

Politics and Government in Israel

The Maturation of a Modern State

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The Foreign Policy Setting

Foreign policy is an integral component of any country's political system. This is particularly true for Israel. There are several reasons for this, the most important being the continued state of hostility that has existed between Israel and some of its Arab neighbors and the hostile geopolitical atmosphere in which Israel has had to operate since its creation. The study of Israeli foreign policy thus encompasses a number of important dimensions, ranging from an examination of the geopolitical and strategic contexts within which foreign policy decisions are made, to the history of Israeli and Arab foreign policies, from a consideration of military strategy and tactics, to the evolving definition of what constitutes national security. In this chapter we briefly examine each of these issues with an eye toward more fully understanding both the context within which Israeli foreign policy is made and the strategic considerations that constantly preoccupy decision makers. This chapter examines the legacy of warfare experienced in this region and analyzes the strategic considerations that have contributed to Israeli foreign policy over

Gas mask training with child.

the last five decades. The issue of military security has traditionally been paramount in Israeli politics, and this chapter traces the history of Israeli military operations. In a parallel manner, this chapter also examines the political, diplomatic, economic, and cultural factors that have been significant in the Israeli foreign policy setting over the last five decades.

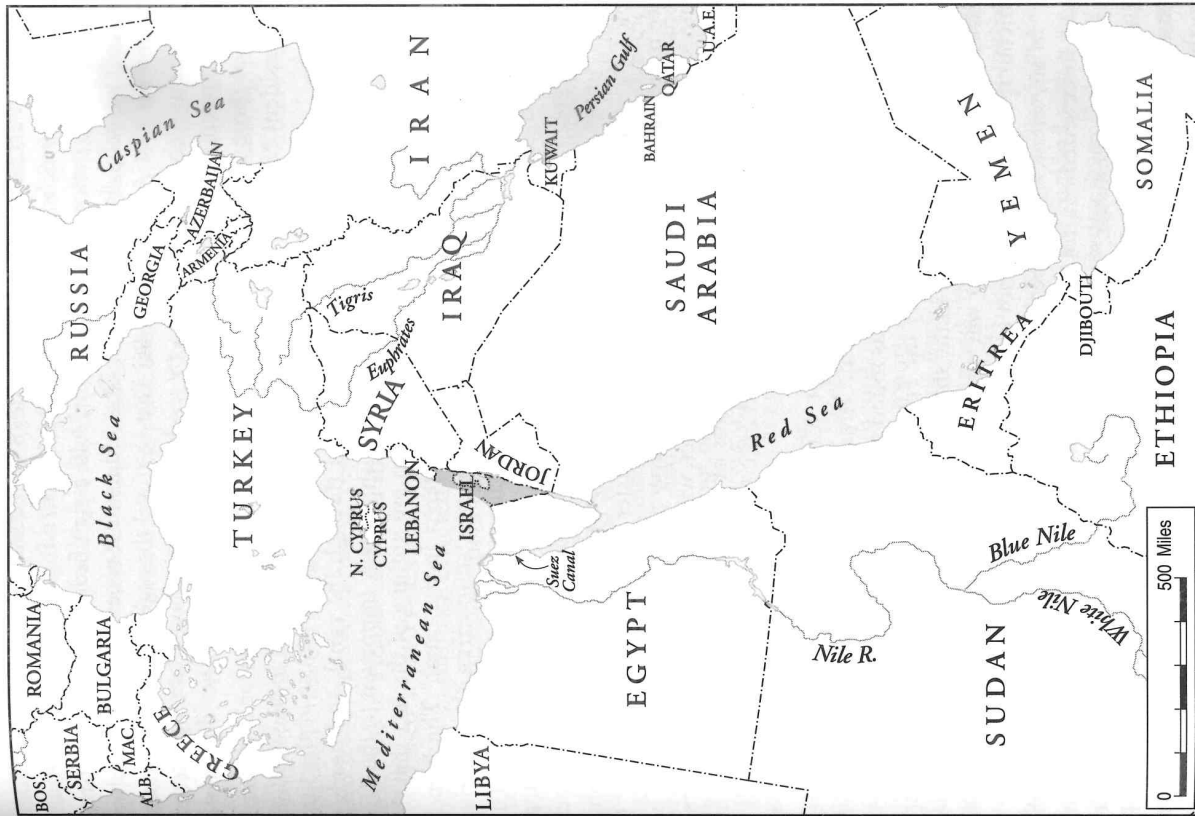
THE SETTING: THE LEGACY OF WARFARE

The foreign policy setting within which Israel has had to operate since independence has often been characterized by hostility, suspicion, and anxiety. The central focus of the more than five decades of Arab-Israeli conflict has been the refusal of many of the Arab states (with the exception of Egypt and Jordan) to accept Israel's right to exist within its borders, as indicated in map 9.1. Since the time of its Declaration of Independence, Israel has been threatened on a number of occasions by its neighbors. The purpose of these threats and the goal of those wars that have occurred have been clearly articulated as the destruction of the Israeli state. Indeed, some have referred to the principal setting within which Israel has functioned since independence as "one long war."¹

As we noted in chapter 1, the Arab nations surrounding Palestine in the late 1940s rejected all British suggestions for partition into separate Jewish and Arab states. When the United Nations Special Committee recommended its own version of a partition plan for Palestine in November 1947, it was greeted with the same response. Between then and May 14, 1948, the projected date of Israel's formal independence, there was continued preparation on the part of the Arab nations for an attack once the British completed their withdrawal from Palestine.

Not surprisingly, on May 15, 1948, the combined armies of Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon, assisted by forces from Saudi Arabia, launched their invasion of the new state of Israel. Over the next fourteen months many significant battles were fought, many sacrifices were made, and many temporary cease-fire agreements came and went.² By July 1949, armistices (not peace treaties) would be agreed to with Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan. Their stated purpose at the time was "to facilitate a transition to permanent peace." It was a goal not destined to be achieved in the short term with some of the nations; it has not yet been achieved with others.

A little more than seven years later, in October 1956, the state of war was renewed following numerous Arab violations of the 1949 armistice agreements.³ One of the major sources of tension contributing to this second



Map 9.1 Israel in the Middle East

round of warfare was Egypt's blockade of Israeli shipping through the Straits of Tiran in 1955, which was illegal under international law because the straits were an international waterway.⁴ This had a significant impact upon Israel since it virtually closed the port of Eilat and made it necessary for Israeli ships bound for East Africa and the Far East to travel through the Mediterranean and around the Horn of Africa to reach their destinations. Israel protested the Egyptian action, but was not able to resolve this crisis either diplomatically or through unilateral action.

President Nasser of Egypt subsequently nationalized the Suez Canal on July 26, 1956. This action was upsetting to the British because at the time nearly a quarter of British imports passed through the canal, and nearly a third of the ships using the canal were British. Equally important to the British was their prestige in the Middle East, to say nothing of the fact that the British government owned a controlling interest in the canal.⁵ The French were also upset with Egypt because Egypt was supporting the Algerian National Liberation Front in its battle for independence against France. The British and the French, accordingly, began to plan ways to retake the canal from Egypt. Their displeasure with Nasser now coincided with that of Israel.

In August 1956 French interior minister Bourges-Maunoury sent for Shimon Peres, then an assistant to Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, and asked, "If we make war on Egypt, would Israel be prepared to fight alongside us?"⁶ The message was conveyed to the Israeli cabinet, which discussed the matter. Ben-Gurion was worried about the reactions of other nations, particularly the United States, the Soviet Union, and influential nonaligned countries like India.⁷

On October 24, 1956, when Egypt, Jordan, and Syria announced the creation of a joint military command,⁸ Israel's decision was made much easier. In fact, historical scholarship has found that Israel's involvement in the 1956 war was heavily influenced by the French agenda and was the result of very specific issues and alliances in the short run. Overall, the question of whether Israel would have gone to war against Egypt without French and British encouragement really cannot be known.⁹

In any event, on October 29 a combined Israeli, British, and French military force seized control of the Suez Canal, along with the Gaza strip and the entire Sinai Peninsula. The United Nations, the United States, and the Soviet Union all criticized the action, with the United Nations General Assembly passing an immediate cease-fire resolution demanding an Israeli withdrawal to the 1949 armistice line. On November 6, Britain and France announced that they would comply with the United Nations resolution, and on November 8, a United Nations Emergency Force was created to help maintain peace in the area. In March 1957, following promises from Egypt that it would

cease all maritime blockades and guarantees from American president Dwight Eisenhower that the United States would help see that Egypt kept its word,¹⁰ Israel returned to Egypt all of the captured territory. Egypt's promises, as it turned out, were not kept. Neither were the promises of the United States to be the guarantor of the Egyptian commitments.

By June 1967, Israel again found itself in a precarious position.¹¹ Both Egypt and Syria had begun a massive program of military mobilization, and it became increasingly clear to Israeli intelligence analysts that the Egyptians were preparing for another attack. Egypt ordered the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces out of the Sinai, where they had been maintaining a demilitarized zone,¹² moved its own forces toward the Israeli border, and again closed the Straits of Tiran to all Israeli shipping. When Israel sought American support based upon President Eisenhower's 1957 promises, President Lyndon Johnson—at this time involved in an unpopular and increasingly unsuccessful war in Vietnam—responded that the United States was "not the policeman of the world" and that Israel would have to take care of its own problems.

