

A Window of Opportunity for Israel?

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Articles & Testimony

"The tragic conflict between Israelis and Palestinians continues to elude resolution. But I believe that there exists a window of opportunity similar to the one that existed in the aftermath of the Gulf War in 1991." — James Baker III, former U.S. secretary of state[1]

President George W. Bush hinted during the build-up to the 2003 Iraq war that after dealing with Saddam Hussein, he would turn his attention to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.[2] Some analysts dismissed such linkage as a pre-war sop to European and Arab governments. But with Saddam successfully removed from power, the United States backed up its rhetoric by publishing the "roadmap" for peace -- a step-by-step outline of Palestinian measures, Israeli concessions, and international monitoring, to culminate in the establishment of an independent, democratic Palestinian state by the year 2005.

The war, say proponents of the roadmap, has caused the "strategic sands" to shift in the Middle East, creating "another moment of opportunity." [3] Implicit in this argument is the supposition that the 1991 Kuwait war created the conditions for the subsequent peace conference in Madrid, followed by the 1993 Oslo accords. Therefore shouldn't the latest U.S. victory over Saddam open the way to a revived peace process? Specifically, now that Israel has been saved from the Iraqi threat -- this time, for good -- shouldn't it have the confidence to do what Yitzhak Rabin did in 1993? "The expression window of opportunity," Rabin told the Israeli Knesset (parliament) in 1994, "is indeed the correct expression of these times." [4] Proponents of the roadmap say the United States has forced open that window once more, and Israel should leap through it before it shuts again.

History is a deceptive muse, always tempting us to see repetitions. The problem with the notion exemplified in the statement by James Baker is that any comparison between 1991 and 2003 is specious. The key distinction is Israel's differing postwar security environments.

In 1991, the defeat of Saddam dramatically changed Israel's strategic environment. It removed a major threat -- Iraq's arsenal of missiles and non-conventional weapons. For this reason, Israeli leaders on the left, and ultimately, the left-center prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, decided that Israel could run unprecedented risks in pursuit of peace.

In 2003, contrary to many assessments, the removal of Saddam has not improved Israel's strategic situation in a profound way. Saddam's capabilities never recovered from his 1991 defeat, subsequent inspections, and years of sanctions. By the time Operation Iraqi Freedom was launched in March 2003, he did not threaten Israel directly. The main strategic threat to Israel since 2000 has been Palestinian terrorism -- partly fueled by Saddam's subsidies, but mostly home-grown, with encouragement from Iran, Syria, and wealthy Saudis. And looking ahead, Israel's prime security concern is Iran's nuclear program. These two threats have increased significantly since the 1991 Kuwait war, and they have outlasted Saddam.

So is there a "window of opportunity"? An accurate answer depends on a sober comparison of Rabin's post-1991 Kuwait war threat perceptions to Israel's current security situation.

Rabin's Window

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin believed that the 1991 Kuwait war created an opportunity for Israel to conciliate the Arab world. This position was based on a sound supposition: only from a position of strength could Israel make peace with the Arabs. The logic was twofold: "No Arab ruler will consider the peace process seriously so long as he is able to toy with the idea of achieving more by the way of violence." [5] And thus, "Only a strong State of Israel can supply its leaders with the feeling of security required to take difficult and at times painful decisions for peace." [6]

Rabin believed the 1991 Kuwait war allowed him to make these painful concessions because it dramatically improved Israel's strategic position. During the 1980s, the Iraqi army had become the largest in the Middle East and the strongest in the Persian Gulf, as a result of the Iran-Iraq war. [7] Operation Desert Storm destroyed half of Iraq's conventional military force and led, in Rabin's words, to "the discovery of Iraq's nuclear plans which postponed if not prevented a supremely dangerous threat to Israeli security." [8] The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) estimated that without the war and the United Nations (U.N.) inspection regimes that followed, Iraq might have been able to manufacture its first nuclear weapons by as early as the fall of 1993. [9]

Rabin also appreciated the fact that the decline of the Soviet Union had removed a major prop of Arab radicalism. "Arab countries hostile to Israel," he noted, "can no longer rely on the Soviet umbrella that protected them in the past, whether militarily, politically, or economically." [10] For this reason, those who threatened Israel "come into opposition to U.S. policy, and this time without an external backup." [11] The collapse of the Soviet Union strengthened Israel in another way: it opened an influx of Soviet immigrants to Israel. Some 85,000 came in 1990 and another 145,000 arrived the following year. Rabin spoke for many when he described the opening of the gates of the Soviet Union as "the realization of the Zionist dream." [12] To Rabin, these international developments created a "new world" -- a watershed moment for Israeli security. [13]

