

Quest for Peace: United States-Israel Relations and the Arab-Israeli Conflict



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should fulfill the current need for monographs which discuss the events of this particular era in Lebanese history.

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W. DAVID WRIGLEY

BERNARD REICH, *Quest for Peace: United States–Israel Relations and The Arab–Israeli Conflict*, The Shiloah Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University, The Monograph Series (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1977). Pp. 495.

There is no shortage of publications on the special relationship between the United States and Israel or about the quest for peace in the Middle East. What distinguishes Bernard Reich's study is the clear and sharp focus on United States–Israeli interactions in the context of the Arab–Israeli conflict, the enormous wealth of material and variety of Hebrew and English sources on which it is based and the exemplary manner in which this material has been used. The result of his extensive and careful research is a thorough, comprehensive, and accurate diplomatic history which is likely to remain a standard work in the field for many years to come.

Standard works, however, rarely make exciting reading and this book is no exception. It provides no startling revelations and very little in the way of fresh insight or imaginative interpretations. The author rarely strays from the narrow path of historical reconstruction to discuss the broader issues inherent in his subject matter. Does support of Israel serve America's national interest? Did the successful management of the Jordanian crisis of September 1970 pave the way to the close strategic alliance which developed subsequently between the United States and Israel? Was the aim of this alliance to promote a peaceful settlement or was it to perpetuate the status quo in the Middle East – an intolerable status quo which compelled the Arabs to launch the October War? Was Kissinger Israel's subtle friend or sinister foe? Was his step-by-step approach intended to lead ultimately to a comprehensive settlement or was it aimed at buying time and reducing pressures on the United States and Israel? On these and many similar questions, Reich is curiously reluctant to voice his opinions. Implicitly he shares the conventional assumptions about the defensive and reactive character of American foreign policy. But he does not argue a case and he shuns controversy. His preference is to allow the policy-makers to argue their own case through multiple citations. For those interested in exploring further contentious issues, he thoughtfully provides detailed footnotes (which take up almost as much space as the text) with references to relevant primary sources as well as commentary from conflicting perspectives. Not until the last chapter does he himself venture beyond the description of policies, events and peace initiatives to give an illuminating and analytical overview of the underlying factors which shaped the special relationship during the crucial decade which followed the Six Day War.

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MICHAEL C. HUDSON, *Arab Politics: The Search for Legitimacy* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1977). Pp. xiv + 434.

The question of legitimacy in the politics of the modern Arab states is of vital importance to the study of political development in the Middle East. In this region the problem of what constitutes legitimate rule is not a new one. In the past it plunged the world of Islam into interminable wars and continuous schism. Since the constitution of the former Arab