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Vox Populi:
Trends in Israeli Public Opinion on National Security 2004-2009

Memorandum **106**

iNSS

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יהודה בן מאיר ואולנה בגנו־מולדבסקי

דעת קהל בישראל בסוגיות הביטחון הלאומי 2009-2004: מגמות מרכזיות

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Courtesy: Image Bank / Getty Images

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Executive Summary

Most Israelis do not believe that Iran would attack Israel with nuclear weapons, but at the same time, a majority support an Israeli attack against Iranian nuclear sites if Israel learns that Iran has military nuclear capabilities. In the event of a nuclear Iran, Israelis are evenly divided between putting the major emphasis on strengthening Israel's deterrent capability and putting the major emphasis on strengthening Israel's active defense capabilities, such as the Arrow anti-missile defense system. Notwithstanding the urgency of the Iranian threat – nuclear weapons in the hands of Iran are viewed as the most serious threat facing Israel – on the individual level, Israelis do not seem consumed by the Iranian nuclear threat. When asked how their personal lives might be affected by Iran acquiring nuclear weapons, an overwhelming majority stated that their lives would not change.

These are among the primary findings of the 2009 survey of the National Security and Public Opinion Project of the Institute for National Security Studies, conducted during the first three weeks of May 2009. The memorandum presents the results of this Israeli public opinion survey and compares the data with findings from previous surveys, focusing on data since 2004 and thereby giving a picture of key trends in Israeli public opinion over a five year period.

On the major national security questions, the findings demonstrate impressive consistency and show that as in prior years, the Israeli center – sometimes known as the silent majority – is a solid bloc, encompassing half of the Jewish population in Israel. The center remains strong, with the extreme right and extreme left together comprising less than a quarter of the population. However, the center is not the same center as it was in previous years. Rather, there was a definite shift to the right from 2006 to 2009, as over the three year period individuals moved from the left to the

center and from the center to the right. On specific issues in particular, the trend to more hawkish opinions is quite pronounced.

Still, in the five year period of 2004-2009 there was a high degree of consistency in the attitudes regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its possible solutions. A majority of Israelis continue to support the establishment of a Palestinian state and the "two states for two peoples" solution to the conflict. In addition, an overwhelming majority of the public rejects the idea of halting the peace process, even though people feel little optimism about prospects for reaching an agreement with a suitable partner. The majority of the Israeli public is disenchanted with the Palestinians as political partners but simultaneously does not in the long run see a viable alternative to a political solution. Most of the Israeli public favors the evacuation of some settlements in the West Bank, and there is massive support for an "evacuation-compensation law." In sharp contrast, however, the majority of the Israeli public strongly opposes a withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Among the other major findings of the survey:

- In the realm of basic political values, demography continues to supersede geography. The ideal of "Greater Israel" ranks far below the values of a Jewish majority and a state of peace as leading Israeli values.
- Most Israelis are skeptical of any possible reconciliation with Hamas, but at the same time are opposed to the reoccupation of Gaza.
- Confidence in the political echelon rose substantially in 2009 over 2007, most likely a reflection of the differences in public mood in the aftermaths of Operation Cast Lead and the Second Lebanon War.
- Concern about possible civil strife as a result of a political settlement with the Palestinians involving territorial withdrawal and evacuation of settlements increased in 2009, though still significantly lower than just before the 2005 disengagement from Gaza.
- The public's assessment of the overall state of the country rose dramatically since the previous survey. Individual assessments of respondents' personal states continue to exceed their assessment of the state of the country.
- Attitudes by Israeli Jews toward the Arab citizens of Israel have become more negative, intensifying a trend evident in recent years.

- A majority continue to view refusal by a soldier to obey an order to evacuate settlements as illegitimate, although this majority decreased substantially from the previous survey.

One consistent conclusion from the studies conducted over the years is the predominant effect of religious identification on one's political opinions. Likewise in the 2009 survey, of all the demographic factors examined (gender, age, country of origin, education, and socio-economic status), the factor with the strongest influence on the attitudes and opinions of the respondents is self-definition of religious identity. The ultra-Orthodox and the religious are the most hawkish, the secular population has the most moderate positions, and the traditionalists are in the middle. This split between the religious and secular communities is the new demarcation line that replaces the decades-old ethnic division between Ashkenazim and Sephardim.

The data of 2009 confirms that basic attitudes and opinions did not shift dramatically during the five year period, although there were some significant changes on a number of specific issues. In general, there remains a good deal of flexibility in Israeli public opinion, which under certain circumstances – especially strong and charismatic political leadership or some dramatic event – allows considerable room for change.

Introduction

National security continues to dominate the Israeli political reality. Over the past four years, Israel has fought two small scale wars, one on the northern front and one on the southern front. Although as a result of those wars Israel has enjoyed an almost unprecedented period of quiet, the threats from Hizbollah in the north and Hamas in the south remain. The threat from Iran looms large on the horizon. Above all, the Israeli-Palestinian and Arab-Israeli conflicts figure as irresolute as ever. Perhaps predictably, then, and the economic crisis of recent years notwithstanding, issues of national security persist in being the primary concern of the Israeli public.

Public opinion on national security issues will inevitably have a substantial impact on the decisions of any Israeli government. As in any parliamentary democracy, government policy in Israel is determined to a large degree by coalition and internal party considerations. Nevertheless, policies and decisions of any Israeli government on key national security issues are to a large degree constrained by the pressures of public opinion. Indeed, too often those dealing with national security issues and specifically with the Israeli-Palestinian and Arab-Israeli conflicts fail to give sufficient weight to Israeli public opinion. Israel is a vibrant democracy with a relatively highly informed body politic served by an independent and active media. As such, no Israeli government can ignore the exigencies of public opinion, certainly when national security decisions are often seen to have an almost existential nature. True, national leaders and governments can influence, shape, and at times even radically change public opinion. But there are limits to the ability of governments to shape public opinion and forge a majority in support of their policies. And without such support it is very difficult, if not impossible, for any government to implement key and far reaching national security decisions.

The National Security and Public Opinion Project (NSPOP) was established to address issues related to Israeli public opinion, its development over time, and its policy implications. The aim of the NSPOP is to measure, describe, and analyze Israeli public opinion on an ongoing basis, and in particular the attitudes, perceptions, and opinions of the Jewish population in Israel on all issues of national security. From June 1985 until May 2009, twenty-three representative surveys of the adult Jewish population of Israel were conducted. Each survey included between 600 and 1200 respondents. All the interviews were administered on a face to face basis at the home of the respondents.

The Israeli body politic is composed of Jews and Arabs. The breakdown between the two groups for the overall Israeli population is approximately 79 percent Jewish and 21 percent Arab. However, due to the higher birthrate among the Arabs (most of whom are Muslims), when speaking of the "Israeli voting age population," i.e., those eighteen years old and above, the breakdown for the two groups is approximately 83 percent Jewish and 17 percent Arab. From its inception, the NSPOP has surveyed the Jewish population of Israel. There was a twofold rationale behind this methodological choice. Given Israel's history and character, decision makers are more sensitive and more influenced by trends in Jewish public opinion. If public opinion in the Arab sector on key national security issues differs – in many instances even radically – from Israeli Jewish public opinion, and there are indications that this is the case, then averaging in the Arab data with the Jewish data confuses the true picture and in some instances may be no more than a statistical artifact. At the same time, since the Jewish population is predominant, overall Israeli public opinion on the vast majority of issues does not vary from that of the Jewish population by more than 5 percent. Thus, when this study refers to "Israeli public opinion" or "Israelis," it refers to the public opinion of the Jewish community in Israel, although in most instances it also largely reflects Israeli public opinion overall.

The NSPOP longitudinal data is gathered on the basis of a questionnaire developed specifically for the project. The questionnaire comprises over 100 questions on a wide range of national security issues. Most questions have remained unchanged throughout the years; they constitute the core of the survey and allow valid comparisons over time. The second set of

survey items is designed to reflect public opinion on foremost national security events that may vary from year to year. Questions related to the Iranian nuclear program, for example, constituted a particular issue for 2009. Topics covered in the questionnaires include, inter alia: perceptions regarding the Israeli-Palestinian and Arab-Israeli conflict; opinions on possible solutions dealing with the core issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: territories, settlements, refugees, and Jerusalem; the national mood, including feelings of security and insecurity, threat perception, and overall optimism and pessimism; perceptions of the Iranian nuclear threat; attitudes regarding the Arab minority in Israel, the IDF, and the rule of law; and key national values. Demographic indicators include gender, age, country of origin, education, socio-economic status, level of religious identification, and military service.