"The threat to the very existence of Israel ... has been reduced as a result of the two events surrounding the fall of the Soviet Union and the crisis in the gulf ... This is the major threat to Israel, the one presented by the armed forces of an Arab country or Arab countries, especially in the search for ... weapons of mass destruction." [14]

Beneath this message of triumph, however, Rabin expressed a longer-term view that was both pessimistic and paradoxical. Israel should make peace from strength precisely because Israel would not retain its postwar strategic advantage forever. He believed "that because nuclear weapons will be introduced into the Middle East in the coming years ... this situation requires us to ... end the Arab-Israeli conflict and live in peace with our Arab partners." [15] Although his desire to secure peace with the Arabs before they obtained the bomb was intuitively attractive, it was not entirely logical. [16] For if Israel's strength alone could persuade Arabs to make peace, what would persuade the Arabs to keep that peace if Israel grew weaker? And how would peace with some Arab states in any way diminish the threat of, say, a nuclear Iran?

Rabin also misread the strategic threat of terrorism. He called it a "second level of threat," posing only daily personal security problems.

"Forms of Palestinian or Shi'i terror, and the intifada do not present a threat to the very existence of Israel. They are painful and they interfere with the normal way of life for many Israelis. But the Palestinians, the Shi'is, and the intifada are not threats to the very existence of Israel." [17]

Rabin was right -- but only up to a point. He was referring to Palestinian terror based largely in neighboring states, where the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) had operated since the mid-1960s. Rabin did not fully comprehend the possible impact of terror from within a Palestinian quasi-state, operating from bases in immediate proximity to Israeli cities. The impact of this terror from 2000 onwards went well beyond the daily personal security of Israelis and posed a threat to Israel's economic security and its own domestic Arab-Jewish modus vivendi.

In sum, the 1991 Kuwait war did open a window of opportunity. The failure of Rabin was that he tried to drive a truck through the window. Rabin thought the time had come to "revolutionize our thought and behavior patterns in the coming years."^[18] But the revolution was so far-reaching -- and so far removed from Middle Eastern reality -- that it generated new threats in place of old.

The window of opportunity created by the 1991 Kuwait war was never as wide as it is now portrayed by proponents of the roadmap. In particular, it was not wide enough for an "end of conflict" agreement as envisioned in Oslo. The weakness of the roadmap is that it seeks to drive the same truck through an even narrower window -- a window that is narrower because, unlike in 1991, the war against Saddam has not significantly reduced the threats facing Israel.

Misled by Rhetoric

Why do many observers think otherwise? Numerous parties had an interest in overselling the effects of a successful war to remove Saddam. The window of opportunity rhetoric is the direct offspring of pre-war and wartime oversell.

Some of the oversell was done in Israel itself. Leading up to war, the Israeli government and military elite actively contributed to the misperception that Iraqi regime change would be a panacea for Israeli security. Whether it was a case of wishful thinking or the desire to support the U.S. president, Israel's official line both before and during the war was exceedingly optimistic.

For example, in early February 2003, the director of the Israeli national security council, Ephraim Halevy, delivered a speech at the prestigious Munich Conference on Security Policy. There he proclaimed that relieving "the world from a bloodthirsty dictator who has threatened to blackmail the region will in itself be a major contribution to stability in the region."^[19] Halevy described a "best scenario outcome" in which the "shock waves emerging from post-Saddam Baghdad could have wide ranging effects in Tehran, Damascus, and in Ramallah." Toppling Saddam, he suggested, could lead to "snowballing" by giving "encouragement to all the moderate regimes and forces in the entire region."^[20]

According to this maximalist version of the domino theory, all the pieces would fall in the right direction. Iran and Syria, without Saddam to unite them, would draw apart, creating an independent Lebanon free of terror, and paving the way for a comprehensive peace in the region. Such optimism was in lockstep with the views of Maj.-Gen. Amos Gilad, Israel's official "national commentator" on the war, who went so far as to describe the war plans as a miracle cure-all for everything from Israeli security to economic woes.^[21]

