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Towards Middle East Peace Negotiations: Israeli Postwar Political-Military Options in an Era of Accelerated Change

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Executive Summary

Israel enters a new peace process at a time of considerable short-term safety and long-term uncertainty. The social and demographic consequences of the Gulf War have not fully expressed themselves on the politics of the region, while the military role of Iraq in the future is hard to anticipate. Under such circumstances widely varying interpretations of Israel's security situation have emerged both in the U.S. and Israel.

In contrast to U.S. interpretations of the Gulf War, a distinct view has been emerging among Israeli policymakers:

- *While the profile of missile warfare in the Middle East rose with Iraqi missile attacks on Tel Aviv, Desert Storm illustrated that the dominant form of warfare that still decisively determines political outcomes is the movement of conventional land armies. As long as conventional warfare remains the most critical component of the Middle Eastern military balance, the conditions affecting its outcome—from topography to strategic depth—will be vital to the security of Israel.*

- *The lessons of the Patriot deployment and Israel's policy of "restraint" offer limited precedent for guarantees of external security in lieu of secure borders in the peace process. Israel still seeks to be ultimate guarantor of its own security.*

- *Israel's approach to borders and security arrangements cannot be based on short-term developments like the crushing of Iraq. Israeli planning will have to assume a restoration of Iraqi power at a later date. The borders Israel will agree to must provide security for decades to come.*

Israel will have to assume that peace with its neighbors will not be a Western European-style peace, but rather will continue to involve considerable security threats—like the relations between the Arab states themselves. Territorial concessions in the Golan and West Bank, under such conditions, will entail a far higher degree of risk than was the case in the Sinai agreements. The prior establishment of the nature of peace to be offered and arms control options can help verify whether those risks can at all be assumed.

INTRODUCTION

Israel is entering its first direct negotiations with the Arab world—aside from its existing treaty with Egypt—in a period characterized by inherent contradictions which affect both its choices and constraints.

Unquestionably, the collapse of Soviet military power in the Middle East and the removal of much of the near-term offensive capability of the Iraqi army during and after Desert Storm have led to a nearly unprecedented improvement in Israel's security situation for the time being.

But equally, the Gulf War unleashed the possibility of radical regional changes throughout the Middle East; this in turn places a very limited time frame on any reading of Israel's position. In the wake of the war, enormous arms sales have been made—or are planned—by both the Soviet Union and the United States to Syria and Saudi Arabia, along the flanks of Israel's Eastern Front. Syria continues to expand its armed forces by adding armored divisions. And while continuing UN sanctions make it extremely difficult for Iraq to conduct research, there is little indication that conventional arms transfers to Baghdad will be permanently prohibited. As a result, neither Israel nor the Gulf States can rule out for planning purposes the restoration of a large part of Iraq's military power.

In the area of unconventional weapons, the Gulf War has given greater impetus to Middle East countries, particularly Syria and Iran, to obtain advanced missile and non-conventional weapons capabilities. And withal, a surprisingly large amount of Iraq's missile forces remain intact. While President Bush has put forward an ambitious regional arms control initiative, it remains to be seen whether Middle East arms control can be implemented given the asymmetries in regional force structures and the multipolar nature of regional conflicts. In the meantime, the prospect that individual "nuclear" republics of the former USSR might pursue independent defense and foreign affairs policies introduces a whole new set of variables that are nearly impossible to anticipate.

Within the Arab world itself the prospects for stability are extremely unclear. The Gulf War was a globalized inter-Arab war and the social and ideological consequences for its main protagonists have yet to be felt.

On the ground, vast demographic shifts of foreign workers are underway throughout the Arab world, especially the return of over 250,000 Palestinians to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Egypt has reabsorbed some 600,000 of its nationals who once worked in Iraq.[1] The Gulf war led to a partial resumption of inter-Arab aid patterns but it is highly questionable whether they might offset the disruptive effects of these enormous population movements.

Thus, Israel is entering a new peace process at a time of considerable short-term safety and long-term uncertainty. The Israel Defense Forces' Chief of Staff, Lt. General Ehud Barak summarized Israel's strategic situation at the end of September 1991 as follows: "In the immediate term, there is some reduction in the danger of war, but I don't know when this period of time will end—in another half a year or a year and a half; against this, I see clearly that in the medium and long term there is an increase

in the threat."[2] Ironically, after seeing one of its main military rivals defeated by the U.S.-led Desert Storm coalition, the Israeli cabinet still found it necessary to increase defense spending in 1992, notwithstanding other pressing needs, especially the absorption of a massive influx of Soviet immigrants.

It should come as no surprise that this period of considerable uncertainty is accompanied by widely varying interpretations of Israel's security situation. Thus present-day U.S.-Israel disagreements over the peace process result from a more fundamental difference of views over the lessons of the Gulf War for Israel's political-military choices. The Bush administration believes that the war has created a "window of opportunity" to improve Israel's diplomatic situation and move toward peace. However, the administration's interpretation of Israel's postwar reality contains several features that would be hotly contested by most Israelis:

(a) *The Diminished Importance of Territorial Security*—the belief that Desert Storm introduced a new era of high technology/missile warfare which has altered, and indeed diminished, the importance of traditional territorial considerations in national security.

(b) *The End of Israeli Self-reliance*—the belief that the operations of coalition air forces over Scud launching areas in western Iraq as well as the deployment of U.S. Patriot missile batteries in Israel represent a turning point in Israeli thinking, allowing consideration for the first time of external international guarantees for Israel's security.

(c) *The Near-Term Reduction of Israel's Eastern Threat*—the belief that a reduced Middle Eastern threat environment should allow Israel to take a more relaxed view of its security concerns; this new environment, so the reasoning goes, should make Israel more flexible in the peace process and reduce the need for any increases in security assistance.[3]

U.S.-Israeli differences in interpreting the nature of the postwar Middle Eastern environment are not just academic. The U.S. has been Israel's principal military ally since 1967 and is positioned in the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations as the central broker between the parties. Differences with Israel over general political-military trends in the Middle East may not only affect the course of negotiations, but may also affect long-term Israeli security options. Thus American postwar policy toward the Middle East is as much a factor in Israeli considerations as trends within the region itself.

As the peace process proceeds Israel will be called uponto reconsider much of the fundamental basis of its national security thinking, particularly as it will be asked to take greater risks with its present-day territorial security margins. But at the same time, other Israeli security margins may have to be addressed as well. Specifically, President Bush's strong stand during the $10 billion loan guarantee debate and its political repercussions—while not directly affecting Israeli security—nonetheless exposed the inherent weaknesses of Israel's reliance for its financial security margin on open-ended U.S. aid. Israelis must now recognize that there simply are limits to the growth of U.S. assistance to Israel that the American political system can tolerate.

While previous Israeli withdrawals from Sinai in 1974, 1975, and 1979 were each accompanied by massive increases in U.S.

aid, there is reason to question whether higher aid levels to support technologically-intensive substitutes for Israeli concessions on the ground can be sustained in the long-term. American public opposition to foreign aid can be expected to intensify with the growth of isolationist sentiments at the end of the Cold War. Thus, the notion that narrowing Israel's territorial security margins can be compensated for by widening its security assistance margins will have to be more critically examined than in the past.

