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Two-Track Diplomacy: Negotiations Between Israel and the PLO Through Open and Secret Channels



Karin Aggestam



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

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INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the First World War, there has been a debate concerning the definition, content, and practice of diplomacy. The debate originates in different views of how democracy and the transformation in the international setting have affected the traditional practice of diplomacy. Some analysts maintain that there is a *new diplomacy*, characterized by publicity and openness with new kinds of diplomatic activities and agents. Others view modern diplomacy as an amalgam of *old diplomacy* that has adapted to changes. Since claims are made that we are witnessing a new diplomacy (open and public in a multilateral setting), distinct from old diplomacy (professional diplomats practicing secrecy and confidentiality), a central question in this paper is how we are to view *secrecy* in international negotiation.

Many practitioners and scholars tend to refrain from analyzing the dimension of secrecy in international negotiation because of the negative connotation of secrecy as offensive to democratic principles. Nevertheless, it is widely recognized that secret negotiations are sometimes necessary, particularly in sensitive and difficult areas that involve vital security or economic interests. These secret negotiations are often conducted through *back channels*, simultaneous to or just before the official negotiations. Colosi calls the practice of secrecy in negotiations the "iceberg principle." The submerged part of the "iceberg" consists of the secret negotiations; official negotiations are the visible "top" of the iceberg (1986: 244). Consistent with that metaphor, this paper utilizes the definition of secret negotiations as

Karin Aggestam is a research assistant at the Department of Political Science, Lund University, Sweden. She is writing a doctoral thesis on negotiation and mediation in the Middle East. A recent article on international mediation has been published in the *Kent Journal of International Relations* (1995).

“veiled collaboration involving two or more international actors pursuing essentially peaceful high policy objectives, and which expresses itself in explicit communication, businesslike exchanges, and tacit understandings or arrangements of such sensitivity as to preclude sharing these confidences with either domestic constituencies or other outside parties” (Klieman 1988: 10).

Under what situational conditions and circumstances are secret negotiations favored, and how are such negotiations conducted? As mentioned, secret negotiations are often used as a supplement to official negotiations; therefore an additional question is how these various tracks of negotiation interrelate.

The case selected is the negotiations between Israel and the PLO, which resulted in the Declaration of Principles in 1993. This case highlights several important aspects, such as domestic impacts on the official negotiations; how and why secret negotiations were practiced; and the implications of open vs. secret diplomacy. Considering that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict dates back to the beginning of this century, the parties are involved in a long and difficult process of reframing the conflict¹ and working out “who gives up what, who doesn’t give up, who fights for what, and who stands for what” (Weizman 1994: 15). Both Israelis and Palestinians have decided to pursue the path of settling the conflict by peaceful means, although “in these circumstances, diplomacy can be like a complex ballet danced by elephants, who have their own unique grace but find it hard to change course” (Rubin 1994: 3).

Finally, it should be stressed that an analysis of secrecy in international negotiations poses several limitations for researchers because of the lack of both theoretical and empirical materials. Nevertheless, the case examined in this paper involves the successful conclusion of an agreement, which enables greater insights into the negotiation process. In addition to the published material available, I have conducted a number of interviews with the negotiators in the Oslo channel. Consequently, I believe this case yields some new

theoretical and empirical understanding of the competing concepts of open and secret diplomacy.

MULTIPLE TRACKS OF DIPLOMACY

The content of diplomacy has been under dispute for the last 75 years. As noted, the debate centers around the question of whether we are witnessing a new kind of diplomacy, clearly distinguished from old diplomacy; or whether modern diplomacy is an amalgam of old diplomacy adapting to new circumstances in the international and domestic setting. An interrelated question is what effects these changes may have had on the practice of international negotiations. Official negotiation is a visible mode of modern diplomacy, but less discernible are other tracks of diplomacy, such as secret negotiation—a practice that was a prominent feature of old diplomacy.

Alterations in the Practice of Traditional Diplomacy

The origins of old diplomacy can be traced back to ancient Greece, from which some of the diplomatic vocabulary and practices emanate. Roman law and later Italian customs, as well, shaped much of the diplomatic practice in old diplomacy. The basic assumption was the acceptance of rivalry between international units, with secrecy forming a natural part of diplomatic practice. Public opinion was rarely taken into consideration (except during crises and wars) since diplomacy was viewed as an art based on tradition and historical precedents, practiced by diplomatic elites with a “trained intuition” (Berridge 1995: 4; Eban 1983: 333-344).

After the First World War and with the spread of democracy, the international and domestic setting of diplomacy underwent a transformation. The American President Woodrow Wilson stated in

his Fourteen Points that a new kind of diplomacy based on moral and democratic principles had to be developed. International negotiations should from then on be pursued openly and in public, without private or secret understandings between the negotiators. Hence, President Wilson's famous statement about "open covenants openly arrived at" became the normative principle of new diplomacy (Eban 1983: 345).

These new and moral principles of diplomacy stemmed from the view that old diplomacy was immoral and encouraged conspiracies and war. These new assumptions were strengthened by the growing influence of media and public opinion, which demanded an open and democratic diplomacy. The expectation was that diplomatic practice in general would change and, in particular, the conduct of international negotiations. Open international conferences, multilateral diplomacy, and personal involvement of politicians increased, so that the role of professional diplomats became more limited (Eban 1985: 10; Watson 1983: 121).

In addition, a general transformation of international politics has affected the modes of diplomacy. The fusion of domestic politics and international relations has broadened the arena of diplomatic activities. For instance, international politics used to be the exclusive domain of foreign ministries; today, however, domestic ministries are extensively involved in international relations (Barston 1988: 251-252; Higgot 1994: 164). According to Watson, it is a mistake to link the concept of modern diplomacy too closely to the declining role of resident embassies and the professional diplomatic services, since economic and commercial diplomacy has grown in importance (1983: 11). A great number of nongovernmental actors presently participate in modern diplomacy. For example, it is common for governments to communicate through news media, private citizens, or channels arranged by NGOs. Governments may send unofficial persons to explore the possibility of negotiations, and the use of "nondiplomats" or "nonofficials" is particularly prevalent in "track-two diplomacy."² The increasing use of informal diplomatic agents may reflect the failure or nonavailability

of the traditional methods of diplomacy (Barston 1988: 5-7; Berman 1977: 3-10, 23; Burton 1984: 153).

Publicity and International Negotiations

Modern diplomacy is characterized by a greater openness, which came with the growing need to keep the public informed and to avoid speculation about secret agreements. Old diplomacy, in sharp contrast, was based on discretion and secrecy. An important question is in what ways open and public diplomacy has affected the conduct of international negotiation. Two interrelated dimensions of public diplomacy must be considered: (1) the impact of public opinion, and (2) news media reporting.

