967 has considered illegitimate. Liberal Jews have returned his views in kind. J Street, the Washington-based organization that supports a two-state solution, said it was “vehemently opposed” to the nomination. Calling the proposed nomination “reckless,” Ben-Ami said it puts “America’s reputation in the region and credibility around the world at risk. Senators should know that the majority of Jewish Americans oppose the views and the values this nominee represents.”

Settlements have expanded under Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who also says he wants a peace deal.
**Warrant:** The UN ruled Israeli settlement expansion illegal.


The Security Council reaffirmed this afternoon that Israel’s establishment of settlements in Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, had no legal validity, constituting a flagrant violation under international law and a major obstacle to the vision of two States living side-by-side in peace and security, within internationally recognized borders. Adopting resolution 2334 (2016) by 14 votes, with the United States abstaining, the Council reiterated its demand that Israel immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem.
Warrant: Allowing Israel to expand settlements will comparatively worsen global tensions with Israel.


Defying extraordinary pressure from President-elect Donald J. Trump and furious lobbying by Israel, the Obama administration on Friday allowed the United Nations Security Council to adopt a resolution that condemned Israeli settlement construction. The administration’s decision not to veto the measure reflected its accumulated frustration over Israeli settlements. The American abstention on the vote also broke a longstanding policy of shielding Israel from action at the United Nations that described the settlements as illegal. While the resolution is not expected to have any practical impact on the ground, it is regarded as a major rebuff to Israel, one that could increase its isolation over the paralyzed peace process with Israel’s Palestinian neighbors, who have sought to establish their own state on territory held by Israel. Applause broke out in the 15-member Security Council’s chambers after the vote on the measure, which passed 14 to 0, with the United States ambassador, Samantha Power, raising her hand as the lone abstention. Israel’s ambassador, Danny Danon, denounced the measure, and castigated the council members who had approved it.

Analysis: This argument functions on a few levels of analyzing US pressure for a two-state solution. From an administrative level, the Obama administration steadily supported calls for a two-state solution, and formed their approach to Israel based on these principles. The new administration promises to pivot away from these goals and supports expanded settlements. Majority of global powers and influencers in international bodies oppose the expansion of settlements, as proven by the UN security resolution passed to condemn Israel’s actions. Removing the pressure for a two-state solution enforces Israel’s pivot to settlement building and effectively increases tensions with the US as other global powers rebuke their actions.
A2 – Tensions with Israel will escalate

**Answer:** The US has continued to support Israel, despite its disagreement regarding settlements that may undermine a two-state solution.

**Warrant:** US military aid to Israel continues to flow and increase.


The United States agreed Wednesday to provide Israel a record $38 billion in new military aid over the next decade. The pact is a sign of the two nations' close alliance despite major differences over Iran's nuclear program and other policies. The agreement, which equates to $3.8 billion a year, is the largest bilateral military aid package ever and includes $5 billion for missile defense, additional F-35 joint strike fighters and increased mobility for its ground forces. The aid package “is just the most recent reflection of my steadfast commitment to the security of the state of Israel,” President Obama said in a statement. “The U.S. is sending a message to the region that despite all the differences between us and Israel over last few years, none of Israel’s adversaries have a patron willing to commit as much money to their defense as the United States,” said David Makovsky, an analyst at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, a think tank in Washington, D.C.
**Warrant:** The US will always have strategic incentives to support Israel, stabilizing its presence and strength in the international community.


All of this creates an odd backdrop for a historic military-spending deal. **No matter how bad the relationship between the two countries’ top leaders, no matter who gets elected to the White House, no matter how loudly some voters voice their opposition or how charged the underlying ideological debate: The United States has pragmatic reasons to keep providing large sums of money for Israel’s military.** There are straightforward explanations for why this particular deal got done. **Politically, the spending package was partly a response to the nuclear deal that the United States and other world powers finalized with Iran in July of last year, and which Obama hailed as cutting off Iran’s pathway to nuclear weapons for more than a decade.**

Netanyahu was harshly critical of that agreement, which he called a “historic mistake” that would ease sanctions on Iran while leaving it with the ability to one day get the bomb. “Even with the deal in place, and taking the nuclear-weapon capability of Iran off the table at least for the next 10 to 15 years, there are still considerable destabilizing activities that Iranians are pursuing in the region that are not consistent with U.S. or Israeli interests or objectives,” said Melissa Dalton, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. **The new money is an attempt to pacify Israeli concerns about continued threats from Iran, she added.**

**Analysis:** The takeout to this argument focuses on analyzing the way the relationship between the US and Israel works right now. The US has several strategic incentives and commitments to Israel that they will not entirely abandon no matter what policies Israel chooses to pursue. This means that despite the tensions and agreements between the two actors, no substantial amount of support for Israel will decline to the point that Israel is in a bad position with other global powers as long as the US is backing their decisions.
**Answer:** Netanyahu sees the new administration has indefinitely supporting expansion.

