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IRAN AND ISRAEL'S NATIONAL SECURITY IN THE AFTERMATH OF 2003 REGIME CHANGE IN IRAQ

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Abstract

Following the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, Iran has continued to pose a serious security threat to Israel. The US initially occupied Iraq, ultimately overthrowing Saddam Hussein's regime, in the belief that it would be able to replace that government with a pro-American administration which would counteract the threat from Iran. Instead, the balance of power in the Gulf region was radically altered and Iran, which saw Iraq as its first line of defence against the increasing threat from Israel, sought ways to prevent the US from taking control of Iraq. This failure by the US to stabilise Iraq paved the way for Iran to expand its influence over the region and altered the 'balance of threat' making it an actual threat to Israeli national security. This led Iran, as part of its deterrence and forward-deployment strategy, to initiate a cold war with Israel by accelerating its nuclear programme and its support, both financial and military, of Hezbollah

In order to explain any changes to Israel's stance on security since the 2003 invasion of Iraq, this study examines that country's national security policy since the invasion, looking at the perceived threat from Iran, in the form of its nuclear capabilities, and its forward defence strategy.

This study suggests that the US was so focussed on implementing regime change in Iraq, in the belief that this would instigate the introduction of democracy to the region, that it failed to foresee the wider geopolitical implications of the power vacuum which would occur. The result was that the way was left clear for Iran to exercise its influence over the region and to alter the balance of threat against Israel. This study argues that, in order to better understand Israel's new security status, it is essential to explore the Iranian threat, which is characterised by its development of nuclear capabilities and the forward defence structure which can be seen in Tehran's alliance with Syria and Hezbollah

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the content of this thesis, including all materials, has not been previously used for a degree in this or any other university apart from where otherwise stated and other sources are acknowledged by explicit references. I further declare that this thesis is available for photocopying and inter-line library, for the title and summary to be made available for all researchers.

IBRAHIM A. ALOTHAIMIN

1-3-2012
Signed………………………….

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IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE MERCIFUL, THE COMPASSIONATE

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This effort is dedicated to the memory of my father who passed away 12 years ago, my beloved mother whose dream it was to see me happy in life and to my wife, Wafa, my daughter, Reema, and my son, Abdurrahman, who have struggled to share in my success.

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND AND ISSUES: UNDERPINNINGS OF THE PROJECT

For the state of Israel, security has been the most significant political–military issue since the beginning of its establishment. The history of the Israel–Arab wars, from the War of Independence onwards, strengthened the Israelis' fear of being annihilated. The Arab states, particularly the neighbouring countries, visibly refused to recognise Israel as a legitimate sovereign neighbour and perceived the existence of this Jewish state as a threat. These countries therefore objected to the UN Partition Plan of 1947, declaring war against Israel immediately after its declaration of independence. Therefore, the most significant Israeli perception of threat has been the external threat to its existence from neighbouring countries, such as Egypt and Jordan with the rest of the eastern front, including Syria and Iraq.

In the 1990s, the peace process reduced the possibility of Jordanian participation in an Arab coalition attack because of the 1994 Peace Treaty. Prior to this agreement, the 1979 Peace Treaty with Egypt brought about real change to Israel's security environment given that the former was no longer a source of danger. Israel's Arab enemies lost their economic, military, and political support with the fall of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, whereas the US, Israel's supporter, remained the only dominant power in the Middle East—a situation that further weakened the influence of the Arabs. Consequently, the perception of the threat to Israeli security shifted from a neighbour state-based threat to a remote neighbour state-based menace, primarily Iraq and Iran.

Iraq has been in a continuous state of war with Israel since 1948. It sent armies to fight Israel in 1948 and 1967, and sent troops as backup to Syria's armed forces in the Yom Kippur War in 1973. Israel took military action by bombing Iraq's Osiraq nuclear reactor in 1981, fearing that Saddam would use it to develop nuclear weapons. Iraq did not respond until during the Gulf War in 1991, at which time Saddam's army

fired 39 Scud missiles at Israel. Israel did not retaliate and no further action has been taken by either side since. The Iraqi threat significantly diminished owing to the US-led coalition's victory over Iraq in the Kuwait Crisis, and Israel viewed Iraq as a gateway to transforming the Middle East into a friendly region. It hoped that reconciliation with Iraq would prompt similar moves from Iran and Syria.

Throughout these events, Iran (the focus of this thesis) developed close relations with Israel under the Periphery Doctrine, which sought alliance with the non-Arab states of the Middle East periphery to prevent the threat of attack from Arab states, mainly Iraq. During the 1967 Six-Day War, Iran supplied Israel with essential oil and petroleum. Even after the Iranian Revolution in 1979, some level of covert relations continued because the threat from the Soviet Union and Iraq remained more potent than that from Iran.

The threat from Soviet Union and Iraq were the two primary factors that guaranteed cooperation between Iran and Israel. The collapse of the Soviet Union, however, eliminated these factors as a driver of cooperation between the two states. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the Arabs were no longer receiving Soviet support and Israel no longer needed Iran as a buffer against the USSR. Iraq, which was formerly the strongest Arab state, was no longer a threat to Israel after the first Gulf War. The end of the Cold War and the fall of Iraq made Iran, by default, the most powerful country in the region after Israel. Therefore, Israel changed its policy regarding Iran, manipulating the Periphery Doctrine to build closer relations with its Arab neighbours whilst portraying Iran as the main threat. The relationship between Israel and Iran has since then been one of hostility as both countries attempt to gain regional power.

Since the invasion of Iraq in 2003, Iran has remained a serious security threat to Israel. By overthrowing Saddam's regime, the US radically altered the balance of power in the Gulf region. When the US initially occupied Iraq, it believed that it would be able to replace the government with a coherent pro-American administration that would serve as a means of counteracting the Iranian threat. Iran rationally regarded Iraq as its first line of defence from the increasing threats of military action from Israel; thus, Iran sought ways to prevent the US from finding the time or opportunity to decisively control Iraq. By failing to stabilise Iraq, the US paved the way for an expansion of

Iran's influence over the region and altered the 'balance of threat', turning it into an actual threat to Israeli national security. As a result, Iran initiated a cold war with Israel by speeding up its nuclear programme and increasing financial and weapons support for Hezbollah as part of its deterrence and forward-deployment strategy.

Critics argue that after 2003, the lack of pre-war planning meant that the US was unable to prevent the inevitable expansion of Iranian influence throughout the region. This study argues that as the Americans thought a regime change in Iraq would bring about a 'democratic wave' over the region (Ehteshami 2012) and were so focused on removing Saddam from power, they essentially overlooked the wider geopolitical ramifications of this power vacuum, thereby fostering an environment conducive to increasing Iranian influence in the region and altering the balance of threat against Israel. I argue that our understanding of Israeli's new security status in the regime can be enhanced only by exploring the Iranian threat, which is characterised by Iran's development of nuclear capabilities and a forward defence structure positioned closer to the Israeli neighbourhood, as represented in Tehran's alliance with Syria and Hezbollah.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This study aims to explore Israel's national security policy following the 2003 regime change in Iraq. It explores the perceived Iranian threat, which is characterised by nuclear capabilities and forward defence strategy as part of the conditioning of Israel's new security status in the region. To explain the shift in or continuity of the Israeli security perspectives that have been prevalent since 2003, I examine the nature of the Iranian threat on the basis of the following questions:

What is the centrality of the Iranian threat to Israel's national security since the 2003 regime change in Iraq? How does Iran's quest for perceived nuclear weapons and its establishment of a forward defence strategy through alliances with Syria and Hezbollah pose a strategic threat to Israel's position in the broader Middle East?

To answer these questions, I formulate objectives that enable the comprehensive examination of the strategic milieu that affects Israel's national security policies:

(i)   Conceptualise the national security policy implemented by Israel from 1949 to the 1990s.

I examine the Israeli national security doctrine as defined by Israeli leaders. This analysis is important because it reveals the doctrine's trend of effectiveness through the exploration of the changes in the principles that govern Israeli security policy, from the state's establishment of such policy in 1948 up to 1991. I scrutinise how each war, beginning from the War of Independence up to the Kuwaiti crisis in 1991, affected the doctrine.

(ii)   Examine the consequences of the changing balance of power in the Gulf region from 1979 to 2003 for Israel.

I argue that the perception of the danger to Israeli security shifted from threat from a neighbour state to that from remote neighbour states, primarily Iraq and Iran. This research seeks to determine the changes in Israeli security within the context of regional balance of power as viewed primarily from an American perspective. Elucidating this shift will best clarify the Israeli security position.

(iii)   Identify the threat to Israel, perceived and actual, after the removal of Saddam Hussein from power.

This research contends that the lack of pre-war planning by the US meant that they were unable to thwart the expected widening of Iran's influence. The officials of the Bush administration and neo-conservatives single-mindedly pursued the removal of Saddam from power that they neglected to consider the wider geopolitical ramifications of his removal on the security of Israel.

(iv)   Investigate the Israeli response given its concerns over Iran's drive for nuclear capability.

The research explores the development of Iran's nuclear programme and the consequences of Iranian nuclear diplomacy, which determined Israel's response to this threat from 2003 to 2010. A clearer understanding of this dimension of the Iranian threat enables an assessment of Israel's motivation for pre-emptive action against Iranian nuclear facilities, similar to the actions it carried out against the Iraqi nuclear facilities at Osiraq in 1981. This understanding also facilitates the examination of how Israeli policymakers and strategists perceive the potential effects of a stable nuclear balance of power with Iran on their strategic disadvantages in the region.

(v) Analyse the developments related to the Iranian forward defence policy doctrine within the framework of influence on the security of Israel.

Analysing the recent history of the relationship between Iran, Syria, and Hezbollah up to the 2006 war shows the achievements of the Iran–Syria–Hezbollah alliance. By analysing Israeli responses to Iranian forward defence, from Prime Minister Menachem Begin's rule in 1982 to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's administration in 2006, the current work allows for an examination of how Israel failed to weaken the alliance's capacity and its intention to perpetrate terror attacks.

(vi) Propose an alternative approach to elucidating Israel's security dilemma as manifested in a new 'balance of threat',[1] prevalent since 2003, compared with a regional 'balance of power'.

1.1 SUBORDINATE QUESTIONS

To strengthen the answer to the core questions and achieve the objectives of the study, I formulate the following sub-questions:

- To what extent did the Iraq war/regime change affect relations between Israel and Iran?

- To what extent does Iran pose a real threat to Israel?

- To what extent do Iranian nuclear capabilities affect the national security of Israel?

- To what degree does Iranian forward defence affect the national security of Israel?

- To what degree can an alternative approach to understanding Israel's security dilemma as manifested in a new balance of threat lead to a regional balance of power?

This study assumes that the threat from Iran, which has shaped Israeli security discourse since the Iraq war/regime change, is reflected in Israel's foreign and defence policies. Thus, investigating the threat from Iran following the Iraq war is a central concern of this project.

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[1] The balance of threat theory modified the popular balance of power theory in the neo-realist school of international relations.

This thesis has been completed in the context of three case studies. It provides a detailed discourse analysis of Israeli defence and foreign policy, and develops a narrative of diplomatic history to aid the understanding of Israel's policy regarding Iran since 2003. The research uses the US invasion of Iraq, Iranian nuclear deterrence, and Iranian forward defence as case studies to determine whether Iran poses a real threat to Israel and how this threat affects the national security strategy of Israel.

1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY AND ITS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FIELD

A considerable body of literature supports the idea that Iran does not pose an existential threat to Israel on a long-term basis, for which evidence of Iran's cooperative relationship under the Shah's regime is commonly cited. Even after the emergence of an anti-Israeli regime under Khomeini (1979–1989), this relationship is argued to have endured under the common threat that both Israel and Iran faced from Iraq. Hence, Iran's sharing vital intelligence with Israel lead to the destruction of the Osiraq nuclear reactor in 1981. Israel's role as a bridge between the US and Iran over the release of American hostages from Lebanon (1982) in return for Tehran's receiving vital strategic weapons against Iraq (the Iran–Contra Scandal) is also cited as another manifestation of the long-term strategic potential of the two belligerent powers (Parsi 2007, p. 149). However, the narrow focus on this cooperative epoch disregards the ideological, security, and other underlying mechanisms of the Iranian regime's hostility towards the Jewish state, as manifested by its rejection of the Palestinian–Israeli Peace Process since 1993 and support of Hamas and other Palestinian groups who reject normalisation with Tel Aviv.

The present study challenges this narrow strategic cooperative perspective, and instead explores the potential threat from Iran's development of weapons of mass destruction, as well as its support of anti-Israeli elements in Lebanon, Palestine, or Syria. These actions have posed a threat to the national security of Israel since Iraq's removal from the regional strategic equation.

Minimal academic attention has been devoted to identifying which other regional powers pose a strategic threat to Iran, apart from Israel. Such threats can motivate

Tehran to develop nuclear capabilities or intensify its strategic partnership with Syria and Hezbollah, which it had put in motion since the early 1980s to reinforce its forward defence structure and position such structure closer to Israeli borders.

Relatively few studies have also tried to explain Iran's relations with Lebanon's Hezbollah, which do not go beyond characterising this relationship as one of a 'patron–client' relationship intended to dominate the country through a predominantly Shia proxy. The possibility that Iran's support of this non-state entity may impose serious effects on Israeli's position in the Levant has not been explored. The current study delves into these ideas under the theoretical assumptions of balance of threat theory.

More important, the Iran–Syria 'axis' that has posed another state-centric hold over Israel since 2003 has similarly been neglected in literature on Israeli security. The current work examines the Israeli–Syrian conflict beyond the 'dyadic' assumptions of contemporary security debates, and explores this conflict as a case of Iran's forward defence strategy, making Iran an effective proximate threat to Israel.

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This thesis also determines how the core theoretical approaches to international relations contribute to understand the Iran–Israel relations following the invasion of Iraq.

1.4.1 Liberalism

As one of the two great philosophical products of the European Enlightenment, liberalism has had a profound effect on shaping all modern industrial societies (Burchill 2005, p. 55). The roots of modern liberal international relations theory can be traced back farther than those of utopianism to Immanuel Kant's 1795 essay *Perpetual Peace.* The liberal approach tends to emphasise that human nature is rational and inherently good, and that inherent goodness makes societal progress possible. According to liberalism, the outbreak of war and other such behaviour is the result of corrupt social institutions and misunderstanding between leaders. Therefore, the use of force in international politics can (and should) be eliminated or minimised through the desire for prosperity and the commitment to liberal values (promoting

democracy and interdependence, advocating free markets, and respecting human rights, etc). In satisfying these objectives, a key concept of liberalism is multilateral cooperation through international institutions (Keohane 1984).

From a liberal perspective, realising why actors cooperate is not a problematic endeavour because cooperation is to their absolute advantage. The problem, rather, is that states have a tendency to cheat, or become 'free riders', and what is needed is a mechanism that prevents cheating and enables states to realise that their true long-term interest lies in cooperation (Brown 1997, p. 55).

Since the 1970s, the liberalist approach has progressed largely under neo-liberalism. In terms of cooperation, neo-liberal institutionalism differs from classical liberalism in that it disagrees with the notion that simply establishing international forums for cooperation is sufficient. It also rejects the idea that actions are based on inherent goodness. Rather, neo-liberal institutionalism contends that the repeated interaction between countries/actors encourages cooperation. With increased globalisation—global trade, financial relationships, technology exchange, and arms agreements, amongst other cultural exchanges—states have become more interdependent, with a stronger need to cooperate more closely (Brown 1997, p. 148).

In neo-liberalism, security is essential; institutions (such as the UN) that encourage cooperation also make security possible. Since the Cold War, these arguments have gained more weight amongst democracies because they explain why democratic countries do not fight one another.

As will be clarified in Chapter 4, the manner by which the Iran–Israeli relations developed and continued to evolve from the times of the Shah to the Iran–Iraq War (1980–1988) could have effectively been a power struggle over 'high politics', but under fortuitous circumstances, had the potential of a military 'alliance' under American guarantees.

1.4.2 Constructivism

The end of the Cold War presented the possibility of alternative explanatory perspectives for international relations theory through the rise of the new 'constructivist' school of thought. Ruggie and others identified several strands of

constructivism. The works of constructivist scholars, such as Martha Finnemore, Kathryn Sikkink, Peter Katzenstein, and Alexander Wendt, have been widely accepted within the mainstream IR community and have generated vibrant scholarly discussions amongst realists, liberals, institutionalists, and constructivists. Conversely, radical constructivists take discourse and linguistics more seriously (Ruggie 1998, p. 856). Constructivists have argued that the decisive factors influencing foreign policy decisions are 'ideational' rather than material, as rationalists have claimed (Burchill 2005, p. 194). Wendt (1999, p. 1) describes two increasingly accepted basic tenets of constructivism: (1) 'that the structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces' and (2) 'that the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature'.

Four factors encouraged the rise of constructivism. First, constructivists challenged critical theorists to move beyond theoretical critique to the substantive analysis of international relations in an attempt to reassert the pre-eminence of their own conceptions of theory and world politics (Burchill 2005, p. 194). Second, the end of the Cold War undervalued the explanatory posturing of neo-realists and neo-liberals. Neither of these two had predicted, nor could they appropriately comprehend, the systemic transformations that reshaped the global order (Burchill 2005). Third, the beginning of the 1990s saw the emergence of a new generation of young scholars, who embraced many of the propositions of critical international theory. However, they saw potential for innovation in conceptual elaboration and empirically informed theoretical development (Price & Reus-Smit 1998, p. 261). Finally, the progress of the new constructivist framework was aided by the enthusiasm that mainstream scholars showed in embracing the new perspective, moving it from the margins to the mainstream of theoretical international debate; such espousal was borne of frustration over the analytical failings of the dominant international and rationalist theories (Burchill 2005, p. 194).

The above-mentioned factors set the background of the rise of constructivism to the mainstream in international relations. Exploring the ideational factors in constructivism is now important; this exploration can be accomplished by examining the essential tenets of constructivism, such as social knowledge, social practice, and identities and interests. These principles are not independent of one another but are

closely interlinked, which helps highlight the role of ideational factors in constructivism.

1.4.2.1 Social knowledge

According to Wendt (1992, p. 397), 'people act toward objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that the objects have for them'. Constructivists argue that systems of shared ideas, beliefs, and values also have structural characteristics and that they impose a dominant influence on social and political action (Price & Reus-Smit 1998, p. 261). Wendt argues that social structures are defined by common understanding, expectations, or knowledge. These motivate the actors in a given situation and characterise the nature of their relationships, whether cooperative or conflictual. For example, a security dilemma is a social structure collected from 'intersubjective' understanding, in which states are so sceptical that they make worst-case assumptions about one another's intentions. As a result, they define their interests in self-help terms. A security community is a different social structure, one composed of shared knowledge in which states trust one another to resolve disputes without war. This dependence of social structure on ideas is the sense in which constructivism has an idealist view of structure. What makes these ideas and thus, structures, social, however, is their intersubjective quality. That is, sociality (in contrast to materiality, in the sense of brute physical capability) is about shared knowledge (Wendt 1995, p. 73).

Constructivists also assert that material resources acquire meaning for human action only through the structure of shared knowledge in which they are embedded (Wendt, 1995). States act differently towards enemies than they do towards friends because enemies are threatening and friends are not (Wendt 1992, p. 398). For example, '500 British nuclear weapons are less threatening to the US than North Korean nuclear weapons, because Britain is a friend of the US and the North Koreans are not' (Wendt 1995, p. 73). Canada and Cuba also exist alongside the US, yet the simple balance of military power cannot explain the fact that the former is a close American ally, whereas the latter is a sworn enemy (Burchill 2005, p. 194). Amity or enmity is a function of shared understanding (Wendt 1995, p. 73). In other words, ideas about identity, the logic of ideology, and the established structures of friendship and enmity lend radically different meanings to the material balance of power between Canada

and the US and between Cuba and the US (Burchill 2005, p. 194). According to Wendt, 'it is collective meanings that constitute the structures which organize our actions' (Wendt 1992, p. 397). Social knowledge and structures would not survive if it were not for the knowledge of practices, which leads to the second principle of constructivism—social practice.

1.4.2.2 Social practice

According to Wendt, 'the meaning in terms of which action is organized arises out of interaction' (Wendt 1992, p. 397). Constructivists contend that agents and structures are mutually constituted. They emphasise that normative and ideational structures may well condition the identities and interests of actors, as well as the patterns of the appropriate economic, political, and cultural activities engaged in by these individuals; however, these structures would not exist if it were not for the knowledge of practices of the actors (Price & Reus-Smit 1998, p. 261). For example, Wendt (1995, p. 73) argues that 'the Cold war was a structure of a shared knowledge that governed the great powers for forty years, but once they stopped acting on this basis it was over'. Anthony Giddens and other neo-realist maintain that 'social structures are nothing more than routinized discursive and physical practices that persist over an extended temporal and spatial domain' (Price & Reus-Smit 1998, p. 261). Social practices also exist in their capacity to reproduce the intersubjective meaning that constitutes social structures and actors alike. The US military intervention in Vietnam was consistent with a number of US identities: great power, imperialist, enemy, ally, and so on. Others observing the US not only deduced US identity from their actions in Vietnam, but also detected the intersubjective web of meaning about what exactly constitutes this identity. Moreover, the most vital factor of social practice is its capacity to foster predictability (Hopf 1998, p. 177). Social practices, therefore, significantly reduce uncertainty amongst actors within socially structured communities, thereby increasing confidence that what actions one takes will be followed by certain consequences and responses from others. State actions in the foreign policy realm constrain and empower prevailing social practices at home and abroad. According to Hopf, for example, foreign policy choice is a kind of social practice that constitutes and empowers a state in defining its socially recognised competence, and secures the boundaries that differentiate the domestic and international economic and political

spheres of practice, as well as the appropriate domains in which specific actors may secure recognition and act competently (Hopf 1998, p. 178).

1.4.2.3 Identities and interests

In both international politics and domestic society, identities are essential to ensuring some minimal level of predictability and order. Resilient expectations between states require intersubjective identities that are sufficiently stable to guarantee predictable patterns of state behaviour. A world without identities is a world of chaos; a world of pervasive and irremediable uncertainty is a much more risky world. Anarchic identities perform three essential functions in a society: they tell you who you are, they tell others who you are, and they tell you who others are. In telling you who you are, identities strongly imply a particular laying down of interests or preferences with regard to choices of action in particular domains, and with regard to particular actions (Hopf 1998, p. 177).

Furthermore, constructivists emphasise the importance of normative and ideational structures because these are thought to shape the social identities of political actors (Price & Reus-Smit 1998, p. 261). According to constructivists, identities are not assigned but have collective meaning. Wendt argues that 'it is the intersubjective rather than material aspect of structure that influences behaviour. Intersubjective structures are constituted by collective meanings. Actors acquire identities, which Wendt defines as 'relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self by participating in such collective meanings' (Zehfuss 2002, p. 40). Identity is a property of international actors; it generates motivational and behavioural dispositions (Zehfuss 2002, p. 40). Berger argues that a state may have various identities as 'sovereign, leader of the free world, imperial power, and so on' (Wendt 1992, p. 398). The commitment to, and the salience of, particular identities vary; however, each identity is an essentially social definition of the actor grounded in the theories that actors collectively hold about themselves and one another, and which constitute the structure of the social world (Wendt 1992, p. 398).

Wendt further explains that 'identities and interests are produced in and through situated activity' (Wendt 1992, p. 399). Constructivists assert that identities form interests and actions, so that understanding how non-material structures shape actors'

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identities is vital because comprehending how actors develop their interests is the key to explaining a wide range of international political phenomena that rationalists have disregarded (Price & Reus-Smit 1998, p. 261). To explain interest formation, constructivists focus on the social identities of individuals or states. Wendt asserts that 'identities are the basis of interests' (Price & Reus-Smit 1998, p. 261). In the context of identity, constructivism's insight is that anarchy is what states make of it. As Wendt states, 'the daily life of international politics is an ongoing process of states taking identities in relation to others, casing them into corresponding counter-identities and playing out the result' (Zehfuss 2002, p. 41). A difference in the culture of anarchy would not be present in the international system were it not for different 'conceptualisations' of identity (Zehfuss 2002, p. 41). This perspective implies that many different interpretations of anarchy exist in the world; hence, state actions should be more varied rather than take on a self-help character (Zehfuss 2002, p. 42) The culture of anarchy relies on how identity is defined: 'alternative actions with alternative identities, practices, and sufficient material resources are theoretically capable of effecting change in the anarchy' (Zehfuss 2002, p. 41). Therefore, the security of nations differs in the extent to which, and the approach from which, the self is recognised cognitively with the other. The meaning of anarchy and the distribution of power depend on this cognitive variation. Positive identification with other states will thus generate security threats, not as a confidential theme for each state but as a responsibility of all. If the collective self is well developed between a group of states, security practices will be, to some level, altruistic. Wendt discusses the identity dilemma as one of whether, and under which conditions, identities are more collective or more egoistic (Zehfuss 2002, p. 42). Depending on where states fall on this continuum, from positive to negative identification with other states, they will be more or less willing to engage in security practices. Identity is therefore the key to the progress of different security environments or anarchic cultures (Zehfuss 2002, p. 41).

The rise of constructivism has had considerable influence on the development of international relations theory and the analysis of international anarchy through its provision of a framework that serves as an alternative to realism and idealism; this framework is used to analyse the behaviour of actors in anarchy, the factors mitigating

state behaviour, and the logic of anarchy in the international system (Burchill 2005, p. 196).

Neo-realists claim that under anarchy, an actor enhances power to ensure survival. That is, the principal determinant of state behaviour is the underlying distribution of material capabilities across states in the international system—a determinant that endows states their animating survival motive, which in turn drives the balance of power competition. Neo-liberals also view state interests as essentially material, even if they posit the importance of international institutions as intervening variables. Under anarchy, therefore, an actor promotes social learning through institutions and ideas. Neo-realism argues that self-help mitigates state behaviour because there is no world government, so that cooperation amongst states is unreliable and, as a result, the logic of anarchy is conflictual. Neo-liberals maintain that international society mitigates state behaviour, thereby engendering a cooperative anarchic logic (Antje 2006; Burchill 2005, p. 196).

Constructivists claim that an actor's behaviour in an anarchic environment is unpredictable prior to social interaction because what mitigates state behaviour is intersubjectivity, which constitutes the structure of identities and interests. Thus, producing state identities and interests that are competitive encourages competition and producing state identities and interests that are cooperative fosters cooperation. Therefore, the logic of anarchy depends on how states perceive it (Wendt 1992, p. 398). Constructivists, however, have succeeded in broadening the theoretical contours of international relations by exploring issues of identity and interest bracketed by neo-liberalism and neo-realism; they have demonstrated that their sociological approach leads to new and meaningful interpretations of international politics. Constructivists have also liberated the exploration of identity from postmodernists. By arguing the importance of identity using methods accepted by the majority of scholars, they have been able to challenge mainstream analysts on their own ground (Held & Mcgrew 2007).

We can see that constructivism has offered a number of benefits to the theoretical approach to international relations. Despite the purported benefits, however, the constructivist viewpoint also suffers from downsides. More than anything else,

constructivism remains a method. According to Checkel (1998, p. 330), the central challenge for constructivists is that they have confirmed that social construction is important but they have failed to address when, how, and why it occurs, and to clearly specify the actors and mechanisms that bring about change, the scope of conditions under which they operate, and how they vary between countries. Checkel also says the following of constructivists:

> …should want to avoid the charge that they are reducing one unit of analysis - agents (states, decision makers) - to the other - structures (norms). One result of this reduction is a failure to explore how norms arise in the first place (and the role of agency and power in this process), and how, through interactions with particular agents, norms change over time (Checkel 1998, p. 330).

Despite these limitations, constructivism has brought a new level of conceptual clarity and theoretical sophistication to the analysis of international relations. I argue that constructivist theory is of considerable analytical relevance if we are to study the past relations between Israel and Iran. According to Walt, constructivism seems to be agnostic because it cannot predict the content of ideas. Constructivist thought may help more substantially in describing the past than in anticipating the future (Walt 1998, pp. 38–41). However, my research focuses on an explanation of the role that geopolitics can play in shaping the flow of the Iran–Israel relations.

1.4.3 Realism

Realism pertains to a variety of perspectives in many different disciplines, but the basics generally remain the same in that realism is based on the view that individuals are primarily driven by their own agendas. In international relations, political realism is a tradition of analysis that stresses the imperatives states face to pursue the power politics of national interest (Burchill 2005, p. 29). Realism or political realism has been the dominant worldview in the study of international relations (Forde 1992, p. 373).

The theory claims that the roots of realist thinking go back thousands of years and has proponents in writers such as Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Rousseau. Early realism can be characterised as a reaction against interwar idealist thinking. The outbreak of

World War II was seen by realists as evidence of the deficiencies of idealist thinking (Burchill 2005, p. 31).

Various strands of modern-day realist thinking exist, but the main tenets of the theory have been identified as statism, survival, and self-help. Statism refers to the belief that a nation state is the unitary actor in international politics. This perspective contrasts with liberalism, which allows for plurality in state actors and international institutions. Survival pertains to the standpoint that the world system is governed by anarchy; that is, no universal sovereign or worldwide government exists. Therefore, international affairs is a struggle for power amongst self-interested states. Self-help refers to the belief of realists that the world is a self-help world, meaning no other nation states can be relied upon to help guarantee a state's survival (Burchill 2005).

Realism, which has two major strands [classical realism and neo-realism (also called structural realism)], is based on several fundamental assumptions. First, nation-states are unitary, geographically based actors in an anarchic international system without a neutral authority that can enforce rules and decisions capable of regulating interactions between states (Weber 2001, p. 14). The second core assumption is that sovereign states, rather than non-state actors, guarantee the centrality of actors in international affairs (Burchill 2005, p. 31). As a direct consequence of these first two assumptions, realists are drawn to a third: sovereign states, as the highest order, compete with one another. Thus, a state acts as a rational autonomous actor in its own self-interest with the primary goal of maintaining and ensuring its own security, therefore, its sovereignty and survival (John 2001, p. 26). This assumption leads to the conclusion that in pursuit of their interests, states will attempt to amass resources and that relations amongst actors are determined by their relative levels of power. This level of power is, in turn, determined by a state's military and economic capabilities (John 2001).

1.4.3.1 Classical realism (Morgenthau and political realism)

Classical realism states that the fundamental nature of man is to push states and individuals to act in a way that places interests over ideologies. It is defined as the 'drive for power and the will to dominate [that are] held to be fundamental aspects of human nature' (Baylis & Smith 2005, p. 95). Hans Morgenthau's (1948) *Politics*

Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace introduces the concept of political realism, presenting a realist view of power politics. In his text, the author presents six principles of political realism, which summarise his approach to international politics (Morgenthau 1978, pp. 4–15). The first principle is that politics, and society in general, are governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature. The second principle is the concept of interest, which is defined in terms of power and infuses rational order into the subject matter of politics. Thus, it makes the theoretical understanding of politics possible. That is, although leaders may present their policies in terms of their ideologies, rational actions will ultimately win over desirable yet illogical ones. This view does not mean that ideals are unimportant, but that the relative power of the state determines the actions of a statesman rather than his ideology. Therefore, classical realism does not concern itself with the motives and ideologies of statesmen, and avoids re-interpreting reality to fit policy (Morgenthau 1978). The third principle is that in terms of power, this interest is not static and changes over time depending on the political and cultural context in which foreign policy is made. The fourth principle indicates that a universal moral principle does not guide political actions given that states are not moral agents. However, the classic realist is aware of the moral significance of political action and that these actions have moral and ethical implications (Burchill 2005, p. 75). Universal moral principles are filtered through the concrete circumstances of time and place. Morgenthau states that 'Realism, then, considers prudence – the weighing of the consequences of alternative political actions to be the supreme virtue in politics' (Morgenthau 1978, p. 12). Thus, tension exists between morals and national interest. The fifth principle of classic realists is the non-existence of universal morals, and realism rejects the idea that a particular nation's morals can serve as universal morals. Finally, the political sphere is separate or autonomous from all other areas of human concern, including legal, moral, or economic spheres. A realist must show where a nation's interests differ from moralistic and legalistic viewpoints.

1.4.3.2 Neo-realism or structural realism

Neo-realism or structural realism, as outlined by Waltz in his *Theory of International Politics, in* 1979*,* takes a different approach. Waltz seeks to reformulate the classical realist tradition of 'human nature' to explain international politics with focus on the *international system*. He argues that the relationships amongst political structures are

important; specifically, the way political functions are structured and how power is distributed are important to both domestic and international politics. Waltz begins by looking at domestic political structures and highlights three important characteristics: the principle by which the system is ordered (what form of hierarchical structure is in place), the functions that each unit fulfils (presidential versus parliamentary, etc.), and each unit's capacity/ability to act. By analogy, Waltz extends these three principles to the international system. According to the theory, the ordering principle is anarchy; if this situation changes, inter-unit interaction also varies. The anarchic order principle of the international structure is decentralised, having no formal central authority, and is composed of formally equal sovereign states. In anarchy, different units exist in a self-help system—states serve their own interest and will not make their interests subordinate to another's; therefore, no functional differentiation exists amongst them. Thus, the two relevant characteristics of the international system are anarchy and relative capacity (power). The latter is defined by the distribution of capabilities, measured by the number of great powers within the international system (Waltz 1979, pp. 48–52).

Neo-realists assume that 'states seek to ensure their survival'. Power is not an end unto itself; the survival of the state is the end, and power is simply a means. Even if the state wants to accomplish other goals, it cannot do so unless it survives. The real aims of states may be endlessly variable, but in a world without security, survival is the essential prerequisite to pursuing other goals (Waltz 1979, p. 56). This driving force of survival is the primary factor that influences their behaviour and, in turn, ensures that states develop offensive military capabilities for foreign interventionism and as a means of increasing relative power. Because states can never be certain of other states' future intentions, a lack of trust exists between states, thereby prompting them to be on guard against relative loss of power that can enable other states to threaten their survival. This lack of trust, which is based on uncertainty, is called the security dilemma (Waltz 1979, p. 96).

In defining international–political structures, states are deemed similar in terms of needs but not in the capabilities to achieve them. The positional placement of states in terms of abilities determines the distribution of capabilities. Waltz argues that 'although capabilities are attributes of units, the distribution of capabilities across

units is not' (Waltz 1979). The key result from this approach is a 'positional picture' that describes a system 'in terms of the placement of units rather than in terms of their qualities' (Waltz 1979).

The structural distribution of capabilities thus limits cooperation. Waltz identifies two ways in which the structure of the international system constrains cooperative efforts. First, 'the condition of insecurity - at the least, the uncertainty of each about the other's future intentions and actions - works against their cooperation.... A state worries about a division of possible gains that may favor others more than itself' (Waltz 1979, pp. 105–106). Second, 'a state also worries lest it become dependent on others through trade and/or cooperation, and therefore also chooses to limit its cooperation with other states' (Waltz 1979). The desire and relative abilities of each state to maximise relative power constrain each other, resulting in a balance of power that shapes international relations. It also gives rise to the 'security dilemma that all nations face' (Waltz 1979).

This idea leads to the next aspect of structuralist (neo-realism) theory. The international order, which is anarchy, depends on the number of superpowers within the international order. Three fundamental systems are possibly defined by the number of great powers within the international system. A unipolar system comprises only one great power, a bipolar system encompasses two great powers, and a multipolar system has more than two great powers. These powers ultimately either side against one another or duplicate one another in accordance with their own self-interests. A weak power must oppose or side with great powers to survive. This decision is always risky, however, because the great power could potentially betray the weak country (Waltz 1979, pp. 132–133). Neo-realists conclude that a system of two great powers (a bipolar system) is more stable (less prone to great power wars and systemic change) than a multipolar system because balancing can only occur through internal balancing given that no extra great powers with which to form alliances exist (Waltz 1979). Because there is only internal balancing in a bipolar system, bipolar balancing tends to produce less conflict (Waltz 1979). The structure of a system changes with variations in the distribution of capabilities across the system's units.

This idea leads to the next aspect of structuralist (neo-realism) theory, which differentiates between 'bandwagoners' and 'balancers'. Weak states are confronted with the risk of allying with great powers and hoping that they are treated well. However, great powers can simultaneously accomplish both by internally devoting resources to national security and externally establishing formal alliances and agreements with other nations. Nonetheless, in an atmosphere of insecurity, states try to gain more self-sufficiency whenever possible. The concept of anarchy contributes to escalation because no particular body regulates the individual countries' fears. They are locked in a cycle of mutual competition that can escalate, as asserted by realist theory. These actions, which lead to escalation, can be necessary or unnecessary defences. There is no way to verify the current state of international anarchy because no effective regulating body exists.

1.4.4 Balance of Power Theory

Balance of power is one of the oldest and most enduring concepts of international relations, and it is a central concept in neo-realist theory (Paul & Fortmann 2004, p. 1). The balance of power system is simply the term given to a system that is based on sovereignty and the absence of a world government (Brown 1997, p. 121). This system is key to understanding the recurrent patterns of behaviour of states living under 'international anarchy'. At the same time, it has served as a guide for many statesmen who view it as a method for securing the continued independence of their states (Sheehan 1996, p. 1). The root idea is that 'only force can counteract the effect of force, and that in an anarchic world, stability, predictability and regularity can only occur when the forces that states are able to exert to get their way in the world are in some kind of equilibrium' (Brown 1997, p. 121).

As previously stated, Waltz argues that states are assumed, at a minimum, to desire the guarantee of their own survival and, at a maximum, universal domination. 'States seek to achieve their goals either through internal balancing (increasing economic and military strength) or external balancing (creating alliances)' (Waltz 1979, p. 116). Therefore, disruptions of the balance of power are both created and potentially rectified by increasing the internal power of the state, by establishing alliances, or through some combination of the two (Brown 1997, p. 121). Brown discusses two ways in which equilibrium can be disturbed and two ways in which it can be re-

established. Equilibrium deviates from a balanced level when one state becomes more powerful than others for indigenous reasons, without this imbalance being compensated for. It also becomes imbalanced if at least two states move closer together without compensatory movement elsewhere (Brown 1997).

According to Walt, two choices are available for states to establish alliances that offer protection and serve their interests. The first choice is to associate with those who cannot readily dominate their allies in order to avoid being dominated by those who can; that is, to get closer to the weak side or less strong powers (balancing behaviour). The second option is to ally with the dominant power (bandwagoning behaviour). The logic behind the latter is either defensive, when the bandwagoner aims to appease another power to avoid an attack by diverting it elsewhere, or offensive, to share the fruits of the victory of the dominant power (Walt 1987, pp. 18–22).

Realism and balance of power theory are of great analytical relevance in studying the Israel–Iran relations during the Cold War era. The unipolar international order that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union changed the factors that statesmen consider in deciding with whom and against whom to ally. As Walt argues, although power is a significant part of the equation, it is not the only factor. 'It is more accurate to say that states' alliance behavior is determined by the threat they perceive from other states. In other words, states tend to ally with or against the foreign power that poses the greatest threat' (Walt 1987, p. 21). Walt goes on to claim that states may achieve balance by allying with other strong states if a weak actor is more dangerous for other reasons. He points to the alliance patterns of European states before and during World War I and World War II, when nations vastly superior in total resources allied against the recognised threat of German expansionism (Walt 1987).

1.4.5 Stephen M. Walt's Balance of Threat Theory: Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power

In terms of neo-realist theory, this thesis uses balance of threat theory, which was put forward by Walt in his book *The Origins of Alliances*, and builds on his 1985 article 'Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power' published in the Journal of International Security as a modification of the popular balance of power theory in the neo-realist school of international relations.

Given that balancing and bandwagoning are more accurately explained as a response to threats, the balance of threat approach identifies four criteria that states use to evaluate the threat posed by another state (sources of threat): aggregate power, geographic proximity, offensive power, and aggressive intentions. Walt (1987, p. 21) claims that the more other states view a rising state as possessing these qualities, the more likely they are to perceive it as a threat and balance against it.

1- *Aggregate Power:* The first assumption is that the greater a state's total resources (e.g., military capability, population, social solidarity, industrial and technological development, etc.), the greater a potential threat it can pose to others (assuming all other factors are equal). If power can be threatening, however, it can also be prized. States with great power have the capacity to either punish enemies or reward friends. Therefore, a state's aggregate power may provide a motive for other states to engage in balancing or bandwagoning.

2- *Geographic Proximity:* The second assumption is that powers located nearby pose a greater threat than distant ones (with all other factors equal). Approximate threats can also prompt other states to either adopt a balancing response (encircling the approximate threat with an alliance or more) or bandwagoning behaviour (especially when the approximate threat demonstrates its ability to command obedience).

3- *Offensive Power:* The third assumption is that states with large offensive capabilities are more likely to pose a greater threat than those who are militarily weak or acquiring defensive capabilities (with all other factors equal). Most probably, offensive power leads to a balancing response that aims at counteraction; in some cases, however, bandwagoning becomes the only recourse when other states are too vulnerable to hold out.

4- *Aggressive Intentions:* With all else being equal, perceptions of intent are likely to play a vital role in alliance choice. States that are perceived as aggressive are likely to provoke others to balance against them. However, when a state is believed to be unalterable, other aggressive states may prefer to engage in bandwagoning as a protective measure (Finlandization syndrome).

1.4.6 Reflecting on the Theoretical Framework of the Study

This study uses Walt's balance of threat theory as a modification of the popular balance of power theory in the neo-realist school of international relations. In this section, I determine how the core theoretical approaches in international relations contribute to a better understanding of the Iran–Israel relations following the invasion of Iraq. I accomplish this determination by analysing different theoretical approaches. This research demonstrates the liberalist approach, which emphasises that states are not limited to high politics (power) but also embrace low politics (economics).

As will be clarified in Chapter 4, the manner by which the Iran–Israeli relations developed and continued to evolve from the times of the Shah to the Iran–Iraq War (1980–1988) could have effectively been a power struggle over 'high politics', but under fortuitous circumstances, had the potential of a military 'alliance' under American guarantees.

I assess the constructivist approach through the prism of Wendt's work. I highlight the following ideational factors—social knowledge, social practice, and identities and interests—as the essential tenets of constructivism. However, Walt's criticism of agnostic quality, failure to predict the content of ideas, and inability to anticipate the future renders the constructivist paradigm as analytically irrelevant in explaining past relations between Israel and Iran (Walt 1998, pp. 38–41). The current work nevertheless focuses on an explanation of the role that geopolitics can play in shaping the flow of the Iran–Israeli relations.

This section also explores the realist approach. The main tenets of the theory are statism, survival, and self-help. Although this research acknowledges that the three central tenets of realism remain valid for explaining Israel's quest for national security, the transformation of the international system since the Cold War from a bipolar security order to a unipolar system caused the material conditions that determined a state's preference for alliance establishment or self-help security strategies to change drastically. Such change was prompted by the desire to embrace threats that are of more immediate consequence to survival rather than abstract threats. In terms of Israeli national security, this study argues that the assumptions of balance of threat theory provide better explanations as to how the state of Israel perceives threats to its

national security from Iran and its trans-regional proxies. This situation is more immediate and geographically proximate.

The balance of threat approach identifies four criterion states used to evaluate the threat posed by another state (sources of threat): aggregate power, geographic proximity, offensive power, and aggressive intentions. Chapter 5 clarifies that Iraq's removal from the regional security equation made Iran one of the most significant threats to Israeli security by default. Therefore, Iran's aggregate power serves as a motive for Israel to prevent Iran from turning its peaceful nuclear program into a military one. The chapter also shows how Iran's active interest in developing, acquiring, and deploying a broad range of ballistic missiles, as well as its potential development of nuclear weapons, may increase its capability to project its offensive power beyond its immediate Gulf security complex to threaten Israel.

I also argue about how the recent rhetoric by Iran against Israel, development of nuclear technology, and funding of various non-state groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah, have aggravated Israel's sensitivity to Iran's 'aggressive intentions', as identified by the balance of threat paradigm.

In Chapter 6, I further explore that establishing the 'triple alliance' amongst Iran, Syria, and Hezbollah [since 1980, intensifying the subsequent invasion of Iraq in 2003 and during the Lebanese War (2006)] implies that this forward defence posture has brought the Iranian threat closer to Israeli borders.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

The research method used in this study is primarily qualitative analysis, relying mostly on primary and secondary sources. It exploits four major sources of primary material to enable a thorough understanding of the debates and issues related to Israel–Iran policy.

The first source of primary material is public statements made by senior US, Israeli, and Iranian administration officials in speeches, interviews, and press conferences, as well as oral testimonies in parliamentary hearings and official and governmental reports. The second source is the published memoirs of administration officials, such

as George W. Bush, Tony Blair, Ayatollah Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, and Abdul Halim Khaddam who was Syria's vice president from 1984 to 2005. These sources provide an insider's view of the strategic decisions of the US regarding Iran and Iraq.

The third source is Project for the New American Century documents -an American think thank- which has an influence on high-level U.S. government officials in the administration of U.S. President George W. Bush. Large numbers of PNAC were appointed to the Bush administration such as Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, John Bolton, Richard Armitage, and Elliott Abrams affected the Bush Administration's development of military and foreign policies, especially involving national security and the Iraq War.

The fourth primary source is published literature, primarily books, newspaper articles, and news magazines produced by leading investigative journalists in the field. Books by Ronen Bergman, George Packer, Gordon Trainor, Tom Segev, and Bob Woodward are some of the materials examined in this study because they include interviews with senior US officials and quote directly from firsthand sources.

The other category of secondary literature comprises books and academic articles written by leading academics. All these materials combined facilitate a deep understanding of Israeli policy towards Iran, and aid the development of a detailed picture of the Iran–Israel relations after 2003.

1.6 RESEARCH OVERVIEW

This study is divided into seven chapters. The introduction provides an outline of the issues at hand, briefly describing the work that is reported in the thesis, as well as the outline and structure of the research.

Chapter 2 focuses on Israeli security policy. The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the conceptualisation of Israel's national security policy with its general changes and continuities from 1949 to 1991. It provides a detailed historical narrative of Israel's national security doctrine through secondary sources. The chapter is divided into four main sections. In the first section, I examine the factors influencing the formation of Israeli security policy, such as history, religion, ideology, and threat perceptions. In

the second section, the basic pillars of Israeli security doctrine are scrutinised. The third section analyses the changes and continuities in Israeli security thinking, and the implementation of the military doctrine during and after seven main wars: the War of Independence; the war against Egypt in 1956; the Six-Day War; the War of Attrition; the Yom Kippur War; the war in Lebanon in 1982; and the Kuwait War in 1991. Only by tracking these phases can we set the necessary bases for addressing and understanding the changes in Israeli security policy.

Chapter 3 details the consequences of the changing balance of power in the Gulf region to Israel. The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the changes in the Israeli security doctrine within the context of regional balance of threat between Iran and Iraq, viewed primarily in terms of American policy. The discussion of these changes will best elucidate the Israeli position. The chapter is divided into three main sections. The first discusses the deterrence strategy implemented during the Cold War. The second section analyses the containment strategy in the post-Cold War era. The last section raises the issue of the equilibrium strategy following the American invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Chapter 4 traces the shift from dual containment to regime change. This chapter investigates exactly how US policy led to America's invasion of Iraq by showing how the neo-conservative policy agenda grew out of the post-Cold War environment and how it was reinforced in the post-9/11 era. Here, I argue that the Bush administration invaded Iraq but the lack of pre-war planning is a reflection of US failure to stop Iran's influence from growing. I propose that the Bush administration and neo-conservatives were so intent on removing Saddam from power that even the Israeli policymakers failed to consider the geopolitical implications of this power vacuum on Israel's security. These ideas are elaborated in detail.