And so Israel did. On June 5, 1967, the Israeli Air Force launched a preemptive strike that destroyed virtually the entire Egyptian Air Force while it was on the ground.¹³ At the outset, the Jordanians stayed out of the fighting. Israel assured Amman that it had no expansionist motives in the war and indicated that if Jordan stayed out of the fighting, Israel would take no action along its eastern border.¹⁴ However, after the overwhelming Israeli successes against Egypt and Syria on the first day of the war, President Nasser of Egypt began to exert a great deal of pressure on King Hussein of Jordan, arguing that if Israel were forced to fight a three-front war—northern with Syria, southern with Egypt, and eastern with Jordan—the Arab governments would ultimately prevail. Indeed, Nasser is reported to have (untruthfully) told Hussein that three-quarters of Israel's air force had been wiped out by the Egyptian forces at the outset of the fighting and "that Egyptian armored units were fighting deep inside Israeli territory." Hussein himself later admitted that "we were misinformed about what had happened."¹⁵ By then, of course, it was too late. Jordan did enter the war, and Israel did respond with a significant move to the east, through Jerusalem, to the Jordan River. Confounding the expectations of Nasser, at the end of six days Israel had captured the entire Sinai Desert to the south, the Golan Heights to the north, and the West Bank of the Jordan River to the east, as shown in map 9.2.¹⁶

After the war, Israel made a number of offers to return the captured territories in exchange for real peace treaties, not continued armistices. But at the August 29–September 1, 1967, Arab summit held in Khartoum, Sudan

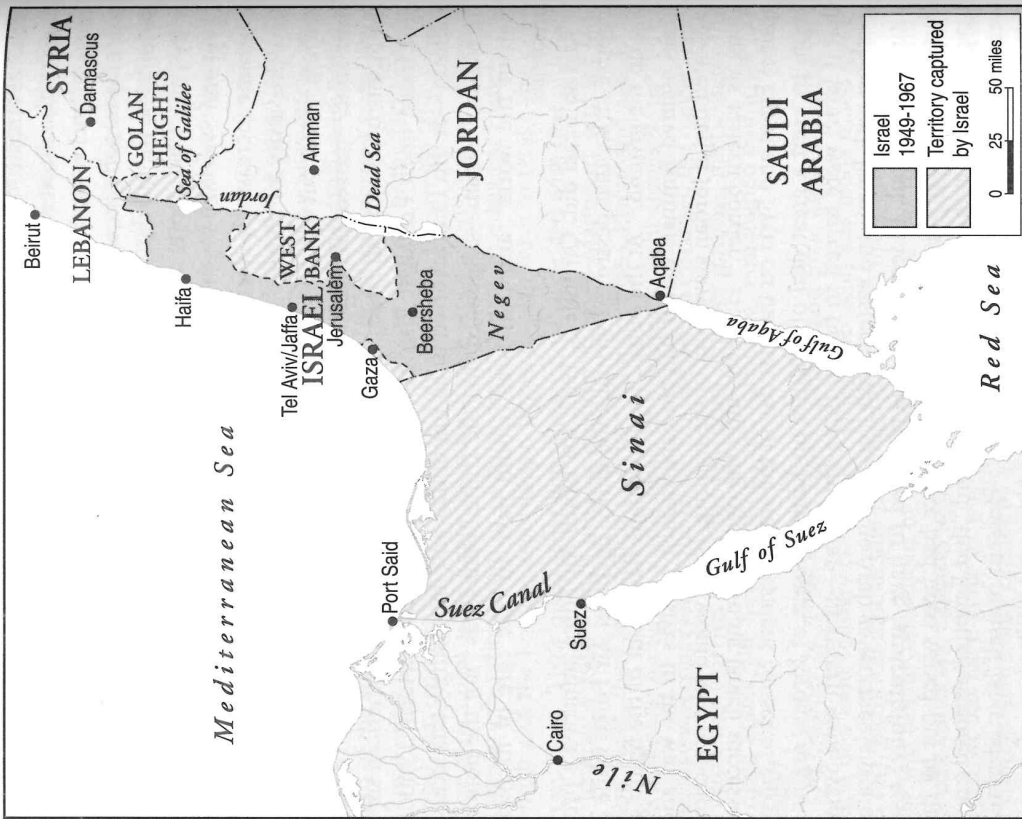
negotiated between Egypt and Israel, and a temporary peace again came to the region, although it was not to last.

Although the period between 1970 and 1973 did not see outright war in the Middle East arena, neither was it a period of peace.¹⁹ Israel was expending much effort rearming itself, improving its defenses, and maintaining its post-1967 frontiers. Egypt and Syria continued to import arms from the Soviet Union, deny Israel's right to exist, and issue various threats related to Israeli security. Tensions waxed and waned, but were never far below the surface.

In October 1973, the country was to face its most severe challenge to date.²⁰ Israeli intelligence notified the political leadership that it possessed clear evidence of an impending joint Egyptian-Syrian invasion. Meanwhile, President Anwar Sadat (who had replaced President Nasser after Nasser's death in 1970) was taking the public position that Egypt could no longer tolerate a continued Israeli presence in the Sinai. In response, some in the Israeli leadership were advocating another preemptive strike, arguing that if they were to wait for Egypt and Syria to strike first, the material and human costs to Israel would be prohibitively high. Golda Meir, Israel's prime minister at the time, contacted American president Richard Nixon regarding the impending crisis. Nixon, like Johnson in 1967, urged restraint and cautioned against another preemptive strike. Even if Israel was correct that an invasion was imminent, he argued, Israel simply could not afford to be labeled by the Arab powers as the aggressor, as had been the case in 1967. Nixon promised that if Israel would wait, it could count on American assistance, should an attack occur.

Coming from the country's principal ally and supplier, Nixon's advice carried great weight. The Israeli government's position was also influenced by the fact that Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish year, was fast approaching. The Government was loath to split up virtually every Israeli family by mobilizing the armed forces unless absolutely necessary. After extended debate the cabinet decided, finally, not to mobilize the IDF, and adjourned from its meeting on October 5.

Early on the morning of Yom Kippur, October 6, 1973, the armed forces of Egypt and Syria launched their attack on Israel.²¹ The IDF suffered extraordinarily heavy losses, but managed to hold and then repel the invading armies on both fronts.²² When Prime Minister Meir telephoned President Nixon to inform him of the invasion and request the promised American assistance, Nixon indicated that he would begin making the necessary arrangements; however, it was literally days before any American supplies reached Israel, despite repeated telephone calls from Meir to Nixon—sometimes several a day. Nixon's response was that it was necessary to follow required procedures, to inform Congress, and to wait for Congress to act,



Map 9.2 Israeli Borders Before and After the 1967 War

(about one thousand miles south of Cairo), the Arab governments announced their "three no" doctrine: "No recognition. No negotiation. No peace."¹⁷ Between the spring of 1969 and the summer of 1970, Israel had to endure the so-called War of Attrition, during which Egypt regularly fired across Suez Canal cease-fire lines.¹⁸ In August 1970, another cease-fire was

and that Israel should be patient and help would come.²³ Eventually, the promised American aid did begin to arrive, being airlifted in,²⁴ but the delay in the process once again reminded Israel of its vulnerability. A new ceasefire agreement was subsequently arranged, sponsored by the United States, after more than two weeks of fighting.

Following the 1973 war, a period of profound reassessment emerged in Israeli politics. The exuberant self-confidence that had followed the 1967 Six Day War was now severely shaken. In the first three days of the two-week 1973 war, there had been some real doubt, not hysterical, but sincere, objective, self-confidence-shattering doubt, about the conflict's likely outcome, and there were times when some actually felt that the war could be lost.²⁵ One consequence of this was that there were a number of significant political casualties. Long-time political leaders, including Prime Minister Meir and Defense Minister Moshe Dayan, resigned over strategic decisions made in relation to the nonmobilization. Israel, then, was increasingly sensitive to its vulnerability and the need to remain well armed.

The late 1970s and 1980s saw military action outside of Israeli territory involving Israeli troops in a highly controversial military action in Lebanon. One of the key events during this chapter of Israeli military action occurred in June 1982 and was called by the Israeli government Operation Peace for Galilee. The IDF entered the southern part of Lebanon to seek out and destroy Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) terrorist bases, which had long used the area to launch artillery and rocket attacks against settlements in northern Israel. This was the first military action in Israel's history in which significant portions of the Israeli population expressed vocal criticism of the Government's military policy. Indeed, many in Israel referred to this action as Israel's Vietnam. When the army finally withdrew from Lebanon in 1988, many in Israel breathed a sigh of relief,²⁶ although there was substantial debate about the wisdom of leaving Lebanon, with many arguing that an Israeli withdrawal would send the wrong lesson to forces of violence in the Arab world.

One of the most pointed statements that has come out after the forced Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon is whether this will encourage militant Palestinians. Right-wing Israelis who are opposed to the withdrawal from Lebanon expressed worry that Palestinians will want to follow the example of Hizbullah. Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic resistance movement, made a public statement expressing just that sentiment.²⁷

A chronology of Israel's involvement in Lebanon is found in box 9.1.

More recently, Israel has struggled with the *intifada*, an uprising on the West Bank that was originated not by the PLO, but by the residents of the

Box 9.1 Israeli Involvement in Lebanon, 1949–2000

March 1949 War of Independence armistice is signed between Israel and Lebanon.

December 1968 Israel Defense Force (IDF) commandos raid Beirut Airport responding to terrorist attacks.

January 1969 Katyusha rocket hits Kiryat Shmona, killing two Israelis.

March 1972 IDF destroys eleven terrorist bases, killing two hundred terrorists.

March 1978 Operation *Litani* is launched in retaliation for that month's Coastal Road massacre. Nearly three hundred terrorists and thirty-five IDF soldiers are killed.

March 17, 1978 U.N. Security Council Resolution 425 calls for Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon.

July 24, 1981 Cease-fire agreement is signed with Lebanon after U.S. mediation.

