Studies in Contemporary History

Series Editors: T. G. Fraser and J. O. Springhall

Published

T. G. Fraser *The Arab–Israeli Conflict*

Dennis B. Smith *Japan since 1945: The Rise of an Economic
Superpower*

THE ARAB–ISRAELI CONFLICT

T. G. FRASER

Macmillan Education

ISBN 978-0-333-59023-2 ISBN 978-1-349-24143-9 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-24143-9

THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

Copyright © 1995 by T. G. Fraser

Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 1995

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles or reviews.

For information, address:

St. Martin's Press, Scholarly and Reference Division,
175 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010

First published in the United States of America in 1995

ISBN 978-0-312-12757-2 (cloth)

ISBN 978-0-312-12759-6 (paper)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Fraser, T. G.

The Arab-Israeli conflict / T. G. Fraser.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-312-12757-2 (cloth). — ISBN 978-0-312-12759-6 (paper)

1. Jewish-Arab relations. 2. Israel-Arab conflicts. I. Title.

DS119.7.F725 1995

956.04—dc20

95-15358

CIP

For Grace

CONTENTS

<i>Series Editors' Preface</i>	x
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xii
<i>Glossary</i>	xiii
<i>Map: Israel and its Arab Neighbours</i>	xv
Introduction	1
<i>The origins of the Arab-Israeli conflict</i>	2
<i>The impact of the First World War</i>	7
<i>The British Mandate over Palestine</i>	9
<i>The Holocaust</i>	14
<i>American Jewish Support for Zionism</i>	18
 1 The Partition of Palestine and the Creation of Israel	 23
<i>British and American Policies towards Palestine</i>	23
<i>The Jewish revolt</i>	28
<i>The Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry</i>	29

Contents

<i>The King David Hotel attack and its consequences</i>	31
<i>The UNSCOP report</i>	34
<i>The UNSCOP report in the General Assembly</i>	37
<i>The end of the British Mandate</i>	41
<i>The proclamation of the state of Israel</i>	44
<i>The first Arab-Israeli war</i>	45
2 The Problem Consolidated	51
<i>Israel after the 1948-9 war</i>	51
<i>The Palestinians after the 1948-9 war</i>	55
<i>The Egyptian revolution</i>	59
<i>Deteriorating Arab-Israeli relations</i>	61
<i>The Gaza raid and its consequences</i>	64
<i>Origins of the Suez crisis</i>	66
<i>Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez Canal</i>	68
<i>'Collusion' and war</i>	70
<i>Consequences of the Suez crisis</i>	73
<i>Fatah and the Palestinian revival</i>	75
3 From War to War	81
<i>Origins of the June war</i>	81
<i>The June war: Israel's six day victory</i>	84
<i>The aftermath of war</i>	85
<i>The Palestinian revival</i>	89
<i>The Israeli-American link</i>	91
<i>'Black September' in Jordan</i>	94
<i>Sadat's foreign policy</i>	95
<i>The Yom Kippur war</i>	99
<i>Kissinger and the ceasefire</i>	101
<i>Results of the war</i>	103
<i>Kissinger's 'step-by-step' diplomacy</i>	105
<i>'Reassessment' and the return to diplomacy</i>	108

4 The Search for a Settlement	111
<i>The PLO after the 1973 war</i>	111
<i>The PLO and the Lebanese civil war</i>	114
<i>Carter and the return to diplomacy</i>	116
<i>Menahem Begin's electoral triumph</i>	118
<i>Sadat's visit to Jerusalem</i>	120
<i>The Camp David summit</i>	124
<i>Reagan's Middle East policy</i>	127
<i>Israel's Lebanon war</i>	129
<i>America intervenes: the multinational force</i>	131
<i>The Reagan Peace plan</i>	132
<i>The Sabra and Shatila massacres</i>	133
<i>America's Lebanese débâcle</i>	135
<i>The Intifada</i>	136
<i>Moves towards a settlement</i>	139
<i>The Gulf war</i>	140
<i>The Bush-Baker initiative</i>	141
<i>The Breakthrough</i>	143
Conclusion	151
<i>Bibliography</i>	157
<i>Index</i>	161

