



50 YEARS OF US POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

	◀ 1947-48 UN votes to partition Palestine into two states – one for Jews, one for Palestinian Arabs. Arab states invade; 300,000 Palestinians flee Jewish-controlled areas. Jewish forces prevail, declaring Israeli independence. US recognizes Israel.	1960 Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela form Organization of Petroleum Exporting Nations (OPEC).	1967 Six-Day War. Israel launches preemptive strike against Arab neighbors, capturing Jerusalem, the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights. Kuwait and Iraq cut oil supplies to US. UN adopts Resolution 242, calling on Israel to withdraw from captured territory. Israel refuses.
	1953 CIA helps Iran's military stage a coup, deposing elected PM Mohammad Mossadeq, whom US sees as communist threat. US oversees installation of Shah Mohammad Reza Pavlavi as ruler of Iran.	1956 Israel attacks Egypt for control of Suez Canal. Britain and France veto US-sponsored UN resolution calling for halt to military action. British forces attack Egypt.	

1968 First major hijacking by Arab militants occurs on El Al flight from Rome to Tel Aviv, marking decades of hostage-takings, hijackings, and assassinations as a strategy by Arab militant groups.	1973 Egypt and Syria attack Israel over its occupation of the Golan Heights and the Sinai Peninsula. US gives \$2.2 billion in emergency aid to Israel, turning tide of battle to Israel's favor. Arab states cut US oil shipments.		◀ 1978 Egypt and Israel sign US-brokered Camp David peace treaty. Eighteen Arab countries impose an economic boycott on Egypt. Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin receive Nobel Peace Prize.
1969 Muammar Qaddafi comes to power in Libyan coup and orders US Air Force to evacuate Tripoli.	1972 Eight Arab commandos of Palestinian group Black September kill 11 Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympic Games.		1974 UN General Assembly recognizes right of Palestinians to independence.

	◀ 1979 Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini leads grass-roots Islamic revolution in Iran, deriding the US as "the great Satan." Iranian students storm US Embassy in Tehran, taking 66 Americans hostage for next 15 months. US imposes sanctions. Protesters attack US Embassies in Libya and Pakistan.		◀ 1982 Israel invades Lebanon to expel the Palestine Liberation Organization, facilitate election of friendly government, and form 25-mile security zone along Israel's border. Defense Minister Ariel Sharon permits Lebanese Christian militiamen to enter the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps outside Beirut. The ensuing three-day massacre kills 600 or more civilian refugees. US and other nations deploy peacekeeping troops in Lebanon.
	1981 Israel bombs Iraqi nuclear reactor. Muslim militants opposed to Egypt's peace treaty with Israel assassinate Egyptian President Sadat.		1983 A truck bomb explodes in US Marines' barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, killing 241 soldiers. US forces withdraw.

1986 US bombs Libya in retaliation for the bombing of a Berlin nightclub frequented by US servicemen. The airstrike kills 15 people, including the infant daughter of leader Muammar Qaddafi. All Arab nations condemn the attack.	1987 Start of the Palestinian intifada, or uprising, in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.		1993 World Trade Center in New York is bombed, killing six. US Special Forces, deployed as peacekeepers in Somalia, attempt to capture warlord Mohamed Farah Aidid. Eighteen US servicemen are killed. Israeli PM Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat sign historic peace declaration in White House ceremony with President Clinton. ▶
1990 Iraq invades Kuwait. Saddam Hussein links pullout to Israel's withdrawal from occupied territories. UN imposes sanctions that continue to hobble Iraq's economy in effort to force Iraqi compliance with weapons resolutions.	1991 US and coalition launch attacks against Iraq from Saudi Arabia. Gulf War ends after some three months, but US deployment continues even now, with 17,000 to 24,000 US troops in region at any time. ▶		

	1994 Jordan and Israel sign peace treaty. Yasser Arafat, Yitzhak Rabin, and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres receive Nobel Peace Prize for 1993 agreement.		◀ 1996 A truck bomb explodes outside a US military barracks in Khobar, Saudi Arabia, killing 19 US airmen. UN reports that sanctions cause 4,500 Iraqi children under 5 to die each month.	1997 Egyptian Islamic Group massacres 62 people, mostly foreign tourists, in Luxor, Egypt. The group claims it is retaliation for US imprisonment of Sheikh Omar Abdel al-Rahman, who is later convicted in 1993 World Trade Center bombing.
	1995 US announces trade ban against Iran, reinforcing sanctions in effect since 1979. Rabin is assassinated, two years after peace deal with Palestinians. In Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, a car bomb explodes outside an office housing US military personnel. Seven are killed, including five Americans. Three Islamist groups claim responsibility.			

1998 Bombs explode outside US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, killing 224 people. US launches cruise-missile attacks on sites in Sudan and Afghanistan allegedly linked to Osama bin Laden. US indicts bin Laden for committing acts of terrorism against Americans abroad. ▶		1999 Islamic militants, traced to bin Laden, are arrested for plot to bomb tourist sites during millennium celebrations.		2001 Hijackers crash two planes into World Trade Center in New York, one into Pentagon, and one in Pennsylvania. More than 7,000 people are dead or missing.
2000 Camp David negotiations fail. Sharon visits Temple Mount in Jerusalem, sparking current Palestinian uprising. USS Cole bombing in Yemen's Aden harbor kills 17 American sailors. Bin Laden denies responsibility, but applauds the act. ▶				

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SOURCES: "THE MIDDLE EAST" (CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERS), NEWS REPORTS, PHOTOS BY AP AND REUTERS.