Contributing to the value of the survey as an insightful measurement over time is that the questionnaire has retained the core questions over the years. The original intent was to use the same questionnaire from year to year, maintaining the exact wording of most of the items, thus enabling the analyst to chart and plot developments and changes in Israeli public opinion over time. As the years progressed, however, some questions became outdated and new issues arose. In some cases, the exact wording of certain items had to be modified. Nonetheless, the questionnaire includes numerous questions that have appeared for over two decades. As a result, over a twenty-five year period the NSPOP has amassed a reservoir of critical data that paints the changing face of Israeli public opinion on vital national security issues.

This study presents trends in Israeli public opinion, and compares the data from the most recent survey, conducted during the first three weeks of May 2009, with data from previous surveys, focusing mainly on years 2004-2007, thus giving a picture of key trends in Israeli public opinion over this five year period. The study begins with the presentation of main findings related to public opinion of the Israeli Jewish population. The second chapter charts the profile of the Israeli body politic. The third chapter presents an analysis of key factors in the formation of Israeli public opinion, specifically one's value system and religious identification. The next two chapters focus on the description of threats felt by the Israeli Jewish public and devote particular attention to the threat of a nuclear Iran.

The following chapter accounts for attitudes related to various aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Chapter seven widens the scope of the discussion and depicts respondents' perceptions of the Arab- Israeli conflict in general. The last chapter is devoted to domestic issues and in particular, Jewish-Arab relations and ideological tensions within the Jewish public. The monograph concludes with a summary of the survey's results and an assessment of both the policy implications of these results and potential developments in Israeli Jewish public opinion.

Chapter 1

Main Findings

Observers of the Israeli scene often claim there has been a shift to the right in Israeli public opinion over the last two or three years. This perception is ostensibly supported by the results of the general elections in February 2009, which saw the rise of a right wing government. The findings of the May 2009 survey indeed show a shift to the right compared to the results of 2007, but definitely not one of dramatic proportions. The shift is manifested primarily by a substantive decrease in support for extreme left positions. The overall picture is one of consistency rather than change, although there is a shift of a few percentage points to the right on a number of issues.

In fact, throughout the years the Israeli center – sometimes known as the silent majority – has remained strong and steady. Half of the Jewish population in Israel continues to belong to the center, even though the center is not the same center as it was in previous years. There is a shift of approximately 8 percent from the left to the center and from the center to the right.

Shifts within the right and left groups occurred, albeit in opposite directions. Within the right, there has been a definite shift from the "moderate right" to the "extreme right," while on the left, there has been significant movement over the past three years from the "extreme left," which in 2009 dropped to less than 4 percent, to the "moderate left" group. The overall trajectory of Israeli public opinion has moved from a dovish trend, manifest over many years, to a hawkish trend.

The left-right political dichotomy is a common tool to classify political stances along a one-dimensional political spectrum. The perspective of "left" versus "right" has a broad, dialectical interpretation that covers political, social, security, economic, and cultural issues. Similar to the left-

right terminology, the dove-hawk division is also of a dialectical nature. In this memorandum, left and right are defined exclusively on the basis of positions on key national security issues, primarily the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. "Doves" are defined as respondents who in contrast to "hawks" manifest a greater readiness for political compromise and more substantial concessions in pursuit of a resolution to conflicts and are less willing to use military power.

One consistent conclusion from the studies conducted over the years is the predominant effect of religious identification on one's political opinions. Likewise in the 2009 survey, of all the demographic factors examined (gender, age, country of origin, education, and socio-economic status), the factor with the strongest influence on the attitudes and opinions of the respondents was self-definition of religious identity. The ultra-Orthodox and the religious were the most hawkish, the secular population had the most moderate positions, and the traditionalists were in the middle.

The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Support for the establishment of a Palestinian state within the context of a permanent agreement was 53 percent, versus 55 percent in 2007, and support for the "two states for two peoples" solution was 64 percent, versus 63 percent in 2007 (the study was conducted prior to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's June 2009 speech where he announced his qualified support for a Palestinian state). The results of both 2007 and 2009 are lower than the findings of 2006 regarding both items – 61 percent and 70 percent, respectively.

The shift to the right, visible particularly since 2006, is most probably related to events of the last few years, namely the Second Lebanon War, the perceived failure of the disengagement from Gaza culminating in the Hamas takeover, and Operation Cast Lead. These events evidently have left their unmistakable imprint on Israeli public opinion. It may also be a retort to a perceived increasing lack of impartiality transmitted by the international community in pro-Palestinian international media coverage; extensive support for anti-Israeli initiatives, and sentiments such as those subsequently expressed in the Goldstone report.

At the same time, in the five year period of 2004-2009 there has been a high degree of consistency in the basic opinions of the adult Jewish

population in Israel regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and possible solutions. The data confirms that basic attitudes and opinions did not shift dramatically during this period, although there were some significant changes on a number of specific issues. And in general, there remains a good deal of flexibility in Israeli public opinion, which under certain circumstances – especially strong and charismatic political leadership or some dramatic event – allows considerable room for change.

Some of the recently charted changes can most probably be traced to Israel's success in the Gaza operation. Thus while only 23 percent of the public believed in 2007 that Israel won the Second Lebanon War (versus 26 percent who saw Hizbollah as the victor and 51 percent who believed that neither side won), in 2009, 64 percent believed that Israel won the war in Gaza and only 6 percent viewed Hamas as the victor, with 32 percent claiming that neither side won. A dramatic shift was also evident with regard to confidence in the political echelon. In the 2007 study, following the Second Lebanon War, only 34 percent stated that they rely on the government to "make the right decisions on questions of national security"; in 2009 the percentage doubled to 65 percent. Confidence in the ability of the IDF to defend Israel, however, remained relatively unchanged – 83 percent in 2007 and 80 percent in 2009. Nevertheless, the subjective perception of the effects of both wars on one's confidence in the IDF was dramatically different. In the aftermath of the Second Lebanon War, 46 percent indicated that their confidence in the IDF had decreased, 46 percent said that it had not changed, and only 8 percent reported an increase in confidence. When asked in the current study whether their confidence in the IDF had changed as a result of Operation Cast Lead, 48 percent indicated it increased, 48 percent indicated that it had not changed, and only 4 percent said it decreased.

Overall, Israelis remain hawkish on security but dovish on political issues, manifesting a readiness for territorial compromise and concessions in the context of a permanent settlement and an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. At the same time, relative to 2007, there was a shift to the right on a number of issues, in the range of 2 to 11 percentage points, but on most issues moderate positions still enjoyed majority support, even if somewhat reduced.

Moreover, despite the aforementioned shift to the right and although they are quite pessimistic regarding the Palestinian partner, Israelis remain committed to seek a solution to the conflict. Support for halting the peace process has been persistently low. In 2007, 22 percent agreed with the proposition that the peace process should be suspended, versus 62 percent who disagreed (16 percent were in the middle of a 1-7 scale). The comparable numbers for 2009 were 19 percent, 59 percent, and 22 percent. On the other hand, in both 2007 and 2009 only 31 percent believed in the possibility of reaching a peace agreement with the Palestinians. Support for the Saudi initiative, even in principle, was quite limited in the past and decreased even further in 2009. In 2007, 27 percent supported a positive Israeli response to the initiative, versus 49 percent who were opposed (24 percent were in the middle); in 2009 only 19 percent supported a positive Israeli response versus 60 percent who opposed it (21 percent were in the middle).