Public opinion is a significant consideration when deciding on and pursuing negotiations. However, research on the effects of public opinion on diplomacy has been somewhat contradictory and normative. Some analysts tend to view public opinion as irrational and underline that a government should lead rather than follow public opinion. They regard government as the actor that is most capable of conducting rational foreign policymaking (Craig & George 1990: 60). However, a contrasting argument assumes that public opinion is more rational, just, and moral than governments are, and thus public opinion should always be seriously considered (Watson 1983: 137). This disagreement reflects difficulties in the concept of public opinion itself. Among a given public, there are often a variety of opinions on both domestic and international issues. Public opinion may therefore be interpreted in different ways, and is also dependent on how political leaders frame the issues in question (Eban 1983: 349-352; Sofer 1988: 203).

Yet there is a tendency to view the impact of public opinion, particularly on international negotiation, as somewhat negative. Domestic interest groups that are active on an international issue are assumed to limit the autonomy and flexibility of negotiators. For

instance, concessions are often difficult to make when there are active domestic constituencies with hawkish and opposing opinions toward the negotiations. Conversely, domestic groups with dovish attitudes may undermine the credibility of their national negotiators. Hence, there is some ambivalence among diplomats about the publicity surrounding negotiations. However, because public diplomacy has become an integral principle to any state claiming to be a democracy, the “public’s right to know” cannot be disregarded (e.g., concerning knowledge of new policies and the official negotiating position). One outcome of the increasing demands of publicity has therefore been a rapid growth of conference diplomacy. Some have objected that in this kind of diplomacy, politicians have become more concerned about their public image than about negotiating the issue at stake (Craig & George 1990: 67-68). An evident example of this type of “public appearance diplomacy” is the series of conferences on the war in Bosnia. Under public pressure, world leaders convened several times to give a public appearance of concern about the war.

Public opinion is in many ways interrelated with and formed by the news media. The media is often the channel of the democratic principle of the “public’s right to know.” In this context, the news media works to expose and scrutinize activities of diplomats and politicians,³ thereby strengthening the public consciousness that secrecy runs counter to democratic diplomacy (Arno 1984: 237; Cohen 1986: 69).

There is, however, a built-in tension between publicity and international negotiation. In some circumstances, diplomats may prefer to negotiate privately and thereby limit the publicity surrounding the process. In contrast, journalists and news media desire publicity and insist on being briefed on every phase of a negotiation. This dilemma was seen in the negotiations between Israel and the PLO on redeployment of Israeli military forces in the occupied territories in 1995. To avoid media attention, the negotiating teams kept moving around to different locales in Israel.

An important alteration in modern diplomacy is that negotiators have to negotiate directly with international actors, and at the same time, indirectly (often through the media) with domestic interest groups and public opinion (Barston 1988: 8; Van Dinh 1987: 61-62). This kind of “double-edged diplomacy” is well illustrated in a two-level game approach where political leaders conduct two dialogues simultaneously—influencing, as they negotiate, both domestic opinion and their interlocutors. The negotiators are constrained both by what the other party will accept and by what the domestic constituencies will ratify and agree to. Most negotiations involve a certain amount of concessions. To the opposing negotiating party, the concessions will be presented as extremely painful to go along with; but to the domestic constituencies they have to be framed as less crucial. Thus, the interaction between international and domestic concerns determines the opportunities, constraints, and autonomy of the negotiators (Moravcsik 1993: 15-17). If ideas and proposals are immediately made public by the media, the implications may be twofold. First, it may be difficult for domestic interest groups to understand concessions granted before an agreement has been concluded (at which point relative gains and losses should emerge more clearly). Second, exposure may undermine the government, since concessions tend to be viewed as a deviation from the official and original negotiating position. Too much media exposure during the negotiation process may therefore lead to a freeze in the parties’ positions and reduce their flexibility (Barston 1988: 75; Y. Cohen 1986: 76; Craig & George 1990: 68-70; Eban 1983: 346; Nicolson 1961b: 5).

On the other hand, the media is also used and manipulated by the negotiating parties. In international negotiations where the parties exhibit polarized positions and a low political willingness to negotiate, the media is often used to expose the negotiating positions. In press conferences, the parties may aim not so much to promote an agreement as to influence public attitudes and send messages to the public that the official negotiating positions have not changed. Furthermore,

political leaders may use the media to try out new ideas and proposals—i.e., to “fly kites”—so as to see how the other side may react. The media may also be used to mobilize support and prepare the public for an agreement. Such “trial balloons” may also measure the likely extent of domestic support for an eventual agreement (Berridge 1995: 156; Cohen 1986: 76, 81). Nicolson notes that these “trial balloons” may also produce opposite effects: the other party may conclude that its interlocutor’s domestic opinion is divided and therefore not ready for an agreement (1939: 99). On the other hand, as Moravcsik points out, under some circumstances domestic divisions may strengthen one’s bargaining position. A party may argue persuasively to its counterpart that it is impossible to make some specific concession because public support is lacking (1993: 28).

In conclusion, publicity (the public’s right to know) and the need for secrecy in international negotiation are clearly two opposing principles that originate from two completely different frames of reference involving the nature of information and who possesses it (B. Cohen 1963: 265-266; Goren 1979: 27). Therefore, the analysis of secret negotiations below will involve the question of how secrecy may be reconciled with the requirement of public and open international negotiations.

Secrecy and International Negotiations

Secrecy is regarded as an undemocratic feature of modern diplomacy, yet most practitioners and scholars continue to stress its importance. Secrecy, of course, is still being practiced in negotiations, although as an additional track to official negotiations (in contrast to old diplomacy) or before them, in a prenegotiation phase. Here, we focus on how and why a simultaneous track of secret negotiations (most often through a back channel) is pursued as a supplement to official negotiations.

Shortly after President Wilson issued his famous statement on new diplomacy, he revised part of it by underlining that “when I

pronounced for open diplomacy I meant not that there should be no private discussion of delicate matters but that no secret agreement should be entered into and that all international relations when fixed should be open, above board and explicit" (quoted in Eban 1983: 346). Indeed, the dispute about secret negotiations concerns *how* open and public international negotiation should be; and *when* secrecy is necessary. Those who aspire to expand and enhance open and public diplomacy believe in the superior rationality of this type of diplomacy. It is assumed that international politics should adjust and become more similar to domestic politics. Secrecy is considered dangerous and immoral, liable to lead to regrettable compromises in international negotiation. Most important, it is perceived as counter to the principles of democracy (Klieman 1988: 15; Wight 1991: 196). The more prevalent viewpoint, however, is that sometimes there is no alternative to exchanging confidential and private views between negotiators (Watson 1983: 137-139).

Armstrong analyzed three cases⁴ in which conflicting parties pursued the path of rapprochement and conciliation. He found that negotiations that successfully reached an agreement were conducted away from the public, on a high political level, and with few participants involved. In these secret negotiations, assurances and commitments were given that were essential for the parties to negotiate in "good faith" (1993: 138-140). Thus, in sensitive and difficult negotiations with vital national security or economic interests at stake, secret negotiations may be fundamental either initially (during a prenegotiation phase) or as an additional track during official negotiations. For instance, in a back channel the parties may be able to break deadlocks⁵ and explore other options without official commitments,⁶ enhancing confidence and reducing uncertainties (Klieman 1988: 11; Stein 1989a: 200; 1989b: 239-247). As Eban notes: "The hard truth is that the total denial of privacy even in the early stages of a negotiation has made international agreements harder to obtain than ever in the past history" (1983: 347).