The chapter explores the relationship between the Bush doctrine and Iraq. It then moves on to examine the effect of the major pro-Israel neo-conservative research centre—the Project for the New American Century (PNAC)—on the Bush administration and the Iraq War by analysing the strong influences of the neo-conservatives, most of whom are associated with the PNAC. Many also have close ties to Israel's Likud Party and are widely known to have long called for the

overthrow of Saddam Hussein. I demonstrate the direct link between the PNAC members and Israel in mapping out and drafting 'A Clean Break Plan', which is regarded by observers as a road map for the US invasion of Iraq. I analyse the nature of Israeli involvement in the Iraq War by exploring the three dimensions of its role: the military, economic, and political. In addition, I identify the positive and negative outcomes for Israeli security as a result of the regime change in Iraq in 2003.

Chapter 5 illustrates the Israeli response to the perceived development of Iranian nuclear capabilities. I argue that whilst Iranian nuclear ambitions are the direct cause of US failure in Iraq since 2003, by its very implications, this development has made Iran one of the most significant threats to Israeli security, after Iraq. This line of argument suggests that although Iran was initially the chief beneficiary of the US removal of Iraq from the regional security equation, its failure to foster security in Iraq and its threat of destabilising the entire region motivated the Iranians to develop independent nuclear capabilities and deter future threats from Iraq or a combination of other hostile threats within the region. In the foregoing, I maintain that Iran's aggregate power after Iraqi removal provided the strategic rationale for Israel to avert the transformation of Iran's peaceful nuclear programme into a military one by all available means.

This chapter also examines the potential implications for the new balance of nuclear threat to the region. I argue that a nuclearised Iran would pose a number of negative outcomes to Israel and to the region as a whole. I anticipate that these outcomes will eliminate Israel's nuclear superiority over its adversaries, trigger a nuclear arms race in the region, and improve Iran's ability to provide conventional arms to its regional proxies by assuming a 'first-strike' posture against Israel in future conventional conflicts (the Hezbollah scenario).

Five main sections make up this chapter. The first discusses the development of Iran's nuclear programme. The second identifies the nuclear facilities in Iran. The third section highlights Iran's nuclear programme and bureaucratic politics. The fourth section examines the consequences of Iranian nuclear diplomacy, and the fifth investigates the Israeli response to Iranian nuclear ambitions.

Chapter 6 discusses the Israeli response to the Iranian forward defence doctrine, as represented by Tehran's support of Hezbollah and its alliance with Syria, as well as how the forward defence doctrine affects the national security of Israel. Here, I contend that the Iran, Syria, Hezbollah alliance since the early 1980s intensified following the 2003 invasion of Iraq and consolidated during the 2006 Lebanese War, indicating that this forward defence posture brought the Iranian threat closer to Israeli borders. The study also argues that this triple alliance will affect safe borders or 'secure frontiers', which is one of the main principles governing the national security of Israel. Three parts make up Chapter 6. The first provides a brief overview of the recent history of the relationship amongst Iran, Syria, and Hezbollah up to the 2006 war. The second part analyses the relationship amongst Iran, Syria, and Hezbollah during the 2006 war. Finally, the effects of the 2006 war on the debates over Israeli national security are assessed.

Chapter 7 concludes the thesis, covering all the theoretical and empirical debates that underpin this work: the centrality of the Iranian threat to Israel's security since 2003 and how Israeli policymakers diffuse the threat by expanding its nuclear capabilities and forward defence policy, as well as by responding to the threat through military and non-military diplomacy. I surmise on our each assumption about the effects of the Iranian threat to Israel since 1991, and the strategic factors as the weakening of Iraq under the US-led dual containment of both Iran and Iraq under the Bush and Clinton administrations before the integration of the Bush anti-Iranian diplomacy in 2001.

Reflecting on the primary and secondary data analysis, I show how both Iran and Israel continued to view each other as a security partner through the Periphery Doctrine before 1991 and even during the Iran–Iraq war under the Khomeini regime. I also draw conclusions as to how Iran's strategy since 1991 reflects the perception of US presence in the region as motivation to assume an aggressive posture. This posture was achieved through the initiation of a nuclear programme and increase in support for Hezbollah and Palestinian groups, as well as establishing direct relations with Syria whilst covertly assuring Israel about its non-aggressive intentions against the Jewish state.

This chapter presents a retrospective analysis of the core assumptions of balance of threat theory as the favoured paradigm in elucidating the nature of the Iranian threat and its putative intentions in relation to Israel. This analysis provides a comprehensive view of the reality and proximity of the Iranian threat. The theoretical assumption that serves as the foundation of this work is evaluated against the primary data, in terms of how it shapes the perceptions of Israeli security and diplomatic discourse against the Iranian development of aggressive capabilities and alliance patterns. As a neo-revisionist conclusion, which underlies this work, the final analysis argues that the removal of Saddam exposed both the Cold War security partners (Iran and Israel) to an unpredictable security vacuum in the region or in the case of the latter, to Syrian or Hezbollah's intimidation. However, the failure of the US to foster stability in Iraq from 2003 to 2012, as well as Israel's own interests in divesting Saddam of power, shattered the Iraqi buffer that had shielded Israel from the revolutionary and security spillover from the Gulf region. I aim to objectively and empirically scrutinise that although Iran and Israel cooperated with each other under the Shah's regional hegemonic power to protect the latter from the pan-Arab threat, and colluded against Saddam under the Khomeini regime (1979–1989) by neutralising Iraq's nuclear capabilities in 1981, the US dual containment of Iraq and Iran and former President George W. Bush's accusing Iran as part of an 'axis of evil' after 9/11 diminished Israeli security. This vulnerability stems from the Iranian threat, which may be a direct reaction to the US and Israeli discourse against the clerical regime.

Through further primary and secondary data analysis, I raise a debate on the Israeli and US failure to anticipate Iranian response as a factor that directly contributed to the exposure of Israel to the Iranian threat. This threat is strengthened by Iran's support of regional proxies such as Hezbollah and Palestinian groups, as well as its direct relations with Syria. One of the serious issues debated in the conclusion is the delineation of the dichotomies of the different US security doctrines to contain Iran and Iraq during the Senior Bush and Clinton administrations. Such doctrines were moderate, manageable, and more responsive to Israeli security than was W. Bush's attack on Iraq.

The thesis ends with a deliberation over the fact that the US attack on Iraq and the Israeli pressures imposed by the neo-conservatives and the strong Jewish lobby has

made Israel more vulnerable. These factors also further placed the pro-Western Arab regimes of the Gulf at risk of the Iranian nuclear threat and the consequences of the support of other non-state actors in the region. I propose various remedial military and diplomatic measures for Israel to protect itself from further Iranian threats by critiquing its previous policy of engagement with Iran and the US, and how its failure to resolve the Palestinian problem makes the resolution of the security dilemma impossible in the event of another war in the region.

The summary focuses on answering the set of research questions highlighted earlier to show the significance of the Iranian threat to Israel's national security. Various research questions that are supported by different theoretical assumptions are tested to conceptualise Israel's national security policy, the consequences of the changing balance of power (1979–2003) in the Gulf region for Israel, and the perceived and actual threats that stem from Saddam's removal from power. The Israeli response to Iranian nuclear deterrence, the Israeli response to the Iranian forward defence doctrine, and an alternative approach to understanding Israel's security dilemma (balance of threat compared with balance of power) are also discussed. This discussion is achieved by presenting the main elements of the questions via the methodological approach applicable to the issue at hand.

Chapter 2

ISRAELI NATIONAL SECURITY FROM 1948 TO THE 1990s

2.0. INTRODUCTION

When first recognised as a country, Israel had the task of formulating and implementing a national security policy. This chapter will analyse the conceptualisation of Israel's national security policy and review the aspects that were changed and those that were maintained between 1949 and 1991. In addition, this chapter will examine the basic pillars of the Israeli security doctrine formulated in response to the threats that faced Israel, including the lack of strategic depth, manpower and weaponry. These pillars, established by Ben-Gurion, were strategies of deterrence, first strike, safe borders, strategic depth and alliances with great powers. This chapter will also consider the impact that each war, beginning with the War of Independence until the Kuwait crisis in 1991, had on the thinking behind the Israeli security doctrine.

This chapter argues that Israeli security policy did not go through any significant changes until the 1990s, when the peace process started. Israeli political and military decision-makers redefined Israel's approach from one of neighbour-state based threat perception to that of remote neighbour-state based threat perception. This change was prompted by the Iraq issues and weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) in Iran.

This chapter is divided into four main sections, including the chapter conclusion. In the first section, the factors that influenced the formation of Israeli security policy (i.e. history, religion, ideology and threat perceptions) are examined. In the second section, the basic pillars of the Israeli security doctrine are scrutinized. The last section analyses the changes and continuities in Israeli security thinking and the implementation of the military doctrine during and after the main wars: the War of Independence, the war against Egypt in 1956, the Six Day War, the War of Attrition, the Yom Kippur War, the war in Lebanon in 1982 and the Kuwait War in 1991.

2.1. ISRAELI NATIONAL SECURITY: BACKGROUND AND ROOTS

Concern about the concept of security from an Israeli perspective stems from two major elements: first, historical experience and religion, and second, the establishment of Israel in the midst of neighbour countries of Arab decent and culture.

From the first Zionist Congress held in Basel, Switzerland in 1897 until the establishment of Israel in 1948, the experience of exile and diaspora punctuated by massacres, pogroms and the Holocaust created a legacy of deeply-felt insecurity that was brought into the newly-established State of Israel (Riadh, 1977: 247). The Jews suffered exile from ancient Egypt, from the Kingdom of Babel under the rule of Nebuchadnezzar, and finally the major scattering in 70 AD. Since then, they have been dreaming of establishing a national homeland (Riadh, 1977: 247). In this sense, historical experience can be examined as the first element that has influenced Israel's concept of national security. Uri Bar-Joseph (2000: 99), the Chair of the Division of the International Relations School of Political Sciences University, Haifa, argues "the national security conception of any state is the product of the given reality of external environment and internal resources (the 'operational milieu') as perceived and processed in the minds of her political and military elite (the 'psychological milieu')". Israel's current philosophy of national security stems from both operational and psychological milieus of the Jewish Yishuv (The Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel pre-1948) and the War of Independence of 1948, as well as the Nazi Holocaust (Bar-Joseph, 2000: 99).

Warfare played a significant role in the development of Jewish identity in the Bible and in the Tanakh, the Jews' Holy Scriptures (Cohen, 1997: 1). Religion and national security in Zionist ideology often coexist in what can only be described as an uneasy partnership. Zionist ideology justifies the idea of creating a permanent settlement in Palestine saying that it is a fulfilment of God's promise to the Children of Israel. Further, it maintains that Jewish nationality and the establishment of the State of Israel is a religious duty derived from the Torah (Mahmoud, 2007: 43). According to Genesis 13:14-18, God promised his prophet Abraham that He would create the Israeli state, "on that day God appeared and promised Abraham by saying: I would give this land to your descendants. Then he built an altar for God who appeared to

him."[2] In this regard, Golda Meir, former prime minister of Israel, stated, "This country exists as the fulfilment of a promise made by God Himself. It would be ridiculous to ask it to account for its legitimacy" (Klingenberg, 2006: 289). Menachem Begin (former prime minister of Israel) also asserted, "This land has been promised to us and we have the right to it" (Klingenberg, 2006: 289).

The second element that influenced the Israeli national security at its conception relates to the environment in which the State of Israel was established. The small nation was established in the midst of the Arab world. The importance of this factor was confirmed by Arab attacks immediately following the establishment of Israel.

Shai Feldman comments:

> Israel viewed the extent and possible ramifications of Arab hostility differently from relations between most other countries. In most cases, hostility is limited by the finite character of the issues, such as the location of boundaries or the distribution of resources. These disputes can be resolved, even if violently, without threatening the existence of any of the states involved. By contrast, Israelis regarded the Arab states as hostile to the very existence of their state and as determined to make every attempt to destroy it (1997: 8).

These two elements (historic experience combined with religious belief and the establishment of Israel among Arab neighbours) shaped and entrenched the belief, which remains to the present, that the first priority of Arab foreign policy is the destruction of Israel (Merom & Jervis, 1999: 410). In this respect, Levi Eshkol, former prime minister of Israel, stated, "the protection and the preservation of the Israeli state both spiritually or otherwise, and the enhancement and continuity of that state in the future are the top preoccupations of the Israeli people" (Mahmoudd, 2007: 43). Israel, since its creation, has adopted a strategy that does not favour any Arab country. Israel deems itself to be under a persistent security threat due to the imbalance of power and because it is outnumbered by its Arab neighbours. This is a real dilemma for Israel. Exacerbating the situation is the fact that all Arab countries rely on regular armies, while Israel relies on its reserve troops.

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[2] For further information: Genesis, 13: 14-18. http://nasb.scripturetext.com/genesis/12.htm

2.2. THE BASIC PILLARS OF THE ISRAELI SECURITY DOCTRINE

The Israeli security doctrine takes into account the geopolitical factors that led to the emergence of the state of Israel, as well as those factors that continue to exist. Israel is a small state that lacks strategic depth and is surrounded by a sea of potentially hostile neighbours. Cohen (2001) states that the elements of the Israeli military doctrine can be categorized into constraints and responses. The constraints arise from the conditions associated with Israel's lack of size in terms of territory, population, economic resources and so on. These conditions are considered by the vast majority of Israel's security community to be permanent operating factors over which they can wield little influence. The responses or strategic solutions, such as deterrence, first strike, safe borders, strategic depth and alliances with great powers, have been developed in response to the constraints (Cohen, 2001: 3). These strategic solutions are discussed in the remainder of this section.

2.2.1. Deterrence Strategy

Since its establishment in 1948, Israel has pursued strategic policies that rely on the concept of deterrence (Honig, 2007: 1). In this regard, Ben-Gurion and Dayan (then Chief of Staff), set the rules during the 1950s and 1960s for this policy based on the principle of disproportionate response. According to Honig (2007), the logic of Ben-Gurion and Dayan was based on three considerations. First, the small size of Israel and its limited population would make it too vulnerable to human loss to allow the home front or the standing army to absorb too many attacks based on attrition warfare strategies adopted by its enemies. Second, the small physical land size of Israel would mean a lack of strategic depth, necessitating the transfer of battleground the enemy territory by pre-emption whenever that was possible. Third, the need to deter fresh waves of attacks would require that every round of hostilities end as a crushing blow to Arab adversaries (Honig, 2007: 1).

However, as with most countries, Israel sought to protect its national security interests through peaceful means, using deterrence rather than war with its Arab opponents. To achieve that end, Israel has used both general and specific deterrence. Moreover, according to Rodman (2001: 7), it has practised deterrence in the realms of both conventional and unconventional warfare.

Israel's general deterrent posture has primarily been based on the concept of projecting an image of overpowering strength. In this respect, the Israeli leadership always admitted that although the Arab states could initiate a war, Israel would determine the extent and intensity of that war. This refrain has conveyed a message to the Arab world that it would not be sensible to initiate war against Israel; costs would outweigh any benefits. On the other hand, Israel's specific deterrent posture has been shaped around the concept of laying down "red lines" – the predefined conditions that, if breeched, would provoke a firm military response (Rodman, 2001: 7). The ability to effectuate deterrence ensures Israel is not defeated by its enemies. Israel has succeeded in consistently conveying to the Arabs that they would be subject to severe military retaliation if they attacked first.

According to Allon (1970: 62), the Israeli military doctrine confirms the principle of superiority for securing military victory:

> the army which is capable of achieving victory must have the potential of deterrence, and in order to do that successfully the military power alone won't work unless it is used promptly without hesitation and with the due credibility and decisiveness at the right.

Israel has successfully applied deterrence measures within the context of its security doctrine. It has not only achieved, but maintained, qualitative military superiority over Arab armies and to date this has worked to deter them from launching a large-scale attack against Israel. On the surface at least, it appears Arab countries have accepted Israel's existence as a reality. Israel has been able to convince them that military confrontation would cause the attacker irreparable damage (Handle, 1973: 13). In this respect, Yaniv (1987: 275) sees the aim of deterrence as "not to vanquish the opponent but to teach it a lesson … and thereby contribute to change in its strategic and political calculus."

This deterrence strategy was questioned in light of the Yom Kippur War in 1973. This war proved to be a watershed in Israeli political history and in the development of its national security outlook. The outcome of the war demonstrated that neither Egypt, nor Syria, had been deterred by Israel's defence policy, but rather they succeeded in surprising Israel. The Israeli Defence Force (IDF) had difficulty in achieving a quick

and decisive victory (Inba, 1998: 71). In fact, since 1973, Israel's capability to deter armed conflict, mainly at the lower end of the spectrum of violence, has eroded even further. The 1973 war shook Israel's confidence in its own conventional superiority and resulted in subjecting its fundamental assumptions concerning national security to intense public debate (Inba, 1998: 71-72).

Undoubtedly, since 1973, conventional deterrence has become less successful in solving Israel's security dilemma despite gains from the 1967 war, which created new strategic circumstances that changed the nature of its security problems. However, Israeli deterrence strategies have not prevented the Arabs from carrying out attacks against Israel as evidenced by the 1973 war, the first and second Palestinian *intifada* and the 2006 confrontation between Hezbollah and Israel. Furthermore, in 1991, Israel failed to deter Iraq from attacking its cities with missiles, which resulted in economic paralysis within Israel (Inba, 2008: 8). All of these events dissipated the illusion of Israeli military superiority by causing major cracks in the legend that the Israel army was unbeatable.

Additionally, since 2003, Iran, one of the most influential states in the Middle East, has challenged the international community with its decision to pursue a full nuclear fuel cycle. Such pursuits would give Iran the ability to develop its own nuclear weapons. This has raised the question of whether this would challenge not only Israel's conventional deterrence tactics, but Israel's nuclear deterrence. This is a question that will be considered below.

The diminishing success of conventional deterrence brings our attention to the second principle, the role of "first strike" – a tactic that can enhance the credibility of conventional deterrence strategies.

2.2.2. First Strike

The principle of first strike was not accepted in Israeli strategic thinking until the mid-1950s. It was developed by Dayan in response to the changing regional politico-strategic circumstances. In 1948, Israel was exposed to direct Arab attacks and at this stage, military strategy relied upon preventing these attacks (Horowitz, 1993: 20). First strike has two elements: preventive war and pre-emptive war. A preventive war is based on the assumption that the enemy is determined to attack the country at some

time in the future. Thus, first strike prevents a medium or long-term deterioration of military forces when there is no immediate threat to the political or territorial status quo (Kober, 1996: 199-200). Israel has staged several preventive strikes, including the bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor in July 1981, the military strike on the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) in Tunisia in 1985 and the bombing of the alleged Syrian nuclear reactor on 6 September 2007.

The term pre-emptive war refers to repelling or defeating a perceived inevitable and immediate offensive (Yaniv, 1980: 11). The adoption of pre-emptive war tactics, according to the Israeli perspective, would mean that Israel would not allow any Arab military force to develop into a real threat to its national security. Pre-emptive strikes involve two elements. The first is taking the initiative in war and the second is launching a surprise attack to destroy the enemy's forces. In other words, it would mean taking action before the enemy, targeting locations where enemy forces are gathering, thus preventing the attack. Consequently, a pre-emptive strike tends to reduce the chances of the enemy controlling the war in terms of time, venue and method of conducting the war (Agaha, 1982: 12). Yigal Allon identifies the pre-emptive strike as "an operational initiative ... against concentrations of enemy forces and the capture of vital strategic targets on enemy territories at a time that such enemy is preparing to attack you, before he has succeeded in actually launching such an attack" (Kober, 1996: 200). The most notable example of pre-emptive strikes was the Israeli strike in the 1967 war (commonly known as the Six Days War). After a period of high tension between Israel and its neighbours, Israel launched surprise air strikes against Arab forces. The outcome was a swift and decisive Israeli victory (Van Evera, 1999: 129).

The concept of first strike has constituted one of the main pillars of the Israeli security doctrine. Having a tried and true first strike capability is a real test of the credibility of the deterrence (discussed in the previous section), effecting practical measures against the Arab enemy as a punishment for any aggressive moves. Consequently, credibility is considered to be one of the basic principles of Israeli deterrence theory. The real value of deterrence lies in the level of determination, persistence and ability to translate threats into action (Schelling, 1966: 187).

Therefore, the question here is: to what extent could Israel decide, much as it did twenty-eight years ago with respect to Iraq, and two years ago with respect to Syria, to attack Iran's nuclear installations in order to delay development of weapons capability? This will be discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

2.2.3. Safe Borders

The smallness of Israel as a state applies in many ways – its physical land area, its population and its limited resources, when compared to the surrounding Arab states taken as a whole. Thus, the perception of insecurity and isolation within Israel makes the concept of "safe borders," as a solution for Israel's lack of strategic depth, extremely important. For Israel, safe borders, or "secure frontiers," are a changeable concept that varies depending on circumstances. The concept was deeply embedded in Ben-Gurion's thinking. He argued that "the boundaries of the Jewish state should be flexible, never firmly fixed, but dependent on the nature and need of the historical moment and regional and international condition" (Masalha, 2000: 6). In the early 1960s, Ben-Gurion, in reply to General De Gaulle about the borders of Israel, stated "I would prefer a state without definite borders, as it would not have been possible to establish the settlements with definite Israeli borders" (Masalha, 2000: 7). In other words, Israel's lack of commitment to the establishment of permanent borders formed the basis for Israeli foreign policy in relation to the Israel-Arab conflict at the time.

It is worth mentioning that the term "safe borders" was purposely selected to fit the Israeli doctrine with regard to the issue of borders. The term is highly flexible to reflect the dynamic and relative requirements of Israeli security. Therefore, according to Riyadh (1977: 247), the issue of Israeli security is relative and dynamic as there will always be a need for Israel to expand its borders in the direction of potential danger in order to increase its strategic depth enabling the effectiveness of its security plans.

Israeli strategic doctrine worked towards emphasising the concept of safe borders as a solution to the problem of a lack of strategic depth. Thus, Abba Eban, the former minister of Israeli Foreign Affairs, defines the strategic meaning of safe borders as "borders that can be defendable without the need for initiating a pre-emptive military action" (Masalha, 2000: 205). Israel has taken advantage of this slogan to keep its

borders dynamic so that they are defined by the outcome of the latest conflict or negotiations. Israel's concept of safe borders features the following notions:

1. There is a link between the idea of safe borders and national security. This implies the freedom to expand its borders through military occupation of a new territory, and to shrink the borders in response to political settlement (Masalha, 2000: 1). However, the wider the occupied territory, the safer and more secure the nucleus of the settlement base (better known as the heart region) will be from surprise attacks. Levi Eshkol referred to this in August 1967 when he said, "the occupied territory should help us establish a secured border to the extent that [we / Israel] would no longer be vulnerable to attacks by our neighbours" (Al-Kailani, 1969: 338). Israel continues to take advantage of the concepts of security and safe borders to justify its expansionist policies in its attempt to secure vital space.

2. The acquisition by Hezbollah, Iraq and the Palestinians of long-range ballistic missiles that could reach Israel reduced the significance of territory to Israeli strategic thinking. Thus, given the nature of such threats, neither the Golan Heights, nor the West Bank would be of any advantage to Israel as "any future confrontation between Israel and its enemy would feature space as a battleground making the use of missiles decisive in any future war" (Steinberg, 1999: 1).

3. From the foregoing it becomes obvious that Israel is in need of safe frontiers rather than safe borders. The former are politically and legally oriented; the latter indicate a natural and permanent phenomenon. In contrast with the idea of vital space, which is defined by borders controlled by the state, the idea of safe frontiers is characterised by expansionist policies based on natural barriers that can be controlled by Israel given its technological and military superiority, demilitarised zones that Israel can take over at any time it chooses to, or a security belt, as was the case with southern Lebanon (Mahmoud, 2007: 67).

4. The idea of safe frontiers depends on geo-strategic considerations as defined by Israeli political leadership. Since the security of Israel is persistently under

threat, the concepts of security and safe frontiers are purposely vague, indefinite, inaccurate and variable, depending on current circumstances that may be both subjective and objective (Masalha, 2000: 205).

Based on the above discussion, the persistent endeavour of Israel to pursue the concept of safe borders can only be understood as a pretext to legalise its expansionist policies in order to take control of strategically important territory so that it may operate militarily both defensively and offensively. Otherwise, it is difficult to explain its occupation of territories such as the Golan Heights in Syria, Shaba farms in Lebanon and other territories in the West Bank, all of which only have strategic importance (Masalha, 2000: 1-26).

2.2.4. Strategic Depth

There is no doubt that geopolitics constitutes one of the most, if not the most, important factors that influence the security of Israel. According to Aharon Yaniv (1980: 3), strategic depth is the space between the furthermost line at which a country may maintain military forces for its defence without impinging upon the sovereignty of another country and its own vital area which, if occupied by an enemy, signifies an end to the sovereignty of that state, and in the case of Israel, the physical liquidation of the state. The Israeli security situation is affected by the geographical location of the state, its lack of strategic depth and its long coasts and borders. Moreover, the flat and narrow land makes the vast majority of the populated areas, industrial areas and military facilities a soft and easy target for any enemy (Rodman, 2002: 44).

In the case of an all-out high-tech war, Israel's security could be threatened by virtue of its high-density population and lack of strategic depth along its widest expanse between the Mediterranean and Syria. Most of Israel's population (80-90 per cent) is concentrated along a 120 km stretch of coast between the port of Haifa in the north and Ashdod in the south; the other major population centre includes Jerusalem. Not only is the population highly concentrated in these areas, but the country lacks depth (it is only 75 km across), which reduces its ability to organise an in-depth defence (Attaya, 1998: 2).

The vulnerable geographic situation of Israel caused those who masterminded the Israeli security concept to base their assumptions and plans on the fact that Israel

cannot afford an all-out war within it territories. Thus, the military planners in Israel developed a strategy to move the battleground of any war into enemy territory, particularly in the case of an all-out war. In support of the value of this tactic, Kohane states, "the Israeli army should take the initiative if necessary and move the battleground to the enemy's territory as quickly as possible … in an attempt to create a virtual strategic depth" (1990: 20).

2.2.5. Alliances with Great Powers

It is easy to understand that since Israel is a small state with limited resources and is surrounded by Arab states, a perception of insecurity and isolation has resulted within Israel. Alliances with superpowers were perceived to be of significant importance for this and a number of other reasons, including: assurance of political and economic support, access to modern weaponry, being recognised as a legal state and to consolidate Israel's position in the Middle East. Podeh (1999: 122-123) notes that alignment with superpowers would improve Israel's capability for action through external balancing and would provide a measure of extended deterrence through the commitment to defend another party.

In its early years, Israel looked for support from the West and the East, adopting a policy of neutrality between 1949 and 1950. The changing Cold War environment in the Middle East led Israel to the conclusion that an alliance with Western powers would be more helpful in contending with the hostile Arab world (Podeh, 1999: 122-123). A detailed explanation is provided in the next section.

2.3. CHANGES IN ISRAELI SECURITY THINKING

2.3.1. The 1948 War of Independence

The War of Independence (as it is known by Israelis), or the Nakba (as it is known by Arabs), was the first in a series of wars fought between Israel and its Arab neighbours. The Israeli security concept was shaped after this 1948 war. Israel's indefensible borders, limited population and poor resources forced Ben-Gurion to accept two realities. The first reality was that war would always be "few against many," indicating the asymmetry between Israel and its opponent(s), both in terms of

manpower and weaponry. The second reality was that Israel needed superpower support.

In 1948, Israel had a Jewish population of less than one million people, while neighbouring Arab state populations were several million strong (Kober, 1996: 190). Ben-Gurion's concern about this demographic asymmetry was evident when he stated:

> We have a unique military problem – we are few and our enemies are many ... Even if our population grows, and it will grow ... but even if it is doubled and tripled and quadrupled, we will still be in a situation of the few against the many, because there is no objective possibility that we will ever be comparable in numbers to our actual and potential enemy in the future (Levite, 1990: 31).

As a solution to the problem of a small population, a plan was conceived to increase Jewish settlements and Arabs would be resettled from Israeli-occupied land. This became a top priority of the Israeli security policy. By 1950, the Knesset, Israel's Parliament, had enacted the Law of Return. Further legislation followed with respect to immigration matters via the Nationality Law of 1952. The legislation declared the right of Jews living in any nation to come to Israel, their ancestral homeland, and to facilitate the practicalities of such immigration. These laws established an open-door policy for Jews and provided extensive benefits for immigrants in order to mitigate risks of a small population (Shuval, 1998: 4). As a result, Israel started to oversee the absorption of vast numbers of Jews from all over the world. A major wave of over half a million Jews immigrated between 1949 and 1952. Many immigrants fled renewed persecution in Eastern Europe and increasingly hostile Arab countries (Luttwak & Horowitz, 1983: 81-82).

The resettlement of Arabs from Israeli-occupied territory was through the Palestinian exodus. According to Ilan Pappé (2006: xiii), in 1948 the forced relocation of close to 800,000 Palestinians occurred. This was more than half the Palestinian population at the time. It involved the destruction of 531 Palestinian villages and the emptying of 11 entire Palestinian urban neighbourhoods. In 1938, Ben-Gurion stated, "I am for compulsory transfer; I do not see anything immoral in it" (2006: xiii). In 1948, ethnic cleansing was implemented by Zionist leaders, mainly Ben-Gurion and the other ten members of his consultancy group, in order to create the character of the Jewish state

(2006: 6). This report is supported by a group of historians called the New Historians. This group of historians use the archival sources in the West and Israel, particularly the opening of the protocols of Israel's cabinet meetings and the declassification of the Haganah Archive in Tel Aviv, along with the IDF and Israeli Defence Ministry Archive in Givatayim. The New Historians argue that this expulsion was an organised policy and was part of a deliberate plan (Pappé, 2006). The details of the "ethnic cleansing strategy" are fully described in an Israeli military/government document entitled Plan Dalet (Pappé, 2006: xiii).[3]

The need for superpower support was perceived by Israeli leadership as an important factor in securing political and economic support, and, above all, in securing access to modern weaponry. In its early years, Israel felt that alignment with either major power (i.e. the US or the Soviet Union) would improve its capacity for action through regional balancing and would also provide some measure of extended deterrence through a commitment by one of these superpowers to defend Israel. Israel adopted a policy of non-alignment, thereby avoiding having to take sides in any conflict between the US and the Soviet Union. Good relations with the Eastern bloc were also considered important in order to gain the benefits from the immigration of massive numbers of Jews that was expected from those countries.

At that time, US leadership acted to minimize its support of Israel because they believed such support might jeopardize US global and regional interests. Eisenhower's administration consistently considered Israel a hindrance to US political and security interest in the Middle East (Bar-Siman-Tov, 1998: 233). In the early years, Israel settled for access to weaponry from European powers, France in particular. In 1953, France announced that it intended to sell French weapons to Israel. The two nations maintained a unique political and military relationship based on the common perceived threat of Pan-Arab nationalism. France played an active role in strengthening the young state and was Israel's main weapons supplier until it withdrew from Algeria in 1962, thereby removing the binding influence from the relationship. Thereafter, France became increasingly critical of Israel. This new reality became clear when, in the lead up to the Six-Day War in June 1967, France imposed an arms embargo on the region. This embargo mostly affected Israel, since it

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[3] For more details Pappé, I. (2006). *The ethnic cleansing of Palestine*. Oxford, Oneworld.

had come to rely heavily on France for weapons over the previous decade. During the late 1950s, France supplied Israel with the Mirage, Israel's most advanced and first serious combat aircraft to that date. During the 1970s, Israel used the Mirage as a model for developing its own fighter aircraft, the Kfir (Rowley & Taylor, 2006: 79).

Although Israel recognised the need for Western support, doing so was inconsistent with its desire for self-reliance. The matter was further complicated because Israel found it could not fully trust such support. It became apparent that Western interests were not analogous to Israeli security perceptions when the Tripartite Declaration[4] was made in May 1950. This declaration specified that both the Arabs and Israel should maintain a sufficient level of armed forces in order to provide internal security and legitimate self-defence and that both were to be important actors in the defence of the region (Podeh, 1999). Furthermore, Israel was excluded from the 1951 US-UK initiative of the Middle East Defence Alliance at a time when Israel's most hazardous threat was Egypt (Tal, 1995). Israeli response to these developments took two forms: a concerted political effort was launched to block arms shipments to the Arab countries and parallel attempts were made to persuade both Britain and the US to regard Israel as a key asset in any response to the growing communist threat in the region. These negative developments in relations with the superpowers strengthened Israel's desire to remain self-reliant, despite the aforementioned political, economic and security-related realities (Tal, 1995).

Israel had no time to deter enemies before it was attacked in the 1948 War. In the aftermath, Israel took a defensive position not only because of external and internal political circumstances, but because the IDF's capabilities were inadequate to implement a doctrine permitting first strike. The principle of first strike was not possible until 1955; however, the principle of transferring war into enemy territory was implemented during the 1948 War and as such immediately became a credible military doctrine.

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[4] Also referred as the Tripartite Agreement of 1950, it was a jointly issued statement by the United States, Britain, and France, which guaranteed the territorial *status quo* determined by Arab - Israeli armistice agreements.

2.3.2. The 1956 Suez War/Sinai Campaign

In October 1956, Israel joined forces with Britain and France to attack Egypt. The British and French decision to launch the military operation was influenced by Egyptian President Gamal 'Abd al-Nasser's announcement of the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company, which was jointly owned by the British and French. In addition, Nasser's support for the anti-French insurgency in Algeria and his efforts to subvert pro-British Arab regimes in Jordan and Iraq also contributed to the Anglo-French motivation to overthrow his regime.

The Israeli decision to go to war was determined by the belief that Israel's main threat came from just one Arab country, Egypt. The Egyptian threat had been further exposed in 1955 with Nasser's announcement of the Egyptian-Czech arms deal, thus transforming its military capabilities. Furthermore, the outcome of the war increased the asymmetry in weaponry as Britain agreed to leave its military assets to Egypt after withdrawing from the Canal. The Egyptian-Anglo agreement also eradicated a buffer between Egypt and Israel (Schiff, 1999: 438). Thus, the 1956 attack by Israel can be seen as part of its preventive war policy to stop an attack by Egypt after it had received qualitatively better arms (Tal, 1995).

However, according to Laron (2009: 72), expanding Israeli territory was the implicit aim behind Israel's 1956 Sinai Campaign. He argues that the main motivation that pushed Israel to occupy Sinai was its desire to expand its borders at the expense of its neighbours. Laron discloses that in 1955, Israel planned to occupy Cairo and Damascus. His argument relies on military documents, including minutes of meetings of the Israeli General Staff, that had been kept secret until only recently. On 26 October 1955, a year before the Suez War, the Israeli Chief of Staff, Moshe Dayan, informed his generals of a phased plan to expand the borders of Israel, starting with a pre-emptive strike against Egypt. The plan was supposed to be put into effect during the Suez War, but France opposed it. The Israeli Military Staff implemented the first phase of the plan in 1967, enabling Israeli forces to reach the banks of the Suez Canal.

According to Laron, the plan was to occupy the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula as far as the eastern shore of the Suez Canal. Occupation of Cairo was to be part of the second phase of the attack. With regard to the West Bank, the Israeli forces would

reach the city of Hebron in the first phase and the River Jordan in the second. As for Syria and Lebanon, Israel was supposed to stop at the Litani River in Lebanon, and move to the north of the Golan Heights to occupy Damascus. Laron states that Israel held many discussions and consultations during the 11 years between the 1956 and 1967 wars. Those discussions focused on the necessity of expanding its borders when any war broke out. Laron also describes the Israeli way of dealing with Egypt as schizophrenia. According to Israeli intelligence, the Israeli army could easily defeat Egypt. Although this outlandish belief was of itself a sufficient reason not to participate in the war, the Israeli leaders insisted on taking part in the conflict to expand their borders (Laron, 2009: 74).

The offensive objective of conquering enemy territories was fulfilled successfully in the Suez campaign with a short and decisive victory. However, in spite of the support of Britain and France, Israel could not turn its military victory into a political victory because of the lack of support from the US (Lanir, 1984: 20). The need to gain US support became one of the most important political-security aims of Israel after its 1957 withdrawal. Nevertheless, as part of the withdrawal agreement, access to the Red Sea remained open for Israel, the Sinai Peninsula was demilitarised and terrorist attacks from the Egyptian-controlled Gaza Strip stopped. Importantly, the withdrawal also provided Israel with long-term American backing giving Israel strategic advantages, such as the occupation of Sinai and other territories in 1967 (Bar-On, 1994: 10).

The deteriorating relations between the US and Egypt climaxed in mid-1957, when it became apparent to the US that, despite its condemnation of the Britain-French-Israel attack on Egypt and its successful effort to save Egypt from a military debacle, Nasser showed no gratitude. On the contrary, he rejected the Eisenhower Doctrine[5] and undermined US interests in the Arab world, effectively raising himself up as a hero to the Arab world in their struggle against the West. Washington came to view Nasser as a key client of the Soviets. Moreover, in the course of frequent crises in the Middle

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[5] The term 'Eisenhower Doctrine' refers to a speech by President Dwight David Eisenhower on 5 January 1957, within a "Special Message to the Congress on the Situation in the Middle East." Under the Eisenhower Doctrine, a country could request American economic assistance and/or aid from US military forces if it was being threatened by armed aggression from another state.

East that evidenced Nasser's attempts to undermine pro-Western governments, the US began to appreciate that Israel was the only stable pro-Western country in the Middle East. Israel's presence and military strength helped contain anti-Western elements in the area and facilitated US successes in stabilizing the situation in Lebanon and Jordan in July and August of 1958, respectively (Alteras, 1993: xv).

Arguably, Israel's strategic relationship with the US was more important for Israel than gaining strategic depth in Sinai because strong bilateral relations with the US were found to be a more effective deterrent against the Arabs. In short, the 1956 War was unsuccessful in gaining strategic depth, but brought a more significant outcome in the form of strong relations with the US, increased deterrent effects and provided Israel with ten and a half years of nearly uninterrupted peace, giving the IDF a significant measure of self-confidence and forward-planning capability (Handel, 1973: 37).

2.3.3. The Six Day War/1967 War

The Six Day War was fought between Israel and the neighbouring countries of Egypt, known then as the United Arab Republic (UAR), Jordan and Syria. The outcome was a swift and decisive Israeli victory. At the war's end, Israel took effective control of the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan and the Golan Heights from Syria. The most dramatic modifications to Israeli security were added strategic depth, secure borders and improved relations with the US.

2.3.3.1. Strategic Depth and Secure Borders

Israel gained a significant increase in geographical depth with the occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip. The borders, which were previously vulnerable to surprise attack, now had natural barriers, such as highlands (the Golan Heights), desert (the Sinai Peninsula) and a river (the Jordan River), helping Israel protect its heartland (Becker, 1971: 21). The occupied territory resulted in "secure borders" or "defensible borders" replacing the "indefensible borders" as set out in the 1949 established borderlines. Abba Eban describes the new situation as "borders which can be defended without a pre-emptive initiative" (Horowitz, 1993: 23).

Despite the new strategic depth, which helped improve the deterrent factor, the principle of first strike was retained by Israeli military leaders due of the continued threat from a joint Arab attack by Egypt, Syria and Iraq (Becker, 1971: 23).

2.3.3.2. Relations with the US

The 1967 War was a turning point for Israeli security policy and the basic pillars of the military doctrine in terms of its strategic relations with the US. Although the US did not provide combat support to Israel during its most successful war, material and political support flowed freely. For the US, not only did Israel's victory humiliate Nasser, who had been a stumbling block for US plans in the region, but the war also took on a symbolic glow; a single American proxy had beaten the combined forces of Soviet proxies.

In the aftermath of the 1967 war, several factors feature in the relationship between the US and Israel. First, Israel's capture of Sinai, the Golan Heights, the West Bank and Gaza made territory a key to resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict. A close relationship between Israel and the US could enable the latter to convince the former to make the concessions necessary to resolve the conflict. Second, Israel's military victory rendered it the most formidable military power in the region, piqued the Arab states and the Soviet Union and impressed the US, thus interlocking the Arab-Israel and superpower conflicts. Third, Israel's new military and strategic importance made political and strategic cooperation with it more attractive to the US than had been the situation in the past. Indeed, some military analysts in Washington saw Israel as a strategic asset in regional and global terms (Bar-Siman-Tov, 1998: 241).

In the post-1967 period, Israel was politically and militarily dependent on the US. Politically, support from the US enabled Israel to ignore UN Security Council Resolution 242 that demanded Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories. The UN deemed the occupation to be illegal. Israel had confidence in American support, since the US did not see it as a hindrance to its interests in the region (Telhami, S. 1990: 409). Militarily, the US became the main supplier of military equipment to Israel, assuring its military superiority over the Arab states. The US agreed to deliver A-4 Skyhawk jets in February 1966. In late 1968, with strong support from Congress, President Johnson approved the sale of Phantom fighters to Israel, an important

development in the relationship because Phantoms were offensive aircraft (Bar-Siman-Tov, 1998: 237).

The four most important pillars of Israel's security policy were implemented successfully during and after the Six Day War: strategic depth, secure borders, decisive victory and strong relations with a superpower (the US). The 1967 War proved to be a momentous turning point for Israeli security policy due to the significant changes resulting from the outcome of the war. While its deterrence policy failed prior to the war, Israel successfully implemented a pre-emptive strike that expanded its strategic depth (Levite, 1989: 90). However, although this was a significant change, it did not alter Israeli security strategy. The new borders, which made absorption of the enemy's first attack possible, were easy to defend; thus, the new option of a static type of defence along fortified defence lines was created. Thus, the military victory combined with occupation of territories radically improved Israel's strategic situation and self-confidence. This led to the reduction, but not abandonment, of the policy of pre-emption (Bar-Siman-Tov, 1998: 241).

2.3.4. The War of Attrition

Following the 1967 War, there were no serious diplomatic efforts to resolve the issues at the heart of the Arab-Israeli conflict. At an Arab League summit in Khartoum in September 1967, the Arab states formulated the "Three No's" policy: no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel and no negotiations with Israel.[6] This formed the basis of the policies of the Arab governments towards Israel until the 1973 Yom Kippur/October War. Nasser believed that only a military initiative would either compel Israel, or pressure the international community to force a full Israeli withdrawal from Sinai (Dunstan, 2005: 7-14). This prompted the War of Attrition. Beginning as a low-intensity war between Israel and Egypt, it was fought along the Suez Canal from 1967 until August 1970 when it finally ended with a ceasefire.

In the War of Attrition, Israel was unable to achieve a decisive victory. Thus, the military doctrine objectives of achieving a short and decisive victory were brought

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[6] Essential Documents: Khartoum Resolution. *Council on Foreign Relations*. http://www.cfr.org/publication/14841/khartoum_resolution.html?breadcrumb=%2Fpublicatio n%2Fpublication_list%3Ftype%3Dessential_document%26page%3D69. Retrieved 2009-11-08.

into question (Lanir, 1984: 29). Furthermore, the war augmented Israeli dependency on Washington as the US adopted an active role to help protect Israeli security, particularly after the Soviet Union's direct involvement in 1970 on the Egyptian side (Liden, 1979: 100). The US offered support in three ways. The US gave Israel political support when it invoked its veto power against proposed UN imposed sanctions against Israel. The US also provided economic support when it financed Israel's huge military expenses for the operation. Finally, the US provided military support by providing high-tech arms to Israel (Horowitz, 1993: 35). This support increased Israel's dependency on the US, making strong relations not only desirable, but a necessity for Israel.

2.3.5. The 1973 October War/Yom Kippur War

The October War was another watershed event in Israel's political history and in the development of its national security outlook. As a result of this war, confidence in the IDF was shattered and the fundamentals of the basic pillars of Israel's national security were again questioned (Inbar, 1998: 63).

2.3.5.1. The fragility of Israeli Deterrence

The October war began with a massive, successful Egyptian attack that confirmed the fragility of Israel's deterrence policy. While Israel's position in terms of territory and its powerful army may have appeared advantageous, it was insufficient to deter Syria and Egypt from launching a first strike, thereby challenging the status quo (Inbar, 1998: 71).

2.3.5.2. Lack of an Israeli Pre-emptive Attack

Israel's military doctrine failed to launch a pre-emptive strike in the October war due to a failure of an early-warning from either the Aman (Israel's Intelligence Corps) or the Air Force. Much of the culpability fell on the shoulders of the intelligence community, which was blamed for not accurately assessing the intentions of Egypt and Syria to go to war. The Intelligence Corps had been responsible for formulating Israel's intelligence estimate by evaluating the likelihood of war. This evaluation was built on a number of assumptions. First, it was thought, accurately, that Syria would not attack without Egypt. Second, it was believed, on the basis of information

received from a high-level Egyptian informant, Ashraf Marwan, that Egypt would not attack until it received weaponry due from Bulgaria (Tal, 1977: 51).

2.3.5.3. The Adverse Effect of War on US-Israeli Relations

According to Inbar (1998: 66), after the 1973 war Israel faced one of the most hazardous periods in its history because it was left with "only one friend that was the US." Israel's dependency on American military, economic and political support, allowed Washington to influence Israeli policy. Thus, the US pressured Israel to stop its advances towards the end of the war. Moreover, during the negotiations with Egypt, the US compelled Israel to make concessions to reach an agreement (Mandelbaum, 1988: 361). Then in 1975, the US implemented an arms embargo on Israel until it signed the Sinai II disengagement agreement with Egypt in September 1975 (Horowitz, 1993: 32). The tense relations between Israel and the US continued until Israel signed a final peace treaty with Egypt in 1978. Due to US pressure, Israel signed five agreements with Egypt between 1973 and 1979, resulting in Israel's phased withdrawal from Sinai. This pressure led observers to comment that the US role was harmful to Israel's security interests. In contrast, Donald Bergus claimed that the US strengthened its ties with Israel after 1974 without endangering its own interests in the oil-producing Arab states (1988: 203).

The failure of Israeli deterrence efforts, the absence of an Israeli pre-emptive attack and weaker relations with the US after 1973 increased the importance of a strong defensive strategy based on secure and defensible borders. Despite these failures, Israel achieved a number of vital gains in the negotiation process after 1973. One example of such a gain was during Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in 1977 when Sadat indicated Egypt's acceptance of Israel's legitimacy. This led to the 1978 Camp David Peace Treaty (Mandelbaum, 1988: 361).

2.3.5.4. The Camp David Peace Treaty and the End of the Egyptian Threat

The Camp David Accords were signed by Anwar El Sadat, Egyptian President, and Menachem Begin, Israeli Prime Minister, on 17 September 1978, following thirteen days of secret negotiations at Camp David; the accords led directly to the 1979 Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty.

The treaty triggered a momentous change in Israeli perceptions of external threats and in its security policy. For Israel, the most tangible benefit of the agreement with Egypt was perhaps evidenced by the peaceful mutual border. The first peace treaty with her strongest Arab enemy eliminated one of the two war fronts for Israel and effectively weakened the Arab coalition. This enabled the IDF to reduce their levels of alert on Israel's south-western frontier and reallocate its resources the eastern border, strengthening that boundary against potential attack from Syria, Iraq or Jordan (Mroz, 1981: 47). This treaty was received with controversy among the Arab nations, and led to Egypt's suspension from the Arab League from 1979 until 1989. The end of the Egyptian threat did not change Israeli military doctrine and security policy significantly, since the potential of a coordinated attack from the east continued to constitute the most dangerous threat for Israel in the 1970s (Mroz, 1980: 48).