Similarly, Israelis remain quite pessimistic about Hamas. When asked in 2007 whether there was any chance that Hamas would choose the course of the PLO and recognize Israel, 44 percent responded "no chance," and 46 percent said "very little chance." Only 8 percent said that there was "a fairly good chance," and 2 percent responded "a very good chance." The results were almost identical in 2009 – the comparable numbers were, respectively, 44, 45, 7, and 4 percent. Only 14 percent supported negotiating with Hamas, versus 74 percent who were against (12 percent were in the middle). At the same time, Israelis have not completely given up on a political solution. On the contrary, those agreeing with the statement that "there is no political solution to the conflict" dropped from one third in 2004-2007 to a mere one quarter in 2009 – 58 percent disagreed with the statement and 17 percent were in the middle. Forty-nine percent in 2006, 44 percent in 2007, and 45 percent in 2009 believed that "most Palestinians" want peace.

The Second Lebanon War and the intensification of the Qassam rocket attacks against Israeli towns and cities from the Gaza Strip after the disengagement – culminating with the kidnapping of Gilad Shalit by Hamas and the killing of two other soldiers on June 25, 2006 and Operation Cast Lead – brought home to many Israelis the dangers and drawbacks inherent in unilateral withdrawals. The dramatic effect of these events along with

the lack of sympathy in the international political community emerges clearly in the data. In 2004, 56 percent of the Jewish population supported Ariel Sharon's disengagement plan in Gaza and northern Samaria. In the days just prior to the actual implementation of the disengagement (August 2005) and half a year later (March 2006) the Jewish public was evenly split (50 percent – 50 percent) with regard to the plan. When asked in March 2007 as to their post factum opinion of the disengagement, only 36 percent supported the disengagement plan versus close to two thirds (64 percent) who opposed it. The comparable numbers in 2009 were a mere 30 percent supporting the disengagement plan versus 70 percent who opposed it. It is clear that a majority of the Israeli public views the disengagement from Gaza as a failure, and this public climate is likely to influence the decisions and actions of the Israeli government in the future.

Political Values
In the realm of basic political values, demography continues to supersede geography. Respondents were asked to rank four key values in order of importance: a country with a Jewish majority; Greater Israel; a democratic country; and a state of peace.

For most of the past decade, the value ranked as the most important has been a Jewish majority. In 2007, 50 percent listed it as the most important value, versus only 9 percent who chose Greater Israel as the preeminent value. The corresponding numbers for 2009 are 38 percent and 10 percent. The data reflects a drop in the importance of a Jewish majority; a state of peace is ranked as equally important: 37 percent. Nevertheless, each of these values is ranked as the most important value by four times the number of respondents ranking the value of Greater Israel as the most important. When looking at those choosing each value as "the most important" or "the second most important" value, the results are equally impressive. In 2009, 72 percent named a Jewish majority as one of their two leading values, versus 71 percent in 2007, while 36 percent and 29 percent, respectively, named Greater Israel as a leading value. Democracy has been losing public support in the last five years. In 2009, 35 percent of the population opted for democracy as their most or the second most important value; in contrast in 2005, 60 percent of respondents chose democracy as their most or the second most important value. The opposite trend was recorded for

the values of a Jewish majority and Greater Israel. Both values became more prevalent, although in 2009 demography was still chosen 2 to 1 over geography.

The prioritization of demography over geography is manifest in the readiness to evacuate certain settlements in the West Bank in the context of a permanent agreement. Support for removal of all the settlements, including the large settlement blocs, was 14 percent in 2007 and 15 percent in 2009. However, 45 percent in 2007 and 43 percent in 2009 supported the removal of the small and isolated settlements. Taken together, 59 percent in 2007 and 58 percent in 2009 were ready to evacuate certain settlements in the West Bank in the context of a permanent settlement. The results are remarkably consistent. Respondents were also asked as to their support for dismantling settlements in the context of "a partial agreement." In this case willingness to evacuate certain settlements dropped to 52 percent, this due almost completely to a drop of 5 percentage points (from 15 percent to 10 percent) in those supporting the removal of all the settlements. Interestingly, those supporting – under certain conditions – an Israeli declaration that the security fence is Israel's permanent eastern border and a relocation of all Israelis residing east of the fence to Israel dropped from 49 percent in 2007 to 43 percent in 2009.

Iran, External Threats, and the National Mood

Given the growing centrality of the Iranian nuclear challenge in Israeli national security discourse, a number of questions were introduced in the current study regarding this issue. Careful analysis of the data gives a clear picture of the Israeli public stance on the Iranian nuclear threat. Seventy-nine percent of Israeli Jews do not believe that Iran would attack Israel with nuclear weapons. This position is probably influenced by the fact that 90 percent of the public believes that Israel has nuclear weapons (60 percent are positive of this). At the same time, a majority of Israelis (59 percent) support an Israeli attack against Iranian nuclear sites if Israel should learn that Iran has nuclear weapons.

The vast majority (80 percent) of Israelis support the government policy of ambiguity regarding Israel's nuclear capability. There is little support (13 percent) for creating a Middle East nuclear-free zone, even if Iran already acquired a nuclear capability. In the event of a nuclear Iran, Israelis

are evenly divided between those who favor putting the major emphasis on strengthening Israel's deterrent capability (39 percent) versus those who would put the major emphasis on strengthening Israel's active defense capabilities, such as the Arrow anti-missile defense system (42 percent); 18 percent favored building nuclear shelters. American support is regarded as a central component in Israel's response to the Iranian nuclear threat: 42 percent would want an American nuclear umbrella or defense treaty.

On the personal level, Israelis do not seem consumed by the Iranian nuclear threat. When asked how their personal lives might be affected by Iran acquiring nuclear weapons, 80 percent stated that their lives would not change. Nine percent said they would move to another community, 8 percent would consider moving to another country, and only 3 percent stated they would definitely emigrate from Israel. Results from hypothetical questions should be taken with a grain of salt, yet the data nevertheless appears to signify a high degree of steadfastness among the Israeli population.

The threat perception of Israelis remained essentially unchanged from 2007 – a mean score of 5.4, on a 1-7 point scale, compared (for the same items) with a mean score of 5.3 in 2007, although this is somewhat higher than the identical average threat score for the years 2004-2006 – 4.9. Nuclear weapons in the hands of Iran were viewed as the most serious threat facing Israel: 6.2 on the 1-7 point scale, the same as in 2007. Next in line were chemical and biological weapons in the hands of an enemy state (5.9) and renewal of terrorism on a large scale (5.7). Close behind these external threats were two internal threats, namely a deep socio-economic crisis in Israel (5.6) and corruption in the public system (5.4). Least threatening were the establishment of a Palestinian state (4.5) and return of territories for peace (4.4).

A significant majority of the Jewish public remains confident that Israel can cope successfully with any conceivable threat. The percentage ranged from 67 percent with regard to "potential for an enemy state to attack Israel with nuclear weapons" to 97 percent regarding "war launched by Syria against Israel." In 2007, 76 percent saw a high or medium chance of an outbreak of a war between Israel and an Arab country or Hizbollah in the next three years, up from 37 percent in 2006 (prior to the Second Lebanon War) and 39 percent in 2005. In 2009, the percentage rose to 88 percent, probably as a result of the war in Gaza earlier in the year.

As in previous studies, there is a distinct difference between a respondent's assessments of the overall state of the country and his/her own personal condition, with the perception of the latter remaining much higher. At the same time, however, there was a dramatic improvement in the assessment of the overall state of the country from the national security perspective, up from 4.3 (all measures are on a 1-9 point scale) in 2007 to 5.2 in 2009 – by far the highest rating over the past five years (the previous high was 4.8 in 2006 – prior to the Second Lebanon War) and the first positive one during this period. Ratings as to one's personal state also rose, though less dramatically – up from 5.9 in 2007 to 6.2 in 2009, also the highest reading in the past five years. The picture is similar regarding optimism. Assessment of the state of the country's national security "five years hence" increased from 5.2 in 2007 to 5.6 in 2009, once again the highest reading since 2004. Israelis remain quite optimistic assessing their personal state "five years hence" with slight changes over the past five years – 6.6 in 2004 and 2005, 6.9 in 2006 and 2007, and 6.7 in 2009.

