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Politics of the Middle East

Research Paper Proposal

For my research proposal, I plan on studying Israel’s prospect for a one-state solution in regards to the Palestinian conflict. Prior to the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, Israel and the Palestinian territories were under British colonial rule. The West Bank and Gaza were then occupied by Jordan and Egypt, respectively until the 1967 war. Some proponents of the one-state solution say that Jordan is essentially a Palestinian state (where a significant part of the population is Palestinian, including their Queen). Opponents of the one-state solution say that it will lead to apartheid, such as what happened in South Africa. As Israel prepares for elections where a right-wing government is expected to continue, and the current United States administration shows full-pledged support for Israel - the current status quo is expected to remain the same, with a de-facto one state solution.

Right-wing Israelis pursue a theory of a “Greater Israel” and a Knesset committee exists to establish greater rule over the West Bank. Officially, the West Bank region is known as “Judea and Samaria” by the Israeli government - particularly right-wing Israelis and settlers. However, other Israeli right-wing politicians such as Avigdor Lieberman fear a demographic threat if a one-state solution comes to fruition. The Palestinian Arab birth rate is generally higher than Jewish Israelis, and would make Jewish Israelis a minority in the Jewish state. My research paper will look into why the two-state solution has failed and why a one-state solution is the most realistic for Israel.

Israel is one of two countries, besides Tunisia considered “free” by Freedom House in the Middle East and North Africa. Meanwhile the Palestinians have not held any election since 2006 and both sides (Hamas, Fatah) continue remain distrustful of each other. The Palestinian Authority (led by Fatah) is highly unpopular, but Hamas in the West Bank is seen as a terrorist organization. Israel also still retains overall control over electricity, what supplies get in and security.

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