Warrant: Netanyahu expects support for settlements from Trump.


The White House said on Thursday that it did not believe Israeli settlements in occupied territories posed “an impediment to peace,” while adding that the expansion of settlements beyond current borders “may not be helpful in achieving that goal,” in its first statement of note on the Israel-Palestine conflict. The second half of the statement appeared to signal some outer limit to President Trump’s previously unqualified support for the settlements. Since the presidential inauguration on Jan. 20, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has announced plans to expand settlements, including the construction of some 6,000 new homes. But Israeli officials appear to have taken the comments more as a thumbs-up than as a shift to a tougher line. "Netanyahu will be happy," a senior Israeli diplomat told Reuters in a text message. "Pretty much carte blanche to build as much as we want in existing settlements as long as we don't enlarge their physical acreage. No problem there."

And a right-wing deputy foreign minister from Mr. Netanyahu’s Likud party, Tzipi Hotovely, told the news service the White House had concluded that “more building is not the problem” and would go on unhindered.

**Analysis:** As long as Netanyahu sees anything that the White House says and indefinitely lining his existing policies on expansion, US support will always be politically skewed to meet that end. At that point, the Israeli government will always still gain support from the White House even if their statement is unclear, literally because Trump will never come out against expansion with Netanyahu because he wants to separate his policies from those under Obama.
CON – Palestine wants a two-state solution

**Argument:** The argument that many people make regarding the failure of a two-state solution is that there is a culture of hate. However, the stability of the state of Israel is something that Palestinians envy. They are open to a two-state solution, and thus do not need to be pressured.

**Warrant:** The problem is not a culture of hate; it is the jealousy of the state of Israel.


“As Israelis prepare to head[ed] to the ballot boxes on March 17, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are wondering whether they, too, will ever have the privilege of holding their own free and democratic elections. In the past few weeks, Palestinians have launched a campaign to demand free and democratic elections. But the campaign seems thus far to have fallen on deaf ears. All that is left for Palestinians to do is sit and watch with envy as voters in Israel practice their right to elect new representatives. The average age of the PLO leadership is 75. The same faces have been in control of Hamas for the past two decades. The last time the Palestinians went to the ballot boxes was in January 2006, when they voted for a new parliament, the Palestinian Legislative Council. The vote resulted in a victory for the Hamas-affiliated Change and Reform list. Exactly one year earlier, the Palestinians had a presidential election, which brought Fatah leader Mahmoud Abbas to power. The next parliamentary elections were supposed to be held in 2010, while the presidential vote was scheduled to take place in 2009. But the Palestinians have since failed to hold new parliamentary and presidential elections because of the dispute between Fatah and Hamas, which reached its peak with Hamas's violent takeover of the Gaza Strip in 2007. Next week's election in Israel will be the fourth since 2006 -- the year Palestinians last saw the ballot boxes in their own voting stations.”
**Warrant:** Palestinian citizens want to set up elections.


As Hamas and Fatah continue to fight each other, some **Palestinians have decided to launch an initiative to pressure the two parties to end their dispute and agree on new elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.** Dunya Ismail, one of the organizers of the campaign, said that, "**Every Palestinian should** rid himself of despair and frustration, and **take part in the drive to put pressure on the political leadership to hold new elections as soon as possible.**" She and her colleagues have taken to the streets to spread their message, but so far with little success. Yet the Palestinians are not likely to have new elections, at least not in the foreseeable future. The power struggle between Hamas and Fatah, which only seems to be escalating, has destroyed the Palestinians' dream of building a free and democratic society. "**We say all these bad things about Israel, but at least the people there have the right to vote and enjoy democracy,**" remarked a veteran **Palestinian** journalist from Ramallah. "**We really envy the Israelis.** Our leaders don't want elections. They want to remain in office forever."
The changes Palestine seeks are peaceful and allow for a two-state solution.


