

1. Israel Advocacy
 - a. The reason we are all here is both a love for Israel and a desire to advocate for it
 - b. This convention aims to teach all of you how to advocate
 - c. In the other sichot they learned about how the world view Israel and some general knowledge
 - d. This is designed to teach how to use the information learned before
 - e. To do this, we will use the ARM method
 - i. There are three steps:
 1. State your point directly
 2. Back up your point with specific examples
 3. End by sending a message about the root of the conflict
 - ii. Example, "The Israeli fence/wall/boundary is not humane to the Palestinians."
 1. The fence/wall/boundary set up by the Israelis is designed to save the lives of Israelis not hinder those of the Palestinians
 2. Since it was built the wall has statistically thwarted numerous terror attacks and saved many lives
 3. If the actions of the terrorists did not call for a fence/wall/boundary to be built it would not have been.
 - f. Now the participants will be broken into groups of 2 and receive their own examples and they will have to formulate a response to it using the ARM method.
 - g. Each pair will present their arguments to the group.

Excerpt from Mark Twain's *The Innocents Abroad*:

“The further we went the hotter the sun got, and the more rocky and bare, repulsive and dreary the landscape became. There could not have been more fragments of stone strewn broadcast over this part of the world, if every ten square feet of the land had been occupied by a separate and distinct stone-cutter's establishment for an age. There was hardly a tree or a shrub any where. Even the olive and the cactus, those fast friends of a worthless soil, had almost deserted the country. No landscape exists that is more tiresome to the eye than that which bounds the approaches to Jerusalem. The only difference between the roads and the surrounding country, perhaps, is that there are rather more rocks in the roads than in the surrounding country (442).”

Twain, Mark. *The Innocents Abroad Roughing It*. New York: Literary Classics of the United States, Inc., 1984.

- What adjectives or phrases would you use to describe Israel? How do those answers differ from what Mark Twain wrote (taking into account that he visited Israel in 1867)?
- What makes your connection to the land of Israel so strong?
- What could you say to someone who only saw the negative aspects of Israel (ex. pushy or rude Israelis, or ugly deserts)?

Second Intifada

“The Palestinian intifada, or uprising, broke out at the end of September 2000.

Analysts say the atmosphere at the time was ripe for an explosion. Palestinian frustration that years of the peace process had failed to deliver their political aspirations was intensified by the failure of the Camp David summit in July 2000.

Current Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon - at the time in opposition - visited a site in Jerusalem known to Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary (Haram al-Sharif) and to Jews as Temple Mount.

The Palestinians viewed the visit as provocative because the compound lies on territory captured by Israel in the 1967 war and is at the centre of the fierce dispute over the sovereignty of Jerusalem. It ended in bloody clashes at the mosque, which quickly spread through the occupied Palestinian territories.

Correspondents say the visit was intended to underline the Jewish claim to the city and its holy sites.¹”

Disengagement

“Some 14,000 unarmed Israeli soldiers and police entered six settlements throughout Wednesday, forcibly evicting residents who refused to leave voluntarily. According to the army, 1,842 people were evacuated Wednesday. Of 1,600 families in Gaza's 21 settlements, only 600 remained by the end of the day.

By evening, five of the six settlements that troops entered in the morning were cleared, with resisters remaining only in Neve Dekalim — for months the epicenter of resistance. Morag, Bedolah, Ganei Tal, Tel Katifa and Kerem Atzmona were deserted.

"It's impossible to watch this ... without tears in the eyes," Sharon said, but he insisted the pullout would make Israel safer.

"I'm appealing to everyone. Don't attack the men and women in uniform. Don't accuse them. Don't make it harder for them, don't harm them. Attack me. I am responsible for this. Attack me. Accuse me," Sharon said.

"I think Israel is weeping today," spokesman Ra'anana Gissin told FOX News. "But I think the soldiers and policemen are carrying this operation with a great deal of compassion and sensitivity to its completion. They are doing something that no other military in the world has done — evacuating hundreds of people from their homes without any casualties."²”

Hamas Elections

“RAMALLAH, West Bank, Jan. 26 -- The radical Islamic movement Hamas won a large majority in the new Palestinian parliament, according to official election results announced Thursday, trouncing the governing Fatah party in a contest that could dramatically reshape the Palestinians' relations with Israel and the rest of the world.

¹ “Q & A: Middle East Conflict.” 18 February 2003. BBC News. 18 January 2007.
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/1831251.stm>

² Tobin, Mike and Jennifer Griffin. 17 August 2005. Fox News. 11 January 2007.
<http://www.foxnews.com/printer_friendly_story/0,3566,165951,00.html>

In Wednesday's voting, Hamas claimed 76 of the 132 parliamentary seats, giving the party at war with Israel the right to form the next cabinet under the Palestinian Authority's president, Mahmoud Abbas, the leader of Fatah.

"This is the choice of the people," Qureia, a member of the party's discredited old guard who did not run for reelection, told reporters here. "It should be respected."