June 1982 Operation *Peace for Galilee* begins major invasion of Lebanon in response to both the attempted assassination of Israel's ambassador to the United Kingdom and the Katyusha attacks on the north of Israel.

August 1982 IDF reaches Beirut.

November 1983 A suicide terrorist bomber kills sixty in Tyre.

June 1985 The majority of the 1982 invasion force of IDF withdraws.

February 1992 A missile from an IAF helicopter gunship kills Hizbullah leader Sheikh Abbas Musawi.

July 1993 Operation *Accountability* is launched against terror groups, resulting in about sixty terrorists killed. During the operation the terrorists fire 142 Katyushas across the northern border.

April 1996 Operation *Grapes of Wrath* is launched in response to the Katyusha attacks by Hizbullah. During the campaign against the Hizbullah infrastructure, the terrorists fire 777 Katyushas at northern settlements.

September 1997 Eleven naval commandos and an army doctor are killed in an abortive raid on an Amal base.

April 1998 The Israeli cabinet decides to implement U.N. Security Council Resolution 425.

June 1999 Civilians are killed in a Katyusha barrage. The IDF responds by bombing Lebanese infrastructure.

May 2000 Hizbullah Katyusha attacks increase tension on the northern border, especially in Kiryat Shmona. The IAF responds with bombing raids on Lebanese infrastructure.

May 24, 2000 The last IDF soldier leaves Lebanon.

Source: Based upon "Chronology of Involvement in Lebanon," *Jerusalem Post* (May 25, 2000): 5.

Occupied Territories. This uprising has continued since 1987, as shown in box 9.2, and has placed a constant pressure on Israeli authorities for several reasons. First, in many important respects the authorities were unprepared for the massive demonstrations that have occurred. Soldiers and police were untrained in how to respond to crowds throwing rocks; an army trained in how to fight a modern war has had to respond to challenges of urban warfare. Today the IDF has several battalions trained for low-intensity conflict, some specializing in urban warfare.²⁸

In addition, the uprising caught the attention of the world in a far more sympathetic fashion than any of the past actions of the PLO. Scenes of women and children throwing rocks at armed Israeli troops were terribly effective in convincing many around the world—and many in Israel—that the occupation of the West Bank simply could not continue indefinitely. The significance of the Palestinian casualty rate has been an effective propaganda weapon for the Palestinians in supporting their argument that they are being oppressed in the Occupied Territories. The lead paragraph of an article in the *Jerusalem Post* read, “More than 600 Palestinians have died in the yearlong wave of violence known as al-Aqsa Intifada. Of these, 148 were under 18. In addition, 14,405 Palestinians have been seriously wounded or disabled.”²⁹ The theme of the inequity of the casualty rate is one that the Palestinians have raised on many occasions, as they have emphasized the relative youth of many of the casualties.³⁰

More recently, the *intifada* has evolved into a new phase with a much more aggressive and violent series of actions known as suicide bombings—referred to by the Israeli government as homicide bombings—which are a strategy to bring violence into Israel proper and to the Israeli civilian population. Major explosions killing large numbers of Israeli civilians in Israel’s population centers—Tel Aviv and Jerusalem—as well as frequent incidents in less populated areas, including bus stops in rural areas, have brought a degree of terror and a sense of vulnerability to the Israeli population that simply did not exist when all of the violence of the *intifada* was confined to the (Arab) cities of the West Bank and Gaza. As well as having serious effects upon the morale of the Israeli population, this has also had serious effects upon Israeli tourism and, thus, the Israeli economy.³¹

Finally, it has been difficult for many to see how to bring the uprising to an end. The leaders of the *intifada* have taken different positions in respect to the continuation of the uprising, often vowing to continue their uprising as long as Israel refuses to negotiate with the PLO, and although Israel has expressed its willingness to negotiate with moderate Palestinian leaders, it has periodically refused to have anything to do with the PLO and Yasser Arafat.

Box 9.2 Stages in Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1917–2002

November 2, 1917 The Balfour Declaration in which the government of the United Kingdom expresses support for a homeland for the Jewish people in Palestine.

July 24, 1922 The Mandate for Palestine is approved by the League of Nations giving Britain jurisdiction over Palestine.

November 29, 1947 U.N. General Assembly Resolution 181 (Partition Plan), dividing Palestine into Jewish and Arab states, with Jerusalem internationally administered. The Palestinians reject the plan.

May 14, 1948 The Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel: During the war Israel annexes territory set aside for the Arab Palestinian state, leaving only East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza Strip in Arab hands.

April 24, 1950 Jordan annexes the West Bank and East Jerusalem, blocking efforts to form a Palestinian state there.

October 29, 1956 Israeli troops invade the Sinai Peninsula as part of an Israeli, British, and French initiative after Egypt nationalizes the Suez Canal. They withdraw under pressure from the United States and the Soviet Union.

May 28–29, 1964 The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is established “to mobilize the Palestinian people to recover their usurped homes” at a meeting of the Palestine National Congress in Jerusalem.

June 5–10, 1967 Israel launches preemptive attacks on neighbors, capturing the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza, creating thousands of Palestinian refugees in what will become known as the Occupied Territories. Israel also takes Sinai and the Golan Heights.

June 27, 1967 Protection of Holy Places Law: The Minister of Religious Affairs is charged with the implementation of this Law.

September 1, 1967 The Khartoum Resolutions: Eight Arab heads of state attend an Arab summit conference. The resolutions advocate continued struggle against Israel and the creation of a fund to assist the economics of involved Arab states, among other things, and adopt the position of no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, and no negotiations with Israel.

November 22, 1967 The U.N. Security Council approves Resolution 242, calling for Arab recognition of Israel in return for Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories.

July 17, 1968 The Palestinian National Charter is passed declaring Palestine to be the homeland of the Arab Palestinian people and stating that armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine as an overall strategy, not merely a tactical phase. It calls for commando action as the nucleus of the Palestinian popular liberation war; says that the liberation of Palestine is a national duty and attempts to repel the Zionist and imperialist aggression against the Arab homeland; aims at the elimination of Zionism in Palestine; and declares the partition of Palestine in 1947 and the establishment of the state of Israel to be entirely illegal. The Balfour Declaration, the Mandate for Palestine, and principles based upon them are deemed null and void.

February 3, 1969 Yasser Arafat, leader of Palestinian guerrilla group Fatah, is elected chairman of PLO Executive Committee.

September 1970 The Jordanian army drives the PLO out of Jordan because of PLO activity there, an action known as "Black September." The PLO moves its base of operations to Lebanon.

September 5, 1972 Palestinian commandos kidnap Israeli Olympic team members in Munich, Germany. Eleven Israelis are killed in the raid.

October 6-22, 1973 Egypt and Syria attack Israeli forces in Sinai and Golan in the Yom Kippur War. The U.N. Security Council approves Resolution 338 calling for a cease-fire and "land-for-peace" Arab-Israeli negotiations.

October 22, 1973 U.N. Security Council Resolution 338 calls upon parties to end military activity, implement Resolution 242 (1967), and start negotiations aimed at establishing peace in the Middle East.

May 31, 1974 Separation of Forces Agreement between Israel and Syria: Israel and Syria will observe the cease-fire on land, sea, and air and refrain from military actions against each other.

October 28, 1974 At a meeting of the Arab League in Rabat, Morocco, twenty Arab heads of state adopt a resolution recognizing the PLO as "the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people."

March 19, 1978 U.N. Security Council Resolution 425 (Israeli Withdrawal from Lebanon), following the IDF invasion of Lebanon to attack

PLO terrorist bases south of the Litani River, calls on Israel to withdraw and establishes a United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

September 17, 1978 Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin sign the United States-brokered Camp David Accords. The PLO does not accept the pact. One part deals with the Sinai and peace between Israel and Egypt, to be concluded within three months. The second part is a framework agreement for a format for the negotiations for the establishment of an autonomous regime in the West Bank and Gaza.

March 26, 1979 Sadat and Begin sign peace treaty. Israel returns Sinai to Egypt, but keeps control of the Gaza Strip.

July 30, 1980 Basic Law: Jerusalem, Capital of Israel states that a united Jerusalem will be the capital of Israel.

December 14, 1981 The Golan Heights Law extends Israeli law to the area of the Golan Heights.

June 1982-December 1983 Israel invades Lebanon to halt guerrilla activity there, causing evacuation of PLO headquarters to Tunisia.

December 8, 1987 Rioting in the Gaza Strip leads to the beginning of the *intifada*, a prolonged Palestinian uprising against Israeli rule in the Occupied Territories.

November 15, 1988 The Palestine National Council, the PLO's legislative body, declares a Palestinian state in occupied territories. The council votes to accept U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338, thus recognizing Israel's right to exist.

December 14, 1988 Arafat states that the PLO recognizes Israel's right to exist and "renounces" terrorism.

May 14, 1989 Israel's Peace Initiative is formulated by Prime Minister Shamir and Defense Minister Rabin with four basic points: strengthening peace with Egypt, promoting peaceful relations with Arab states, improving refugee conditions, and advocating elections and interim self-rule for Palestinian Arabs.

August 1990 Arafat and PLO officials split with most Arab governments, backing Iraq after it invades Kuwait.

October 30, 1991 An invitation to the Madrid Peace Conference is extended to Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and the Palestinians. This calls for a conference having no power to impose solutions; bilateral talks with Arab states bordering Israel; and talks with Palestinians on five-

year interim self-rule, to be followed by talks on permanent status and multilateral talks on key regional issues, like refugees.

October 30–November 4, 1991 United States/Soviet-sponsored talks are held in Madrid with Palestinian participation. Direct Arab-Israeli negotiations involving Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, as well as the Palestinians, continue through mid-1993.

