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THE AMERICAN CHRISTIAN RIGHT'S RESPONSE TOWARDS THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICTS

This article explores the critical response of the Christian Right towards the Israel-Palestine conflicts by examining two events: the 2002 Road Map Peace Plan and the Annapolis Conference. It seeks to examine the critical role of the Christian Right in American foreign policy during the George W. Bush administration, with particular regard to Israel and Palestine. It argues that the Christian Right has consistently demonstrated its earnest concern about American foreign policy towards Israel, particularly the present Israel-Palestine conflict resolution. However, the paper seeks to establish that, after 9/11, the Christian Right extended its support for Israel beyond its traditional theological partiality and that such support was offered under a banner of American national security and the War on Terror. However, the study also shows how mainstream evangelicals are often divided in their opinions on the issue of the Christian Right's unequivocal support for Israel.

Keywords: *Israel-Palestine conflicts, Christian Right, Evangelicalism, US foreign policy, two state solution, religion in international relations*

Introduction

During the George W. Bush's Administration (2001-2009), the American Christian Right successfully widened its horizon of activism from social conservative issues to American foreign policy issues. During this two terms of the Bush's administration, the Christian Right movement has articulated its religious vision for American foreign policy by giving considerable attention to some pertinent international issues including Israel-Palestinian conflicts. Heywood (2007:303-304) suggests:

Fundamentalist [the Christian Right] influence on the Bush administration has been clearest in relation to foreign policy, particularly in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorists attack. This was evident in two ways. First, it was reflected in greater emphasis being placed on humanitarianism and human rights policies, especially an increase in foreign aid to Africa. Second, it deepened US support for Israel and effected how the Bush administration set out to fight the

“war on terror”... In this light, bolstering the position of Israel in the Middle East became a prime focus of US foreign policy.

Generally, the Christian Right believes that the land of Palestine is the covenant land made by God with the Jews. They consider any attempt to divide or share the land with the Palestinian people as against the covenant (Wagner 2002:57). This attitude significantly influences the support of the Christian Right for Israel and its lobby activities on US foreign policy decision making process. For instance, the Christian Right does not prescribe to the idea of a peace process between Israel and Palestine as part of main solution to the conflict. Conversely, the Christian Right is a strong advocate of a one-state solution and protest against any chance of the creation of a Palestinian state (Victor 2005:233).

The paper examines two case studies that show the response of the Christian Right to the US foreign policy towards the Israeli–Palestinian peace process during the George W. Bush administration. It seeks to examine the critical role of the Christian Right in American foreign policy during the George W. Bush administration regarding the proposed solutions to the Israel–Palestine conflict. We argue that the Christian Right has consistently demonstrated its earnest concern about American foreign policy towards Israel, particularly regarding the present Israel–Palestine conflict resolution. We seek to establish that, after the 9/11 attacks, the Christian Right extended its support for Israel beyond its traditional theological beliefs and that such support was offered under a banner of American national security and the War on Terror. Lastly, we argue that American evangelicals are divided in their opinions and stances on the issue of the Christian Right’s unequivocal support for Israel.

Israel-Palestine Conflict: A General Background

In order to understand the Israel-Palestine conflicts, it is important to turn our focus to the evolution of the conflicts. The conflicts started when the Jews’ attempt to procure Palestine; the latter a country which at that time was under the governance of the weakened Turk’s Ottoman Empire. Theodore Herzl, the leader of the World Zionist Organization (WZO) sought an audience with Sultan Abdul Hamid II, the Caliphate (Ruler) of the Ottoman Empire, in order to purchase the piece of land for the Jews. At that time, the Jews a majority of who lived in Russia-were facing torture from the Russians when their conspiracy to kill the Tsar was exposed, thus causing them to live in fear (Mohsen Mohamad Saleh 2001:25). However, their proposal was rejected by the Caliphate. Theodore Herzl was not deterred by the rejection and instead strove to obtain the land for the Jews. He brought his case to the British’s administration in order to gain its support. To the British, the issue was timely as Palestine held a geographically strategic location that enabled the British

to monitor their colonies in Africa and Asia. Therefore, in 1917, the Balfour Declaration was created with the objective of Britain attempting to establish a national home for the Jews (Mohsen Mohamad Saleh 2001:27).