Fair and transparent elections are seen by experts and policymakers as a necessary step in Palestinian democratization and for the peace process. In 2002, the Palestinian Authority (PA), under increasing internal and external pressure, announced a so-called “100-Day Reform Plan” for institutional reform and elections in order to rejuvenate PA leadership. The 2006 legislative elections were the final and perhaps most critical test for Palestinian democratic institutions. On the one hand, the Palestinian Legislative Council elections may improve the day-to-day lives of Palestinians, renew public confidence in the PA, and bolster the peace process. On the other hand, the clear-cut legislative victory of Hamas, which does not recognize the state of Israel and calls for an Islamized Palestinian state, may increase the possibility that Palestinians will find themselves isolated. Palestinian political reform is an important element in the U.S. policy of promoting democracy, civil society, and good governance in the Middle East. Still, a PA that is dominated by a democratically elected Hamas is uncharted diplomatic territory for the United States government and international community.
Warrant: The government of Palestine is weak, and they trust the United States.

<http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1005&context=intlstudies_honors>.

Under the democracy and rule of law priorities, the EU and PA agreed to work together on strengthening the legitimacy of the Palestinian Legislative Council, regulating political parties, assisting in local elections and making the public administration more transparent. In 2005, the European Commission directed the Union’s financial commitments in two areas: (1) —support for the PA, including reforms (70 million Euros), with Europe being the primary donor to the Palestinian Financial Management Trust Fund supervised by the World Bank; and (2) —building the institutions of the Palestinian state (12 million Euros), which mainly focused on creating the conditions for an economic recovery in Gaza and the West Bank. Yet, the relationship between the EU and the Palestinians predates the ENP: with the signing of the 1980 Venice Declaration by the then members of the European Community, the EU became the first major international actor to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the legitimate negotiating partner for the Palestinian people 13 years before the State of Israel. Moreover, it advocated a negotiated two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict before the United States fully subscribed to this position in 2002. Nevertheless, America plays a more muscular role in the region and often in the past, Europe's potential as a negotiator between the Israelis and the Palestinian has been meet with skepticism on behalf of Israel and the US.

Analysis: If the Palestinians are willing and able to change their government, then the pressure needs to be put on Israel. Palestine should not be punished for mistakes that the Israelis are making. At the point in which Israel is the one with the stable government and the ability to fight back militarily, they have the leg up on Palestine. The negative should stress that Israel is the one at fault, and any vote in the affirmation rewards Israel for their refusal to cooperate with the negotiations for a two-state solution. Voting negative is the only way to guarantee stability with US policy and form the accurate response.
A2 – Palestine wants a two-state solution

**Answer:** Palestine’s divided government makes it nearly impossible for the state to agree.

**Warrant:** Hamas has continually rejected a two-state solution.


One day after celebrating a landmark reconciliation accord for Palestinian unity, Khaled Meshal, the Hamas leader, said on Thursday that **he was fully committed to working for a two-state solution but declined to swear off violence** or agree that a Palestinian state would produce an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. “The whole world knows what Hamas thinks and what our principles are,” Mr. Meshal said in an interview in his Cairo hotel suite. “But we are talking now about a common national agenda. The world should deal with what we are working toward now, the national political program.” He defined that as “a Palestinian state in the 1967 lines with Jerusalem as its capital, without any settlements or settlers, not an inch of land swaps and respecting the right of return” of Palestinian refugees to Israel itself. **Asked if a deal honoring those principles would produce an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Mr. Meshal said, “I don’t want to talk about that.”** He added: “When Israel made agreements with Egypt and Jordan, no one conditioned it on how Israel should think. The Arabs and the West didn’t ask Israel what it was thinking deep inside. All Palestinians know that 60 years ago they were living on historic Palestine from the river to the sea. It is no secret.”
Warrant: Palestine can sometimes be divided, and the support is never guaranteed.

Issa Amro, head of Youth Against Settlements, a Palestinian-led organization in Hebron, told Mondoweiss that most Palestinians feel disenfranchised by the continuous cycle of negotiation attempts. “The majority of the Palestinians don’t have any faith in the Paris Peace conference because no matter what, the conference won’t force Israel to fulfill its obligations to international law or human rights treaties,” Amro said. He added that any attempts at negotiating a solution at the moment are futile because in his opinion, as Israel is not interested in ending the occupation in the near future. “Israel doesn’t want one-state, two-state, or any other solution right now, so the first step, before any negotiations, should be to hold Israel accountable for its behavior,” he said. Ramzi Baroud, a Palestinian analyst and author, also told Mondoweiss that the political discussion surrounding the two-state solution was far from the on-the-ground reality of today’s Palestine, and that is wasn’t just the Israeli government Palestinians feel disenfranchised by. “Palestinians have progressively been losing faith in the two-state solution for some time now. That loss of faith is going hand-in-hand with the growth of Israeli settlements, and the loss of legitimacy of the Palestinian leadership among ordinary people,” Baroud said. According to Baroud, Israel, the US and the Palestinian Authority (PA) have “labored to give an impression that they are working jointly to reach a peace agreement,” but in reality, all three parties have no interest in a long-term solution, he said.