The growing prominence of arms control as a regional issue could well place strains on Israel's long-standing posture of nuclear ambiguity—that is, that it will not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East. Whether or not proposals for increasing regional nuclear arms control succeed, increasing American attention to the nuclear issue will make it necessary to think about whether an increased Israeli nuclear posture in the future, as has been suggested by some Israeli academics, could be used to replace the diminution of another security margin. What might have been possible during the heyday of the Cold War, when the U.S. arms control agenda focused primarily on the U.S.-Soviet relationship, has become an entirely different problem now that nonproliferation stands at the top of the agenda.

In short, postwar strategic conditions in the Middle East have sharpened U.S.-Israeli differences over many of Israel's past security margins. Washington is basically telling Jerusalem that while it supports Israel's security, that security can be obtained within narrower margins without an increased level of risk. But both Washington and Jerusalem will have to make difficult choices, for it is not tenable that Israel be asked to take risks in all aspects of its security or that Israel forgo broadening one margin in compensation for reducing another. At the heart of any U.S.-Israeli security dialogue will be the question of what "security mix" for Israel can best assure regional stability in the period ahead.

In sum, Israeli options during the upcoming negotiations will then be a function of two sets of considerations. First, Israel's own reading of its strategic situation will guide its basic choices as to the degree of risk it can afford given the uncertain nature of its regional environment. Second, Israel will have to realistically appraise how American policy preferences affect the security strategies it can adopt in the postwar Middle East.

ISRAELI POSTWAR SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The American notion of a "window of opportunity" for Middle East peace talks relates in part to U.S. perceptions of changes in Israel's strategic situation as a result of the Gulf War. Israel's own reading of the regional threats it faces, as previously noted, varies with the time frame in question. Nonetheless, certain observations have been repeatedly noted among Israeli analysts about each of the points that U.S. officials frequently cite in assessing Israel's security requirements as it enters negotiations.

The Enduring Relevance of Territorial Factors in Israeli National Security

It was no less a figure than President Bush himself who established in his March 6 victory address before a joint session of Congress that, with reference to the Arab-Israeli conflict "we have learned in the modern age,

geography cannot guarantee security and security does not come from military power alone."[4] This was not his only expression of this idea. Bush hinted at a partial retreat from this position when he slightly altered this phraseology in a June 16 address before the Simon Wiesenthal Center at which he described the "hard lesson" that "geography **alone** cannot guarantee security" (emphasis added).

Bush's general observation was made more explicit a month later by his National Security Advisor, General Brent Scowcroft. When asked if the lessons of the Gulf War confirm or refute the position that further Israeli territorial concessions might compromise Israeli security, Scrowcroft stated that "they tend to refute it." He maintained that Israel had no strategic depth against Egypt after its peace treaty and that with the growing preoccupation with Middle East missiles, territory was even less critical to national defense.[5]

These expressions from the Bush administration appear to be based on the high profile of missile warfare during the Gulf conflict. At that time, the argument goes, Israel's defensive positions in the West Bank and the Golan Heights were absolutely worthless when Israel came under missile attack. In other words, because defensive territorial positions cannot hermetically seal Israel from an Arab missile threat, they presumably have a declining value to Israeli national security. Moreover, improving missile systems may make these weapons the decisive instruments of conflict, as was the case in the Soviet-American military balance through the Cold War.

While the profile of missile warfare in the Middle East rose with Iraqi missile attacks on Tel Aviv and Riyadh, from the Israeli perspective, the dominant form of warfare that still **decisively** determines political outcomes is the movement of conventional land armies. "The true problem," explained the outgoing Israeli Chief of Staff, Lt. General Dan Shomron, "the threat to our existence is not the Scuds, but the large ground and air forces; strategic depth, therefore, should be weighed not from the standpoint of the range of a Scud."[6]

The decisiveness of conventional forces was actually confirmed by the Gulf War itself. Kuwait was invaded and occupied by Iraqi tanks and paratroopers—not by Iraqi missiles or chemical weapons. And Kuwait's political existence was restored by the ground war of the U.S.-led coalition, notwithstanding the month-long aerial bombardment that preceded it. At any rate, any defensive asset's value to Israeli national security is not based on whether it fully protects the country against all threats, but whether it fundamentally denies decisive military victory to its Arab military adversaries.

Israel's historic vulnerability to conventional attack by Arab land armies has not only emanated from the overall numerical asymmetry of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) against an Arab coalition attack. It has particularly been a function of the fact that while Israel has a small standing army with large reserve units, neighboring Arab states have generally built up large standing armies with only a small role for reserves.

According to foreign sources, Israel can ultimately field 12 armored divisions against what will soon become 12 Syrian divisions, 4 Jordanian divisions, and a future Iraqi expe-

ditionary force that traditionally has been made up of a third of its total ground forces (30 divisions in 1991).[7] But if Israel does not call up its reserves, it can field only its small standing army, assessed by the International Institute for Strategic Studies to number just 3 divisions. While the divisional force ratio between Israel—at full strength—and an eastern front coalition might be 1: 2.16, the ratio of Israel's standing army to the same coalition is 1: 8.6.

The general shift in the makeup of Arab armies in the Middle East since 1967, from mostly infantry units to highly mobile armored and mechanized units, has made this latter asymmetry more acute. During a conflict, Arab coalition forces can now move far more rapidly on the ground while Israel is still calling up its reserves. For instance, Iraqi mechanized units require less time to move from the Iraqi-Jordanian border to the Jordan River than Israel needs to complete its reserve call-up. Under such conditions, defensive territorial lines remain absolutely critical for Israel's small standing forces to hold off the threat of attack.

Looking to historical example, the asymmetry between Israeli and Syrian standing forces in the Golan Heights during the summer of 1973 led to a situation in which some 800 Syrian tanks faced an Israeli force of only 60 tanks, reinforced to 177 tanks before the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War.[8] The superior terrain held by Israel in the Golan played a critical part in the success of its vastly outnumbered armored forces in holding off the Syrian attack before any reserve reinforcement arrived.

As long as conventional warfare remains the most critical component of the Middle Eastern military balance, the conditions affecting its outcome—from topography to strategic depth—will be a vital component to Israeli security.

Missile warfare, then, has added to the conventional military threat to Israel but not replaced it. And ironically, rather than diminish the importance of the territorial factor to national security, it has only increased it. Because of the basic asymmetry between Israeli and Arab standing armies, Syrian or Iraqi military commanders must make decisive gains against Israel's standing army before the large reserve reinforcement arrives. It is precisely in this 48-hour period, prior to the completion of the reserve call-up, that force ratios are dramatically in favor of any Arab war coalition. Missiles, when combined with a ground assault, could delay the reserve call-up and thus lengthen the period of heightened Israeli vulnerability. Though these low accuracy ballistic missiles have limited military value in and of themselves, they can cause considerable social and psychological dislocations and induce significant logistical disarray, as they did in the Gulf War.