The British were extremely dedicated in their efforts to help the Jews due to the benefits that they themselves were certain to gain. Their first effort involved helping the Jews through the Balfour Declaration. They then promised Sharif Husayn, the ruler of Hijaz and the Holy Cities of Makkah and Madinah his own empire if he revolted against the Ottoman Empire. Thirdly, they signed a treaty with France—the Sykes-Picot Treaty. This treaty outlined that if their cooperation succeeded in securing Palestine, France would be given two territories, i.e. Syria and Lebanon, whereas three other territories, i.e. Palestine, Iraq and Jordan would be given to the British Empire. The period in which Palestine was under the authority of the British was known as the ‘British Mandate’, and throughout this period, many Jews migrated to Palestine. However, it was in 1933 that half a million Jews migrated to Palestine after Hitler’s anti-Jew campaign. A number of Palestinians rebelled against the migration and were consequently banished from their land. On 29 November 1947, the United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine or United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181 was approved by the United Nations General Assembly, at the UN World Headquarters in New York. The aim of this plan was to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict in the British Mandate of Palestine.

Both the inability of the British to govern Palestine under the British Mandate and the unfair UN Partition Plan had fuelled the anger of the Palestinians. Eventually, the approved partition plan could not be implemented due to protests made by the Palestinian Arab Higher Committee. The British were unable to settle the problem and chose to abandon Palestine. As a result, a void was left in Palestine that the Jews were impatient to fill. The heightened violence between the Palestinians and the Jews, and the accelerated British withdrawal from Palestine did not help to defuse the vulnerable situation. In New York, the UN’s hands were tied. The Security Council were unable to execute an effective decision after discussing General Assembly resolution 181 (II) in December 1947. Eventually, in March 1948, the United States drafted a proposal to enable the Council to act on the failed partition, and the Council called for the end of the violence in Palestine.

Perhaps the most major decision the Jews made in order to create the State of Israel was their thorough engagement in the policy of territorial expansion throughout the British’s withdrawal from Palestine. From the writings of the Zionist leaders, it is evident that the Zionist policy was to occupy as much territory as possible, including the West Bank—boundaries that were beyond those that were originally assigned to the Jewish State by the partition resolution. An Israeli official described a comprehensive military plan, called Plan ‘D’²¹ or Dalet:

In March 1948, Haganah High Command prepared a comprehensive operational –Plan ‘D’, replacing plans ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’ which had governed Haganah strategy in previous years. Zero hour for Plan D was to arrive when British evacuation had reached a point where the Haganah would be reasonably safe from British intervention and when mobilization had progressed to a point, where the implementation of a large-scale would be feasible. The mission of Haganah was as simple as it was revolutionary: ‘To gain control of the area allotted to the Jewish State and defend its borders and those of the blocs of Jewish settlements and such Jewish population as were outside those borders, against a regular or Para regular enemy operating from bases outside or inside the area of Jewish state (Nathaniel 1991:87).

According to the UN document, the attacks and the psychological warfare strategies deployed on the Palestinians resulted in approximately 726, 000 Palestinians becoming refugees by the end of 1949 (Nathaniel 1991:87). At the world level, attempts were made to bring about peace within the conflicted area by placing Palestinians under the United Nation’s temporary trusteeship (United Nations 1990:137). However, this proposal was met with strong opposition from Zionist leaders, who perceived it as a setback in their attempts to wrest control over Palestine.

On 14 May 1948, Israel finally announced their independence, thus marking the birth of the State of Israel. It also marked the end of the British Mandate in Palestine, with the departure of the British High Commissioner from Palestine. With the British no longer in Palestine, the Jewish became more aggressive as they began occupying territories beyond what had been stipulated by the Partition Plan. This action fuelled the anger of the Arabs, and, as an act of retaliation, several neighbouring Arab forces entered Palestine, intent on providing security to the Palestinians. This action was explained by the Arab League to the UN Secretary General through cable (United Nations 1990:137).

It was for these reasons and for the fact that the security of Palestine was considered their sacred trust, that the Arab governments found themselves compelled to intervene. Their intervention was spurred on by the sole purpose of restoring peace and security, and establishing law and order in Palestine. Furthermore, they were anxious to check further deterioration of the prevailing conditions, and to prevent the spread of disorder and lawlessness into the neighbouring Arab lands. It was also necessary for them to fill the vacuum created by the termination of the Mandate, which had thus far failed to be occupied by any legally constituted authority.