June 23, 1992 Israeli Labor Party leader Yitzhak Rabin, pledging a concerted effort to reach peace settlements with the Arabs, leads his party to victory over the incumbent Likud right-wing bloc in general elections.

January 19, 1993 Israel's parliament repeals the 1986 law forbidding Israelis to have contact with PLO members.

August 13, 1993 Israel accepts a PLO presence in the ongoing peace talks, announcing that it will continue to negotiate with the Palestinian delegation despite the open membership of several of those delegates in the PLO.

August 30–31, 1993 Israeli foreign minister Shimon Peres announces that a preliminary accord on Palestinian self-rule in the Occupied Territories has been reached in secret talks in Norway and Tunisia between the PLO and the Israeli government.

September 10, 1993 Arafat and Rabin exchange letters of mutual recognition. Arafat says parts of the 1964 PLO covenant denying Israel's right to exist are "no longer valid"; Rabin recognizes the PLO as the representative of Palestinians.

September 13, 1993 Peres and PLO negotiator Mahmoud Abbas sign a self-rule draft accord at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. Arafat and Rabin, meeting for the first time, seal the landmark pact with a handshake.

September 13, 1993 Israel-Palestinian Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government: Israel and the PLO (in the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the Middle East Peace Conference) agree to negotiate a peace settlement.

September 14, 1993 The Israel-Jordan Common Agenda is agreed on to negotiate toward peace, specifically addressing issues of water, refugees, borders, and other areas of bilateral cooperation.

May 4, 1994 An agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area between Israel and PLO includes a scheduled withdrawal of Israeli military, transfer of authority in specific areas to the PLO, agreement on the structure of the Palestinian Authority (PA), a description of its powers,

and an agreement on relations between Israel and the P.A., specifically covering areas of economic relations, human rights, and the rule of law.

July 25, 1994 The Washington Declaration involving Israel and Jordan: Israel and Jordan agree on basic principles and announce that they will work toward a peace treaty.

August 29, 1994 An agreement on the Preparatory Transfer of Powers and Responsibilities in the West Bank between Israel and the PLO is signed.

October 26, 1994 A treaty of peace between Israel and Jordan is signed.

September 28, 1995 An interim agreement between Israel and the Palestinians makes progress toward peace.

April 26, 1996 The Israel-Lebanon Cease-fire Understanding establishes a monitoring group for the cease-fire consisting of the United States, France, Syria, Lebanon, and Israel.

May 9, 1996 Agreement on Temporary International Presence in Hebron: as called for in the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (September 28, 1995), Israel and the P.A. establish a Temporary International Presence in the city of Hebron (TIPH) to supervise demilitarization and the transfer of authority.

January 21, 1997 Agreement on TIPH: a second phase of above agreement.

October 23, 1998 Wye River Memorandum is signed to further implement the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip (September 28, 1995) so that Israelis and Palestinians can carry out their responsibilities relating to redeployments and security.

September 4, 1999 Sharm el-Sheikh Memorandum on Timeline of Commitments of Agreements Signed and the Resumption of Permanent Status Negotiations: Israel and the PLO commit to full implementation of the interim agreement and other agreements between them since 1993 and all commitments from other agreements. The sides agree to permanent status negotiations, more redeployments, release of prisoners, safe passage for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, the establishment of a Gaza Sea Port, Hebron issues, and security.

October 5, 1999 Protocol concerning Safe Passage between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is signed.

July 25, 2000 Trilateral Statement on the Middle East Peace Summit at Camp David: President Clinton, Prime Minister Barak, and Chairman

Arafat meet at Camp David to reach an agreement on permanent status, but are not successful.

January 27, 2001 An Israeli-Palestinian Joint Statement following meeting at Taba, Sinai, concludes that it is impossible to reach an agreement on all of the issues involved and suggests more negotiations following the Israeli election.

April 30, 2001 A report of the Sharm el-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee recommends that Israel and the P.A. act decisively to halt violence in the West Bank and Israel and suggests that their objectives should be to rebuild confidence and resume negotiations.

June 14, 2001 The Tenet cease-fire proposal says that the two sides are committed to a mutual, comprehensive cease-fire, applying to all violent activities.

March 12, 2002 U.N. Resolution 1397 refers to Resolutions 242 and 338, expresses concern at violence since September 2000, stresses the importance of the safety of civilians and the need to respect humanitarian law, demands the immediate cessation of acts of violence, including acts of terror, provocation, incitement, and destruction, and calls upon Israelis and Palestinians to cooperate in the implementation of the Tenet plan.

March 28, 2002 Beirut Declaration on Saudi Peace Initiative signed.

Sources: "Middle East: Key Events in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1947-1993," *Facts on File*, online, accession number: 1993054786; story date: 19930916, accessed October 2003; and Government of Israel, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Web page, "The Peace Process" > "Reference Documents," at www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH00pq0, accessed October 2003.

The cycle of violence has been dramatic and destructive: Suicide bombings lead to Israeli occupation of refugee camps or Palestinian cities in the West Bank and the destruction of homes and infrastructure, often with Palestinian casualties. This leads to Palestinian retribution and more suicide bombing. This goes on and on. Thus, there is no light at the end of the tunnel.³²

This problem has been exacerbated by a lack of clarity of the Palestinian leadership's goals: it has not been clear that the PLO leadership has been genuinely motivated to stop the violence that has been so problematic in recent months and years. At some points the leadership has come out against violence; at others it has encouraged a continuation of it. An illustration of this inconsistency occurred in October 2000, when the *Jerusalem Post* reported

that "despite Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat's attendance at the Sharm el-Sheikh summit convened to end three weeks of violence, Arafat's mainstream Fatah faction yesterday called on Palestinians to continue the intifada until Israel withdraws its troops from all territories captured in the 1967 Six Day War."³³

As acts of terrorism in the West Bank and Israel proper have taken place in the last several years—especially suicide bombings—the Israeli government has continued to demand that the PLO leadership play an active role in stopping the violence, and the PLO leadership has not done so, or at least it has not done so enthusiastically and effectively. When the Palestinian leadership has made statements deploring the acts of violence, they have seemed half-hearted or forced to the Israeli government. The question asked by Israeli leaders has been whether this failure to end the violence is because of a lack of ability or a lack of will. If the PLO leadership cooperates with Israel, it faces pressure (and possibly violence) from the Palestinian side, and if it does not cooperate with Israel, it faces pressure and demonstrated violence from the Israeli side.³⁴

On the whole, then, the preceding discussion has sought to demonstrate that the legacy of warfare as it exists in the Middle East is significant for its duration, intensity, and policy implications. This is true in at least three important respects. First, the entire context for decision making in Israeli foreign policy has been shaped into judging virtually every situation from a national-security perspective. Israel has been forced to engage in a struggle for national survival for its entire existence. This has had the effect of graphically and periodically reminding all citizens of Israel of their vulnerability in the sense that their neighbors (with the contemporary exception of Egypt and Jordan) do not want them to be there and that many of their neighbors and other actors (such as factions of the PLO) have the ability to affect their lives through acts of warfare and terrorism.

A second legacy of the history of warfare has conditioned Israel's relations with its neighbors. Apart from Israel's relations with Egypt and Jordan, Israel's relations with Arab nations have for the most part been hostile and threatening. Israel is still technically at war with some of its neighbors and has been since 1948. Although the last full-scale Middle East war was in 1973, the IDF was mobilized from 1982 until 2000 in Lebanon, has continued to be on alert along Israel's borders, and has continued to be very active in the cause of national security in a struggle against terrorism in the West Bank and in Israel proper in recent years. While Israeli soldiers have willingly gone to war in defense of Israel for more than five decades, the *intifada* has generated a new degree of unhappiness among the Israeli military. Soldiers have increasingly said that they are willing to go to war and risk their lives to

defend the state of Israel, but they do not see serving as an army of occupation in the West Bank as a just action. This is new for Israel.³⁵

A third legacy of the history of warfare has to do with Israel's relations with the superpowers. Although Israel has reestablished official diplomatic relations with Russia, the heir of the Soviet Union, from the early 1950s through the 1980s the Soviet Union was a sponsor of the Arab camp in the Middle East conflict.³⁶ On several occasions in the last forty years, the two superpowers have been extremely active in the Middle East arena, especially during the periods of active warfare. At one point in the 1973 Yom Kippur War, Soviet premier Leonid Brezhnev called American president Richard Nixon on the "hot line" to warn that if the United States could not convince Israel to release an Egyptian division surrounded in the Sinai Desert, the Soviet Union would be forced to send its own troops in to help the Egyptians.³⁷ At that point, the warning that had been articulated for years—that the Middle East held the potential to start a war between the superpowers—seemed alarmingly prescient. President Nixon was able to convince the Israelis to release the Egyptians, the Soviets did not intervene (more actively than providing arms for the Egyptians), and the superpowers successfully avoided direct conflict.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

The definitive study of the Israeli foreign policy system is Michael Brecher's book *The Foreign Policy System of Israel*.³⁸ Brecher suggests that the foreign policy system of Israel is divided into three parts: "inputs," "process," and "outputs." The "inputs" segment is in turn made up of three components, the "operational environment," "communication," and the "psychological environment." The "process" segment deals with the formulation of strategic and tactical decisions, along with the way these decisions are implemented by various structures of government. The "outputs" segment pertains to the substance of decisions and actions by the government. Each of these parts of the overall process deserves individual comment, for each makes its separate contribution to our understanding of the entire scheme.