Analysis: Whether it be the inability for the government or the people to agree upon a solution, the support for the two-state solution comes and goes. Not all groups continuously support it, and thus the United States cannot rely upon Palestine to fairly take part in the negotiations. The United States needs to wait until Palestine has a stable government that can firmly confirm or deny their support for the two-state solution. Once we know for sure whether the government will back the United States in our efforts, we can then engage in these negotiations properly.
Answer: Palestine’s wishes are not the only key facet to the negotiations; Israel needs to be on board.

Warrant: Israel doesn’t feel that the two-state solution will be successful.

Arens, Moshe. "The world doesn’t get it, Israelis do: the two-state solution is unrealistic.”  

Most political analysts would agree that the reason the two-state solution and an Israel-Palestinian peace agreement are not the central campaign issues is that the vastmajority of Israelis don’t believe such an agreement is in the cards in the foreseeable future. They know Mahmoud Abbas does not represent all the Palestinians and is incapable of reaching an agreement with Israel on their behalf. And they know that an Israeli withdrawal from Judea and Samaria would bring Hamas, and possibly Islamic State, into the area, with consequent danger to Israel’s population centers. That seems to be the Labor Party’s position as well. Labor is not pushing the two-state solution in the election campaign, knowing full well that most Israelis consider it no more than a pipedream. That’s not fully appreciated or understood in much of the world outside Israel, by those enamored by the specious slogan of “two states for two peoples,” which originated in Israel and over the years has been embraced by many people worldwide. But the Middle East has changed substantially in recent years, and what to many seemed like a just and realistic alternative seems for now unrealistic.

Analysis: This is a two-state solution that must be agreed upon by both parties. Even if Palestine wasn’t incredibly divided, Israel and Palestine must both believe that the two-state solution will be successful and will be a good idea. However, if these negotiations are not supported by both parties, then there will be no agreement and there will be no success regarding a two-state solution.
CON – A two-state solution stabilizes conflict in the Middle East

**Argument:** As one of the most conflict-ridden regions across the entire globe, a two-state solution would be one of the best ways to prevent further war and conflict.

**Warrant:** The Middle East is a region torn by conflict.


“The Middle East is more unstable today than it has been in decades. Global energy supplies are at risk, and thus, so is the entire world economy. After more than a decade of war against al Qaeda, the United States has failed to stem the rising tide of transnational jihad, which is again threatening to rock the very foundations of global order as the Islamic State seizes vast swaths of land, resources and arms, murders and terrorizes thousands, displaces millions, recruits countless new fighters (thousands with Western passports) and plots a second 9/11. Many of your critics have accused your administration of lacking a coherent Middle East team to implement a coherent Middle East strategy. In the wake of recent developments, even Democratic loyalists like your former ambassador to Iraq, Christopher Hill, are piling on, concluding: “there doesn’t seem to be a good team there; there doesn’t even seem to be a team of rivals; there just seems to be people who have a lot of different views on the issues. And I think the president does need to kind of pull it together and look at [issues] from a broader context.”
Warrant: Israel and Palestine have both murdered and displaced thousands of people during war.


Israel and Hamas committed serious violations of the laws of war during fighting in the Gaza Strip in July and August 2014. At least 2,100 Palestinians were killed, of whom the United Nations identified [which] more than 1,500 as civilians, and approximately 11,000 people, mostly civilians, were injured. The tens of thousands of Israeli attacks caused the vast majority of destruction during the fighting, which left uninhabitable 22,000 homes, displacing 108,000 people, and left hundreds of thousands without adequate water or electricity.
Warrant: New elections to unite the government are now planned, without United States help or contribution.


Armed groups in Gaza in August summarily executed at least 25 Palestinians whom they accused of collaborating with Israel. Hamas authorities in Gaza conducted arbitrary arrests and tortured detainees. The authorities permitted some local human rights organizations to operate, but suppressed political dissent, freedom of association, and peaceful assembly. In 2014, Israeli forces killed 43 Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, as of October 31, including unlawful killings of protesters and others who posed no imminent threat to life. Following the June abduction and killing by Palestinian suspects of three Israeli teenagers, Israeli authorities conducted hundreds of apparently arbitrary arrests and punitively destroyed three family homes.