Another purpose of secrecy is to limit domestic influence on the negotiations. Some maintain that secrecy avoids arousing public anxiety until there is a reasonable opportunity to gain public acceptance of an agreement. Concessions given and gains received are easier to explain when viewed as a comprehensive agreement, instead of allowing the media to expose every move during the negotiation process (Eban 1983: 353-354). This is especially so when negotiations involve a radical departure from previous policies and where the domestic opposition is presumed to be powerful.⁷ With increasing politicization of an international issue, domestic interest groups that oppose negotiations may turn more active. Such groups are less concerned with the costs of failing to reach an agreement, and may even sabotage the negotiation process by various means. This may reduce flexibility, and is indeed the main reason that most negotiators emphasize the value of secrecy (Berridge 1995: 5; Iklé 1964: 132; Montville 1991: 262; Putnam 1993: 446). For instance, in the SALT II negotiations, the U.S. administration preferred to limit the publicity on aspects of the negotiation process, since it felt that knowledge of these aspects could strengthen the opposition (Rangarajan 1985: 142). Iklé suggests that governments should seek "open agreements secretly arrived at" (1964: 132), since public diplomacy in all phases of the negotiation process limits the political bargaining. Eban argues that there are times when the "right to peace is more important than the right to know" (1985: 6). Likewise, former UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld maintained that "the best results of negotiation between two parties cannot be achieved in international life, any more than in our private worlds, in the full glare of publicity with current public debate of all moves, unavoidable misunderstandings, inescapable freezing of position due to considerations of prestige and the temptation to utilize public opinion as an element integrated in the negotiation itself" (quoted in Thompson 1965: 403; see also, e.g., McDermott 1973: 43; Simpson 1987: 2-3).

Still, the question remains of how open and public diplomacy should be, and how the value of public knowledge of the negotiation

process is to be weighed against the possibility of secretly reaching an agreement (Keretz 1967: 27-28). To be sure, there are problems and drawbacks associated with secret negotiation. Secrecy is frequently used to minimize knowledge among the negotiating parties' own institutions, bureaucracies, and domestic interest groups who feel they have the right to oppose negotiations. Moreover, with the increasing practice of personal diplomacy (i.e., high-level meetings among political leaders) the number of participants is reduced, which limits the number of persons who may raise valid objections to an agreement (Armstrong 1993: 27; Franck & Weisband 1974: 6). As a consequence, obstacles may eventually arise. First, problems in ratifying an agreement may emerge, as has been the case in the United States. The circumvention of some domestic actors may arouse suspicion, and an opposition may emerge that is motivated by the sheer fact of exclusion from the negotiation process. Secret negotiations are often considered democratically offensive and this argument may be used by the opposition, especially if public opinion is divided on the benefits of the agreement. Second, since the number of negotiators is limited, there is always a risk of ignoring expert opinions on particular issues. This may later cause embarrassment to the government when the agreement is made public and its weaknesses are scrutinized (Armstrong 1993: 28; Berridge 1995: 159).

Old or New Diplomacy?

The answer to the question of how to identify and classify modern diplomacy lies, in part, in how we view the practices of diplomacy. Two components are often cited as indicating the existence of a new kind of diplomacy: the need for legitimacy from democratic publics, and the inclusion of new international actors in negotiation processes.

In a democracy, political leaders need legitimacy from the public in order to lead effectively. Presumably, legitimacy can be acquired by

practicing open and public diplomacy. Still, as we have seen, both practitioners and scholars continue to stress the importance of secrecy. Since secrecy is a controversial component of democratic diplomacy yet an integral dimension of old diplomacy, it is dealt with ambiguously. In analyzing secrecy in modern diplomacy, Nicolson points to a lack of distinction between policy and negotiation. Foreign policy, in his view, needs to be democratically controlled (i.e., a public and open process), but should be clearly distinguished from international negotiations that require privacy and secrecy.⁸ The democratic principle should be applied once the negotiations have culminated in an agreement, which must be ratified by a democratically elected parliament (1939: 82-87; 1961a: 40; 1961b: 1-4).

Then there is the issue of whether diplomacy is in an overall decline because of the inclusion of new international actors. It is clear that the role of ambassadors and traditional diplomatic activities has weakened. On the other hand, modern diplomatic practices encompass wider areas, and often involve new international actors and agencies. These can be, as mentioned, NGOs facilitating negotiations or unofficial diplomats secretly preparing the ground for talks. In other words, rather than a decline of diplomacy in general, what has occurred is a widening of its sphere and an expansion of the ways in which it is conducted.

In conclusion, the distinction between old and new diplomacy is often uncertain. Sofer criticizes the distinction as both "simplistic and inaccurate" (1988: 195); Nicolson, early in the debate, stressed that diplomatic principles and methods had not fundamentally changed but rather adapted to an altered political environment (1939: 57). Wight not only dismisses the notions of old and new diplomacy, but raises the fundamental question of the exclusiveness of the concept of diplomacy⁹ (1991: 181).

In this paper diplomacy is viewed, despite all the changes in the political environment, as a dynamic and elastic concept, with diplomatic activities in constant transformation and adaptation. Although new

agents of diplomacy have emerged and international negotiations have become more open, practices of the old diplomacy, such as secrecy and confidentiality, still play an important role.

NEGOTIATING THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The empirical case in which Israel and the PLO negotiated and successfully concluded the Declaration of Principles (DOP) puts into focus many of the issues of public vs. secret diplomacy. There were many tracks of negotiation in this case; two important ones are analyzed here: (1) the official negotiations in Washington, and (2) the secret back-channel negotiations in Oslo. Moreover, the two tracks were pursued simultaneously, and it is therefore interesting to consider the interactions between them.

TRACK ONE: THE OFFICIAL NEGOTIATIONS IN WASHINGTON

The first track of negotiation officially began at a conference in Madrid in December 1991. The negotiation was structured into two settings: (a) bilateral negotiations in Washington in which Israel negotiated separately with the Palestinians, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon; and (b) multilateral negotiations where broader issues such as regional development and cooperation were to be discussed. These negotiations included other Arab states as well as states outside the Middle East. In this first part, we shall focus on the bilateral negotiation process and its outcomes in Washington, paying special attention to the dimension of publicity.

Preparing the Madrid Conference

Many explanations have been offered as to why Israel and the Palestinians came to the realization that the conflict could be resolved only by a negotiated settlement. Three factors are frequently cited: the intifada, the Gulf War, and the end of the Cold War.

The intifada had a direct and significant impact on both parties. Over four years, Israel attempted all kinds of strategies to end the intifada without success. The situation escalated during 1990-1991, when the intifada spread into Israel's pre-1967 borders with stabbing attacks by Palestinians on Israeli civilians. Moreover, Israel's international reputation was suffering because of the actions taken against the Palestinian population under occupation. For the Palestinians, the intifada activated the struggle for independence in the occupied territories and strengthened the "inside" leadership, who wanted a two-state solution, that is, recognition of Israel within the pre-1967 borders and a Palestinian state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. That process culminated in 1988 when the PLO implicitly recognized Israel and declared a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza with East Jerusalem as its capital.