The American media at times went even further, suggesting that the whole point of the war was to eliminate the Iraqi threat to Israel. The allegation that this was Israel's war became so pervasive that even Tim Russert -- the evenhanded dean of NBC's flagship news program Meet the Press -- challenged one of his guests from the Pentagon: "Can you assure American viewers across our country that we're in this situation against Saddam Hussein ... for American security interests? And what would be the link in terms of Israel?"^[22] On the extremes of both the left and the right, commentators emphasized that several of President Bush's foreign policy advisors are Jewish and leveled charges -- both direct and indirect -- of dual loyalty.^[23] The most direct charge of Jewish conspiracy revolved around a 1996 strategy paper by a Washington-based think tank.^[24] The paper, written by Richard Perle, Douglas Feith, and other Americans, bore the title, "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm." It was written to persuade then-incoming Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu to break with past Israeli policy toward Syria and to deliver a military blow against Damascus -- advice that Netanyahu rejected. The media seized on a single line, thrown in almost in passing, that Israel could also shape its strategic environment by "removing Saddam Hussein from power."^[25]

All of this produced a strange convergence. Rosy Israeli predictions of enhanced postwar security, combined with anti-Israeli insinuations of a Jewish conspiracy, gave the same erroneous impression: Israel would be much more

secure after the war, and therefore, able to make far-reaching concessions -- or, in the cliched formula, "take risks for peace." And after all, didn't Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, like Rabin, claim that only a strong Israel could make concessions? Hadn't Sharon repeatedly championed the importance of negotiating from a proverbial "position of strength"?[26] Now Israel had achieved it -- whether by good fortune or conspiratorial manipulation. It was time for Israel to deliver.

In the midst of this hyperbole and insinuation, one analyst kept a steady keel. Lieut.-Gen. Moshe ("Bugi") Ya'alon, the Israeli chief of staff, kept Israel's strategic environment in an accurate perspective. In a candid interview last summer, Ya'alon acknowledged, "Iraq's capabilities are shallow compared to what they were in the Gulf war. They are not capabilities that give me sleepless nights ... Obviously we have to prepare for the possibility that they will launch a missile ... but the threat itself is limited. It might be unpleasant, but not terrible." [27] This was not the only time the chief of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) made such a statement. That same month, in a Jerusalem Post interview, he again admitted, "The Iraqi threat does not keep me up at night ... it does not pose an existential threat to the State of Israel." [28]

Palestinian Terrorism

If not Saddam's Iraq, what threats have kept Israel's chief of staff up at night? For the past two years, the Sharon government and the IDF have regularly identified Palestinian terrorism and Iran as the greatest dangers to Israel. [29]

In contrast to Rabin, who believed Palestinian terrorism -- though disruptive -- did not "pose a threat to the survival of the State of Israel," [30] many Israeli officials now regard it as a strategic if not existential threat. How does one explain this sea change in Israeli threat perceptions? Palestinian terrorism has increased dramatically since the Oslo period. Although the two intifadas bear the same name, they are in fact qualitatively different. The first intifada lasted seventy months and killed 160 Israelis; the present intifada has lasted only thirty-one months but has killed almost 800 Israelis, and the figure continues to rise. [31]

Not only has Palestinian terrorism reached the level of a strategic threat, as opposed to a mere impediment to peace, [32] Israel's enemies today question whether the Jewish state enjoys a "position of strength." In contrast to Rabin's window of opportunity, which was predicated on Israel's perceived strength, today the IDF and the Sharon government believe the opposite: terrorists think they have the upper hand over Israel.

Hizbullah secretary general, Hasan Nasrallah, first popularized the notion throughout the region that Israel is akin to a spider web. This theory holds that while Israel has robust military power, Israeli society is pampered and unwilling to fight and sacrifice for its national interests. Those who uphold the theory cite Israel's unilateral pullback from south Lebanon in May 2000, after eighteen years of guerrilla warfare with Hizbullah. According to this logic, asymmetrical terrorist attacks against Israel can undermine and ultimately destroy the Jewish state. Like a spider web, Israel looks impressive from afar, but touch it and it will fall apart. [33] This conclusion may have encouraged Palestinians to embark on the so-called Al-Aqsa intifada, less than four months after Israel's departure from Lebanon. [34]