Israeli authorities demolished hundreds of homes under discriminatory policies and practices, forcibly displacing hundreds of Palestinian residents in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, as well as Bedouin citizens of Israel. Israeli authorities took inadequate action against Israeli settlers who attacked Palestinians and damaged their property in 307 incidents in 2014 as of December 1, the UN reported. Israel continued to expand unlawful settlements in the occupied West Bank and unlawfully appropriated 400 hectares of land. It also imposed severe restrictions on Palestinians’ right to freedom of movement and arbitrarily detained hundreds of Palestinians, including children and peaceful protesters.
Warrant: Palestine and Israel have a culture of hate that has led to violence.


According to Foxman, Palestinian and Israeli societies are fundamentally different. Palestinian discontent is “fanned and incited into hatred by a widespread, unfettered support for violence against Jews and Israel”. He was echoing a sentiment common in Israel, and famously voiced in the late 1960s by the then prime minister, Golda Meir. She suggested that even harder than forgiving the Arab enemy for killing Israel’s sons would be “to forgive them for having forced us to kill their sons”. In a bout of similar self-righteousness, many Israelis berate Palestinian parents for putting their children in danger’s way by allowing them to throw stones at Israeli security forces. The implication is that Palestinians – as a result of either culture or religion – value life less than Israelis. Strangely, Israelis rarely question the implication of the decision taken by one in 10 of their number to live in illegal colonies on stolen Palestinian land. The settlers choose to put themselves and their children on the front lines too, even though they have far more choices than Palestinians about where to live. In fact, neither Israelis nor Palestinians can claim to be above a culture of hate. As long as Israel’s belligerent occupation continues, their lives together in one small patch of the Middle East will continue to be predicated on bouts of violent confrontation.
Warrant: Ending the violence by preventing occupation of Palestinian land will create peace.


This conflict is emphatically not between equals, but between the occupier and the occupied. Israel is creating new facts on the ground “leading towards one state and perpetual occupation” as Kerry warned. Before asking what Britain can do now to promote a just peace, it is worth saying what won’t work. Quiet diplomacy, for one. We’ve tried that. Quiet diplomats get ignored. Second, US-led shuttle diplomacy, such as Kerry conducted for nine months. The US is necessary but not sufficient to resolve this conflict. And while no one can be sure what hand President Drumpf will play, the omens are bad. And we can’t leave it to the two conflicting parties to sort it out. The Middle East peace process became just that – a process. Direct unconditional negotiations between the strong and the weak only leave the weak, weaker. That’s not how to end the occupation. It will need an initiative by the international community, shaping the outcome, providing security guarantees, upholding the law, ensuring a better tomorrow for both peoples. The Paris conference should develop a wider consensus based on security council resolution 2334 and re-commit all Arab states to recognising Israel in return for a sovereign Palestine. It is not enough to offer more carrots to both parties, hoping that both will bite. Israel has had a surfeit of carrots over the decades. Incentives to the Palestinians are contingent on ending the occupation – which only Israel can do. So there are two things Britain should do. They go together. First, recognise the state of Palestine on 1967 borders now, or as soon as the Knesset “legalises” outposts, in breach of international humanitarian law; and secondly uphold that law without fear or favour – with serious consequences for whoever breaks it.

Analysis: The United States has been watching Israel occupy land that Palestine has continually claimed. As a result, there has been continued violence in the area, whether it be because of a poorly functioning government or because of unlawful occupation. The United States needs to pressure Israel to end the occupation that has continued to exist since the 1960s in order to end the conflict.
A2 – A two-state solution stabilizes conflict in the Middle East

**Answer:** The violence has persisted for so long that a two-state solution is no longer possible.

**Warrant:** The United Nations started looking toward a one-state solution.


The two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was at risk of being replaced by a one-State reality of perpetual violence and occupation, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told the Security Council today, encouraging both sides to take the difficult steps needed to change that destructive trajectory. Briefing the 15-member Council, Secretary-General Ban called attention to Israel’s expansion of its settlement construction activities, noting that in the past two weeks alone, plans had been advanced for another 463 housing units in Area C of the occupied West Bank. The decades-long policy, which had settled more than 500,000 people on Palestinian territory, was diametrically opposed to the creation of a Palestinian State, he emphasized. “Settlements are illegal under international law,” he said, adding: “The occupation, stifling and oppressive, must end.” The international community, including the Security Council and the Middle East Quartet, universally viewed the expansion of settlements as an obstacle to peace, he stressed. As Palestinians prepared for the first local elections in more than 10 years, the international community was seeing growing threats to the electoral process and the credibility of institutions, he said. “Local elections in the West Bank and Gaza, if held in line with international standards, could provide an important renewal of Palestinian democracy and a first step towards advancing national unity.”
Warrant: A two-state solution won’t end because Israel won’t end occupation even under pressure.


