

## Conflict: Middle East Political Simulator

### THE REAL WORLD

Since World War II, we have been told that no major wars have occurred. In reality, there have been many small scale confrontations all over the world which have not developed into larger wars mainly because of Superpower pressure and fear of nuclear holocaust. But, the Superpowers are in decline. Japanese economic strength increases the U.S. deficit. New Soviet leaders are concentrating more on internal problems than foreign affairs. The days of purely military campaigns have gone. All modern battles have definite political objectives.

### THE WORLD OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Today, the Middle East is as unstable and dangerous as any time since the Crusades. The Superpowers encourage their fighting cocks and try out their state-of-the-art military gadgets. It is the potential cradle for World War III.

The main regional power is Saudi-Arabia, a country too rich to be used as a pawn by the Superpowers. Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Iraq play central roles in the constant power struggles. Jordan has adopted sly leadership to keep it secure. Libya and Iran lie on the western and eastern edges of the area: both have been sharp thorns in the side of the U.S. government.

In the middle of all this mayhem lies one of the smallest and most controversial countries on Earth — Israel. Born in 1948 this nation state started life fighting. Conflicts with the surrounding states led to war in 1956, 1957 and 1973.

Despite problems with Palestinian people and ridiculously high inflation, Israel has emerged as the strongest power — due, in part, to U.S. assistance.

### THE WORLD OF CONFLICT

The year is 1997. After twenty years of relative peace in the Middle East, tensions are starting to mount as the ever present fears of re-armament and nuclear testings are confirmed. The situation is brought to a head with the assassination of the Israeli Prime Minister on December 29, 1996. That same day you are sworn into office as leader of Israel.

As the New Year begins, you set out to achieve your aim: to force the collapse of neighboring states while keeping Israel alive and monitoring the conflict between Iran and Iraq. Direct military defeat, political destabilization or general pressure can all lead to the collapse of your neighbors. But remember, World opinion has to remain favorable and Superpowers persuaded to help your cause. All the while the internal health of the Israeli state has to be maintained as your opponents seek your downfall.

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## WADING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Load DOS
2. At the A > prompt, insert the CONFLICT program disk, then type CONFLICT and press RETURN.
3. When the graphics mode selection menu appears indicate (type the number of your choice) which graphics mode your computer uses.

For example: 1. CGA

2. EGA

3. TANDY 1000

4. Insert the second disk when instructed.

## HARD DISK INSTALLATION

At the C > prompt type:

MD CONFLICT <RETURN>

Copy A:" C: \CONFLICT <RETURN>

Repeat for each disk.

Loading from the hard disk:

1. At the C > prompt, change directories, then type CONFLICT and press RETURN.

Example: CD CONFLICT <RETURN>  
CONFLICT <RETURN>

2. See LOADING INSTRUCTIONS steps 3 & 4

CONFLICT can be played on any IBM compatible PC with CGA/EGA 256K screen under DOS. If you have a mouse, load the driver before starting.

If your PC is slow enough, you will have time to read the loading screen. When the main title screen is ready, just press RETURN.

## CONTROLS

UP/DOWN Choose menu option

### CURSOR KEYS

RETURN Complete menu option selection

SHIFTS Save the current game at newspaper screen

SHIFT-B Call up a report gathered from official sources summarizing diplomatic and intelligence positions

SHIFT-E Quit the current game

HOME Takes you to the top of the menu

END Takes you to the bottom of the menu

CONFLICT is entirely menu-driven. Use the Up/Down cursor keys to choose a menu option and press RETURN to select. HOME moves you to the top of the menu and END moves you to the bottom of the menu.

If you loaded a mouse driver before CONFLICT use the left mouse button to make menu selections.

At any stage. SHIFT-E quits the current game. Game positions may also be saved and loaded from the title screen menu.

## FLAYING THE GAME

*Good Morning, Prime Minister — Here Are The Papers*

Each game turn covers the period of one month, and a turn involves you in making decisions on diplomatic, intelligence, security and military matters.