The "external environment" suggested by Brecher includes a general consideration of the global environment, or, as he puts it, the "total web of relationships among all actors within the international system (states, blocs, organizations)."³⁹ All of these relationships can affect the manner in which Israel acts in any given situation. Regional relationships, or what Brecher terms "subordinate systems," focus primarily upon the Middle East, for obviously this environment has a direct bearing upon foreign policy deci-

sions. Other bilateral relationships, especially those with the superpowers/great powers, such as the relations between Israel and the United States or Israel and Russia, must also be taken into consideration in the formulation of Israeli foreign policy.

The "internal environment" is composed of the domestic factors that can influence foreign policy. Among the many factors that would be included in this category are military capability, economic strength and resources, the current political environment, and the context within which decisions are made (i.e., public opinion, government coalitions, and other short-term domestic political considerations). The degree of interest-group involvement in the political system and how divided or agreed these various segments of the public are over foreign policy options is a very significant part of the study of public opinion, as is an understanding of who the competing elites are and of their respective strengths.

The views, or "inputs," of these various actors in the international and domestic environments are communicated to decision-making elites through a variety of communications outlets, including the mass media, the press, books, radio, television, and the bureaucracy. These decision-making elites, then, become what Brecher refers to as the "core decision-making group" of the foreign policy system, consisting of the head of Government, the foreign minister, and a relatively narrow range of other political actors.⁴⁰

As this "core decision-making group" tries to make foreign policy decisions, its individual members must operate within their own psychological environments. Each decision maker brings with him or her a set of attitudes about the world, other nations in the foreign policy setting, ideology, tradition, and the desirability of a variety of policy alternatives. Decision makers also bring in their psychological predispositions a set of images of the environment and their perceptions of reality in the political world. These images may be more or less realistic and flexible and can color the information that the decision makers receive from the external and internal operational environments.

After the elements making up the operational environment have been communicated to the elite and then filtered through the psychological screens of individual decision makers, the policy-making process itself helps to determine what policy is chosen and how that policy is implemented. Factored in here would be the number of individuals involved in the decision-making process, the chain of command or power relationship among these individuals, whether a given policy decision is seen as a political decision, the degree to which it must be openly debated and discussed, and a variety of other factors in the Israeli political world.⁴¹

Brecher further suggests⁴² that there are four identifiable issue areas in

Israeli foreign policy: "military-security" concerns—such as violence, warfare, or national security; "political-diplomatic" concerns—involving relations with other international actors; "economic-development" concerns—which pertain to trade, aid, or foreign investment; and "cultural-status" concerns—which focus on educational, scientific, and other related concerns. Each cluster of issues is handled differently by the overall foreign policy system from the other clusters, and consequently, the different clusters must be analyzed and studied with an awareness that each is distinct from the others.

MILITARY-SECURITY CONCERNS

A crucial aspect of Israeli foreign policy involves its military, because the status, structure, and operation of the IDF is not the same as that of armed forces in other nations. This is true for two reasons: (1) the relations between civilians and the military are different in Israel from the relations one finds in other settings,⁴³ and (2) the underlying doctrine of Israel's military establishment differs from other armies. The fact that only a small proportion of Israel's army is on active duty at any given time has strategic implications for Israeli foreign policy considerations.

The concept of defense, in the words of one analyst, "has been a central issue in [Jewish] society ever since the beginning of the Zionist Movement in Central and Eastern Europe at the turn of the century."⁴⁴ If for no other reason, the concepts of defense and the military are very significant in Israel because of the proportion of national resources defense issues consume.⁴⁵ As a percentage of the total national budget, defense spending at its peak (1973) consumed almost 50 percent of the total budget! In the 2002 budget the Defense Ministry accounted for NIS 41,911 million out of a total budget of NIS 265,652 million, or 15.77 percent of the total. The two next largest cabinet line items were NIS 29,328 million for the Ministry of Education and NIS 28,153 million for Labour and Social Affairs.⁴⁶

The military is also very visible in Israeli society.⁴⁷ It is as close to a universal social experience as exists in Israel; while women do not participate in combat, they are subject to the draft, as are men, although their military circumstances are not exactly the same. Today about 90 percent of men are drafted, while only about 60 percent of women are drafted, and men serve three years in active duty and are in the reserves until the age of fifty-one, while women serve only two years in active duty and are in the reserves only until the age of twenty-five.⁴⁸ As we noted earlier in this book, the IDF has played a key role in the socialization and assimilation of generations of Israeli

immigrants; it is the one characteristic of Israeli life that most Israelis have in common. Thus, even in a society that is dedicated to civilian control of the military, the Israeli military has a significant role in policy making.⁴⁹

One direct consequence for foreign policy is the call-up pattern of military reserves.⁵⁰ Only a small proportion of the military is on active duty at any given time. It is officially calculated that the IDF needs seventy-two hours to reach a fully mobilized status, although some estimates suggest a considerably shorter period than this. For example, one study has indicated that "currently, private estimates of the partial-mobilization time needed for Israel to deflect an attack range from four to eighteen hours. . . . Full mobilization can be undertaken within 16–48 hours, considerably less than the official figure of 72 hours."⁵¹

Whatever the time involved, when decision makers have had to decide whether to launch a preemptive attack (as was the case in 1967) or to wait to call up the reserves (as was the case in 1973), they have known that their decision will have real consequences. The IDF suffered especially high casualties in 1973 during the first seventy-two hours, until the IDF was at full strength, and postwar analysis was very clear in its criticism of Golda Meir and her Government. Among other factors, critics noted that many of these casualties could have been avoided if the IDF had been fully mobilized prior to Yom Kippur, even if the prime minister had not ordered a preemptive strike. We saw earlier why she did not order a full mobilization and why she did not launch a preemptive strike: the call-up process and the effects of mobilization were an ingredient in the equation.

Another military-security concern in foreign policy making involves the nuclear question.⁵² Although Israel has continued to insist that it does not possess nuclear weapons, many observers feel that even if it is literally true that Israel does not possess intact nuclear weapons, it possesses the ability to assemble such weapons in relatively short order. If this is true, a nuclear capability would permit the IDF to offset an enemy with much greater tactical strength. Israel has stated publicly on several occasions that she will not permit her Arab neighbors to develop a nuclear capability. This policy was demonstrated in 1979 when Iraq was developing a nuclear reactor ostensibly for the production of electricity. Israeli acted, and her bombers attacked and destroyed the facility, the justification being that such a facility could too readily be converted to military uses to produce hostile nuclear products.⁵³

Yet another military-security issue involves what the Israelis refer to as defensible borders. We noted in chapter 3 that one of the central goals of classical Zionism was a secure Jewish population in a secure Jewish state—in fact, a Jewish majority in a Jewish state. This has been translated in more modern times into a call for secure and defensible borders.⁵⁴ The quest for

stability and national security has been a continual, and as yet unrealized, goal in Israeli foreign policy. The problem, of course, is that many of Israel's neighbors today are still technically in a state of war with Israel; the armistices signed in 1949, 1956, 1967, and 1973 are not the same as peace treaties, and while Israel has signed peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan, it has not yet signed peace treaties with Lebanon, Syria, or Iraq. One of the most common descriptions of the Israeli foreign policy setting, as we have already remarked, has been that Israel has survived "one long war."⁵⁵

The quest for secure and defensible borders has been the *sine qua non* of Israeli foreign policy since 1948 and the subject of a great deal of debate and scholarship. Israel has contended that it has a right to secure boundaries⁵⁶ and that the only way to maintain secure boundaries is to make them as defensible as possible. This means, in the case of tensions with Syria (to say nothing of Egypt and Jordan, with which Israel has signed peace agreements), that geopolitical factors must be taken into consideration.

When Israel occupied the entire Sinai Peninsula following the 1967 war, it obtained a degree of security that it had not previously possessed. With military observation stations at the southwestern tip of the Sinai, Israel would have a twenty-minute warning period from the time of its first detection of hostile Egyptian aircraft taking off from Egyptian military bases near Cairo to the time those aircraft would reach the outskirts of Tel Aviv. When Israel returned the Sinai to Egypt in 1982, and its southernmost radar units were repositioned to the middle of the Sinai mountains, the advance warning time was significantly decreased: if Israel had to rely only on ground-based radar, the time would have been decreased from twenty minutes to two minutes.⁵⁷

Similarly, the occupation and eventual annexation of part of the Golan Heights was undertaken for strategic reasons.⁵⁸ Given the topography of northern Israel, a hostile Syria controlling all of the territory of the Golan Heights meant that entire cohorts of children living on the kibbutzim and other settlements in northern Israel frequently had to live in underground shelters for long periods of time because of the constant fear and periodic reality of Syrian sniping from high ground and attacks. Once this territory was captured in 1973, the quest for secure and defensible borders meant that Israel would not return high ground to a nation with which it was still at war until it could be confident that peace would prevail. It is still waiting for a peace treaty with Syria, and advanced technology will clearly be a part of that solution, too, as it was in the Sinai.⁵⁹

The search for national security motivates all nation-states in their foreign policy. It is only reasonable to expect that states that have never known real security will be even more desirous of obtaining it. Israel has learned that the only way she can have real security is through military preparedness, since so

many of her neighbors are committed to her destruction. Any long-term peace in the Middle East must therefore require that Israel's neighbors acknowledge her right to exist within mutually recognized and secure borders before the parties involved can begin to look beyond their own immediate security⁶⁰ needs to an examination of what they can all do to deescalate the tensions and perceived threats that exist in this part of the world.