As part of the agreement, Israel agreed to withdraw its armed forces from Sinai in return for demilitarisation of the areas policed by the UN. The demilitarised areas created buffer zones in an attempt to decrease the possibility of a surprise attack and would effectively extend the warning and mobilisation periods in case of a surprise attack (Horowitz, 1975: 18-19). Demilitarised areas were seen by some politicians and military elite as a substitute for the post-1967 defensible borders concept. However, at that time, almost a quarter of the Israel Labor Party contingent to the Knesset refrained from supporting the agreement with Egypt because the agreement did not insist on defensible borders and claimed that the Arabs could smuggle arms into Sinai and increase the possibility of a surprise attack against Israel. Thus, Israel refrained from signing demilitarisation agreements for the remainder of the occupied territories (i.e., the Golan Heights, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip).Today, there is only limited opposition among the Labor Knesset members to the Rabin government's proposal to fully withdraw from the Golan Heights, despite the party's promise before the 1992 elections to maintain an Israeli presence there. Gur implied in the Knesset that the government was considering giving up the entire Golan and pointed out that the key to winning a war was military technology, not territory (Inbar, 1996: 46)

Nevertheless, the relations between Israel and Egypt were often described as a "cold peace," with many in Egypt sceptical about its effectiveness. The wider Arab-Israeli

conflict has kept relations cool and anti-Semitic incitement is prevalent in the Egyptian media. US diplomatic cables released by WikiLeaks suggest that the Egyptian military continues to see Israel as its primary adversary. In 2008, The Egyptian army conducted military exercises against an "enemy" Israel.

2.3.6. The 1982 Lebanon War

The most serious Arab threats to Israel in the early 1980s came from two Soviet allies. The PLO had its headquarters in Beirut and Syria and held political leverage over Lebanon. Israel was strongly opposed to Palestinian political demands. The PLO increasingly called for a peaceful resolution that is best symbolized by the Ten Points Plan[7] and support for a UN Security Council resolution proposed in 1976. The resolution called for a two-state settlement based on pre-1967 borders. Menachem Begin, among many on the Israeli right, opposed the PLO. Begin stated on more than one occasion that even if the PLO accepted UN Security Council Resolution 242 and recognised Israel's right to exist, he would never negotiate with the organisation (Political Program Adopted at the 12th Session of the Palestine National Council, 1974). This led the PLO to develop its political and military infrastructure in South Lebanon, which it had occupied since 1969, in effect creating an unofficial state within a state. It also acquired destructive weaponry such as tanks and long-range artillery. This raised Israeli concerns about the PLO's ability to establish a large number of settlements in north Israel. Consequently, Israel sought methods by which to eliminate the Palestinian military threat (Inbar, 2008: 55).

Israel also became anxious about the Syrian army build-up and its drive toward what was termed in Damascus "strategic parity with Israel." The Syrian military present in Lebanon was no longer seen as having a divisive effect on its ability to wage war, but as an advantageous option for a two-pronged attack on Israel. This perception, along with the presence of the PLO in Lebanon, led to the Israeli invasion that evicted the PLO from Lebanon in 1982 (Inbar, 1998: 68).

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[7] The PLO's Ten Point Plan adopted at the 12th Session of the Palestine National Council (June 8, 1974). For more details see http://www.un.int/wcm/content/site/palestine/pid/12354

In order to consolidate its position, Israel tried, unsuccessfully, to undermine the PLO by replacing local pro-PLO leaders with an Israeli civil administration in southern Lebanon. However, by the early 1990s, Hezbollah, with support from Syria and Iran, emerged as the leading group and military power, monopolizing guerrilla activity in southern Lebanon (Inbar, 1996: 44). The success of Hezbollah led to the withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon in 2000.

The Israeli pre-emptive strike launched against Lebanon in 1982 sought to achieve at least two political goals: curb Syria's influence over Lebanon and replace local pro-PLO leaders with an Israeli civil administration. This strike confirmed that Israel had readopted a traditional offensive strategy. Further changes to the strategic thinking were the reintroduction of *casus belli*[8], which had been missing since 1967 with the abandonment of "secure borders" (i.e., borders that can be defended without a pre-emptive initiative). The offensive military doctrine and *casus belli* saw pre-emptive strike as an important pillar of Israeli military doctrine, especially with the neutralisation of the strategic depth advantage (Inbar, 1982: 13-15).

Following the August 1982 bombing of Beirut, and particularly in the aftermath of the massacres of Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps perpetrated by Israel allies, the Phalangist forces, opposition to the war in Israel became widespread. As a result, the offensive nature of Israeli security policy was changed. Moshe Arens replaced Ariel Sharon as Minister of Defence, who had been forced out of office following the Kahan Commission's report on the Sabra and Shatila massacres. This led to the reestablishment of the principle of launching a pre-emptive strike only when necessary for Israeli security. The policy, which continued during Yitzhak Rabin's tenure as Minister of Defence between 1984 and 1990, paved the way for Israel's total withdrawal from Lebanon. However, Israel retained its control over what is known as the Israeli Security Zone in southern Lebanon (Horowitz, 1993: 43-44).

It could be argued that Israel was unable to translate its military superiority in the 1982 War into the achievement of its political goals. It did not curb Syria's presence and influence in Lebanon, and its attempt to create a civil administration failed.

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[8] Casus belli is a Latin expression meaning the justification for acts of war.

Despite their influential positions, the Maronites[9] could not obtain their decisive position in Lebanese politics and Syria continued to involve itself deeply in Lebanese politics. The third and most significant aim to eliminate the Palestinian military threat from Lebanon was achieved. However, the Palestinians and the PLO did not stop their war against Israel and threatened Israeli security through the *intifada* which started in 1987 and lasted until 1993. The *intifada* included demonstrations that led to the Palestinian initiative to take control of their future and become their own independent nation. The *intifada* forced Israel to reassess what its main threat was in the 1990s (Inbar. 1996: 51).

2.3.6.1. US-Israeli Relations during the 1980s

In the 1980s, the intensifying competition between the US and the Soviet Union, which was felt deeply in the Middle East, led to convergence between Israel and America on security issues and resulted in a considerable strengthening of bilateral relations. Israel, for the first time, acknowledged that the Soviet Union was an external threat to its security. As Sharon stated:

> … our main security problems during the 1980s will stem from the external threats ... from two sources, namely: One – the Arab confrontation; second – the Soviet expansion which both builds on the Arab confrontation and at the same time provides it with its main political and military tools (Inbar, 1982: 10).

The alliance of the periphery, or "periphery doctrine," was a strategic principle first advanced by Ben-Gurion who suggested the formation of alliances with non-Arab states on the periphery of the Middle East, including Turkey and Iran. In the 1980s, in response to the threat caused by Soviet expansionism in the region, Israel moved to enhance the periphery doctrine in relation to countries not under Soviet influence by broadening its strategic and security interests with them (Alpher, 1990: 6).

Throughout the 1980s, the geo-strategic balance of power in the region was in favour of Israel. The outbreak of the Iraq-Iran War in 1980 provided Israel with a unique window of strategic opportunity. Iraq had been neutralised as a threat to Israel and Syria had become isolated from the rest of the Arab world because it supported Iran.

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[9] Maronites are part of the Catholic Church.

The war diminished the likelihood of a joint eastern-front attack by Syria, Iraq and Jordan.

US-Israel relations were dampened during the 1982 Lebanon war when the US went so far as to contemplate sanctions with the goal of getting Israel to cease its siege of Beirut. The US reminded Israel that weaponry provided by it was supposed to be used for defensive purposes only and suspended shipments of cluster munitions to Israel. This intervention was instrumental in Israel's withdrawal. Many American politicians were concerned that support for Israel in the conflict would consolidate anti-US feelings in Arab countries, endanger the stability of pro-US regimes in the Middle East and provide the Soviet Union with an opportunity to increase its influence in the region. The war served to expose serious differences between Israeli and US policies, such as Israel's rejection of the Reagan peace plan of September 1982. But, it did not change the Reagan administration's support for Israel and the emphasis it placed on Israel's importance in the region. While critical of Israeli actions, the US vetoed a Soviet-proposed UN Security Council resolution to impose an arms embargo on Israel. Overall, the 1982 invasion did not totally sour relations between Tel Aviv and Washington, despite short term difficulties. This is analysed further in Chapter Six.

2.3.7. The 1991 Kuwait Crisis

The 1991 Gulf War that came as a result of the Kuwait crisis had a significant effect on Israeli military doctrine. Iraq fired thirty-nine Scud ballistic missiles into Israel during the seven weeks of war, even though Israel was not involved in the war. Israel was eager to respond to these attacks with military force. However, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir reluctantly agreed not to retaliate against Iraq under pressure from the US, which feared that if Israel became involved, the Arab nations would either withdraw from the US-led coalition against Iraq or join Iraq (Clancy, 1994: 180). The Kuwait war had two countervailing effects on Israeli security policy.

Under the Saddam Hussein regime, Iraq was considered by Israeli politicians and military leaders to be a major Arab threat, particularly in relation to its stock of conventional and unconventional missiles (Feldman, 1992: 189). A combined eastern front attack by Syria, Jordan and Iraq posed a nightmare-type scenario for Israel. The decisive victory of coalition forces destroyed Iraq's capacity to launch a war (Ben-Zvi,

1992: 104). Thus, the outcome of the Kuwait crisis limited the potential of a conventional attack on the eastern front.

Furthermore, the Kuwait war paved the way for the Madrid Peace Conference of 1991 and the 1993 Declaration of Principles, an attempt by the international community to start a peace process through negotiations involving Israel, the Palestinians and Arab countries that included Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. Israel benefited significantly from the peace process, as it was recognised by number of countries, including the two great Asian powers, China and India. The talks came with the promise of tremendous strategic and economic potential. It also saw the establishment of relations with a number of Arab countries such as Oman, Qatar, Tunisia, Morocco and Mauritania. Ironically, despite these improvements to Israel's security position, the Shamir government did not initially view the Madrid Peace Conference as a positive development, since the US had coerced Israel's participation (Karsh, 1997: 99).

The PLO welcomed the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The Arab monarchies that supported the Palestinians financially in their war against Israel cut off their support one month after the end of the war, thus isolating the PLO (Karsh, 1997: 289). The lack of financial aid and international sympathy forced the PLO to move closer to a peace agreement and the signing of the Declaration of Principles.

The Palestinian support for Iraq was popular among the residents of the West Bank and Gaza; however, so as not to undermine the political benefits of the on-going *intifada* at that time, they did not resort to "terrorism." When the war broke out, Palestinian attempts to widen the struggle were curtailed by Israel when they set and enforced a curfew on the entire Palestinian population (Alpher, 1993: 215).

Although the Iraq War resulted in a number of positive outcomes that enhanced the security of Israel, there were also negative impacts, including a new threat of limited surface-to-surface missile attacks that did not require physical proximity to threaten Israel's security (Inbar & Sandler, 1993: 335). Israel, for the first time, had been attacked by a country with which it did not share a common border (Levite, 1992: 148). Even though the ballistic missiles did not pose a significant threat to the country, they did harm members of the civilian population (Levran, 1992: 125). The aspect of

a new conventional threat from a remote country and how Israel should respond in the future was considered after the war.

2.4. CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to demonstrate how Israel's national security policy was conceived and review what elements changed and what elements remained constant from 1949 to 1991. It has been shown that Israel is a state for which security has been the most crucial issue since the very beginning of its establishment. This stems from two major elements: first, historical experience and religion, and second, the establishment of Israel amidst Arab neighbours. In addition, this chapter examined the basic pillars of the Israeli security doctrine that were formulated based on the threats Israel faced, including lack of strategic depth, manpower and weaponry. The pillar strategies that Ben-Gurion established as Israel's first prime minister were: deterrence, first strike, safe borders, strategic depth and alliances with great powers.

Several military events caused the pillars of Israeli security policy to be reviewed between 1948 and 1991. An examination was made as to how each war, starting with the War of Independence in 1948 and ending with the Kuwait crisis in 1991, affected the Israeli security doctrine. It was concluded that, although the pillars of its national security were questioned following each war, they remained as the main principles. This chapter also noted that in the time leading up to the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, Israel's Arab enemies lost their support whilst Israel's primary supporter, the US, remained the only dominant power in the Middle East. Hence, the overall Arab position was weakened against the Israelis. Additionally, the Iraqi threat on the eastern front was significantly decreased upon the US-led coalition's victory over Iraq in the Kuwait Crisis. The Peace Process was another positive development for Israeli security, effectively reducing the possibility of Jordanian participation in an Arab coalition attack due to the 1994 Peace Treaty with Jordan. Before that, the Peace Treaty with Egypt in 1979 had brought about a real change to Israel's security, since Egypt no longer posed a threat to Israel's existence.

The chapter concluded that Israeli security policy did not undergo significant changes until the 1990s when the Peace Process started. At this point, Israeli security shifted from a neighbour-state based threat perception to a remote neighbour-state based

threat perception, based on the attacks by Iraq and the documented threats of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) in Iran. Israel's perceptions of security threats shifted in 1991 away from direct war with adjacent Arab states, to proxy and cold wars between peripheries and their clients. This was, as mentioned, a direct consequence of the separate Peace Processes involving Egypt, then the PLO and finally Jordan.

The following chapters will discuss how Iraq and WMDs in Iran have effected change in the national security of Israel.

Chapter 3

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE CHANGING BALANCE OF POWER IN THE GULF REGION FOR ISRAEL

3.0. INTRODUCTION

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Israeli security focus shifted from a neighbour-state based threat to a remote neighbour-state based threat, with Iraq and Iran as the primary threats in this respect. The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the consequences of the shift in the balance of power in the Gulf region as it affected Israel between 1979 and 2003. Changes to Israeli security within the context of regional balance of power will be presented primarily from an American perspective. Once this is explained, the Israeli position can be better understood.

The chapter is divided into two main sections. In the first section, the deterrence strategy during the Cold War is discussed. In the second section, the containment strategy in the post-Cold War era is analysed.

This chapter demonstrates that during the Cold War, Israel adopted the "Periphery Doctrine," which sought alliances with non-Arab states of the Middle East periphery (specifically, Turkey and Iran) in an attempt to maintain a balance of power against Arab states, primarily Iraq. Even after the Iranian Revolution in 1979, some level of covert relations continued between Israel and Iran because the threat to Israel from the Soviet Union and Iraq continued to be more real than that from Iran. However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the alliance with Egypt in the Camp David Accords and the weakening of Iraq in 1991, Israel changed its policy about Iran, turning the Periphery Doctrine on its head when it sought to build closer relations with its neighbouring Arab states, while portraying Iran as a major threat. Relations between the two nations since then have been hostile, as both countries attempt to gain regional power. However, since the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the seriousness of Iran as a security threat to the state of Israel has increased significantly. Iran rationally regarded Iraq as its first line of defence from the increasing threats of military action against it and therefore sought ways to prevent the US from finding the time or opportunity to secure its control of Iraq. By toppling Hussein's regime, the US

radically altered the "balance of threat" (a term coined by Stephen M. Walt, see below) in the Gulf region. Iraq had been a significant pillar in maintaining a balance of threat with Iran. When the US initially occupied Iraq, it believed that it would be able to replace the government with one that was both strong and pro-American, and able to balance the power of Iran. The US, in its failure to stabilize Iraq, also failed to establish an Iraqi government with the strength required to achieve the desired balance against Iran.

3.1. THE DETERRENCE STRATEGY DURING THE COLD WAR

During the Cold War, the US established a network of militarily-capable regimes as a bulwark against Soviet expansion. The main aims were to stop Soviet access to the resources of the Gulf region and to protect Israel's security. At different times, this strategy involved collusion with various Iranian and Iraqi regimes (Carpenter & Innocent 2007: 67).

3.1.1. Twin Pillar Policy

The British announcement in 1968 to withdraw from the Persian Gulf before the end of 1971 meant that, for the first time in modern history, the Gulf region became side-lined from mainstream international politics. No global power was willing to replace the British. The US was involved in the Vietnam War and the Soviet Union did not make any serious attempt to expand its influence in the region from Iraq and South Yemen, as it was aware of the US sensitivity to any disruption in oil supplies. Therefore, Moscow adopted a cautious strategy aimed at achieving economic and political gains in the Gulf without inciting the US (Al-Saud, 2003: vii). In 1971, the US sought to establish a new security system to fill the power vacuum in the region. Given the hard lessons learned in Vietnam, the US did not want to send its troops to the Persian Gulf. Instead, the Nixon administration formulated the "twin pillar" policy that was built around its two main regional allies, Iran and Saudi Arabia. As the two most powerful regional states, they were charged with securing the area against possible foreign threats. Significantly, the dependence of the US on these two countries effectively tied its fortunes to regimes of frail legitimacy (Al-Saud, 2003: 1).

During the 1970s, inter-state rivalries and the threat of Soviet proxies coming to power or influencing the pillars of Western power were perceived as the main sources

of danger to the West's interests in the region (Barzegar, 2010: 2-3). However, this changed in 1979 with the replacement of the pro-American Shah in 1979 by one of the fiercest anti-US regimes in the world coupled with the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union. These two events signalled the end of the twin pillar strategy. The use of proxies upon which the doctrine depended had failed to provide the necessary security in the Gulf region (Brzezinski, Scowcroft, & Murphy, 1997: 1). Washington was confronted with a new threat from within the region. The Islamic revolution in Iran was a major blow to the American hold on the oil-rich Arab Gulf. However, according to Michael Klare, the application of the Nixon Doctrine "opened the floodgates of US military aid to allies in the Arab Gulf, and helped set the stage for the Carter Doctrine and for the subsequent direct US military involvement of the Gulf War and the Iraq War" (2004: 63).

3.1.2. The Carter Doctrine

In an effort to position the US as the dominant external player in the Gulf region, the US adopted a new Gulf security strategy, the "Carter Doctrine," and was proclaimed by President Jimmy Carter in his State of the Union address on 23 January 1980:

> Let our position be absolutely clear: An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force (Carter, 1980).

The statement indicated to the Soviets that they should not seek control of the region. Planning and executing military operations in the Gulf meant that the US became further immersed in the political dynamics of the region. The Carter administration established the Rapid Deployment Force that would eventually become US Central Command (CENTCOM). At this point, the Carter Doctrine came into being (Seyed & Sarvinder, 2010: 124).

In 1980, when war broke out between Iran and Iraq over a border conflict, the Carter administration was in the unfortunate position of having to back either pro-Soviet Iraq or anti-US Iran. The initial US response to war was muted. President Carter was in what turned out to be his final months in office when Iraqi President Saddam Hussein

launched his initial attack. Carter had no reason to be sympathetic to Iran, which was holding 52 American diplomatic hostages (Galbraith, 2006: 17).

3.1.3. The Reagan Doctrine

When Ronald Reagan came to power in the US on 20 January 1981, he extended the American foreign policy with what is sometimes called the "Reagan Corollary to the Carter Doctrine." This was characterised by a strategy of "peace through strength," which was followed by a warming of relations with the Soviet Union, and subsequently a peaceful end to the Cold War when the Soviet reformer Mikhail Gorbachev rose to power. An important element of Reagan's strategy was to deter the influence of the Soviet Union during the final years of the Cold War by providing overt and covert aid to anti-communist guerrillas that acted against the communist governments of Soviet-backed client states in central Europe. Reagan also took an increasingly hard line against socialist and communist governments in Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia and Nicaragua (US Department of State, Official Web Site). Deterring Soviet influence in the Gulf was a key element of the doctrine and effectively opened the door for Western liberal capitalism in nations that were largely governed by Soviet-supported Marxist governments. The Reagan doctrine[10] was the centrepiece of American foreign policy from the mid-1980s until the end of the Cold War in 1991 (Meiertöns, 2010: 156).

Initially, the Reagan administration continued its predecessor's hands-off approach to the war between Iraq and Iran. However, after Iran turned the military tide in 1982, the administration became concerned about the consequences of an Iranian victory, namely that it would embolden Islamic fundamentalist Shiites in the oil-rich Arab states and lead to the overthrow of Western allies, thereby threatening Western corporate interests. Consequently, the US sided with Iraq, believing that the Iranian leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, threatened regional stability more than Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. The US therefore courted Hussein as the preferred alternative to a revolutionary Iranian Shiite Islamic State (Brzezinski, Scowcroft, & Murphy, 1997).

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[10] The term "Reagan Doctrine" was initially coined by American author, Charles Krauthammer, who used the term in several articles. He used the term to refer to Reagan's State of the Union address of 6 February 1985.

It also saw an opportunity to move Iraq from its alliance with the Soviet Union to a closer relationship with the US (Galbraith, 2006: 17).

The US provided significant aid to Hussein in the war, turning a blind eye to his use of chemical weapons against Iran. The US support for Iraq was not only political, but included battlefield intelligence that helped Iraq target Iranian troops, financial assistance and logistical support, all factors that played a crucial role in arming Iraq. According to the affidavit sworn by Director of Political-Military Affairs in National Security Council, Howard Teicher, in 1995 (which the US government demanded the court seal for national security reasons), "In the spring of 1982, Iraq teetered on the brink of losing its war with Iran ... . In June 1982, President Reagan decided that the United States ... would do whatever was necessary and legal to prevent Iraq from losing the war with Iran" (http://www.realhistoryarchives.com/). Even after Iraq's chemical weapon attacks on its own Kurdish people became public in 1988, the Reagan administration blocked the congressionally-proposed Prevention of Genocide Act and sanctions against Iraq, as it was the largest importer of US rice and an important market for other grains (Galbraith, 2006: 17-18).

However, as the war intensified, the Reagan administration covertly intervened to maintain a balance of power, supporting both nations at various times. The US policy checked both Iraq's and Iran's power by sustaining their involvement in a costly, lengthy and lethal war. George P. Shultz, Secretary of State from 1982 to 1989, described the support to Iraq as a limited form of balance-of-power policy (Samantha, 2002: 176). It was obviously a policy that helped maintain a balance of power between Iraqi Saddam Hussein and the revolutionary Iranian Shiite Islamic State, but led to an eight-year long war.

Eight years of bloodshed finally ended with a UN-mandated ceasefire in August 1988. Iran and Iraq were militarily, politically and economically devastated. However, Iraq recovered its composure relatively quickly, equipped with a powerful, experienced and well-trained million-man army (Carpenter & Innocent, 2007: 69).

During the Cold War, from the time of Nixon until Clinton, the US pursued a continuous policy of deterrence strategies to prevent further hegemonic wars in the region, pitting Iran and Iraq against each other and reducing the risk of the US having

to take sides against a Soviet-Arab supported Iraqi regime. However, during the entire period, the Israeli security interests mandated that Israel continue to support and covertly cooperate with the Shah and Khomeini regimes against Iraq in an attempt to weaken Hussein to the extent that he could not directly threaten Israel as a leader of the pro-Palestinian-Arab coalition. After Israel defeated Egypt in the 1967 and 1973 Wars, the two adversaries signed a peace treaty under the Camp David accords in 1978. At that point, the only Arab regimes standing between Israel's territorial and domestic consolidation remained Syria and Iraq. Therefore, until Israel could reach a tentative deal with Assad respecting the stability of Lebanon, support to the PLO and a status of Golan, Hussein remained the only Arab leader who posed a threat to Israel's national security and position in the Levant. Israel therefore set about to permanently weaken Iraq after Hussein's action against Kuwait in 1991. But the Clinton administration continued to resist Israel's calls to remove Hussein from power, or at least keep Iraq under sanctions and roll-back its nuclear programme under the authority of the United Nations.

The next section will demonstrate how Israel tried to protect itself from the non-Iranian threats (the pre-Khomeini security policy) and from the Arab coalition during the remainder of the Cold War, even while Iraq enjoyed support from the US against the Khomeini regime until 1991. This will be discussed under the section Israel's Cold War-era doctrine, commonly known as the "periphery doctrine."

The outbreak of the Iraq-Iran War in 1980 provided Israel with a unique window of strategic opportunity to fully employ the periphery doctrine through which it could neutralise Iraq, while continuing to isolate Syria from the rest of the Arab world due to its support of Iran and overt threats to Lebanon's security. This strategy was successful to the point that it diminished the likelihood of a joint eastern-front attack from Syria, Iraq and Jordan. While the US sided with Iraq, believing that Iran, under Ayatollah Khomeini, threatened regional stability more than Iraq, Israel continued its strategic alliance with Iran, in direct contradiction to the US deterrence policy, a strategy that continued until 1991, and which changed the basic premises of the Israeli security policy.

3.1.4. The Israeli Periphery Doctrine

During the Cold War, the "Periphery Doctrine" was the cornerstone of Israel's strategic approach to the Middle East. Israel adopted a strategy that sought alliances with the non-Arab countries on the periphery of the Middle East in order to counteract Arab opposition to Israel. Turkey and pre-revolution Iran were two such peripheral states with which Israel had relatively warm relations. However, after the Iranian revolution, relations with Iran began to deteriorate into a war of words. Khomeini was very much against Israel's existence and declared Israel an "enemy of Islam" and "The Little Satan" (the US was called "The Great Satan") and called for Israel's destruction. He stated that "this cancerous tumor of a state [Israel] must be removed from the region" (Cited in Parsi, 2007: 104).

Israel regarded the Iran–Iraq War with great concern. Iran appeared weak because of the chaotic domestic situation following the revolution. Iraq had an army more than four times the size of Israel's and held the world's third-largest oil reserves. Therefore, an Iraqi victory would leave Israel in a vulnerable position, and Iraq would have undisputed hegemony over the Gulf region. It would make the threat from the eastern front worse. Also, with the US intent of making Hussein their new ally, an Iraqi-US rapprochement would have little bearing on Iraq's hostility toward Israel. An Iranian victory, as unlikely as it appeared at the outbreak of the war, did not particularly worry Israel. Iran was a thousand miles away and its ability to participate in a war against Israel was minimal, even if it did overcome Iraq. Thus, according to Professor David Menashri of Tel Aviv University, Israel's foremost expert on Iran, "Throughout the 1980s, no one in Israel said anything about an Iranian threat – the word wasn't even uttered" (Cited in Parsi, 2007: 104).

Despite Iranian opposition to Israel, during the 1980s both countries faced the same regional and international threats that had previously brought them together. The main threats were hostility from their Arab neighbours, especially from Iraq which was hoping to fill the power vacuum in the Arab world after the Camp David Accords saw Egypt ostracised by the Arab world, and the threat from the Soviet Union. As a result of these continuing threats, soon after the Iran-Iraq War broke out, Israel covertly armed Iran without the knowledge of the US and simultaneously sent military personnel to train Iranians in the use of their US-supplied advanced weaponry

(Souresrafil, 1988: 30). The military equipment included 250 tyres for its F-4 fighters as well as USD $135 million worth of anti-aircraft battery missiles, mortars, ammunition and other weapons (Sobhani, 1989: xi). Bergman argues that Israel, in Operation Seashell in 1981, sold Iran USD $75 million worth of arms from the stocks of Israel Military Industries, Israel Aircraft Industries and Israel Defence Force, including 150 M-40 antitank guns with 24,000 shells for each gun, spare parts for tank and aircraft engines, 106mm, 130mm, 203mm and 175mm shells and TOW missiles. This material was first transported by air via the Argentine airline Transporte Aereo Rioplatense, and then by ship (Bergman, R 2008: 40-48). Tehran received American-built tanks from Tel Aviv that the Shah (before his exile) had sent to Israel for repair. According to the Jaffe Institute for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University, Tehran purchased over USD $500 million in military equipment from Tel Aviv between 1980 and 1983. Most of it was paid for by Iranian oil delivered to Israel (Parsi, 2007: 107), the cost of which had been discounted by 25 per cent (Souresrafil, 1988: 84). The military assistance ended with the Iran-Contra Affair in 1985-1986 (Ram, 2009: 36).

Likewise, secret bilateral trade relations were built. Israel attempted to defuse tensions between Washington and Tehran. In return, the Iranians assisted the Israelis by providing plans for the Iraqi nuclear reactor at Osirak. Parsi states that the Osirak attack was discussed between a senior Israeli official and a representative of the Iranian regime in France one month before the Israeli preventive attack. The source of the assertion was Ari Ben-Menashe, a former Israeli government employee and the author of *Profits of War: Inside the Secret US-Israeli Arms Network*. At the alleged meeting, the Iranians explained details of their 1980 attack on the site, and agreed to let Israeli planes land at an Iranian airfield in Tabriz in an emergency (Parsi, 2007: 107). Tel Aviv believed the Iraqi nuclear reactor caused a threat to their security and prolonging the decision to attack would lead to a fatal inability to respond to this threat. There were reports that Iran provided the aerial photographs and other high level information for the successful attack on the Iraqi reactor. Hussein used this incident to claim that Iran was working with the Israelis, but Iran repeatedly denied this allegation, of course (Souresrafil, 1988: 66-67).

In 1986, the Reagan administration became involved in what was known as the Iran-Contra Affair. It began in January 1986 when US president Ronald Reagan and other

senior US officials covertly supplied Iran with badly needed war material (HAWK missiles, TOW antitank missiles and spare weapons parts) in exchange for the freedom of US citizens held hostage in Lebanon (Ehteshami, 2003: 122). In 1985, Tel Aviv made three deliveries of arms to Tehran and Washington directly managed four arms deliveries in 1986. The political scandal came to light in November 1986 after the Lebanese magazine *al-Shiraa* published an article asserting that the US had been providing weapons to Iran in exchange for the release of American hostages held by pro-Iranian militants (Hezbollah) in Lebanon. The article revealed that the US government had been selling arms to Iran since August 1985 (Galbraith, 2006: 23).

These factors demonstrate that the Periphery Doctrine was still fundamental to Israel's security in the 1980s. Israel's desire that Iran remain strong against Iraq was for geopolitical reasons. Iran and Israel were facing the same regional concerns: threats from the Soviet Union and from a strong Iraq. Iran was still an ideal ally because of its location outside the Arab region. According to Bergman (2008: 40), by providing support to Iran during the war, Israel sought to re-establish a significant influence over Iran, which was lost when the Shah was defeated in 1979. Parsi states that in May 1982, Israeli Defence Minister, Ariel Sharon, told NBC that Tel Aviv had supplied Iran with arms and ammunition because it viewed Iraq as "dangerous to the peace process in the Middle East" (Parsi, 2007: 107). Sharon added that Israel provided the arms to Iran because it felt it was important to "leave a small window open" to the possibility of good relations with Iran in the future (cited in Parsi, 2007: 107). Moreover, Iraq had never been a friend of Israel; it had participated in the Arab-Israeli wars, something Iran had never done. Also, of the five Arab nations that had declared war against Israel in 1948, only Iraq failed to sign a ceasefire agreement with the Jewish state, and therefore was technically still at war with Israel (Hiro, 1991: 144).

In addition, the Israelis hoped that if it could gain political influence over Iran, it might maintain a balance of power in the region. Israel did not want Iran's military to collapse totally, nor allow Iraq to gain control over Iran as this would shift the regional power in favour of the Arabs. Intensifying the Iran-Iraq War would thus weaken both Iran and Iraq (both of whom opposed the existence of Israel) and would favour Israel (Bahgat, 2005: 525). The Iran-Iraq war neutralised Iraq as a threat to

Israel and effectively isolated Syria from the Arab world because of Syria's alignment with Iran. Thus, the Iran-Iraq war created a rift among the Arab nations, which benefited Israel in that it reduced the possibility of an eastern-front attack by Syria, Iraq and Jordan with Iraq's attention being diverted to other matters, and thus eliminated Syrian-Iraqi cooperation (Alpher, 1990: 4).

There was also the hope within Israeli security circles that helping or remaining close to Iran would prompt Tehran to restrain its proxy forces in Lebanon and moderate Syria's agenda. In 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon to evict the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). The PLO had established bases in southern Lebanon, from which it fired Katyusha rockets into northern Israel. This war shattered the Palestinian infrastructure, saw the expulsion of the PLO from Lebanon and led to the collapse of the Lebanese government. The Iranian regime took the opportunity presented by the political vacuum to export the Islamic revolution into Lebanon. With this accomplished, Iran created and then used Hezbollah as its proxy to wage battle against Israel and the US without being directly involved (Norton, 2007: 77). This tactic will be considered in greater detail in Chapter Six.

The Israeli arms industry is an important element in the economy; arms sales account for 20 per cent of its total exports and 60,000 jobs. These points factored into Israel's decision to sell arms to Iran.

In summary, Israeli support of Iran during the Iran-Iraq War was based on a number of factors. Maintaining contact and relations with generals in Tehran would be significant if the Khomeini regime fell; prolonging the war would divert Arab attention from Israeli involvement in Lebanon; and the support could help Iran restrain its Lebanese proxy forces that opposed Israel. Other factors included the economic incentives of selling arms to Iran and interest in the welfare of the Iranian Jewish community (Souresrafil, 1988: 113-117).

3.2. DUAL CONTAINMENT STRATEGY IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

3.2.1. The Clinton Doctrine

American support for Hussein changed when Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1991, ostensibly because the latter was drilling Iraqi oil and raising Kuwaiti production, thereby

lowering oil prices at a time when Iraq was desperate for money to repay its war debts. The US went to war under US President George H.W. Bush, with the full support of the international community, unlike the subsequent invasion of Iraq (Polk, 2005: 143). Bush made the US position clear on 11 September 1990:

> An Iraq permitted to swallow Kuwait would have the economic and military power, as well as the arrogance, to intimidate and coerce its neighbours— neighbours who control the lion's share of the world's remaining oil reserves. We cannot permit a resource so vital to be dominated by one so ruthless. And we won't (Bush, 1990).

On 6 August, four days after Iraq's occupation of Kuwait, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 661 (1990), imposing comprehensive economic sanctions under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. This was followed by a US-led military campaign to, among other things, force the Iraqi army to withdraw from Kuwait, compel Iraq to pay war reparations and expose and eliminate any WMD (Polk, 2005: 147).

The US did not finish the job during the Kuwait crisis and left Hussein in power and the important military Republican Guard intact. During a political speech, Bush called for the uprising of the Iraqi people against their dictator. Though he described this moment in his memoir as an "impulsive *ad lib*," the Kurds and Shiites took him seriously with tragic results (Galbraith, 2006: 49). The Shiites in the south rebelled against Hussein's ruling Ba'ath party and Hussein quashed the uprising with his Republican Guard, while American troops looked on. Between March and September 1991, Iraqi forces killed 300,000 Shiites. Embittered, Shiites believed that Bush "encouraged the uprising and intentionally allowed Hussein to crush it because Bush wanted Shiites to be killed" (Galbraith, 2006: 49).

The Kurds began their rebellion by attacking Ba'ath party headquarters and eventually took over all of Kurdistan, the Kurdish ethnic region in northern Iraq. The uprising collapsed when Iraqi troops retook the region and 500,000 Kurds fled Iraqi retribution by crossing the mountains into Turkey. Many Kurds died during their flight due to cold weather and a lack of food and shelter. Their plight drew world attention when it was televised and the US and Britain responded by sending troops to

secure a safe area and establish a no-fly zone that continued through to the Second Gulf War (Galbraith2006: 55).

Bush administration officials explained that they did not want to support the uprisings because they were concerned about the long-term balance of power in the oil-rich Gulf. They wanted a stable Iraqi state, but the Shiite and Kurdish rebellions threatened to break it up. However, the US failure to support these uprisings created fractures that helped lead to the potential break up of Iraq (Galbraith, 2006: 36).

From 1993 to 1997, the Clinton administration believed that the previous US policy of maintaining a balance of power between Iraq and Iran, taking the action necessary to contain whichever nation seemed to present the greatest threat at any time had failed. Therefore, Clinton devised a method of Dual Containment whereby the nations of Iran and Iraq could be simultaneously prevented from embarking upon actions deemed to counter the interests of the international community in general, and the US in particular. The ability of the US to embark on a strategy of containment was a result of the modified structure of the international system that came with the end of the Cold War and America's position as the sole remaining superpower able to work its will without the threat of any serious international backlash. Moreover, neither Iraq nor Iran was able to exert the same level of influence on the regional balance of power as they had prior to their war. As a consequence of the Kuwait crisis, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries were now less reluctant to enter into security arrangements with the US (Myers, 1997: 16-18).

On 18 May 1993, in a speech delivered to the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Martin Indyk, then Senior Director of Near East and South Asian Affairs at the United States National Security Council (NSC), outlined the basic tenets of the policy of dual containment. Indyk emphasised that a particular focus on Iraq would only strengthen Iran. He also stressed that the older policy of sustaining the balance of power between Iran and Iraq would not be pursued as the US had sufficient other regional allies to succeed and sustain its interests (cited in Myers, 1997: 11). In his speech, Indyk stated,

> … the Clinton administration's policy of 'dual containment' of Iraq and Iran
> derives in the first instance from an assessment that the current Iraqi and Iranian

regimes are both hostile to American interests in the region. Accordingly, we do not accept the argument that we should continue the old balance of power game, building up one to balance the other...We will not need to depend on one to counter the other (Myers, 1997: 11).

The Dual Containment policy was intended to weaken both Iran and Iraq in three ways, according to Anthony Lake, National Security Advisor under US President Bill Clinton. During the years 1993 to 1997, the policy was effected through: isolation from the international community, diplomatic and economic pressures such as UN sanctions and/or international boycotts and restrictions on Iran and Iraq military and technical capabilities (cited in Seyed & Sarvinder 2010: 125). According to Myers (1997: 17), the key goal of this policy was to isolate both nations, economically, politically and militarily, in order to increase the chances of a lasting peace settlement between the Arabs and Israel. The simultaneous containment drove US policy to sustain the balance of power in the Gulf region and achieve its two strategic goals of securing the free flow of oil to the West and protecting Israel's security (Barzegar, 2010: 2).

However, the dual containment policy had a negative impact on US foreign policy. By isolating itself from Iran and Iraq, the US effectively cut off any influence it might have had over these two states. The attempt to contain Iran unilaterally pushed Tehran into alliances with China and Russia, shifting sources from western nations towards Russian, Chinese and North Korean technology (Myers, 1997: 26).

It could be argued that, from the end of the Gulf War in 1991 until America's invasion of Iraq in 2003, the US successfully prevented Iraq from dominating the Gulf and curbed its expansionist tendencies, primarily by means of no-fly zones and stringent sanctions. However, the attempts by the US to control Iran politically, economically and militarily failed. Iran rebuilt its military capabilities, expanded its industrial infrastructure and placed an increased priority on its nuclear programme. Although Iran's strength was growing and Iraq's diminishing, the balance in the Gulf remained reasonably intact. However, this changed dramatically in 2003.

3.2.2. The Erosion of the Israeli Periphery Doctrine

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the US invasion of Iraq in 1991, the environment of the Middle East was entirely changed. The two main reasons for Iran and Israel to cooperate no longer existed. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the Arabs no longer received Soviet support; as a result Israel no longer needed Iran as a buffer against the Soviet Union. Additionally, after the Kuwait Crisis, Iraq, formerly the strongest Arab state, was no longer a threat to Israel. In fact, both countries had additional resources and a desire to gain regional supremacy. Thus, there was now an even greater reason for the two to turn against each other.

Iran had become, by default, the most powerful country in the region, thus disturbing the regional balance of power. Israel was forced to change its policy towards Iran now that it had become a real potential threat, and turning the Periphery Doctrine on its head, Israel began to build closer relations with its neighbouring Arab states while portraying Iran as the main threat. According to Israel's military doctrine, potential threats had to be treated as existing threats. The relationship between the two nations since then has been one of hostility, as both countries attempt to gain regional power (Trita Parsi, 24 September 2007).

Israel made a number of convincing arguments against Iran. It pointing out that Iran had a nuclear programme and supported Hezbollah. Also, Iran's anti-Israeli rhetoric was now brought to the forefront. During the 1980s, the rhetoric was largely ignored. But at the end of the Cold War and with a weakened Iraq, there was less willingness to ignore the incendiary statements coming from Iran. Statements denying Israel's right to exist became troublesome. Although the rhetoric in the 1980s had been more vocal, with Khomeini dead and Iraq fallen, the Israelis realized that Iran had become a threat since it was no longer countered by Iraq.

Iranian attempts to reach out to the West throughout the 1990s were ignored by the US. In part, this was because Israeli lobbying convinced the US and the EU that Iran was a threat to Israel and to the rest of the region. Iran therefore started to work against the Palestinian peace process and increased funding to Hezbollah. Rafsanjani, the Iranian president at the time, even sponsored the conference pledging Iran's support to the Palestinian cause under the International Conference to Support to the

Islamic Revolution of Palestine, which was held at the same time as the Madrid Conference. Rafsanjani invited Hamas, Hezbollah and other Palestinian groups to attend (Condesman, 1997: 158). It also increased its rhetoric against Israel.

The removal of Saddam Hussein in 2003 and the de-Ba'athification of Iraq had the opposite effect of that originally desired by the US. The US had sought to install a friendly regime in Iraq that would be pro-US and willing to respect Israel's right to exist. Instead, Iran emerged as the strongest hegemonic power in not just the Gulf region, but also the Levant, by projecting its power beyond the Gulf to directly threaten Israel and the US_position_throughout the Middle East and western Asia overall. This unintended consequence of the Iraqi removal from the regional security equation led the US and Israel to shift their focus from Iraq and institute a two pronged strategy to challenge Iran by opposing its nuclear ambitions and preventing its influence on Lebanon and Syria.

3.3. CONCLUSION

This chapter determined key changes in Israeli security from the context of regional balance of power viewed primarily from an American geopolitical perspective. It was shown that during the Cold War, Israel adopted the "Periphery Doctrine," seeking alliances with the non-Arab states in periphery of the Middle East (primarily Turkey and Iran) in order to maintain a balance of power among the Arab countries. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the US invasion of Iraq in response to the Kuwait crisis, the environment of the Middle East was completely changed. During the 1990s, the attempt by the US to control Tehran politically, economically and militarily failed. Iran was able to rebuild its military, expand its industrial infrastructure and began to place an increased priority on its nuclear programme. As a result, the two main reasons for Iran and Israel to cooperate no longer existed. Therefore, Israel changed its policy concerning Iran and the Periphery Doctrine was turned on its head as Israel sought to build closer ties with neighbouring Arab states and began portraying Iran as its main threat.

Although Iran's strength was growing and Iraq's diminishing, the balance in the Gulf region remained reasonably intact until 2003 with the American removal of Hussein as the principal strategic counterweight to Iran, thus paving the way for an expansion

of Iran's influence. Iran rationally regarded Iraq as its first line of defence. With the increasing threats of military action against Iran, Tehran began looking for ways of preventing the US from finding the time or opportunity to implement military action against it. In an ironic twist, the US involvement in Iraq worked to strengthen the Iranian position in the region. This dramatic change opened a cold war between Iran and Israel over the Iranian nuclear programme and Tehran's increasing financial and arms support of Hezbollah based out of Lebanon. The Iranian nuclear deterrence and the Iranian forward defence in its struggle with Israel will be further highlighted in Chapters Five and Six.

Chapter 4

FROM DUAL CONTAINMENT TO REGIME CHANGE

4.0. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapters undertook a secondary data analysis and detailed a number of American strategies that had been adopted since the 1948 inception of Israel. The objective of these strategies was to containing the Gulf region and its main powers, Iran and Iraq. Under the Nixon Doctrine (the twin pillar strategy), Iran's military was allowed to be built up. After 1979, containing the Islamic regime in Tehran was accomplished through support of Saddam Hussein under the Carter and Reagan Doctrines. Iraq turned out to be the stronger state in the Iran-Iraq War (1980-88), which had an inconclusive outcome. The literature review detailed that after the war, Iraq was quite belligerent against the West and its Gulf Arab partners and until 2001, the threat it posed to core Western interests after the invasion of Kuwait mandated a direct response from the US through continuous engagement with the region under the Bush and Clinton's "dual containment" policies. This was a hitherto effective doctrine implemented with the intent of preventing the rise of two anti-Western powers in the region. The historical evidence suggests that the US strategies remained effective until the rise of neo-conservatives in US policymaking circles.

However, the following sections will argue that, from a position of deterrence in the region through lesser aggressive diplomatic strategies since 1968, the post-2001 US strategy to protect its geopolitical interests in the region came to embrace a more militant approach through pre-emptive war doctrines and regime changes effected under President George W. Bush. In this chapter, we will examine how the pre-eminence of neo-conservatives in US policy planning hierarchies in the aftermath of the 9/11 tragedy effectively tempered the US foreign policy processes, and were further influenced by the Israeli government through its strong Jewish lobby, triggering a sense of urgency about the Iraqi threat of developing weapons of mass destruction and an intent to attack Western targets throughout the broader Middle East.

September 11 paved the way for neo-conservative ideology regarding America's role in the world to emerge in full force. The idea of regime change in Iraq, previously an

unpopular tactic, now became practicable, as Hussein's regime was linked with terrorism (Packer, 2005: 112). The assumption was that the containment policy toward Iraq had to be changed to a war policy following the 9/11 attacks (Packer, 2005: 112).

This chapter investigates exactly how US policy led to America's invasion of Iraq by observing how the neo-conservative policy agenda grew out of the post-Cold War environment and was reinforced in the post 9/11 era. The chapter begins with an in-depth analysis of the relationship between the Bush Doctrine and Iraq. It then moves on to examine the impact that the major pro-Zionist neo-conservative research centre, the Project for the New American Century (PNAC) had on the Bush administration and the Iraq War by exploring the strong influences of the neo-conservatives, most of whom are associated with the PNAC. Many also have close ties to Israel's Likud Party and are widely known to have long called for the overthrow of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. While this chapter did not neglect the significant role of the Israel lobby such as the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) or (J Street) in the Iraq War but this chapter focus more in the Project for the New American Century (PNAC) as a large number of PNAC members who call for the regime change in Iraq were appointed to key positions within the Bush administration. This allowed them to more easily influence the development of military and foreign policies, in relation to the Iraq War

The chapter also demonstrates the direct link between the PNAC members and Israel in mapping and drafting *A Clean Break*, the plan considered by observers, such as Ian Buruma and Karen Kwiatkowski (2006), to be the road map for the US invasion of Iraq. It also analyses the Israeli involvement in the Iraq War by exploring three dimensions: the military, the economy and politics. The chapter develops by assessing how the 2003 war affected the Israeli security doctrine by exploring four positive impacts for Israeli security. The first was the removal of Iraq from the radical Arab camp. The second was the abolition of the threat of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) coming out of Iraq. The third was the undermining of Iraq's support of the Palestinian *intifada* and resistant groups. The fourth was how the Iraq War boosted the hegemony of the US in the region.

This chapter also argues that the Iraq War resulted in a number of negative outcomes for Israeli security. The failure of the US to bring about a peaceful solution in Iraq created a new threat source for Israel, challenging its security. The instability in Iraq has increased the power of Iran making it one of the most significant threats to Israeli security. The Bush administration invaded Iraq, but the lack of pre-war planning meant the US was unable to moderate the inevitable expansion of Iran's influence. This chapter argues that the US was so focused on removing Hussein from power; they largely overlooked the wider geopolitical ramifications of his removal.

4.1. POST-SEPTEMBER 11: THE BUSH DOCTRINE

The Bush Doctrine was the name given to a set of foreign policies adopted during the presidency of George W. Bush in the wake of the 11 September 2001 attacks. Charles Krauthammer, a Washington Post columnist, argues that "the Bush Doctrine is, essentially, a synonym for neo-conservative foreign policy" (Schmidt & Williams 2008: 4). The doctrine was characterised by a strategy that gave the US the right to demand security from states that "harbour or give aid to terrorist groups," and was used to justify the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan and also led to the toppling of Hussein's regime in 2003 (Kaufman, 2007: 1). In an address to the US Congress less than 12 hours after the 9/11 attacks, President Bush declared that the US would "make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbour them" (Rhem, 2011). Hence, the Bush Doctrine has come to be identified with a policy of preventive war against any regime that poses a potential threat to the security of the US, even if that threat was not immediate; a perception that has been used in part as a rationale for the 2003 Iraq War (Page, 2003).

The Bush Doctrine is a marked change from the policies of deterrence that shaped Washington's foreign policy during the Cold War and during the brief period between the collapse of the Soviet Union and 9/11.