As a result, Israel's standing forces might have to cope with a ground war for long periods of time before reinforcements could arrive and a counter-attack could begin. The acute imbalance of forces between standing armies might last up to 72 hours instead of the present 48-hour call-up time. Under such conditions, the need for topographically advantageous defensive lines will actually grow in importance for vastly outnumbered Israeli standing forces, not decline in value.

Likely technological developments in the accuracy and lethality of Middle Eastern

missiles will not change these calculations. Accurate missiles will make possible counterforce missile attacks against airfields of the Israeli Air Force—the most important segment of Israeli military power that is not dependent on reserves. Thus accurate missiles considerably lessen the chances that the Israeli Air Force could be fully depended upon to relieve standing ground forces. Such counterforce attacks could characterize the opening round of future wars; preparations for such strikes would be less detectable than wars beginning with the movement of ground armies.[9] Again, conditions on the ground will be ever more critical for determining how Israel would hold back a surprise attack.

Another possible scenario involves the future shift from conventionally-tipped missiles, just used in the Gulf War, to non-conventional missiles, including nuclear missiles. When that time comes, territorial considerations may not matter as much as war becomes decided by city-busting ballistic missiles, as in the U.S.-Soviet strategic balance during the Cold War. While this period may be a decade away, lessons can be learned nonetheless from the experience of European security. Just as American and Soviet theater nuclear weapons canceled each other out and re-emphasized the importance of the conventional balance between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, it could be expected that a similar process would occur in a nuclear Middle East.

In any case, the Gulf War illustrated that while Israel's reputed non-conventional capability might have deterred an Iraqi chemical weapons attack on Tel Aviv, it could not deter conventional missile launches. Nuclear deterrence in a future Middle East might be relied upon to prevent a threat to the national existence of countries in the region. But the spectrum of conflict that can be reliably deterred by the threat of devastating retaliation may become far narrower than was previously thought. Nuclear deterrence was never relevant in limited wars; it may prove to be irrelevant in many future conventional wars as well.

Aside from the question of whether the introduction of missiles might alter territorial considerations, the Gulf War also raised the question of the impact of airpower. In Desert Storm, conventional ground forces may have decided the war, but airpower set much of the stage for the land campaign. Israel has little to learn from the U.S. experience. Desert Storm was an American-initiated war; the U.S. did not have to cope with recovering from a surprise attack nor did it have to mobilize to defend its borders on little notice.

Moreover, the U.S. air campaign was not constrained by the knowledge that a political clock was ticking at the United Nations Security Council. Israel, by contrast, operates at war within a strict political timeframe and would never have the luxury of a six-week air campaign. It must begin to push back and defeat any adversarial ground forces before a UN Security Council cease fire is imposed. In the earliest stages of conflict most of its air forces will have to first gain air superiority and perhaps neutralize enemy Scud launchers.

Finally, air-to-ground operations cannot always be depended upon to halt an enemy's advance. In 1973, for example, the Israeli Air Force failed to stop the reinforcement of Syria by an Iraqi expeditionary force moving over 1000 kilometers to the Golan Heights.

Even in 1967, when Israel achieved overwhelming air superiority in the early stages of the war, the Iraqi expeditionary force that moved across Jordan was struck by the Israeli Air Force only when it was relatively close to the West Bank.

Simply put, strategic conditions in the Arab-Israeli theater make the lessons of the American air war against Iraq difficult to apply. *In particular, territorial concessions in the West Bank and the Golan Heights will unquestionably increase Israel's vulnerability and risk even if the Middle East missile age has begun.* That vulnerability and increased risk will have to be recognized and addressed in the upcoming negotiations.

The American Patriot Deployment and the Policy of Restraint: Precedent for a Political Settlement?

The unique circumstances of the Gulf War allowed for an unprecedented event in U.S.-Israel security relations. While since 1973 Israel has grown increasingly dependent on U.S. economic assistance, unlike the countries of Western Europe or the Far East, it never asked for American troops to risk their lives for its defense. Israel may have needed money but not manpower.

But in the Gulf conflict, two important events shook this paradigm. First, American aircraft flew missions over western Iraq seeking to destroy Scud missile launchers aimed at Israel, while Israel for its part exercised a policy of restraint, allowing coalition air forces to operate in lieu of any Israeli retaliation for Iraqi Scud attacks. And second, for the first time in the history of U.S.-Israel relations, U.S. troops were deployed on Israeli soil to protect her; specifically, air defense teams were sent from their bases in Germany with Patriot Pac-2 anti-missile capable surface-to-air missile batteries.

The future implications of these events can only be considered in the full context of Israeli decision-making during the war. While an American commitment to deliver Patriot systems to the Israeli Air Force was made in August, as the buildup in the Gulf ensued all the U.S. was prepared to ultimately transfer to Israel was the less capable Patriot Pac-1, designed to shoot down aircraft but not missiles. The Pac-2, which could handle limited missile threats, was needed for U.S. forces and was in short supply.

Two days before the January 15 deadline, Israel was offered American-manned Patriot Pac-2 batteries. The basic consensus of the political-military leadership at the time, including Defense Minister Moshe Arens, Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Dan Shomron and Air Force Commander Maj. Gen. Avihu Ben Nun, was to avoid breaking the principle that foreign soldiers should not protect Israel's security.[10] Thus, prior to the missile attacks, the deployment of American-manned Patriot batteries was actually turned down by Israel. Only after the missile attacks began on Tel Aviv, and the Israeli government decided at America's request to hold off on retaliating, was America's previous offer reconsidered. It was under these new circumstances that Israel accepted the deployment of U.S.-manned Patriot Pac-2 batteries. But had the Israeli Air Force received Pac-2 with ample time for training prior to the outbreak of the Gulf War, there would have been no need for any U.S. forces to be deployed in Israel.

In accepting American Patriot Pac-2 batteries, Israel accepted foreign protection in a dimension of security that it could not

provide by itself. The most similar case to the Patriot deployment in this respect was Israel's dependence on American satellite early-warning. Former Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin disclosed after the war that Israel had no capacity for providing warning of this sort for Iraqi Scud attacks. Without U.S. space-based assets, Israel might have had to place its entire population in shelters for the duration of the Iraqi missile attacks.

The much-valued Israeli policy of "restraint," by which coalition air forces attacked Iraqi Scud launchers in lieu of the IDF, must also be understood in its proper proportions. Israel never took the decision that it was better for U.S. forces to operate in western Iraq instead of its own. Indeed, after each Scud attack, the question of restraint was reconsidered. The IDF had an operational plan for coping with the Iraqi missile threat: "I had no doubt about the success of the Israeli action if and when it would happen, I knew we would hit them hard," recalled then-Israeli Chief of Staff Dan Shomron.[11]

The policy of "restraint" did not mean denying the possibility of an Israeli military option against Iraq; it meant carefully assessing the appropriateness of its timing. Shomron summarized his conclusions that the IDF plan might have become operational: "after a chemical missile attack or a strike that caused many casualties, or after the beginning of the American ground war.