POLITICAL-DIPLOMATIC CONCERNS

On a more global level, one of Israel's major concerns since independence, of course, has simply been to be accepted by the community of nations. This has not been an easy task, and Israel still has not arrived as a universally accepted member of the United Nations. Although the function of the United Nations is to play the role of a disinterested third party capable of remaining neutral in any political crisis, the United Nations is not perceived in this light in Israel.⁶¹ Israel has felt since 1967 that it cannot get a fair hearing in the United Nations General Assembly and that the combination of the Soviet Union's influence (later Russia's influence) among Eastern Bloc and Third World nations, as well as the Arab nations' influence in the Third World (through oil politics in general, as well as regional groupings such as the Organization of African Unity), has resulted in an automatic anti-Israel majority in the General Assembly and in most U.N. specialized agencies.⁶²

Under the rules of the United Nations Charter, for example, peacekeeping forces can only be stationed in an area if they are requested by all parties concerned—actors on both sides of the relevant border. Such forces, as is well known, were stationed in the Middle East between 1956 and 1967, but when in 1967 President Nasser of Egypt ordered them to leave, they had no choice but to comply.⁶³ This, according to Israel, is one of the weaknesses of the United Nations: it has no real power of its own. In situations in which the opportunity has presented itself, Israel has accordingly favored using other multinational peacekeeping forces rather than U.N. forces to guarantee disengagement agreements.

In Israel's view the United Nations cannot be objective in its dealings with the Israeli-Arab conflict because of the U.N. recognition of the PLO and its granting the PLO Observer Status; therefore, the United Nations has lost virtually all of its potential to act as a credible mediator between Israel and the Palestinians or other Arab powers. Instead, Israel has appeared to favor using other parties, primarily the United States, to help it negotiate with its Arab neighbors.

Outside the confines of the United Nations, Israel has had inconsistent

relations with European nations.⁶⁴ For a time France was a strong supporter of Israel, and it was during the period of Franco-Israeli harmony that Israel is said to have acquired its nuclear capability.⁶⁵ In more recent times, as the French have taken a decidedly pro-Palestinian and pro-Arab stand, relations between Israel and France have suffered accordingly. Britain has never had a particularly close relationship with Israel, a fact most Israeli leaders attribute to the unpleasant period leading up to Israeli independence. Israel's relations with West Germany were greatly affected early on by the issue of reparations to be paid to Israel by the West German government for the Holocaust.⁶⁶ Over time, however, German-Israeli relations have stabilized.⁶⁷

Israel's greatest foreign policy successes in the early years were with the Third World. Prior to the 1967 Six Day War, in fact, Israel had extremely good relations with most Third World nations. From Independence through the 1956 Suez War, in particular, many African and Latin American states saw Israel as a fellow small nation grappling with the same kinds of development problems they faced. Israel developed a number of very popular aid programs with states in sub-Saharan Africa,⁶⁸ Asia,⁶⁹ and Latin America and had a number of political, if not military, allies.⁷⁰ Through the mid-1970s, more than fifty-five hundred Israeli experts had been sent as scientific, educational, and agricultural advisers overseas, while over twenty thousand citizens of African, Asian, and Latin American nations had traveled to Israel for training there.⁷¹

It was the Six Day War in 1967 that significantly changed Israel's status, most prominently with African nations. Egypt especially used the Organization of African Unity to isolate Israel from allies in Africa, claiming that Israel had been the aggressor in that conflict and that the principle of pan-African solidarity required all African states to cut ties with Israel. In fact, virtually all African states did this, except for South Africa. Israel has worked at improving relations with sub-Saharan Africa since that time, but only in very recent years has significant progress been made in reestablishing links with sub-Saharan African nations.⁷²

Much of Israel's linkage with the Third World, and especially with Latin America, has involved arms transactions. This linkage often involves Israel selling Israeli-made copies of United States-designed arms systems to Third World nations, systems that the United States sold to Israel on the condition that copies could not be sold to other nations without the approval of the United States.⁷³ As Israel is a major arms supplier to the Third World, many Latin American nations have maintained their diplomatic ties with Israel and continued their diplomatic support for her as a direct *quid pro quo* for Israel's continuing to sell arms to them.

Clearly, the most important political-diplomatic concerns held by Israel

involve relations with the United States and Russia. Although the United States was the first nation to recognize Israel officially as an independent state,⁷⁴ the Soviet Union was in fact Israel's strongest supporter in the early years of the state.⁷⁵ By the time of the 1956 Suez War, however, it was clear that Moscow had opted to support the Arab powers in the Middle East, while Israel was going to establish closer relations with the West. Israel's relations with Russia⁷⁶ have improved enormously in the last two decades. Robert Freedman has suggested that the significant improvement began under Mikhail Gorbachev (1988–1991) and was continued during Boris Yeltsin's tenure. Yeltsin, seeking to improve Russia's international influence, adopted a more balanced position on the Arab-Israeli conflict and sought to promote more links with Israel than had been the case in the past.⁷⁷

Israel and the United States have had a close relationship since the creation of the state.⁷⁸ In recent years Israel's closest political and diplomatic ties have been with the United States. The subject of United States-Israeli relations is clearly far too large and significant in the context of Israeli foreign policy to be adequately handled in the space available here.⁷⁹ The United States is Israel's largest supplier of aid, both civilian and military, as well as Israel's guarantor of energy,⁸⁰ largest trading partner, and most consistent defender in a variety of problematic international diplomatic arenas.⁸¹

The role of the United States as a mediator in the Middle East in modern times—from Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy⁸² through President Jimmy Carter's Camp David experience—has been consistent and omnipresent. President Bill Clinton's intense efforts at the end of his presidential term to break the peace impasse illustrate this.⁸³ Although events in recent years have created occasional tensions in this bilateral relationship,⁸⁴ overall the two nations have been important to each other and good allies.⁸⁵ Israel has been important to the United States as a source of military intelligence in a strategically important geopolitical setting and equally important as a stable democracy in a part of the world where stable democracies are not very common.

ECONOMIC-DEVELOPMENTAL CONCERNS

The third of Brecher's four general issue areas in foreign policy involves economic and developmental concerns. Israel's economic development has not been as strong or as consistent as many had hoped it would be.⁸⁶ For this, foreign policy has played a direct as well as a frequently disruptive role.

Because Israel is forced to spend so much of its budget on military- and

defense-related activities, it has continually had a severe balance-of-payments problem.⁸⁷

Over the past half century this deficit has grown 29-fold (in current prices), from \$280 million in 1950 to \$8.02 billion in 2000. Nevertheless, the deficit is decreasing in relative terms, indicating that the problem is gradually being solved: whereas in 1950 exports financed only 14 percent of imports, in 1960 this ratio was 51 percent, and in 1990 it stood at 78 percent.⁸⁸

After the 1973 Yom Kippur War and owing to other international factors,⁸⁹ Israel's economy slowed considerably, with growth rates of 5.0 percent in 1978–1979, 3.2 percent in 1980–1981, 1.2 percent in 1982–1983, and 1.8 percent in 1983–1984.⁹⁰ This slowdown has resulted in serious domestic economic problems, with inflation at one point running at nearly a 1,000 percent annual rate.⁹¹ A decade and a half later, the growth rate was 2.1 percent in 1999 and 5.2 percent in 2000.⁹² Israel's balance-of-payments deficit, which in 1970 was \$1.28 billion, was \$3.73 billion by 1980, \$5.35 billion by 1990, \$11.09 billion by 1995, and \$8.02 billion in 2000.⁹³ The foreign loan picture has improved significantly.

Over the past 52 years, Israel has required no less than \$160 billion (in current figures) to cover all its annual trade deficits. Almost two thirds of this accumulated deficit were covered by unilateral transfers, such as funds brought in by immigrants, foreign pensions, donations from Jewish fund-raising organizations abroad to institutions of health, education and social services, and grants from foreign governments, especially from the United States. The rest was financed by loans from individuals, banks and foreign governments, which Israel has been repaying since its early years. The national external debt thus increased every year until 1985, when, for the first time, less was borrowed than was paid back. However, this positive trend reverted for a few years in the 1990s and in 1995 reached \$20.8 billion. Ever since that year, it has declined considerably, to \$7.4 billion by the end of 2000. The bulk of this debt is governmental (owed to the United States) and on very long terms.⁹⁴

Total loans to Israel outstanding at the end of the year continued to grow over time between independence and the late years of the twentieth century, but in 2000 the total external debt was significantly lower. The total foreign debt was \$356 million in 1954, \$543 million in 1960, \$2.223 billion in 1970, \$11.344 billion in 1980, \$15.122 billion in 1990, and \$7.353 billion in 2000.⁹⁵ Israel is economically tied to the Western world despite its geographic setting in the Middle East. More than half of Israel's imports come from the European Community (Common Market) and almost half of Israel's exports go there. In fact, in 1977 Israel signed an agreement with the Common Market

and received a "special association" with the Common Market, providing Israel with lower tariff barriers than most non-Common Market countries would have to face.⁹⁶

CULTURAL-STATUS CONCERNS

Educational, scientific, and cultural concerns also appear in the formulation of Israeli foreign policy. As indicated above, Israel has been concerned since 1948 with gaining acceptance and legitimacy in the world community. In many cases this desire for acceptance by other nations of the world has extended from the political realm to the cultural realm. A number of efforts to defeat Israel in the cultural realm have been made by Arab nations that have been unable to defeat Israel on the battlefield. Israel must always be prepared, in other words, to do battle in the halls of the United Nations, where attempts are regularly made to expel Israel from one or another of the United Nations' many bodies, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), or to condemn Israel for a variety of reasons.⁹⁷

THE FOREIGN POLICY SETTING: A RECAPITULATION

When studying the political context within which public policy is made, it is important, indeed crucial, not only to understand those factors in the domestic, or internal, environment, and how they might influence policy, but to understand as well those factors in the external environment. It is clear from even a cursory examination of the foreign policy process that there are a variety of factors that influence both the formulation and the execution of Israeli foreign policy decisions.