At the start of each turn, you have the opportunity to review the news, as reported in the world's press. Distortion, fabrication and propaganda all creep into the columns of newspapers, but they provide a sound indication of how the rest of the world views your exploits. Use the news to gauge world opinion on the events that took place since the end of the previous turn, but don't rely too heavily on the press for accurate information you have Mossad, a massive intelligence organization at your disposal.

At this stage, it is possible to save the current game position by pressing SHIFT-S.

*Diplomacy And Intelligence*

Down to serious business—find out what is really going on around you. By selecting a country, you can call up a brief summary of official news, collated from official sources rather than from the press. Pressing SHIFT-B

allows you to call up a report which summarises diplomatic and intelligence positions — check out each neighbouring state

Then, on a more general level, your Foreign Office can offer a measure of current conditions in the form of Prestige and Tension indicators. Israel's prestige is likely to rise as you assert more military or political strength, which will make you more popular with your people and raise your country's profile in the world. Tension rises as tanks roll and insults fly — rising tension may or may not be to your advantage, but it is wise to remember that the probability of nuclear holocaust increases as tension builds.

The United Nations Security Council may step in and call a July summit if tension gets too high — and a variety of proposals may be made including ending current wars and setting up a Palestinian homeland.

*The Diplomatic Approach*

Once you have appraised yourself of the picture it's time to start making decisions. Diplomatic relations with neighbouring states influence the options that become available to you later in the game. Bear in mind that it will prove impossible to invade a country if you have built up excellent diplomatic relations with its leaders — your generals would refuse to mobilise forces against a very friendly country, your Foreign Office staff would rebel and World opinion would line up against Israel. But diplomatic rela-

lions need to be constantly worked on and improved if your aim is to make even the most limited pact with a country.

By choosing to reduce diplomatic relations with a country, you risk starting a conflict — which may all be part of your strategy. On the other hand, by fostering relations it might be possible to sign a military agreement. But by signing an agreement with one of your neighbours, you might be contributing to another country's war effort.

Diplomacy is a tangled web at the best of times and in the best of conditions, but as you might expect, relations between Arab countries and Israel are always tentative.

### *Covert Operations*

Intelligence, both military and political, is vital to the successful running of any nation state. Israel has built up one of the most successful intelligence services in the world — Mossad — and as Prime Minister you would be well advised to make good use of it.

During peace time, Middle Eastern countries are continually embroiled in covert activities aimed at destabilising their neighbours. This normally involves giving financial support to insurgent functions which war against an opposing government. Reports from the Psychological Warfare Unit indicate the internal stability of your neighbours, and you must decide whether to support the government or hasten its demise. Israeli funds can be diverted to insurgent groups working inside other coun-

tries, or you can choose to protect another government by attempting to disrupt the activities of insurgents. As the game develops, more powerful covert strategies will come within your reach — it may be possible to assassinate the leader of another country, or start a coup.

In the final analysis, it is not important what causes a government to collapse. Your aim is to achieve domination by fair means or foul, and once a government has collapsed, it cannot recover again within the timespan of the game.

### *Policy Decisions*

After dealing with diplomatic and intelligence matters, it's time to develop your long and short-term strategies. With an eye on your defense budget, you need to maintain the security of Israel's borders while building and deploying your military forces.

### *Buying Arms*

Weaponry is available from four sources: America, France, Britain and a private arms dealer. Dealing with your suppliers involves a special kind of diplomacy — they will only offer wide range of choice if they are sure you have the resources to pay and if you can convince them that you intend to keep buying from them. Forward planning is also needed, as equipment is usually shipped at the start of the following turn, although weapons sourced from the private dealer can take two months to arrive.

Consistency and lots of money is the key to achieving good relations with an arms dealer, but bear in mind that each trader has different motives. America, for instance, is unlikely to sell you high-tech equipment later in the game if you started off buying arms from the independent arms dealer, or if your international prestige fails to rise. If you start acting too aggressively, the Senate may enforce an arms embargo and the French are likely to fall into line with such an initiative. The British are happy to sell to you, but don't have a wide range on offer. The independent dealer couldn't care less about embargos on international arms sales.