After the Gulf War, the PLO found itself in political and economic isolation as a consequence of its support for Saddam Hussein. For Israel, the Gulf War demonstrated that the United States did not necessarily regard Israel as a "strategic asset" in the region. With the end of the Cold War, the United States was now able to build regional alliances with other Arab states, including Syria. There was concern in Israel as to the implications of the Gulf War and the end of the Cold War for the "special relationship" between the United States and Israel.

With the end of superpower rivalry in the Middle East, a greater pragmatism toward the Arab-Israeli conflict was discernible among Arab regimes. This encouraged the United States, after the Gulf War, to assume an active mediating approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict, aimed at facilitating a peace process. The U.S. administration actively

sought the parties' consent to convene a peace conference, which materialized at Madrid in 1991. This process involved a great deal of "pushing and pulling" by then-Secretary of State James Baker, who "exercised precisely the right amount of pressure on all parties to ensure that the conference took place" (Peres 1995: 316). Both Israel and the Palestinians reluctantly agreed to negotiate.¹⁰

The Negotiation Process and Its Outcome

From the beginning, the negotiation process was plagued with obstacles. One of the major ones was the composition of the Palestinian delegation.

Initially, the Palestinians were included in a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, since Israel insisted that there be no separate Palestinian delegation. However, the Palestinians refused to negotiate Palestinian issues within a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.¹¹ As a result, a situation dubbed "corridor diplomacy" arose in which the Palestinians preferred to stay outside the negotiation room (in the corridors of the State Department). However, by January 15, 1992, separate negotiations began to take place between the Israeli and Palestinian delegations (Abbas 1995: 88; Ashrawi 1995: 161-168).

Israel also insisted that no PLO officials and no Palestinians from East Jerusalem could be part of the delegation. This was part of an Israeli attempt to create an alternative Palestinian leadership to the PLO. Yet, because the PLO did not officially participate, the Palestinian delegation did not receive a real mandate to negotiate on its own. The PLO had given the delegation a reluctant mandate to pursue the negotiations, because "the peace process was a compulsory track" for the political survival of the PLO (Ashrawi 1995: 184). Behind the scenes, however, the PLO unofficially controlled and instructed the Palestinian delegation. Both former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres and the Palestinian negotiator Sari Nusseibeh have stated that

the Palestinian delegation merely operated as a “fax machine” between Tunis and Washington (Nusseibeih 1993; Peres 1993: 7).

The negotiations in Washington clearly posed a dilemma for the PLO. If progress was made in the negotiations, the “inside” leadership would become the major player and the PLO’s control would decline. At the same time, if there was no progress in the negotiations, there was a risk that the Hamas would take over and undermine the PLO’s legitimacy. Hence, the PLO never clearly defined objectives or strategies for the Palestinian delegation. As a consequence, there was much tension and suspicion between the Palestinian delegation and the PLO. The PLO, in particular, constantly suspected the delegation of attempting to form an alternative leadership to the PLO (Ashrawi 1995: 58, 139, 241; Hirschfeld 1994a: 105; Inbar 1996: 183).

The Palestinian delegation also had problems of bureaucracy and of coordination. On some occasions, the delegation comprised over a hundred negotiators. The PLO determined its composition, yet did not consider this composition essential because of its own lack of direct participation (Ashrawi 1995: 131, 139; Larsen 1995).

In May 1992, the Israeli elections brought the Labor Party to power on a political platform that included negotiating a Palestinian autonomy plan within nine months. Furthermore, a freeze on further settlements in the occupied territories was imposed shortly after the government took office, in order to receive the American loan guarantees.¹² It was expected that the new Israeli government would give new impetus to the official negotiations, since the previous prime minister, Yitzhak Shamir, never had a real commitment to the process. Indeed, after the elections he was quoted as saying that he appeared at the negotiation table only because of a lack of other alternatives (Baker 1995: 556; Bergquist 1993: 151). Nevertheless, the new government did not replace the Israeli negotiators and Elyakim Rubinstein continued to head the Israeli team. From a Palestinian perspective, it did not “matter how hard [Rubinstein] tried to shed his skin and change his tone and his ideas, he would still not empathize with the new spirit”

(Abbas 1995: 92). Rubinstein, well known for his right-wing sympathies, continued to work for an agreement that would keep "all options open"¹³ (Hirshfeld 1994b).

When Israel decided to deport 413 suspected Islamic activists to Lebanon, the negotiations reached a deadlock. The deadlock was partly broken because of pressure by PLO Chairman Yassir Arafat on the Palestinian delegation to return to the negotiations.¹⁴ In addition to lacking a mandate to negotiate on its own, the delegation now had to worry about increasing uneasiness with the negotiations among the Palestinian public. Compared to the "outside" leadership, the "inside" was more attentive to, and constrained by, public opinion. Furthermore, Palestinian ideological groups opposed the negotiations with Israel and tried to derail them (Abbas 1995: 66; Steinberg 1994: 125).

In persuading the parties to attend the Madrid conference, the United States acted as a "manipulator" using carrots and sticks. Nevertheless, the parties' eventual agreement to participate was reluctant, with low political willingness and low commitment to negotiate in good faith. Although at first the United States did not actively participate in the negotiations, it augmented its role as a "formulator" by initiating separate negotiations with the Israeli and the Palestinian delegations to draft new proposals. However, Nabil Shaath, who headed the coordination committee of the Palestinian delegation in Washington, describes the U.S. mediating role as a "nonstarter." The Americans, he asserts, tried too hard to fit everything into their own formula rather than constructing a new one (1993: 6). Peres concurs, and adds that the United States became too occupied with its own declaration of principles (1993: 10). Moreover, the Palestinian delegation viewed the United States as being pro-Israeli in its proposals and its basic stance (Ashrawi 1995: 199; Pundik 1995).

Clearly, the negotiations in Washington focused more on procedures and formalities than on substance (Abbas 1995: 115; Peres 1995: 317). Furthermore, the Palestinian delegation lacked any real decisionmaking capacity, and the Israeli side viewed this as "voluntary

submission to the PLO" (Hirshfeld 1994b). The Palestinian negotiator Faisal Hussein, who realized the delegation's limitations at an early stage, remarked to Baker: "If you see us behave in a strange or unusual or inappropriate manner, it is not that we were born that way, or that it is our nature, or that we like to behave as such. It's just that the suit you have tailored for us does not fit" (quoted in Ashrawi 1995: 87).