"My assessment was that after the massive aerial bombing (of Iraq), King Hussein of Jordan will understand that the entire business is lost and he wouldn't intervene in the war. I also held that the coalition already wouldn't fall apart at such an advanced stage of the war due to an Israeli attack," Shomron said.[12]

Thus, in adopting the policy of "restraint," Israel did not decide to surrender its own right of self-defense in favor of external protection. Shomron has admitted that an Israeli strike on Iraq was even expected:

"The day the Americans began the ground attack, I knew the time to act had arrived. Our moment was upon us. It was clear that the next missile attack on Israel was going to be the last. The operational preparations had been completed for some time. The [Israeli] forces were like a pulled-back spring. . . "[13] Arens' assessment, too, was that the conditions for an Israeli operation had arrived.[14]

Two events put a possible Israeli operation on hold. When the next missile fell on Israel, it struck unpopulated portions of Israel's southern Negev desert. And then the ground war came to an abrupt end with the 100-hour coalition victory. In other words, circumstances affected Israel's policy of restraint more than any alteration of its security doctrine.

In relying on coalition air forces to strike Scud launchers in western Iraq during the first part of the war, Israel's decision was made easier by the limited nature of the Iraqi threat. Major General (res.) David Ivry, Director-General of the Ministry of Defense, was satisfied with the policy of restraint "considering all the circumstances. *This wasn't a war threatening our existence and because of that one had to act in a manner that would assure us maximal political-strategic achievements after the war.*" (emphasis added)[15]

The result of this is that the concept of foreign protection was never adopted as new political-military doctrine. Therefore, the Patriot deployment and Israel's policy of "restraint" offers little precedent for providing increased American protection of Israel in any sort of peace process package. As a fundamental principle, Israel still seeks to be the ultimate guarantor of its own security.

Moreover, while President Bush's singularity of purpose in challenging Iraqi aggression was widely appreciated in Israel, most Israelis would identify more with Kuwait's situation than with that of Saudi Arabia. It took the U.S. six months of non-stop lift and placement to gather sufficient offensive capability in the region to liberate Kuwait. In other words, the time frame of Israeli vulnerability is far shorter than the time frame of American power projection. External guarantees have inherent, objective limitations when thousands of miles must be traversed to protect a geographically tiny area. Moreover, external guarantees for Israel are contingent on the U.S. having the political and military readiness to project power globally and indefinitely into the future. Such readiness must be viewed in the context of isolationist instincts that may emerge in the post-Cold War U.S.

The specifics of external help must be taken into account. Where foreign contributions to Israeli security were welcomed in Desert Storm—and where they will be welcomed in the future—was precisely in those areas in which Israel did not have the means to protect itself, namely anti-missile defenses and satellite early-warning. But even in these areas, Israel is presently seeking to improve its capabilities, by developing the Arrow anti-missile system in the context of the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative program and by perhaps achieving its own space-based early warning system.

Further, while reliance on coalition air attacks against Iraqi Scud launching sites was made palatable in large part because of the war's unique political-military circumstances, it was also acceptable because the conventionally-armed Iraqi Scuds were militarily and strategically insignificant at the time. Thus, during the period in which an Israeli counter-strike was not politically advisable, Israel was willing to have coalition forces operate in its stead, because the Scud attacks did not involve an existential threat to the state.

Any lessons for the future from the American umbrella over Israel in the Gulf War must reckon with this limitation. Simply put, under any scenario, hard facts of geography and geopolitics insure that primary responsibility for the security of Israel against a massive Arab war coalition attack will still have to rest with the Israel Defense Forces, and any foreign military deployment to the Middle East on Israel's behalf will ultimately be supplemental to Israel's own basic capability.[16]

The Near-Term Destruction of Israel's Eastern Front

Because of the Gulf War, Israel enters current peace negotiations at a time in which the actual risks of war along its eastern border are far less than in the past. But the question for Israeli decisionmakers will be the significance of this development for the level of risk they will be able to assume in the future. Prospective borders and security cannot relate to a short-term reality alone. The

borders Israel will agree upon in peace talks have to provide security for decades to come.

Israel has faced situations before in which a relative improvement in its security declined considerably shortly thereafter. In June 1967, Israel delivered a severe blow to both the Egyptian and Syrian armies, destroying 83 percent of Egypt's combat aircraft and 74 percent of its tanks;[17] yet it took only two years for Egypt to reach a point at which it could open the War of Attrition. By 1973 both of the previously defeated Arab armies had sufficiently recovered to mount a joint surprise attack in October 1973.

In Desert Storm, 57 percent of Iraq's combat aircraft were either destroyed or flown to Iran while 50 percent of its tanks were put out of action.[18] Assessing Iraqi recovery is complex. Unlike the post-1967 period, Iraq continues to be subject to UN sanctions. Moreover, Iraqi recovery is not being actively sought by a superpower in the way that Egyptian and Syrian recovery was sought by the Soviet Union.

Nonetheless, Iraq still has a far greater resource base than either Egypt or Syria and a sufficiently large and well-educated population to support a large military establishment. At some point in time sanctions will be dropped, oil revenues will resume, and defense firms (both from the West and, increasingly, from the Soviet bloc) will compete again for the lucrative Iraqi market. Declining post-Cold War defense budgets will make exports to Iraq a matter of survival for many defense industries.

Much attention has been focused on Iraq's non-conventional weapons programs. These programs stand to be weakened if technology transfer codes are instituted by the industrialized countries. President Bush has in fact undertaken a new Middle East arms control initiative, which, if implemented, could affect the way Middle Eastern nations expand and modernize their forces. The new U.S. effort clearly places greater stress on the non-conventional missile area, where real limitations have been specified, than in the conventional field, where only discussions between weapons suppliers have been proposed.

Yet, even if Iraq's non-conventional and missile efforts are arrested, Baghdad could easily re-build its conventional forces once UN economic sanctions are dropped.[19] Not only will advanced Western technologies be available to Iraq, but large amounts of surplus Soviet equipment should become available from the countries of the former Soviet bloc. In other words, positing the eventual restoration of a large part of Iraq's conventional military muscle would be consistent with current trends in Middle East arms limitations.

If predicting Iraqi capabilities is very difficult, predicting Iraqi intentions is even more so. Nonetheless, one observation can be made. Should postwar Iraq assume an activist policy once UN sanctions are lifted, there are good reasons to believe that the main strategic direction of any Iraqi efforts will be westward towards the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, especially since its past confrontations eastward into Iran and southward into Kuwait were ultimately so costly. In fact, one of the operating assumptions in the Israeli general staff throughout the Gulf crisis was that a voluntary Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait could well be followed by an Iraqi thrust into Jordan.[20]

Jordan's importance to Iraq was underlined during the eight year Iran-Iraq War when Jordan's Red Sea port of Aqaba served as Iraq's main outlet to the sea. In the course of the more recent conflict, Iraq compromised its access to the Gulf through the Shatt al-Arab when it turned to forge a rapid rapprochement with Iran by essentially returning to the 1975 boundaries, forfeiting the costly gains of war.