SERIES EDITORS' PREFACE

There are those, politicians among them, who feel that historians should not teach or write about contemporary events and people – many of whom are still living – because of the difficulty of treating such matters with historical perspective, that it is right to draw some distinction between the study of history and the study of current affairs. Proponents of this view seem to be unaware of the concept of contemporary history to which this series is devoted, that the history of the recent past can and should be written with a degree of objectivity. As memories of the Second World War recede, it is surely time to place in perspective the postwar history that has shaped all our lives, whether we were born in the 1940s or the 1970s.

Many countries – Britain, the United States and Germany among them – allow access to their public records under a thirty-year rule, opening up much of the postwar period to archival research. For more recent events, diaries, memoirs, and the investigations of newspapers and television, confirm the view of the famous historian Sir Lewis Namier that all secrets are in print provided you know where to look for them. Contemporary historians also have the opportunity, denied to historians of earlier periods, of interviewing participants in the events

they are analysing. The problem facing the contemporary historian is, if anything, the embarrassment of riches.

In any case, the nature and extent of world changes since the late 1980s have clearly signalled the need for concise discussion of major themes in post-1945 history. For many of us the difficult thing to grasp is how dramatically the world has changed over recent years: the collapse of the Soviet Union and Russian communism; the end of Soviet hegemony over eastern Europe; the unification of Germany; the end of the Cold War; America's sense of a 'new world order'; the pace of integration in the European Community; the disintegration of Yugoslavia; the Middle East peace settlement; the continuing economic strength of Japan. Writing in a structured and cogent way about these seismic changes is what makes contemporary history so challenging, and we hope that the end result will convey some of this excitement and interest to our readers.

The general objective of this series, written entirely by members of the School of History, Philosophy and Politics of the University of Ulster, is to offer concise and up-to-date treatments of postwar themes considered of historical and political significance, and to stimulate critical thought about the theoretical assumptions and conceptual apparatus underlying interpretation of the topics under discussion. The series should bring some of the central themes and problems confronting students and teachers of recent history, politics and international affairs into sharper focus than the textbook writer alone could provide. The blend required to write contemporary history that is both readable and easily understood but also accurate and scholarly is not easy to achieve, but we hope that this series will prove worthwhile for both students and teachers interested in world affairs since 1945.

University of Ulster

T. G. Fraser
John Springhall

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office for permission to quote Crown Copyright material.

I am grateful to Keith Kyle and Paul Lalor for commenting on parts of my manuscript. Responsibility for interpretation is my own.

GLOSSARY

- Aliyah** term for immigration (technically 'ascent') of Jews into the Land of Israel
- A'yan** Arab 'notables' of Palestine, e.g. the Husseinis
- Diaspora** term for the 'Dispersion' of the Jews
- Fatah** 'Movement for the Liberation of Palestine', principal Palestinian group, founded by Yasser Arafat
- Gush Emunim** 'Block of the Faithful', a movement in the 1970s and 1980s to settle Jews in the Occupied Territories
- Haganah** 'Defence', the official defence force of the Jewish Agency which formed the basis of the Israeli army
- Hibbat Zion** 'The Love of Zion', movement to settle Russian Jews in Palestine in the 1880s
- Intifada** 'Uprising', used for the revolt in the Occupied Territories which began in 1987
- Irgun Zvai Leumi** 'National Military Organisation', right-wing underground army led by Menahem Begin
- Knesset** name for the Israeli parliament or assembly
- Leh'i** 'Fighters for the Freedom of Israel', right-wing underground group sometimes known as the Stern Gang after its founder Avraham Stern
- Likud** 'Union', right-wing political coalition led by Menahem Begin

Glossary

Mesha'a system of landholding in Palestine

Yishuv term for the Jewish community in Palestine before 1948

Israel and its Arab Neighbours