244 MIDTERM PROMPT: Both World War One and World War Two had a dramatic effect on the contest between Zionism and the Arabs of Palestine. Compare the impact of these two wars. In what ways did those conflicts transform the prospects of each side? What similarities and differences do you find between the effects of the two world wars?

Until World War One, the Middle East — and the Arab world — was unified under the Ottoman Empire. The rule of the Ottomans spanned across centuries and local conflict, and regional and religious differences. Thus, World War One and the subsequent collapse of the Ottoman Empire opened up the Middle East. Conversely, World War Two, and its resulting British withdrawal from Palestine served to concentrate the conflict.

As the Ottoman Empire collapsed, it left a suffocating vacuum of power with two significant results. Firstly, it endowed the many regional sects within former Ottoman territory a glimpse of independence, and, secondly, this same regional independence paved the way for the British and French Mandates. The confluence of great European powers descending upon the Middle East set the stage for everlasting tension.

As it pertains to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the British, who were vocal supporters of Zionism at the initiation of their Mandate, effectively encouraged Arab dissent and ignited Arab nationalism. However, since power in the Middle East was, in effect, determined by locality, Arabic leaders largely failed at a cohesive response and practiced, as Professor Lieberman said, "rhetorical maximalism and practical minimalism." So, as the newly formed Arab Higher Committee fought internally and mingled with Adolf Hitler, Zionist leaders implemented an informal, Westernized system of governance and trade.

These more efficient means of organization proved essential as anti-Semitism, and more specifically, the Holocaust forced an incredible influx of Jewish immigration into Palestine. Along with dramatically increasing the domestic population, the mass persecution of Ashkenazim played an undeniable role in global sympathy for Zionism, too. The new population, coupled with unprecedented support for an independent Jewish state, emboldened Zionist leaders, unified international Jewry, and, for all Jews, sparked a sense of urgency.

On the other side of the conflict, World War Two proved to be the catalyst for British withdrawal. The war left Britain no longer playing puppeteer in the Middle East as a result of reliance upon Arab oil and American economic relief. Therefore, in 1948, they officially ended their Mandate in Palestine.

However, the impact of British involvement, and the two world wars it existed through, far superseded that of its actual presence. During its time overseeing Palestine, Britain served as a capacitor for the Arab-Israeli conflict; it often prevented direct aggression between the groups. So, merely days after the British left, the Arab states, still in their infancy, declared war upon Israel and swore to its destruction.

All told the Zionist movement, of course, suffered greatly with the rise of Nazism and the murder of 6 million Jews. However, in a broader sense, both World War One and World War Two benefited the Israeli people. As trench warfare ravaged European landscapes, the British oversight of Palestine shielded Zionist settlers from direct conflict with a majority Arab population and provided them with Westernized institutions. And although World War Two saw the removal of a British buffer and the Holocaust, the Zionist cause saw a spike in Jewish immigration and global sympathy for a Jewish state.

244 FINAL PROMPT: The first intifada brought the peace process to life. The second intifada killed that same process." Is this an accurate analysis? If so, why should the two events have had such disparate results? If this statement is not accurate, what is wrong with it?

In the time between the Independence War of 1948, the Six-Day War of 1967, the Oslo Accords of 1993, and its eventual collapse, the identities of both Palestinians and Israelis matured. But throughout this timeline, the first and second intifadas played a unique role, too. The drudging instances of public discontent had a pronounced impact not just in the development of each nation independently, but also in the relationship between the two. So, an analysis where the first intifada gave energy to a peace process and the second intifada pulled the plug is accurate, but not wholly considerate of the many other factors which came into play.

Beginning in the late 1980s, the first intifada was sparked by a car crash, but quickly became an outlet of frustration far greater than that of road rage. This outpouring of emotion from Palestinians alongside the IDF's often lethal response did two things, in specific, to foster the prospect of peace. First, as the intifada dragged on until the early 1990s, it placed the Palestinian struggle on center stage, internationally. In doing so, it also publicly demonstrated that the IDF was not so much the force it had been immediately after the Six-Day War. In other words, the first intifada slowed Israeli momentum while accelerating Palestinian sympathy; it brought the two sides closer together. The second, and more emotional, way in which the violence led to peace was how it released the raw frustration of both Palestinians and Israelis. Through rock-throwing and Molotov cocktails, the Palestinians conveyed their pain, their frustration, to the Israelis, who, in return, recognized that such a relationship was simply unsustainable.

However, in spite of the first intifada being an easily identified marker of a step towards the Oslo Accords, it is not the only one. There were two other factors — one national and the other, international — which complete the picture of peace. Within both states, the more cooperative, peace-seeking party held power; in Israel, Labor took the helm, and, in the West Bank, the PLO maintained control. If having these respective groups in power was the gun, the fall of the Soviet Union was the silver bullet. Prior to its collapse, Soviet Russia exercised its influence through supporting Arab states, including the Palestinian Authority. Once it dissolved, however, its

military and financial support dried up for the Palestinians and left America as the sole world leader.

Unlike the first intifada, which generally brought the two states closer, the second provoked parallel political reactions. As the first set the table for peace, the second, yanked out the tablecloth less than a decade later; it entirely poisoned the dynamic between Israel and Palestine and set off a tireless cycle of disillusionment and extremism. In Israel, such a cause-and-effect scenario took root in the Likud party who doubled down on security and settlements. Meanwhile, in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, Hamas ideology became even more widely supported. Together, these similar movements towards a more conservative, hardline approach served only to accelerate a departure from peace and toward everlasting tension.

All told, the first and second intifadas devolved similarly — they were both sparked by a small incident, spiraled out of control, and then required outside influence to end them — but the outbursts themselves were products of drastically different factors and, as a result, concluded in different ways, too. To begin, the first intifada was born as Israeli and Palestinian leverage balanced each other out, and it concluded with hopes of peace at an all-time high. Conversely, the second intifada broke out as the most promising effort for peace collapsed, and it ended as unilateral moves by the Israeli government and the PA were on the rise.