Current Political Issues

A number of topics of current interest were examined. When asked about the unauthorized outposts, 31 percent responded that they should be dismantled. Twenty-six percent said that the government should try to reach an agreement with the settlers regarding dismantlement of the outposts but in the absence of such agreement they should be dismantled by force, 18 percent stated that they should be dismantled only by agreement with the settlers, and 25 percent favored leaving the outposts alone (16 percent of those supported the legalization of the outposts). Clearly, the unauthorized outposts do not enjoy substantive public support and the government would not face serious public disapproval should it decide to remove them. On a related topic, respondents were asked whether settlements should be expanded even at the expense of a confrontation with the United States. Forty-two percent were opposed to any settlement expansion, 41 percent favored settlement expansion but not if it would lead to a confrontation with the United States, and 17 percent supported settlement expansion regardless of the American position. Thus the Israeli public is more or less evenly divided on basic attitudes towards the settlements. Moreover, over three quarters (77 percent) of the respondents supported an "evacuation-

compensation law" whereby residents of the territories who wanted to leave voluntarily would receive full compensation for their property.

Another current issue surveyed in 2009 deals with the situation in Gaza and the aftermath of Operation Cast Lead. When asked about the threat from Hamas, 34 percent were in favor of toppling the Hamas regime even if it entailed the conquest of the entire Gaza Strip, 38 percent were in favor of deterring Hamas through military action in Gaza (bombing Hamas targets and targeted killings of Hamas leaders), 10 percent supported continuation of the blockade, and 18 percent supported some form of engagement with Hamas. It is clear that two thirds of Israelis are against the reoccupation of Gaza.

In the context of Gilad Shalit's ongoing captivity, respondents were asked about Israel's policy if in the future an IDF soldier were to be abducted by a terrorist organization like Hamas. Seventeen percent were against any negotiations with a terrorist organization, 26 percent supported negotiating the soldier's release but were against the idea that Israel should release terrorists "with blood on their hands" (those responsible for killing Israelis) in exchange for the soldier, 19 percent supported the "reasonable" release of terrorists "with blood on their hands" but not especially dangerous terrorists, while 38 percent were in favor "of paying any price" in order to bring home an abducted soldier. Interestingly, public opinion regarding the Shalit issue has shown extensive fluctuation over time and seems particularly influenced by specific circumstances existing when the question was posed. Nevertheless, on the basis of the data, it appears that the positions of both the Olmert and the Netanyahu governments on this issue enjoy the support of a majority of the Israeli public.

Respondents were also asked how the IDF should act when engaged in combat in heavily civilian populated areas such as Gaza. The data showed that the vast majority of the Jewish population agreed that soldiers' lives are paramount; at the same time half of the respondents manifested a concern about civilian casualties. Forty-nine percent said that everything must be done to limit the loss of soldiers' lives, 42 percent said that it is permissible to harm civilians in order to save lives of soldiers but the harm to civilians should be limited as much as possible, and 9 percent said that harm to civilians must be prevented at all costs.

A survey of current opinion toward a prospective withdrawal from the Golan Heights showed that the majority of Israeli public strongly opposes this scenario. The results are dramatically clear and leave little room for doubt. Respondents were asked if they would agree to Israel's withdrawal in the context of a peace treaty with Syria that would include full diplomatic and economic relations with Israel, demilitarization of the Golan, dissolution of the alliance with Iran, expulsion of the terrorist organizations from Syria, and halted support for Hizbollah. Even under these far reaching conditions, only 3 percent of the Jewish population supported the return to Syria of the entire Golan Heights, another 6 percent supported the return of the Golan on condition that the border would be distanced from the shores of the Kinneret (Sea of Galilee), and 11 percent supported the return of parts of the Golan. Respondents ready to consider some form of a withdrawal thus together constituted 20 percent, while 60 percent opposed any withdrawal from the Golan. The remaining 20 percent were willing to return the Golan to Syrian sovereignty on condition that the Israeli settlements remain on the Golan (such as by granting Israel a 100 year lease on the settlements land). Nothing is irreversible in public opinion, but any Israeli government hoping to sign a peace treaty with Syria on Bashar al-Asad's terms would face a difficult task in trying to sell it to the Israeli public.

Domestic Issues

Jewish attitudes towards Arab citizens of Israel have become significantly more negative, probably a cumulative result of the Second Lebanon War, Operation Cast Lead, and the negative attitudes voiced by the Arab Knesset members and other Arab leaders during these two military conflicts. At the same time, there is a certain degree of ambivalence in the attitude of Israeli Jews towards Israeli Arabs. A large majority opposed allowing Israeli Arabs to participate in crucial national decisions (up from 73 percent in 2007 to 77 percent in 2009) or including Arab ministers in the cabinet (up from 63 percent in 2007 to 70 percent in 2009), and supported the voluntary emigration of Israeli Arabs from Israel (63 percent in 2006, 66 percent in 2007, and 72 percent in 2009). At the same time, the percentage of Jews supporting equal rights for Israeli Arabs dropped from almost three quarters of the respondents in 2006 and two thirds in 2007 to 55 percent

in 2009. When asked what Israel should emphasize in its relations with its Arab citizens, 60 percent in 2006 and 57 percent in 2007 chose the option of "equalizing their conditions with those of the other citizens of the state" over "intensifying punitive measures for behavior inappropriate for Israeli citizens." In 2009 the tables were turned, with only 45 percent supporting the former versus 55 percent supporting the latter.

Concern about possible civil strife as a result of a political settlement with the Palestinians involving territorial withdrawal and evacuation of settlements increased in 2009; 39 percent saw a possibility of civil war as a result of Israeli withdrawal from Judea and Samaria in the context of a permanent settlement with the Palestinians, up from 29 percent in 2007 and returning to the level of 2006 (37 percent). At the same time, the level of concern was significantly lower than the 49 percent that prevailed in 2005, just prior to the disengagement. A majority of the Jewish population continued to view refusal by a soldier to obey an order to evacuate settlements as illegitimate, although this majority decreased substantially, from close to three quarters in 2007 to less than two thirds (62 percent) in 2009. Regarding refusal to serve in the territories, sentiments remained constant, with 73 percent of the respondents in 2009 viewing it as illegitimate, unchanged from 2007.

Overall, then, there appears a relative stability in public opinion among Israeli Jews concerning the major issues pertaining to national security. On the other hand, a clear tendency toward radicalization of opinion on certain issues is evident and most probably results from the security-related turmoil (intifada, military operations, and the wars in Lebanon and Gaza) experienced by the country in the recent decade. The following chapters provide a detailed account of these and related issues.

Chapter 2

The Profile of the Israeli Body Politic

The general elections in 2009, which resulted in the formation of a right wing government led by Binyamin Netanyahu, suggest the strengthening of rightist tendencies in Israeli society. Does this reflect the actual tenor of public opinion in terms of attitudes toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? One would expect some correlation between public opinion on national security issues and voting behavior. At the same time, one's vote is related to many other factors, among them economic considerations, family and ethnic loyalties, personal charisma of party leaders, party loyalty, and attractiveness of political platforms, to name but a few.

This chapter provides a detailed account of the current political profile of the Israeli Jewish public. It poses questions such as, how is the Jewish population of Israel divided in terms of right, left, and center. What is the true nature of the Israeli center? Are the divisions on right, left, and center conditioned by economic, demographic, religious, and/or political preferences of the respondents? Based on previous studies and incorporating the data from 2009, a public opinion profile of Israeli society over the past few years can be drawn and its 2009 configuration assessed.

The 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2009 surveys were analyzed, with particular emphasis on the responses by each individual to the key questions relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. On the basis of the individual response pattern, each individual could be assigned to one of five categories along a left (dovish) to right (hawkish) continuum. Individuals who chose the most hawkish response to the proposed questions were classified as "extreme right"; those who chose moderate hawkish responses to each of the questions were classified as "moderate right"; individuals who chose the most dovish response to each of the questions were classified as "extreme

left"; those who chose moderate dovish responses to each of the questions were classified as "moderate left"; and those individuals not falling into one of the above categories comprised the center of the political continuum.