Overall, Brecher tells us that there are eight key components to Israel's foreign policy system:

1. Israel is a self-conscious Jewish state whose historical legacy and *raison d'être* link her indissolubly to Jewish communities everywhere.
2. Israel is dependent upon one or more super and great power(s) for military and economic assistance and diplomatic support.
3. The combined voting strength of the Arab, Soviet, and non-aligned groups at the UN has made a pro-Israel resolution in the General Assembly or the Security Council impossible since the early 1960s.
4. Israel is totally isolated within the Core of the Middle East system and is con-

fronted with a permanent challenge to her security; that condition, and her geographic position, have imposed a persistent quest for military aid.

5. Israel is vastly outnumbered by the Arab states, thereby creating a continuous demand for immigrants to augment her military and economic manpower.
6. Coalition government is a fixed element of Israel's political system, causing restraints on foreign policy choices.
7. "Ein breirah" [no alternative] is the lynchpin of Israel's political thought and behaviour.
8. Historical legacy and Arab enmity have created the necessity for activism and militancy in Israeli behavior.⁹⁸

The legacy of war and the resulting pattern of tension that exists are clearly the most important factors in Israeli foreign policy. There is no legacy of goodwill, trust, faith, or confidence existing between Israel and her neighbors. While it is true that Israel and Egypt have been at peace now since 1979, and Israel and Jordan have been at peace since 1994, the peace has run hot and cold over the years, and Israelis have not perceived it as sufficiently secure to feel that they no longer need to be concerned about their southern border. All of Israel's other neighbors are still technically in a state of war, and this merely intensifies Israel's concerns about the creation of an independent state for the Palestinian people, a topic to which we turn our attention in the next chapter.

Likewise, important strategic considerations must be kept in mind. Israel must be aware of the separate environments within which policy must operate, ranging from the domestic (internal) to the regional (Middle Eastern) and international (global) levels. Psychological perceptions of leaders, their attitudes, beliefs, and values, and how these perceptions can affect policy making must also be accounted for. These factors, to say nothing of the actual policy-making process itself, all make up the strategic environment in which foreign policy decisions are made.

Equally important is the military dimension of foreign policy. The size, organizational nature, and needs of the IDF must constantly be evaluated when political leaders make policy decisions that can have military consequences. The time needed to fully mobilize the Israeli armed forces, the effect of such a mobilization on the economy, and similar factors must all be considered in the development of foreign policy. The issues of national security and defensible borders form an important part of this agenda. Because Israel is small and because some of her larger and more populous neighbors are hostile, the concept of defensible borders becomes even more important than it might be in the case of the United States and Canada, for example, two nations with the longest open and unarmed border in the world, but with a history of peace and cooperation.

Israel has existed as an independent nation now for more than five decades, but has not yet known a moment's peace. One of the elements that will contribute in a very significant way to the realization of a state of peace in the near future is the role of the Palestinians and the question of the future of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the status of Jerusalem. It is to an examination of these questions that we turn our attention.

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NOTES

1. The discussion that follows is partially based upon the extended discussion in *Facts about Israel* (Jerusalem: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1985), pp. 39–40. See also Efraim Karsh, *Israel: The First Hundred Years* (Portland, Ore.: Frank Cass, 1999).

2. Some good general military histories of this period include work by S. Ilan Troen and Noah Lucas, eds., *Israel: The First Decade of Independence* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995); Jon Kimche and David Kimche, *A Clash of Destinies: The Arab-Jewish War and the Founding of the State of Israel* (New York: Praeger, 1960); Dan Kurzman, *Genesis 1948: The First Arab-Israeli War* (New York: World, 1970); Netanel Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence: 1947–1949* (Hartford: Hartford House, 1968); and Edgar O'Ballance, *The Arab-Israeli War, 1948* (New York: Praeger, 1957), among others. Historians with a different perspective would include Efraim Karsh, *Fabricating Israeli History: The "New Historians"* (Portland, Ore.: Frank Cass, 2000); Eugene Rogan and Avi Shlaim, eds., *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Ilan Pappé, *The Israel/Palestine Question* (New York: Routledge, 1999); Joseph Heller, *The Birth of Israel, 1945–1949: Ben-Gurion and His Critics* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000); Laila Parsons, *The Druze between Palestine and Israel, 1947–1949* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000); and Charles D. Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Boston: St. Martin's Press, 2001).
3. Some reference material for this event would include Moti Golani, *Israel in Search of a War: The Sinai Campaign, 1955–1956* (Portland, Ore.: Sussex Academic Press, 1998); Moshe Dayan, *Diary of the Sinai Campaign* (Jerusalem: Steimatzky's Agency, 1966); or Robert Henriques, *A Hundred Hours to Suez: An Account of Israel's Campaign in the Sinai Peninsula* (New York: Viking, 1957). A very good, more historical examination is Benny Morris's *Israel's Border Wars, 1949–1956: Arab Infiltration, Israeli Retaliation, and the Countdown to the Suez War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).
4. See, for example, B. Andrews, "Suez Canal Controversy," *Albany Law Review* 21:1 (1957): 14–33, or Simcha Dinitz, "The Legal Aspects of the Egyptian Blockade of the Suez Canal," *Georgetown Law Journal* 45:2 (1957): 166–199.
5. Howard Sachar, *A History of Israel: From the Rise of Zionism to Our Time* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981), p. 486.
6. Sachar, *History of Israel*, p. 489.
7. Sachar, *History of Israel*, p. 494.
8. Alfred Katz, *Government and Politics in Contemporary Israel, 1948–Present* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1980), p. 155.
9. See David Tal, "Israel's Road to the 1956 War," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 28 (1996): 59–81. On Israel and the Sinai, see Motti Golani, *Israel in Search*; Benny Morris, *Israel's Border Wars; Mordchai Bar-On, The Gates of Gaza: Israel's Road to Suez and Back, 1955–1957* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995).
10. Gideon Rafael, *Destination Peace: Three Decades of Israeli Foreign Policy; A Personal Memoir* (New York: Stein and Day, 1981), p. 64.
11. There is a very good, and detailed, discussion of this in Rafael, *Destination Peace*, pp. 153–190. One of the best analyses of the decision-making process involved here is to be found in Michael Brecher's *Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1975), pp. 318–453.
12. On this subject, see Indar Rikhye, *The Sinai Blunder: Withdrawal of the United Nations Emergency Force Leading to the Six Day War of June, 1967* (Totowa, N.J.: Frank Cass, 1980).
13. A fascinating discussion of the value of preemption is found in Robert Harkavy, *Pre-emption and Two Front Conventional Warfare* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Press,