The key elements of the Bush Doctrine policies were outlined in a National Security Council policy paper entitled *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* published on 20 September 2002 (National Security Council September 2002). It was updated in 2006 and states:

The security environment confronting the United States today is radically different from what we have faced before. Yet the first duty of the United States Government remains what it always has been: to protect the American people and American interests. It is an enduring American principle that this duty obligates the government to anticipate and counter threats, using all elements of national power, before the threats can do grave damage. The greater the threat, the greater is the risk of inaction – and the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack. There are few greater threats than a terrorist attack with Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act pre-emptively in exercising our inherent right of self-defence. The United States will not resort to force in all cases to pre-empt emerging threats. Our preference is that non-military actions succeed. And no country should ever use pre-emption as a pretext for aggression (National Security Council, March 2006).

Accordingly, it can be argued that the Bush Doctrine rested on two main pillars: pre-emptive strikes and promoting democratic regime change.

4.1.1. Pre-emptive Doctrine

The events of September 11 dramatically showed the willingness of terrorists to inflict large-scale destruction and death on American soil (Schmidt & Williams 2008: 4). The attacks revealed that the traditional methods of deterrence and containment were no longer credible when it came to rogue states and terrorists bent on using WMDs. The US was no longer able to rule out the option of using force pre-emptively, rather than reactively (Kaufman, 2007: 1). John Ikenberry (2002: 49) explains that the neo-conservative argument was that terrorists and the regimes supporting them "cannot be deterred because they are either willing to die for their cause or able to escape retaliation". In his address to the US Military Academy (West Point) on 1 June 2002, President Bush made it obvious that pre-emptive war strategies would play an influential role in the future of American foreign policy and national defence:

We cannot defend America and our friends by hoping for the best. We cannot put our faith in the word of tyrants, who solemnly sign non-proliferation treaties,

and then systemically break them. If we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long—our security will require transforming the military you will lead—a military that must be ready to strike at a moment's notice in any dark corner of the world. And our security will require all Americans to be forward-looking and resolute, to be ready for pre-emptive action when necessary to defend our liberty and to defend our lives Bush.

Furthermore, Colin Powell, the United States Secretary of State (2001–2005), explained that the National Security Strategy (NSS) of September 2002 declared that they (the US) had the "sovereign right to use force to defend ourselves" (Chomsky, 2003:1) from nations that possess WMDs and cooperate with terrorists, the official pretexts for invading Iraq (Chomsky, 2003:1).

Regarding the issue of the use of pre-emptive strikes against states such as Iraq, Iran and North Korea ("The Axis of Evil" states), there were two opposing views within the Bush administration. Secretary of State Colin Powell and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, as well as US Department of State specialists, argued for what was fundamentally the continuance of existing US foreign policy to garner international support in order to establish a multilateral consensus for action. The opposing school of thought as represented by the Department of Defence camp included Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld, along with a number of influential Department of Defence policy makers including Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle. This camp argued that the US position as sole remaining superpower made direct and unilateral action both possible and justified, and that America ought to embrace the opportunities for democracy and security that comes with this power. President Bush eventually sided with the Department of Defence camp, accepting their recommendations (Kaufman, 2007: 126).

Noam Chomsky argued that what was being called pre-emptive war was merely a euphemism for direct aggression (Chomsky, 2003). The thought behind this mandate is that it is an easy recourse to war whenever and wherever an American president

chooses. According to Abraham D. Sofaer[11] (2003: 220), there are four key elements for justifying pre-emption:

1. The nature and magnitude of the threat involved;

2. The likelihood that the threat will be realised unless pre-emptive action is taken;

3. The availability and exhaustion of alternatives to using force; and

4. Whether using pre-emptive force is consistent with the terms and purposes of the UN Charter and other applicable international agreements.

4.1.2. Promoting Democratic Regime Change

The promotion of democracy was central to the George W. Bush administration's promotion of both the war on terrorism and its overall grand strategy, in which it was assumed that US political and security interests could be advanced by the spread of liberal political institutions and values abroad (Monten, 2005: 112). Kaufman argued that the root cause of 9/11 and similarly inspired aggression was the culture of tyranny in the Middle East that spawns fanatical, aggressive, secular and religious despotisms. Therefore, the US had to promote democratic regime changes in that region. Neo-conservatives entirely embrace this idea and strongly support the notion that American foreign policy ought to actively and, at times, forcefully work to promote democracy. For instance, Charles Krauthammer argued, "with the decline of communism, the advancement of democracy should become the touchstone of a new ideological American foreign policy" (cited in Schmidt & Williams 2008: 10).

A week after September 11, Bush is reported to have told one of his closest advisers that "we have an opportunity to restructure the world toward freedom, and we have to get it right" (Jervis, 2003: 368). He expounded this theme in a formal speech marking the six-month anniversary of the attack:

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[11]Abraham D. Sofaer was a federal judge for the US District Court for the Southern District of New York, and then a legal adviser to the US State Department. He is currently a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University.

When the terrorists are disrupted and scattered and discredited…we will see then that the old and serious disputes can be settled within the bounds of reason, and goodwill, and mutual security. I see a peaceful world beyond the war on terror, and with courage and unity, we are building that world together (Jervis, 2003: 368).

In a series of speeches in late 2001 and 2002, President Bush stated that the US ought to support the promotion of democratic regimes around the world, but primarily in the Middle East, as a strategy for combating the threat of terrorism. In addition, he argued that the US had the right to take direct and unilateral action to secure its own security interests without international approval from multilateral organisations such as the United Nations respecting the legitimacy of the actions (Allen, 2007). In his 2003 State of the Union Address, President Bush stated, "Americans are a free people, who know that freedom is the right of every person and the future of every nation. The liberty we prize is not America's gift to the world; it is God's gift to humanity" (cited in Monten, 2005). Moreover, in a January 2004 speech at National Defence University following his second inauguration, Bush stated, "The defence of freedom requires the advance of freedom" (Monten, 2005: 112). Thus, the Bush administration's national security policy became centred on the direct application of US military and political power to promote democracy in strategic areas (Monten, 2005: 112).

Jonathan Monten further argued that there are two main factors behind the promotion of democracy in US strategy: the expansion of material capabilities in the form of political and economic influence of the US globally and the presence of a nationalist domestic ideology. He also states that the Bush administration held the promotion of democracy abroad under the Bush Doctrine as essential to the achievement of US objectives in the war on terror (Monten, 2005).

In order to gain a better understanding of the Bush administration's decision to invade Iraq, it is necessary to delve deeper to highlight the influence of the PNAC.

4.2. THE INFLUENCE OF THE PNAC ON THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION IN RELATION TO THE IRAQ WAR

In 1997, two neo-conservatives, William Kristol, editor of *The Weekly Standard*, and Robert Kagan, senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, established an American think tank based in Washington called The Project for the New American Century (PNAC). The PNAC's goal is "to promote American global leadership" based on a few fundamental propositions, such as "American leadership is both good for America and good for the world" and support for a "Reaganite policy of military strength and moral clarity" (www.newamericancentury.org/aboutpnac.htm). Throughout the period 1997 to 2003, the PNAC constantly pushed the agenda for regime change in Iraq. Therefore, it is apparent that the agenda to topple Hussein was being established before Bush even became president, and predated the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001.

Following the perceived Iraqi reluctance to cooperate with UN weapons inspections, on 26 January 1998 PNAC members, including Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz and Robert Zoellick, posted a public letter to President Bill Clinton on the PNAC website. The open letter urged Clinton to pay more attention to the Middle East issue and to reform his foreign policy. The letter claimed that the foreign policy in place at the time was not working, and a new policy "should aim, above all, at the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime from power" using all necessary means, including military. The letter stated:

> We are writing you because we are convinced that current American policy toward Iraq is not succeeding, and that we may soon face a threat in the Middle East more serious than any we have known since the end of the Cold War. In your upcoming State of the Union Address, you have an opportunity to chart a clear and determined course for meeting this threat. We urge you to seize that opportunity, and to enunciate a new strategy that would secure the interests of the U.S. and our friends and allies around the world. That strategy should aim, above all, at the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime from power. We stand ready to offer our full support in this difficult but necessary endeavor (www.newamericancentury.org/aboutpnac.htm, letter to President Bill Clinton, 26 January 1998).

Along with offering their full support, the signatories claimed,

> [the Policy of] Containment of Saddam is not working, thus if Saddam regime achieved in acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) it would pose a threat to the U.S. troops in the region, its allies in the Middle East like Israel and the moderate Arab regimes, and a significant portion of the world's oil supply in the Gulf region will all be put at hazard…the security of the world in the first part of the 21st century will be determined largely by how we handle this threat (www.newamericancentury.org/aboutpnac.htm, letter to President Bill Clinton, 26 January 1998).

They also argued:

> We can no longer depend on our partners in the Gulf War to continue to uphold the sanctions or to punish Saddam when he blocks or evades UN inspections…American policy cannot continue to be crippled by a misguided insistence on unanimity in the UN Security Council. (www.newamericancentury.org/aboutpnac.htm, letter to President Bill Clinton, 26 January 1998).

They further stated that war on Iraq was justified by Hussein's defiance of the UN "containment" policy and his persistent threat to US interests.

On 19 February 1998, a further letter to President Clinton calling for Hussein's removal from power was written under the auspices of the Committee for Peace and Security in the Gulf, the organisation set up in 1990 by Richard Perle (the former political director of the Democratic National Committee), and former Congressman, Stephen J. Solarz (D-NY). It was signed by those who signed the first letter, as well as Douglas Feith, Michael Ledeen, Bernard Lewis, Martin Peretz and David Wurmser, to name a few (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007: 244). President Bill Clinton could not afford to ignore the letters as he was facing mid-term elections and impeachment. Although the President "did pay lip service to the goal of ousting Saddam he did little to make it happen" (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007: 244). Furthermore, he was definitely not considering the use of military power to overthrow the Hussein regime. Thus, the neo-conservatives were unable to sell the scheme to invade Iraq during the Clinton

years. However, they did succeed in making regime change in Iraq an official aim of the US government (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007: 244).

In addition to these two high-profile letters, a letter was sent on 29 May 1998 to Republican members of the US Congress, Newt Gingrich and Trent Lott, in an attempt to pressure Congress to pass the Iraq Liberation Act. The letter stated:

> Mr. Speaker and Mr. Lott, during the most recent phase of this crisis, you both took strong stands, stating that the goal of U.S. policy should be to bring down Saddam and his regime. And, at the time of the Annan deal, Senator Lott, you pointed out its debilitating weakness and correctly reminded both your colleagues and the nation that 'We cannot afford peace at any price' (PNAC).

On 30 January 1998, four days after the date the public letter from the PNAC members to President Bill Clinton was posted on the PNAC website, two neo-conservatives, William Kristol and Robert Kagan, published an article titled *Bombing Iraq Isn't Enough*. The article started with the strong statement that "Saddam Hussein must go." The article's primary argument was that regime change in Iraq was necessary to remove the threat in the Middle East. Kristol and Kagan also argued that the administration's decision to assert military action starting with three to four days of bombing weapon sites would prove fruitless because if five weeks of heavy bombing in 1991 failed to take Hussein out, five days of bombing would also likely fail. They argued that since the location of all weapon sites were unknown, "the only way to remove the threat of those weapons is to remove him, and that means using air power and ground forces, and finishing the task left undone in 1991" (Kristol & Kagan, 1998)

In September of the same year, Kristol published an article in the *Weekly Standard* entitled "A Way to Oust Saddam," commenting on Wolfowitz's plan to establish "a 'liberated zone' in southern Iraq for opponents of Saddam, where they could mobilise and organise a provisional government, and gain international recognition" (Kristol, 1998). In his article, Kristol proposed two ways to implement this plan: first, the Iraqi opposition should be supported with dollars and weapons and should be politically recognised; and second, the President should be authorised to use force against Hussein (Kristol, 1998).

On 16 November 1998, when Iraq expelled the UN weapons inspectors, including Richard Butler, the head of the weapons inspections team, accusing them of acting as spies for the US, Kristol, in his article, "How to Attack Iraq," bluntly stated, "any sustained bombing and missile campaign against Iraq should be part of any overall political-military strategy aimed at removing Saddam from power" (Kristol, 1998). Kristol also welcomed the idea of creating a liberated zone, stating,

> … a 'liberated zone' in southern Iraq that would provide a safe haven where opponents of Saddam could rally and organize a credible alternative to the present regime...The liberated zone would have to be protected by U.S. military might, both from the air and, if necessary, on the ground (Kristol, R ,1998, online posting, *newamericancentury.org*, *web.archive.org*).

On 7 January 1999, the PNAC circulated a memorandum that criticised the US and UK bombing of Iraq in Operation Desert Fox in December 1998 as ineffective. The PNAC questioned the viability of Iraqi democratic opposition, which the US had embarked on in support of the Iraq Liberation Act, and referred to any "containment" policy as an illusion (Mark, 1999).

After the election of George W. Bush in 2000, a large number of PNAC members and/or signatories to the letters noted above were appointed to key positions within the Bush administration. This allowed them to more easily influence the development of military and foreign policies, especially in relation to national security and the Iraq War (The Christian Science Monitor, 2004). Under the Bush administration, the calls for regime change in Iraq became more intense. Stan Crock, Senior Editorial Director at Accenture, in his article "Bush's Foreign Policy: Like Father, Like Son?" stated that there was little hope for any serious action against Iraq. He argued that Bush, Sr. "sent troops to Iraq to protect oil, but not to oust a repressive regime" and that Bush, Jr. would also be concerned with strategic matters rather than democratic values (Crock, 2000).

On 20 September 2001, nine days after the 9/11 attacks, the PNAC sent a letter to President Bush praising his desire "to lead the world to victory" in the war opposing terrorism and promising their full support. It also agreed that the US must not only seek out those responsible, but "other groups out there that mean us no good."

Quoting the president again, the letter goes on to propose that in order to carry out the "first war of the 21st century," the US should not only to attack and destroy Osama bin Laden, but should also support a determined effort to effect a regime change in Iraq:

> We agree with Secretary of State Powell's recent statement that Saddam Hussein 'is one of the leading terrorists on the face of the Earth'…It may be that the Iraqi government provided assistance in some form to the recent attack on the United States. But even if evidence does not link Iraq directly to the attack, any strategy aiming at the eradication of terrorism and its sponsors must include a determined effort to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq. Failure to undertake such an effort will constitute an early and perhaps decisive surrender in the war on international terrorism (Letter to President Bush, 20 September 2001).

On 6 December 2001, the PNAC circulated a memorandum from nine leading members of Congress calling for Saddam Hussein's removal from power. They noted that Hussein "cannot be permanently contained." They further pointed out that as long as he is in power, "he will seek to acquire weapons of mass destruction ... .We have no doubt that these deadly weapons are intended for use against the United States and its allies" (Congressional Letter on Iraq, 5 December 2001).

On 5 December 2001, the President made it clear in a letter to Congress that the "war on terrorism" was made even more urgent by the fact that terrorist states such as Iraq were actively developing nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. The nexus of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction made the removal of Hussein key to success in the overall war on terrorism, and a matter of considerable urgency. This letter aimed to reassure the Bush administration that there would be bipartisan political support for the President when he moved on to the next crucial phase of the war (Congressional Letter on Iraq, 5 December 2001).

As the months passed, and perhaps due to the impact of this letter, it became increasingly evident that the administration was determined to remove the Hussein regime. The debate inside the administration was no longer over whether to invade, but when to go in, how to attack, what to do with Iraq after deposing Hussein and whether to try to involve the UN. According to Cohen, there was a vision of building

a democratic Iraq with "American values [that] would radiate through the region captured president's imagination" (2005: 144).

On 19 March 2003, the PNAC published an article titled "The Statement on Post-War Iraq" supporting the US invasion of Iraq. The article stated,

> Although some of us have disagreed with the administration's handling of Iraq policy and others of us have agreed with it, we all join in supporting the military intervention in Iraq. The aim of UNSC Resolution 1441 was to give the Iraqi government a 'final opportunity' to comply with all UN resolutions going back 12 years. The Iraqi government has demonstrably not complied. It is now time to act to remove Saddam Hussein and his regime from power.
>
> The removal of the present Iraqi regime from power will lay the foundation for achieving three vital goals: disarming Iraq of all its weapons of mass destruction stocks and production capabilities; establishing a peaceful, stable, democratic government in Iraq; and contributing to the democratic development of the wider Middle East (http://www.newamericancentury.org/iraq-20030319.htm, Statement on Post-War Iraq)

Throughout the run-up to the invasion of Iraq, the WMD issue was presented to the public as the primary rationalisation for invasion. The successfully manipulated public attitudes and by the eve of war, more than half of Americans believed Hussein was involved in the 9/11 attacks (Cohen, 2005: 149). This was despite the fact that according to David Kay, the lead American inspector, no WMDs were found in Iraq. Furthermore, Vice President Cheney's persistent claims of a connection between Iraq and the 9/11 attacks were also unsubstantiated. Indeed, according to Cohen (2005: 153) the evidence suggested that Hussein had in fact rejected bin Laden's offer to cooperate. Cohen concludes, "The war did nothing to reduce the threat of terrorism. It did not bring democracy to Iraq" (2005: 157).

Richard Clarke, the top counterterrorism specialist on the National Security Council, a career bureaucrat who had served in several administrations, including those of Clinton and Bush, published a volume (*Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror—What Really Happened*) in 2004 that reopened the debate on why the US attacked Iraq. Clarke argues that Bush had taken America into an unnecessary and

costly war, that only served to strengthen terrorism around the world, not diminish it (Cohen, 2005: 158). In 2004, Bob Woodward, the investigative journalist who uncovered the Watergate scandal, published a second book on the Bush administration. Unlike the first one, widely considered uncritical, in *Plan of Attack,* Woodward (2004) revealed that the administration had privately diverted the funds appropriated for Afghanistan and used them in the war against Iraq (Cohen, 2005: 158).

It could be argued that the PNAC's 16 January 1998 letter to President Clinton (along with other position papers, letters and reports) served to urge Clinton to embrace the plan for the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime from power, and the large number of PNAC members appointed to the Bush administration, including Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, John Bolton, Richard Armitage, and Elliott Abrams (see Table 4.1 below), made the invasion of Iraq a strong probability.

Table 4.1: PNAC Affiliates Appointed to Key Positions by the President Bush **Administration**

Name	Position(s) Held
Elliott Abrams	• Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Democracy, Human Rights, and International Operations (2001-2002) • Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Near East and North African Affairs (2002-2005) • Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor for Global Democracy Strategy (2005-2009) (all within the National Security Council)
Richard Armitage	• Deputy Secretary of State (2001-2005)
John R. Bolton	• Under-Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Affairs (2001-2005), • US Ambassador to the United Nations (2005-2006)
Dick Cheney	• Vice President (2001-2009)
Eliot A. Cohen	• Member of the Defence Policy Advisory Board (2007-2009)
Seth Cropsey	• Director of the International Broadcasting Bureau (12/2002-12/2004)
Paula Dobriansky	• Under-Secretary of State for Global Affairs (2001-2007)

Name	Position(s) Held
Francis Fukuyama	• Member of The President's Council on Bioethics (2001-2005)
Zalmay Khalilzad	• US Ambassador to Afghanistan (11/2003-6/2005) • US Ambassador to Iraq (6/2005-3/2007) • US Ambassador to the United Nations (2007-2009)
I. Lewis 'Scooter' Libby	• Chief of Staff to the Vice President of the United States (2001-2005) under Dick Cheney
Richard Perle	• Chairman of the Board, Defence Policy Board Advisory Committee (2001-2003)
Peter W. Rodman	• Assistant Secretary of Defence for International Security (2001-2007)
Donald Rumsfeld	• Secretary of Defence (2001-2006)
Randy Scheunemann	• Member of the US Committee on NATO, Project on Transitional Democracies, International Republican Institute
Paul Wolfowitz	• Deputy Secretary of Defence (2001-2005)
Dov S. Zakheim	• Department of Defence Comptroller (2001-2004)
Robert B. Zoellick	• Office of the United States Trade Representative (2001-2005) • Deputy Secretary of State (2005-2006) • 11th President of the World Bank (2007-2009)

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_for_the_New_American_Century#cite_note-Valenzuela1-38

4.3. ISRAEL AND THE IRAQ WAR

As discussed in the previous section, there is strong evidence that the major pro-Israel neo-conservative research centre, PNAC, played a key role in prompting the Bush administration to invade Iraq. Pressure from Israel and its lobby was not the only factor behind the Bush administration's decision to attack Iraq in March 2003, although it was a critical element. This section will demonstrate the existence of a direct link between PNAC members and Israel in drafting and mapping the plan *A Clean Break*, considered by some observers to be the road map for the US invasion of Iraq.

Following President Bush's speech concerning Iraq on 13 September 2002, a senior Israeli official said that he "set things right" (cited in Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007: 233). Furthermore, the left-wing Israeli opposition leader, Yossi Sarid, commended the American position as positive, but expressed concern that the US attack was likely to create an "earthquake" in the Middle East (cited in Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007: 233). A spokesman for Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon told the French press that "Israel was satisfied with the speech, which set things straight because he did not raise any doubt about the design of the United States to force Iraq to get rid of non-conventional weapons" (cited in Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007: 233). *Haaretz* reported on 26 February 2001 that "Sharon believes that Iraq poses more of a threat to regional stability than Iran, due to the errant, irresponsible behavior of Saddam Hussein's regime" (cited in Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007: 233). Furthermore, in September 2002, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres told CNN that "the problem today is not if, but when" to attack Iraq. He also stated that postponing an attack would be a grave mistake because Hussein would be better armed down the road (cited in Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007: 233).

Benjamin Netanyahu, then Prime Minister of Israel, published an article on 20 September 2002 in the *Wall Street Journal* titled "The Case for Toppling Saddam." In the article, Netanyahu declared:

> Two decades ago it was possible to thwart Saddam's nuclear ambitions by bombing a single installation. Today nothing less than dismantling his regime will do…I believe I speak for the overwhelming majority of Israelis in supporting a pre-emptive strike against Saddam's regime (Wall Street Journal, 2002).

On 16 August 2002, ten days before US Vice President Cheney delivered his speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars national convention in Nashville, Tennessee. This speech has been interpreted as the beginning of the war. At that time, a number of media outlets (including *Haaretz,* the *Washington Post, CNN* and *CBS News*) reported that Israel was urging the US not to delay an attack on Iraq (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007: 235).

There is no question that Israel's leaders saw the Hussein regime as a threat to Israel and were encouraging the Bush administration to attack Iraq and remove Hussein from power. During the 1990s, American neo-conservatives were arguing that the complete defeat of the regime in Iraq was essential. By toppling Hussein and turning Iraq into a vibrant democracy, they argued, the US would trigger a far-reaching process of change throughout the Middle East. The same line of thinking can be traced, at least in part, to *A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm* (commonly known as the "Clean Break" report), a policy paper prepared for the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. This paper offered a new approach to solving Israel's security problems in the Middle East (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006: 239). According to the report's preamble, it was written by the Study Group on a New Israeli Strategy Toward 2000, a group within the Israeli think tank, the Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies (Perle, Feith, & Wurmser, 1996). The authors of *A Clean Break* included Richard Perle, Douglas Feith and David Wurmser, three influential Jews who later held high-level positions in the Bush administration between 2001 and 2004. Perle was chair of the Defence Policy Board, Feith was Undersecretary of Defence, and Wurmser was special assistant to the Undersecretary of State for Arms Control (Weber, 2004).

The paper set out a plan by which Israel could shape its strategic environment, beginning with the removal of Saddam Hussein and the installation of a Hashemite monarchy in Baghdad. It was held that this would be the first step in remaking the Middle East region friendly, instead of hostile, to Israel. According to a section of the report entitled "Moving to a Traditional Balance of Power Strategy,"

> Israel can shape its strategic environment, in cooperation with Turkey and Jordan, by weakening, containing, and even rolling back Syria. This effort can focus on removing Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq—an important Israeli strategic objective in its own right—as a means of foiling Syria's regional ambitions (Perle, Feith & Wurmser, 1996).

The report also pointed out that:

> Since Iraq's future could affect the strategic balance in the Middle East profoundly, it would be understandable that Israel has an interest in supporting

the Hashemites in their efforts to redefine Iraq, including such measures as: visiting Jordan as the first official state visit, even before a visit to the United States, of the new Netanyahu government; supporting King Hussein by providing him with some tangible security measures to protect his regime against Syrian subversion; encouraging—through influence in the US business community—investment in Jordan to structurally shift Jordan's economy away from dependence on Iraq; and diverting Syria's attention by using Lebanese opposition elements to destabilize Syrian control of Lebanon…Were the Hashemites to control Iraq, they could use their influence over Najf to help Israel wean the south Lebanese Shia away from Hezbollah, Iran, and Syria. Shia retain strong ties to the Hashemites: the Shia venerate foremost the Prophet's family, the direct descendants of which—and in whose veins the blood of the Prophet flows—is King Hussein (Perle, Feith, & Wurmser, 1996).

In his book, *Tyranny's Ally: America's Failure to Defeat Saddam Hussein*, published in 1999, Wurmser elaborated on this theory by arguing that the removal of the Hussein regime would destabilize both Syria and Iran, isolate Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah and realign the whole Middle East so that, although this was never specifically spelled out as if the author feared making himself too clear, Israel would no longer need to negotiate with the Palestinians over the occupied territories (Packer, 2005: 31). The *Clean Break* report, according to Jason Vest, an investigative journalist, was "a kind of US-Israeli neoconservative manifesto" (Vest, 2002). The Netanyahu government, at the beginning, sought to follow the *Clean Break* strategy. But due to immense pressure from the Clinton administration, Netanyahu's government was forced into US-led negotiations with the Palestinians (Blumenthal, 2006). However, with many of the *Clean Break* paper's authors holding high-level positions in the Bush administration, according to Ehitaker, in 2002, "the plan for Israel to transcend its foes by taking steps to reorder the entire Middle East seems a good deal more attainable today than it did in 1996" (Ehitaker, 2002). Perle and Wurmser consistently pushed the Bush administration to strike the Hussein regime, as did key organisations in the Israeli lobby (Mearsheimer & Walt 2007: 166).

Many Israeli analysts believe that the Iraqi war was fought at the behest of Israel, or at the instigation of policymakers whose foremost motivation was to create a secure environment for Israel. For example, Akiva Eldar, the *Haaretz* columnist believed that

Perle, then chair of the Defence Policy Board, and Feith, then Undersecretary of Defence for Policy, "are walking a fine line between their loyalty to American governments...and Israeli interests" (Kathleen & Christison, 2006).

Not only is this view held by Israeli analysts, it also has widespread support amongst other analysts. George Packer, an American journalist, states,

> A few weeks before the war of Iraq, a State Department official described to me what he called the 'everybody move over one theory'. Israel would annex the Occupied Territories, the Palestinians would get Jordan, and the Jordanian Hashemites would be restored to the throne of Iraq. (Packer, G. 2005: 33)

In addition, Packer (2005: 33) argues that the *Clean Break* report, "through the lens of Wurmser's subsequent AEI-published volume, which argued (in 1999) that America's taking out Saddam would solve Israel's strategic problems and leave the Palestinians essentially helpless."

Furthermore, Ian Buruma, a Henry R. Luce Professor at Bard College, asserted a link between the *Clean Break* strategy and the 2003 war in Iraq by stating that

> Douglas Feith and Richard Perle advised Netanyahu, who was prime minister in 1996, to make 'a clean break' from the Oslo Accords with the Palestinians. They also argued that Israeli security would be served best by regime change in surrounding countries. Despite the current mess in Iraq, this is still commonplace in Washington. In Paul Wolfowitz's words, 'The road to peace in the Middle East goes through Baghdad'. It has indeed become an article of faith (literally in some cases) in Washington that American and Israeli interests are identical, but this was not always so, and 'Jewish interests' are not the main reason for it now… What we see, then, is not a Jewish conspiracy, but a peculiar alliance of evangelical Christians, foreign-policy hard-liners, lobbyists for the Israeli government and neo-conservatives, a number of whom happen to be Jewish. But among them—Perle, Wolfowitz, William Kristol, editor of The Weekly Standard, et al—. (Buruma, 2003).

Daniel Levy (2006) described the influence of the *Clean Break* authors by stating that:

> The 'Clean Break' was from the prevailing peace process, advocating that Israel pursue a combination of roll-back, destabilization and containment in the region, including striking at Syria and removing Saddam Hussein from power in favor of 'Hashemite control in Iraq.' The Israeli horse they backed then was not up to the task. Ten years later, as Netanyahu languishes in the opposition, as head of a small Likud faction, Perle, Feith and their neo-conservative friends have justifiably earned a reputation as awesome wielders of foreign-policy influence under George W. Bush.

Karen Kwiatkowski (2006), a retired US Air Force Lieutenant Colonel, indicates in her article "Israel Makes Its 'Clean Break'" the similarities between the proposed actions in the *Clean Break* document, and the subsequent 2003 invasion of Iraq.

Patrick J. Buchanan, the former White House Communications Director in his article "Whose War?" states, "their plan [*A Clean Break*], which urged Israel to re-establish 'the principle of pre-emption', has now been imposed by Perle, Feith, Wurmser & Co. on the United States." (Buchanan, 2003). He continues,

> We charge that a cabal of polemicists and public officials seek to ensnare our country in a series of wars that are not in America's interests. We charge them with colluding with Israel to ignite those wars and destroy the Oslo Accords. We charge them with deliberately damaging US relations with every state in the Arab world that defies Israel or supports the Palestinian people's right to a homeland of their own. We charge that they have alienated friends and allies all over the Islamic and Western world through their arrogance, hubris, and bellicosity (Buchanan P, 2003).

This section shows that the main aim of Israel in the removal of the Hussein regime was to destabilize both Syria and Iran, and to isolate Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah. However, after ten years of war in Iraq, it was unable to block Iranian influence due to the longstanding ties that the dominant Iraqi parties had with Tehran.

There was a direct link between the PNAC members and Israel in mapping and drafting the plan *A Clean Break,* considered by a number of observers to be a road map for the US invasion of Iraq.

4.4. ISRAEL'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE IRAQ WAR

There has been no reliable official confirmation of Israel's direct involvement in the Iraq War, besides direct diplomatic means or indirectly through the US and EU. However, according to newspaper reports, there is a tacit acknowledgement that there was Israeli involvement and this has been confirmed by Israeli officials. This section will discuss the remaining two dimensions of Israeli involvement in the removal of the Hussein regime: its military and economic contributions.

4.4.1. The Military Dimensions

The military dimension had a number of aspects. An Israeli presence in western Iraq in the lead up to and during the war was allowed. There appeared to be close bilateral coordination with Israel. Weapons produced in Israel were used in the action. There was an exchange of intelligence between Israel and the US alliance. And finally, Israel shared its experience in urban warfare.

One of the main military aspects of Israel's involvement in the war was the positioning of Israeli military observers in Iraq's western desert, and in particular, in the E1H1 region. It was from here that, in 1991, Iraq launched forty-one Scud missiles, hitting Tel Aviv, Jaffa and Haifa. According to a report from the Jaffe Center for Studies at the Hebrew University, the military observers were tasked with preventing a repetition of this experience, thereby safeguarding Israel's national security.

The Israeli presence in the area was reported in a number of media outlets. According to a report in *Foreign Report* magazine published in late September 2002, Prime Minister Sharon ordered a unit of the Israeli special forces, *Sayerat Matkal*, into the western part of Iraq in order to identify the places and sites that could have been used to launch Scud missiles towards Israel (cited in Yedioth Ahronoth, 29/9/2002). This was confirmed by *The Washington Post* (19/10/2002), which quoted a former official at the Pentagon as saying Israeli force commandos secretly worked in western Iraq on the eve of the US attack on Iraq. During the summer, Israel sent its Special Forces to the Iraqi Air Force airfield H3, adjacent to the Iraqi-Jordanian border. The purpose was to determine if Iraq, in addition to the Scud missiles, could launch an unmanned aircraft capable of carrying chemical and biological weapons. *Time* magazine also

reported the presence of Israeli military forces in western Iraq, quoting officials in Israel and Washington that said Israeli Special Forces were operating in the area used by Iraq in 1991 to launch Scud missiles at Israel. The unit noted in this report had been mandated to search an area that covered 80,000 km^2 for caches of Iraqi missiles that remained after the Kuwait War.

A second military endeavour that Israel carried out was the coordination between America and Israel in relation to the regime in Iraq. In the run up to the invasion, the two countries raised the level of coordination and identified detailed scenarios in relation to the invasion (Foreign Report, 19/3/2002). According to Israeli sources, Israel and the US established a joint war room in Tel Aviv for discussing Israeli cooperation in attacking Iraq. This was particularly important as both Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Defence Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer stated that, unlike the Kuwait War, if Israel were attacked, it would respond (Szymanski, 2002).

As part of this coordination, Israel and the US agreed that the first goal of the attack on Iraq was to destroy any missiles directed against Israel. Meir Dagan, the Director of Mossad, was appointed as a representative in the US on behalf of Sharon to coordinate the plan to attack Iraq, as well as to counter terrorism (Yedioth Ahornoth, 17/9/2002). According to *Foreign Report*, it was Dagan who suggested to US officials that the US deploy the Special Israeli Forces ground operations inside Iraq before the attack (cited in Yedioth Ahornoth, 29/2/2002).

The coordination also resulted in bilateral visits between the two sides of high ranking military and government officials. Vice Admiral James W. Metzger, the US coordinator for the Iraq invasion, visited Israel for talks described as the first in a series that would be held in coordinating preparation for the Iraq War. On 13 November 2002, a new round of so-called strategic dialogue between the parties took place. The Israeli delegation was represented by Minister Dan Meridor and included Ephraim Halevy, National Security Adviser to Prime Minister Sharon, together with a number of senior army officers. Israel represented its vision for the future of the Middle East after the war on Iraq.

After a few weeks of dialogue, Moshe Ya'alon, the Chief of Staff, and Shaul Mofaz, the Defence Minister, both visited Washington. This meeting resulted in a joint

cooperation agreement between the parties and established the plan for attacking targets, including missile launchers in western Iraq. It was agreed that Israel would not participate directly. The US officials reiterated their commitment to advise Israel at least 72 hours before the start of the attack (Yedioth Ahornoth, 18/12/2002).

In mid-January 2003, the US military raised its level of coordination with Israel in preparation for war. In this context, General Charles Wald, Vice-Chairman of American leadership in Europe in charge of relations with the Israeli army, visited Israel to hold a series of meetings with Israel's military leadership and security officials. He also visited the 600 American soldiers stationed in Israel with the defensive Patriot batteries. Aluf Benn, a senior political commentator, stated that senior Israeli security sources had confirmed that the strategic coordination between Israel and the US was at a much higher level than it was in the 1991 Kuwait War. He also pointed out that the commander of US forces in Europe, president of air operations, visited Israel within the context of increased military coordination and to establish a joint training exercise in the Mediterranean that involved two ships from the US Sixth Fleet together with participation of units from the Israeli Navy (Haaretz, 17/1/2003).

In another report, Aluf Benn stated that an unnamed high-ranking American officer at the General Command visited Israel to continue talks about the military coordination with the Israeli army at the operational level. He reported that according to political sources, these dialogues, as well as the US–Israel joint military training, were about passing two messages to the wider Middle East: first, the US was urging Israel to stay out of the war against Iraq, and second, to deter forces, such as Iran and Hezbollah, from striking Israel, (i.e., that Israel was being fully protected by the US). Also the commentator noted that the Americans included a number of Israeli officials in the operational plans in order to neutralise the threat of retaliation by Israel should it be hit by Iraqi missiles during the war (Haaretz, 24/1/2003).

A further example of coordinated efforts between the US and Israel was reported two weeks after the outbreak of war by the French station Canal Fifth (TV5). It broadcast information from a French retired general about a plan developed in cooperation with US officials to track down and assassinate nearly 500 Iraqi scientists associated with

the development of the Iraqi arms industry. The general conveyed that over 150 Israeli commandos would participate in the operation.

A third aspect of Israel's military involvement was the supply of Israeli weapons to coalition forces for use in attacks on Iraqi targets. This was facilitated through an already established arms trade relationship between Israel, the US and the UK. The US military was already using advanced weaponry produced or developed in Israel. For example, in addition to supplying Israel with US electronic warfare, F-16s used the advanced computers integrated into the command and control systems and have chosen the US Strategic Command air-ground Bobai (produced by Rafael in Israel) to arm Phantoms and F-111s since the start of production in the early 1990s (Yedioth Ahornoth, 9 June 1991). Until 1991, the value of US purchases of most of the missiles was USD $350 million (Haaretz, 2/6/1998). At the outbreak of the war on Iraq, information was published that B-52 bombers carried US missiles equipped with Bobai (Yedioth Ahornoth, 23/3/2003).

In addition, the US military used an Israeli-made unmanned aircraft during the Iraq War. Several months before the war, a deal had been announced in which the Pentagon purchased hundreds of tactical unmanned decoy aircraft costing USD $22 million. The Israeli report stated that Israel provided the US military with unmanned aircraft worth NIS 80 million. The Israel Military Industries Ltd (Taas) is the sole producer of this type of missile. Confirmation of the use of Israeli-made unmanned aircraft during the war came when Iraqi television pictures showed the wreckage of a Tactical Air Launched Decoy (TALD) manufactured by Taas (Yedioth Ahornoth, 23/3/2003). Operating from inside an aircraft, the shelling of targets is identified by early-warning systems or radars, guided by satellite, which makes the implantation of the functions of the aircraft better (Arieh Egozy, Yediot, 24/12/2002). According to another report, an urgent delivery of aircraft was transferred from Israel to the US a few days before the war on Iraq began (Yedioth Ahornoth, 18/3/2003).

During the war, the US also used two other types of Israeli unmanned aircraft, the Harvey and the Hunter. These aircraft carried anti-tank rockets and explosive devices that immediately reverse as soon as their objectives are checked (Yedioth Ahornoth, 23/3/2003). In addition, Arye Mizrahi, Director General of the Israeli Housing

Ministry, stated that the Americans used a fissile bomb in Iraq, a bomb that was also developed by Taas (Haaretz, 23/3/2003).

In relation to the British military, media reports highlighted that the army used rocket propelled grenades produced by Taas, and military electronic devices from Israeli production plants at Alta were part of the Nimrod planes (Haaretz, 6/2/1996; The Marev, 9/4/1997).

A fourth involvement of Israel at the military level was the exchange of intelligence with the US. According to a report published by the New York *Daily News* on 29 March 2003, US troops used Israeli agents located in Baghdad, along with Israeli satellites, to provide information to both US and British forces. A later Israeli report showed that Israel had provided the US with intelligence information and referred to suspicious sites that merited scrutiny. The report concluded that the Israeli military was highly satisfied with the exchange of information and felt that Israel was able to influence matters associated with their security (Aluf Benn, Haaretz, 8/5/2003).

The fifth aspect of Israeli military involvement in the war was use of their experience in urban warfare. According to reports in *USA Today* (11/4/2002) and *The Times* (17/3/2003), Israel built two typical mock Arab towns for training American commando soldiers. The newspapers added that Israel passed on its experience of fighting in Jenin to enable the Americans to conduct a short and effective war. The newspapers quoted senior officials in the Bush administration who confirmed that the Israeli forces (which had gained considerable experience during the first *intifada* in populated areas) trained the US units who would potentially face a similar kind of war in Iraq. The *Yedioth Ahornoth* (3/4/2003) reported that for a number of months, senior Pentagon officials studied videos recorded by the Israeli army to learn strategies for fighting in the built-up areas, in particular, the use of bulldozers to clear an area. According to information reported by the Israeli Army Radio, Galle Tsahal (21/5/2003), quoting Israeli security sources, on the eve of the Iraq War, the US military requested that Israel provide a number of large military bulldozers.

A second training contribution of the Israelis was highlighted by Alex Fishman. He reported that Israeli experts had travelled to the US to share expertise concerning suicide bombers and how to prevent such bombings (Yedioth Ahornoth, 30/3/2003).

Fishman, in another report, stated that in the two days preceding the entry of armoured columns into Baghdad, coalition attack helicopters and warplanes followed Israeli experience by targeting tanks, armoured personnel carriers and trucks along the three entry axes (Yedioth Ahornoth, 6/4/2003).

According to a report by *Marev*, the US forces began to use the Israeli experience to suppress Iraqi resistance within the city. In this context, Colonel Moshe Tamir (the commander of the Golani Brigade) gave a lecture to US marines on the lessons learned in their conflict with the Palestinians. The lecture, which was part of a conference on urban warfare, focussed specifically on Operation Defensive Shield launched by Israeli forces against Palestinians in April 2002 (48 Arabs site, 20/6/2003)

4.4.2. The Economic Dimension

In July 2003, the Israeli Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a joint resolution that allowed Israeli companies to enter the Iraq market despite the fact that Iraq was still officially in a state of war with Israel. This resolution allowed the promotion of trade and financial links. Following the passing of the resolution, Gilead Sher (an Israeli attorney and former Chief of Staff and Policy Coordinator of Israel's Prime Minister), Minister of Defence, Ehud Barak, and Amnon Lipkin-Shahak (a former Chief of Staff of the Israel Defence Forces, Member of the Knesset and Minster of Transportation and Tourism), began work on establishing a system linking Israeli, Jordanian and American companies. These efforts were conducted within the Gilead Sher & Co law firm (Dow Jones Newswires, 17/6/2003; Agence France-Presse, 28/7/2003).

According to Doron Perkin, Chief Executive of Info-Prod Research (Middle East) Ltd, an Israeli Company, the volume of Israeli exports to Iraq amounted to USD $6 million in May 2003, but in June alone rose seven fold to around USD $42 million (DEBKAfile, 5/8/2003). Israeli companies responded quickly to cover any shortfall in supplies to the US military, providing everything from kitchen appliances to the mobile Bamahullac. The Corps of Engineers in the American army responsible for the maintenance of Iraqi oil installations and airports found that it was cheaper and faster to import the materials, such as pumps and concrete, from Israel (DEBKAfile, 5/8/2003). In other areas, the Sher Company started receiving requests for basic

medical goods, baby food and powdered milk, as well as requests related to long-term infrastructure, energy and water projects. Also a US bank, the identity of which was not disclosed, was in negotiation with an Israeli company to send agricultural experts from Israel to Iraq and to finance rehabilitation projects in the agricultural sector. These negotiations were led by Aharon Efroni, head of East Green and the Director of Jewish-Arab Institute at the faculty of Berl College (Khalid, 2005).

According to the Israeli Export and International Cooperation Institute,

> The estimated size of the expected Israeli exports, directly and indirectly, was about one hundred million dollars annually for the next five years, and for this reason this institution held a conference in Tel Aviv on the 20th of August 2003 under the title 'How to get business in Iraq'. It was attended by a group of businessmen, representatives from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Trade (cited in Khalid, 2005).

Izhaq Rozen, who was responsible for the Iraq dossier in the Israeli Export and International Cooperation Institute, told the Swiss newspaper, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, that interest in the conference was very high (Agence France-Presse, 20/8/2003). One of the officials of the institution stated, "We are looking to engage in the areas of agriculture, raw materials, and infrastructure", and explained that "this is not a market such as Europe and the United States, it was full of opportunities. This referred to the fact that the Iraqi market would now be a free market economy with its own laws" (Agence France-Presse, 20/8/2003). The *Yedioth Ahronoth* reported that any Israeli business in Iraq would be conducted through an intermediary such as Turkey, Jordan or Poland. This was confirmed by the Israeli Export and International Cooperation Institute, which stated, "At the outset the Israeli companies will be linked to Turkish companies which possess the greatest experience of business with Iraq" (cited in Khalid, 2005).

Another consideration was that oil and water were available in Iraq, but scarce in Israel. Although Harold Stevens, a US investor, had searched for many years for oil in Israel to meet the energy shortfall, he had not achieved success. Following the fall of Baghdad, the Ministry of Infrastructure said there was a possibility of re-opening the oil pipeline that connected the Kirkuk oil fields to the port of Haifa in Israel.

According to *The Guardian* (7/10/2003) , Douglas Feith was a supporter of the idea. Furthermore, Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel's Minister of Finance, told a group of British journalists that the northern Iraqi oil wells would, through Jordan, use the port of Haifa for exports (Gulf News, 12/8/2003). According to Abdul Hadi Saleh writing in the Anbaa newspaper (Kuwait, 28/6/2003), sources, such as the Arab Times (Kuwait, 29/6/2006), indicated that the Israelis were actually repairing the pipeline during the course of the war and noted, in this context, the escalation of attacks by Iraqi resistance against the oil pipeline. The Lebanese *Daily Star* reported that a railway project linking Baghdad to Haifa would pass through Irbid in northern Jordan (The Daily Star, 20/10/2003).

As noted above, Israel faces water scarcity and is looking to use the Tigris and Euphrates to solve this problem. The Israeli media has written about the Peace Pipeline, which would carry oil and water from Iraq into Israel.

Thus, a number of elements comprise the economic dimension of the Israeli involvement in the Iraq War. These range from increasing trade to accessing oil and water.

Israel's interest on a political perspective was to follow-up on claims to assets left behind by the Iraqi Jewish minority who had migrated from Iraq to Israel in the 1950s. In March 1950, Iraq passed a law allowing Jews one year in which to emigrate on the condition that they relinquish their Iraqi citizenship. Iraqi Jews left behind extensive property, often located in the heart of Iraq's major cities. The abandoned property was frozen by the Iraqi government at that time. The property was later sold cheaply during the Baathist era. From 1950 to 1952, Operation Ezra and Nehemiah airlifted 120,000-130,000 Iraqi Jews to Israel via Iran and Cyprus. By 2005, less than 100 Jews remained, all of whom lived in Baghdad (Pasachoff & Littman, 2005: 301).

4.5. THE GEOPLOTICAL IMPACT OF THE IRAQ WAR ON ISRAELI SECURITY

The Iraq War and the resulting regime change in 2003 had significant implications not only for Iraq itself, but also for most of the countries in the region. Although Israelis were deeply concerned that the war could lead to the possibility of missile attacks

from Iraq as occurred twelve years earlier, this did not occur. Despite the Israeli and US knowledge that a large number of WMDs were destroyed during and after the Kuwaiti Crisis in 1991, the US deployed missile-defence units on the eastern border of Israel and provided access to battlefield intelligence to assist Israeli defence in the eventuality of any Iraqi missile attacks. As in 1991, the US again asked Israel to stay on the side-lines during the 2003 war (Sofaer, 2003: 28). Israel benefited from the new balance of power in the region through a number of US led positive impacts.

The first positive impact of the war on Israel's security interests was the removal of Iraq as a significant security threat to its eastern borders. Previously, the Hussein regime had been a part of the radical Arab camp. Arguably, the threat had ended after the 1991 Kuwait War, but Israel could not be sure until Hussein was removed.

The second positive impact was the end of the WMD threat from other countries in the region, such as Libya who could pose a threat to Israel security (Feldman, 2003). The decision made by Libyan leader Muammar al-Gaddafi in December 2003 to dismantle its WMD and ballistic missile programmes and allow UN weapons inspectors access to key sites was a direct result of Hussein's demise (Spyer, 2005).

Third, Iraq had financially and politically supported the Palestinian *intifada* and the main resistance groups located within Israel. This led to Bush repeatedly arguing that "peace between the Arabs and Israel will not be achieved so long as Saddam Hussein was in power, and Israel will only be able to achieve peace in the wake of the demise of this system" (Feldman, 2003). The removal of the Hussein regime weakened these groups and strengthened Israeli security, leading to Sharon's comment after the fall of Baghdad, "Now the Israelis live in peace" (Feldman, 2003).