The 2009 questionnaire included eight questions that had possible responses ranging from extreme left to moderate left to moderate right to extreme right. A ninth question had an extreme left and an extreme right response. Two other questions had an extreme right response (the other responses did not necessarily reflect a clear right or left position), and four additional questions had an extreme left response (with the other responses not necessarily reflecting a clear right or left position). Thus, there were thirteen potential "extreme left responses," i.e., questions having an extreme left option, eleven "extreme right responses," and eight questions that contained "moderate left" and "moderate right" options of response. Table 1 shows the fifteen questions used in the profile analysis and the responses coded as "extreme left," "extreme right," "moderate left," and "moderate right." The profile analysis for each of the four points in time (2005, 2006, 2007, and 2009) is based on identical questions, as the fifteen items listed in table 1 appeared in all the studies with the identical response options.

In theory, the "extreme right" group should comprise those individuals who chose the extreme right response to each of the eleven "extreme right questions" (questions 1-11). The same holds true for each of the other three groups – "the extreme left" group (choosing the extreme left response to each of thirteen "extreme left questions") and the "moderate right" and "moderate left" groups (choosing the appropriate response to each of the eight "moderate right" and "moderate left" questions). This would give us "pure" groups. This is central to the profile analysis since it is the accumulation of responses that determines an individual's profile. For certain questions, the responses coded as "moderate right" or "moderate left" could have been given just as well by individuals who are in the center; only when an individual systematically chooses "moderate left" or "moderate right" responses is he or she assigned to that respective group. In reality, however, no such pure group exits; in fact, it is almost impossible to find even one individual with a "pure" profile. Out of 616 respondents, only two individuals gave the "extreme right" response to all eleven "extreme right questions," one individual gave the "moderate left"

Table 1. Questions and responses used in the profile analysis

	Items included in the analysis	Extreme left	Moderate left	Moderate right	Extreme right
1	Territories should be returned for peace – 1-7 scale (1-strongly disagree; 7-strongly agree)	Strongly agree (7)	Agree (5,6)	Disagree (2,3)	Strongly disagree (1)
2	No military solution to the conflict (1-strongly disagree; 7-strongly agree)	Strongly agree (7)	Agree (5,6)	Disagree (2,3)	Strongly disagree (1)
3	No political solution to the conflict (1-strongly disagree; 7-strongly agree)	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2,3)	Agree (5,6)	Strongly agree (7)
4	Solution of two states for two peoples	Strongly support	Support	Oppose	Strongly oppose
5	Israel declaring the fence as its permanent border and removing all the settlements to its east	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
6	A Palestinian state on 95 percent of the West Bank and Gaza with Israel retaining the large settlement blocs	Strongly support	Support	Oppose	Strongly oppose
7	Transfer Arab neighborhoods in Jerusalem – except for the Old City – to the Palestinians	Strongly support	Support	Oppose	Strongly oppose
8	Establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza	Strongly support	Support	Oppose	Strongly oppose
9	Evacuation of Jewish settlements in Judea and Samaria in the context of a permanent settlement	Ready for removal of all settlements including the large settlement blocs			No removal of settlements under any circumstances
10	Return or retain isolated settlements on mountain ridge of eastern Samaria				Retain
11	The "most important" value				Greater Israel
12	Temple Mount will be given to the Palestinians and Wailing Wall retained by Israel	Support			
13	A limited number of refugees will be permitted to return to Israel	Support			
14	Ready to return or retain Gush Etzion (the Etzion bloc)	Return			
15	Ready to return or retain the Jordan Valley	Return			

response to all eight "moderate left questions," no one gave the "moderate right" response to all eight "moderate right questions," and no one gave the "extreme left" response to all thirteen "extreme left" questions nor even to twelve of the "extreme left" questions.

This is what happens only too often in real life, where theory rarely conforms to reality and it is very rare to find "pure" groups. This is exactly the case regarding the empirical data collected, and this may be the most fascinating and significant finding of all, one with far reaching implications. There are no "pure" groups. It is evident that if the most stringent criteria are adopted and individuals are assigned to a given group only if they gave the appropriate response to all the relevant questions, the result would be empty categories. Only three individuals, one half of one percent of the sample, would be assigned to any of the four groups, thus rendering the entire profile analysis meaningless. Therefore, the groups are formed on the basis of the determination that respondents choosing the majority or at least no less than half of the responses that were defined as extreme right, moderate right, moderate left, or extreme left should be assigned to that respective group.

Table 2 shows the number of respondents choosing the coded response in each of the four coded groups ("extreme left," "moderate left," "moderate right," and "extreme right,") for all the relevant items, fewer than all (each possible aggregate number of questions), or none of the relevant questions. Looking at table 2d, for instance, we can see that 137 respondents (22 percent) did not give any "extreme right" responses whatsoever, and another 122 respondents (20 percent) gave only one "extreme right" response. In comparison, in 2007 these groups constituted, respectively, 27 percent and 21 percent. Thus, approximately half (48 percent) of the Jewish population in 2007 and slightly less than half (42 percent) in 2009 hardly gave any extreme right responses. At the other end of the "extreme right" scale, the cumulative percent of respondents who chose six or more "extreme right" responses on the eleven "extreme right questions" is 20 percent.

The results for the other three groups appear in tables 2a, 2b, and 2c. The picture for the "extreme left" (table 2a) is different – 42 percent did not give any "extreme left" responses and another 28 percent gave only one "extreme left" response (out of thirteen questions), i.e., more than two thirds (70 percent) of the Jewish population hardly choose an extreme left

Table 2. Distribution of respondents according to aggregated responses to selected questions, 2009

Table 2a. Extreme left questions

Number of items answered with "extreme left" response	N	%
0	260	42.2
1	172	27.9
2	69	11.2
3	32	5.2
4	25	4.1
5	17	2.8
6	19	3.1
7	10	1.6
8	4	0.7
9	4	0.7
10	2	0.3
11	2	0.3
12	0	0
13	0	0
Total	616	100

Table 2b. Moderate left questions

Number of items answered with "moderate left" response	N	%
0	86	14.0
1	120	19.5
2	115	18.7
3	114	18.5
4	89	14.4
5	43	7.0
6	32	5.2
7	16	2.6
8	1	0.2
Total	616	100

Table 2c. Moderate right questions

Number of items answered with "moderate right" response	N	%
0	113	18.3
1	157	25.5
2	150	24.4
3	84	13.6
4	46	7.5
5	37	6.0
6	22	3.6
7	7	1.1
8	0	0
Total	616	100

Table 2d. Extreme right questions

Number of items answered with "extreme right" response	N	%
0	137	22.2
1	122	19.8
2	92	14.9
3	57	9.3
4	49	8.0
5	35	5.7
6	29	4.7
7	28	4.5
8	31	5.0
9	23	3.7
10	11	1.8
11	2	0.3
Total	616	100

response. Less than 4 percent of respondents choose the "extreme left" response on seven or more of the thirteen "extreme left questions." The majority of the Israeli Jewish public is concentrated around the center; this is seen clearly from the analysis of the distribution of the public on the "moderate right" and the "moderate left" items.

The empirical data shown in table 2 suggests that Israeli public opinion is complex, and while there is a clear rightward tendency in recent years, Israeli society is not drastically polarized with regard to issues related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Not only is there a large center comprising half of the Jewish population, but the other half is not divided into homogenous antipodal groups, and instead ranges along a continuum. Thus, there is only a marginalized 2 percent of the public (those choosing the "extreme right" response on all or almost all of the eleven "extreme right" questions) that can be categorized as thoroughly "extreme right." Interestingly, this is approximately the percentage of the vote in the 2009 elections received by the National Union, the most extreme right wing party. The rest of the right-oriented public is spread out along a continuum, ranging from the extreme right to the center. The same holds true for the left, although it is obvious that nationalistic attitudes toward the land are more popular in Israel in 2009 than the left attitudes, which have steadily lost popularity since 2006. The results suggest that Israeli public opinion is not rigid, rather manifests a certain degree of flexibility and under certain circumstances is open to significant change.

On the basis of the results charted in table 2, the entire sample was divided into five groups in each of the given years (2005, 2006, 2007, and 2009). The majority criteria was applied, i.e., respondents choosing the majority or at least no less than half of the responses that were defined as "extreme left," "moderate left," "moderate right," or "extreme right" were assigned to that respective group; respondents not assigned to any of these four groups were viewed as belonging to the center. The cutoff points thus chosen are to a certain degree arbitrary. In the analysis of the data for some of the previous years, the cutoff point may have been moved one place higher or lower. A main consideration for such a shift was to have a minimal number of respondents in each group so as to enable an analysis of the socio-demographic and electoral makeup of each group. In any case,

moving the cutoff point one place either way does not change the overall picture.