At the time, losing its improved position in the Shatt al-Arab was deemed worthwhile given the vastly improved access to the Gulf that Baghdad achieved through its conquest of Kuwait. But having lost its Kuwaiti outlet to the sea as well, the remaining Jordanian connection should grow in importance.

Moreover, Jordan contains the best target population for any Iraqi inter-Arab political appeals. The background of general support for Saddam in Jordan will not be soon forgotten by the current Iraqi leadership or its successors. For an Iraq led by Sunni Muslims, Jordan has the constant appeal of being the only homogeneous Sunni Arab country along Iraq's immediate borders. And if any upcoming Arab-Israeli peace process excludes Iraq, Baghdad will become a natural leader of Arab rejectionism and its supporters among the Palestinians. In short, Iraq is well positioned to seek a dominant role in the future affairs of Jordan, especially if by doing so it denies a similar role to its Syrian and Saudi rivals.

The strategic implications of any active Iraqi role in Jordan have been described by Shomron: "The Jordanians can make up for their limited military force by means of attaching a large Iraqi force with great firepower. In such an instance, the long Jordanian border will become a security risk for the existence of Israel."

Upon hearing, on August 2, 1990, that Iraq had invaded Kuwait, Shomron himself raised several scenarios, including an Iraqi move into Jordan after a withdrawal from Kuwait. Under such conditions, he stated, Israel would have faced a situation like 1967, requiring a call-up of the reserves and "maintaining all the [Israeli] forces along the Jordanian line."[21]

Ultimately, no Iraqi ground forces entered Jordanian territory during Desert Storm, not because Jordan proved to be a reliable buffer between Israel and Iraq, but because Iraq simply had no means of shifting large ground formations once coalition air forces ruled its skies. The experience of Iraq's strategic penetration of Jordan prior to the invasion of Kuwait, however, still leaves room to question whether Amman has the strength to ward off political-military encroachments by a militarily reinvigorated Iraq or any other major Arab military power.

Jordan's willingness to permit Iraqi intelligence aircraft to fly repeatedly through its airspace and conduct surveillance missions along Israel's eastern border in 1989 indicated clear limits to Jordanian reliability in assuring Israeli security to the east. Jordan's own growing internal challenges including the presence of almost a quarter of a million Palestinians emigrants from the Gulf, and the possible addition of up to 200,000 more Palestinians from Lebanon could well increase the kingdom's instability. In any event, many of these Palestinian immigrants might eventually find employment as foreign workers in a restored Iraq (in lieu of the former

Egyptian workforce), further enhancing economic links between Jordan and its eastern neighbor.

Finally, any consideration of Israel's eastern front must take into account changing patterns of inter-Arab relations in the future; after all, in order for an Arab war coalition to form, some degree of prior strategic coordination must exist. It would appear at present that any military cooperation between formal Arab adversaries in Desert Storm is extremely unlikely.

Nevertheless, the Gulf War demonstrated the degree of uncertainty that exists in the entire field of determining regional political alignments. One of Israel's operating assumptions about Iraq through the 1980s was that the bulk of its armed forces would be tied down by residual Iranian hostility for a considerable time to come. Then the struggle over Kuwait led to a rapid change of alignments and an Iraqi-Iranian rapprochement. Taking a seven-to-ten-year view ahead, Israel cannot count on the permanence of current inter-Arab rivalries. Such differences were subsumed in past Arab-Israeli wars, and they could well be buried again.

In sum, Israel's eastern front has been quieted for the immediate future. But genuine possibilities exist for the recovery of Iraq and along with it the eastern front that will have to be accounted for by Israeli planners preparing for negotiations. The restoration of Iraqi power and even its projection towards Jordan are not remote worst-case possibilities. Geostrategic constants, like the search for a secure outlet to the sea, underpin Iraqi interests in Jordan, regardless of who rules in Baghdad. Moreover, should Jordan face increasing internal instability in the years ahead, an Iraqi role will be even more likely, if only to preclude the activities of its Arab rivals.

THE LIMITS OF ISRAELI CHOICES AND RISKS IN NEGOTIATIONS

Varying interpretations of UN Security Council Resolution 242 will certainly play a central role in discussions over the territorial dimension of any Middle East peace negotiation. Israel will likely stress that the resolution affirms the right of every country in the region "to live in peace within secure and recognized borders" and calls on withdrawal of Israeli armed forces only "from territories occupied in the [1967] conflict."

While official U.S. holds that UNSC Resolution 242 applies to all fronts (Egypt-Sinai, Jordan-West Bank, Syria-Golan), Israeli decisionmakers can be expected to be sensitive to the very different strategic characteristics of each front; these differences will affect their assessment of whether the withdrawal from territories—some, perhaps, certainly not all the territories—can be made consistent with the resolution's promise of "secure borders" in the same manner along each boundary.

The Case of Sinai

The 1979 Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty involved a very specific degree of risk for Israel created by the unique geographic features of Sinai. The military clauses of the agreement created three limited-force and demilitarized zones that kept Egyptian armored concentrations 120 miles from the Israeli border. Were an Egyptian government in the future to decide to break the treaty and move forces into Sinai, Israel

would have just about adequate warning to get its reserve call-up underway. Even in the worst of circumstances, Sinai, though adjacent to Israel's southern Negev desert, is not in close proximity to its main population centers.

The Case of the West Bank

Unlike Sinai, the West Bank overlooks part of Israel's densely populated coastal plain, home to 65 percent of its population and 80 percent of its industrial capacity. While it is only 34 miles wide, and thus adds limited appreciable depth to Israel's pre-1967 nine-mile narrow waistline, its topographical features offer natural defensive positions to Israel's small, defensive standing forces. Arab coalition armies attacking from Jordan would have to move up steep, predictable axes of movement into the West Bank hills that would entail, in some cases, as much as a 4200 foot net rise from the Jordan River and the Dead Sea, both well below sea-level.

A demilitarized West Bank would of course preclude the development of a threat from its relatively small Palestinian population. But it would also deny Israel adequate defensive positions against the far more heavily-armed eastern front coalition of Arab state armies that are and will be Israel's main concern. Moreover, any demilitarization regime in the West Bank could be violated from neighboring Jordan, with the strategic backing of a rehabilitated Iraq, far more rapidly than the regime in Sinai.

Thus, unlike the case of Sinai, most Israeli options for the West Bank are predicated on preserving a significant Israeli military presence: by common consensus, several Israeli brigades (3,000 men each) need to be deployed at the eastern entrances to the five passes running from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean, to be reinforced with reserves in time of need. Because radar requires an unobstructed line of site, the Israeli presence would include ground based early-warning stations for the Israeli Air Force along the central hill ridge of the West Bank (like Ba'al Chatzor in the Beit El hills north of Jerusalem) as well as surface-to-air missile systems (HAWK batteries and other shorter range anti-aircraft weapons) based in the same hilltops. These would chiefly address an air attack—especially at low altitude—from the direction of Jordan or Iraq.[22]

Most options also include control of the West Bank's airspace—given that the minimal time needed to scramble Israeli fighters is already about the same as the three minute flight time from the Jordan River over the West Bank to Tel Aviv. Notably, all the components of this presence are dispersed in different parts of the West Bank.