The Dimension of Publicity in the Negotiations

Both the Israeli and Palestinian negotiators have often attributed the failure of the negotiations in Washington to the high degree of publicity and the complete lack of confidentiality between the opposing parties. The negotiations were hampered by constant leaks as well as press conferences in which the parties justified their positions (Peres 1994). Every minute of the negotiation sessions was recorded and usually published in the media. This publicity prevented flexibility; negotiating positions became rigid so that concessions were impossible. Each delegation sought to signal through the media to its domestic constituency that its official negotiating position had not changed and no concessions had been made (Ashrawi 1995: 244; Larsen 1995; Peres 1994). The intensive communication with the media and the lack of trust between the parties are well illustrated in the crisis of the Israeli deportation of the Islamic activists. Hanan Ashrawi, a spokesperson of the Palestinian delegation, decided and announced (without informing either the PLO or Israel beforehand) on an American TV program ("Larry King Live") that because of the deportations the Palestinian delegation would not attend the next session (Ashrawi 1995: 224). The media played an important role throughout, especially for the Palestinian delegation. Ashrawi has described the media as "a partner in my battle for legitimacy" (1995: 143), because "they were after the truth and the truth was my ally" (1995:195).

The high degree of publicity included diplomatic signaling through the media in various directions, in particular: (1) between the Israeli and Palestinian delegations, (2) to other negotiating parties in Washington (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan), (3) to domestic constituencies, and (4) to general international opinion. For some observers, "the 'krieg lights' of the media had reduced the talks to public posturing" (Makovsky 1996: 13), so that the talks were little more than a "PR campaign" (Hirshfeld 1994b; Larsen 1995).

Still, an attempt was made to circumvent the publicity by setting up unofficial committees to discuss three issues: (1) basic concepts of the negotiations, (2) territories, and (3) economy and human rights. These attempts failed because the specific issues were addressed in separate groups, and thus a rigid framework was created (Abbas 1995: 94-95). The PLO also tried to create a secret back channel between Israeli officials and Faisal Husseini, though the Palestinian delegation rejected this idea. A common perception among the Palestinian public was that talking privately with Israeli officials constituted a departure from the norm of handling Palestinian affairs and a way of "normalizing" occupation (Abbas 1995: 111; Ashrawi 1995: 238).

TRACK TWO: SECRET BACK-CHANNEL NEGOTIATIONS IN OSLO

A back channel was created in response to the obstacles encountered in the official negotiations. The back-channel negotiations were not, however, intended to replace the official negotiations; the purpose of the secret back channel was to resolve deadlocks and come up with new concepts and formulas later to be presented in Washington.

Setting Up a Secret Back Channel between Israel and the PLO

After a year of the negotiations in Washington, there was a widespread perception that they were unworkable in their present form and setting “due to their character as open propaganda diplomacy” (Østerud 1995: 1). In addition, the PLO was intentionally blocking the official negotiations so as to leave Israel no alternative to direct talks with the PLO. Whenever there was some progress in the official negotiations, the PLO would instruct the Palestinian delegation not to make concessions and to “go back to principles” (Ashrawi 1994; Nusseibeih 1993). The Israeli government, with the late Yitzhak Rabin as prime minister, had a keen interest in seeing the negotiations succeed, although some ministers had misgivings about the outcome.¹⁵ One of several factors that made Israel hesitant to establish secret negotiations with the PLO was that Israel, at that time, had a law making it illegal to meet with PLO officials. The new Israeli government had presented a bill that would abolish this law, and in December 1992 the bill passed its first reading in the Knesset.

Shortly before the Israeli elections in 1992, Yossi Beilin of the Labor Party met with the Norwegian sociologist Terje Larsen.¹⁶ Larsen, together with Director General Jan Egeland of the Norwegian Foreign Ministry, expressed willingness to facilitate a back channel between Israel and the PLO. At that point the idea was still considered premature, since the Labor Party was not in power. Immediately after the Israeli elections, a meeting was arranged by Larsen in which the Israeli professor Yair Hirschfeld,¹⁷ Beilin, and Faisal Hussein further explored the possibilities of a secret back channel, though not yet deciding anything (Beilin 1994; Hirschfeld 1994b; Larsen 1995).

After the Israeli bill passed its first reading in the Knesset, Hirschfeld met, at Beilin’s initiative, with Ashrawi to find out whom to contact on the Palestinian side. Ashrawi suggested Abu Ala,¹⁸ the head of the steering committee for the multilateral negotiations. The first meeting between Hirschfeld and Abu Ala took place in London on December 4,

1992. Meanwhile the multilateral talks were being held in London, and Larsen, Beilin, Hirshfeld, and Abu Ala were all in London for these negotiations. Before Hirshfeld held his first meeting with Abu Ala, he met with Larsen who again offered to facilitate a back channel in Oslo. Larsen also mentioned that FAFO was arranging a seminar on human resources for January 20-22, 1993, an "academic gathering" that could provide a cover for the next meeting (Abbas 1995: 112; Beilin 1994; Larsen 1995).

The Negotiation Process and Its Outcome

The first session took place on January 20-22, 1993, at Sarpsborg in Norway and included Abu Ala, Maher Al-Kurd, and Hassan Asfour¹⁹ as representatives of the PLO, and Hirshfeld and the professor Ron Pundik (a close associate of Hirshfeld) representing the Israeli side. In the first meeting, the parties presented ideas and established mutual ground. Furthermore, it was decided that substance rather than procedures should take precedence, which would mean negotiating without protocols and set agendas. The purpose was to work out new negotiation concepts, and to explore whether an understanding between the parties could be reached. The ideas and proposals agreed on in Norway would later be presented in the official negotiations in Washington. Already in the first meeting Abu Ala presented the idea of "Gaza first" (an Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip as a first step—an idea that had already been extensively discussed within the Israeli Labor Party); he also stressed the importance of economic cooperation in the region. The principle of gradualism, based on a Declaration of Principles, was brought forward by the Israelis; by this they referred to a step-by-step approach accompanied by an ongoing process of negotiation (Abbas 1995: 115-126; Hirshfeld 1994b).

In this session and the one that followed, the Palestinian negotiators constantly asked in what way Hirshfeld and Pundik represented the

Israeli government, and if ideas agreed upon in Norway would be promoted in Israel. The Palestinians, in other words, wanted to be sure that the negotiations were politically relevant and not just an academic exercise. The two Israelis acknowledged that they did not have a clear mandate to negotiate, since they did not represent an official body, but indicated that they had links to various Israeli officials²⁰ (Abbas 1995: 127; Hirschfeld 1994b; Pundik, 1995).

During the period February-April 1993, several meetings took place in Norway and a first, preliminary DOP was drafted. Both sides agreed to present the results in the official negotiations, since Rabin still favored these negotiations and mistrusted the back channel in Oslo. It was also agreed that the role of the PLO would become public only years later; Israeli recognition of the PLO was not considered at this time. Peres followed the secret negotiations enthusiastically.²¹ However, the question still remained of whether the back channel should be upgraded to an official level on the Israeli side. The Palestinians also continued to be puzzled by the question of Israeli representation. Aware that Rabin and Peres were old political rivals, they wanted to know if the channel had Rabin's support (Abbas 1995: 128-35).

At the sixth meeting, May 20-21, 1993, Director General Uri Savir of the Israeli Foreign Ministry was sent to Norway, but under two conditions: (1) that the back channel was to remain totally secret, and (2) that the PLO would agree that it could not participate in the official negotiations. In addition, Savir, in Norway, was to verify the information received from Hirschfeld and Pundik and to underline to the Palestinian negotiators a number of issues: (a) the Oslo channel was no substitute for the official negotiations; (b) Israel still had its "red lines," including no concessions on the status of Jerusalem (the day after, the Palestinian negotiators agreed to exclude Jerusalem from the framework); (c) Israeli settlements were at this stage not negotiable; and (d) the talks should center on an interim agreement, including the concept of Gaza and Jericho first (Savir 1994).