The results for 2009, summarized in table 3, are compared with the results for the previous years. The cutoff point for the "extreme right" group was set at six or more, i.e., those respondents who chose the "extreme right" response on six or more out of the eleven "extreme right" questions were included in the group. The cutoff point for the "moderate right" and "the "moderate left" groups was set at five or more questions (out of eight questions) and for the "extreme left" group at seven or more questions (out of thirteen questions).

Table 3. Breakdown of the Israeli Jewish electorate into left, right, and center, 2005-2009 (percent)

	2005	2006	2007	2009
Extreme left	10.5	8.4	7.6	3.6
Moderate left	13.2	18.4	13.3	14.9
Center	49.3	51.6	50.6	50.7
Moderate right	13.4	12.8	14.1	10.7
Extreme right	13.6	8.8	14.4	20.1
Total	100	100	100	100
(N) – Number of the respondents in the respective survey	(704)	(724)	(709)	(616)

The data presented in table 3 confirms the conclusion drawn from table 2, demonstrating dramatically the strength of the Israeli center. Half of the Jewish population in 2009 was in the center and did not embrace a definite right or left, hawkish or dovish point of view regarding the crucial issues pertaining to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its solution. Furthermore, the situation seems to be relatively stable over time, as the central category remained the largest over the five year period analyzed (49 percent, 52 percent, 51 percent, and 51 percent in 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2009, respectively).

The finding that the center has remained stable over the years is correct, but the center of 2009 is not the same center as the one in 2006. Rather, there has been a definite shift to the right from 2006 to 2009, and over the

three year period individuals moved from the left to the center and from the center to the right. While the left in 2005 consisted of approximately one quarter of the population, the same as the right, it numbered only one fifth in 2007 and even less in 2009. In 2006, before the Second Lebanon War and at the height of the dovish trend, the left outnumbered the right; the right increased from a quarter in 2005 and even less in 2006 to 30 percent in 2009 (and close to that already in 2007). By 2009 the number of respondents included in the right was almost double that of those included in the left. This tendency is also evident in the second manifestation of the shift to the right, namely a shift within the right group from "moderate right" to "extreme right." In the previous years, the moderate right group was either equal to or slightly larger than the extreme right group; in 2009, the size of the extreme right group was double that of the moderate right group.

The opposite holds true for the left. Not only was there a shift from the left to the center of about 8 percentage points from 2006 to 2009, but there was a dramatic shift within the left group itself. Thus, while the size of the moderate left group remained the same over time, the extreme left has almost disappeared – down from over 10 percent in 2005 to less than 4 percent in 2009. Interestingly, the percent represented by the extreme left is only slightly higher than the percentage of the vote received in the 2009 elections by the extreme left party, Meretz. The two recent military operations in Lebanon and Gaza as well as the changing international political climate have apparently left their unmistakable imprint on Israeli public opinion – the electorate drifted toward the right, reversing a trend that was evident until 2006. In 2009, the center together with the right constituted around 82 percent of the Israeli Jewish public. At the same time, even today the center together with the left still comprises over two thirds of the Jewish population (69 percent).

The group profiles formed on the basis of the 2009 sample were examined in terms of their socio-demographic and electoral characteristics. All demographic variables analyzed in the following chapter were significantly correlated with respondents' profile. The results are presented in table 4.

The analysis of the correlation between the various demographic factors and an individual's particular profile suggests that respondents who originate from Europe or the US are the most dovish (approximately

Table 4. Correlation of respondent profiles and various characteristics, 2009

Table 4a. Demographic characteristics and respondent profile (1-extreme left to 5-extreme right)

Sample 2009	Coefficients of association*	Asymptotic significance
Gender	.157	p<.005
Age	-.175	p<.000
Origin 1	.200	p<.017
Origin 2 (all those born in Israel as a separate category)	.224	p<.002
Religiosity (1-ultra-Orthodox…4-secular)	-.477	p<.000
Education (years)	-.236	p<.000
Academic degree (no-yes)	-.146	p<.011
Monthly expenditures	-.168	p<.000
Army service (did not serve–served)	-.211	p<.000
Total respondents	616	

*Different coefficients (e.g., Phi, Cramer-V, Pearson r, Somers'd) were used, depending on the variables' characteristics. All of them can be interpreted as showing the strongest relationship between a profile variable and each characteristic when the absolute value of a coefficient tends to 1, and no relationship when it approximates 0.

Table 4b. Electoral characteristics and respondent profile (1-extreme left to 5-extreme right)

Sample 2009	Coefficient of association*	Asymptotic significance
Actual electoral choice in 2009 (1 – voted for the left wing party to 7 – voted for the right wing party)	.449	p<.000
Total Respondents	616	

*Coefficient of correlation Pearson r is reported. It shows the strongest relationship when the absolute value of a coefficient tends to 1 and no relationship when it approximates 0. r=.449 shows a moderate statistically significant relationship between the variables.

29 percent are situated left of center), while immigrants from the former Soviet Union (FSU) and respondents born in Israel are most hawkish The latter two categories are overrepresented in the center of the political continuum – 68 percent of immigrants from the FSU and 66 percent of native Israelis, while the rest of the respondents in this group figure almost entirely in the right. Academically educated and wealthier respondents as well as those who served in the army are more likely to be found among the center and left groups. Religious identification and one's actual vote in the 2009 elections have the strongest relationship with respondent profiles, far exceeding that of any of the other demographic factors

With religious identification dramatically correlated with respondent profile, table 5 shows the distribution of the five profile categories for each of the four religiosity groups. The ultra-Orthodox and religious sectors emerged as much more right wing and hawkish than the rest of the population, and this correlation is statistically significant at the .0001 level (i.e., there is only one chance in 10,000 that this correlation between religious identification and opinion profile is not found in the Jewish population as a whole). Nevertheless, there is quite a difference between the two groups. No ultra-Orthodox individual can be found in the left and only slightly over a quarter are in the center. The ultra-Orthodox community is by far the most right wing sector of Israeli society; three quarters of these respondents are in the right and over half have an extreme right profile. The religious group is similar in that it too is barely represented in the left. There is no religious respondent in the extreme left, nor for that matter is any traditionalist included in this group – the extreme left appears to be the province of only secular Jews. However unlike the ultra-Orthodox, half of the religious respondents are in the center and only slightly more than a quarter are in the extreme right. According to the overall sample, i.e., Israeli society as a whole, the center profile is the dominant one for religious Jews.

Traditionalists are predominately in the center: two thirds fall in this category, with the remaining respondents exhibiting right and left profiles at a ratio of two to one in favor of the right. Secular Jews tend to the left; one quarter of the secular respondents – more than double that of the traditional or religious sectors – have a left profile. At the same time, secular Jews are also represented in the right, albeit in small numbers. In a mirror image of

the traditional sector, for the secularists the left outnumbers the right by two to one, while in line with the overall sample, the center is by far the dominant profile.

Table 5. Distribution of profile categories for each religiosity group, 2009 (percent; in parentheses, number of respondents)

	Ultra-Orthodox	Religious	Traditional	Secular
Extreme left	0	0	0	4.4 (12)
Moderate left	0	11.6 (8)	10.2 (20)	22.5 (64)
Center	28.2 (20)	47.8 (33)	67.3 (132)	59.5 (166)
Moderate right	14.1 (10)	11.6 (8)	11.7 (23)	8.9 (25)
Extreme right	57.7 (41)	29.0 (20)	10.8 (21)	4.7 (13)
Total	100 (71)	100 (69)	100 (196)	100 (280)

Note: All the groups were formed on the basis of respondents' self-definition.

Chapter 3

Key Factors in the Formation of Israeli Public Opinion

What underlies the matrix of Israeli perceptions, opinions, and attitudes? What factors account for the variation in attitudes among the Jewish population? What characteristics lie behind individual differences and determine specific opinions and attitudes on an individual level? This chapter examines two sets of critical factors that in addition to events on the ground and the influence of charismatic leaders have an impact on the formation of public opinion in Israel: the value system and demographic characteristics.