While a consensus has existed about the necessity of most of these security arrangements, there has long been a political debate over what sort of sovereignty over the territory is needed in order to make these Israeli security needs workable. Could Israeli forces be an extraterritorial presence in a region under Palestinian control? Would the land they are located on have to be annexed, or would some other type of arrangement need to be found? This debate has largely been a question of political judgment as to how far the concept of sovereignty can be bent, rather than a purely military-security dispute.

In comparing the West Bank situation to Sinai, close political-military coordination

between the Jordanians and their more powerful Arab neighbors could potentially situate major concentrations of Arab conventional armies close to the most sensitive parts of Israel. As Shomron has noted, "An Iraqi force in Jordan can reach in a very short time, an hour or two, the [Israeli] border and be within handgun range of Israeli villages in the Jordan Valley and Beit She'an Valley. How many kilometers would then separate them from Jerusalem?"[23]

While territorial concessions in the West Bank will only become relevant when final status talks begin, most likely in the third year of Palestinian autonomy, it is worth remembering that Israeli defense assets in this area are widely dispersed. Moreover, the critical highest points of its central hill ridge are located precisely in the same area as the densest concentrations of its Palestinian Arab population.

One should recall this separation of Israeli strategic requirements and the Palestinian Arab population confounded many of the fathers of Israeli security like Moshe Dayan, Israel's former defense minister and chief of staff. Those who have nonetheless offered proposals for separating the two, as did Yigal Allon, Israel's former foreign minister and the commander of its elite Palmach brigades in 1948, still called for retaining of at least a third of the West Bank for Israel. Whether Israel's maximum concessions can meet the minimum Palestinian Arab and Jordanian territorial demands remains doubtful, especially if the issue of East Jerusalem is taken into account.

The Case of the Golan Heights

In the Golan Heights, large concentrations of Syrian forces are already right on top of the Israel Defense Forces—one of the basic strategic reasons why the Israeli national consensus over the Golan is greater than over the West Bank, where the threat is less immediate. Furthermore, the Golan is even narrower than the West Bank, reaching a maximal width of 18 miles. Geostrategically, it is the mirror image of the West Bank hill ridge: it contains a steep rise facing westward toward the Sea of Galilee that reaches 3,000 feet in its northern sector, and Mount Hermon reaches a height of over 7000 feet. It was from these hills that Syrian artillery regularly fired on Israeli kibbutzim before 1967. Eastward, the Golan drops far more gradually toward the Syrian valley, permitting in some areas observation of Syrian military encampments as far back as the outskirts of Damascus.

The topography of the Golan significantly limits Syria's ability to move their massive armored forces into Israel: "Syria, with its large military force, leads the eastern front, but Syria has a military problem that is not simple," Shomron has explained. "It is situated facing a relatively narrow sector in the Golan Heights that is very easy for the defense. . . The fact of the matter is despite their achieving surprise, the Syrians did not succeed in achieving their aims during the Yom Kippur War."[24]

In order for a Golan arrangement to provide the same degree of warning time that was achieved in Sinai with Egypt, Syrian force concentrations would have to be pulled back a similar distance of 120 miles—which would place the Syrian army **behind** Damascus. Demilitarization of the 18 mile-wide Golan would never be a substitute for Israel's defensive presence there by itself since a

narrow strip of this sort could be re-militarized in less than an hour. There may be small parts of the Golan about which Israel could conceivably be flexible but, given the narrowness of the territorial margin, it is extremely doubtful whether Israel's maximal concessions could meet Syria's minimal conditions for an agreement.

Israel, therefore, will be very limited in terms of its territorial flexibility in both Golan and the West Bank if it is to assume a degree of risk similar to what it assumed in Sinai in 1979. Moreover, withdrawal to the 1967 borders, as currently demanded by the Arab states, would place Israel's water sources at risk—underground aquifers in the case of the West Bank and the sources of the Jordan River in the Golan Heights. In the successive Sinai withdrawals, Israel gave up oil fields and increased its dependence on imported petroleum. In this case, it will be endangering its water sources with clear memory that Syria attempted to divert the sources of the Jordan when it held the Golan in the early 1960s.

In sum, any politically meaningful Israeli territorial concessions on the West Bank and in the Golan will entail a **far higher level of risk** than was the case with the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. They will unquestionably deepen Israeli vulnerability, especially in relationship to its vital metropolitan centers.

The degree of this enhanced vulnerability will have to be carefully measured against the reduction of hostile intentions achieved through any given concession, and so the nature and quality of peace settlements will greatly affect the degree of territorial risk Israel can assume. Israel's considerations are sure to be influenced by whatever significant reductions in the offensive capabilities of its Arab neighbors stand to be achieved through the regional arms control talks that are to proceed in tandem with the bilateral peace process.

REDUCING THE PARAMETERS OF RISK: THE NEED FOR A STABLE CONTRACTUAL PEACE PROVEN OVER TIME

Underlying Israel's domestic security debate over the future of the Golan and the West Bank is the widely held conviction that if the Middle East were moving in a direction similar to that of the European Community, Israel could and would take greater territorial risks for peace. This observation is implicit in Israeli Chief of Staff Barak's statement that ". . . obviously, in the present situation, as long as deep, fundamental changes in the regional reality around us have not transpired, the Golan Heights remains a strategic asset of the highest order for the State of Israel."[25] Israeli politicians have observed that neither Canada nor the Netherlands need fortified defensible borders, but Israel does.

A fundamental issue of political judgment lies at the heart of this question: is it realistic to think that the Middle East region can make such a political leap within a meaningful time frame? The evolution of democratic institutions and political culture in the region may take another fifteen years or another fifty. In those countries where some parliamentary democracy has been encouraged, Jordan and Algiera, the result has been the empowerment of fundamentalist groups. Notwithstanding the end of the Cold War and superpower rivalry in the region,

the Gulf War showed that the stabilization of inter-Arab relations and borders might take a long period of time. Under these circumstances, it is untenable to expect Israel to believe that a new era in Arab-Israeli relations is already upon us while the Gulf states call for security arrangements against inter-Arab threats.

Only by first determining the degree of peace on offer can the Israeli body politic determine whether high-risk territorial concessions are even conceivable or actually destabilizing. If by peace nothing more is meant than the absence of war—with everything else remaining the same—then the risks to Israel's territorial vulnerability could well be prohibitive in the West Bank and the Golan Heights. Even an Egyptian-style cold peace may be inadequate in Syria's case, considering the increased vulnerability that Israel would assume by withdrawing from the Golan.