Many observers believe that Operation Defensive Shield, Israel's successful antiterrorism mission launched in spring 2002, finally persuaded the Palestinian leadership and political elite of Israeli might and resolve. Yet evidence suggests that the spider web theory continues to hold sway not only with terrorist leaders such as Nasrallah, but among the rank-and-file -- Palestinian suicide bombers and Hizbullah foot soldiers. They still express the view that Israel is a fragile spider web that can be broken through sustained terrorist attacks. [35]

This perception has increased the dangers to Israel of making concessions. Many Palestinians would conclude that Israel had conceded out of weakness, not strength; the strategic role of terrorism would be validated, not negated. The Israeli chief of staff put it this way:

"If this conflict goes on with the feeling on the Palestinian side that terrorism is winning and terrorism leads to achievements, we will find ourselves on a slippery slope regarding our ability to deter the Palestinians from using terrorism anywhere there is no agreement ... This is why I say as a military man that we must win this conflict in such a way that the Palestinian side will have burned into its consciousness that terrorism and violence have no chance of leading to any achievement which translates into Israeli surrender ... that [validates] their belief that the State of Israel is not prepared to fight any more, to sacrifice for its defense [emphasis added]."[36]

Adherents of the domino theory posit that the Iraqi regime change will convince Palestinians to choose the path of peace in the revived spirit of the "new Middle East." In practice, the centerpiece of this plan has been to change the Palestinian leadership. Although the appointment of "moderate" Abu Mazen (Mahmud 'Abbas) to the post of Palestinian Authority prime minister is widely regarded as a step in the right direction, the real question is his ability to effect change. In fact, Abu Mazen's appointment highlights an inherent contradiction: it was intended as the first step towards Palestinian democracy (and peace), yet his opposition to terrorism is overwhelmingly unpopular among the very people he supposedly represents, and who still entertain the spider web theory.

Daniel Pipes has noted:

"What about changes in Palestinian leadership? Every piece of evidence suggests, and opinion poll confirms, that the [terrorist] assault on Israel ... has been widely popular among Palestinians. Indeed, there is ample reason to believe that the "street" is more aggressively anti-Zionist than the leadership. Although Arafat promotes the ambition of destroying Israel, he is not the source of that ambition, and his removal would not eliminate it."[37]

Will it be possible for Abu Mazen -- or any leader for that matter -- to rein in Palestinian terrorism when two-thirds of the Palestinian public supports suicide bombing operations against Israeli civilians, and when only 7 percent believe the new Palestinian leadership should accept the roadmap plan?[38] Not surprisingly, a late April poll conducted by the Palestinian Center for Communications shows that less than two percent of the Palestinian public supports the new prime minister.[39]

In addition to changing Palestinian tactics, Abu Mazen's professed two-state agenda depends on changing the very goals of his constituents. As it stands, more Palestinians believe the Palestinian goal is "to liberate all of historic Palestine" than "to end the Israeli military occupation and establish an independent Palestinian state based on U.N. Security Council resolution 242." [40] It remains unclear how Iraqi regime change has contributed anything to the transformation of Palestinian tactics, never mind aspirations.

The domino theory assumes not only that Iraqi regime change will reduce Palestinians' inclination to use terror but their capability of using it as well. Yet Saddam's Iraq had always been a tertiary contributor to Palestinian terrorism. The pro-Iraqi Palestinian group, Arab Liberation Front, did claim to have received and distributed \$35 million from Saddam. But the bulk of resources funneled to Hamas and Islamic Jihad, not to mention Hizbullah, have come from Iran and Saudi Arabia -- not Iraq.[41] Furthermore, with Arafat's rejection of Prime Minister Ehud Barak's peace proposal in July 2000, and the onset of sustained terrorist attacks against Israel, Iran's hand in Palestinian terror broadened to include the Palestinian Authority itself. This new connection to terror was dramatically illustrated in January 2002 when Israel intercepted the Karine-A, a freighter headed to the Gaza Strip loaded with fifty tons of Iranian weapons. Upon learning of the seizure, Prime Minister Sharon and Defense Minister Fouad Ben-Eliezer pointed out the obvious: Iran, not Iraq, is "the center of world terror." [42]

Iran Looms

Rabin's willingness to take risks for peace also rested on the assumption that Israel, in making peace with its Arab neighbors, could forestall nuclear proliferation in the region. But beyond the Arab states lies Iran.