The fourth positive outcome for Israel is that the removal of the Hussein regime will allow for the integration of Iraq into the wider peace process in the Middle East. Marc Grossman, former Director General of the Foreign Service and Director of Human Resources, stated on 21 March 2003 that the US expected the first action of the new Iraqi government to be the recognition of Israel. Furthermore, on the side-lines of the World Economic Forum meeting held at the Dead Sea, Jordan in late June 2003, Ehud Olmert, former Prime Minister of Israel and the Israeli Minister of Commerce, said,

"Israel wants a peace deal with Iraq" (The World Economic Forum's Annual Report 2002/2003).

The fifth positive outcome for Israel was the enhanced hegemony of the US in the region. This hegemony put greater pressure on Palestinians to accept Israeli conditions in peace negotiations. It also created an impression in the world community that Hussein's removal without a UN mandate could be repeated in other regimes, and this would pressure other enemies of Israel, like Syria, Iran and Lebanese-based Hezbollah in the mid- to long-run. This pressure was an implied understanding that the US could launch additional, similar pre-emptive strikes as required, without justifying its actions to the international community.

4.6. THE NEGTIVE IMPACT OF REGIME CHANGE: EXPANSION OF THE IRANIAN INFLUENCE

As has been noted, there have been several positive outcomes for Israel as a result of the 2003 Iraq regime change. However, despite the positive outcomes, there were and continue to be several negative impacts. In fact, the continuing conflict and an Iran-centric balance of power shift will have more negative impacts on Israeli security than originally anticipated by the Bush administration and Israeli officials.

There is no doubt that the US radically altered the balance of power in the Gulf region when it toppled Hussein's regime. Iraq had been a significant pillar in maintaining a balance of power with Iran. When the US initially occupied Iraq, it believed that it would be able to replace the government with one that was both coherent and pro-American, and one that would provide balance against Iran. According to Peter Galbraith, a Senior Diplomatic Fellow at the Centre for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, a crucial administration error in planning for post-war Iraq was the assumption that it would be easy to accomplish this. However, the US was unable to block Iranian influence on the post-Hussein government due to the long-standing ties between the dominant parties in Iraq with Tehran. Iran viewed the friendly Shiite parties' control of Iraq as an assurance that Iraq would remain pliable and attentive to Iran's interests, thereby providing Tehran with strategic depth (Katzman, 2007: 1).

According to George Friedman, the CEO of the private intelligence corporation Stratfor, US policy in Iraq was in jeopardy from its foundation. This weakness resulted in three new wars inside Iraq. The first was caused by resistance of the Sunni community against the American occupation; the second was from the struggle of the Iraqi Shia (comprising 60 per cent of the population) in alliance with the Kurds to take control of the Iraqi state, which had been previously controlled by the Sunnis; and the third was a proxy war between the US and Iran over who would be the predominant influence in the country. The combined turmoil involved three different parties—the Americans, the Sunnis and the Shia, and thus upset the regional balance of power, making the US the only power able to stand up to Iran (Stratfor Global Intelligence, 2011).

The US failure in Iraq after Hussein's removal to overcome the Ba'athist insurgency led to the onset of the Shia-Sunni civil war and provided Iran the strategic opportunity to prevent the US from complete domination of Iran's first line of defence. Iran would have welcomed Iraq's permanent weakness under US and EU sanctions. But, the prospect of another US attack on Iraq assured Tehran that it would achieve its main objective if it pursued strategies inside Iraq that would prevent its encirclement. Iran determined that it would pursue three contemporaneous strategies. The first was to insure that Iraq never again became a threat to Iran. The second was to harness Iraq through Iran's broader policy goals, such as defence against international criticism of and sanctions against Iran's nuclear program. The third was to deepen the considerable political and economic influence Iran held over Iraqi Shi'as (Katzman, 2010: 1). Iran sought to achieve these goals in Iraq through several efforts: support of pro-Iranian factions and armed militias, influencing Iraqi political and faction leaders and building economic ties throughout Iraq.

Tehran's continued interest in Iraq has added to US-Iran tensions. Iran's existing regional ambitions (i.e., its support to Syria, aid to the Lebanese Hezbollah and other Palestinian groups) through which Iran projects power that is effectively close in proximity to Israel. It can be argued that the George W. Bush administration and neo-conservative proponents of the war were so focused on removing Hussein from power that they largely overlooked the wider geopolitical ramifications of the outcome of their endeavours. Paradoxically, America's removal of Hussein paved the way for the

expansion of Iran's influence in the region. This can be, in part, blamed on the US failure to stabilize Iraq (Carpenter & Innocent, 2007: 67).

4.7. CONCLUSION

The security of Israel was an essential element in the decision for the US to go war in Iraq but it was not the only reason. This chapter addressed how Israel influenced the American decision to invade Iraq and how the 2003 war, in turn, affected Israeli national security.

An analysis was presented on various aspects of how the US conducted the war inside Iraq. The research demonstrates the relationship between the Bush Doctrine and the war in Iraq. The doctrine was based on the principle that the US had the right to secure itself from states that "harbour or give aid to terrorist groups" and had been used to justify the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan (Wiseman, The New York Times, 13/4/02). The doctrine also included a policy of preventive war against any regimes viewed as a threat to the security of the US, a view that was used, in part, as a rationale for the 2003 Iraq War (Page, USA Today, 17/3/03).

Also, the influence of Israel on the Bush administration's decision to launch the Iraq War was assessed through the prism of the PNAC. The research highlights the strong influence of the neo-conservatives, most of who were associated with the pro-Zionist neo-conservative research centre (the PNAC), had close ties to Israel's Likud party and had long called for the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. In addition, this chapter showed the Israeli government to be satisfied with the overthrow of the Hussein regime by detailing the positive impacts of Iraq's removal from the regional security equation, and given Israel's participation in the Iraq War by way of military and economic inputs, both of which were off the record.

In addition, this chapter considered how the 2003 war affected Israeli national security and found there to be a negative impact. The expansion of Iranian influence inside Iraq through the Shia groups, as well as support to Syria and certain non-state actors, which will project Iranian power closer to the Israeli borders, was identified as the major negative outcome of the war.

In the next chapter, I will detail how these negative outcomes made it possible for Iran to resist US and Israeli pressures respecting its nuclear programme using both non-military and military means. As a logical outcome of the US failure to stabilize Iraq, Israel has become more vulnerable to Iranian threats since 2003. The next chapter details the evolution of the Iranian nuclear option, Israeli efforts to prevent Iran from developing its nuclear deterrent and tactics Iran might use in a response to Israeli pre-emptive strikes. These tactics might include direct military response, but Iran could also take advantage of its investments in Syria and Hezbollah.

Chapter 5

ISRAELI RESPONSES TO IRANIAN NUCLEAR DETERRENCE

5.1. INTRODUCTION

Since 2003, the Islamic Republic of Iran, one of the most influential states in the Middle East, has challenged the international community with its decision to pursue a full nuclear fuel cycle. This achievement would allow Iran the possibility of developing its own nuclear weapons in the future. In an attempt to prevent Iran from threatening its national security with nuclear weapons, Israel's diplomatic pressure on the EU and the US brought the Iranian nuclear programme to the international agenda. Widespread sanctions were implemented and closer scrutiny was made of Iran's various facilities as it moved towards further weapon-grade enrichment. The Israeli-US pressures and sanctions in turn brought about various counter-diplomatic manoeuvres by Tehran, as seen in Iran's increased reliance on Russia and China to act as a counter weight to the US, EU and Israel. Subsequently, Israel exerted more diplomatic pressure on Iran's two traditional allies in its attempt to weaken Russo-Chinese support to Iran. This chapter will discuss Iran's potential to develop nuclear weapons that may affect Israel's national security and how Israel can react to Iran's potential development of a nuclear deterrent.

On the military front, this chapter will assess the options available to Israel through a pre-emptive military strike on Iran's nuclear facilities, as opted for in 1981 against Iraq. Discussion will assess the risks to Israel's national security and to the Gulf region as a whole. Suggestions will be offered as to possible scenarios under which Iran may respond: through direct retaliation, use of its proxies in the Levant or a combination of both.

As an alternative to the unipolar nuclear balance of power in Israel's favour, this chapter will conclude with assessing the possibility of stable nuclear deterrence between Iran and Israel. Considerations will be made as to the possibility that such a scenario will have an opposite effect and trigger a nuclear arms race in the region; that

Israel might lose its nuclear deterrence capability; that Israel might become highly suspicious about any future overtures by the Tehran regime; and, most significantly, whether Iran would be able to threaten Israel through more conventional means or even distribute tactical nuclear weapons to Hezbollah and other extremist groups inside Israel.

5.2. THE DEVELOPMENT OF IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAMME

Iran's interest in nuclear knowledge and related technologies can be traced back to 1957. Under Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, a civil nuclear cooperation agreement was made with the United States that would increase military, economic and civilian assistance to Iran. On 5 March of that year, the two countries announced a "proposed agreement for cooperation in research in the peaceful uses of atomic energy" under the auspices of the US Atoms for Peace programme and within the framework of bilateral agreements between the two countries (Squassoni, 2007). The deal was intended to pave the way for US investment in Iran's civilian nuclear industries, such as health care and medicine. The plan also called for the US Atomic Energy Commission to allow Iran to lease up to 13.2 pounds of low-enriched uranium for research purposes (Bruno, 2010).

In 1960, Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi ordered the establishment of an institute at Tehran University, the Tehran Nuclear Research Center (TNRC). In 1967, the TNRC was established and was run by the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran (AEOI). It was equipped with a US-supplied, 5-megawatt nuclear research reactor, which was fuelled by highly-enriched uranium (Squassoni, 2007). The reactor could produce up to 600 grams of plutonium in spent fuel annually (Sahimi, 2003). Gary Samore, Special Assistant to the President and White House Coordinator for Arms Control and Weapons of Mass Destruction, Proliferation, and Terrorism since January 2009, stated that the cooperation was meant to assist Iran in developing nuclear energy while steering Tehran away from indigenous fuel-cycle research (Bruno, 2010).

Iran signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968 and ratified it in 1970, making Iran's nuclear programme subject to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) verification.

By the 1970s, the programme was jumpstarted by several Western powers: the US, France and West Germany all provided Iran with reactors and technical training (Quillen, 2002). Regional wars and predictions of a looming energy shortfall prompted the Shah to explore alternative forms of power production (Bruno, 2010).

His motives "were a fusion of Iranian national ambition and concern for the direction of the neighbourhood" (Kemp, 2003). His ambition was to establish a comprehensive strategy for transforming Iran into a major nuclear power by the early 21st century through US supported construction of up to 20 nuclear power stations across the country. In this regard, numerous contracts were signed with various Western firms (Ehteshami, 2008).

Regardless of the early and sustained flow of nuclear technology to Tehran, Western governmental support for Iran's nuclear programme started to erode before the Islamic Revolution of 1979. In 1974, a CIA proliferation assessment stated that while "Iran's much publicized nuclear power intentions are entirely in the planning stage," the ambitions of the Shah could lead Iran to pursue nuclear weapons, especially in the shadow of India's successful nuclear test in May 1974 (Special National Intelligence Estimate, CIA, 23 August 1974). Intelligence reports suggested that the Shah had established a secret group to work on nuclear weapons (Spector & Smith, 1990: 204). Scholars assume the Shah also directed a parallel weapons programme, using the civilian nuclear power programme as a springboard for developing weapons grade fuel and as a cover for developing the technical know-how to design and manufacture weapons. The programme ended upon the overthrow of the Shah in 1979 (Shaffer, 2003). Additionally, concern led Western governments to withdraw support for Iran's nuclear programme and this further slowed the country's nuclear progress.

Following the Islamic Revolution in 1979, the nuclear programme was suspended. In 1983, Iran sought approval from the UN's nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to resume its nuclear programme. Although approval was initially granted, it was quickly withdrawn under US pressure. The programme was further stalled when Western states, including the US, France and Germany, reneged on agreements to supply nuclear material and enrichment equipment that Iran had already paid for in full. Neither the US, Germany nor France returned payment (Sahimi, 2006).

In the early 1990s, Iran began negotiations with Russia regarding the reconstruction of the Bushehr power plant. These negotiations concluded with a bilateral agreement in 1992 that Russia would provide assistance for the construction of a light-water reactor in Bushehr, on Iran's southwest coast, as well as nuclear fuel (Shaffer, 2003). This cooperation was based on common trade goals and political agendas. As the confrontation between the US and Iran escalated, Tehran found common ground with Russia in the desire to limit political influence of the US in Central Asia.

The resumption of nuclear activities prompted stories in the international media that accused Iran of undeclared nuclear activities. Iran subsequently opened its facilities to the IAEA in 1992.The IAEA found nothing that was out of line with civilian nuclear production.

On 14 August 2002, Alireza Jafarzadeh, a spokesman for the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), an Iranian opposition group, held a press conference to "expose" two nuclear sites under construction and unknown to the IAEA and the US: a uranium enrichment facility in Natanz (part of which is underground) and a heavy water facility in Arak ("Timeline: Iran Nuclear Crisis," BBC News, UK Edition). Washington immediately accused Tehran of attempting to make nuclear weapons. The remainder of the 2000s have seen Iran, the EU and other Western countries go back and forth with the United Nations' nuclear watchdog, the IAEA, on inspections of the nuclear facilities and discussions regarding whether or not the programme is for peaceful purposes.

Although its nuclear enrichment programme has been a source of tension within the international community, there are a number of pragmatic reasons for Iran to continue its nuclear programme. First, two neighbouring countries (Iraq and Afghanistan) have been taken over by the US, an enemy of Iran. In addition, another neighbour, Pakistan, has nuclear weapons as does Russia to the north of Iran. Finally, Israel has had nuclear weapons since the 1960s, although the Israeli government has never acknowledged possessing nuclear weapons, nor has it published any account of its nuclear programmes or testing, etc., and is the only country in the Middle East to have nuclear weapon capabilities. Since Israel has never signed the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, it has not been subject to inspections of its nuclear programme. In fact, Israel has worked against any Middle East country that has tried to attain

nuclear weapons. As mentioned earlier, in 1981 the Israelis struck the Iraqi nuclear plant at Osirak without the consent of any international body. Given the above, the possibility of an attack from Israel remains. It therefore seems logical that Iran would wish to continue its nuclear programme.

5.3. NUCLEAR FACILITIES IN IRAN

GlobalSecurity.org, a public policy organisation, has examined various reports and claims in depth. The following section is drawn extensively from this analysis and is supported by recent reports published by the IAEA concerning what is and is not known about the nature of Iran's activities in each nuclear related facility. According to published reports, Iran has a long list of known and suspected nuclear facilities, as well as a large number and well-dispersed mix of state industries and military facilities that it could use to hide its nuclear activities or to shelter and disperse them. According to the IAEA, the nuclear sites noted below have been declared or are relevant to the implementation of IAEA safeguards.

Tehran Nuclear Research Centre: The Tehran Nuclear Research Centre (TNRC) has been housed by Tehran University since 1967 and is run by the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran (AEOI). It is located in the suburb of Amirabad outside Tehran and has included a research reactor with a nominal capacity of 5 megawatts, supplied by the US under IAEA safeguards.

Tehran: The research programme of the Tehran-based Centre for Theoretical Physics and Mathematics of the AEOI includes theoretical physics and other research and development activities related to high energy physics, including particle physics, mathematical physics, astrophysics, theoretical nuclear physics, statistical mechanics, theoretical plasma physics and mathematics.

Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant: The plant is located 17 kilometres south-east of the city of Bushehr on the Persian Gulf, between the fishing villages of Halileh and Bandargeh. The reactor units at Bushehr were initially built by a German company; however, the reactor was damaged by Iraqi air strikes during the Iran-Iraq war in the mid-1980s. Construction resumed in 1995 under an agreement between the Russian and Iranian governments at an estimated cost of USD $800 million. In December

2007, Russia started delivering nuclear fuel to the Bushehr nuclear power plant. The construction was completed in March 2009. The plant began production on 22 August 2009, and would have been brought up to full capacity by the end of March 2010.

Isfahan Nuclear Technology Centre: Isfahan is a nuclear research facility that currently operates four small nuclear research reactors, all supplied by China. It is run by the AEOI and is alleged to be the main location of the Iranian nuclear "weapons" programme. The centre is Iran's largest nuclear research centre and is said to employ as many as 3,000 scientists. The Uranium Conversion Facility at Isfahan converts yellowcake into uranium hexafluoride. As of late October 2004, the site has been 70 per cent operational with 21 of 24 workshops completed. There is also a zirconium production plant located nearby that produces the necessary ingredients and alloys for nuclear reactors. The nuclear research centre in Isfahan was built under an agreement with France in 1975 and provided training for personnel to operate the Bushehr reactor.

Natanz: This facility is located between Isfahan and Kashan in central Iran, about 160 km north of Isfahan in Kashan-Natanz, near a village called Deh-Zireh, about 40 km southeast of Kashan. Natanz is a hardened Fuel Enrichment Plant covering 100,000 square metres built 8 metres underground and protected by a concrete wall 2.5 metres thick, which is protected by another concrete wall. In 2004, the roof was hardened with reinforced concrete and covered with 22 metres of earth. The complex consists of two 25,000 square metre halls and a number of administrative buildings. This once-secret site was one of the two exposed during a press conference in August 2002 held by the representative of the NCRI in Washington, DC. IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei visited the site on 21 February 2003 and reported that 160 centrifuges were complete and ready for operation, with 1,000 more under construction at the site. As noted earlier, under the terms of Iran's safeguards agreement Iran was under no obligation to report the existence of the site while it was still under construction. There are currently approximately 7,000 centrifuges installed at Natanz, of which 5,000 are producing low enriched uranium.

Arak: This was the second of the two sites exposed by the NCRI in August 2002. It is located at the Qatran Workshop near the Qara-Chai River in the Khondaub region of central Iran, 241 kilometres south of Tehran. According to the NCRI, the Mesbah

Energy Company, a front organisation, has been used to prevent unwanted disclosures. The headquarters of the Mesbah Energy Company is located in Tehran. Iran is constructing a 40 megawatt heavy water moderated research reactor at this location, which should be ready for commissioning in 2014; it is referred to as IR-40. On 18 November 2006, Reza Aqazadeh, Director of the AEOI, stated that Arak's reactor would replace Tehran's 5-megawatt reactor, which is over 30 years old.

Karaj: The Nuclear Research Centre for Agriculture and Medicine in Karaj was established in 1991 and is run by the AEOI. Situated 160 km northwest of Tehran, it includes a recently-constructed building that houses a dosimetry laboratory and an agricultural radio chemistry laboratory.

Lashkar Ab'ad: Lashkar Ab'ad was a pilot laser enrichment plant established in 2000 and dismantled in 2003.

Anarak: There are, reportedly, rich occurrences of uranium ore near Anarak, not far from Yazd. The famous Talmessi Mine near Anarak produced the first specimen of Seelite in 1955.

Table 5.1: Relevant Nuclear Locations Designated by the IAEA

LOCATION	AS OF NOVEMBER 2003	STATUS
Tehran Nuclear Research Centre	Tehran Research Reactor (TRR)	Operating
	Molybdenum, Iodine and Xenon Radioisotope Production Facility (MIX Facility)	Constructed, but not operating
	Jabr Ibn Hayan multi-purpose laboratories (JHL)	Operating
	Waste Handling Facility (WHF)	Operating
Tehran	Kalaye Electric Company	Dismantled pilot enrichment Facility
Bushehr	Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP)	Under construction
Isfahan Nuclear Technology Centre	Miniature Neutron Source Reactor (MNSR)	Operating
	Light Water Sub-Critical Reactor (LWSCR)	Operating
	Heavy Water Zero Power Reactor (HWSPR)	Operating
	Fuel Fabrication Laboratory (FFL)	Operating
	Uranium Chemistry Laboratory (UCL)	Closed down

LOCATION	AS OF NOVEMBER 2003	STATUS
	Uranium Conversion Facility (UCF)	Under construction, first process units being commissioned for operation
	Graphite Sub-Critical Reactor (GSCR)	Decommissioned
	Fuel Manufacturing Plant (FMP)	In detailed design stage, construction to begin in 2004
Natanz	Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant (PFEP)	Operating
	Fuel Enrichment Plant (FEP)	Under construction
Karaj	Radioactive Waste Storage	Under construction, but partially operating
Lashkar Ab'ad	Pilot Uranium Laser Enrichment Plant	Dismantled
Arak	Iran Nuclear Research Reactor (IR-40)	In detailed design phase
	Hot cell facility for production of radioisotopes	In preliminary design stage
	Heavy Water Production Plant (HWPP)	Under construction, not subject to Safeguards Agreement
Anarak	Waste storage site	Waste to be transferred to JHL

Figure 5.1 Known Nuclear Sites
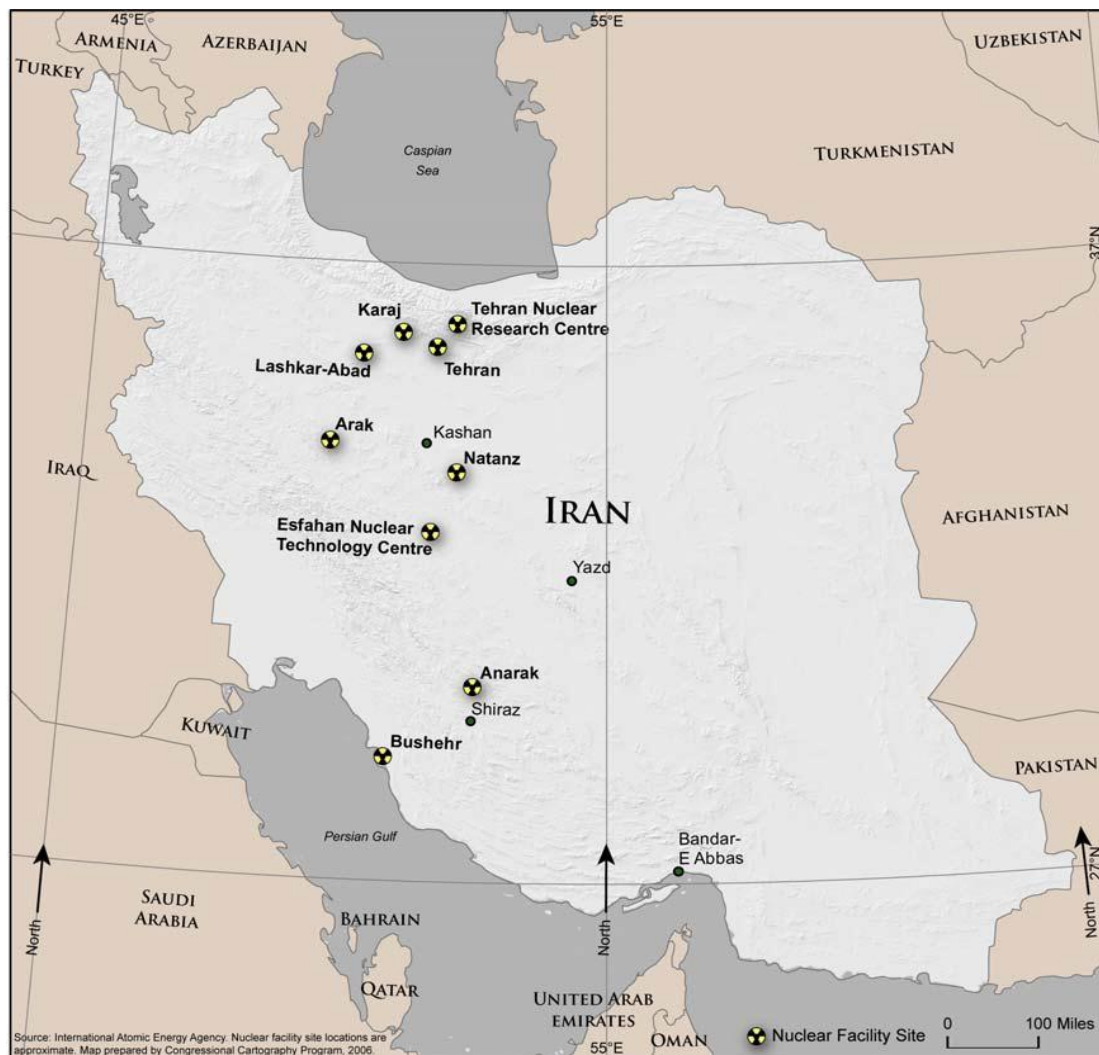
Source: International Atomic Energy Agency. Nuclear facility site locations are approximate. Map prepared by Congressional Cartography Program, 2006.

5.4. IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAMME AND BUREAUCRATIC POLITICS

5.4.1. The Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps

The Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), also known as *Sipeh-e-Pasdaran* (Army of God), or *Pasdaran* for short, is a branch of Iran's military and was formed in 1979 after the Iranian Revolution. It was formed as a force that would be loyal to Ayatollah Khomeini, provide security for him, maintain public order, ensure the success of the Revolution and balance the power of the *Artesh* (army), which the mullahs had mistrusted from the outset (Cordesman, 2007). There was a further, perhaps more significant, motivation for creating the IRGC. The Revolution needed to rely on an instrument of its own rather than using the previous regime's tainted units.[12]

The IRGC is recognised as a component of the Iranian military under Article 150 of the Iranian Constitution (Byman, 2001). The key task of the IRGC is to maintain national security and it is responsible for internal and border security, law enforcement and Iran's missile forces. Iraq's invasion of Iran in September 1980 spawned the IRGC as "the arm of choice" for leading the war against Iraq. During the Iraq War, the IRGC expanded rapidly from 10,000 to 50,000 members in 1982 and 250,000 by 1985 (Byman, 2001). This rapid rise and new role forced the IRGC to reorganise itself into military units. Part of this reorganisation saw the creation of the *Pasdaran's* own ministry and the equipping of the IRGC as a parallel navy, army and air force. The Iran-Iraq War gave the IRGC control over Iran's surface-to-surface missile units and right of first refusal for all newly-procured military equipment (Byman, 2001).

The important role the IRGC has played in efforts to obtain surface-to-surface missiles and weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) has provided it with considerable experience in advanced military technology. Furthermore, the IRGC operates all of the country's Scud missiles, controls most of its chemical and biological weapons and provides the military leadership in the production of missiles and WMDs.

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[12] Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC - *Pasdaran-e Inqilab*).

Consequently, the IRGC is considered to be the major player in Iran's military industries. More importantly, the IRGC holds the key to the nuclear dispute, as it is believed to have control over most or all chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) weapons, and would potentially operate nuclear-armed missile forces if they were acquired and deployed (The New York Times, 13 December 2004).

The IRGC was greatly influenced by Iraq's use of chemical weapons and Scud missile attacks in the 1980s. These experiences underpin the *Pasdaran's* insistence that it needs a deterrent in order to prevent future attacks. The presence of US military forces in the Persian Gulf area only reinforces these concerns. Nevertheless, the IRGC leaders have resisted strengthening Iran's regular military forces as they recognise that their conventional forces would never be strong enough to deter a determined attack by America. Furthermore, they believe that a strengthened regular army might confront the IRGC and its drive for power. Consequently, they consider nuclear weapons to be the sole means of ensuring their survival and projecting their power in the region (The New York Times, 13 December 2004).

The relationship between the IRGC and Iran's nuclear programme is very close. This can be seen from the number of Iranian officials who have had their assets frozen under the UN Security Council Resolutions passed on 23 December 2006 and 24 March 2007 (Cordesman, 2007). Commander, Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi, deputy commander, Brigadier General Morteza Rezaie, and the heads of the IRGC ground forces, naval branch, Al Quds Force and Basij (Mobilization of the Oppressed Force) were all involved. UN Security Council Resolution 1747, passed on 24 March 2007, and named a wide range of Iranian officials involved in nuclear or ballistic missile activities. Table 5.2 lists those members mentioned in the Resolution (Cordesman, 2007).

Table 5.2 Iranian Officials Cited in UN Security Council Resolution 1747

Individual	Position
Fereidoun Abbasi-Davani	Senior Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces Logistics (MODAFL) scientist with links to the Institute of Applied Physics, working closely with Mohsen Fakhrizadeh-Mahabadi, designated below.
Mohsen Fakhrizadeh-Mahabadi	Senior MODAFL scientist and former head of the Physics Research Centre (PHRC). The International Atomic Energy Agency has asked to interview him about the activities of the PHRC over the period he was head, but Iran has refused.
Seyed Jaber Safdari	Manager of the Natanz Enrichment Facilities.
Amir Rahimi	Head of Esfahan Nuclear Fuel Research and Production Centre, which is part of the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran's (AEOI's) Nuclear Fuel Production and Procurement Company, which is involved in enrichment-related activities.
Mohsen Hojati	Head of Fajr Industrial Group, which is designated under Resolution 1737 (2006) for its role in the ballistic missile programme.
Mehrdada Akhlaghi Ketabachi	Head of Shahid Bagheri Industrial Group (SBIG), which is designated under Resolution 1737 (2006) for its role in the ballistic missile programme.
Naser Maleki	Head of SBIG, which is designated under Resolution 1737 (2006) for its role in Iran's ballistic missile programme. Naser Maleki is also a MODAFL official overseeing work on the Shahab-3 ballistic missile programme. The Shahab-3 is Iran's long-range ballistic missile currently in service.
Ahmad Derakhshandeh	Chairman and Managing Director of Bank Sepah, which provides support for the AIO and subordinates, including Shahid Hemmat Industrial Group (SHIG) and SBIG, both of which were designated under Resolution 1737 (2006).

5.4.2. The Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran (AEOI)

The Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran (AEOI) is the core bureaucratic association that supervises all aspects of atomic energy activities including research, nuclear power plants, nuclear fuel production, nuclear regulatory authority and planning, education and parliamentary affairs (Ghannadi, 2002). It is headquartered in the northern Amir Abad district of Tehran, but has facilities throughout the country. Since 1973, the AEOI has been recognised internationally as the official representative of

Iran's civilian nuclear programme (Ghannadi, 2002). It is currently headed by a former representative of the IAEA, Ali Akbar Salehi, who succeeds Gholam Reza Aghazadeh who resigned in July 2009.[13]

The AEOI has risen to prominence since the push in the 1990s to develop nuclear infrastructure. The AEOI has operated autonomously for the past 15 years with no authoritative oversight by the *Majlis* (parliament). (Kemp, 2004: 51). However, the AEOI is co-managed by the Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) and the Foreign Ministry. The challenge has been to resolve differences between these two groups. The Foreign Ministry is responsible for deciding issues with external partners and suppliers, such as negotiating with the Russians over the Bushehr light-water reactor. The SNSC formulates the country's nuclear policy, including prioritising secret projects within Iran, such as the Natanz uranium enrichment facility before details of its existence were revealed by opposition groups. The secretary of the SNSC doubles as the chief nuclear negotiator for Iran.

The documents provided by the Iranian opposition group in 2002 revealed the names, nature and reporting lines of the front companies used to conceal the activities of the AEOI.[14] Given the proven reliability of that portion of the document, it is important to note that the opposition group drew attention to the fact that the Kan Iran company is a front for the AEOI's military programme. This suggests that the AEOI is involved in more than just enrichment activities; it appears to be researching weapons-related applications for military laboratories (Kemp, 2004: 51).

The AEOI has a close working relationship with many of Iran's technical universities, research institutions and military-industrial organisations. These communities have developed a co-dependence that helps sustain the influence and power of each institutional base. The power and parochial nature of the scientists' self-interests came to light in the autumn of 2003 as the EU-3 additional protocol debate heated up. In an open letter to the government, more than 500 students and 250 faculty members from

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[13] Iran names new head of atomic energy body. Reuters. 17 July, 2009.
http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE56G3HU20090717
[14] John R. Bolton, "Iran's Continuing Pursuit of Weapons of Mass Destruction," Washington, D.C.: Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security; Testimony before the House International Relations Committee Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia (24 June 2004); http://www.state.gov/t/us/rm/33909.htm; accessed February 2010.

Sharif Technical University in Tehran wrote that any agreement by Iran with the IAEA to forego uranium enrichment, or otherwise curtail Iran's nuclear programme, would be tantamount to treason (Kemp, 2004: 51). The students' and scientists' immediate concerns centred on acceptance of concessions that would prevent these organisations from "achieving their goals of survival and 'logical' expansion" (Kemp, 2004). This episode illustrates an expectation among the workers and scientists that the state would maintain their livelihood, regardless of other state interests. This is typical of the parochialism that has embedded itself into political attitudes in favour of nuclear technology and nuclear weapons seeking to sustain the status quo.

From this supporting evidence framing Iran's previous unconventional weapons processes, it can be concluded that at least part of Iran's determination to carry on its nuclear weapons programme is rooted in bureaucratic competition and self-preservation.

5.5. THE CONSEQUENCES OF IRAN'S NUCLEAR DIPLOMACY

The Iranian nuclear programme has always been controversial. As was discussed in section 5.2, (the development of Iran's nuclear programme), international concern over Iran's nuclear intentions escalated in August 2002 after an Iranian opposition group, the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), revealed a secret uranium enrichment facility at Natanz and a heavy water facility at Arak. There were allegations that Iran was illicitly pursuing a nuclear weapons programme in violation of the NPT. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) immediately launched an investigation into Iran's nuclear programme and sought access to those facilities, demanding further information and co-operation from Iran (Timeline: Iran Nuclear Crisis, BBC News, UK Edition). In November 2003, the UN nuclear watchdog agency determined that for the previous 18 years, Iran had been secretly developing technologies to produce highly-enriched uranium. The IAEA reported that Iran had failed to report a large number of its nuclear-related activities as required by the 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (International Atomic Energy Agency, 2006: 8, 9).

Iran has claimed that the military threat posed by Israel and the US forces it to restrict the release of information concerning its nuclear programme. Gawdat Bahgat of the National Defence University speculated that Iran may have a lack of confidence in the

international community, something that was reinforced when many nations, under pressure from the US, rejected or withdrew from signed commercial deals with the Iranian Nuclear Authority (Bahgat, 2000: 309).

During the IAEA investigation, France, Germany and the UK (the European Three, EU-3) instigated a diplomatic initiative to tackle issues concerning the Iranian nuclear programme. An agreement was reached in October 2003 between Iran and the EU-3, and became known as the Tehran Declaration. Iran agreed to temporarily suspend uranium enrichment during negotiations concerning its nuclear programme, fully cooperate with the IAEA and implement an additional protocol to build confidence in its peaceful nuclear intentions. In return, the EU-3 explicitly recognised Iran's right to a civilian nuclear programme in accordance with the NPT. A main part of the deal was Iran's agreement to provide access to further information on its secret programme over the previous 18 years. However, negotiations stalled in February 2005 over Iran's right to uranium enrichment. The United States and the European powers wanted Iran to agree to permanent cessation of enrichment activities; Iran rejected the demand and said it would not stop a process granted to all signatories of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Tehran claimed the demand was "very insulting and humiliating" and challenged its sovereign rights (The Guardian, 8/8/2005).

Tension build-up ultimately led to UN sanctions that began in 2005. The divergent positions of the two sides led to the breakdown in negotiations with Britain, France and Germany; Iran resumed its uranium enrichment programme in mid-2005, coinciding with the election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (Wright, 2010). In September 2005, the IAEA Board of Governors concluded that Iran had not complied with its safeguards agreement and that its nuclear programme raised questions regarding the competence of the Security Council (Hunter, 2010: 96). Iran tried to gain the support of Russia, China and other non-European countries in order to prevent the referral of its case to the UNSC. But Iran's diplomatic strategy failed (Hunter, 2010). In February 2006, the IAEA Board reported its conclusions to the Security Council after it determined that Iran had not provided sufficient clarification of its nuclear intentions. Israel welcomed the IAEA decision to transfer the Iranian nuclear issue to the UN Security Council for a preliminary discussion and expressed hopes that the international community would act decisively and expeditiously,

conveying a clear message to Iran that it must put a complete and immediate end to its nuclear activities. Israel insisted that the Iranian regime must understand that if it continued with its aggressive nuclear program, it would endanger its relationships with the community of nations (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs). To distract attention from its nuclear programme, the Iranian-backed Hezbollah launched a war against Israel (Greenblum, 2006: 2).

On 31 July 2006, the Security Council successfully adopted Resolution 1696 demanding that Iran suspend all enrichment and reprocessing-related activities. Nevertheless, because of Russia's concern that the resolution could be interpreted as authorisation for the eventual use of military force against Iran, the resolution failed to include diplomatic and economic sanctions, and instead did no more than open the door to nebulous "appropriate measures" (Greenblum, 2006). Iran has strongly rejected this resolution and called it unlawful, destructive and unwarranted. The Iranian president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, said that he would not bow to "the language of force and threats" (BBC, 1 August 2006).

On 12 October 2006, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert consulted with his government and senior security establishment personnel on the Iranian issue. The discussion focused on diplomatic issues, including the steps that needed to be taken as part of the international effort to deal with the issue. Olmert made it clear that the diplomatic effort to halt Iran's nuclear programme was being led by the international community and that Israel supported the measures being taken by the UN Security Council, including the imposition of sanctions on Iran and praised the fact that the Council had not acceded to Iran's compromise proposals that would have enabled it to proceed with its nuclear plans. Olmert emphasised that North Korea's recent nuclear testing only underscored the international community's need to urgently, determinedly and vigorously deal with the issue (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs). On 9 December 2006, Olmert re-iterated his continuing preference for a diplomatic solution, but he simultaneously emphasised that he could not rule out the possibility of a military attack against Iran and called for the international community to step up its action against that country. He called Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's repeated threats to destroy Israel "absolutely criminal," and said that he expected "more dramatic steps to be taken" (Migdalovitz, 2006: 13).

Iran's failure to comply with the resolution's deadline led to Resolution 1737 on 23 December 2006 and, in response to concerns of China and Russia, the resolution did not authorise the use of force (BBC, 13 December 2006). The resolution imposed specific, but lighter, economic sanctions than those sought by the United States, which were solely linked to Iran's nuclear programme (BBC, 13 December 2006). Israel stated that the resolution determined the understanding of the international community that "the world cannot afford to tolerate an Iran that possesses nuclear weapons" (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Israel emphasised that imposing sanctions was a significant first step. Assuming the initial sanctions would not be sufficient to halt Iran's nuclear programme, Israel asked that the international community demand additional action rapidly and decisively. Moreover, Tzipi Livni, the then Foreign Minister, stated,

> The imposition of sanctions is an important decision in the fight to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear power. The international community will be called upon to continue to show its determination in waging the common battle until the goal of halting Iran's nuclear programme is achieved (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

In response, the Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman warned that the resolution "cannot affect or limit Iran's peaceful nuclear activities, but will discredit the decisions of the Security Council, whose power is deteriorating." Because the resolution came under Article 41 of Chapter 7 of the United Nations Charter, it could not be enforced through use of military means (CNN, 23 December 2006). Iran's UN Ambassador, M. Javad Zarif, also accused the Security Council of attempting to force Iran to abandon its rights under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. He stated that the Council should instead focus its attention on Israel, which had not rejected the use of nuclear weapons or declared its secret programme. Also, the Iranian President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, responded to the resolution saying "I am sorry for you who lost the opportunity for friendship with the nation of Iran. You yourselves know that you cannot damage the nation of Iran one iota" (CNN, 23 December 2006). He also threatened to reconsider relations with those countries that supported sanctions (CNN, 23 December 2006.).

On 24 March 2007, the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1747 that tightened the sanctions imposed on Iran in connection with the Iranian nuclear programme. The resolution imposed a ban on arms sales and stepped up the freeze on assets that was already in place. This followed an IAEA report reprimanding Iran for not yet declaring the full scope of its programme and for not allowing full, unrestricted access to all its nuclear sites (Hunter, 2010: 97). In response to the issuance of a second anti-Iran resolution by the Council, Iran's Foreign Minister, Manouchehr Mottaki, claimed that in passing the resolution, the Security Council had taken "unnecessary and unjustifiable action" against a peaceful nuclear programme that "presents no threat to international peace and security and falls, therefore, outside the Council's charter-based mandate" (Iran watch www.iranwatch.org). He also stated that no sanction or threat could force the Iranian nation to retreat from its legal and legitimate demands and that "the world must know – and it does – that even the harshest political and economic sanctions or other threats are far too weak to coerce the Iranian nation to retreat from their legal and legitimate demands" (Iran Watch, www.iranwatch.org).

Israel welcomed UN Security Council Resolution 1747, dated 24 March 2007, which imposed additional sanctions on Iran due to its failure to halt uranium enrichment. According to Ehud Olmert, this resolution was undoubtedly an additional, important step in the international struggle against Iran's nuclear armament programme (Israel News Agency, 26 March 2007). Olmert also stated that Israel would continue to act to the best of its ability to exert its influence in an attempt to strengthen the international front in order to achieve the desired result (Israel News Agency 26 March, 2007). Israel also welcomed the US State Department's 25 October decision to impose economic sanctions on Iran's Revolutionary Guards, some financial entities and specific individuals. Israeli officials have expressed some concern about the ramifications on regional stability and possible retaliation by Iran, Syria or Hezbollah in the event of a military strike against Iran (Migdalovitz, 2006: 13).

On 3 March 2008, the UN Security Council adopted a third sanctions resolution (Resolution 1803) in response to Iran's refusal to comply with the Council's demands to suspend its nuclear fuel-cycle activities. The five permanent members of the Security Council (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States)

and Germany agreed to pursue the resolution as part of a "package deal," whereby additional sanctions would be imposed on Iran on the one hand, but "to further enhance diplomatic efforts," the Council would seek a comprehensive long-term resolution to the nuclear issue as part of their "dual track approach" (Crail, Arms Control Today, April 2008). Even before the adoption of Resolution 1803, Iran reiterated its refusal to comply with the Council's demands that it suspend its nuclear fuel-cycle activities. Speaking to the Council prior to the 3 March vote on the resolution, Mohammad Khazaee, Iran's permanent representative to the UN, stated in regard to suspension that "Iran cannot and will not accept a requirement which is legally defective and politically coercive" (Crail, Arms Control Today, April 2008). Iran also rejected the call by the five permanent members of the Security Council and Germany's representative to pursue discussions on the nuclear issue on the basis of the incentives package. Gholam Hossein Elham, Iranian government spokesperson, stated, "The issue of nuclear talks with the countries of the [five permanent members of the Security Council and Germany] is over" (Crail, Arms Control Today, April 2008).

Israel welcomed UN Security Council Resolution 1803 as an additional necessary step and unequivocal message that the international community was unwilling to tolerate Iran's nuclear programme (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Tzipi Livni stated that this third resolution expressed the understanding that the international community must "neither give up nor stand aside in the face of Iran's attempts to attain a nuclear capability. Any additional decision by any state, company or group will add further weight to the body of sanctions necessary to halt Iran" (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs). According to an Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman, Iran, whose policies undermine global peace and stability and whose leaders openly threaten Israel, continues to ignore the demands of the international community and persists in violating previous UN Security Council resolutions. According to the spokesman, the international community was right to express their lack of confidence in Iran's declarations that its nuclear programme was for peaceful purposes and that the United Nations Security Council had adopted a resolution that represented a further stage in pressing Iran to retreat from its intention to attain nuclear weapons (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

On 4 June 2008, Prime Minister Olmert, however, asked for stronger sanctions, saying that "the long-term cost of a nuclear Iran greatly outweighs the short-term benefits of doing business with Iran" (BBC News, 4 June 2008). Shaul Mofaz, Israeli Deputy Prime Minister, also expressed frustration with the perceived ineffectiveness of sanctions aimed at discouraging Iran from uranium enrichment. Israel continues to believe that the enrichment may be used to aid an alleged nuclear weapons programme. Mofaz stated that the United Nations Security Council and the international community have "a responsibility to explain to Iran, through drastic measures, that the repercussions of their continued pursuit of nuclear weapons will be devastating" (BBC, 6 June 2008). Mofaz also made direct threats against Iran's nuclear facilities, saying "if Iran continues with its programme for developing nuclear weapons, we will attack it" (BBC, 6 June 2008).

On 27 September 2008, the UN Security Council adopted a fourth sanctions resolution (Resolution 1835). This resolution was in response to the 15 September report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) that stated Iran had not suspended uranium-enrichment-related activities (Security Council, SC/9459, 27 September 2008). The resolution imposed no new sanctions and was merely a restatement of previous resolutions: 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007), and 1803 (2008) (Security Council, SC/9459, 27 September 2008). Resolution 1835 was the weakest of the Security Council's six resolutions concerning Iran.

In the final UN discussions about Iran before Bush left office, the Bush administration was forced to accept a compromise resolution when Russia balked at more sanctions. Russia's UN representative, Vitaly Churkin, claimed the resolution had been aimed at focusing minds on political, rather than military solutions (BBC, 28 September 2008). Washington claimed Resolution 1835 showed the Council's mutual resolve to confront Iran, while Moscow argued it would encourage a political solution to the nuclear impasse (BBC, 28 September 2008).

Iran dismissed the resolution by reiterating its claim that its uranium development was for peaceful purposes and that it would not stop its uranium enrichment programme (BBC, 28 September 2008). Mahmoud Ahmadinejad warned that Iran would resist "bullying powers" (BBC, 28 September 2008) that attempted to thwart Iran's nuclear ambitions. The Chief Nuclear Negotiator, Saeed Jalili, stated that the new resolution

would cause "mistrust" and would not help global peace and security (BBC, 28 September 2008). Israel criticised Ahmadinejad's speech which, according to Tzipi Livni, demonstrated the "absurd state of affairs" in that it was delivered at an organisation whose founding motto was that there would "never again" be another Holocaust (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Livni was further dismayed when it became apparent that Iran wanted to become a member of the Security Council. Livni stated that such a step would be like allowing a criminal to be his own judge and jury, and further, that it was an unprecedented absurdity for a state threatening the security of its neighbours and calling for the destruction of another state to be a member of the body whose goal was to maintain international peace and security. Livni continued,

> Iran is the subject of Security Council sanctions because it pursues a nuclear weapons program and supplies weapons to terrorist organizations, thereby violating numerous Security Council resolutions. Responsible countries cannot support Iran's membership in the body responsible for the implementation of those same sanctions. … What is needed now is to apply international pressure on Iran which would leave no doubt as to the price involved in ignoring the demands of the international community – rather than including Iran in the very body that is spearheading this action. (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

On 9 June 2010, the UN Security Council adopted a fifth sanctions resolution (Resolution 1929), building on previous sanctions concerning the topics of Iran and non-proliferation. The Council noted that Iran had failed to comply with previous Security Council resolutions concerning its nuclear programme and therefore further sanctions on the country would be imposed by this resolution (United Nations News Centre, 9 June 2010), which came after months of intense and sometimes bitter diplomacy. Negotiations over the resolution followed two key events. First, revelations came forth in September 2009 that Iran had built a secret uranium enrichment facility at Qom, and second, Tehran's rejection in October 2009 of a deal designed not only to meet the country's pressing medical needs, but to also serve as a confidence-building measure, allowing time for negotiations respecting the long-term nuclear controversy (Wright, 2010).

President Ahmadinejad described the new resolution as a "used handkerchief which should be thrown in the dustbin" (BBC, 10 June 2010). Moreover, he warned that Iran would end negotiations on its nuclear programme if the resolution was adopted.

However, Israel viewed resolution 1929 as an important step in the efforts to get Iran to acquiesce to international demands. Specifically, the resolution called for Iran to suspend uranium enrichment activities, including enrichment to 20 per cent, cease construction of the facility in Qom, cooperate fully with the IAEA investigation into the military aspects of Iran's nuclear programme, and grant the IAEA full access to the facility. At the same time, Israel stated that the resolution was insufficient in and of itself and should have been accompanied by significant national and international commitments and further, only sanctions focusing on a variety of sectors in Iran would likely have any real influence on Iran's activities. Israel considered that broad, determined international action was required to clearly convey to the Iranian regime the price tag for continuing to violate international demands. Israel also stated its belief that the combination of Iran's "extremist ideology," together with nuclear weapons would result in catastrophic consequences.