The arrival of Hamas, formally known as the Islamic Resistance Movement, in the Palestinian Authority as a nearly equal partner will severely complicate Abbas's efforts to begin negotiations with Israel under the U.S.-backed peace plan known as the "road map." Hamas, which emerged in 1987 during the first Palestinian uprising as an offshoot of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, favors the creation of a Palestinian nation on land that now includes Israel rather than the road map's two-state solution.

The election results stunned U.S. and Israeli officials, who have repeatedly stated that they would not work with a Palestinian Authority that included Hamas, which both countries and the European Union have designated as a terrorist organization. In Washington, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said that a party could not "have one foot in politics and the other in terror. Our position on Hamas has therefore not changed."

"They want to see how Hamas will act once it's responsible for running the government," said Bassem Barhum, a spokesman for the Palestinian Legislative Council. "They want to show the public that this is what they got. This is Hamas."³

"Hamas is expected to receive 24% of the votes, and for a movement that participates in the elections for the first time this is a victory."⁴

One Year Later...

"DAMASCUS, Syria - Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and the exiled leader of the rival Hamas faction failed last night to resolve their differences over forming a unity government, dashing hopes for a quick end to deadly clashes between their supporters. But Abbas and Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal said in a statement that they had "achieved major progress" during the meeting, and that they hoped to resume talks within two weeks.

"Palestinian bloodshed was considered totally prohibited, and we must exert all efforts to avoid frictions and internal clashes," Abbas said.

Both sides said differences remained, without providing details. The thorniest issues have been control of the two factions' security forces and Hamas' refusal to recognize Israel or commit to previous accords signed between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

³ Wilson, Scott. "Hamas Sweeps Palestinian Elections, Complicating Peace Efforts in Mideast." 27 January 2006. Washington Post. 11 January 2007. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/01/26/AR2006012600372_2.html>

⁴ Svetlova, Ksenia. "The Word on the Street." 20 January 2006. Online Edition Jerusalem Post. 11 January 2007.
<<http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/jpost/access/980357401.html?dids=980357401:980357401&FMT=ABS&FMTS=ABS:FT&date=Jan+20%2C+2006&author=Ksenia+Svetlova&pub=Jerusalem+Post&edition=&startpage=12&desc=The+word+on+the+street>>

Despite the lack of agreement, he said the meeting "will send a message to the Palestinian people that the two sides are committed to continue dialogue."

Hamas, which controls the Palestinian parliament and cabinet, and Abbas' more moderate Fatah movement have been stuck in political deadlock since Hamas' victory in legislative elections last year. Abbas, who is widely seen as a moderate, was elected president separately.⁵

The Future of Israel

Olmert could immediately change the reality of life in the occupied territories - he could order and really enforce the removal of hundreds of roadblocks, checkpoints, and obstacles throughout the West Bank that turn the lives of millions of people into a daily hell. The government could decide to implement its own decisions and enforce the law vis- -vis the settlers and actually remove all unauthorized (illegal) outposts in the West Bank. It could also pass a law that would enable settlers in the West Bank who wish to return to Israel to receive compensation for their homes even before Israel withdraws from the territory.

With 10,000 Palestinians in Israeli prisons, most under administrative detention (arrested without charge and imprisoned without trial), the government could release hundreds of them. Olmert could order the extension to the West Bank of the Gaza cease-fire, which, even though not observed 100%, has significantly lessened Kassam rockets being shot into Israel.

MAHMOUD ABBAS could also announce and implement a whole series of steps that would serve as a triggering event for Israelis. These too would be independent of whatever Israel does or doesn't do. The steps are aimed at changing reality.

Abbas must finalize the creation of a national unity government to demonstrate leadership. He must bring about the immediate release of Gilad Shalit. He and his forces must create law and order, particularly in Gaza. Abbas must devote real effort to finding and destroying the Rafah tunnels used for smuggling. He could once again deal with the issue of the daily Kassam rockets shot into Israel. Abbas must continue to address and deal with the issue of incitement and hate in schools and in the media.

Both leaders should also consider steps beyond those suggested above. The best initiative for moving back into a genuine peace process is the Arab League peace initiative that offers land for peace and normalization with 22 Arab states. Supported unanimously by the Arab League twice in the past four years, this initiative offers comprehensive peace with all our neighbors.⁶

⁵ Karam, Zeina. "Rival Palestinian Leaders Fail to Agree." 22 January 2007. Philadelphia Inquirer. 23 January 2007. <<http://www.philly.com/mld/inquirer/news/nation/16515337.htm>>

⁶ Baskin, Gershon. "The Missing Agenda." 22 January 2007. Jerusalem Post. 23 January 2007. <<http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1167467790400&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FPrinter>>

Second Intifada

- What sparked the second intifada in September 2000?
- What is the difference between Israel's wars and the intifada?

Disengagement

- Some people predicted that the Disengagement would lead to a Civil War in Israel. How was this prevented?

Hamas Elections

- What affect did this election have on Israeli citizens?
→ Was the effect any different due to the surprise of the election results?
- How did the rest of the world react to the election results?
- How did *you* react?
- Some people thought that if Hamas was given responsibility in the government, they would stop using terrorist tactics. It has been a year since the Palestinian elections; is Hamas still known as a terrorist group?

The Future of Israel

- What do *you* see in Israel's future?