The Value System

There is no single accepted definition of "values," but values are generally conceptualized as criteria people use to select and justify actions and to evaluate the self, other people, and events. Students of political psychology consider values to be the enduring beliefs that certain behaviors and ways of existence are personally and socially more preferable.[1] Values[2] can be characterized as concepts or beliefs that 1) pertain to desirable end states or behaviors 2) rise above specific situations 3) guide selection or evaluation of behaviors and events and 4) are ordered by relative importance. In contrast to attitudes, values are relatively few and more central.

Thus the function of values on the macro level is to create guidelines for the system and to legitimize the polity through direct or indirect indoctrination. Individual values provide the basis for attitude formation and further evaluation of informational tokens, and facilitate individuals' behavior and opinion formation. Individual value system ordering is easily

affected and transformed by changing circumstances and dramatic formative events.[3] The literature suggests that individuals "may have encapsulated modular, or multiple value-systems associated with different issues."[4]

Individual political values are rooted in culture, and constitute comparative and competitive categories organized and hierarchically ordered by the value system structure. Works in political psychology[5] suggest that competing values underlie most policy controversies and that contending positions often stem from different value priorities. Fluctuations in value hierarchies over time are conditioned by the impact of political events and changes in the structure of the society (e.g., increased religiosity).

Contrary to the conventional approach that places individuals along an attitudinal continuum of political "left-right," "liberal-conservative," or "dove-hawk," the basic premise of the value equilibrium approach[6] is that every individual embraces a number of values, some of which under certain circumstances may lead to contradictory opinions or behavior. Thus the multiple value system (MVS) perspective suggests that value systems are dynamic and that the value hierarchy one constructs in any given situation depends on the context in which one is asked to do it. In other words, if one is asked to think in the context of capital punishment, the sanctity of human life may occupy the first rank in the value hierarchy. However, when one is asked to think in the context of terrorism, preservation of law and order may become a top value in the hierarchy. Methodologically it means that values should be studied within concrete contexts involving value conflict, as is done in this chapter. Abstract ranking of values may be less effective because individuals tend to rearrange their value hierarchies according to the issue. Values may play a role in shaping individuals' behavior when there is a value conflict – when a certain behavior has consequences of promoting one (or more) value but is opposed to others that are also embraced by a person. Values are more active when there is an internal conflict. At that moment, values are used as guiding principles. In the absence of value conflict, values draw little attention and social "shortcuts" or immediate stimuli (e.g., rise in prices) guide individual behavior and attitudes toward governmental policies or political figures.

The NSPOP surveys four key values: a country with a Jewish majority; Greater Israel; a democratic country; and a state of peace. These values

correspond to ideals that may be in conflict with each other (e.g. Greater Israel and a state of peace) but can be equally dear to the Jewish citizens of Israel. Respondents were asked to rank the four values in their order of importance. The overall dynamics of the findings suggests that basic values are relatively stable; they may change under the contextual influences but continue to revolve around the same patterns over time.

Until 2009, the value that was named as the most important was a Jewish majority. In 2009 a state of peace ranked equally high with the value of a Jewish majority. Israelis are attached to the land, believe in Zionist ideals, support settlements, and remain very suspicious of the intentions and goals of the Palestinians, but when they have to choose between alternatives and prioritize their goals, the need to maintain Israel as a Jewish state as well as the desire for peace takes precedence over competing values. The steep increase in importance of the value of peace in the 2009 study is most probably an example of a contextual influence on the value hierarchy, as results are likely to be influenced by the timing of the survey. As in previous years Greater Israel received the fewest votes as the most important value. There was also a decrease in the number of votes for democracy as the most important value. Results for the Jewish majority and Greater Israel values in the years 2004-2009 are presented in figure 1.

The percentage of respondents choosing a country with a Jewish majority as their "most important" value in 2009 reverted from the high level found in 2006 and 2007 (over half of the sample) to the level manifested in 2004 and 2005 (about 40 percent). However, when combining the "most important'" and the "second most important" value, the results for 2009 are similar to those for 2006 and 2007. During this period, the percentage of respondents choosing a Jewish majority as the "most important" or "second most important value" increased from close to two thirds in 2004 and 2005 (65 and 64 percent, respectively) to close to three quarters (72 percent).

In 2009, as in previous years, only about 10 percent of the population chose Greater Israel as the most important value, and for 36 percent of the Jewish population it was the most or the second most important value. The results for 2009 suggest that from 2005 to 2009 there was a 10 percent increase in the public for whom Greater Israel is the second most important value. Thus the percentage of the public viewing Greater Israel as a key
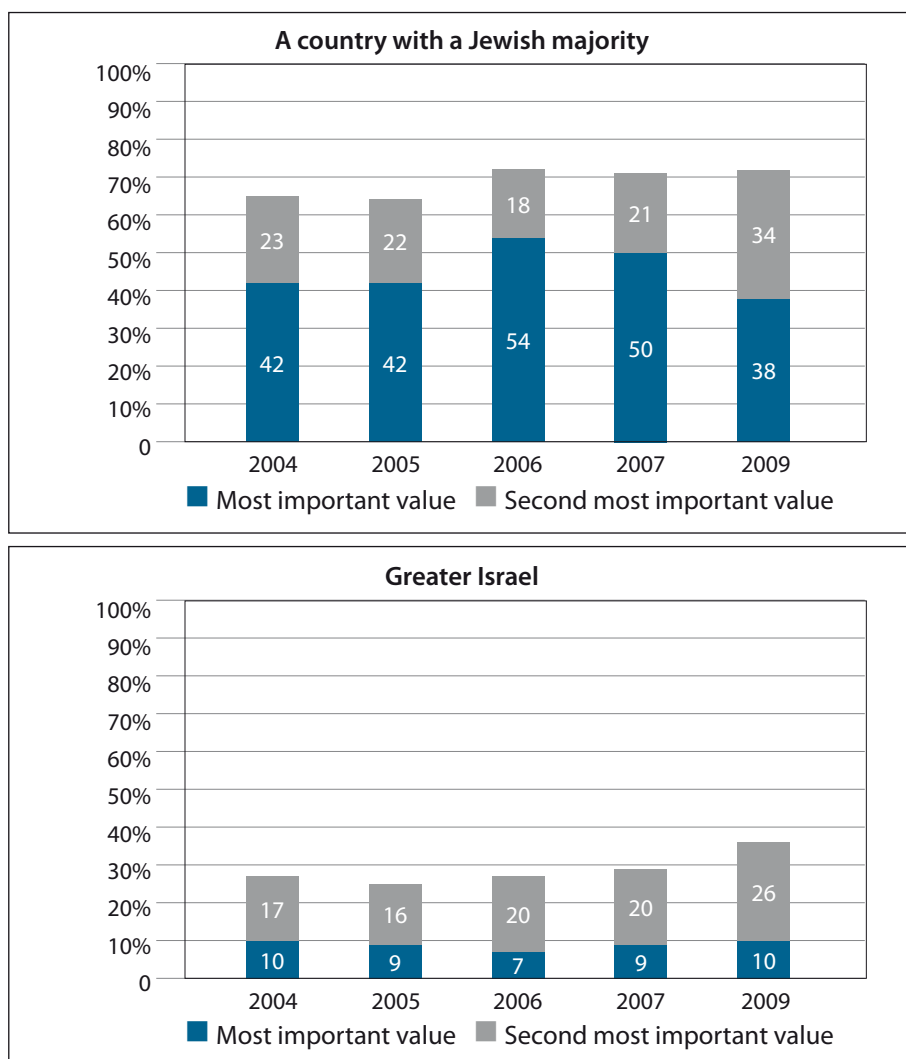
Figure 1. Percent prioritizing Jewish majority and Greater Israel values, 2004-2009

value increased over the five year period from slightly over a quarter (27 percent in 2004) to slightly over a third (36 percent in 2009), yet is still outweighed two to one by the value of a Jewish majority. The increase in the importance of Greater Israel may be due, at least partially, to increasing numbers of ultra-Orthodox and religious Jews in the sample.