5.6. ISRAELI RESPONSES TO IRANIAN NUCLEAR DETERRENCE

Israeli efforts to prevent Iran from turning its peaceful nuclear programme into a military one had two purposes. The first was to deter Iran from crossing the nuclear threshold by threatening pre-emptive military strikes, even if Israel had to violate international air space. The second, as will be shown in this chapter, was to discourage Iran through building a stronger alliance with the US and to use its relationships with Iran's two Cold War-era strategic allies to weaken Iran by taking advantage of its dependence on these sources for nuclear fuel and conventional military supplies.

5.6.1. Warnings to Use a Preventive Strike

Israel's threat to exercise its pre-emptive strike option could be used as a tool to deter the Iranian regime from producing nuclear weapons. Since the mid-1980s, Israel, the United States and other Western powers have accused Iran of pursuing nuclear weapons capability. Iranian officials have categorically denied these accusations and claimed that their nuclear programme is designed for peaceful purposes. These

accusations and denials have intensified since early 2002 with the revelation of previously undeclared nuclear facilities in Natanz and Arak (Bahgat, 2007). Since 2003, Israel has warned that it is prepared to take unilateral military action against Iran's nuclear sites if the international community fails to stop any development of nuclear weapons. Then-Israeli Defence Minister, Shaul Mofaz, stated in 2003 that "under no circumstances would Israel be able to tolerate nuclear weapons in Iranian possession" (Dunn, 2003).

According to the *Sunday Times*, military sources revealed that in 2005, Ariel Sharon, prime minister of Israel, ordered the country's armed forces to be ready by the end of March 2005 for possible strikes on secret uranium enrichment sites in Iran. The order came after Israeli intelligence warned the government that Iran was operating enrichment facilities that were believed to be small and concealed in civilian locations. Sharon stated, "We have the ability to deal with this and we're making all the necessary preparations to be ready for such a situation" (The Sunday Times, 11 December 2005). In July 2009, Israel sent two Saar-class missile ships and one Dolphin-class submarine capable of carrying nuclear warheads through the Suez Canal into the Red Sea in what an Israeli defence official explained was preparation for a possible attack on Iranian nuclear facilities (The Sunday Times, 16 July 2009). Furthermore, Ehud Barak, Israel's Defence Minister, warned Iran that a military strike on its nuclear facilities was still an option. He stated, "We clearly believe that no option should be removed from the table. This is our policy. We mean it. We recommend to others to take the same position but we cannot dictate it to anyone" (The Sunday Times, 27 July 2009). According to Uzi Arad, National Security Advisor to the Israeli prime minister, Tel Aviv was prepared to attack the nuclear facilities unilaterally, without the military support of its American or European allies. He explained that Iran's nuclear programme threatens Israel more than its larger and more distant allies, and stated, "we are always alone. Sometimes we have partners and lovers and donors of money, but no one is in our shoes." In May 2010, three German-built Israeli submarines equipped with nuclear cruise missiles were deployed in the Gulf near the Iranian coastline. Their reported missions were to deter Iran, gather intelligence and potentially land Mossad agents on the Iranian coast (The Sunday Times, 30 May 2010).

To complement its deterrence strategy, Israel also included "carrots" (soft power) as an incentive for Iran not to cross the military nuclear threshold. In September 2009, senior Israeli and Iranian officials met face-to-face in Cairo and discussed the threat of nuclear arms at a meeting of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament. Israeli officials stated that each side attended panel sessions of a disarmament and non-proliferation conference. Iran denied the Israeli accounts. However, if these reports could be confirmed it would have been the first official exchange between the bitter foes since Iran's 1979 revolution (BBC, 22 October 2009). The meeting between Israeli and Iranian officials was brokered by Australia and occurred days after Iran revealed it had built a uranium enrichment plant (Brisbane Times, 16 October 2009).

5.6.2. The Israeli Undeclared War

In an attempt to disrupt Iran's nuclear program Israel began a series of assassinations targeting Iranian nuclear scientists, much as it had done twenty-eight years before with respect to Iraq. Israeli intelligence agents triggered explosions in April 1979 at a French production plant near Toulouse, damaging two reactor cores destined for Iraqi reactors. Israeli agents may also have been behind the murders of an Egyptian nuclear engineer and two Iraqi engineers in Paris, who, were working for the Iraqi nuclear program (Reiter, 2005).Therefore, the assassinations which began in 2010 were widely believed to be the work of Mossad, Israel's foreign intelligence service.

In the first attack, on 12 January 2010, particle physicist Masoud Alimohammadi was killed on his way to work by a bomb strapped to a motorcycle in north Tehran. According to US intelligence sources, Israel is running a secret war against Iran; among techniques used is the killing of important persons in the Iranian atomic energy program (Philip, 2009). On 29 November 2010, Majid Shahriari, a senior Iranian nuclear scientist, was killed when a bomb was attached to his car by a motorcyclist in northern Tehran. According to Time magazine, Shahriari was the top scientist and senior manager of Iran's nuclear program. (*Time*. 30 November 2010). In a separate attack, Fereydoun Abbasi-Davani, a 52-year-old nuclear scientist working for Iran's defence ministry, was,wounded. Iranian officials have variously blamed Israel and the United States for assassinating Shahriari. Saeed Jalili, Iran's chief nuclear

negotiator, was quoted as saying that Western nations "exercise terrorism to liquidate Iran's nuclear scientists" (Jahn, 2011). .

On 23 July 2011, Darioush Rezaeinejad was shot dead in eastern Tehran. On 12 November 2011, a Revolutionary Guard commander, a key figure in Iran's missile programme, and 16 others died in an explosion at an ammunition depot near Tehran. The Revolutionary Guards called it an accident despite speculation that Israel was responsible (The Guardian, 11 January 2012). On 28 November 2011, a mysterious explosion was heard at nuclear facilities in Isfahan. Satellite picture later appeared to confirm the blast. On 11 December 2011 at least seven people were killed in a blast at a steel mill linked to Iran's nuclear program in the city of Yazd. On 11 January 2012, Mostafa Ahmadi Roshan, a top official at the Natanz uranium enrichment plant, and his driver were killed by a bomb attached to their car by a motorcyclist. Iranian officials, on state-run media, blamed Israel and the United States. While Israel has generally refused to comment on accusations, Mickey Segal, a former director of the Iranian department in the Israel Defence Forces' Intelligence Branch, told Israel Army Radio that the January 11 attack was part of broader pressure being brought to bear on President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's regime (CNN, January 11, 2012).

Furthermore, Israel was also suspected of being behind the explosion that reportedly struck the key nuclear facility at Isfahan, Iran's third-largest city. Isfahan is known for its uranium conversion plant which has been operational since 2004. At first, Iranian officials denied that any explosion had occurred, with the governor of Isfahan later alleging that the blast was caused by an accident that had occurred during a nearby military drill. However, The Times report alleged that the blast had not been a military accident, and that the city's nuclear facility had been damaged. The report quotes Israeli intelligence officials who based their conclusion on updated satellite images showing smoke billowing from the direction of the conversion plant. According to Israeli sources, there was "no doubt" that the blast had damaged the nuclear facility, and that the explosion was not an "accident" (The Times, November 30, 2011).

Hours after the Iran explosion took place; Hezbollah fired several rockets that landed near the Lebanese border in northern Israel, causing some property damage but no

injuries. Tel Aviv reacted by firing several artillery shells at the area from where the launch originated. It was speculated that the attack was ordered by Iran and Syria as a message from Iran to warn Israel (Y net news, November 29.2011)

Israel also allegedly carried out an attack on an Iranian steel plant near Yazd that killed seven, including 'foreign nationals' as reported in Iranian media and Haaretz. This plant was believed to be supplying Iran with special types of steel necessary to produce advanced missile designs and upgraded centrifuge equipment (BBC, 12 December 2011).

Mossad was also suspected of being responsible for an explosion at a Revolutionary Guard missile base. The explosion killed 17 Revolutionary Guard members, including General Hassan Moqaddam, described as a key figure in Iran's missile programme (The Guardian, 14 November 2011).

In addition, Israel was also suspected of being behind a series of notable cyber attacks, some of which were linked to the Iranian nuclear program. The best known of these was Stuxnet, the name given to a computer worm, or malicious computer program. Different variants of Stuxnet targeted five 'industrial processing' organisations in Iran, with the probable target widely suspected to be the uranium enrichment infrastructure in Iran (BBC, 15 February 2011). According to data compiled by Symantec, nearly 60 percent of all systems infected by the worm were located in Iran (Press TV Jun 28, 2011) therefore it seems Iran was the prime target. While Israel and America denied the allegations, Ralph Langner, the first researcher to show how Stuxnet could take control of industrial equipment, disclosed at a conference in California in September 2010 that the malware was of Israeli origin, and that it had targeted Iranian nuclear facilities (BBC, 4 March 2011).

Moreover, according to David Sanger, the Chief Washington Correspondent for The New York Times and author of "Confront and Conceal: Obama's Secret Wars and Surprising Use of American Power" Stuxnet is part of a U.S. and Israeli intelligence operation against the Iranian nuclear industry called "Operation Olympic Games", begun under President George W. Bush in 2008 and expanded under President Barack Obama (Sanger, 2012). Sanger argued that the two nations (U.S. and Israel) attempted

to "insert malicious software into the machinery of the Iranian military-industrial complex and so set back Iran's ability to manufacture weapons-grade uranium" (Sanger, 2012: 188). He also argued that the computer security experts who began studying the worm, which had been developed by the United States and Israel, gave it the name Stuxnet. Moreover, The Washington Post reported that Flame malware was also part of 'Olympic Games'. According to Western officials with knowledge of the effort, "the United States and Israel jointly developed a sophisticated computer virus nicknamed Flame that collected intelligence in preparation for cyber-sabotage aimed at slowing Iran's ability to develop a nuclear weapon (The Washington Post, 19 June, 2012).

In response to covert Israeli-US operations, including the assassination of Iranian nuclear scientists, Iranian agents reportedly began attempts to attack Israeli targets around the world. Yoram Cohen, the head of Shin Bet, the Israeli security agency, claimed that three planned attacks in Turkey, Azerbaijan and Thailand were thwarted at the last minute (The Guardian, 3 February 2012). On 11 October 2011, United States officials claimed to have foiled an alleged Iranian plot that included the assassination of the Saudi Arabian ambassador to the United States, Adel Al-Jubeir, with a bomb, and subsequent bomb attacks on the Saudi and Israeli embassies in Washington, D.C.,and Buenos Aires, Argentina (The Financial Times, 11 October, 2011)

5.6.3. The Establishment of Political Alliances to Exert Pressure

A second mechanism that Israel has used in an attempt to deter Iran from developing nuclear weapon capabilities is the establishment of a strong alliance with superpowers. Israel carried out this tactic via two diplomatic channels, both of which aimed at specific alliances to put pressure on Iran. One followed the traditional path of Israel's solidarity with the United States, which primarily depends on military and security doctrine. The second strategy was aimed at two of Iran's long-term strategic partners, Russia and China. If Iranian reliance on Russian and Chinese military imports could

be minimized, Israel would improve its sense of security. In the following section, which is divided into two parts, these two diplomatic channels will be discussed.

5.6.3.1. The Israeli-American Alliance

There is a fundamental symmetry of perceptions between the US and Israel in assessing Iran's regional role and the threat it poses. Both believe that Iran is an active promoter of terror (citing as examples, the terrorist groups Hamas, Hezbollah, al-Qaeda and the insurgents in Iraq as support for this belief). In addition, both countries believe Iran to be a threat to peace in its own right and that it is capable of disrupting both the Middle East peace process and the process of reconstruction and reconciliation in Iraq (Task Force on the Future of US-Israel Relations, 2008: 3). Furthermore, the two nations have developed a continuous dialogue about the threat posed by the Iranian nuclear programme. This dialogue has been continuous since the early 1990s, both on the political and intelligence levels. Because of its nuclear intentions and its support for the Islamist terror groups that seek Israel's destruction, from Yitzhak Rabin to Binyamin Netanyahu, the Iranian nuclear threat has been one of the main issues on the agenda of almost all Israeli prime ministerial visits to the United States (Freilich, 2007: 6). The same has been true of most meetings between the ministers of foreign affairs and defence and their American counterparts, in addition to countless meetings between officials at all levels of the respective national security establishments. With the exception of the Palestinian issue, no other topic is likely to have been the focus of such intensive bilateral attention (Freilich, 2007).

The intelligence exchange has been particularly extensive. In recent years, Meir Dagan, Director of Mossad (2002-2010) appointed by Ariel Sharon to head an interagency team to discuss Iran's nuclear programme, has become a regular visitor to Washington, meeting with his CIA counterparts, the Pentagon, the National Security Council (NSC) and other agencies. Officials from Israeli military intelligence, from its chief down, also meet regularly with their US counterparts, and the heads of the Israeli Atomic Energy Commission have been regular visitors (Freilich, 2007).

The Iranian nuclear issue has also been discussed extensively in various joint strategic forums, including the Joint Politico-Military Group (JPMG) as a high-level planning forum to discuss and implement combined planning, joint exercises and logistics

composed of representatives from the director general of the Israeli Ministry of Defence and the US Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs (Bard, 2010). The JPMG is arguably the most significant of the bilateral strategic forums and certainly the longest standing, and the Iranian issue has long been central to its meetings. The JPMG meets biannually, alternating between Israel and the US. The recent decision to increase the frequency of JPMG meetings from biannually to quarterly may be an indication of the two sides' growing sense of concern regarding Iran, as well as their desire to remain better informed regarding each other's thinking (Freilich, 2007: 6).

In recent years, the Iranian nuclear issue has been among the greatest challenges discussed in the Semi-Annual US-Israel Strategic Dialogue forum headed by the US Deputy Secretary of State and the Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister (Freilich, 2007). The dialogue reviews, in depth, many of the issues that affect their mutual security and partnership. It is an opportunity for both the US and Israel to discuss at a senior level a variety of issues, from their respective perspectives and evaluate policy implications for both countries (US Department of State, 18 October, 2010).

Among these exchanges, the US and Israel have taken a number of joint practical steps to increase Israel's security in the face of the Iranian threat. These steps include US sales to Israel of long-range F-15s, bunker busters and other arms, as well as US financial support for Israel's antimissile Arrow system. In September 2007, the media was rife with reports of a purported Israeli airstrike against a North Korean–supplied nuclear facility in Syria. The US and Israel reportedly exchanged intelligence regarding the facility in the months preceding the raid and coordinated positions afterward. This served to underscore the need for close, discrete, high level and intense bilateral consultations on issues pertaining to the prevention of WMD proliferation (Freilich, 2007: 7).

However, although both sides agree on the type of threat emanating from Iran, there is a lack of agreement on the importance of these risks. The Israeli perception is influenced by the belief that Iran presents a threat to its own survival. According to this perception, the nuclear threat must be prevented regardless of other Iranian activities such as the promotion of terror (Task Force on the Future of US-Israel Relations, 2008: 3). In the case of the US, both strategic and domestic political

reasons, not just the nuclear issue, influence its perceptions. First, Washington believes that the Iranians' interference in Iraq should be curbed, as should its support of resistance organisations such as Hezbollah and Hamas and its alliance with Syria, which undermines the peace process. Washington is also concerned about Tehran's other WMDs and missile programmes, such as the long-range missile capabilities, which may target US allies. Finally, it is concerned about the threat of a transferral of nuclear technology, materials and weapons to terrorist groups (Task Force on the Future of US-Israel Relations, 2008: 3).

This disagreement on the type of threat is reflected in a divergence of policies. Israel believes that the threat must be eliminated by any means, including military action, whereas the US prefers to use dialogue after the failure of deterrence and containment.

In addition, the US-Israel relationship suffers from two problems. First, the Israelis are concerned that the Iraq War has resulted in many Americans arriving at two conclusions: US influence in the region is diminishing and Israel is a liability to US national interests. This affects the Israeli assessment of security as that image has entered American political consciousness, and in fact, is probably the case for others in the Middle East region. The perception that the influence of the US is declining in the region has made a negative impact on Israeli security because of the close association between the US and Israel. Second, the US-Israel relationship itself has come under unprecedented attack. Some critics argue that Israel has manipulated the US government to act counter to American national interests, which, if properly understood, would see Israel as a liability. The implication of this analysis is that American national interests demand greater distance from Israel, not closer cooperation (Task Force on the Future of US-Israel Relations, 2008).

5.6.3.2. Iran's Counter Response Alliances with Russia and China

Russia

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Iran-Russia relations witnessed a sudden improvement, especially in relation to diplomatic and military cooperation. By the mid-1990s, Russia had agreed to assist with the development of Iran's nuclear programme in Bushehr. This cooperation was established based on common trade goals and political agendas. As the confrontation between the US and Iran escalated,

Tehran found common ground with China and Russia in limiting the political influence of the US in Central Asia. This common interest led the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation[15] to offer Iran observer status in 2005, and to allow Iran to apply for full membership on 24 March 2008. However, because of on-going sanctions levied by the United Nations, it was blocked from admission as a new member. The SCO stated that any country under UN sanctions cannot be admitted (China Daily, 12 June 2010). Iran's relations with the organisation, which is dominated by Russia and China, represent the closest diplomatic ties Iran has shared since the 1979 Revolution. In 2007, the five Caspian states,[16] which include Iran and Russia, agreed in a joint declaration that "under no circumstances will [they] allow the use of their territories by other states for an aggression or other military actions against any of the parties" (Scheieson, 2009).

Iran has increased its economic ties with Russia in order to deepen political relations between the two nations. Russia and Iran are respectively ranked first and second in the world in terms of gas reserves, and second and fourth in oil production. This status has encouraged the two to pursue economic partnerships involving the refining and export of oil and gas (Reuters, 1 November 2008). Along with Qatar, which ranks third in natural gas reserves, Russia and Iran agreed to boost cooperation at a meeting in Tehran in October 2008 to increase their cooperation in the energy sector. Together, the three countries account for over 40 per cent of global natural gas reserves (Reuters, November 1 2008). Thus, in 2005 Russia was Iran's seventh largest trading partner, with 5.33 per cent of all imports into Iran having originated from Russia. According to the International Monetary Fund, the bilateral trade between the two nations exceeded USD $1 billion in 2005 and totalled over USD $3 billion in 2007 (Tehran Times, 4 February 2010).

Consequently, Israel found it difficult to persuade Russia to withdraw support for Iran's nuclear programme. In a historical visit to Israel in 2005, Russian President

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[15] The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is an intergovernmental mutual-security organisation which was founded in 2001 in Shanghai by the leaders of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Except for Uzbekistan, the other countries had been members of the Shanghai Five, founded in 1996; after the inclusion of Uzbekistan in 2001, the members renamed the organisation.
http://www.sectsco.org/EN/secretary.asp

[16] The five Caspian states are Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Turkmenistan

Vladimir Putin came under pressure from Israel's Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, over Russia's role in Iran's nuclear programme. However, Putin defended the assistance Moscow provided in support of the Iranian nuclear programme insisting that Russia's role in Iran was only for peaceful purposes, such as energy, and not nuclear weapons (BBC, 28 April 2005). In 2006, Olmert visited Russia and in another attempt to convince Russia to stop assisting Iran's nuclear programme, said in his opening remarks to the Russian president that Russia must exert its influence to help solve the international standoff surrounding Iran's nuclear programme. He continued, "Russia has a central and very important role in the world, especially with regard to the nuclear standoff which is worrying us all." However, Putin did not address Iran's nuclear programme in his comments to Olmert during their meeting, preferring to focus on Russia's role in the push for the Middle East peace process to be stepped up. Also, Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov, told Olmert that Tehran's nuclear programme does not appear to include a threat to peace and security (Haaretz Daily, 18 October 2006).

Consequently, despite voting in favour of UN Security Council resolutions against Iran in 2006, 2007 and 2008, Russia refused to participate in a P5+1 (the permanent 5 members of the UNSC plus Germany) meeting to impose a new round of sanctions on Iran in September 2008, even after the IAEA condemned Tehran's lack of cooperation (Avni, 2008). According to Mahmoud-Reza Sajjadi, Iranian Ambassador to Russia, Russia would fulfil its commitments to complete Iran's first nuclear power plant in Bushehr despite any pressures. Russia also warned the US not to use force against Iran in the current nuclear dispute and that any military intervention in the Caspian Sea area would be unacceptable (The Guardian, 16 October 2007).

Both the Bush and Obama administrations have encouraged Russia to put pressure on Iran to halt its nuclear enrichment and shift its policy towards co-operation with the IAEA. The *New York Times* and the Russian business daily *Kommersant* reported that the US opened the prospect of a deal with Russia on the contentious US missile defence system in Europe in return for Moscow's help in resolving the Iranian nuclear crisis. A letter sent by US President Barack Obama to the Russian President, Dmitry Medvedev, stated that the US was ready to give up its plans to deploy missile shield elements in Central Europe in exchange for Russia's assistance on the Iranian nuclear

programme. President Medvedev claimed in March 2009 that he would cooperate with President Obama on the Iranian nuclear issue, although one month prior to this promise, Russia had discussed negotiating a 10-year fuel supply deal for the Bushehr nuclear power plant (The Guardian, 4 March 2009). Thus, Iran faces no threats from Russia. Russia is at present a state that Iran considers a friend.

China

China and Israel share an extensive economic, military and strategic relationship. Economically, both nations increased their trade from USD $30 million in 1992 to USD $3 billion in 2005 and it is projected to rise to USD $5 billion by 2008 and USD $10 billion by 2010. Militarily, China is the largest customer of Israeli military equipment and Israel is China's second-largest supplier of arms (following Russia). In 2007, the Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, made a high-profile visit to China to bolster trade and military cooperation and seek China's support over the conflict regarding Iran's nuclear proliferation. Despite the bilateral economic and military ties, China's policy concerning the Iranian nuclear issue did not soften. It was not until 2010 that China entertained the idea of implementing sanctions against Iran (George & Simpson 2010).

Perhaps more significantly, an understanding of economic issues clarifies China's lukewarm support for the US in its disputes with Iran. China, which has one of the fastest-growing major economies in the world and which has designs on becoming an economic superpower, is today the world's second largest consumer of oil. Nearly 60 per cent of its oil is imported from the Middle East. Iran, which held about 10 per cent of the world's total proven oil reserves, replaced Saudi Arabia as the leading supplier of oil to China in May 2009. Approximately 80 per cent of China's total imports from Iran are oil and the rest are mineral and chemical products. Indeed, since reaching an agreement in October 2004, Beijing and Tehran have penned energy deals that purportedly are worth more than USD $120 billion (George & Simpson 2010).

Because of this reliance on Iranian oil, China has shown support for Iran's right to a peaceful nuclear technology. In addition, China helped to build a research reactor and supplied four other research reactors in 1980. Continued aid from China has been provided to Iran in the form of help in the construction of a uranium hexafluoride

enrichment plant near Isfahan and in the resumption of the construction of the nuclear power plant at Bushehr that had been left incomplete by the French and Germans.

A 1990 covert nuclear agreement was also discovered (Delpech, 2009:45). In 1992, China and Iran signed an unprecedented nuclear cooperation agreement. While consistent US pressure on China succeeded in limiting nuclear cooperation between it and Iran, it obviously did not manage to completely halt this cooperation (Mafinezam, & Mehrabi, 2008: 82). Direct nuclear cooperation has ended, but there is speculation over whether indirect nuclear cooperation still remains (Delpech, 2009: 45). For instance, in February 2005, the US imposed sanctions on seven Chinese firms suspected of selling nuclear weapons technology to Iran. The penalties, which were to remain in place for two years, included a ban on trading with, and receiving assistance from, the US government (Sharif, 2005:149). There is substantial information to show that Chinese nuclear experts, scientists and technicians continue to be present in Iran (Delpech, 2009: 46).

With consistent US and Israeli pressure on China to impose a nuclear quarantine on Iran, China opposes Iran's production and possession of nuclear weapons, but does not see the urgency in stopping development of nuclear capabilities. However, it should be noted that the current Iranian government lacks the international credibility to expect seamless cooperation from China and other countries that are capable of helping Iran's nuclear programme (Mafinezam, & Mehrabi, 2008: 76).

5.6.4. Assessing Israeli Pre-emptive Actions against Iran

Pre-emptive doctrine constitutes one of the main pillars of the Israeli security policy, as evidenced by the bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor in July 1981, the military strike on the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) in Tunisia in 1985 and the bombing of the alleged Syria nuclear reactor on 6 September 2007. As discussed in Chapter Two, the pre-emptive doctrine involves two elements. The first element is taking the initiative in war, while the second is carrying out a limited surprise attack to destroy the forces of the perceived enemy. Tel Aviv could decide, much as it did twenty-eight years ago with respect to Iraq and two years ago with respect to Syria, to attack Iran's nuclear installations in order to force a delay in achieving nuclear

weapons capability. The main problem now is to estimate the possibility of a replication of such a scenario in the case of Iran.

It seems that the option of a pre-emptive Israeli strike on Iranian nuclear facilities would inevitably be problematic. Tehran has learnt lessons from Israel's attack on Osirak in 1981 by building sites underground and widely disseminating the facilities. The possibility of a pre-emptive Israeli strike is made more difficult by three inter-related problems: the choice of routes, distance and defensive measures.

5.6.4.1. The Difficulty of Routes

There are three possible flight paths that could be used by Israeli Air Force units to attack Iranian nuclear facilities. The northern approach would follow the Syrian-Turkish border and risk violation of Turkey's airspace; the central flight path would cross Jordan and Iraq; and the southern route would transit the lower end of Jordan, Saudi Arabia and possibly Kuwait. All but two of these countries are to a greater or lesser degree hostile to Israel; the exceptions being Jordan and Turkey, which would nevertheless refuse to let Israeli planes use their airspace to attack Iran (Steven, 2009:2). Turkey recently cancelled an annual trilateral exercise involving Israel, in part to put Israel on notice of its opposition to an Israeli strike.

Overflight of Iraq, whose airspace is *de facto* under US control, would also be diplomatically awkward for Israel and would risk a deadly clash with American air defences, since the intruding aircraft would not have the appropriate Identification, Friend or Foe codes. Israel would have to carefully weigh the operational risk, and, most of all, the cost to its most vital bilateral relationship before proceeding with a strike, especially if President Obama explicitly requested Prime Minister Netanyahu not to order an attack (Steven, 2009).

5.6.4.2. The Distance

The sheer distance involved would also pose a challenge. Iranian nuclear facilities are 1,200-1,500 km from Israel, much further away than the Iraqi reactor was. The distance could be even further if the planes needed to by-pass Jordanian airspace in order to avoid a crisis in Israeli-Jordanian relations, or refrain from flying over Iraq if the operation were not coordinated with the US. In the latter situation, an alternate

route via the Indian Ocean would be a necessity. In order to travel such distances, the Israeli planes would need to refuel twice mid-flight, once on the way to their targets, and once on the way back. Vulnerability when refuelling adds a higher level of complexity to such an operation (Kam, 2007).

5.6.4.3. The Geographical Distribution and Protection of Iranian Nuclear Facilities

Such a difficult and sensitive operation would be further complicated by the wide geographical distribution of the nuclear facilities. Iran has strategically scattered the components for nuclear development around its country; centrifuges have been set up in the once-secret locations of Natanz and Isfahan, a factory has been established for the production of heavy water in Arak and secret laboratories have been constructed in the Nuclear Research Centre in a Tehran suburb. Thus it becomes impossible to neutralise Iran's nuclear capability by attacking just one facility as Israel was able to do in Iraq. In the case of Iran, it would require the destruction of at least three or four sites involved with uranium enrichment and plutonium production (Kam, 2007).

Moreover, many Iranian facilities are carefully sheltered; some are located deep underground, and are well protected by air defences and interceptor planes. Israel has purchased over 5,000 precision-guided missiles (PGMs), many of which contain penetrating warheads (e.g. the GBU-28 bunker busters). However, although conventional bunker buster bombs/missiles can penetrate up to 10 metres of hardened materials or 30 metres of earth, some Iranian facilities are located up to 60 metres deep. Also, the Iranian ground-based integrated air defence system is based on the highly sophisticated Tor M1 9M330 Air Defence System from Russia. All of this would require that the attack be carried out by a relatively large force, including attack planes, interceptor planes, refuelling planes and additional supporting aircraft. Such a large operation would be vulnerable to interference and mishaps, thereby increasing the risk of failure (Kam, 2007).

5.6.5. The Evolution of the Iranian Retaliation against Israel

Iran has already warned Israel that any attack would result in retaliation. In December 2003, Iran's Air Force Commander General, Seyed Reza Paradiz, said in response to

statements by Israeli Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz that if Israel attacks Iran "it will be digging its own grave" (Sammy & Karen, 2004).

According to Mustafa Alani, any country has three military capacities: the ability to use deterrence, the ability to defend and the ability to retaliate. Iran lacks both a deterrent ability and a defence ability by which it could repel a military attack, including by air. (Alani, Khaleej Times Online, January 2010). However, Iran does have the ability to retaliate in the event of an attack. Retaliation against Israel would consist of three primary components: the use of missiles, proxy warfare and direct attacks on Jewish communities.

5.6.5.1. Firing Shahab and Other Missiles at Israel

The greatest strategic threat to Israel is an attack by one or more ballistic missiles armed with nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction. Today, Israel remains completely vulnerable to this form of attack. Iran has explicitly stated that it will respond to an Israeli strike against its nuclear facilities by firing Shahab 3 missiles. The Shahab 3 is a medium-range, liquid-propellant, road-mobile ballistic missile. It represents Iran's first successful attempt to acquire medium-range ballistic missiles and they provide Iran with the capability of legitimately threatening targets like Israel, which lay beyond Iran's immediate borders. The original Shahab 3 missile is almost identical to the North Korean No Dong 1 missile, and is almost certainly based on technology and parts from North Korea. Pakistan has also had access to this technology to build the Hatf 5 missile. Later variations of the missile, which may represent significant technological improvements made domestically, are covered in a separate entry (Missiles of the World).

On 8 July 2008, one day after threatening to strike Tel Aviv and US interests if attacked, Iran's Revolutionary Guards were reported to have test-fired nine missiles, including one the government in Tehran says has the range to reach Israel (The New York Times, 9 July 2008). Air Force commander Hossein Salami advised that Iran was ready to retaliate to military threats, saying "We warn the enemies who intend to threaten us with military exercises and empty psychological operations that our hand will always be on the trigger and our missiles will always be ready to launch" (The New York Times, 7 September 2008). However, according to Ephraim Kam, Deputy

Head of the Institute for National Security Studies, this type of missile lacks precision, and is likely to be most effective against large targets. Furthermore, according to Kam, long-range missiles such as the AS-15 purchased from the Ukraine, and the BM-25 acquired from North Korea, are capable of being intercepted by Israel's Arrow missile defence system. Thus, the damage that Iran's missiles would inflict, as long as they are not fitted with nuclear warheads, is limited. Moreover, Kam argues that although the 24-36 long-range Sukhoi-24 ground attack aircraft are capable of reaching Israel, Israel's air force and air defence system are superior to that of Iran (Kam, 2007).

Table 5.3 Iranian Missiles

Designation	Stages	Propellant	Range km	IOC	Inventory	Alternate Name
Mushak-120	1	Solid	130			Iran-130, Nazeat 10
Mushak-160	1	Solid	160			Fateh-110/NP-110
Mushak-200	1	Solid	200			Zelzal-2
Shahab-1	1	Liquid	300	1995	50-300	Scud-B
Shahab-2	1	Liquid	500		50-150	Scud-C
Shahab-3	1	Liquid	1,300	2002	25-100	Zelzal-3
Shahab-4	2	Liquid	2,000		0	
IRIS	1	Liquid / Solid	3000	2005		Shahab 3D
X-55 LACM	1	Jet engine	3,000	2001	12	
Shahab-5	3	Liquid	5,500		0	
Shahab-6	3	Liquid	10,000		0	

Source: Iran Missile Programme, global security.org, available at http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/iran/missile-overview.htm (Access Date: 11 Jan, 2010)

5.6.5.2. Proxy War

The second retaliatory element is the use of forward defence tools such as Hezbollah and Hamas. Iran could accomplish this by encouraging Hezbollah to deploy its extensive stock of rockets against Israel. However, this stock, which predominantly consists of long-range rockets, was diminished during the Lebanon War in 2006.

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Nevertheless, Hezbollah still has the capability of striking Israel. Iran is expected to simultaneously use Hamas and other Palestinian groups to intensify their attacks against Israel (Kam, 2007). This option will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Six (Iranian Forward Defence).

The third retaliatory measure is spectacular attacks against Israeli and Jewish targets outside Israel (similar to those Iran carried out in Argentina in the mid-1990s). In this context, it is also possible that Iran would carry out a strike against its own Jewish community (Kam, 2007).

5.6.6. Possibility of a Stable Nuclear Balance between Iran and Israel

Many Israeli decision makers and independent observers speculate that a nuclearized Iran would affect regional stability and global efforts to curb nuclear proliferation. The following sections discuss how the failure of the international community to deter Iran from becoming a nuclearized power may have implications not only for Israel's national security, but may even destabilize the entire Middle East through an arms race, thus undermining Israel's confidence in peaceful diplomacy and may even empower the non-state actors through leakage of sensitive nuclear technology.

5.6.6.1. Breaking the nuclear superiority

Israel is believed to be the sixth country in the world to have developed nuclear weapons. It is widely understood to be the first and only country in the Middle East to possess them and they are viewed as the ultimate guarantor of Israeli security. The acquisition of nuclear weapons by any state in the region would be considered a direct threat to Israel. Therefore, alone or together with other nations, Israel has used diplomatic and military efforts as well as covert action to prevent other Middle Eastern countries from acquiring nuclear weapons. Three states in the region – Iran, Iraq and Syria – have been suspected of aspiring to develop nuclear programmes. In the past, Israel has attempted to deal with such threats unilaterally. On 7 June 1981 Israel bombed the Iraqi nuclear reactor Osirak in "Operation Opera," and on 6 September 2007 it launched an air strike, "Operation Orchard," against a presumed nuclear site in Syria. Today, it is Iran's nuclear ambitions that are of primary concern (Charnysh, 3 September 2009). If Iran succeeds in acquiring nuclear weapons capability, it would call the effectiveness of Israel's nuclear deterrence into question.

5.6.6.2. Triggering a Nuclear Arms Race in the Middle East

From an Israeli perspective, the threat of Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons does not lay merely in the possibility that Iran would break Israel's nuclear superiority, but it could possibly tip the region into a nuclear arms race that would lead to a major transformation in the Middle East's strategic balance. Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons would force its neighbours in the region, such as Saudi Arabia (with possible help from Pakistan), Egypt and Turkey to also consider acquiring them to counter the threat (SSED, 54).

In 2006, the International Atomic Energy Agency revealed that several Arab countries were expressing an interest in domestic nuclear energy programmes, the oft-used front for working on weapons. These countries included Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and Egypt – all adversaries of Iran. Jordan has also begun a nuclear programme and has sought help from the Obama administration for developing it (Mauro, 15 April 2011). The Gulf States, including Saudi Arabia, recognise that Iran is a regional power and is in the position of becoming a real threat. Iran, with its population of 80 million, almost four times the population of Saudi Arabia, is separated from Saudi Arabia by only a few kilometres of the Persian Gulf. The Gulf States, including Saudi Arabia, have deep suspicions about Iranian intentions and they will not accept Iran as a nuclear state (Jones, 1998:44). Saudi Arabia, some argue, "could not tolerate the political, military, and diplomatic power that a nuclear weapon would give Iran" (Solingen, 2007:168).

In November 2010, the website WikiLeaks disclosed various confidential documents pertaining to the US and its allies that revealed Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah had urged the US to attack Iran to destroy its nuclear weapons programme, describing Iran as a snake whose head should be cut off without any procrastination (WikiLeaks and Iran, Chicago Tribune, 29 November 2010). Saudi Prince Turki al-Faisal, a former chief of Saudi intelligence at the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies, called on the Gulf Cooperation Council, which consists of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, to create a united army and to begin "acquiring the nuclear might to face that of Iran" (Mauro, 15 April 2011). This was the first time that an influential member of the Saudi royal family had called for the

commencement of a nuclear weapons programme, which is undoubtedly what he was referring to.

According to GlobalSecurity.org, the Saudis have the necessary infrastructure to quickly start a nuclear weapons programme. "While there is no direct evidence that Saudi Arabia has chosen a nuclear option, the Saudis have in place a foundation for building a nuclear deterrent," (Mauro, 15 April 2011). Furthermore, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has embarked on a programme to build civilian nuclear power plants and is seeking cooperation and thnical assistance from the United States and others. The UAE's peaceful civilian nuclear energy programme could be changed to focus on armed weapons to counter Iran's nuclear developments. Also Oman is looking forward to Iranian cooperation with the international community and believes that it is of paramount importance that Washington should engage in a "direct dialogue" with Teheran to resolve the crisis over the Iranian nuclear program. Oman also concerned not to see any military confrontation or any activities that may disturb security in the region. Oman believes that security and stability in the Gulf is a definitive necessity and can only be achieved through mutual trust and a balance of power between the Gulf States on the one hand and regional powers on the other (Sultanate of Oman ministry of foreign affairs, 2010).

A Chatham House report indicates that the Sunni-led Gulf monarchies fear Iran's Shiite clerical regime (http://www.chathamhouse.org/). Ian Jackson stated that "A matching civil nuclear energy programme undertaken jointly and rapidly by Gulf Arab states would be a sensible strategic precaution" to Iran's ambitions and it would have "an implied military deterrent value" (Daya, 10 November 2009). Khalaf (2004) suggested that behind the public silence from Sunni Arab officials lurked anxiety over Shi'ism's widening regional power from southern Lebanon through Iraq to Iran and the Gulf, where Shi'as constitute a majority in Bahrain, and a minority in Kuwait, the UAE and Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, Iran and the UAE have long-standing territorial disputes over Persian Gulf islands. Abdul-Rahman bin Hamad al-Attiyah, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), declared that Iran's nuclear armament is unjustifiable.

It is likely that such a nuclear arms race would even extend into Egypt. According to one American report, former Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak, viewed Iran as the

primary long-term challenge facing Egypt, and an Egyptian official said that Iran is running agents inside Egypt in an effort to subvert the Egyptian regime. In 2010, leaked diplomatic cables revealed that Mubarak expressed animosity toward Iran in private meetings, saying that Iran's backing of terrorism is well-known (WikiLeaks, November 29 2010). The Mubarak regime was not shy to tell US officials off-the-record that it was ready to develop nuclear weapons if Iran was not stopped. One cable from May 2008 that was released by WikiLeaks stated, "Mubarak said that Egypt might be forced to begin its own nuclear weapons program if Iran succeeds in those efforts." Mubarak also said in 2007, "We don't want nuclear weapons in the area, but we are obligated to defend ourselves…We will have to have the appropriate weapons" (Bergman, December 11 2010).

The fear of breaking Israel's nuclear monopoly is a nightmare to Israel, the US and other Western countries. The more nuclear weapons multiply and proliferate, the greater the danger that they will be either purposefully or accidentally used by an irresponsible regime or extremist organisation.

5.6.6.3. Israeli Perception of the Nature of the Iranian Regime

Pedatzur has stated that Iran's determined and vigorous pursuit of nuclear weapons capability, together with the regime's extreme hostility towards Israel, presents an existential threat (Pedatzur, 2007: 516). Israeli policymakers perceive Iran as an irrational and hostile ideological enemy determined to eliminate Israel from the face of the earth (Fiore, 18 July 2011). Therefore, Israel cannot allow or live with an Iran that has nuclear capabilities because it is certain that Iran will eventually attack Israel with nuclear weapons. Israeli threat perceptions are based on the extreme rhetoric of Iranian leaders and their support for terrorism against Israel in the form of Hezbollah and Hamas. For example, in October 2000, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the former President of Iran, clearly stated that Iran believed it would come out the winner of a nuclear war. He stated, "In a nuclear duel in the region, Israel may kill 100 million Muslims…Muslims can sustain such casualties, knowing that, in exchange, there would be no Israel on the map" (Pedatzur, 2007: 516). Iran's President, Mahmud Ahmadinejad, worsened the situation between the two countries with a series of extremist declarations. In October 2005, shortly after his election to the presidency, Ahmadinejad declared before participants in a World without Zionism conference

held in Tehran, that "as the Imam [the Ayatollah Khomeini] said, Israel must be wiped off the map." Since then, he has regularly made statements pertaining to these topics (Pedatzur, 2007: 517).

Given the perception and factual evidence of Iranian threats towards Israel, the Israeli security policy of thwarting Iran's actions is not just with respect to the nuclear issue, but also with respect to Iran's support of terrorist groups aligned against Israel.

5.6.6.4. Iranian Nuclear Programme as an Umbrella for Extremist Organisations (The Hezbollah Scenario)

Many observers assume that a nuclearized Iran would contribute to military instability not only in terms of its own use of nuclear weapons, but its support of regional extremist groups long affiliated with Iran, such as Hezbollah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Hamas. There is concern that these groups would become emboldened to take more aggressive action against Israel, assuming that a nuclear-armed Iran would provide protection for them (Karmon, 2008: 94).

Furthermore, the most controversial issue for Israel is a nuclear-armed Iran that provides its new weapons and technology to extremist organisations. Iran could potentially share its nuclear technology and know-how with extremist groups hostile to Israel and others in the region. Indeed, Iran could see this as an insurance policy. In the event that Israel launches a pre-emptive attack on Iranian nuclear facilities, Tehran may conclude that it has nothing to lose by turning nuclear technology over to terrorists, notably Hezbollah (Emerson & Himelfarb, 2009).

The stakes would have to be very high, perhaps regime survival, before Iran would risk giving nuclear weapons to extremist groups, although some argue that this would not be the only scenario in which Iran would share its nuclear technology and know-how with extremist groups. Iran already has well-established smuggling routes to Hezbollah. Recently, it smuggled massive quantities of weapons to the group in Lebanon in an attempt to help it to rebuild the weapons arsenal destroyed by Israel during the 2006 war. As a result, Hezbollah now has more than three times the number of missiles it had at the start of that war. This point will be further discussed in Chapter Six. This raises the question as to whether a nuclear weapon might also be smuggled through. A recent collective study by The Washington Institute for Near

East Policy investigated the challenges posed by deterring a nuclear Iran, should diplomacy not succeed, and considered the possibility of Iran's nuclear weapons finding their way into the hands of terrorists (Karmon, E. 2008: 94).

The late Paul Leventhal, former President of the Nuclear Control Institute, took this possibility seriously. Under the right circumstances, Tehran might attempt to transfer WMDs to Hezbollah, or perhaps other terror groups such as Hamas or the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. In interviews with *The Washington Times* and *The New York Times* not long before his death in 2007, Leventhal said it was not beyond the realm of possibility that Hezbollah could try to smuggle a crude nuclear device by ship or truck and deliver it to a highly-populated Israeli city. According to Leventhal, if the fissile device functioned poorly, it would result in an explosion with the power of 1,000 tons of TNT, resulting in radiation contamination and a "catastrophic" number of casualties. If such a device functioned properly, it could result in an explosion with the power of 15,000 to 20,000 tons of TNT – roughly equivalent to the bomb dropped on Hiroshima in August 1945 (Emerson & Himelfarb, 2009).

As can be seen, it is therefore not beyond the realm of possibility that if Iran succeeds in acquiring nuclear weapons capability, it might also supply extremist groups with nuclear weapons capability as part of a defence alliance and thereby increase the danger of direct conflict.

Also, according to the study, Iran's WMD programmes are probably under the control of the IRGC, which is comprised of some of the most radical elements in the regime. These elements may be able to circumvent senior government decision makers opposed to sharing the new and dangerous technology with extremist groups. Therefore, the risk that pro-Iranian terrorist groups would be heartened by their patron's new capabilities also presents a new challenge for Israel national security.

5.7. CONCLUSION

This chapter considered how Iran's potential development of a nuclear deterrent under its nuclear programme would affect Israel's national security. It argues that the failure of the US in Iraq has made Iran one of the most significant threats to Israeli security. This chapter has examined the possible Israeli responses to Iranian nuclear deterrence

through non-military and military diplomatic means. This examination analysed different aspects of Israel's likely response and Iran's counter-response. The research demonstrates the development of Iran's nuclear programme and assesses the various activities that Iran is undertaking in its nuclear facilities through the prism of GlobalSecurity.org and recent reports by the IAEA. The information gleaned from these reports suggests what is openly known and what may not be known about the nature of the nuclear activities at each facility. Furthermore, the research highlights the strong influence of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) and the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran (AEOI), both agencies being closely associated with the Iranian nuclear programme as well as directly answerable to Iran's spiritual leader Ali Khamenei.

In addition, this chapter has shown the consequences of Iranian nuclear diplomacy and the non-military efforts undertaken by Israel to deter Iran after two secret nuclear sites became known to the IAEA from 2003 to 2010. This chapter has demonstrated how Iranian diplomats tried to resist the EU and international pressures by going back and forth with the IAEA over inspections of its nuclear facilities, and taking advantage of international divisions over whether the Iranian programme was for peaceful purposes or military use.

This chapter has also reviewed the possible Israeli response to the Iranian nuclear threat. Both a direct military response and indirect response that brought pressure against Iran through Israell's development of stronger alliances with the US, Russia and China might be expected. This chapter discussed the efforts to deter Iran through Israeli warnings that Israel might launch pre-emptive strikes and analysed how this might be possible in military terms. It has argued that the option of a pre-emptive strike on Iranian nuclear facilities would inevitably be problematic since Tehran has learnt practical lessons from Israel's attack on Osirak in 1981. Seeking to learn from Iraq's mistakes, Iran has built its nuclear related sites underground and dispersed the facilities over a broad area. Together with the problems that Israel would face with respect to attack routes its aircraft could use, the distance from its military base and the likely defensive measures Iran would take, this chapter ended with the conclusion that under the conditions existing in 2011, Israel could not carry out an effective military attack against Iran using conventional weapons.

This chapter also proposed the possibility of a stable nuclear balance between Iran and Israel and discussed its broader implications for Israeli and regional security. It assumed that a nuclearized Iran would contain a number of negative outcomes for Israeli security, in that such a scenario would mean that Israeli nuclear superiority would no longer exist, Israeli confidence would be undermined and it would likely trigger a regional nuclear arms race. The added possibility that Iran may extend its umbrella of nuclear protection to other states and extremist organisations was also reviewed.

This analysis has offered an understanding of how a nuclearized Iran would affect the national security of Israel. The following chapters will discuss the second aspect, that of Iranian forward defence represented by Tehran's support of Hezbollah and Hamas.

Chapter 6

ISRAELI RESPONSES TO IRANIAN FORWARD DEFENCE

6.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines Israel's reaction to Iran's forward defence doctrine as represented by its support of Hezbollah and its alliance with Syria, and how it affects Israel's national security. It discusses the strengthening of the "triple alliance", which was intensified following the invasion of Iraq in 2003 and became stronger during the 2006 Lebanon War. It explores Iran's relationship with Israel's two major adversaries, Syria and Hezbollah, and a host of Palestinian resistance groups under its "forward defence posture" which might have made Israel more vulnerable to indirect Iranian threat. It also argues that the triple alliance would affect the 'secure frontiers' principles of Israeli national security since 1948.

The chapter is divided into three parts which explain and analyse Iran's forward defence strategy as an extension of its conventional deterrence. The first part gives a brief overview of the history of the relationship between Iran, Syria and Hezbollah up to the 2006 War. The second part analyses the relationship following the 2006 Lebanon War. The final part looks at the effects of the 2006 Lebanon War on the Israeli national security doctrine.