Although Iran is a signatory of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, it continues to steer its nuclear program in worrisome directions. For decades, U.S. nonproliferation strategy centered on an unfinished nuclear power plant near the southern port city of Bushehr where it was feared Iran could one day extract weapons-grade plutonium from the reactor's fuel. Last August, however, an Iranian opposition group, the National Council of Resistance of Iran, exposed details regarding the Natanz plant in central Iran -- a highly advanced nuclear facility capable of building uranium-based nuclear weapons.[43] Six months later, satellite images of Natanz confirmed the claims by the Iranian opposition group of a large gas centrifuge uranium enrichment plant under construction.[44] The IAEA's late February visit to the site lent further credence to the view that Iran is aggressively and successfully developing a nuclear option.[45] In fact, according to Muhammad El Baradei, the head of the IAEA, Iran's centrifugal technology is considerably further along than Iraq's was at the time of the 1991 Kuwait war.[46]

Iran maintains that its nuclear program has a civilian purpose, but this claim is dubious. As The Washington Post asked in March 2003: "Why would a country that sits atop one of the world's largest reserves of oil and natural gas spend hundreds of millions of dollars to build nuclear power plants?"[47] From an Israeli point of view, there is a more compelling explanation for Iran's aggressive nuclear program: Iran's desire to offset or intimidate Israel. Iranian officials have enhanced that perception by their own statements. Former Iranian president 'Ali Rafsanjani, who is still one of the country's most powerful clerics, made a point of noting that "Israel is much smaller than Iran in landmass and therefore far more vulnerable to nuclear attack." [48] Iranian defense minister, 'Ali Shamkhani, similarly threatened that if Israel ever attacks Iran, "We will retaliate in ways they haven't dreamt of." [49]

Two factors exacerbate Israeli fears of Iran. First, Israel is not in a position to destroy Iran's nuclear facilities, as it destroyed Iraq's Osirak nuclear reaction in June 1981. The distances to Iran are greater, Iran's fortification techniques are better, and its nuclear facilities are not concentrated in a single location. As Yiftah Shapir of the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies has noted, "Some people might think that ... Israel could carry out a joint naval and air strike to destroy the Iranian facilities. But that seems to me unfeasible." [50] Second, Iran's medium-range missile, the Shihab-3, may be operational. With a range of 800 miles, the Shihab-3 can reach any point in Israel. [51] Although Israel has improved its missile defense capabilities, no active defense system is one-hundred-percent reliable.

The Iranians now stand at a crossroads. The difference in the Bush administration's approach towards non-nuclear Iraq and nuclear North Korea suggests only one conclusion. Washington may preemptively attack states developing nuclear weapons, but it will engage regimes -- even those hostile to the United States -- that already possess this capability. Should Iran try to get the upper hand by further expediting its nuclear program? Or should it defuse tensions with the U.S. by putting the brakes on its nuclear ambitions? Conversely, should Washington preemptively strike before Tehran secures the ultimate weapon? Or should the Bush administration try to derail Iranian efforts to get the bomb by relying on diplomatic pressure?

The answer to these questions is a matter of debate. What is not a matter of debate is the uncertainty and sense of vulnerability felt in Israel. In the 1990s, the disarmament of Iraq effectively neutralized the threat from Israel's eastern flank. In the 2000s, despite the removal of Saddam, Israel faces a looming threat from the east, in the form of Iran's nuclear ambitions.

The Day After

The prevailing thesis among most analysts is that Saddam Hussein's ouster will have a deep and broad moderating influence throughout the region. Whether that happens remains to be seen. Yet there is reason to question -- if not outright doubt -- whether Iraqi regime change has qualitatively improved Israeli security, particularly vis--vis Palestinian terrorism and Iran, Israel's foremost strategic problems.

Notwithstanding Israeli officials' support for the war and the media's predictions of a postwar security windfall for Israel, Israel in the day after still has to contend with precisely the same security problems that bedeviled it before the war. That is why high Israeli officials have been very restrained in their post-war assessments -- and why they have avoided the shop-worn phrase window of opportunity. There is relief, but not euphoria, at the removal of Saddam, and skepticism about whether it will really make a difference to Israeli security.