The Arab States recognize that the independence and sovereignty of Palestine which was so far subject to the British Mandate has now,

with the termination of the Mandate, become established in fact, and maintain that the lawful inhabitants of Palestine are alone competent and entitled to set up an administration in Palestine for the discharge of all governmental functions without any external interferences. As soon as that stage is reached for the intervention of the Arab States, which is confined to the restoration of peace and establishment of law and order, shall be put an end to, and the sovereign State of Palestine will be competent in co-operation with the other States member of the Arab League, to take every step for the promotion of the welfare and security of its peoples and territory (Moore 1974:77).

With this explanation, the forces of the member states of the Arab League entered Palestinian territory and the conflict escalated into the first Middle East War in 1948. The result of this war was highly unexpected: the coalitions of Arab States were unable to defeat the Israeli forces and therefore failed severely to protect Palestine from further invasion by Israel. Perhaps the defeat of the Arab states coalition was due to the fact that they were outnumbered seventy thousand to twenty four thousand by the Israeli forces. This was further worsened by factors such as weak coordination, little knowledge of the terrain of the battlefield, obsolete weapons that occasionally exploded in their faces and premature disarmament of the Arab forces (Mohsen Mohamad Saleh 2001:45). In this war, Palestine had lost control over their territory to the Israeli by 78 percent and with this, the State of Israel was declared.

The 2002 Road Map and the Christian Right's Response

In 2002, amid international pressure urging major international actors to resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict, the United States and the rest of the “Quartet”-the European Union, Russia and the United Nations-proposed a peace plan called the Road Map for peace. In June 2002, President George W. Bush declared his commitment to expedite the peace process by outlining major principles for the Road Map. In his speech, Bush (2003) declared that: “The Roadmap represents a starting point toward achieving the vision of two states, a secure State of Israel and a viable, peaceful, democratic Palestine. It is the framework for progress towards lasting peace and security in the Middle East ... and a viable Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with Israel.” The Road Map was a two-state solution plan which comprised three goal-driven phases to end the Israel-Palestine conflict by 2005 and involved reciprocal steps by Israel and Palestine in the issues of politics, security, economics, humanitarian and institution-building goals. The proposed solution gained international support and, in November 2003, the United Nations Security Council by Resolutions 1515 (2003) endorsed the Road Map. Soon after that, the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in a UN Press Release gave his official

statement that the Road Map “remains the most practical way of achieving the aspirations of both sides” (United Nations 2004).

Nevertheless, immediately after President George W. Bush's declaration of the White House's commitment to and endorsement of the Road Map as a way out of the endless Israeli–Palestinian conflict at a mini-summit in Aqaba, Jordan, a significant number of the Christian Right reacted strongly, opposing such an initiative (Haija 2006:91-92). The *Financial Times* reported: “Some prominent US pastors are unyielding towards Palestinians' own yearning for statehood and have joined settlers groups in Israel in campaigning against Sharon's plan to withdraw from the Gaza Strip” (Berkowitz 2005). The president of CUFI, John Hagee, for instance, has been consistently opposed to the plan and claimed that the plan violates the words of God. He wrote in his book *In Defense of Israel*: “Voices are calling for the sacred city of Jerusalem to be shared as part of a ‘road map for peace’. Let it be known to all men far and near that the city of Jerusalem is not up for negotiation with anyone at any time for any reason in future. It has been and shall always be the eternal and undivided capital of the State of Israel” (Hagee 2007:85-86). Likewise, Mike Evans, the founder of the Jerusalem Prayer Team, a coalition of 1,700 churches in the US, opposed the plan and said: “We either have to oppose the road map or oppose the Bible” (*Washington Post* 27 March 2004).

Many other groups and Christian Right organizations joined together to oppose the Road Map. In 2003, the Christian Right officially opposed the proposed Road Map for peace between Israel and Palestine. For example, the Jerusalem Prayer Team, which was supported by Robertson and Falwell, gathered signatures of Christians for a memorandum that urged George W. Bush to abandon the Road Map initiative. Similarly, Ed McAteer, one of the influential leaders of the Christian Right, launched an advertisement campaign calling Christians to “pray that George W. Bush honours God's covenant with Israel”. At the same time, some of the Christian Right leaders such as Gary Bauer, Richard Land, Falwell and several others sent a letter to express their grave concerns about Bush's intention to accept the Road Map. In addition, Gary Bauer warned Bush that evangelicals would turn against him if he endorsed the Road Map (Durham 2004:152).