6.2. THE BUILDING OF THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE: IRAN, SYRIA, HEZBOLLAH (1980–2006)

6.2.1. Years of Cooperation on a Small Scale (1979–1982)

The Shi'a relationship between Iran and Lebanon is deep and predates the Iranian Revolution of 1979. It developed rapidly in the 1960s and 1970s after Sayyed Musa al-Sadr, a charismatic Iranian-born cleric who was educated in Iraq, went from Iran to Lebanon in 1959 to become the leading Shi'a figure in the city of Tyre (Byman, 2005: 82). Al-Sadr quickly established himself as one of the most prominent advocates for the Shi'a population in Lebanon, a community that was both economically and

politically marginalised (Byman, 2005: 82). The arrival of Imam Musa al-Sadr opened a new page in the relationship between the Lebanese and Iranian people. In the 1960s and 1970s, al-Sadr established close relations with Khomeini's supporters who had fled Iran during the final years of the rule of the Shah and settled in Lebanon to prepare for the Iranian Revolution because Lebanon was regarded as a safe haven for liberal and Muslim movements who were mobilizing against the Shah. Thus, the Iranians used Lebanon as a launching pad from which to organize their groups against the Shah's regime (Alagha, 2006: 19).

In 1969 he was appointed as the first head of the Supreme Islamic Shi'ite Council (SISC), an entity aimed at representing Shi'a demands before the state on an equal footing with other Lebanese sects (Alagha, 2006: 27). The founding of the Supreme Council detached the Shi'a from the Sunnis for the first time, allowing them to form an independent sect, in line with the Maronites and the Sunnis.

In 1974, the 'Movement of the Deprived' (*harakat al-mahrumin*) was established by al-Sadr and Member of Parliament Hussein el-Husseini in an attempt to reform the Lebanese political system to gain political power and to press for better economic and social conditions for the Shi'a. It established a number of schools and medical clinics throughout southern Lebanon, many of which are still in operation today. The organization was sidelined by the beginning of the civil war a year later (Saad-Ghorayeb, 2002:9). Although influenced by Islamic ideas, it was a secular movement rather than religious or ideological. The Greek Catholic Archbishop of Beirut, Mgr. Grégoire Haddad, was among the founders of the Movement (Alagha, 2006: 28).

In 1975, the 'Movement of the Deprived' developed an armed wing known as the Lebanese Resistance Movement (*afwaj al-mouqawma al-islamia*), better known as Amal, as a reaction to the failure to change the political conditions by peaceful means. Amal became one of the most important Shi'a Muslim militias during the Lebanese Civil War (Byman, 2005). The main driving force behind the creation of Amal was the regional and sectarian distinctions and the problem of the South. Amal later helped train several future Iranian revolutionaries (Byman, 2005: 82). After Syrian intervention in the civil war in 1976, Al-Sadr secured Assad's patronage by declaring his Alawi sect to be Muslims. Amal grew strong with the support of, and through its ties with, Syria and became Syria's proxy in Lebanon thereafter.

Neither the Deprived nor Amal were restricted to Lebanese nationals as Iranians, including Mustafa Chamran, an Iranian activist who lived in Lebanon before the Iranian revolution and was a top aide to al-Sadr, also became members. It was supervised by Amal's military branches before the outbreak of the Iranian Revolution. After the success of Khomeini's Revolution, Chamran's career took a sharp upward turn. He was appointed commander of Iran's Pasdaran, as well as Iran's Minister of Defence, personal military aide to Ayatollah Khomeini, and the latter's representative to the Supreme Council of Defence. In March 1980, he was elected to the Majlis of Iran (the Iranian Parliament) as a representative from the city of Tehran (Alagha, 2006: 33).

In August 1978, al-Sadr and two companions, Sheikh Muhammad Yaacoub and journalist Abbas Badreddine, Amal's regional activists at the time, visited Libya to meet with government officials. The three disappeared in mysterious circumstances on August 31, 1978 (Alagha, 2006: 31). Al- Sadr's disappearance, six months prior to the Iranian Revolution, was a key factor in the marginalisation of the Amal Movement, and the birth of Hezbollah. In 1978 the Shi'as witnessed a great gap in their leadership, and Hussein el-Husseini and Nabih Berri could not match al-Sadr's charisma, charm, and leadership. Thus, they needed a new leader to turn to, and relief was to come now from another exceptional source, Imam Khomeini (Alagha, 2006: 31). In 1982, Berri co-opted Amal to the Lebanese government, joining the National Salvation Committee, which was formed by the Lebanese president, Elias Sarkis, in order to help deal with the Israeli occupation of Lebanon and its siege of Beirut. This led to a division within Amal's hierarchy between moderates and those inspired by Khomeini's revolutionary doctrines who sought to adopt a radical Islamic approach. This splintering eventually resulted in the creation of Hezbollah by key personnel in Amal, such as Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah, the current Secretary General of Hezbollah, who was a district leader before he shifted allegiance (Alagha, 2006: 28).

6.2.2. Years of Joint Struggle against Israel and the United States: 1982–1989

In 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon to evict the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) which had bases in southern Lebanon from where it was firing Katyusha rockets into northern Israel. This war shattered the Palestinian infrastructure, saw the expulsion of the PLO and led to the collapse of the Lebanese government. The Iranian regime took the opportunity presented by the political vacuum to export the Islamic revolution into Lebanon. From there it was able to wage its battle against Israel and the US without direct involvement by creating and using Hezbollah as its proxy (Norton, 2007:33).

Two key Iranians were behind the creation of the Lebanese Hezbollah Party, Ali Akbar Muhtashemi, a former Iranian ambassador to Syria and later Iran's Minister of the Interior during Mohammad Khatami's presidency, who came up with the idea and nurtured it in the 1980s, and Mohammad Hassan Akhtari, (the 'operational father'), the Iranian ambassador to Syria from 1986 to 1997, and again from 2005 until January 2008 (Manal Lufti, Ash-Sharq al-Awsat (London), 18/05/2008). Muhtashemi, who spent a considerable amount of time in Lebanon, exploited the power vacuum left by the Lebanese state and held regular meetings with leading Islamists such as Imad Maghnniyye, Husayn al-Musawi, Abbas al-Musawi, and Subhi al-Tufayli, who later were the nucleus of Hezbollah (Alagha, 2006:33). Mohtashemi "actively supervised" Hezbollah's creation, merging into it existing radical Shi'a movements: the Lebanese al-Dawa; the Association of Muslim Students; Al-Amal al-Islamiyya, He also merged into it existing radical Shi'a movements: the Islamic Dawa Party in Lebanon; the Association of Muslim Students; Al-Amal al-Islamiyya (Esposito, 1999: 146-151). In an interview with the Iranian newspaper *Shargh* on 3 August 2008, Muhtashemi discussed the birth of Hezbollah. He stated:

> After the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, Ayatollah Khomeini changed his mind about sending large forces to Syria and Lebanon …. I was really worried about Syria and Lebanon. I went to Tehran and met with Ayatollah Khomeini. As I was worried about Lebanon and enthusiastic about the idea of sending forces to Syria and Lebanon, I started talking about our responsibilities and what was going on in Lebanon. The imam cooled me down and said the forces we send to Syria and Lebanon would need huge logistical support. …. The only remaining way is to train the Shi'a men there, and so Hezbollah was born (Manal Lufti, Al-Sharq al-Awsat (London), May 18, 2008).

A high-ranking Iranian military, political, and religious delegation led by the commander of the Islamic Army's Ground Forces, Colonel Sayyad Shirazi, arrived in Damascus on the second day of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon to plan "jihad against

Israel". The Iranian Pasdaran cooperated with local pro-Iranian Shia factions: *al-Amal al-Islami* (Islamic Amal), led by Husayn al-Musawi; and Hezbollah (the "Party of God"), led by Abbas al-Musawi and Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli (Karmon, 2008: 21). Muhtashemi is quoted by *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* as telling an Iranian newspaper that more than 100,000 young Lebanese received military training both in Lebanon and in Iran in groups of 300 fighters (Manal Lufti, Al-Sharq al-Awsat, London, May 18, 2008).

The prodigious Iranian funding and training which allowed Hezbollah to finance its operations and meet the social welfare needs of its constituents without competing with other militias for revenue led to the rapid growth of Hezbollah's military wing, which devoted itself primarily to the expulsion of the American and European Multi-National Force (MNF) in Beirut and the defeat of occupying Israeli forces. In the early months of 1983, pro-Iranian elements infiltrated Beirut with active Syrian support (Karmon, 2008: 21).

From 1983 to 1985, Lebanese Shi'a resistance linked to Hezbollah carried out a spectacular wave of suicide bombings against Western and Israeli military and diplomatic targets which resulted in the withdrawal of the MNF and the redeployment of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) to a thin "security zone" in the south (Rubin, 2009: 133). Jeffrey Goldberg states in *The New Yorker* that during this period Hezbollah "quickly became the most successful terrorist organization in modern history, [serving] as a role model for terror groups around the world, ...and virtually invent[ing] the multipronged terror attack" (Jeffrey Goldberg, October 14, 2002).

On 18 April 1983, a bomb blast at the US Embassy in Beirut killed at least 63 people, 17 of whom were American citizens. It was the deadliest attack on a US diplomatic mission up to that time. Hezbollah claimed responsibility for the blast with a message "promising not to allow a single American to remain on Lebanese soil ... we mean every inch of Lebanese territory. ..." (Wright, 2001: 107). On 23 October 1983, twin suicide bombings killed more than 300 American and French contingents, forcing its withdrawal in 1984 (Rubin, 2009: 133).

It is significant that Husayn Shaykh al-Islam, Iran's deputy foreign minister, chief of the Revolutionary Guards, and supervisor of secret cells outside Iran, visited Damascus a few days before the April bombing and again a few days before the

October attacks. It was apparently he who, in close coordination with the Syrian government, gave Musawi the final order for the bombings to be carried out (Karmon, 2008: 21).

In 1998, Syrian Defence Minister Mustafa Tlass boasted to the Gulf *al-Bayan* newspaper that he was the one who gave the green light to the "resistance" to murder American marines and French soldiers, but that he prevented attacks on the Italian soldiers of the MNF "because he was in love with the Italian actress Gina Lollobrigida" (Karmon, 2008: 21).

From 1982 until 1985, the Shiites, backed by Syria and Iran, launched persistent attacks against Israel. In May-June 1985, the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) pulled out of most of southern Lebanon, confining itself to a small area known as the Security Zone.

From 1985 to 1989, Syria made strong efforts to create a *pax Syriana* in Lebanon. Meanwhile Iran, in its competition with Amal for the hearts and minds of the Shia community, increased its financial assistance to Hezbollah. Therefore, both Hezbollah's political and its military strength grew considerably, with their forces estimated at 4,000 fighters, of which 2,500 were in the Biqa, 1,000 were in Beirut, and 500 were in the south. There had been a gradual shift from small clandestine units to large, semi-regular military formations (Karmon, 2008: 21).

In parallel, Iran and Hezbollah intensified their campaign against Western targets in Lebanon by kidnapping as many as eighty-seven French, German, Italian, American, and other nationals. Some were held hostage for many years, and some were killed during their captivity. Among the kidnapped were eighteen Americans, of whom three were killed, including William Buckley (the CIA's bureau chief in Beirut) and Marine Colonel William Richard Higgins (who served as head of a UN peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon). Most of the Western hostages were not liberated until 1991, after US pressure intensified following the Gulf War (Karmon, 2008: 21).

Iran needed the cooperation of Syria in order to maintain an effective presence in Lebanon. When Hezbollah was established, Syria was in control of Lebanon, and no one could come and go without the approval of the Syrian regime. Therefore, the

arming of Hezbollah would not have been possible without the support of Syria (Karmon, 2008:20). In fact, Akhtari admits that throughout his 'diplomatic' mission to Syria he coordinated his activities in Lebanon with Ghazi Kan'an, who was chief of Syrian intelligence in Lebanon from 1982-2001. Akhtari describes how he and Kanaan met over several months to manage reconciliation, which ultimately led to the success of Hezbollah (Manal Lufti, May 18, 2008). Iran's strategy was compatible with the interests of Syria in both Iraq and Lebanon. Despite its Ba'athist roots, Syria was the only Arab state to side with Iran during the eight-year war with Iraq; this was due to the rivalry between Syrian President Hafez al-Assad's version of Ba'athism and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's version (Karmon, 2008:22). Thus, Iran encouraged Syria to apply military pressure against Iraq, to which the Syrians responded positively, albeit indirectly. On 15 December 1981, the Iraqi embassy in Beirut was completely demolished by an attack orchestrated by the Syrian and Iranian intelligence services (Karmon, 2008:22).

In Lebanon, after the 1982 Israeli invasion, Syria had two objectives: to control Lebanon, and to undermine the Israeli occupation in southern Lebanon. Thus Syria found the alliance with Iran to be strategic because of it weak military and political position. This encouraged Syria to allow Khomeini to send his Pasdaran (Iranian Revolutionary Guards) to train Hezbollah fighters. Al-Assad explicitly acknowledged that Iran was the only country to send forces to Syria's aid during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon (Nonneman, Ehteshami, & Hinnebusch, 1997:). Syria at that time allowed 1,000-1,500 Pasdaran to entrench themselves in Ba'albek, which was under Syrian military control, including establishing a military-logistic infrastructure at the Sheikh 'Abdallah camp, which they took over from the Lebanese army, as well as at the Zabadani camp in Syria, northwest of Damascus. Intelligence and operational Revolutionary Guards elements were later installed in Beirut, Zahle and Mashgharah in the southern Beqa'a Valley. The military infrastructure set up in the summer of 1982 played an important part in establishing Hezbollah and using it to carry out terrorist missions (Alagha, 2006: 34).

6.2.3. Years of Growing Friction: 1989-2000

As a result of the Ta'if Agreement which halted the civil war in Lebanon and required the "disbanding of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias" (Rubin, 2009: 158) the

government was required to "deploy the Lebanese army in the border area adjacent to Israel" (Rubin, 2009: 158). Furthermore, the agreement allowed Syria to maintain an important role in Lebanese internal affairs. In October 1990, the Syrian military consolidated its power in Lebanon by disbanding the various militias within the country, with the exception of Hezbollah, which Syria, with the support of Iran, allowed to maintain their arsenal and control the Shia areas in Southern Lebanon along the border with Israel (Karmon, 2008: 24). Hezbollah thrived under Syrian occupation. Between 1984 and 1993, Hezbollah was responsible for around 90% of all armed attacks against Israeli forces in Lebanon (Karmon, 2008:24). Hezbollah was required to closely coordinate its operations with Syrian and Syrian-appointed Lebanese military and intelligence personnel. Syria also strictly monitored arms shipments to Hezbollah from Iran, which always transited through Damascus. The implementation of the Ta'if agreement strengthened Hezbollah's position, resulting in it becoming the dominant force not only in southern Lebanon, where it painted itself as the vanguard of resistance against Israel's occupation, but also in Beirut, which would remain under Syrian occupation for the next seventeen years (Karmon, 2008:24).

Both the Syrian and the Iranian governments used Hezbollah to conduct proxy warfare against Israel. In the decade to 2000, Hezbollah conducted more than three dozen suicide attacks against Israeli forces in Lebanon (Williams, 2005: 265). The success of this campaign led to Israel's subsequent withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000. Overall during the period to 2000, the Syrian government not only turned a blind eye to the group's activities in Lebanon as Hezbollah systematically worked to undercut the state's sovereignty, but also facilitated a supply of Iranian missiles to Hezbollah.

6.2.4. From Withdrawal to Confrontation (2000-2006)

On 25 May 2000, Israel withdrew from Lebanon to the UN-designated border; their pullout was certified by the UN as complete. This resulted in the collapse of the Israeli-supported South Lebanon Army (SLA) and the rapid advance of Hezbollah forces into the free area. The Israeli withdrawal was widely considered as a victory for Hezbollah and significantly increased its popularity and regard in Lebanon. Following the withdrawal, Hezbollah, backed by Syria and Iran, found two new pretexts to carry on its military operations against Israel and reject calls for its

disarmament. First it claimed that Israel continued to occupy Lebanese territory at Sheba'a Farms, a small piece of territory on the Lebanon-Israel-Syria border. Second, it called for the release of Lebanese prisoners held by Israel.

Between Israel's withdrawal and the outbreak of the 2006 War between Israel and Lebanon, Hezbollah conducted twenty-one operations against Israel itself[17], including attacks against the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) along the border and shooting and abducting soldiers, as well as establishing a broad military infrastructure in south Lebanon.

During the six years from the IDF withdrawal from Lebanon, Iran and Syria (under Bashar Assad) increased their assistance to and support of Hezbollah. Both countries regard Lebanon as their front line against Israel and Hezbollah as their strategic proxy. Iran, along with Syria, has upgraded Hezbollah's military capabilities, primarily by providing the organisation with rockets and constructing an arsenal of between 12,000 and 13,000 ground-to-ground missiles of various ranges. The two countries also assisted in creating a well-planned and organised military deployment for Hezbollah in south Lebanon, in accordance with Iranian military doctrine.

6.3. THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE DURING 2006 – 2010

The Hezbollah-Israel conflict took place between 12 July and 14 August 2006, after Hezbollah had kidnapped two Israeli soldiers as leverage for a prisoner exchange in 2004. However, a number of analysts argue that the crisis began on 16 June 2006, when Iran and Syria signed an agreement to expand military cooperation against what they called the 'common threats' posed by Israel and the US (Karmon, 2008: 57). According to Pakistani scholar Sayyed, the Summer 2006 crisis was the direct result of the Iran-Hezbollah-Syrian alliance.

According to Steven A. Cook of the Council on Foreign Relations, the Iranian opportunity to strike at Israel earned Iran a credibility all over the region, underscored Tehran's strategic reach, and showed the US that it can project its power beyond its

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[17] Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Hizbullah Attacks along Israel's Northern Border May 2000-June 2006," June 1, 2006, available at www.mfa.gov.il/NR/exeres/9EE216D7-82EF-4274-B80D-6BBD1803E8A7 (accessed December 11, 2009).

immediate neighbourhood (Pan, 2006). Manouchehr Mottaki, Iran's Foreign Minister, visited Damascus after the Israeli attack against Lebanon to express the regime's support for Syria in an obvious indication of greater coordination between the two states. Furthermore, some experts believe that Iran had engineered the timing of the Hezbollah attack to take the pressure off Iran by triggering a major military clash in the Middle East, which would deflect international censure over its nuclear programme (Karmon, 2008: 57). The nuclear file had been referred back to the UN Security Council, and the G8 summit was preparing to debate international sanctions against Iran (Pan, 2006). Specifically, the Hezbollah intervention in the conflict, prepared strategically by Iran during the previous six years by arming it with long range artillery and rockets, was meant to give a clear signal to the United States, the West, and Israel as to what might happen if serious international sanctions were imposed on Iran or if Iran's nuclear facilities were destroyed by a US or Israeli attack (Karmon, 2008: 57). Ilan Berman, vice president for policy at the American Foreign Policy Council, says "Iran believes that the best defence is a good offense". He continues, "the Security Council can't walk and chew gum at the same time, so if they're passing resolutions on Lebanon, they're not passing resolutions on Iran" (Pan, 2006).

Damascus was deeply involved in the conflict. Syria attempted to use the situation to emphasise its influence in the region. According to Steven Cook, the Dillon Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, the Israeli attack against Lebanon paved the way for Damascus to re-emphasise its power in Lebanon (Pan, 2006). After nearly thirty years of occupation Syria had withdrawn from Lebanon in 2005. Furthermore, the election of an anti-Syrian Lebanese parliament weakened Syria's influence, and isolated Emile Lahoud, the pro-Syrian Lebanese President. Cook argues that by supporting Hezbollah's actions, Damascus was "allowing Israel to destabilize Lebanon, which allows Syrian influence to grow again" (Pan, 2006). Emile el-Hokayem, a research associate at the Henry L. Stimson Centre and an expert on Persian Gulf security, states that "all three players Syria, Iran and Hezbollah face major Western pressure, but Syria is actually the weakest" (Pan, 2006). Hokayem says, "Hezbollah is seen as the victor of 2000 [when Israel withdrew from Lebanon]. Hamas won an election. Iran is asserting its power but Bashar is the one whose

legitimacy is the most questionable at this point. For him, this is legitimacy by association" (Pan, 2006).

Cook states that Hezbollah's 12 July attack on the Israeli convoy, during which it kidnapped two Israeli soldiers, "was an opportunity for Hezbollah to further burnish its image on the Arab street" (Pan, 2006). He argues that the attack established Hezbollah as a defender of the Palestinians - already under Israeli attack for an earlier abduction of an Israeli soldier - as other Arab governments stood by helplessly (Pan, 2006).

6.3.1. Training and Arms Transfers

While Hezbollah may be able to constantly harass Israeli military and population centres through a low-intensity conflict in the shorter term, it could be argued that it will not be able to sustain a long term insurgency against a militarily superior power. In order, therefore, for Iran and Syria to keep Hezbollah as a more threatening military organ for their forward defence strategies, both have made serious financial, military training and arms investments to reform a weaker Hezbollah as a potent military organization to confront Israel conventionally. The following section details how, well before 2006 Lebanon War and afterwards, Iran and Syria had been preparing Hezbollah to wage a proxy war closer to the Israeli borders, without having to openly take blame for endangering Israeli security through non-state actors.

Generally, there were three categories of weapons which Iran and Syria supplied to Hezbollah:

1. Weapons manufactured by Iran's military industry , including long range Fajr-3 rockets, with a range of 43km (26 miles) and Fajr-5, with a range of 75km (47 miles).

2. Weapons manufactured by Syria's military industry, including 220mm rockets with a range of up to 75km (47 miles) and 302mm rockets with a range of more than 110 km (68 miles). At least partial payment for the rockets came from Iran. Hezbollah preferred the Syrian rockets during the war.

3. Weapons manufactured in other countries and given to Hezbollah by Syria and Iran, including: 122mm long-range rockets made in China and furnished by Iran; advanced Kornet and Metis anti-tank missiles, RPG-29s and SA-7 and SA-14 anti-aircraft missiles, all made in Russia and furnished by Syria; and Chinese C-802 land-to-sea cruise missiles given by Iran.

During the 2006 Lebanon War, although some were manufactured and supplied by other countries, the weapons were primarily manufactured and supplied by Iran. These included:

Fajr rockets: The Fajr-3 and Fajr-5 rockets are multiple-launch third-generation Katyusha artillery rockets with a range of 25-45 miles (BBC. 2006-07-18). It is believed that Iran supplied a number of these rockets to the Hezbollah militia in Lebanon under the name Khaibar-1. The rockets appear to have been adapted directly from a North Korean design (BBC. 2006-07-18). Hezbollah is reported to have fired these rockets against Israel on a number of occasions in the war (BBC. 2006-07-18). On 2 August 2006, a Fajr rocket, which Hezbollah called Khaibar-1, landed near the town of Beit Shean, 42 miles south of the Lebanese border (The Washington Post 2 August, 2006). The IDF believed that Hezbollah had some 100 Fajr rockets, (BICOM. 16/7/2006) although another document reduces the estimate to several dozen rockets (Shaham Dan, 2006).

Zelzal-2 rockets: Zelzal-2 is an unguided Iranian 610mm heavy artillery rocket that can carry 600kg (1,323lb) which has a claimed range of 200–400km but with a realistic range estimated at 100km (Missilethreat.com). The missile is thought to be based on the Soviet FROG-7 missile, with development begun in 1990. (Missilethreat.com). According to Israeli press reports, in 2004 Hezbollah received 220 missiles from Iran, and the weapons were stored in bunkers at three locations in the Beka'a Valley (Isby, 1 October 2004). Other reports indicate that some of these missiles may have been delivered to Hezbollah as early as 2003. These weapons were covertly removed from Iran via Syrian cargo planes (The New York Times, 7 August 2006). During the 2006 War, the IDF reportedly destroyed a large amount of Hezbollah's Zelzal cache (Missilethreat.com).

Anti-aircraft: For air defence, according to Jane's Defence Weekly, Iran supplied Hezbollah with Russian-produced SAMs, including the ZU-23 artillery and man-portable shoulder-fired SA-7 and SA-18 surface-to-air missile (SAM) (Missilethreat.com). It also argues that Tehran supplied Hezbollah with Mithaq-1 and Mithaq-2 man-portable low-altitude SAM systems, both of which are Iranian copies of the Chinese QW-1 man-portable low-altitude SAM system (Middle East Intelligence Bulletin. April 2003). Hezbollah is also believed to have obtained the SA-8 advanced anti-aircraft missiles from Syria to challenge IAF reconnaissance flights over Lebanon (Middle East Intelligence Bulletin. April 2003).

Anti-ship missile C-802 cruise missiles: C-802 cruise missiles are an Iranian-made variant of the Chinese Silkworm. They have a 165kg payload and 120km (74.5 miles) range. On 14 July 2006, Hezbollah forces fired a C-802 (or its Iranian derivative, the Kowsar) anti-ship missile, at an Israeli naval vessel, killing four sailors and inflicting substantial damage. According to *The New York Times* American and Israeli officials argued the attack was the strongest evidence to date of direct support by Iran to Hezbollah (New York Times, July 19, 2006). The Israeli military believes that Iranian advisers from the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) were present at the launch during the attack (BBC, 8 August,2006). Iran denied any involvement in the incident (BBC, 8 August, 2006).

Anti-tank missile: According to the *Associated Press*, Iran, along with Syria, delivered advanced anti-tank missiles to Hezbollah, namely: the Raad, an Iranian version of the Russian-made AT-3 Sagger which has a range of 3km (1.86 miles) and can penetrate 400mm; the Raad-T**,** an Iranian version of the Sagger with a tandem warhead, which has a range of 3km and can penetrate 400mm after reactive shielding; the Toophan which is an Iranian version of the TOW, and has a range of up to 3.75km (2.33 miles) and can penetrate 550mm steel armour (Associated Press. 18 March 2007). These weapons were used against IDF soldiers during the 2006 Lebanon War causing many deaths (Associated Press, March 18, 2007). A small number of Saeghe-2s (Iranian-made version of M47 Dragon) were also used in the war. According to Israeli experts 'Hezbollah's sophisticated anti-tank missiles are perhaps the guerrilla group's deadliest weapon in Lebanon fighting, with their ability to pierce Israel's most advanced tanks' (The Associated Press, 5 August, 2006). In the previous two days

alone, these missiles had killed seven soldiers and damaged three Israeli-made Merkava tanks - mountains of steel that are vaunted as symbols of Israel's military might. The Israeli media said that most of the 44 soldiers killed in four weeks of fighting were hit by anti-tank missiles (The Associated Press, 5 August, 2006). According to Yossi Kuperwasser, a senior military intelligence officer who retired earlier this summer, "(Hezbollah guerrillas) have some of the most advanced anti-tank missiles in the world" (The Associated Press, 5 August, 2006).

Unmanned aerial vehicle: Ababil unmanned air vehicles (UAVs)**,** developed and manufactured by the Iranian aeronautical industry, were supplied by Iran to Hezbollah (GlobalSecurity.org); A number of different models, including reconnaissance and attack UAVs, carrried warheads weighing scores of kilograms. The attacker UAVs have two guidance systems: a camera with a range of dozens of kilometres and GPS with a range of more than 100km (62 miles). Hezbollah sent reconnaissance UAVs into Israeli airspace in November 2004 and April 2005. During the 2006 War three UAVs were deployed. On 7 August Hezbollah launched an attacker UAV which was shot down over Haifa; its remains were found in an open field near Kibbutz Kabri, about 4km (2 1 miles) east of Nahariya six days later (GlobalSecurity.org).

Katyusha rockets: The main arsenal of Hezbollah's rocket force was 40,000 short range, small Katyusha-type rockets with individual launchers that have small warheads with a range of 25km (12-18 miles) that can only strike a short distance into Israel (Cordesman, 2006:5). Hezbollah were able to fire this type of rocket without Iranian assistance. Iran significantly increased the range of the original Russian system (Cordesman, 2006:5).

Shahin I missile: Hezbollah is also believed to have fired the Shahin I missile which was described as a Raad‑1 missile by Hezbollah's TV station and has a range of 13km. *Associated Press* reported that some 350 of these rockets were fired against Israel during the 2006 War, a massive escalation over the normal low-level harassment fire of random rounds fired against settlements and Israeli military targets (Cordesman, 2006:5).

Iran also has a high-profile role in training Hezbollah militants at designated training camps in Iran, using Revolutionary Guard installations. The two main camps used to

train Hezbollah and other foreign operatives are the Imam 'Ali camp in Tehran and the camp at Honar near Karaj, north of Tehran (Center for Special Studies (C.S.S), 8 September, 2006). According to a STRATFOR source connected to Hezbollah, at least 250 Hezbollah fighters went to Iran from July to September 2006 for training (http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/200...ning_hezbollah). Two Hezbollah militants captured by the IDF during the 2006 War revealed that the training by the Revolutionary Guards took place at small bases near Tehran including the training camp at Karaj. One stated that in 1999 he received anti-aircraft training and that his instructor had been a high-ranking Iranian named Hassan Irlu. Also, Hussein 'Ali Suleiman, who was involved in the kidnap of the two Israeli soldiers in July 2006, revealed under interrogation that he and 40-50 other Hezbollah members had undergone training in Iran. He stated that their passports had not been stamped in Syria or Iran in order to hide the fact that they had been trained in Iran. Since November 2006, up to 300 individuals per month have travelled to Tehran to train. In sum, 4,500 Hezbollah militants have been trained in Iran. They stay for three months and, among other things, learn how to fire rockets. Advanced trainees remain in Iran for an additional forty-five days, learning tasks like firing anti-tank missiles. Many Hezbollah militants have received training on how to fire longer-range artillery rockets like the Fajr-5 and an upgraded Zelzal-2 and anti-tank missiles (including Saggers and TOWs) and the use of anti-aircraft missiles (http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/200...ning_hezbollah). This is a shift in Iran's training for Hezbollah; before, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) would operate Hezbollah's longer-range rocket arsenal from southern Lebanon. The IRGC has now apparently made the decision to train Hezbollah fighters in the use of these rockets and is giving up a certain amount of operational control to trusted Hezbollah operatives (http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/200...ning_hezbollah).

Furthermore, with the help of the Iranians and North Koreans, Hezbollah built a giant tunnel system to hide and launch activities deep inside Israel. According to a high-ranking Revolutionary Guards officer who trained Hezbollah naval units, hundreds of Iranian engineering and technicians, as well as North Korean experts were brought into Lebanon in the guise of domestic servants by Iranian diplomats and by the staff at the Iranian representations and offices in Lebanon. Hezbollah managed to build the 25-kilometer underground tunnel. Each opening in this tunnel measures 12 to 18

square meters, and has a mobile floor and a semi-mobile ceiling. Each of the four openings are connected by a passage that allows fighters to pass easily from one opening to the other (the London Arabic daily Al-Sharq Al-Awsat, on 29 July, 2006).

There is a variety of routes by which Iran can deliver weapons to Hezbollah. One is via Beirut port due to the inability of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFL) to enforce an embargo on weapons shipments into Lebanon. According to Israeli government sources UNIFL does not have the capability to effectively monitor shipping into Lebanon. Furthermore, in April 2008 the Israeli government expressed concerns that Iran had started shipping weapons to Hezbollah via Beirut port (The Daily Star, Lebanon, 14 April 2008).

Another means of delivering weapons is believed to be overland, by means of Iranian trains and trucks crossing from Turkey to Syria, where they unload the weapons and transfer them directly to Hezbollah across the border between Syria and Lebanon without the knowledge of the Turkish government (The Daily Star, Lebanon, 14 April 2008). In May 2007, a shipment of Iranian weapons bound for Hezbollah was discovered after the Iranian train that was carrying them derailed as it passed through Turkey (Rubin, 6 December 2009). The Turkish route into Syria may become more important as Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan improves relations with both Tehran and Damascus (Rubin, 6 December 2009).

Weapons are also thought to be shipped by air. Iranian planes loaded with munitions fly over Turkish air space to land at Damascus International Airport, where the weapons are unloaded and then driven through Syria to Hezbollah in Lebanon (The Daily Star, Lebanon, 14 April 2008).

6.3.2. Financial Support for Hezbollah

Hezbollah's financial support is a matter of controversy. Despite allegations that the main source of its income comes from donations by Muslims, reports indicate that the main financial support is from Iran. Over the past six years, Iranian funding for Hezbollah has consistently risen. In 2002, Western diplomats and Lebanese analysts estimated Iranian aid to Hezbollah to be $60-100 million per year or US$5 to US$10m US dollars per month (Madani, 1 January 2002). Some estimates of Iran's

aid are as high as US$200m annually (Matthew & Jake, 31 July, 2007). As a result of the 2006 war with Israel, Iranian aid was estimated between $200-300 million per year, with additional money for reconstruction (Matthew & Jake, 31 July, 2007). In January 2008, Walid Phares a Senior Fellow and the Director of the Future Terrorism Project at the Foundation for Defence of Democracies in Washington, D.C., claimed that in 2008 Iranian foreign aid to Hezbollah was elevated from $400 million to $1 billion (Phares, 17 January, 2008 & 20 May, 2008). Walid Phares continued that "this ballistic leap would enable the organization to crush any opponent inside Lebanon and engage in worldwide operations against Western democracies and Arab moderates" (Phares, 17 January, 2008).

Tehran transfers the funds to Hezbollah using a variety of methods. One is via the financial officers of the Revolutionary Guards' Qods Force (IRGC-QF). According to the US Treasury Department Hushang Allahdad who was a financial officer for the IRGC-QF from at least 2002, personally oversees the distribution of funds to Hezbollah, Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (Fact Sheet, August 3 2010). Also, Mohammad Reza Zahedi,[18] the commander of the IRGC-QF in Lebanon, plays a significant role in Iran's support to Hezbollah, acting as liaison between Hezbollah and Syrian intelligence services and is reportedly charged with guaranteeing financial and weapons shipments to Hezbollah (Fact Sheet, 3 August, 2010).

Additional means of delivering monetary support to Hezbollah according to the US Treasury Department is assumed to be by the Iranian Committee for the Reconstruction of Lebanon (ICRL). The ICRL was established after the Second Lebanon War in 2006 by Iran as a key channel for Iran's support of the rebuilding of Hezbollah. In August 2010, according to the US Treasury, the ICRL provided financing for Hezbollah's infrastructure, communications network, and construction arm. The ICRL's director, Hessam Khoshnevis, is Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's personal representative in Lebanon. He was designated by the Treasury Department to provide technical support for Hezbollah's reconstruction efforts in Lebanon and to the expansion of the terrorist group's private communications network (Fact Sheet, 3 August 2010).

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[18] Zahedi held several senior positions in the IRGC-Qods Force including Commander of the Lebanon Corps and Deputy Commander of the Qods Force.

The Imam Khomeini Relief Committee (IKRC) in Lebanon is also believed to be a method used by Tehran to transfer funds to Hezbollah. The IKRC was established after the Iranian Revolution in 1979 as an aid association for overcoming poverty, giving relief to the deprived and the oppressed people and making them self-sufficient (Fact Sheet, 3 August 2010). The IKRC in Lebanon was formed in the 1980s as a branch of the main centre in Tehran and is directed and run by a Hezbollah member (Fact Sheet, 3 August 2010). Iran has provided millions of dollars to the Hezbollah-run branch since 2007 (Fact Sheet, 3 August 2010). The IKRC has helped fund and operate Hezbollah youth training camps, which have been used to recruit future Hezbollah members and operatives. Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah has acknowledged the IKRC branch in Lebanon as one of Hezbollah's openly-functioning institutions linked to and funded by Iran (Fact Sheet, August 3 2010). Furthermore, Ali Zuraik the director of IKRC in Lebanon has publicly said that the group operates under the aegis of Hezbollah (Fact Sheet, 3 August 2010).

Finally, Razi Musavi, a Syria-based Iranian official, is alleged to be a further channel through which Tehran transfers finances to Hezbollah (Fact Sheet, 3 August 2010).

6.4. ISRAELI RESPONSES TO IRANIAN FORWARD DEFENCE

6.4.1 Israeli Response under Prime Minister Begin's Government (1977-1983)

After the Palestinian organizations were ousted from Jordan following the "Black September" conflict with Jordanian government forces in 1970, they moved the centre of their activities to South Lebanon. In the area adjacent to Israel's northern border, it was glaringly obvious to the Israeli government that the deterioration in security along the border with Lebanon called for more vigorous countermeasures (Schiff, 1984: 221). The PLO effectively established a "State within a State", and the region became a staging point for infiltration into Israel and rocket attacks on Israeli towns. Subsequently, the Lebanese state grew weaker, Lebanon became the PLO's chief base, and Syrian influence grew (Rabinovich, 1990: 539).

The civil war of 1975-7 and the collapse of the Lebanese state presented Israel with a policy dilemma. Israel started to intervene actively in an effort to shape Lebanese politics (Rabinovich, 1990: 539).

Rabin and his government finally resolved the dilemma (at least temporarily) by making the 'Red Line' agreement with Syria. Through American mediation, a tacit agreement on these curbs was reached between the nations in the winter of 1976, which regulated the Syrian-Israeli rivalry in Lebanon. Orthodox Israelis believed that the Syrian forces massed in southern Lebanon might attack Israel across the unfortified Lebanese border and thus avoid the need to penetrate the heavily-defended Golan Heights. Therefore, Israel enunciated its "Red Line" policy, threatening to attack Syria if it crossed a line identified geographically by the Litani River. Thus, Israel accepted the hegemonical position Damascus had acquired in Lebanese politics (Rabinovich, 1990: 540). Rabin went along with the unorthodox idea that the Syrian move into Lebanon would not be viewed as an alarm signal; furthermore the Syrian presence was seen to offer certain advantages, such as the dispersion of the Syrian army on the two fronts - Lebanon and the Golan Heights (Schiff, Z. 1984: 221).

The Red Line was a geographic line, but it was also more subjective than a line on a map. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin identified the Red Line as a guideline for gauging Syria's overall military behaviour in Lebanon, and he described several criteria Israel would use: the objectives of Syrian forces and against whom they were operating, the geographical area and its proximity to Israel's borders, the strength and composition of Syrian forces, and the duration of their stay in a given area (Seale & Mcconville, 1989: 286)

After the Likud took office, Israeli policy *vis-a-vis* Lebanon underwent far reaching changes due to the Camp David Accords of 1979. The conflict with the PLO had grown fiercer, in part because the Camp David accords exacerbated the conflict over the future of the West Bank. The Palestinians saw the accords as a blow to their aspirations to self-determination. At the same time, however, a much closer alliance and a stronger commitment was developed with the Maronite militias and the cultivation of Major Sa'd Haddad and his militia in southern Lebanon. Finally, the acceptance of the security challenge involved in Syria's hegemony in Lebanon had given way to a determination to undermine that hegemony. Begin's policy toward Lebanon was founded on a belief that existing policy did not provide an adequate response to Israel's security problem in Lebanon, that in the absence of a real state and an effective central government, the territory of Lebanon (and the south in particular)

had become the focus of security threats to Israel from both Syria and the Palestinians (Rabinovich, 1990: 540). The guideline was to preserve the politico-strategic status quo in Lebanon, so that it should not be transformed into a hostile country with an offensive infrastructure turned against Israel (Schiff, 1984: 221).

The first signs of change became apparent with "Operation Peace for Galilee" in 1982. On 6 June 1982, Begin's government authorized the Israel Defence Forces to begin "Operation Peace for Galilee", a full scale invasion of Lebanese territory. The invasion followed the 1978 Litani Operation, which gave Israel possession of the territory near the Israeli-Lebanese border. The Government of Israel launched the military operation as a response to the Abu Nidal Organization's assassination attempt against Israel's ambassador to the United Kingdom, Shlomo Argov. Operation Peace for Galilee's stated objective was to weaken the PLO as a unified political and military force. Begin was hoping for a short and limited Israeli involvement to transform the political equation in Lebanon. He believed that "a Lebanon freed from Syria and the PLO, with a Christian-dominated regime, would bring peace and closer connections between the two countries" (Hamzeh, 2004: 16).

According to Avi Shlaim, the real driving force behind the Israeli invasion of Lebanon was the Defence Minister Ariel Sharon (Shlaim, 2008:412). Sharon led a major offensive across the border to break the military power of the Palestinians there. However, he misled the cabinet regarding his real aims, which were to reshape the balance of Lebanese power in favour of the Christian Militias who were allied with Israel (Tessler, 1994: 580). According to Avi Shlaim, one of his aims was the destruction of PLO military infrastructure in Lebanon and to undermine it as a political organization, in order to facilitate the absorption of the West Bank by Israel. The second aim was the establishment of the Maronite government in Lebanon, headed by Bashir Gemayel and signing the peace treaty between two countries, the third aim was the expelling of the Syrian army from Lebanon (Shlaim, 2008:412).

The plan for a more ambitious operation, which bore the code name "Big Pines", was specifically intended to re-establish Maronite power in Lebanon (Tessler, 1994: 580). The plan was first presented to the Israeli cabinet on 20 December 1981 by Begin, but rejected by the majority of ministers. According to Avi Shlaim, Sharon and Chief of Staff Rafael Eitan, realizing that there was no chance of persuading the cabinet to

approve a large-scale operation in Lebanon, adopted a different tactic and intended to implement "Operation Big Pines" in stages by manipulating enemy provocations and Israeli responses. Sharon met Secretary of State Alexander Haig in May and told him about the plan; he described it as an operation that would "redraw Lebanon's domestic politics in favour of the Christian Phalangists. As part of his preparations, the Defence Minister also established direct contact with the Maronite Christian community in Lebanon during this period. Sharon himself made a secret trip to Beirut in January 1982 to consult with Maronite leaders and in February and March Chief of Staff Eitan visited Lebanon for more detailed discussions about possible Israeli-Maronite Military cooperation (Tessler, 1994: 580).

Despite, the Israeli success in driving the PLO out of Lebanon and forcing its leadership to relocate to Tunisia, most of Israel's objectives in the Lebanon war were not attained. The war ultimately failed in its attempt to install a pro-Israeli government in Beirut to sign a peace accord with it. This goal was never realized, partly because of the assassination of President Bashir Gemayel in September 1982 and also due to the refusal of the Lebanese Parliament to endorse the accord. Furthermore, the Syrian military remained in Lebanon after a successful campaign against the Lebanese Forces militia who had controlled Beirut port. Moreover, Washington has come round to recognizing that Syria has vital interests in Lebanon and that Damascus can no longer be ignored when a new regime is installed in Lebanon. The outcome is just about the opposite of what Sharon expected the war to achieve (Schiff, 1984: 224).

For Israel, the Lebanon war, far from solving problems, created new ones. The withdrawal of the PLO forces in 1982 forced some Lebanese nationalists to start a resistance against the Israeli army led by the Lebanese Communist Party and Amal movement. During this time, some Amal members started the formation of an Islamic group supported by Iran that was the nucleus of the future "Islamic Resistance", and eventually become Hezbollah (Hamzeh, 2004: 16).

6.4.2 Israeli Response under Prime Minister Shamir and the Unity Governments (1983-1992)

Begin him-self retired from politics in August 1983 and handed over the reins of the office of Prime Minister to his old friend-in-arms Yitzhak Shamir. Shamir had a reputation as a Likud hard-liner.

Following the Peace for Galilee Operation in 1983, the United States brokered the May 17 Agreement, a peace treaty between Israel and Lebanon. The agreement called for an abolition of the state of war between the two countries, security arrangements to ensure the sanctity of Israel's northern border, integration of Major Haddad's SLA into the regular Lebanese Army, and the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanese territory (Eisenberg & Caplan 1998: 53). Although the agreement was signed it was never ratified by the Lebanese government for several reasons. First the agreement called for the Lebanese Army to take over Israeli positions, but because the army collapsed in February 1984, Lebanon could not keep their side of the agreement. Second, Syria's opposition to the agreement was vocal, and by refusing to move its troops from Lebanese soil, Damascus effectively torpedoed its implementation, since Israeli withdrawal was contingent on Syria doing the same. Finally, the agreement met strong opposition from Lebanese Muslims and in the Arab World, and it was portrayed as an imposed surrender. The conclusion of separate peace with Israel was (and is) a taboo subject in the Arab world, and Egypt's peace agreement at Camp David had left the country ostracized and temporarily expelled from the Arab League. The National Assembly of Lebanon, under pressure from Syria and Muslim militias, cancelled the Agreement on 5 March 1984 (Eisenberg & Caplan 1998: 66).

Shamir's governments and the unity governments were established after the PLO's military forces in Lebanon had been defeated and dispersed to various countries. At the same time, these governments had to deal with rising Shiite terrorism in Lebanon and fundamentalist-Islamic terrorism in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Shamir's governments were unable to properly handle the *Intifada* (Popular Uprising) and scored only limited success in Lebanon, and even the May 17 agreement was not implemented. Other cabinet members, such as Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin, maintained that concurrently with military action against the Palestinian organizations, Israel must push forward political initiatives that would bring an end to the conflict; and these members gained more clout over time (Karmon, 2008: 73).

6.4.3 Israeli Response under Prime Minister Rabin's Government (1992–1996)

The Israeli counter terrorism strategy under Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin took a new turn. The Oslo Accords which created the Palestinian National Authority and granted it partial control over parts of the Gaza Strip and West Bank made it necessary for Israel to formulate a new counter to the Iranian forward defence (Ganor, Boaz, 2002)

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's declared policy dissociated the peace process from reactions to terrorist attacks against Israel, meaning that the peace process continued even after terror attacks occurred in Israel. "We will fight terror as if there is no negotiation and we will negotiate as if there is no terror" (Boaz Ganor, 2002). Counter terrorism methods were upheld regardless of the formal and informal restrictions imposed by the peace process. Rabin's policy declared that terrorism represented by Iran and Shi'a Islamic fundamentalism was a strategic threat and referred to it as a threat to the peace process (Boaz Ganor, 2002).

In October 1989 the Ta'if Agreement was signed in Ta'if, Saudi Arabia. This Agreement marked the end of the Lebanese Civil War, which required the "disarming of most of the militias that had been active in the country" and required the government to "deploy the Lebanese army in the border area adjacent to Israel" (Rubin, 2009:159). Hezbollah signed the accord only after the Iranian government gave its blessing (Norton, 2007:89).

Despite this agreement, Syria, in control of Lebanon at that time (with the support of Iran), allowed Hezbollah to maintain their arsenal and control the Shiite areas in Southern Lebanon along the border with Israel. The Lebanese government also made no moves to disarm Hezbollah, justifying the maintenance of its armed forces by calling them "Islamic resistance" groups (Norton, 2007:89). The Ta'if accord asked for an Israeli withdrawal based on UN Resolution 425 but explicitly allowed resistance against the Israeli occupation "by all means", including militarily. Hezbollah stated that it would continue to oppose Israeli occupation as a "resistance group", since they were actually protected by the agreement. Therefore Hezbollah continued to use southern Lebanon as a base for striking Israel (Alagha, 2006: 80).

On 25 July 1993 Israel launched Operation Accountability, in retaliation for attacks by Hezbollah which had killed five soldiers in the security zone. Israel specified three purposes to the operation: to strike directly at Hezbollah, to make it difficult for

Hezbollah to use southern Lebanon as a base for striking Israel, and to displace refugees in the hope of pressuring the Lebanese government to intervene against Hezbollah. The military campaign ended in a ceasefire banning civilian targets on both sides (Norton, 2007:84).

The agreement was not completely respected; Hezbollah later broke it and continued to fire Katyusha rockets into northern Israel in retaliation for the killing of Lebanese civilians by Israeli armed forces in South Lebanon Army militia and civilian areas. The Israel Defence Forces (IDF) again launched a major campaign into Lebanon. "Operation Grapes of Wrath," initiated on 11 April 1996 in an attempt to end shelling of Northern Israel by Hezbollah. The conflict ended on 26 April 1996 with the Israeli-Lebanese Ceasefire Understanding in which both Hezbollah and Israel agreed to forgo attacks on civilians (Norton, 2007:84).