The initiative was praised by Palestinian officials but criticised by Israel, saying the meeting "only hardened Palestinian positions and pushed peace further away". Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Emmanuel Nahshon, quoted by AFP, also said "the international community accepted [Palestinian leader] Mahmoud Abbas's demand and enabled him to continue to evade direct and bilateral negotiations without preconditions". France's President Francois Hollande issued a warning about doing nothing. Violence he said was rife, and hope diminishing. The final communiqué said the status quo was not sustainable. Continuing violence was alarming and so was the expansion of Jewish settlements on land the Palestinians want for a state. Both Israelis and Palestinians would have to show, through policies and actions, that they were committed to a two state solution. The Palestinians welcome the internationalisation of attempts to end the conflict. They believe they get more sympathy from European countries than from the United States. The Israeli foreign ministry called the conference a missed opportunity. It said pressure should have put on Mr Abbas, to talk one on one with Israel's Prime Minister, Binyamin Netanyahu.
Warrant: Israel has historically always occupied Palestine, regardless of the pressure on them.


Successive Israeli governments have sustained a half-century-long occupation of the Palestinians through the application of deadly violence by its military. What right do they therefore have to demand that Palestinians forgo violence in their struggle to end their suppression? Is the Palestinians’ resort to violence to achieve freedom and self-determination—considered “peremptory norms” in international law—less legitimate than Israel’s resort to violence to deny them their freedom and self-determination? In fact, no one has asserted the right to violent resistance to occupation more forcefully than the Jewish terrorist groups in the pre-state era. The Irgun, headed by Menachem Begin (which became the Likud, now headed by Netanyahu), terrorized the pre-state British occupiers. Yitzhak Shamir, who was also elected prime minister of Israel, headed the Stern Gang. He wrote in the journal of his terrorist organization, *LEHI*, “Neither Jewish ethics nor Jewish tradition can disqualify terrorism as a means of combat….

Terrorism is for us a part of the political battle being conducted under the present circumstances and it has a great part to play.” As documented by Benny Morris in his book *Righteous Victims*, Jewish terrorism targeted Arab civilians.

Analysis: The United States should only be attempting to prevent conflict through a two-state solution if there was evidence it would work. However, despite the US negotiations that have taken place over the last decade, there is no reason to assume that violence will end by more pressure. This pressure has never historically been successful, and thus there is no need to attempt it for the tenth time. The affirmative needs to stress that the past is the past.
CON – A two-state solution is the only way to achieve justice

Argument: Palestinians need their own judicial system to be treated fairly.

Warrant: Anti-Palestinian laws prevent court rulings in favor of alleviating their grievances.


“In October 2010, the Knesset approved a bill allowing smaller Israeli towns to reject residents who do not suit "the community's fundamental outlook", based on sex, religion, and socioeconomic status. Critics slammed the move as an attempt to allow Jewish towns to keep Arabs and other non-Jews out. The so-called "Nakba Bill" bans state funding for groups that commemorate the tragedy that befell Palestinians during Israel's creation in 1948, when approx. 750,000 Palestinian Arabs were ethnically cleansed to make way for a Jewish majority state. The British Mandate-era Land (Acquisition for Public Purposes) Ordinance law allows the Finance Minster to confiscate land for "public purposes.” The state has used this law extensively, in conjunction with other laws such as the Land Acquisition Law and the Absentees' Property Law, to confiscate Palestinian land in Israel. A new amendment, which was adopted in February 2010, confirms state ownership of land confiscated under this law, even where it has not been used to serve the original confiscation purpose. The amendment was designed to prevent Arab citizens from submitting lawsuits to reclaim confiscated land. Over the entirety of its 63-year existence, there has been a period of only about one year (1966-1967) that Israel did not rule over large numbers of Palestinians to whom it granted no political rights.”
Warrant: Palestinians are left without protection in the status quo.