As a result, the White House received more than 50,000 postcards from Christian Right members that asserted their disagreement over the proposed plan, which, according to them, was a step towards allowing the Palestinians to establish their own state in Israel (Zunes 2004). In this respect, the Apostolic Congress, a Christian Right organization, had mobilized its constituents to send emails or letters to the White House against the Road Map plan. As Perlstein explains:

[The] Apostolic Congress co-sponsored an effort with the Jewish group Americans for a Safe Israel that placed billboards in 23 cities

with a quotation from Genesis, “Unto thy offspring will I give this” and the message, “I pray that President Bush Honors God’s Covenant with Israel. Call the White House with this message”. It then provided with White House phone number and the Apostolic Congress’s Web address. In the interview with the Voice, Pastor Upton claimed personal responsibility for directing 50,000 postcards to the White House opposing the Road Map, which aims to create a Palestinian state. “I’m in total disagreement with any form of Palestinian state” Upton said. Within a two-week period, getting 50,000 postcards saying the exact same thing from places all over the country; that resonated with the White House, that really caused [President Bush] to backpedal on the Road Map (In Haija 2006:92).

Likewise, Victor (2005:241) argues that most of the Christian Right and Christian Zionist leaders had also mobilized their grass roots supporters to protest against the Road Map. She says:

Through American church groups more than one million Christians were organized to e-mail the White House to protest against George W. Bush’s Road Map. The consulting group runs newspaper advertisements and commercials on conservative radio talk shows urging Jews and Christians to see past their historical differences and come together at a time the most of crisis for Israel.

In the same year, at the Interfaith Zionist Leadership Summit held in Washington DC, various Christian Right organizations, such as Gary Bauer’s American Values, the Apostolic Congress, the Christian Broadcasting Network, the Christian Coalition of America, and the Religious Roundtable, came together to develop a strategy to oppose the 2002 Road Map (Berkowitz 2005).

To date, the 2002 Road Map has not been implemented and was considered another failed plan of a series of Israel–Palestine peace initiatives. Besides the various analyses that attempted to figure out the factors behind the failure of the 2002 Road Map, including questions about the mechanism, practicality and contents of the proposed solutions, the commitments of the Israel and Palestine leadership as well as the level of acceptance among their people and the uncertainty of the United States obligations, the role of the Christian Right’s activism is yet to be determined (Annan 2004; Mahdi 2005; Tristam 2007). The current research, however, illustrates clearly that the Christian Right did show their negative response and deep aversion to the 2002 Road Map.

The Annapolis Conference 2007

On 26 November 2007, the United States, with strong backing from the Quartet, once again hosted a conference to attempt to resolve the endless conflict between Israel and Palestine (<http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&id=1199203398299>). Held in Annapolis, Maryland, USA, the conference known as “The Annapolis Conference” was expected to involve formal bilateral negotiations toward the establishment of a Palestinian state in Gaza and the West Bank and the agreement on this shall be concluded before the end of 2008. In addition, it was proposed that the implementation of this agreement should be in accordance with the 2003 Road Map proposal, i.e. a two-state solution (United Nations General Assembly GA/10663, 29 November 2007). In a Joint Understanding read by President George W. Bush in the conference, the conference was to “lay the foundation for the establishment of a new nation - a democratic Palestinian state that will live side by side with Israel in peace and security ... [and] ... bring an end to the violence that has been the true enemy of the aspirations of both the Israelis and Palestinians” (White House, 27 November 2007).

On the eve of the Annapolis Conference on 26th November 2007, some leaders of Orthodox Jewish and Christian Right organizations met with senior White House officials, including President Bush’s National Security Advisor, Stephen Hadley. They expressed their great concern over the initial conference’s proposal of dividing Jerusalem, which would eventually lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state. Among the Christian Right representatives were David Brog, executive director of Christians United for Israel (CUFI), Gary Bauer, and Jeff Ballabon, the leader of Southern Baptist Convention (Rosner 2007). David Brog wrote in his blog that, during the meeting, the representatives not only raised their concerns about the credibility and ability of the Palestinian authority to stop terrorism against Israel and but also argued the plan would increase the possibility of terrorist attacks against Israel. Soon after the meeting, David Brog declared on behalf of the Christian representatives that: “we stressed that we and our membership do not want the [White House] administration to pressure Israel into making territorial concessions at this juncture” (JewsOnFirst.org 11 December 2007). He stated that CUFI would monitor the process of the negotiation closely.