However, Rabin's policy which attempted to move ahead with the peace process, regardless of terrorism did not prove to be efficient enough or appear to counter Iranian forward defence. Rabin's government did not want to disturb the peace process, and thus restricted the IDF in their handling of counter terrorism. However, the terrorist attacks continued with no end in sight. The terrorist attacks, and the responses to them under Rabin, caused the leaders in the Israeli government to change their view of terrorism, i.e. to view it as a strategic problem instead of a tactical one (Ganor, Boaz, 2002: 63).

6.4.4 Israeli Responses under Prime Minister Netanyahu's Government (1996-1999)

While the previous government, and many abroad, emphasized land for peace, this placed Israel in the position of cultural, economic, political, diplomatic, and military retreat. During Netanyahu's election campaign it became evident that he wanted to introduce a new counter terrorism policy – a policy which emphasised security first and peace second.   Such an approach, would eliminate movement toward a "comprehensive peace" and substitute it with a "Peace for Peace" strategy and stress "balance of power" as the sole test of legitimacy for agreements (Shapiro, 2005: 55).

According to Netanyahu's policy an effective approach for "Syria challenges on Lebanese soil is to seize a strategic initiative along its northern borders by engaging Hizballah, Syria, and Iran, as the principal agents of aggression in Lebanon, including by: ---striking Syria's drug-money and counterfeiting infrastructure in Lebanon, all of which focuses on Razi Qanan - paralleling Syria's behavior by establishing the precedent that Syrian territory is not immune to attacks emanating from Lebanon by Israeli proxy forces...." (Shapiro, 2005:55). Also, Israel can "shape its strategic environment, in cooperation with Turkey and Jordan, by weakening, containing, and even rolling back Syria" (Shapiro, 2005: 56).

6.4.5 Israeli Responses under Prime Minister Barak's Government 1999-2001

Ehud Barak became Prime Minister in May 1999. It soon became evident that he wanted to pursue the same idea that Rabin once had; that an end to terrorism could not be achieved without peace. He attempted to achieve this by withdrawing from Southern Lebanon in May 2000, and subsequently entered peace negotiations with the Palestinian Authority at Camp David, US, that summer. Barak's government decided on a unilateral withdrawal from southern Lebanon, without any agreement with Lebanon or the Syrians, due to a belief that he would be able to make peace with Syria before the evacuation, thereby removing an obstacle to Israeli-Lebanese peace (Karmon, 2008: 73).

Barak decided to pull out without an agreement, causing many, especially in the Arab World, to view this as a victory for the Shi'a Islamic Hezbollah resistance, which had been waging a long guerrilla campaign against Israeli forces. As a result, Lebanon and Israel formally remain at war, and Lebanon officially refuses to recognize Israel as a state. The results are well known: on 7 October, three Israeli soldiers were killed in a border raid by Hezbollah and their bodies were subsequently captured. The bodies of these soldiers, along with the living Elhanan Tenenbaum, were eventually exchanged for Lebanese captives in 2004. The cycle of violence continued until the Second Lebanon War and beyond (Karmon, 2008: 73).

6.4.6 Israeli Responses under Prime Minister Sharon's Government 2001-2006

The Arab world reacted to the election of Sharon as Prime Minister with a mixture of anger and revulsion. In September 1982, as Defence Minister, Sharon had been responsible for ordering the massacre perpetrated by Christian militiamen in the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Chatila in Lebanon. Sharon promised to deal quickly and decisively with the problem of Palestinian terrorism (Maoz. 2006: 231). He increased the use of target killings, deportation and administrative detention in an aggressive campaign against the Palestinian Authority and terror organisations In his belief that: "They [Palestinians] must be beaten. We have to cause them heavy casualties, and then they will know that they cannot keep using terror and win political achievements" (Shlaim, 2002). With this military escalation Sharon aimed to: disregard the Oslo accords, complete the re-conquest of the territories, topple the Palestinian Authority, undermine the Palestinian leadership, and replace Yasser Arafat. In May 2004 Tel Aviv University's Jaffe Center carried out a survey which showed that 80 percent of Jewish Israelis believed that the IDF had succeeded in countering the Al-Aqsa Intifada, indicating widespread support for Sharon's hard-line policy (Jaffe Center, 2007). In January 2005, Sharon assured his brigade commanders that there would be no political-handcuffing in the attempt to end terrorism (Maoz. 2006: 231). However, in August 2005, he proposed a disengagement plan which entailed the removal of the permanent Israeli presence in Gaza and from four settlements in the northern West Bank. A survey carried out in September 2004 indicated that if a referendum had been held, 58 percent of the population would have voted in favour of the disengagement plan. However, Sharon's policies caused a rift within the Likud Party, and Sharon left Likud to form a new party called Kadima in November 2005, thereby becoming the first Prime Minister of Israel to belong neither to Labour nor Likud, the two parties that have traditionally dominated Israeli politics. The new party created by Sharon, with Olmert as its leader, won the majority of Knesset seats in the 2006 elections, and is now the senior coalition partner in the Israeli government (Jansen, 2008).

6.5 THE IMPACT OF THE 2006 LEBANON WAR AND RISE OF HEZBOLLAH ON THE ISRAELI NATIONAL SECURITY ORIENTATIONS

As for other wars of national defence against the Arabs since its inception, following the 2006 Lebanon War the traditional Israeli military doctrine was called into question in order to ascertain whether or not this doctrine was being implemented well and working to ensure Israel's security. The notions of deterrence and early warning were heavily criticised after the war, as insufficient to deliver on Israeli security imperatives.

6.5.1 The Failure of Deterrence against sub-State Actors

Between Israel's May 2000 unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon and the outbreak of war in July 2006, Israeli officials sought to contain the Hezbollah threat. According to Inbar "after leaving southern Lebanon, Israeli officials considered the group to be a nuisance, but in recent years, their assessment changed, and they acknowledged Hezbollah to be a strategic threat" (Inbar, E. 2008). However, in the 2006 War, Hezbollah succeeded in surprising Israel. The IDF had difficulty in deterring Hezbollah from attacking the strategic depth of Israel. During the campaign, according to the Associated Press mostly from government officials on both sides, Hezbollah fired between 3,970 and 4,228 rockets at a rate of more than 100 per day (The Associated Press, 17 August 2006) . An estimated 23% of these rockets hit cities and built-up areas across northern Israel, while the remainder hit open areas. The cities hit were Haifa, Hadera, Nazareth, Tiberias, Nahariva, Safed, Shaghur, Afula, Kirvat Shmona, Beit She'an, Karmiel, Acre, and Ma'alot-Tarshiha, as well as dozens of towns, kibbutzim, moshavim, and Druze and Israeli-Arab villages. The northern West Bank was also hit (Ynetnews, 2 August 2006).

Furthermore, the IDF had difficulty in deterring Hezbollah from attacking the strategic depth of Israel, especially through the use of sophisticated Russian-made anti-tank missile (ATGMs). A few hundred yards across the border, Hezbollah antitank missiles penetrated the armour of five Merkava Mark IV tanks killing ten. Israeli experts stated that "Hezbollah's sophisticated anti-tank missiles are perhaps the guerrilla group's deadliest weapon in the 2006 war, with their ability to pierce Israel's most advanced tanks" (The Associated Press 5 August 2006). According to the Merkava tank programme administration, 52 Merkava main battle tanks were damaged (45 of them by different kinds of ATGM), while some missiles penetrated 22 tanks, only five tanks were totally destroyed (two of them by improvised explosive

devices). Hezbollah caused additional casualties using ATGMs to destroy buildings which collapsed on Israeli troops sheltering inside.

In the seventh annual Herzliya Conference which took place in 2007 on the Balance of Israel's National Security, Shmuel Bar, Director of Studies, of the Institute for Policy and Strategy, submitted a working paper titled *The Israeli Experience in Deterring Terrorist Organisations*. In it Bar distinguishes between strategic and tactical deterrence, saying that strategic deterrence is when the deterrence is between the neighbouring states, while tactical deterrence is against a non-state actor. Also Bar distinguishes between Direct Deterrence, which he calls compellence (or coercive diplomacy), that is the threat of force or the demonstration of limited force to convince an adversary to desist from actions in which it is already involved, and Indirect Deterrence, which is directed at a third party closely linked to the target of direct deterrence. Israel, according to Bar, should have both strategic and tactical deterrence against both state and non-state actors.

According to Bar, there are four pillars of Israeli deterrence against sub-state actors:

1. Deterrence via host states: Deterrence via host states is considered as the first pillar of this strategy and aims at bringing pressure from the host state (or quasi-state in the case of the PA) to bear on the terrorist organisation. This was the case during the 1950s against the *fedayeen* after Israeli retaliation led to Jordanian action against the *fedayeen*. However, if the government is weak then deterrence is likely to fail. Success of retaliation as a third party deterrence mechanism depends on the domestic strength of the government. In addition, if a sub-state actor acts against the will of a strong government from whose territory it operates, military retaliation by an outside state can push it to impose restrictions on the sub-state actor. Regarding Hezbollah, Israeli deterrence failed because of the weakness of the Lebanese government. Hezbollah was a non-state actor operating within the framework of a dysfunctional state (Lebanon) compared to a stronger state like Jordan which acted against the non-state actors threatening another state

2. Deterrence via the populace: This attempts to isolate armed groups from the local population; in other words, to prevent the populace from providing

support to the armed group whether morally or socially. Nonetheless, Hezbollah maintained an extensive social and political infrastructure and Israel failed to isolate Hezbollah from the wide grassroots support within the Shi'ite community in Lebanon. An IRIN news report of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs noted:

> Hezbollah not only has armed and political wings – it also boasts an extensive social development program. Hezbollah currently operates at least four hospitals, twelve clinics, twelve schools and two agricultural centres that provide farmers with technical assistance and training. It also has an environmental department and an extensive social assistance program. Medical care is also cheaper than in most of the country's private hospitals and free for Hezbollah members
> (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, March 29, 2006).

In July 2006, during the war with Israel, when there was no running water in Beirut, Hezbollah was arranging supplies around the city. Lebanese Shiites "see Hezbollah as a political movement and a social service provider as much as it is a militia" (CNN, 25 July, 2006). Schuster argued that "Hezbollah did everything that a government should do, from collecting the garbage to running hospitals and repairing schools" (CNN, 25 July, 2006).

3. Direct intervention: A temporary deterrent effect has been achieved by direct military intervention against the resistance organisations, particularly targeted killings of top-level activists. This has been the core of Israel's *de facto* deterrence and generally described as the tactical deterrence theory. The success of indirect deterrence has to contend with threats linked with real action, although this deterrence will create negative deterrence.?

4. Deterrence via the patron state: The fourth pillar is indirect deterrence via the patron state, such as Iran and Syria in the case of Hezbollah. The success of this strategy should focus on the threat of immediate interests, leaders and decision-makers and foreign relations to prevent armed groups from being agent of the sponsoring states (annual Herzliya Conference 2007). As has been seen in the previous sections, over the twenty-five year period of Iranian and Syrian support of Hezbollah attacks against Israeli interests which intensified

after the invasion of Iraq in 2003, and again during the 2006 Lebanon War, Israel has not been able to respond against Iran or Syria with military action.

6.5.2 The Failure of the Early Warning System

According to *Yadioth Ahronoth*, Ruby San, Head of Applications in the Israeli Navy, requested that at least 24 lieutenant colonels complete forms scoring Hezbollah and the IDF points on a scale from 1 to 10 on various aspects of their performance in the 2006 War. The results indicated that these officers considered that Hezbollah was superior to the IDF in the areas of intelligence, strategy and doctrine of fighting, while Israel was thought to excel in the area of warfare means and management (*Yadioth Ahronoth* 29 September 2009). The Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* described Hezbollah as a trained, skilled, well-organised, and highly motivated infantry that was equipped with the cream of modern weaponry from the arsenals of Syria, Iran, Russia and China (Tal, Avraham, 31 July 2006).

Ronen Bergman, an Israeli senior political and military analyst for *Yadioth Ahronoth*, stated that the war revealed two aspects of Israeli military failure. The first was the collapse of the concept of air dominance that was based on the resolution of any air battle with the help of a small ground force. The second was the failure of the intelligence which he described as blind intelligence. He further argued that the Israeli intelligence failed to penetrate Hezbollah despite hundreds of its members being involved in this direction (al-Zaru, 24 August 2010).

During the 2006 War, there appeared what some officials called an intelligence "black hole", which was later analysed by the Israeli military as follows: (al-Zaru, 24 August 2010).

1. The intelligence did not provide sufficient information to the IDF on the anti-tank missiles in the possession of Hezbollah. Shai Feldman stated that "its (Israeli) intelligence seems to have been incomplete. While the IDF's data about Hezbollah's rocket force and its location seems to have been fairly accurate, it appears that the IDF was also unaware about the sophistication with which Hezbollah had constructed its system of fortifications in southern

Lebanon" (Feldman, September 2006). Feldman continued, saying that "it is not entirely clear how detailed the IDF's intelligence was regarding the anti-tank missiles at Hezbollah's disposal. And even if such intelligence was available at the General Staff and Northern Command levels, it does not seem that the information was efficiently distributed to the fighting forces" (Feldman, September 2006:4).

2. The intelligence also failed to provide information about one of the most effective weapon systems deployed by Hezbollah in the war (the Iranian-made C-802 anti-ship missile) which was successfully fired at an Israeli warship, INS Hanit, in July 2006, killing four people on board and severely damaging the vessel. The Israeli military appears to have been taken by surprise by the attack (BBC, 3 August 2006). The IDF report on this Lebanon War incident regarding the Hanit Navy ship, which was submitted to Chief of Staff Dan Halutz, reveals major operational failures: the crew did not anticipate or prepare for a shore-to-ship missile attack and the IDF Intelligence ignored officer's warnings (Greenberg, Hanan, 11 July 2006). According to the Israeli Navy, the ship's sophisticated automatic missile defence system was not deployed, even though the early warning system usually operates even during peace-time war games. In the aftermath of the event, reports suggested that no known intelligence existed which would have pointed to the fact that such a sophisticated missile had been deployed in Lebanon by Hezbollah. The report further indicates the neglect and indifference on the ship; one example of this is that one of the junior officers on the ship decided about one hour prior to the incident to switch off the central radar and parts of the defence system without notifying the commander of the vessel, in the belief that the ship was not under threat (Greenberg, 11 July 2006). Once the ship was hit, the report says, it was unclear for a long time what had caused the strike and the rescue of the injured sailors took a particularly long time (Greenberg, 11 July 2006).

Furthermore, the possibility that Hezbollah possesses these kinds of missiles was brought to the public and IDF's attention as early as 2003. The investigative work of Ha'aretz journalists Amos Harel and Avi Issacharoff showed that a certain Colonel K, an intelligence officer, had already given a

lecture on April 21, 2003, predicting that Hezbollah had shore-to-sea missiles in its possession. Moreover, during the morning of Friday, July 14, 2006 before the attack one of the branch heads of naval intelligence, Lieutenant-Colonel Y, briefed the head of naval intelligence, Colonel Ram Rothberg, telling him that "ships enforcing Israel's naval blockade on Hezbollah should take into account the possibility of a C-802 missile being fired on them" (Harel & Issacharoff, 18 January 2008). The assessment, however, did not result in a warning. If such a warning had been issued, Israeli ships would have moved further away from the shore and activated their anti-missile systems.

3. Apart from major operational failures, the IDF Intelligence also failed to provide vital information on the following aspects of Hezbollah, which could have had a direct impact on Israeli ability to "decapitate" Hezbollah and its capacity to operate from its major nerve centres. For instance, the intelligence failed to provide ground troops with adequate information about the movement of guerrillas, such as informing the elite military units before their landings in Ba'albeck and Tyre. The intelligence was unable to achieve a serious penetration of the decision-making centre of Hezbollah in the southern suburbs of Beirut. The intelligence also failed in providing answer to the most vital question of the war, i.e. the location of Hezbollah's Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah and its members. Despite the intensive bombing of the southern suburbs of Beirut and other locations, Israel failed completely in the hunt for any of Hezbollah's leaders, which led Yossi Melman, an intelligence and military affairs correspondent for *Haaretz* to ask where the leaders of Hezbollah were hiding.

There were many factors that led to the defeat of the Israeli army, but the most prominent was the superiority of Hezbollah intelligence, which depended on the strength of its internal organisation, its spread and its ability to hide its leaders, fighters and stock of missiles. Hezbollah was also successful in monitoring, prosecuting and dismantling the networks of Lebanese spies working for the Israeli secret service, Mossad. Israeli security sources admitted that the "special security

apparatus of Hezbollah was able to dismantle the most dangerous spy networks of Mossad, who worked in Beirut and southern Lebanon":

> Mossad agents who were arrested in Beirut are the most dangerous in the Middle East and more training on the latest electronic devices, but their mission was to identify places and caches of confidentiality and apartments alternative used by party leaders, and develop signs of electromagnetic and phosphorous on the places that should be targeted by shelling Zionist, in addition to plant eavesdropping devices in multiple locations in the southern suburbs. (Tal, Avraham, 31 July 2006).

Because of the failure of Israeli deterrence and early warning Israel could never have achieved a decisive victory over Hezbollah, despite Israel's massive attack during the campaign, that many expected to deliver. Hezbollah has on its part earned the image of a "victory" due to Israeli decision-makers' failure to provide a consistent picture about the goals for the war, or what they had actually expected to accomplish within a given amount of time. One top Israeli official did however, seem to sum up the views of these decision makers when he stated that 'Israel had five objectives in going to war against Hezbollah' (Cordesman, 2006:3).

For thirty-three days, even certain basic Israel's objectives were not met. It was clear that Israel was not able to achieve even the transfer of the abducted soldiers to the Lebanese authorities (Inbar, 2008: 223). Hezbollah's military capability was temporarily diminished, but not destroyed, and its political stock rose in the eyes of Lebanese, including in the eyes of Christians who had previously opposed Hezbollah. Syria and Iran reportedly restocked Hezbollah's arsenal of missiles (Elran & Brom, 2007: 123).

The 2006 Lebanon War, in sum, killed many, destroyed much, but advanced neither Israeli objectives nor of Lebanese government. Only Hezbollah seemed to emerge from the conflict stronger than before, even though Lebanese troops are now deployed in south Lebanon.

6.5. CONCLUSION

This chapter has looked at Israel's reaction to Iran's forward defence doctrine as represented by its support of Hezbollah and its alliance with Syria, and how it affects

Israel's national security. This has been done by analysing the recent history of the relationship between Iran, Syria and Hezbollah from 1982 up to the 2006 war which has shown that the achievements of the Iran-Syria-Hezbollah alliance have become more evident and more aggressive toward Israel since the US wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and more obvious since the 2006 Lebanon war.

In addition, this chapter has shown that since 1980, the alliance has achieved a series of major strategic victories leading to Israel's withdrawal from Southern Lebanon in May 2000, which was seen as a victory for Hezbollah and which led to the 2006 War. A number of factors have led to Israel's deterrence against Iran and Syria being significantly reduced, including: the inconclusive results of the 2006 War, the Hamas' military coup in Gaza, and the continuous bombing of Israeli cities and villages from Gaza.

This chapter has also demonstrated that Hezbollah, supported by Syria, has become a state-within-a-state in Lebanon and could possibly become the country's arbiter in the near future, or even its political ruler. Furthermore, Hezbollah has been actively involved in the destabilization of the Palestinian arena, supporting Hamas and PIJ operationally and financially, and has a growing role in supporting the Shi'a anti-American forces that are working inside Iraq to destabilize that country.

By analysing Israeli responses to Iranian forward defence from Prime Minister Begin's government in 1977 up to Prime Minister Barak's government in 2001, this chapter has highlighted Israel's failure to decrease the capabilities of the alliance and its intention to carry out terror attacks. Israel uses its military doctrine of war to set guidelines for its responses to Iranian forward defence. This research has highlighted three constant elements of this strategy: offensive, defensive and punitive actions and shown that these strategies could not totally eradicate the alliance's threat. This is because Israel is unable to deter the patron state, such as Iran and Syria in the case of Hezbollah. During the twenty-five years that Iran has supported Hezbollah neither Israel nor the United States has acted militarily against either Iran or Syria when their interests have been attacked.

This chapter concluded that the strengthening of the "triple alliance" intensified following the invasion of Iraq in 2003 and then again during the 2006 Lebanon War.

This shows that this "forward defence posture" has made Israel's borders more vulnerable to threat from Iran. It also concluded that the triple alliance would affect the safe borders or 'secure frontiers' which is one of the main principles of Israeli national security.

Chapter 7

CONCLUSION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This study set about to explore Iran-Israel relations since 2003, by seeking to determine how the Iraq War and the ensuing regime change affected the security of Israel , and considering whether or not after 2003 Iran poses a real threat to Israel.

To achieve the objectives of this study, a set of questions were posed to assess the significance of the Iranian threat to Israel's national security. These questions were: To what extent did the Iraq war and regime change affect relations between Israel and Iran? To what extent does Iran pose a real threat to Israel through its perceived nuclear deterrent? And finally, to what extent does Iranian forward defence tactics through its nurturing Hezbollah and relations with Syria affect the national security of Israel?

These research questions were aimed to conceptualize Israel's national security policy, the impact that the change in the balance of power in the Gulf region had on Israel between 1979 and 2003 and to determine the new threats faced (real and perceived) by Israel with the removal of Saddam Hussein through the emergence of new rivals to Israeli hegemony. In this pursuit, we considered Israeli response to Iranian nuclear programme and its forward defence doctrine through new alliances with state and non-state actors. Finally, an alternative approach towards understanding Israel's security dilemma as manifested in a new "balance of threat" environment since 2003, compared to a broader regional condition of "balance of power" was tested.

7.1.1 The Conceptualization of Israel's National Security Policy

The first task in this project was to understand Israel's national security policy and determine those aspects that changed and those that remain unchanged between 1949 and 1991. As indicated herein, security has been the most critical issue for Israel's survival since the very beginning of her establishment. This stems from two major elements: 1) historic experience and religion; and 2) the establishment of Israel amidst

its Arab neighbours. Based on continuous threats to its existence, such as the slaughters, pogroms and Holocaust, it is no wonder that Israelis have a strong feeling of insecurity. In addition their history, religion and the Zionist ideology have also affected the Israeli sense of security and Zionism itself has been affected by Jewish history and religion. Therefore, the influence of its perceptions on Israeli security is based on its "siege mentality" and lack of trust on external powers, which motivates it to defend itself through alliances as well as on "self-help" basis. Combined, these factors have contributed to the belief that use of force is the only way to protect the country. It does not help that Israel is surrounded by Arab neighbours, which serves to reinforce the belief in its strategists that the first priority of Arab foreign policy remains the destruction of the Jewish state. It can therefore be concluded with some certainty that since its inception, Israel determined that its security from the existential threats can be best served through development of offensive capabilities and deterrence .

A general analysis of contemporary literature indicates that the basic pillars of the Israeli Security Doctrine were formulated based on Israel's geo-strategic vulnerabilities and its small physical size. The pillars, as established by Ben-Gurion, were: deterrence strategy, first strike, safe borders, strategic depth and alliances with powerful states. Deterrence has been vital for Israel, as it is aimed at discouraging its enemies from attacking. However, the perceptions of threat and the physical situation of Israel made her adopt a first strike policy, which would result in the destruction of enemy forces and their infrastructure. First strike is a real test of the credibility of the concept of deterrence. It is worth mentioning that the term "safe borders" has been purposely selected to fit the Israeli doctrine with regard to the issue of borders. Consequently, the term is highly flexible in order to reflect the dynamic and relative requirements of Israeli security, as there will always be a need for Israel to expand its borders in the direction of potential danger. Doing so increases strategic depth and ensure security plans work effectively. As a result of being a small state with limited resources and being surrounded by Arab states, a feeling of insecurity and isolation within Israel exists. Therefore, the maintenance of alliances with superpowers was perceived to be important for a number of reasons: doing so would maintain political and economic support, access to modern weaponry, Israel would have recognition as a legal state and it would also consolidate Israel's position in the Middle East.

An examination of each conflict, starting with the War of Independence in 1948 until the 1991 Kuwait crisis, and the resulting changes in Israeli security policy approaches, brings us to the conclusion that although these pillars of the strategic doctrine were questioned after each war, they remained solidly set as the main principles.

With the demise of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, Israel's Arab enemies lost their economic, military and political backing while Israel's supporter, the US, remained the only dominant power in the Middle East; hence the Arab position against Israel was weakened. The Peace Process was another positive development for Israeli security. The 1994 Peace Treaty with Jordan, and before that the Peace Treaty with Egypt in 1979, reduced the possibilities of either a Jordanian or Egyptian participation in an Arab coalition attack. The Iraqi threat from the Eastern front was also significantly decreased due to the US-led coalition victory over Iraq during the Kuwait Crisis in1991. For a brief period, the reduced existential threat brought no major changes in the Israeli security policy during the 1990s.

For a brief period, while the existential threat from neighbourly states and non-state entities the 1990s, become reduced, the existence of other weakened but militarily threatening anti-Israeli states like the post-1991 Iraq, Iran and Syria remained Israel's core security concerns, alongside Hezbollah and Hamas whom Iran and Syria had carefully nurtured during the 80s..

At that stage, Israeli security beliefs started to shift from a neighbour-state based threat perception to a remote-state based threat perception. The threat was seen to be coming mainly from Iraq and from Iran's development of Weapons of Mass Destruction, while Israel failed to resolve the Golan Height's issue with Assad. Therefore, Israel's threat perceptions shifted during the 1990s away from concerns with direct war with the Arab states to the proxy and cold wars between peripheries and their clients. This was a direct consequence of the separate successive peace initiatives with Egypt, the PLO and finally Jordan. As a result, Iraq and Iran became the major players in the arena.

7.1.2 The Consequences of the Changing Balance of Power in the Gulf Region for Israel from 1979 to 2003

Another objective of this project was to determine the consequences of changes in the balance of power in the Gulf region from 1979 to 2003 for Israel, viewed primarily from an American perspective. It is apparent that during the Cold War, Israel adopted the "Periphery Doctrine," which sought alliances with the non-Arab states of the Middle East periphery, primarily Turkey and Iran, in order to maintain a balance of power with the Arab countries. The alignment of both countries with the West, along with the common threats from the Soviet Union and the unified Arab bloc, kept the two countries (Iran and Israel) working together, until 1979. Although Iran under the shah was unwilling to formally recognize or support Israel publically, the two countries did make secret, mutually beneficial arrangements. After the Revolution in 1979, although the strength of the Periphery Doctrine was weakened, but it continued to hold enough sway among some Israelis to allow arms deals with Islamic republican Iran to take place covertly, despite the anti-Israeli remarks that came from the new government in Iran.

Two core factors have apparently contributed to the reduced effectiveness of the Periphery Doctrine for Israel to cooperate with Iran: the collapse of the Soviet Union and the US invasion of Iraq during the Kuwait crisis. As a result of these events, the security of the Middle East changed completely. Additionally, during the 1990s, the US attempt to control Tehran politically, economically and militarily, failed. Iran began rebuilding its military, expanding its industrial infrastructure, placing an increased priority on its nuclear programme and increasing financial and arms support of Hezbollah in Lebanon. Israel therefore turned the Periphery Doctrine on its head by building closer ties with neighbouring Arab states and began to portray Iran as its main threat.

Although after 1991, Iranian military and economic strength continued to grow, while Iraq's became more weakened under the UN sanctions, the Gulf region remained reasonably stable. The US invasion of Iraq in 2003 changed the regional balance of power dramatically and in some ways to Iranian strategic advantages in the Gulf and the Levant. It was believed that the invasion would not only have removed the Iraqi

threat to Israel, but would also reduce threats from Iran and Syria, due to US presents in their neighbourhood.

As the US became the hegemonic power of the region after 2003, while Iran and Syria remained under the US and the EU pressures through a variety of diplomatic and military sanctions, Israel's freedom to act against its adversaries increased at the expense of Syria, Iran and the Palestinians. However my research took the view that Iraq's removal from the regional balance of power and its continued instability actually exposed Israel to more serous existential threats from both states and non-states actors, that neither the Bush administration nor Israeli officials had anticipated.

From the research, it can be concluded that the American removal of Saddam Hussein, who until then had been the principal strategic counter-weight to Iran, paved the way for an expansion of Iran's influence. Iran, which had rationally regarded Iraq as its first line of defence against the US and Israel, might be content with the presence of Saddam on the regional scene, but, with the increasing threats of US military action after 2003 prompted Tehran to look for ways of preventing the US from finding the opportunity for a military action. Ironically, the US continued involvement and failures in Iraq served to strengthen Iranian position throughout the region and contributed to the beginning of a cold war between Iran and Israel over the Iranian nuclear programme and Tehran's increasing financial and arms support of Hezbollah in Lebanon.

7.1.3 The Threat to Israel, Faced and Perceived, after Saddam Hussein's Removal from Power

Another objective of this project was to understand whether the threat to Israel was actual or perceived after the removal of Saddam Hussein. As previously noted, Israel was influential in the American decision to invade Iraq, but how did the 2003 war, in turn, influence the Israeli Security Doctrine. The research demonstrated the relationship between the Bush doctrine and the war in Iraq. Also, the influence of Israel on the Bush administration's decision to launch the Iraq War was assessed through the prism of the pro-Israel neo-conservative research centre (the PNAC) that also had close ties with Israel's Likud party. Many associated with the PNAC had long called for the overthrow of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, thus paving the way for the

American decision to invade. In addition, it was found that a direct link existed between the PNAC members and Israel in the drafting of "A Clean Break," a plan that is considered to have been the road map for the US invasion of Iraq. Analysis of the Israeli involvement in the Iraq War was accomplished by exploring three factors: the military, the economy, and the politics.

In addition, the research looked at how the 2003 war affected the Israeli Security Doctrine. This outcome had four positive effects. First, the removal of Saddam Hussein eliminated Iraq from the radical Arab camp. Second, it encouraged other countries, such as Libya, to give up their WMDs. Third, the removal of the Hussein regime weakened political and financial support for resistance groups against Israel. Fourth, Israeli security was enhanced by the new hegemony of the US in the region.

It has thus been determined that the Iraq War had several negative outcomes on Israeli security. Primarily, the instability in Iraq opened the way for an increase in the power and influence of Iran in the region. The lack of pre-war planning by the US prevented them from thwarting the expansion of Iran's influence. Bush administration officials and neo-conservatives appear to have been so focused on removing Hussein from power that they largely overlooked the wider geopolitical ramifications of his removal on the security of Israel.

7.1.4 The Israeli Response to Iranian Nuclear Deterrence

An examination of the Israeli response to Iranian nuclear deterrence efforts was also undertaken in this study. As discovered, Iran's strategies changed significantly after the Revolution. Iran resumed its nuclear programme while engaged in a bitter struggle against Iraq. Uncertain as to the Soviet Union's intentions beyond Afghanistan, politically isolated and facing ruthless chemical attacks by the Iraqi army, Iran's leaders embarked on a self-reliant rearmament plan. Of all the regional threats against Iran, Iraq became paramount. Even after 1991, Iran continued its nuclear development as a security priority. Seeing nuclear weapons as its only real tool, Iran's grand strategy was to establish an adequate deterrent against an invasion, especially one that might use nuclear, biological or chemical weapons. The adoption of this strategy followed dramatic changes in the world: the Cold War had ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union, nuclear weapon threats based out of central Asia were diminished,

Afghanistan had fallen into continuous civil war and Iraq had been weakened by UN sanctions and US-led containment in the form of no-fly zones.

Although Iran's nuclear programme has been a source of tension within the international community, there are several pragmatic reasons for Iran to continue with it. First, two of its neighbours have been taken over by the US, a nuclear power and enemy of Iran. In addition, Pakistan on the south-east and Russia to the north both have nuclear weapons, and Israel has had nuclear weapons since the 1960s.

Iranian nuclear deterrence efforts were intensified with the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. The invasion elevated the status of Israel and the US in the region, filling the void left by Iraq, thus casting Israel as the main threat to Iran. Iran rationally regarded Iraq as its first line of defence and the increasing threats of military action against Iran prompted Tehran to look for ways to prevent the US from finding the time and opportunity to start military action. The failure of the US in Iraq strengthened the Iranian position in the region. It is common knowledge that Iran has long had overt military ambitions respecting land beyond its borders. It seems determined to foster a Gulf leadership role, while establishing a credible deterrent against future attack. This dramatic change has made Iran one of the most significant threats to the security of Israel and the US interests in the region.

After reviewing the evidence concerning the development of Iran's nuclear programme and the nuclear facilities in Iran reported by Globalsecurity.org, together with recent reports by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) that consider the nature of Iran's activities in each facility, it is apparent that the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps and the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran (AEOI) have a strong influence on Iran's nuclear programme. In addition, a review of the Iranian nuclear diplomatic efforts and Israel's stance between 2003 and 2010 revealed that during this period, Iran, the EU and other western countries went back and forth with the United Nations' nuclear watchdog, the IAEA. On several occasions, this agency carried out inspections of the Iranian nuclear facilities and conducted discussions as to whether or not the programme was actually for peaceful purposes. Iran's aggregate power provided a motive for Israel to prevent Iran from turning its peaceful nuclear programme into a military one through warnings, threat of a pre-

emptive strike and by establishing strategic political alliances with the US and its allies.

An assessment was made of the Israeli pre-emptive actions concerning the Iranian nuclear facilities as compared with those taken against Iraq in 1981. It can be concluded that the option of a pre-emptive Israeli strike on Iranian nuclear facilities would be problematic. Tehran learnt lessons from Israel's attack on Osirak in 1981 and built underground sites, widely distributing their nuclear facilities in locations that obviously considered the routes, distance and defensive measures needed to protect the facilities from an Israeli pre-emptive attack. Iran argued in 2011 that it seemed hard to believe Israel could carry out an effective military attack with conventional weapons.

The possibility of a stable nuclear balance being established between Iran and Israel was also examined. It was shown that a nuclearized Iran would lead to a number of negative outcomes for the security of Israel (not to mention the region as a whole) and would effectively break Israel's nuclear superiority. The acquisition of nuclear weapons by any state in the region would be considered a direct threat to Israel. Therefore, alone, or together with other nations, Israel has used diplomatic and military efforts, as well as covert actions, to prevent other Middle Eastern countries from acquiring nuclear weapons. In the past, Israel attempted to deal with such threats unilaterally. On 7 June, 1981 Israel bombed the nuclear reactor at Osirak, Iraq, as part of "Operation Opera," and on 6 September, 2007 it launched an air strike, "Operation Orchard," against a presumed nuclear site in Syria.

Today, it is Iran's nuclear ambitions that are a primary concern. It is apparent from the research that breaking Israel's nuclear monopoly could result in the beginning of an arms race in the region. Larger Arab states may be pushed to respond; Turkey, Saudi Arabia and perhaps Egypt are potential candidates for nuclear proliferation as a response to a successful Iranian breakthrough. Israel is also afraid that this would lead to a major shift in the strategic balance of the Middle East. Iran could then adopt a more aggressive foreign policy, which worries Israel since they currently have the upper hand as the only nuclear power in the region. In such a scenario, Pakistan, and even India, would be forced to acknowledge Iranian capabilities, shifting the focus

from each other to Iran. Additionally, Iranian nuclear research could provide an umbrella for extremist organizations (i.e. Hezbollah).

7.1.5 The Israeli Response to Iranian Forward Defence Doctrine

Another objective of this project was to examine the Israeli response to the Iranian Forward Defence Doctrine as evidenced by Tehran's support of Hezbollah, its alliance with Syria and the effects of these relationships on the security of Israel. Analysis of the relationship between Iran, Syria and Hezbollah reveals that the achievements of this alliance became more visible and overtly threatening to Israel after the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and more so after the Lebanon war in 2006. While the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were clearly intended to isolate and weaken the Tehran regime, the second major member of "the axis of evil," the failure to stabilize the political situation in Iraq after the US invasion permitted Iran to turn the tables on the Bush administration.

Since 1980, the alliance has achieved a series of major strategic victories ending with Israel's withdrawal from Southern Lebanon in May 2000. This was viewed as a victory for Hezbollah and led to the 2006 war. The inconclusive results of the 2006 war, the Hamas military coup in Gaza and the continuous bombing of Israeli cities and villages from Gaza have undoubtedly diminished the effectiveness of Israel's deterrence efforts against Iran and Syria.

Hezbollah, Tehran's closest ally, with Syrian support, has become a state-within-a-state in Lebanon. It now has the potential of becoming the country's arbiter in the near future, if not the actual ruler. Hezbollah, actively involved in the destabilization of the Palestinian arena, has supported Hamas and PIJ operationally and financially, and has a growing role in supporting the Shi'a anti-American forces in Iraq in their efforts to destabilize that country.

Analysis of Israeli responses to the Iranian forward defence position from the time of Prime Minister Begin's government in 1977, until Prime Minister Barak's government in 2001, shows that Israel failed to decrease the alliance's capacity and its intention to perpetrate terror attacks. Israel uses its military doctrine of war to set guidelines for its response to Iranian forward defence actions. Three strategies have

continuously been included in these guidelines: offensive, defensive and punitive actions. It can be concluded from the research presented that these strategies could not totally eradicate the alliance threat because Israel is unable to deter the patron states of Iran and Syria with respect to Hezbollah. Over the twenty-five year period of Iranian support of Hezbollah attacks against Israeli and US interests, neither Israel nor the US has responded with military action against Iran or Syria. Building of the "triple alliance" (Iran, Syria and Hezbollah) intensified after the invasion of Iraq in 2003, and again during the 2006 Lebanon War. This indicates that the "forward defence posture" has brought the Iranian threat closer to Israeli borders. The study also concluded that the triple alliance will affect the safe borders, or "secure frontiers," one of the main principles in the national security of Israel.

7.1.6 "Balance of Threat" post-2003: An Alternative Approach to Understanding Israel's Security Dilemma

This project sought to understand Israel's security dilemma as manifested in a new "balance of threat" since 2003, compared to a regional condition of "balance of power."

From the theoretical insights provided by different schools of thought, we set about testing their core assumptions to help develop a framework within which Israel perceives its security interests. These theoretical approaches which claim to explain Israel's security dilemma since 2003 are identified as realism, liberalism and constructivism. However, we argued at the outset that the balance of threat approach will have more explanatory power to inform Israel national security behaviour against Iran and its forward defence "allies".

Before we conclude our discussion about balance of threat theory, we will briefly reflect on how liberalism, constructivism and realism may be insufficient to explain Israel' security interests in the region.

The liberalism approach was considered. This theory emphasizes that states are not limited to use of high politics (power), but can also employ low politics (economics). As was clarified in Chapter Four, the manner in which the Iran–Israeli relations developed and continued to evolve from the times of the Shah to the Iran–Iraq War

(1980–1988) could have effectively been a power struggle over 'high politics', but under fortuitous circumstances, had the potential of a military 'alliance' under American guarantees.

The constructivist approach has been assessed through the prism of Alexander Wendt's work. The research highlighted the ideational factors in constructivism through examination of the essential tenets of constructivism such as social knowledge, social practice and identities and interests. The research leaves little doubt that constructivism has brought a new level of conceptual clarity and theoretical sophistication to the analysis of both international and world societies. It has been argued that constructivism theory is of great analytical relevance if we are going to study the past relations between Israel and Iran. According to Walt, constructivism seems to be agnostic because it cannot predict the content of ideas. Constructivist thought may help more substantially in describing the past than in anticipating the future (Walt 1998, pp. 38–41). However, my research focuses on an explanation of the role that geopolitics can play in shaping the flow of Iran–Israel relations.

In the realist approach we acknowledged how the main tenets of statism, survival, and self-help, remain valid for explaining Israel's quest for national security, although we showed that the transformation of the international system since the Cold War from a bipolar security order to a unipolar system had drastically changed the material conditions which used to determine a state's preference for alliance establishment or self-help strategies. We also argued that such change had prompted Israel to embrace threats that were of more immediate consequence to its survival rather than abstract threats.

In terms of Israeli national security post-Cold War, our findings suggested that the assumptions of the balance of threat theory could provide better explanations as to how Israel perceives threats which may be more immediate, geographically proximate, manifestly offensive in nature and aggressive to its survival.

Considering the balance of threat theory put forward by Stephen Walt together with the analysis presented herein, the following conclusions are hereby offered:

1. It is clear that Iran is a threat to Israel's national security. As the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq in March 2003 has shown, Iran is an aggregate offensive power that is gaining geographic proximity to Israel and its intentions are perceived as highly aggressive. Since the US failure in Iraq, Iran has adopted various threatening policies towards the region, to which Israel remains the primary target. Iran's strategies which further aggravate the balance of threat against Israel and improving its deterrence, are its prospective development of Weapons of Mass Destruction and its strike capability through a highly ambitious ballistic missiles programme.

2. The second assumption through which we determined as to how Iran had become a geographic proximity threat to Israel was through its establishment and consolidation of a triple alliance with Syria and Hezbollah which it had nurtured since 1980 and intensified after 2003. This forward defence posture continued to pose a serious strategic threat to Israel after Iran started to supply short to medium range missiles and finding Hezbollah and other Palestinian groups. This Iran policy of supporting non-states actors as well as developing a strategic relationship with Syria has gained Iran closer geographic proximity to the Israeli border.

3. The third prong of the Iranian threat through which it continues to aggravate Israel's national security is indicated by the recent rhetoric between Iran and Israel, which has heightened tensions between Israel and Iran, since the election of the hard-line President Ahmadinejad in 2005. A leader who openly denies the Holocaust and the Israeli right to exist, has openly called for its destruction, indicate Iran's aggressive intentions to use its aggregate power and offensive capability to change the status quo in its favour.

4. Iran's ability to project its power into the Levant since 2003 through development of offensive capabilities, threatening political discourse as indicated by its anti-Israeli rhetoric and its forward alliance patterns suggest

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that Iran has greatly enhanced its aggregate power beyond the Gulf region. Not only Iran seem capable of threatening its Gulf Arab neighbours through domination of Iraq and Afghanistan, but it can wage a highly dangerous proxy war as well as mount direct strikes against Israel should its national security be threatened. We have demonstrated this enhanced ability in direct Iranian support to Hezbollah during the 2006 Lebanon War, as well as its threat to respond to a direct Israeli pre-emptive strikes on its nuclear installations since 2003.

7.1.7 Iranian Threat, the "Arab Spring" and the future of the "Triple Alliance"

The medium-term scenario under which Israel will continue to face threat to its national security is likely to come from a hegemonic Iran aspiring to become a nuclear state and proclaiming support to anti-Israeli state and non-state actors. In respect of the Iranian nuclear issue, due to US and European resistance to its efforts to develop a nuclear programme and in the face of additional pressures, Iran is likely to seek the support of Russia and China to prevent any US or Israeli attack against it.

The theoretical possibility of Iran becoming a "proximate" threat to Israel through its increased "aggregate" power implies an extremely serious security threat, which may not only be threatening to Israel on a long term basis, but even to the global nuclear non-proliferation treaty (the NPT). Besides triggering a nuclear arms race throughout the Middle East which may even comprise South Asia, it is the informed opinion that, should Iran be allowed to cross the nuclear threshold, it would affect both the Gulf and the Levantine security politics, even of moderate Arab regimes.

The long-term scenarios aggravating Israeli security may be totally different if we consider other factors impinging on its security from non-Iranian threats.

Since 2003 Iran has continued to enjoy hegemonic powers over the Gulf and western Asia through Iraq and Afghanistan. However, it appears to be widening its strategic influence in the Levant through its triple alliance by more aggressive relations with various state and non-state actors that have been encircling Israel since the Lebanese Civil War (1982). Nevertheless, the tangibility of this Iran-centric security architecture may have both positive and negative implications for Israel in the long

term, if we factor-in another security threat converging on Israel from both Western and Eastern borders through the Arab uprisings. A revolutionary wave of demonstrations and protests began in the Arab world at the end of 2010. Since then, there have been revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, a civil war in Libya resulting in the fall of its government, as well as civil uprisings in Bahrain, Syria, Yemen and others. Taken together, these events will definitely affect Israel's national security. The overthrow of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak might see Egypt become a real threat to Israel's security for two reasons. First, the future of the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty may be at risk because the Muslim Brotherhood, which is likely to hold a key role in any future Egyptian government, recently announced that continued compliance with the Treaty may be put to a referendum vote. Second, Ayman Nour, an influential Egyptian opposition figure and presidential candidate, called for Cairo's Peace Treaty with Israel to be "reassessed" (*The Jerusalem Post*, 02/14/2011). A wild card that must also be considered is that the nature of the relationship between Hamas and the Egyptian revolution remains to be determined. The Muslim Brotherhood, of which Hamas is a branch, may enable Egypt to regain its regional role and counter Israeli arrogance, thus leading to a new phase of confrontation. This might shift Israeli security thought from a remote neighbour-state based threat perception to a neighbour-state based threat perception.

The on-going Syrian uprising that began in 2011 is an increasingly critical concern for Israel. If the Syrian regime, now Iran's front line of defence against Israel and the US, collapses, the second line of defence, Hezbollah and Hamas, would crumble. Therefore, the potential fall of Syria would open the door for Israel to finally gain greater regional stability and break the "triple alliance" of Iran, Syria and Hezbollah, benefitting Israel's national security.

In this scenario, Assad's survival could have an even more significant impact on Israel's security which may be envisaged in the following negative as well as positive outcomes.

Syria, which has never recognized Israel's right of statehood, alongside Iraq, remains the last "buffer" for Israel's security against Iran or Hezbollah, if it can reach some accommodation over the Golan Heights and Lebanon's "neutrality" with Israel. Through a pre-emptive diplomatic resolution of these Levantine issues by the US or

by Israeli itself, Syria's position in the Triple Alliance could be enhanced, which would reduce its dependence upon Iran, with or without Assad. Paradoxically, Israel is a direct beneficiary of an Assad-centric alliance's moderation which is likely to exercise a considerable restraining influence on Hezbollah and other Palestinian groups inside Israel.

However, the emergence of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria, as envisaged with the coming to power of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, may have a negative outcome for Israel, in the future. A new anti-Israeli regime in Damascus would be likely to challenge Israeli policies in Lebanon and could support Hamas or call for an independent state of Palestine against Israeli wishes. Its consolidation inside Syria and reaching a new "consensus" with the Egyptian Brotherhood and Hamas over relations with the Jewish State would reinvigorate an even more aggressive anti-Israeli bloc, which could threaten the strategic depth of Israel.

However, with an enhanced Syrian position which brought-in a "moderate" Muslim Brotherhood in Cairo, willing to live with Israel, this "neo-Triple Alliance" would carry the potential of excluding Iran and Hezbollah. By weakening an Iran-centric alliance, Israel could completely isolate Tehran and its forward defence Shia arm inside Lebanon. In this scenario, Israel could even become a direct beneficiary of a neo-strategic "depth" which would push its secure borders away from its immediate boundaries, which depend heavily on Syria's enhanced position in any future alliance.

The originality of the present study is evident in the depth to which the issue has been investigated and the methodological approach used. The findings of this study contribute to the understanding of the Israeli National Security Doctrines that exist in the aftermath of the 2003 Iraq war and regime change through the exploration of the Iranian threat posed by their position on nuclear deterrence and forward defence. Also presented is an explanation for Israel's new security position. Finally, further studies could be made with regard to factors that might affect Israel's national security, such as the alliance between Iran and Hamas, Iran's hegemony over Iraq, the impact Egypt might now have in the post-Mubarak period, the "triple alliance," (Iran, Syria and Hezbollah), the potential fall of the Syrian regime and the Arab Awakening.

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