This does not mean that Operation Iraqi Freedom will not come to improve Israeli security in future. The overthrow of Saddam Hussein and the dismantling of his military infrastructure have removed a vocal if impotent source of anti-Israel radicalism in the region. Perhaps Iraqi regime change will ultimately catalyze broader, deeper changes in the wider region. But that is anyone's guess. As Israel's national security director cautioned in February, "Any person who attempts to forecast what will arise from the gathering storm must be endowed either with messianic capabilities or foresight." [52]

There is not much messianic fervor left in Israel, especially for ambitious plans like the roadmap. Its launch had much more to do with political considerations than with any assessment of realities on the ground. At best, it is premature; at worst, its pursuit could send Israeli-Palestinian relations into another tailspin. A major diplomatic effort only makes sense if Israel feels it is strong, and its neighbors acknowledge Israel's existence as a permanent feature of the Middle East. Even after Saddam's removal, too many Arabs and Iranians think that with the right mix of terrorism and nuclear physics, Israel can be destroyed. Israeli concessions, if made while these adversaries indulge in terrorism and bomb building, will only feed the belief that they bullied Israel into making them.

To begin to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict, it will be necessary to lift the two major security threats facing Israel. Saddam was a symbol of defiance, and his removal has had great symbolic value. But the Middle East is still full of what might be called weapons of mass defiance. They are strapped around the waists of Palestinian suicide bombers, they are aimed from the rocket launching pads of Hizbullah, and they ferment in the minds of nuclear planners in Iran. If there is a window of opportunity, it lies in new U.S. options for disarming these spoilers. Israeli-Palestinian peace may lie at the end of the road. But the roadmap to it should lead through Arab and Muslim capitals -- and through Arab and Muslim minds.

Notes [1] "The Catch-22 of Middle East Peace," remarks by James Baker to the Empire Club of Canada, Toronto, The Toronto Star, Apr. 7, 2003. [2] "Remarks by the President at the American Enterprise Institute Annual Dinner," Feb. 26, 2003, Washington Hilton Hotel, at <http://www.tzemach.org/fyi/articles/bush-02262003.htm>. [3] Former U.S. ambassador Edward P. Djerejian, quoted in The New York Times, May 4, 2003. [4] Statement by Prime Minister Rabin to the Knesset, Oct. 3, 1994, Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), at <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH0jmk0>. [5] Yitzhak Rabin, "After the Gulf War: Israeli Defense and Its Security Policy," address at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, Bar-Ilan University, June 10, 1991, at <http://www.biu.ac.il/Besa/books/25/after.html>. [6] Yitzhak Rabin, address, Israel National Defense College, Aug. 12, 1993, MFA, at <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH0jgt0>. [7] Dore Gold, "The End of the Post-Gulf War Era," The Jerusalem Letter, Mar. 2000, at <http://www.jcpa.org/jl/vp426.htm>. [8] Yitzhak Rabin, "The Future of the U.S.-Israel Relationship," International Policy Conference, Sept. 1, 1992, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, p. 1. [9] Rodney W. Jones, Mark G. McDough, Gregory P. Webb (contributor), Tracking Nuclear Proliferation, 1998: A Guide to Maps and Charts (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1998), p. 187. [10] Rabin, "The Future of the U.S.-Israel Relationship," p. 1. [11] Die Welt, Feb. 19, 1993. [12] Rabin, address, Israel National Defense College, at <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH0jgt0>. [13] Rabin, inaugural address to the Knesset, Knesset minutes, July 13, 1992, MFA, at <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH0jdt0>; see also, "Telephone Conversation between Prime Minister Rabin and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Aug. 9, 1993," MFA, at <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH0jg40>. [14] Rabin, inaugural address to the Knesset, at