In addition, Markell (2007), one of CUFI’s directors believes that the Annapolis Conference “should be viewed as one more instalment payment in the sell-out of Israel and of American interests in the Middle East” and claims the conference was a “diplomatic lynching” of Israel (Scharold 2007). CUFI also showed its negative reaction to the Annapolis Summit 2007. According to CUFI, the summit, convened by George W. Bush to work toward a peace agreement between Israeli and Palestinian authorities by negotiating a two-state

solution, was seen as a “forum to coerce Israel to accept certain conditions” (Scharold 2007). Hagee (2007:12) wrote on his church’s website that:

At this point in America’s history, we are plainly rejecting the Word of God because, according to Joel 3, we are helping to divide the land of Israel. We, through billions in foreign aid, are pressuring Israel to abandon the covenant land that God has given to the Jewish people forever. America is in the valley of decision and we are making the wrong decision.

However, it is worth noting that the support for Israel among evangelicals is not monolithic. There have been strong critics from evangelicals towards Israel in relation to Israel’s aggressive policy towards Palestine, in particular on the occupation of Palestinian land for Jewish settlements. Some segments of evangelicals have openly expressed their support for the right of the Palestinians to have their own land through a two-state solution proposed by the US administration. The next section highlights these matters and discusses their development.

The Evangelicals’ Support for a Two-State Solution

Many church leaders of mainstream Christian denominations, including evangelical leaders, are receptive to a peaceful settlement of the Israel–Palestine conflict. In June 2001, sixteen Bishops and representatives of the Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox churches met Colin Powell to hand over a letter that expressed their concern and discuss the US foreign policy in the Middle East. In the meeting, the group stressed the importance of the peacemaking process between Israel and Palestine and described the conflict as “a cancer that threatens the health of the whole region, U.S. relations with Arab and Muslim countries, and inter-faith relations worldwide”. The group gave a more balanced viewpoint to resolve the issue and argued that the independence of the State of Palestine is as important as the security of Israel. They also criticized the Israelis and claimed that “Israel’s practice of assassination and economic strangulation of the fledgling Palestinian state is counterproductive to either security or peace.” In addition, they criticized the US policy, especially the supply of high-tech weapons for Israel in the conflict. They recommended that the Bush administration apply “considerable diplomatic pressure and possibly economic pressure” in order to end the conflict (Strickert 2001:7).

On 2 July 2002, another group consisting of forty evangelical leaders sent a letter to President Bush acknowledging the importance of the creation of a legitimate Palestinian state. Among others, the letter clarified that the evangelical community differs on the issue of US policy towards Israel. They argued that “significant numbers of Americans evangelicals reject the way

some have distorted biblical passages as their rationale for uncritical support for every policy and action of the Israeli government instead of judging all actions-of both Israelis and Palestinians on the basis of Biblical standard of justice.” In addition, the letter also urges the president to “employ even-handed policy toward Israel-Palestinian leadership” in order to amicably resolve the Israel-Palestine conflicts. Finally, the group also condemned the unlawful Israeli occupation of the land belonging to the Palestinians that they described as “theft”. In addition, they criticized the continued Israeli military occupation, which they claimed as “the major causes of the strife that has resulted in terrorism” (New York Times 29 July 2007).

In July 2007, thirty-four prominent evangelical leaders published their letter to President George W. Bush in *The New York Times* to show their support to Bush’s two-state solution for the Israel–Palestine conflicts. It states that: “the U.S. must provide robust leadership within the Quartet to reconstitute the Middle East roadmap, whose implementation would guarantee the security of the State of Israel and the viability of a Palestinian State.” The letter was meant to rectify the common misperception that all evangelicals are opposed to a two-state solution and creation of Palestinian state. Although the letter acknowledged that the evangelicals embrace the belief of the biblical promise of the land to Israel and accepted the literal interpretation of the verse “I will bless those who bless you”, they argue that this does not stop them from criticizing Israel and it does not render their support blindly on any actions that are deemed as promoting violence and injustice to the Palestinian people (New York Times 29 July 2007). However, John Hagee denounced the letter which endorsed the creation of Palestinian state when he argued that: “the authors of this letter do not represent the views of the vast majority of Bible-believing mainstream evangelicals in America” (Quoted in Berkowitz 2007).