Notwithstanding the Israeli upgrading of the delegation by including Savir, who was a close associate of Peres, Savir's presence confirmed the Palestinian suspicion that Rabin was still not completely involved in the back channel. It was therefore significant that in the next session the Foreign Ministry's legal adviser Joel Singer,²² also known as an associate of Rabin, participated in the Israeli delegation. Singer's purpose was to evaluate the back channel and judge whether the concessions offered by the PLO were sincere and credible. After the session, Singer concluded in a report to Rabin that the PLO was prepared to reach an agreement and recommended that the negotiations proceed (Singer 1994).

In the next meeting, Singer presented a draft he had prepared of a DOP to which the Palestinian negotiators reacted negatively, viewing it as a return to the beginning of the negotiation (Abbas 1995: 152). Nevertheless, the two sides worked with the document, specifying those points on which they did not agree.²³

In July, the Palestinian negotiators presented a draft of a DOP that the Israeli negotiators regarded as a complete withdrawal from previously agreed concessions. For instance, Jerusalem was again in the framework and the jurisdiction of the Gaza Strip was unclear (Savir 1994). The negotiations went into a deep crisis and both sides threatened to break them off. However, with the facilitation of the Norwegians,²⁴ the parties sat down and went through each paragraph and came up with sixteen differences concerning the DOP. They decided to divide the sixteen points of dispute into two groups. Each set of negotiators would then try to convince their decisionmakers back home to compromise on eight of the issues. At this meeting, the Israeli negotiators also presented their suggestion of a mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO, which would enable the PLO to become Israel's official and public negotiating partner. However, Israel attached seven conditions to such mutual recognition.²⁵

In August 1993, Peres was on an official visit in Stockholm. He asked Norwegian Foreign Minister Johan Holst to join him in Stockholm

and help overcome the remaining obstacles via telephone with Yasir Arafat in Tunis. During seven hours of negotiations, the last issues of dispute were indeed resolved and a Declaration of Principles between Israel and the PLO was finally concluded on August 18, 1993 (Abbas 1995: 168-175; Savir 1994; Singer 1994). Negotiations on a mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO continued in Paris, and via an intensive Norwegian shuttle between Tunis and Jerusalem. The letters confirming a mutual recognition were signed and exchanged between Arafat and Rabin on September 9, 1993.

During these secret negotiations, Norway's role as a facilitator and communicator was very important. Norway provided the parties with a back channel, and as Hirschfeld states, "we could not have started without anyone to help us" (1994b). Norway offered facilitation without attempting to mediate;²⁶ the Norwegians never took part in the negotiations (except during the meeting in Stockholm and during the talks on mutual recognition). Furthermore, the Norwegians provided a "political relevance" in the initial stages of negotiation, allaying the Palestinian negotiators' concern about the political authority of the unofficial Israeli negotiators (i.e., Hirschfeld and Pundik). The Palestinians knew that Director General Egeland and the diplomat Mona Juul were reporting about the talks to Berlin (Berlin 1994; Hirschfeld 1994b; Pedersen 1994; Pundik 1995). Moreover, the Norwegians not only provided the parties with negotiation settings but arranged where and when subsequent meetings would take place.²⁷ During these secret back-channel negotiations there were no direct telephone links between Israel and Tunisia; hence the Norwegians became the "go-between," with extensive telephone contacts between the negotiation sessions (Corbin 1994: 39-40).

Norway also acted as a communicator. For example, on some issues of dispute, the parties decided that it would be more constructive to communicate their opinions indirectly via the Norwegians (Hirschfeld 1994b). This role as communicator gave the Norwegians a certain kind of leverage, in that they could phrase some issues a bit differently and

put them in a context less fraught with rhetoric (Larsen 1995; Pedersen 1994).

However, the most important contribution of the Norwegians was probably their role as "psychoanalyst," as Larsen puts it.²⁸ In this role, Norway enabled the parties to reframe the conflict, modify their perceptions, and enhance their trust and credibility toward each other. Singer describes Norway's role as a "shock-absorber for both sides" (1994), dealing with the frequent tensions and suspicions. The Norwegians were in constant contact with the parties between the sessions (either via telephone or by traveling to Tunisia and Israel), providing assurances that each side was indeed negotiating in good faith. At a later stage of the negotiations, Holst also played an important role; in his intervention as a formulator, he gave suggestions about specific sentences and wordings and highlighted different preferences (Abbas 1995: 104-5; Juul 1994; Singer, 1994).

Egeland has described the strength of the Norwegian model as being based, first of all, on the parties' willingness to negotiate in good faith. Second, Norway recognized that the media often hinders international diplomacy by polarizing the parties' positions, so that maintaining full deniability of the negotiations was crucial. Therefore, the facilitation effort involved not only the Foreign Ministry in Oslo, but also nongovernmental institutions such as the Norwegian FAFO in cooperation with the Israeli ECF (Economic Cooperation Foundation) that provided a "smokescreen." In case of a leak, the parties could deny the negotiations by claiming they were only an "academic gathering" (Egeland 1994).

The Dimension of Secrecy in the Negotiations

There were times when diplomacy was always conducted secretly. This was the principle. Today everything is transparent—so you must find some alternatives. (Singer 1994)

Because the official negotiations were exposed to the public in every phase, concessions had not been forthcoming and the negotiating positions had remained rigid and polarized. Confidentiality and secrecy were therefore viewed as indispensable in the Oslo channel, enabling the parties to elaborate new ideas and make tentative concessions.²⁹ Indeed, the back channel was meant to be permanently secret and results concluded in Oslo were to be transferred back to the official negotiations (Aas 1994; Beilin 1994; Savir 1994).

Secrecy was also necessary because of the Israeli law against its citizens meeting with PLO officials. When the back channel was initiated, this law was still in force. Thus the use of unofficial diplomats, in this case the two academics, was inevitable because exposure of the back channel could have led to the fall of the Israeli government (Hirshfeld 1994b). However, this use of unofficial diplomats also reflected Israeli uncertainty about the PLO's willingness and credibility to conclude an agreement. The PLO leadership was well aware of this situation and tried to make the back channel extra safe (Abbas 1995: 58).

The constant fear of leaks obviously created pressure to conclude an agreement; Savir indeed asserted that "we were hysterical about leaks" (1994). However, with the increasing prospects of concluding a DOP leaks started to appear, some stemming from Peres, who made optimistic statements in the press about an agreement with the Palestinians (Abbas 1995: 159; Hirshfeld 1994b).

Many secret back channels had been tried,³⁰ and some were even used as a supplement to the Oslo channel. During negotiations on mutual recognition, an additional channel was operating between the Israeli Arab Ahmad Tibi (presently adviser to Arafat) and Haim Ramon (former health and interior minister). This was a way for the sides to "double-check" each other, posing questions and carrying messages between Rabin and Arafat (Abbas 1995: 74-78; Inbar 1996: 212-215).