### *Reviewing and Deploying Forces*

Selecting the review option reveals the forces you have available, lists the arms you have ordered that have not yet arrived, and shows how much money you have spent on arms deals. A readout at the bottom left of the screen indicates your fortunes in war — the further it moves to the right, the better you are doing in a border war, but when it moves close to the left you are about to be overrun.

The *Israeli Defense Force* is divided into 7 brigades of 20,000 soldiers, and each brigade contains a mix of heavy and light infantry Tank brigades, tighter squadrons and S.A.M. batteries may also be deployed separately if you wish to strengthen a position. The most aggressive options only become available when diplomatic relations with other countries are very poor.

Small troop movements can be explained away with excuses, and attract less attention, but only a full-scale deployment allows all types of forces, including fighter planes, to be sent to a border. Before the fighting starts you can strike bomb specific targets — which upsets the West, but stirs matters up seriously! Once fighting starts, your generals are unwilling to release troops for another theatre of conflict. You need to make sure that a constant supply of military hardware is available for your generals to draw on to replace combat losses.

Starting a war may lead to an arms embargo, so set up links with the independent dealer or stockpile arms before going into battle.

### *Insurgency*

Just as you seek to destabilise your neighbours, so they seek to destabilise your government by funding the P.L.O., etc. If things are not going well for you, the main focus of resentment will be found in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and it is advisable to keep a brigade of soldiers there to police the region and deal with insurgents. But that leaves you with one less brigade to deploy to the borders.

### *Nuclear War*

At the start of the game, Israel does not have a nuclear capability, but continual funding of a nuclear program will eventually yield a working tactical nuclear missile

Think carefully before using The Bomb — a chain of retaliatory strikes may be set off drawing in the Super-powers and leading to global nuclear war. A nuclear capability can act as a deterrent, however, so don't dismiss it out of hand.

And remember to keep an eye on the Iran/Iraq conflict — it can easily escalate to nuclear war, which will draw in all the Middle Eastern countries and lead to the destruction of the world.

### *Finances*

At the end of every year you can increase defense spending and increase the size of the army. For economic reasons, remaining on good terms with the American government is advisable. American aid can be significant. Bear in mind, that the more aggressive Israel appears to be, the less aid you are likely to be offered. So it's wise to avoid starting wars until after the December aid has been received.

### **THE OTHER NATIONS**

To achieve your aims, you must understand a little about your opponents and their relations to each other,

#### **The Arab Republic of Egypt**

The Egyptian army is the largest in the game being about twice the size of the Israeli army. Their soldiers are competent and the government behind them is solid. It is

much too strong to destabilize Egypt's only problems come from you and Libya but Libya cannot survive an attack unaided. Little nuclear research is thought to go on the government not being keen to accelerate a nuclear arms race in the face of its own conventional superiority. Since the Camp David agreement in the '70s, Egypt's feeling about Israel have become ambivalent: it is happy to be at peace with Israel but not at the cost of long term security.

#### **Syria**

Syria are the central power of the game funded by the Soviets and the main adversary of Israel. Syria may try to take on Lebanon or Iraq in any game before coming around to attack Israel. Religious feeling can be manipulated to agitate extreme Islamic elements often excluded from government. The Syrians have had limited success in the '73 war on the Golan Heights and are most dangerous when attacking Israel with other Arabs in support

#### **Lebanon**

The weakest power in the game Lebanon and should be Israel's first target. Politically unstable, it could collapse in its own time of its own accord. Israel's history of meddling in Lebanon's affairs has left it with a splintered leadership and many different opposing factions.

#### **The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan**

Though not a large power, it has a strong government

and keeps alive by deals and staying neutral. Jordans support of other Arabs in battle is patchy. They are keen to use the PLO as a stick to keep Israel weak.