“And while the mainstream Western media focus heavily on the loss of Israeli lives, Palestinian deaths are often treated as mere numbers and statistics. More importantly, lost in the media coverage of the violence from “both sides” is the fact that only one side is occupying the other. In this climate, a new framework is needed that places civilians and their rights at the fore. With no end to Israel’s military rule in sight, it is time for an international protection mechanism to be created. Here’s why: First, as the occupying party, Israel is required under international law to ensure the protection of the civilians under its rule. Instead, Israel has, during its 48-year occupation and colonization of Palestinian land, done exactly the opposite. Two Palestinian generations have grown up entirely under Israel’s military control. By 2014, more than 800,000 Palestinians had been imprisoned by Israel, including 8,000 children under the age of 18 arrested since 2000. Currently, there are 5,621 Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli jails. And almost everyone in the Gaza Strip is imprisoned: Israel withdrew its settlers and military in 2005 but maintained its occupation and strengthened its siege after Hamas won elections in 2006; that stranglehold is now also maintained by Egypt’s military dictatorship. Israel’s siege of Gaza is visible; its many sieges against West Bank cities and East Jerusalem are less so. In fact, most Palestinians are confined to one or more towns or villages in the West Bank, and the majority cannot go to Jerusalem. Gaza is almost completely sealed off to Palestinians from the West Bank and Jerusalem. Second, it is clear that the PA is unable to protect Palestinian lives. On the contrary, the PA’s own security forces—trained, armed, and funded by US, European, and other international sources (as, indeed, is Israel’s occupation)—are part of the problem. Far from protecting Palestinians against Israel, the PA security forces effectively protect the Israeli military and settlers. And the security agencies lack accountability and oversight in both the West Bank and Gaza.”
Impact: Palestinians are treated in a hostile manner in Israeli military court.

Bisharat, George. “Israel stacks the legal deck.” LA Times. 7 March 12. 

“To Palestinians, Israeli military courts are sites of repression, not houses of justice. Palestinian defendants facing trial in 2010 were found guilty in 99.74% cases, according to Israel Defense Forces documentation. Proceedings are conducted in Hebrew, which few Palestinians speak. Judges and prosecutors answer to higher military authority, denying military tribunals full independence. Courts may renew administrative detentions in six-month increments indefinitely. Some Palestinians have been so detained for years, never having enjoyed the right to confront and cross-examine witnesses nor even to know the evidence against them. Such evidence is frequently provided by Palestinian informers recruited by Israeli authorities, often through exploitation of the vulnerable. For example, Palestinians seeking advanced medical care that is unavailable in their own less-developed hospitals are sometimes pressured to collaborate in exchange for permits to enter Israel for treatment, according to Physicians for Human Rights-Israel. Credible allegations of torture and physical abuse of detainees gathered by such groups as the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel also continue to dog the military court system, despite a 1999 Israeli High Court of Justice decision barring four forms of torture previously used by interrogators. Evidence derived through informers is notoriously unreliable. Physically coerced statements are no more reliable Those undergoing torture often say anything to alleviate their pain.”

Analysis: Palestinians under Israeli rule must deal with a judicial system that discriminates against them. Much like disproportionate minority incarceration in the United States, the Arab minority in the Middle East faces a constant struggle when dealing with Israeli officials. The only solution, it seems is to give the Palestinian Authority control over their own judicial proceedings.
A2 – A two-state solution is the only way to achieve justice

Answer: Hamas’ judicial system operates autonomous of any government and is just as corrupt. In other words, a two-state solution likely wouldn’t solve Palestinian injustice.

Warrant: Often the Hamas police forces operate arbitrarily.


“Palestinians face serious abuses in the Hamas criminal justice system, including arbitrary arrest, incommunicado detention, torture, and unfair trials. Since it took control of Gaza in 2007, Hamas has executed at least three men convicted on the basis of “confessions” apparently obtained under torture. The 43-page report, “Abusive System: Criminal Justice in Gaza,” documents extensive violations by Hamas security services, including warrantless arrests, failure to inform families promptly of detainees’ whereabouts, and subjecting detainees to torture. It also documents violations of detainees’ rights by prosecutors and courts. Military courts frequently try civilians, in violation of international law. Prosecutors often deny detainees access to a lawyer, and courts have failed to uphold detainees’ due process rights in cases of warrantless arrest and abusive interrogations, Human Rights Watch found. “After five years of Hamas rule in Gaza, its criminal justice system reeks of injustice, routinely violates detainees’ rights, and grants impunity to abusive security services,” said Joe Stork, deputy Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. “Hamas should stop the kinds of abuses that Egyptians, Syrians, and others in the region have risked their lives to bring to an end.” The Hamas authorities have failed to investigate and prosecute abusive security officials, and have in practice granted impunity from prosecution to officials in the Internal Security service in particular, Human Rights Watch said.
**Warrant:** The Palestinian Authority is incredibly corrupt.