Setbacks and problems in conducting secret negotiations were soon discovered by both sides. Because of the fear of leaks, never in the entire process of negotiation did the Palestinians review the documents

with legal consultants (except on August 20, 1993, with the PLO's legal consultant Taher Shash). Hence, when the agreement was made public, the Palestinian negotiators were criticized for not having consulted experts on various issues. Opposition was voiced particularly by the official Palestinian delegation and the Executive Committee in Tunis, who had been excluded and kept in the dark (Abbas 1995: 206-209; Ashrawi 1995: 260, 278). The Israelis also avoided any involvement of experts, including military ones, and Rabin "ended up vetting every line of the DOP himself" (Makovsky 1996:51).

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO TRACKS OF NEGOTIATION

Soon after the initiation of secret back-channel negotiations, both parties recognized the potential to conclude a DOP, since the gap was not as wide as expected. However, the parties were hesitant to bring the principles agreed upon in Oslo into the official negotiations, since there was a risk that parts of the agreement would be exposed before being finally concluded. In such circumstances, domestic opposition (both Israeli and Palestinian) to the agreement could be mobilized and would threaten the continuation of the negotiations (Juul 1994). It is important that the breakthrough between Israel and the PLO was not a result of public pressure to make progress in the official negotiations. Instead, it was the political leadership of each side that decided to make this major shift in policy, despite the high risk and uncertainty involved (Maaz 1994: 53; Shaath 1993: 9).

Both sides were aware that the United States would play a role at a later stage. It was assumed that a paper the United States would present to the official delegations in Washington would contain the substance of an accord.³¹ The United States was, in fact, informed about the Oslo channel from the beginning, although it is unclear to what extent it received detailed information. Norway was the party that

regularly briefed the State Department, either by telephone, reports, or meetings. However, the Americans did not show any great interest in this channel and did not regard it as credible, but as a "Peres channel" in which two academics held talks with the PLO (Abbas 1995: 137, 195; Belin 1994; Egeland 1994; Larsen 1995; Peres 1995: 328). Ashrawi recounts that Dennis Ross (a senior State Department official, and head of the U.S. delegation to the Middle East) asked her about rumors of a back channel and declared that "if there are secret talks we know nothing about, you cannot bring their substance to bear on these talks" (1995: 251). The reluctance to involve the United States stemmed both from the fear of leaks and from concern that the United States would insist on an active role in the negotiation process. For the Israelis and the Palestinians, it was important that negotiations be direct (Belin 1994; Larsen 1995).

Israel pursued negotiations on both tracks simultaneously, although the members of the official delegation were not aware of the Oslo channel. On the Palestinian side, however, there were great difficulties with internal coordination. The PLO's strategy was to block the official negotiations in Washington so as to promote direct Israel-PLO negotiations. The official Palestinian delegation therefore received inconsistent instructions, and with progress in the Oslo channel, further "hard-line" instructions were issued. The PLO wanted to demonstrate to Israel that greater flexibility and greater concessions were possible in the secret back channel (Ashrawi 1995: 183; Steinberg 1994: 128). The Palestinian negotiators in Oslo informed their Israeli counterparts that the official Palestinian delegation had been told to negotiate only on general issues, and asked the Israelis not to raise any issues in Washington that had not been agreed upon in Oslo (Abbas 1995: 137-139). When the official Palestinian delegation did not receive a mandate to discuss U.S. proposals and present counterproposals, they asked Arafat whether a back channel existed; Arafat denied it (Ashrawi 1995: 11, 218, 252). In August 1993, however, the official delegation went to Tunis to offer their resignation; they felt they could not continue

negotiations with such conflicting instructions and lack of coherent strategies (Ashrawi 1995: 256).

CONCLUSIONS

Changes in international relations, especially the spread of democracy, have led to a transformation of many aspects of traditional diplomacy. The question, however, is whether modern diplomacy should be classified as a new type of diplomacy. New aspects of modern diplomacy include multilateral negotiation, summit diplomacy, and a growing number of actors such as the media, private citizens, IGOs, and NGOs. Another major aspect is open and public diplomacy, as opposed to the secrecy and confidentiality that characterized traditional diplomacy. In this paper, however, it has emerged that secrecy and confidentiality have remained integral dimensions of modern diplomacy. This suggests that the alterations in diplomatic practices do not constitute a fundamentally new diplomacy, but are instead adaptations of diplomacy to modern conditions.

The empirical case in this paper highlights the respective implications of publicity and secrecy in international negotiations. In the official negotiations in Washington the parties encountered obstacles, as intense publicity exposed every phase of the process and led to polarized negotiating positions. In addition, the PLO did not officially participate in these negotiations and attempted to block them so as to indicate to Israel that it had to deal with the PLO directly. To break deadlocks, enhance flexibility, explore new formulas, and test each other's sincerity, a secret back channel was created in Oslo. Because at that time Israeli law prohibited direct negotiation with the PLO, the Israeli negotiators were initially unofficial persons. An important role was played by the Norwegian Foreign Ministry, which facilitated the communication channel and provided, in cooperation with NGOs (the Norwegian FAFO and Israeli ECF), a cover for the parties to negotiate in secrecy.

The secret back-channel negotiations were intended to supplement the official negotiations and give the process new vitality and impetus. It was suggested that a DOP agreed upon in Oslo be presented in the official negotiations as an American document. However, the United States seems never to have been fully informed about the back channel and did not take it seriously. When Israel and the PLO began to negotiate a mutual recognition, it was decided that the DOP would have to be concluded in the Oslo channel.

In sum, this case highlights why secrecy may be essential, as well as the role of actors such as the media, private citizens, and NGOs. Secret back-channel negotiations are often sought when negotiations involve vital security or economic interests; when concessions and compromises are intricate and problematic; when official negotiations encounter serious deadlocks; when the negotiation process is overly exposed by the media, leading to rigid negotiating positions; or when politically divided societies are involved in which active domestic groups may oppose negotiations.

NOTES

1. For a theoretical discussion on reframing international conflicts, see Aggestam (1995).
2. Track-two diplomacy involves the aspects of unofficial and informal diplomacy. It is thought of as an adjunct to official diplomacy (track one), with emphasis on reducing psychological barriers between the adversaries in order to create new openings in the official negotiations (Montville 1987:7).
3. This kind of investigative journalism has been further enhanced, especially in the U.S., after scandals such as Watergate and Irangate (see, e.g., Katzenbach 1973).
4. The three cases are: Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik initiative, which resulted in the 1972 Basic Treaty between West Germany and East Germany; Richard Nixon's and Jimmy Carter's negotiations with Mao Tse-tung and Deng

Xiaoping for normalization, which was finalized in 1979; and the negotiations between Anwar Sadat, Menachem Begin, and Jimmy Carter that resulted in the Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty in 1979.

5. For instance, secret back-channel negotiations were used to break deadlocks between the U.S. and the USSR in negotiating the SALT II agreement. Henry Kissinger and Anatoly Dobrynin met secretly several times in Washington in order to break deadlocks in the official negotiation (Eban 1983:355).