Certainly, shifts towards democratic government in neighboring countries, with real democratic institutions taking root, would probably be the best assurance for Israel that a Western European-style peace in the Middle East is conceivable. The call for democracy is not a rhetorical cheap shot at authoritarian Arab states. In the absence of democracy, it is inconceivable that the authoritarian regimes in the region can severely cut back the size of their standing armies which serve, among other things, to keep ruling elites in power.

Should territorial concessions be demanded a full range of political developments could reduce the risks to Israel by varying degrees. The most sensible test for the adoption of real peace in the upcoming negotiations will be Syria's willingness to move forward in multilateral areas of Middle East cooperation. Clearly, the disposition of Middle East water resources is a natural area of discussion between Israel and Syria, as well as regional arms control. But the adoption of common human rights standards, that was part of the Helsinki process which forced the beginnings of openness among the nations of the former Soviet bloc, would also be an important indicator of real change in the Syrian regime.

Moreover, the viability of any territorial arrangements will have to be tested over time. Commenting on the upcoming talks with Syria, Maj. Gen. (res.) Yossi Peled, the former head of the Israel Defense Forces Northern Command, was asked about the issue of withdrawal from the Golan Heights in the coming peace talks: "I think it would be a serious mistake to start the peace negotiations with Syria over the Golan Heights... I don't close any doors, but now the Syrians have to be told 'the Golan Heights is very sensitive', maybe in another 15 years. Why 15 years? Because [by then] peace will be established; regimes will not be overturned; peace will have been tested, and we'll see if it is real."[26]

Arms Control and Risk Reduction

The chief concern underscoring Israel's need for its current, topographically advantageous, positions is the danger of surprise attack by conventional armies. This being so, Israeli calculations would clearly be affected by reductions in the conventional military threat. One area that can be fruitfully addressed in early negotiations would be the establishment of mechanisms to reduce the chances of surprise attack. Much

has been already written on the problems of Middle East arms control, but the field of Confidence Building Measures, if less examined, is probably the most promising area where the lessons of Europe might be applied to the Arab-Israeli arena.[27]

In the long term, risk reduction for Israel in the Golan Heights can only be accomplished by substantial reductions in the size of Syria's standing army. If, as a partial replacement for any loss of territorial warning-time, Syria were to adopt ratios between its standing forces and reserves similar to the IDF, Israel would enjoy the warning time entailed by the Syrian reserve call-up .

To be sure, the likelihood that Syria would agree to alter its force structure is very remote—even in an arrangement for territorial compromise. A reduction in the Syrian standing army might help Israel to be more flexible, but it might also threaten the Syrian regime which depends on its army to keep order at home. Still, conventional reductions ought to be considered, at least to help establish the strategic context in which Israeli territorial concessions are being raised and in some cases demanded.

Where Israel and the Arab states do have considerable arms control experience is in the area of demilitarized zones. As already noted,in order to reduce the risks entailed by any Israeli territorial concessions, it will be necessary to explore whether Syrian demilitarization can extend well beyond the Golan area to the outskirts of Damascus. In 1974, Syrian President Hafiz al-Assad showed considerable sensitivity to the establishment of a second 10-kilometer limited forces zone because of its proximity to Damascus and its impingement on his sovereignty.[28] In the 1990s, limited forces zones would have to be significantly wider.

In any negotiation on such limited forces zones, it will be necessary to establish whether deep demilitarization is possible on an asymmetrical basis—that is with Israel not having to demilitarize its remaining positions in the Golan Heights and the Galilee, or having to do so only symbolically, as in the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty. Moreover, it will be necessary to investigate whether the intrusion on Syrian sovereignty created by limitations on Syrian force deployments near Damascus will ultimately be viewed by the Syrian regime as politically less costly than Israel's continuing control of the Golan Heights. The same calculation must be made regarding significant cutbacks in the size of the Syrian army.

It must be emphasized that there is no major responsible security figure in Israel who can envision territorial concessions on the Golan Heights without reductions in the Syrian standing army and deep demilitarization arrangements substantially eastward beyond the current Israeli-Syrian cease-fire line.

Reducing the Risks: The Limits of Israeli Choices with the United States

Israel will not only be making its choices in negotiations on the basis of political-military realities in the Middle East; throughout the Arab-Israeli peace process since 1973, the U.S. has always been a factor in the sum total of Israeli considerations. While the American factor is often thought of in terms of pressure and leverage, the fact is that the U.S. has more frequently supplied a set of positive incentives for Israeli decisionmakers

that serve to balance the risks of regional flexibility.

However, the recent U.S.-Israel crisis over $10 billion in loan guarantees, as well as other changes occurring in the post-Cold War world raise hard questions over whether the past incentive system will continue to apply in the peace process ahead.

Since 1967, Israel has enjoyed three essential security margins over which the U.S. has exercised considerable influence. First, there has been Israel's territorial margin, which Washington did not question as long as Arab states refused to come to the peace table. Second, Israel has had its own non-conventional security margin, created by its nuclear ambiguity and tolerated by past administrations. Last, Israel has maintained a qualitative edge in conventional weaponry through yearly security assistance. Not only is the territorial security margin being placed in question in the current Arab-Israeli peace process, but the other two margins—a tacit unconventional capability and qualitative conventional edge—are likely to be called into question as well.

In looking at how to protect its security in the unsettled Middle East, Israel will have to evaluate carefully what optimal mix of these various security margins is conceivable, given the changing circumstances of U.S. policy. For example, those who were willing to take risks with Israel's territorial margins in the past usually looked to enhancing the other two margins of security. It has therefore been suggested by some scholars in Israel that in exchange for territory, Israel would alter its position of nuclear ambiguity and instead adopt an overt posture of nuclear deterrence.

Over much of the last forty years, when American non-proliferation policy was subsumed to Cold War considerations, such a security option was perhaps acceptable to the United States. But in a period when proliferation concerns have risen to the top of the U.S. arms control agenda, the emergence of another explicit nuclear power would be a far more serious matter. Indeed, President Bush's Middle East arms control initiative contains a very clear-cut dedication to nuclear arms control, including the traditional American dedication to the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, along with reference to the need for control over the production of weapons-grade uranium. With Arab states linking curbs on their chemical arsenals to curtailments in Israel's purported nuclear capability, Israel's inclusion in any regional non-conventional arms control process will be an increasing priority for the administration.

A similar dilemma exists in the area of U.S. security assistance. Every Israeli territorial withdrawal since 1974 has been accompanied by dramatic increases in U.S. aid to Israel. With the signing of the second Sinai disengagement agreement on September 1, 1975, for example, the U.S. undertook "to make every effort to be fully responsive, within the limits of its resources and Congressional authorization and appropriation, on an **ongoing and long term basis** to Israel's military equipment and other defense requirements, to its energy requirements and to its economic needs."(emphasis added)

These American side payments to Israel at each stage of the peace process included specific reference to the supply of conventional military equipment that helped Israel preserve a qualitative edge against its adver-

saries. The memorandum that was eventually prepared by Washington in the framework of the Sinai II agreement also included a separate set of assurances in which the U.S. stated its resolve "to continue to maintain Israel's defensive strength through the supply of advanced types of equipment, such as F-16 aircraft."