- 1977). See also Richard Bordeaux Parker, *The Six-Day War: A Retrospective* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996), and S. Ilan Troen, Zakai Shalom, and Moshe Tlamim, "Ben-Gurion's Diary for the 1967 Six-Day War: Introduction and Diary Excerpts," *Israel Studies* 4:2 (1999): 195–220.
14. On this subject, see David Ben-Gurion, *Israel: A Personal History* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1971), pp. 774–786.
15. Sachar, *A History of Israel*, p. 643.
16. On the Six-Day War in general, see David Kimche, *The Sandstorm: The Arab-Israeli War of 1967* (New York: Stein and Day, 1968); Michael Brecher, *Decisions in Crisis: Israel, 1967 and 1973* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); Michael Oren, *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); and Randolph Churchill, *The Six Day War* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 2001).
17. *Facts about Israel*, p. 39.
18. On this war see Yaacov Bar-Simon-Tov, *The Israeli-Egyptian War of Attrition, 1969–1970* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980).
19. See George Gawrych, *The Albatross of Decisive Victory: War and Policy between Egypt and Israel in the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli Wars* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2000).
20. Rafael, *Destination Peace*, pp. 281–303.
21. Michael Handel, *Perception, Deception, and Surprise: The Case of the Yom Kippur War* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Press, 1975).
22. There is a significant literature on the 1973 war. Examples of the analyses that have been published would include the following: Avraham Adnan, *On the Banks of the Suez: An Israeli General's Personal Account of the Yom Kippur War* (San Rafael, Calif.: Presidio Press, 1980); Peter Allen, *The Yom Kippur War* (New York: Scribner, 1982); Riad Ashkar, "The Syrian and Egyptian Campaign," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 3:2 (1974): 15–33; Michael Brecher, *Decisions in Crisis: Israel, 1967 and 1973* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); E. Monroe, *The Arab-Israeli War, 1973* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1974); or Zeev Schiff, *October Earthquake: Yom Kippur, 1973* (Tel Aviv: University Publishing Projects, 1974).
23. Edmund Ghareeb, "The U.S. Arms Supply to Israel During the October War," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 3:2 (1974): 114–121.
24. See Walter J. Boyne, *The Two O'Clock War: The 1973 Yom Kippur Conflict and the Airlift That Saved Israel* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2002).
25. Alon Ben-Meir, "Israel in the War's Long Aftermath," *Current History* 80:462 (1981): 23–26; Harold Hart, *Yom Kippur Plus 100 Days* (New York: Har Publications, 1974). See also P. R. Kumaraswamy, ed., *Revisiting the Yom Kippur War* (Portland, Ore.: Frank Cass, 2000).
26. See Shmuel Gordon, *The Vulture and the Snake: Counter-Guerrilla Air Warfare; The War in Southern Lebanon* (Ramat Gan, Israel: Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, Bar-Ilan University, 1998); Jamal El-Hajj, *UNIFIL in Lebanon: The Past and the Future* (Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: Army War College, 1998). For a very dramatic example of this, see Jacobo Timmerman, *The Longest War: Israel in Lebanon* (New York: Knopf, 1982). Another interesting study is Yohanan Ramati's "Strategic Effects of Israel's Campaign in Lebanon," *Midstream* 28:7 (1982): 3–4.
27. Daoud Kuttab, "The Lebanon Lesson," *Jerusalem Post* (May 25, 2000): 8; see also Arieh O'Sullivan, "The Great Gamble: Leaving Lebanon," *Jerusalem Post* (January 9, 1998): 15.
28. See Arieh O'Sullivan, "Nahshon Ready for Urban Warfare," *Jerusalem Post* (October 27, 2000): 4A. See also Stuart Cohen, "The Israel Defense Forces (IDF): From a 'People's Army' to a 'Professional Military'—Causes and Implications," *Armed Forces and Society* 21:2 (1995): 237–254; "Israel Refocuses on Urban Warfare—In the Cauldron of West Bank Street Fighting, the IDF Has Embraced Helicopters and Unmanned Aircraft," *Aviation Week and Space Technology* 156:19 (2002): 24–26; Dan Izenberg, "Israel Searches for More Humane Riot Control Tools," *Jerusalem Post* (November 16, 2000): 2; David Eshel, "Following the Recent Unrest in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Israel, David Eshel Assesses the Security Implications for the IDF," *Jane's Defence Weekly* 34:15 (2000): 36–38.
29. See Eetta Prince Gibson, "The Fiber of Our Society Is Being Destroyed," *Jerusalem Post Magazine* (September 14, 2001): 18.
30. See Reuters, "Hamas, Fatah Vow 'Eye for an Eye,'" *Jerusalem Post* (August 26, 2001): 3.
31. See "Keeping the Downtown Up," *Jerusalem Post* (December 28, 2001): 3.
32. See Efraim Karsh, "Israel's War," *Commentary* 113:4 (2002): 23–28. See also "The Beginning of the End of the Palestinian Uprising?" *The Economist* 360 (September 29, 2001): 50–51.
33. See Lamia Lahoud, "Fatah Calls for Intifada Despite Summit," *Jerusalem Post* (October 17, 2000): 4.
34. One example of this kind of issue is found in "Arafat's Choice," *The Economist* 361 (December 15, 2001): 39–40. See also David Rudge, "Arafat and Palestinian Authority Stronger Than Ever—Expert," *Jerusalem Post* (May 22, 2001): 2; Arieh O'Sullivan, "Israel, PA Now in 'Armed Conflict,'" *Jerusalem Post* (January 11, 2001): 2; Chris Hedges, "The New Palestinian Revolt," *Foreign Affairs* 80:1 (January/February 2001): 124–138; Alexander Blich, "The Intifada and the New Political Role of the Israeli Arab Leadership," *Middle Eastern Studies* 35:1 (1999): 134–164; Yezid Sayigh, "Arafat and the Anatomy of a Revolt," *Survival* (England) 43:3 (2001): 47–60; Lahoud, "Fatah Calls for Intifada," p. 4; and Gal Luft, "Who Is Winning the Intifada?" *Commentary* 112:1 (July/August 2001): 28–33.
35. See Ruth Linn, "When the Individual Soldier Says 'No' to War: A Look at Selective Refusal During the Intifada," *Journal of Peace Research* 33 (November 1996): 421–431; Asher Arian, Michal Shamir, and Raphael Ventura, "Public Opinion and Political Change: Israel and the Intifada," *Comparative Politics* 24 (April 1992): 317–334; Efraim Infar, "Israel's Small War: The Military Response to the Intifada," *Armed Forces and Society* 18 (Fall 1991): 29–50; and Tamar Liebes and Shoshana Blum-Kulka, "Managing a Moral Dilemma: Israeli Soldiers in the Intifada," *Armed Forces and Society* 21 (Fall 1994): 45–68.
36. For a discussion of why the Soviet Union turned increasingly hostile to Israel during the 1949–1953 period, see Sachar, *A History of Israel*, pp. 461–463. Studies of the role of the Soviets in the 1973 war include Galia Golan, *The Soviet Union and the Arab-Israeli War of October, 1973* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Press, 1974), and Yom Kippur and After: *The Soviet Union and the Middle East* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977); and Foy Kohler, *The Soviet Union and the October 1973 Middle East War* (Coral Gables, Fla.: University of Miami Press, 1974), among others.

37. See Viktor Levonovich Israeli, *Inside the Kremlin During the Yom Kippur War* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), or Galia Golan, "The Soviet Union and the Yom Kippur War," in Kumaraswamy, ed., *Revisiting the Yom Kippur War*.
38. Michael Brecher, *The Foreign Policy System of Israel: Settings, Images, Process* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1972). Another excellent general study of Israeli foreign policy strategy is Yoav Ben-Horin and Barry Posen's *Israel's Strategic Doctrine* (Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand Corporation, 1981).
39. Brecher, *The Foreign Policy System*, p. 5.
40. Brecher, *The Foreign Policy System*, p. 11.
41. A very good analysis of the kinds of decisions that are made and how the policy-making process works, especially in military decisions, can be found in Yoram Peri, *Between Battles and Ballots: Israeli Military in Politics* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 156–174.
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45. See Paul Rivlin, "The Burden of Israel's Defence," *Survival* 20:4 (1978): 146–154.
46. Peri, *Between Battles and Ballots*, p. 21. For 2002 budget data, see Government of Israel, Central Bureau of Statistics, table 10.8, "Government Expenditure," *Statistical Abstract of Israel 2003*, at 194.90.153.197/reader, accessed October 2003.
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48. See Martin Van Creveld, "Women of Valor: Why Israel Doesn't Send Women into Combat," *Policy Review* 62 (1992): 65–67.
49. Peri, *Between Battles and Ballots*, p. 22.
50. See Gabriel Ben-Dor, Ami Pedahzur, and Badi Hasisi, "Israel's National Security Doctrine under Strain: The Crisis of the Reserve Army," *Armed Forces and Society* 28:2 (2002): 233–255.
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53. Timothy L. H. McCormack, *Self-Defense in International Law: The Israeli Raid on the Iraqi Nuclear Reactor* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996).
54. For discussions of this concept, see Yigal Allon, "Israel: The Case for Defensible Borders," *Foreign Affairs* 55 (1976): 38–53; and Dan Horowitz, *Israel's Concept of Defensible Borders* (Jerusalem: Institute for International Relations, 1975).
55. Indeed, one of the classic works of military history in Israel is the volume of the same title by Netanel Lorch, *One Long War: Arab Versus Jew Since 1920* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing, 1976). The volume traces the history of wars in Israel from the prestate period, but begins in detail with the 1948 War of Independence and continues through the 1973 Yom Kippur War.
56. One of the classic references is the study by Yehuda Z. Blum, *Secure Boundaries and Middle East Peace* (Jerusalem: Faculty of Law, Hebrew University, 1971), especially part II: "On Israel's Right to Secure Boundaries," pp. 61–110.
57. In September 1988, Israel launched its own spy satellite, designed to observe troop movements and military activities in the Middle East from space. This factor, Israel claimed, would help to make up for relatively small geopolitical area of the state and would help to provide some of the advanced warning security Israel had given up in its peace negotiations with Egypt.
58. On the importance of the Golan to Israel see, inter alia, the following: Muhammad Muslih, "The Golan: Israel, Syria, and Strategic Calculations," *The Middle East Journal* 47 (1993): 611–632; Eyal Ziser, "June 1967: Israel's Capture of the Golan Heights," *Peace Studies* 7:1 (2002): 168–194; William Caldwell, Fandall Falk, and Timothy Malone, *Peacekeeping on the Golan Heights: Assessing U.S. Participation* (Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: U.S. Army War College, 1996).
59. See Dov S. Zakheim, "Hi-Tech Eyes and Ears," *Jerusalem Post* (July 30, 1999): 8A.
60. Mroz, *Beyond Security*.
61. Michael Curtis, "The United Nations and the Middle East Conflict, 1967–1975," *Middle East Review* 3 (1975): 18–22. See also Brian Urquhart, "The United Nations in the Middle East: A 50-Year Retrospective," *The Middle East Journal* 49 (1995): 572–581; and Kofi Annan, "Israel and the United Nations," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 27:4 (1998): 145–150. On U.N. peacekeeping in the Middle East, see H. B. Walker, "The United Nations: Peacekeeping and the Middle East," *Asian Affairs* (London) 27 (1996): 13–19.
62. *Facts about Israel* (1977), p. 192.
63. Alfred Katz, *Government and Politics*, p. 155.
64. See Rosemary Hollis, "Europe and the Middle East: Power by Stealth?" *International Affairs* 73 (1997): 15–29; Paul-Marie de la Gorce, "Europe and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Survey," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 26:3 (1997): 5–17; or Efrayim Ahiram, Alfred Tovias, and Paul Pasch, *Whither EU-Israeli Relations? Common and Divergent Interests* (New York: P. Lang, 1995).
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72. See H. S. Chabra, "The Competition of Israel and the Arab States for the Friendship with the African States," *India Quarterly* 31.4 (1976): 362–370; Susan Gitelson, *Israel's African Setback in Perspective* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Press, 1974); Ethan Nadelmann, "Israel and Black Africa: A Rapprochement?" *Journal of Modern African Studies* 19.2 (1981): 183–220; or Frank Sankari, "The Costs and Gains of Israel's Pursuit of Influence in Africa," *Middle Eastern Studies* 15 (1979): 270–279.

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Forgotten Friendship; Galia Golan, *Yom Kippur and After*; Dagan, *Moscow and Jerusalem*; E. Satanovskii, "Russia and Israel in the 21st Century," *International Affairs* (Moscow) 6 (1988): 13; or M. Confino and S. Shamir, eds., *The U.S.S.R. and the Middle East* (New York: Wiley, 1973).

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