<http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH0jdt0>; see also, "Telephone Conversation," at <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH0jg40>. [15] Address to the Knesset by Prime Minister Rabin, presenting his government, July 13, 1992, MFA, at <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH0je40>. [16] Gold, "The End of the Post-Gulf War Era," at <http://www.jcpa.org/jl/vp426.htm>. [17] Rabin, "The Future of the U.S.-Israel Relationship," p. 1. [18] Rabin, address, Israel National Defense College, at <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH0jgt0>. [19] Ephraim Halevy, "Future Developments in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf," Munich Conference on Security Policy, Feb. 9, 2003, at http://securityconference.de/konferenzen/rede.php?menu_2003=&menu_konferenzen=&sprache=en&id=115&. [20] Ibid. [21] The Jerusalem Report, Mar. 10, 2003. [22] Meet the Press, Feb. 23, 2003, at <http://www.msnbc.com/news/876263.asp>. [23] Fred M. Donner, "OK, President Bush, What If...?" The Chicago Tribune, Mar. 10, 2003; Michael Kinsley, "What Bush Isn't Saying about Iraq," Slate Magazine, Oct. 24, 2002; James O. Goldsborough, "Beginning a Modern Religious War," The San Diego Union-Tribune, Mar. 3, 2003; The Jerusalem Post, Mar. 12, 2003. [24] "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm," Study Group on a New Israeli Strategy toward 2000 (Jerusalem: The Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies, 2000), at <http://www.israeleconomy.org/strat1.htm>. [25] Arnaud de Borchgrave, "A Bush-Sharon Doctrine," The Washington Times, Feb. 14, 2003. [26] Derek Brown, "Election Day: What the Israeli Papers Say," The Guardian Unlimited, Feb. 6, 2001, at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/israel/Story/0,2763,434294,00.html>; The Jerusalem Post, Feb. 4, 2000. [27] Interview with Moshe Ya'alon, Ha'aretz (Friday supplement), Aug. 30, 2002. [28] The Jerusalem Post, Aug. 26, 2002. [29] Interview with Ya'alon, Ha'aretz, Aug. 30, 2002. [30] Israel television, July 15, 1992; Rabin, "The Future of the U.S.-Israel Relationship," p. 1. [31] "Victims of Palestinian Violence and Terrorism Since September 2000," Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH0ia50>. [32] Interview with Ya'alon, Ha'aretz, Aug. 30, 2002; Agence France Presse, Jan. 18, 2002. [33] Interview with Ya'alon, Ha'aretz, Aug. 30, 2002. [34] Ronen Sebag, "Lebanon: The Intifada's False Premise," Middle East Quarterly, Spring 2002, pp. 13-21. [35] Suzanne Goldenberg, "A Mission to Murder: Inside the Minds of the Suicide Bombers," The Guardian, June 11, 2002, p. 4; Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Sept. 18, 2002; Stuart Schoffman, "The Spider's Strategy," The Jerusalem Report, Dec. 2, 2002. [36] The Jerusalem Post, Aug. 26, 2002. [37] Daniel Pipes, "Does Israel Need a Plan?" Commentary, Feb. 1, 2003, p. 21. [38] "On Palestinian Attitudes towards the Palestinian Situation in General," Public Opinion Poll No. 47, Jerusalem Media and Communication Center, Dec. 2002, at <http://www.jmcc.org/publicpoll/results/2002/no.47>. [39] The Jerusalem Post, Apr. 21, 2003. [40] "On Palestinian Attitudes towards the Palestinian Situation in General," at <http://www.jmcc.org/publicpoll/results/2002/no.47>. [41] Associated Press, Feb. 1, 2003. [42] The Jerusalem Post, Jan. 7, 2002. [43] The Washington Post, Mar. 10, 2003. [44] Ibid. [45] Associated Press, Mar. 9, 2003; David Albright and Corey Hinderstein, "The Iranian Gas Centrifuge Uranium Enrichment Plant at Natanz: Drawing from Commercial Satellite Images," The Institute for Science and International Security (Washington, D.C.), Mar. 14, 2003, at http://www.isis-online.org/publications/iran/natanz03_02.html. [46] David Albright and Corey Hinderstein, "Iran: Furor Over Fuel," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, May/June 2003, p. 12. [47] The Washington Post, Mar. 10, 2003. [48] The Jerusalem Post, Mar. 11, 2002. [49] Ibid. [50] Ibid. For an explanation of the difficulties of preempting Iranian nuclear facilities, see also Albright and Hinderstein, "The Iranian Gas Centrifuge Uranium Enrichment Plant at Natanz," at http://www.isis-online.org/publications/iran/natanz03_02.html. [51] The Jerusalem Post, Mar. 11, 2002, May 27, 2002. [52] Halevy, "Future Developments in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf," at http://securityconference.de/konferenzen/rede.php?menu_2003=&menu_konferenzen=&sprache=en&id=115& ❖

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