Amid the Annapolis Conference in November 2007, another letter entitled “Evangelical Statement on Israel/Palestine”, signed by eighty evangelical leaders was sent to President Bush to show their support for a two-state solution. The letter argued that the conflicts between Israel and Palestine would pose a danger to America’s national security. To them, Muslims globally viewed America as a strong supporter of Israel and of the suppression of the right of Palestinians to have their own state. As a result, it had contributed to a strong anti-American sentiment which could lead to the proliferation of terrorist activities among extremist Muslims (Neff 2007:5).

In December 2008, leaders of evangelical churches, including mainline Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox churches, signed and sent another letter to President-Elect Barack Obama. The letter once again emphasized the importance of a two-state resolution and encouraged Obama’s administration to make further commitment to ensure the successful resolution of the Israel–Palestine conflicts. The letter urged Obama “to provide sustained, high level diplomatic leadership toward the clear goal of a final status agreement” (Global

Ministries of the Christian Church 2008:3). During the Israel–Gaza war in January 2009, Rev Dr Geoff Tunnicliffe, an international director of the World Evangelical Alliance, the largest evangelical body in the world representing 400 million evangelicals worldwide, released a statement calling for an immediate ceasefire between Israel and Hamas. In his statement he contended that: “The God who is near wants to bless the Jewish people but not at the expense of the Arab people and He wants to bless the Arab people but not at the expense of the Jewish people” (Vu 13 January 2009). He, however, avoided blaming either side for the outbreak of the war but urged the international community to continue efforts to end the conflict as soon as possible. In addition, he acknowledged the need for a resolution of the conflict by a two-state solution. He urged the parties concerned to agree to “a permanent peace with justice and a two-state solution” and said “we dare to dream together of a Middle East where Jews and Arabs are able to enjoy life side by side in peace” (Vu 13 January 2009).

Finally, in January 2009, a group of forty-four bishops representing the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) visited the West Bank and, according to Rev. Mark S. Hanson, ECLA presiding bishop and president of the Lutheran World Federation, the devastating impact of the Israel’s attacks on Gaza were “disturbing” and he personally declared that the war in Gaza failed to meet the Christian “just war” principles. He commented that the Israeli response to Hamas’ rocket attacks was disproportionate and called for an immediate withdrawal of Israeli soldiers from Gaza (Colvert 2009:3). In response to the Israeli aggression in Gaza, ECLA contributed \$50,000 in assistance for the provision of food and medical care in Gaza.

Conclusion

The study has illustrated how the Christian Right movement during the Bush’s administration has extended its support for Israel beyond their theological beliefs and have incorporated the issue of ensuring American and Israeli security as an integral part of their agenda in support of Israel. They not only justified their support as being founded solely on their religious beliefs on the rights of the Jews over Palestinian land, but they have gone a step further in consolidating their support based on the notion of Israeli and American national interests at large. It also contended that the Christian Right has not been able to fully influence the outcome of American foreign policy over the Israeli–Palestinian conflicts and the Bush administration’s decision to promote a two-state solution as a permanent solution to the conflict is contrary to what the Christian Right was hoping for. The US was indeed trying to resolve the Israeli–Palestinian conflict amicably so that both parties could discuss peace in way that does not jeopardize American national interests. Lastly this paper

has illustrated that there is a division among the evangelicals over the issue of unequivocal American support towards Israel and the efforts of a certain segment of the evangelicals to bring disrepute to Islam and the Muslims. A larger segment of the evangelical movement believes that the two-state solutions to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict is a viable solution and should be supported in the interest of a permanent peaceful solution over the conflict in the Middle East.

End Notes

1. Plan “D” or *Dalet* carried out with the objective of gaining control over the areas of the Hebrew state and defend its borders. It also aims at gaining the area of Jewish settlement and concentration which are located outside the borders of Hebrew state. See Walid Khalidi (1988:3).

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