## Iraq

A possible ally against Syria but more likely to be caught up in endless combat with Iran. Iraq has a history of nuclear development and problems with the Kurdish community.

## The Islamic Republic of Iran

Since the Shah left in '79, Iran has shown the world the meaning of religious extremism. The internal fighting between "moderate" and fundamentalist elements does not assist in estimating the strength of the regime. The large armed forces with fanatic soldiers are a problem only for Iraq and without intervention, war with them can eventually start a Holocaust.

## The Libyan Arab Republic

Unstable and dangerous within, but normally demolished by Egypt at some time during the game. Always a possible ally for Israel in theory but the Libyan governments chaotic and antagonistic nature normally defeats diplomats. Apart from terrorism, the Libyans also believe that "The Sword of Islam" i.e. nuclear weapons, are a method of achieving their aims whatever they are.

## AN EXAMPLE TURN

"So I am the new leader. What now?" Read the newspapers. Then go into the news menu.

"How about picking a fight with Egypt?" Choose Egypt from the news menu then pick Diplomacy. Choose the option to create an artificial incident. That should upset them.

"Now how about an invasion?" Well, its a bit early now, but by going into the Policy menu and then into the Strategic Action menu, you can see what sort of measures you can take. Certainly troops can be deployed. Perhaps a strike bombing. Once troops are deployed and relation?. are reduced, an invasion can be planned.

"Let's deal with the Palestinians!" Choose the Palestinian Problem menu. You can see that no trouble is brewing yet. but why wait? Post a brigade there now.

"Let's nuke Libya!" This is not a diplomatically sensible option: also we don't have a working missile as such yet. But if you choose Nuclear Club from the policy menu and fund the nuclear program in a few months time you might have a working missile.

"What now?" Well, you could Purchase Arms and get a surveillance aircraft-the U.S. will sell the AWACS — which is suggested by your procurement advisors. After this choose Next Turn and wait for next months papers.

"Hey! The Syrians have publicly denounced Israel!" Well

maybe they don't like you. Just make sure you keep a few brigades free in case they try anything. Check the other news headlines. Now go into this new menu and check diplomacy and also intelligence to see the strength of the governments. Start funding Syria's internal opponents.

"The Egyptians are being aggressive towards us!" Hardly surprising, but you definitely don't want conflict against Egypt and Syria or this could be a very short game.

## WINNING

To win one game of CONFLICT means you have handled one possible scenario well. But each game of CONFLICT puts the Middle East in a different conditions some more dangerous to Israel than others A true test of skill is to win many games with a range of styles as well as high scores.

## ABOUT CONFLICT

### Game versus reality

Political events in the Middle East continue to be less affected by Superpower interests and more influenced by inter-regional conflict. America is already showing a larger degree of neutrality when it comes to dealing with Israel and the PLO and the Soviets are clearly not prepared to keep direct military interests in the area-Afghanistan is on Iran's borders

CONFLICT represents a prediction of what life in the Middle East may be like in the near future if these trends continue. Some aspects of the game, while being enjoyable, may not square up to reality. To answer some questions:

"Why can't I launch a surprise invasion while relations with a country are good?" — Because if it is fairly obvious that an invasion was being planned, relations would not be good. Conversely, good relations have to be backed up by the closure of offensive airstrips, the swapping of intelligence, etc.. Syria would hardly launch an invasion of Israel if hundreds of Syrian tourists were sunbathing in Eilat!

"Why am I using 1980s hardware in 1997?" -Author's license. But in fact, most battles are fought with old weapons because they work. In any case, the range of weaponry available is consistent.

"Why can't I bomb Iraqi nuclear reactors?" — A good question since Israel has previously done exactly this. But the problem of flying over foreign air space is becoming more marked and it is not necessarily the only option to avoid nuclear proliferation during (say) an Iraq-Iran war in CONFLICT

"What is and is not Israel?" — CONFLICT assumes Israel has departed from most of the previously occupied territories e.g. the Golan Heights.