At the signing of the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance again undertook in a memorandum of agreement to endeavor "to be responsive to military and economic assistance requirements of Israel." At the same time, Secretary of Defense Harold Brown prepared a side letter stating that "the United States is prepared to supply substantial quantities of additional military equipment to Israel for the modernization of the Israel Defense Forces." Thus, even as Israeli leaders assumed some risk by increasing their territorial vulnerability, the U.S. offered compensation in terms of advanced weaponry. A reduction in one security margin was made up for by increasing reliance on another.

Until recently there was reason to believe that should Israel make the next round of territorial concessions in the Golan and the West Bank, American aid would be made available. This would be made necessary because the partial replacement of territorial assets by high technology alternatives—from advanced- warning aircraft to replaceable satellite systems—would not only cost an initial lump sum, but might actually increase yearly Israeli defense spending.

This increase in defense spending as a result of territorial concession is connected with the problem of obtaining a "peace dividend" in the Arab-Israeli balance. As long as the Middle East remains unstable and arms sales continue to America's Arab allies, Israel will have to keep modernizing its armed forces. The record of Israel's experience with Egypt was that peace was followed by increases, rather than decreases, in U.S. arms transfers.

Could Israel really expect higher levels of U.S. assistance to be sustained over the long term? Can open-ended commitments of this sort really last, especially if the U.S. turns inward with its increasing domestic difficulties and assumes even a limited isolationist posture? While there are no easy answers to these questions, it is clear that the impact of any American input on Israeli choices might well play a different role in the peace process of the 1990s that it did in the 1970s.

Because the U.S. has such a substantial role in assisting Israel with its security, it is necessary for both countries to critically examine their long-term goals in entering the process ahead. Israel, due to the precarious geo-strategic reality with which it must cope, would probably prefer to have as much security as it can obtain in each dimension outlined above. But the U.S. will not let Israel "have it all" and instead will expect the Israeli government to make hard choices and live with a "new security mix."

This presents hard dilemmas for both the U.S. and Israel. Is it better to obtain a territorial solution on one front of the conflict or to begin to reduce Israel's position in the foreign aid budget? Would it be more important to get Israel on board a regional arms control process that deals with its purported nuclear deterrent or to obtain territorial concessions that might require Israel to revise its approach to nuclear deterrence? What if the Bush arms control initiative succeeds

in removing the very weapons—like ballistic missiles—that, from the American perspective, make territory and geography obsolete?

There are no easy solutions to these policy questions. What they indicate however is that changes in the policy priorities of the post-Cold War foreign policy of the United States narrow many options in the peace process. Hard choices must be made. And these choices must be based on a realistic assessment of the possible flexibility of the parties. Israel will not increase its vulnerability if the peace being offered leaves it less secure. Specifically, unless Syria substantially cuts back and restructures its armed forces then there is little Israel can do in the territorial sphere.

Barring rapid structural change in Arab regimes, if peace negotiations indicate that the Middle East remains the exception to the new world order, then Israel will have to carefully preserve its security margins accordingly. The problem for negotiators is that it is extremely difficult to assess such trends under conditions of such radical uncertainty about the medium and long term.

The U.S. and Israel will need to have an honest dialogue under these circumstances and cannot afford the kind of bickering that has characterized the relationship in the period leading to negotiations. The task of American diplomacy will not be to maneuver tactical pressures for short-term successes. Rather, the task of the U.S. will be to utilize its experience in Europe to show the parties in the Middle East that it is possible to transform their region as well.

The U.S., as an honest broker, can facilitate Arab-Israeli negotiations with new ideas, letting the parties freely come forth with the sorts of tradeoffs that are necessary to make them work. It can promote a Middle East where the military balance is maintained at a lower level of armament. But the U.S. and Israel will also have to take a long view of where they want to take their relationship over the next decade: either towards increasing Israeli reliance on American help and intervention or towards an Israel standing at peace in a largely self-contained and stable Middle East.

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NOTES

1. *New York Times*, July 11, 1991.

2. *Ma'ariv*, September 29, 1991.

3. Ironically, while Israel is expected to be more relaxed about its security concerns from the east, considerable attention has been given in the U.S. to the need for extensive "security arrangements" in the Persian Gulf to offer Gulf states protection in the event of an Iraqi recovery.

4. *New York Times*, March 7, 1991. Address by the President of the United States at the Simon Wiesenthal Center, National Tribute Dinner, June 16, 1991, Federal News Service.

5. ABC, "This Week with David Brinkley," Interview with National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft, Sunday, April 14, 1991, Federal News Service, Washington, D.C.

6. Jerusalem Post, March 22, 1991.

7. International Institute for Strategic Studies latest report cited in *Yediot Aharonot*, October 29, 1991.

8. Chaim Herzog, *The War of Atonement*, (Jerusalem: Steimatzsky, 1975), p. 60.

9. See interview with Major General (res.) Israel Tal, *Ma'ariv*, April 4, 1991.

10. "Israel in the Gulf War" a *Ma'ariv* Report, March 29, 1991, p. 34.

11. Lt. General (res.) Dan Shomron, "Personal Report on the Gulf War," in *Yediot Aharonot*, September 8, 1991.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. *Ha'aretz*, March 21, 1991.

15. *Ma'ariv*, September 6, 1991.

16. Alternatively, the U.S. might provide the entire region with a stabilizing security presence of its own—like SDI-GPALS space-based missile interception satellites—enhancing national defense of its allies against missile threats beyond the capabilities of local ground-based ATBM forces. But beyond these sorts of additions to local capabilities, there are few other lessons from the Patriot deployment experience.

17. Colonel Trevor N. Dupuy, *Elusive Victory: The Arab-Israeli Wars, 1947-1974*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), pp. 333, 337.

18. Ze'ev Eitan, "The Iraqi Threat to Israel after the Gulf War" in Jaffe Center for Strategic Studies Report, *The War in the Gulf: Implications for Israel* (Hebrew edition), (Tel Aviv: Papyrus Publishers, 1991), p. 138.

20. Lt. General (res.) Dan Shomron, "Personal Report on the Gulf War," *Yediot Aharonot*, September 8, 1991, pp. 4, 27.

21. Ibid.

22. For a detailed discussion of different Israeli conceptions of West Bank security arrangements, see Dore Gold, *Israel and the Gulf Crisis: Changing Security Requirements on the Eastern Front*, Policy Focus No. 15, (Washington D.C.: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1990).

23. Shomron, *op. cit.*

24. Ibid.

25. *Yediot Aharonot*, September 29, 1991.

26. *Hadashot*, September 17, 1991.

27. See Report of the Washington Institute's Strategic Study Group *After The Storm: Challenges for America's Middle East Policy*, (Washington D.C.: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1991); Geoffrey Kemp, *The Control of the Middle East Arms Race*, (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1991).

28. Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, (Boston: Little Brown, 1982), pp. 1089, 1099.

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