6. In facilitating a secret channel, individuals (private, unofficial, as well as official) play a significant and supportive role, especially during exploratory talks. However, it is important that these individuals have close relations with the political leaders they represent. Since private or unofficial diplomats, academics, businessmen, and journalists often play this role, in their professions they may use conferences, research projects, or press conferences as a cover for their secret diplomatic activities (Colosi 1986: 249; Klieman 1988: 47, 122).

7. In contrast to this argument, Bar-Siman-Tov underlines the importance of domestic legitimacy and consensus when the political leadership pursues dramatic changes in policy, such as shifting from war to peace (1994:4-8).

8. Nicolson continues to value some elements of old diplomacy, namely: the area knowledge of diplomats; absence of publicity during negotiations, together with absence of public expectations about the outcome of the negotiations; and less time pressure during the negotiation process (Nicolson 1961b: 7).

9. In his view, diplomacy may be studied and analyzed more fruitfully from three distinct theoretical traditions—the Grotian, the Machiavellian, and the Kantian—thereby highlighting disparate dimensions of diplomacy.

10. For an extensive description of the prenegotiation phase, see Baker (1995: 443-469, 487-513).

11. A traditional Likud stance has been that Jordan is a Palestinian country and therefore a solution should be found in a Jordanian-Palestinian framework (Shamir 1993).

12. Beginning in 1989, vast numbers of immigrants began arriving in Israel from the former Soviet Union, imposing severe strains on the national economy. Israel therefore requested loan guarantees from the U.S. that would facilitate the absorption of these immigrants. The U.S., however, made the

guarantees conditional on cessation of Israeli settlement activity in the occupied territories.

13. The Madrid formula was interpreted by the former Israeli government as a framework whereby the interim period would be disconnected from the negotiations on the permanent status of the occupied territories. "All options open" was therefore understood as implying the right of both parties to raise whatever proposals they might favor in the final negotiations. For example, a proposal by Israel that it extend its sovereignty over all of the territories would be considered legitimate (Shamir 1993).

14. The Palestinian delegation regarded the deportation as a major breach in the spirit of negotiating in good faith. Ararat, however, argued that the Palestinian people could not afford to break off the negotiations. He also viewed the delegation's own decision to break off the negotiations as a threat to the PLO's authority, and raised the question of whether there existed two different Palestinian leaderships (Ashrawi 1995: 240-241).

15. Rabin headed the bilateral negotiations in Washington and was determined that the negotiations should eventually reach an agreement. Shimon Peres, who was directing the multilateral negotiations, already underlined to Rabin in August 1992 the need for secret back-channel negotiations with the PLO. He had come to the conclusion that unless Israel negotiated with the PLO, it ran the risk of ending up with the Hamas (Peres 1994).

16. During this period, Larsen was working for the nongovernmental organization FAFØ and conducting a special research project on Palestinian living conditions in the Gaza Strip. He is presently the UN's special coordinator in Gaza.

17. Hirschfeld was a member of the "Hundred-Day Team," a group of academics, professionals, and businessmen set up on Peres's initiative in 1984. They were responsible for planning and preparing Israel's policies in the West Bank and Gaza if Labor were to win the elections. Hirschfeld is also a close associate of Beilin. In 1989, they jointly founded the nongovernmental organization ECF (Economic Cooperation Foundation).

18. Also known as Ahmad Qrei—at the time the PLO's finance minister, presently the PA's minister of economy. The person from whom Abu Ala received the main instructions was Abu Abbas (also known as Abu Mazen, head of the PLO's Department of International Relations, member of the

Palestinian Council and of the Executive Committee).

19. Maher Al-Kurd was formerly economic adviser to Abu Ala; Hassan Asfur was secretary of the negotiation committee in Washington and a member of the Communist People's Party.

20. Hirshfeld and Pundik were in constant contact with Beilin, who followed the process and helped them draft proposals via telephone (Beilin 1994).

21. Already in April Peres had suggested that he go himself to Oslo to negotiate. Rabin, however, did not sanction such a move because it would have committed the Israeli government (Peres 1995: 330).

22. At the first meeting, Singer was not a government official, though he had received an offer to become a legal adviser to the Foreign Ministry before going to Oslo. Singer had previously headed the International Law Department of the IDF for 18 years and had extensive experience in negotiating with Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt.

23. Originally there were twenty-five Palestinian reservations on the DOP, but during intensive negotiations in June these were reduced to five, including disagreement on the size of Jericho and security-related issues concerning the passages between Gaza and Jericho (Savir 1994).

24. The Norwegians participating in the Oslo channel were Mona Juul, Jan Egeland, and the late Johan Holst of the Foreign Ministry, and Terje Larsen, Geir Pedersen, and Even Aas of FAFO.

25. These were: recognition of Israel's right to exist in peace and security; recognition of UN Resolutions 242 and 338; a statement that negotiations were about the interim period and permanent status with emphasis that the conflict could only be solved through negotiations; renunciation of terrorism; cessation of all forms of violence; invalidation of articles in the Palestinian Covenant that deny Israel's right to exist; and that Yassir Arafat should be prepared to meet any Israeli official (Abbas 1995: 207-208).

26. Both Singer and Hirshfeld stress that few countries may be able to conduct this kind of facilitation, since middle and superpowers have their own self-interest to tend to (Hirshfeld 1994b; Singer 1994).

27. In times of crisis the Norwegians were able to persuade the parties to return to the negotiation by suggesting a "nonmeeting" to discuss the issues the parties disagreed on (Juul 1994).

28. He underlines two important components of the negotiations: (1) the *cognitive* element (images and perceptions), which played an important role in the “telephone arena”; and (2) the *emotive* factor (feelings and emotions), which was primarily present in the “meeting arena” (i.e., face-to-face negotiations). By being sensitive to these two components, the Norwegians were able to address the problems of suspicion and lack of confidence. The “enemy image” of each other was powerful, but these images were reversed with the help of the “small-group setting.” The Norwegians insisted on a limited number of participants in the negotiations (1995).

29. Singer emphasizes that “all the important, all the significant breakthroughs in the relationship between Israel and its neighbors took place as the results of secret negotiations” (1994).

30. During more than three years, attempts were made to establish back-channel negotiations between some people within the Labor Party (among them Hirschfeld and Pundik) and the PLO with the help of former Dutch Foreign Minister Max van der Stoep and Robert Serry, a Dutch Foreign Ministry official (Ashrawi 1995: 22; Hirschfeld 1994b). However, none of these channels achieved the same level of understanding as the Oslo channel (Beilin 1994).

31. After the DOP was concluded in Stockholm, it was decided that the United States had to be fully informed. Peres and Holst proposed to Secretary of State Warren Christopher that the United States would present the DOP as an American proposal. The offer was turned down, however, because it was not credible or feasible (Peres 1995: 351-355).

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The Leonard Davis Institute for International Relations

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Alfred Davis Building, Mount Scopus, Jerusalem 91905 Israel

Tel. 972-2-5882312 Fax. 972-2-5825534