“A recent poll of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip found that 95.5 percent believe that there is corruption the government of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, the Associated Press reported on Tuesday. The survey of 1,200 people, conducted by the independent Palestinian firm AWRAD, also found that 82 percent of Gazans believe the same of Hamas, the terrorist group that rules the coastal enclave. “This is the highest rate I have ever seen in all the polls I have done,” Nader Said, who runs the polling agency, told the AP. Public perceptions of endemic corruption among Palestinian elites are reinforced by the lavish lifestyles enjoyed by top PA officials, as well as the lack of transparency and accountability displayed by the Palestinian government, the AP reported. **In general, the lack of trust in Abbas is also linked to his failure to deliver statehood to the Palestinians despite being in office for a decade, more than twice as long as the 4-year term he was elected to in 2005. While some experts think that opinions of PA corruption may be overblown, the AP noted that “secretiveness among Abbas and his advisers and a lack of responsiveness have fanned suspicions among the public that the political elite enjoy privileges and special deals at the expense of everyone else.”**"
Warrant: Their suspicions have weight.


“Many such average people are distinctly unimpressed by that kind of extravagance. The document, published last month on a local website, is the latest scandal to roil Palestinian politics. In August it was a letter from an Abbas adviser, begging the foreign minister of Bahrain for $4 million to build an exclusive housing complex for Palestinian officials. Education officials, meanwhile, have been accused of selling off a batch of 1,000 medical scholarships offered by the Venezuelan government. The Palestinian Authority (PA), the limited self-governing body in the occupied territories, has been plagued by waste, graft and accusations of both since its inception in 1994 following the Oslo accords. When auditors looked at the books three years later, they concluded that nearly 40% of the budget had been frittered away. By 2006, according to the PA’s own attorney-general, officials had embezzled some $700m. Aman, a local watchdog group, claims that the bloated public-sector payroll includes an unknown number of “ghost employees” whose salaries line the pockets of managers and ministers. There are ghost businesses, too, like a $6m joint Palestinian-Italian venture to build a pipe factory that existed only on paper. Western donors, who give the PA about a sixth of its annual budget, have periodically threatened to withhold aid. Their concerns were alleviated by the appointment in 2007 Salam Fayyad as prime minister. A respected economist and a longtime IMF official, he took solid steps to combat graft, and millions of dollars were recovered during his tenure. Mr Fayyad resigned in 2013, however, and Mr Abbas quickly turned the anti-corruption effort into a cudgel to use against his enemies. Last year he ordered an investigation into the legal status and finances of some 2,800 NGOs in the Palestinian territories. The goal, he said, was to make them “transparent and accountable.” Critics, though, saw it as an attempt to muzzle civil society. Mr Fayyad himself was caught up in the sweep: his development institute’s bank accounts were frozen in June on vague charges of money laundering.”
Analysis: The Israeli government seems to be much more stable than either Hamas or the Palestinian Authority. If Palestine were to become an independent nation, either of those entities which both have long histories of corruption, could be just as bad for any type of Palestinian justice as the status quo. The solution, is better handled with international pressure on Israel to give Palestinian citizens improved rights in their judicial system.

Answer: A two-state solution would only incite more violence against Palestinians.

Warrant: Given population changes, changes in rule and overall power structure, as well as shifting political circumstances for both Palestinians and Israelis, a two-state solution would likely lead to mass exodus of Palestinians living in Israel and likely more violence as well.


“There are no firm estimates of the number of armed settlers who are likely to resist evacuation. However, between 30 percent and 40 percent of West Bank settlers can be considered “ideological.” “Ideological settlers,” according to Oded Eran, who served as head of Israel’s negotiating team from 1999 to 2000, “are the toughest.” In an interview for my book, Eran pointed out that this group tends to live deeper inside the West Bank. And, for ideological reasons, a small number may take the law into their own hands. A call for evacuation could lead to violence between the settlers and the IDF and violence between settlers and the Palestinian population. “This is going to be a long, painful and expensive operation,” Eran said. In 2010, Amos Harel, a military correspondent for Haaretz, the liberal English language Israeli newspaper, asked, “Has the IDF become an army of settlers?” Harel noted the potential for mass disobedience in the face of such orders was making many Israeli politicians and senior officers have second thoughts before ordering soldiers to take actions against settlers. In the succeeding five years, with the continuing disproportionate influx of settler recruits to the IDF, the question is more pertinent. Would an Israeli prime

minister risk giving such an order, unsure whether it would be implemented? Such an order could tear apart the cohesiveness of Israel, already rife with multiple fault lines. Right now, the weight of uncertainties surrounding a two-state solution seems to outweigh the benefits. The future? There will be no mitigation of present trends. With every passing year using the IDF to evacuate settlers will become more problematic, and evacuation less likely. The Conversation”

Analysis: The last thing the Israel Palestine conflict needs is a mass exodus like what happened between India and Pakistan. If Palestinians are being abused now, there is no telling what will happen to those that remain post – two-states being established. It could lead to massive backlash both in the process and after, and more likely than not, the result would be significant loss of life.