Changes in value hierarchy among the Jewish public can be indicative of two phenomena. They may be a reaction to contextual changes such

as an election campaign or military operations in the Gaza Strip and in Lebanon. Conversely, they may be an indicator of deep structural changes in values of the Israeli public, such as when democratic values that secure equal political rights for all become less popular and nationalistic values gain in support. The assumption here is that the first scenario is likelier and the timing of the survey is responsible for the changes, but it will only be possible to check this assumption in future surveys.

With regard to the demographic characteristics, a Jewish majority is a most important value for 63 percent of the ultra-Orthodox sector, 44 percent of the religious population, and 45 percent of traditional Jews. In contrast, only 24 percent of secular respondents hold it as their first priority. For 47 percent of secular Jewish Israelis the state of peace is the most important value and for another 23 percent it is democracy with equal political rights for all. It is notable that democracy constitutes the most important value for only 3 percent of the ultra-Orthodox and religious public, and for 11 percent of the traditional public.

Contrary to the conventional theory of socialization, age has no significant influence on the value hierarchy of Israel's Jewish public (i.e., younger people do not seem more democratic or older people more conservative as is usually the case in Western democratic states). Higher education plays a role in Jewish respondents' values hierarchy. Individuals with academic degrees are more supportive of the Jewish majority value (42 percent) than people without a higher education (36 percent). Moreover, only 22 percent of academically educated Jews rank a state of peace as their highest priority, while 43 percent of those without an academic degree choose this value as their first priority. This 20 percent difference might be explained by the contextual influences, as the majority of the non-academically educated public is concentrated in the periphery that was badly affected during the military operations in Gaza and the Second Lebanon War. On the other hand, if this trend continues in the years to follow, a systematic societal explanation should be sought for the influence of education on the basic political values of Israeli Jewish respondents.

Fear from various security threats such as terror, wars, intifadas, attacks, and the like is also related to the value priorities of Israeli Jews. These who choose democracy as their first priority feel significantly less threatened than all other Israeli Jews.[7] Respondents who feel most threatened are those

who indicate Greater Israel as their first value priority (a more detailed account of threat perceptions appears in chapter 4).

Demographic Characteristics

Demographic characteristics are relatively stable factors that have an important effect on public opinion. Data was collected for all respondents as to the following demographic characteristics: gender, age, country of origin, religious identification, education (measured both by number of years of formal education and by academic degree), economic status (measured by monthly expenditures compared with the national average), and military service (whether or not one served in the IDF, and for those who did serve if he/she had served in the territories). Country of origin was classified in two ways: conventional typology, whereby first generation Israelis were classified by country of birth of the father and second or third generation Israelis were classified as "Israeli" (origin 1); and a new system whereby all those born in Israel regardless of the father's country of origin were classified as "Israeli" (origin 2). Table 6 gives the number of significant relationships found for each of the ten indicators ("total" column); and the strength or predictive value of the significant relationships reported between the demographic characteristics and 26 questions that outline public opinion in Israel on the key political issues.

The correlation between each demographic indicator and each of the 26 key questions in the 2009 survey was examined. A statistically significant result (reported in "total" column) means that (95 times out of 100) there is, for the entire population, a degree of correlation between the specific indicator and responses on the specific question. The strength of the relationships, i.e., the actual correlation coefficient, is reported separately in columns 1 to 5.

Demographic indicators are sometimes interrelated (e.g., education and expenses) and the magnitude of the relationship varies. Consequently, a relationship between certain indicators and political attitudes may in effect result from the mediation of another demographic factor. For example, military service is correlated with religious identification. Although Israel has a universal draft, the ultra-Orthodox community does not serve in the IDF and many women from the national religious community are exempt from military service. In 2009, 23 percent of Jewish men did not serve in

Table 6. Number and strength of statistically significant relationships between demographic characteristics and 26 key questions (at the .05 level), 2009

2009 (26 items)	<|.19| (1)	<|.29| (2)	<|.39| (3)	<|.49| (4)	<|.59| (5)	Total
Gender	11					11
Age	9	9				18
Origin 1 (old version)	6	7				13
Origin 2 (new version)	6	6				12
Religiosity		8	10	5	1	24
Education (years)	7	11				18
Academic Degree	8	11				19
Monthly expenditures (household)	10	7	1			18
Army service	11	4				15
Service in the territories	15					15

the armed forces. Among these 23 percent (N=67), 40 percent were ultra-Orthodox and 12 percent religious. The proportion of these sectors in the general population is slightly more than 20 percent, while they constitute more than half (52 percent) of these who does not serve. Among the ultra-Orthodox men, 75 percent did not serve in the IDF (compared to 25 percent of religious, 11 percent of traditional, and 16 percent of secular men). Among women the picture is comparable (89 percent of ultra-Orthodox women, 62 percent of religious, 56 percent of traditional, and 37 percent of secular female respondents did not serve in the IDF). Thus to a large degree, the differences between those who served in the IDF and those who did not serve reflect the differences between the ultra-Orthodox and religious Jews and the rest of the Jewish population.

Columns 1 through 5 complete the picture of interrelation between demographic characteristics and major political attitudes related to national security. Examination of the correlation coefficients for each demographic characteristic highlights the overwhelming influence of religious identification versus the relatively limited influence of all the other demographic factors. (A correlation coefficient of less than .19 means that ignoring all the intervening influences, less than 4 percent of the variance in

the responses to any given question can be explained by that demographic variable. A correlation coefficient of less than .29 signifies that less than 10 percent of the variance can be explained by the demographic variable.) Not only is religious identification the only variable that correlates with 92 percent of the items in 2009, but the strength of the relationship between religiosity and one's political attitudes is of a different magnitude than that for all the other demographic characteristics. With the sole exception of economic status, only religion can explain more than 10 percent of the variance in the political opinions of the respondents; religious identification can in some instances explain as much as one quarter and even one third of the variance. This point is illustrated with a number of examples from the 2009 study.

Six percent of the ultra-Orthodox and 15 percent of the religious respondents believe that there is some possibility of reaching a peace agreement with the Palestinians, compared to 29 percent of the traditionalists and 41 percent of the secular respondents. Regarding a preference for an agreement involving major territorial concessions, a partial agreement with fewer territorial concessions, unilateral disengagement with less territorial concession, or neither, 83 percent of the ultra-Orthodox and 62 percent of the religious chose "neither," compared to 43 percent of the traditionalists and 31 percent of the secular respondents. Most of the secular and traditional public is in favor of either major or more limited territorial concessions, but these solutions are much less popular among the religious Jews. This is, in effect, a mirror image of two very different sub-populations.

On the Gaza disengagement plan, only 4 percent of the ultra-Orthodox and 11 percent of the religious expressed an ex post facto support of the plan, compared to 23 percent of the traditionalists and almost half of the secular respondents. Relative to previous surveys there was a steep decline in support for the disengagement plan, especially among the traditional and secular public (in 2006 the plan was supported by almost 50 percent of traditionalists and over two thirds, 67 percent, of the secular respondents). Even so, support for the disengagement plan among the non-religious sector is still four times higher than support among the religious and ultra-Orthodox.

Finally, on the question of a Palestinian state, 14 percent of the ultra-Orthodox and 37 percent of the religious agreed to a Palestinian state, compared to 51 percent of the traditional and 69 percent of the secular respondents. Compared with previous years, there was a slight decrease in support for the establishment of a Palestinian state (e.g., in 2006, the idea was supported by 21, 36, 59, and 76 percent, respectively, for ultra-Orthodox, religious, traditional, and secular). The idea lost on average 6 percent[8] of its adherents from all sectors of the Israeli Jewish population from 2006 to 2009. Nevertheless, the chasm between the ultra-Orthodox and religious sectors and the non-religious sector remains dramatic.

The overall picture regarding the effect of demographic factors on political attitudes for 2009 is similar to that which was manifest in previous years. Table 7 shows the number of statistically significant relationships between the various demographic characteristics and questions that survey attitudes toward major national security issues for the years 2005-2009.

Table 7. Statistically significant relations between demographic factors and key political questions, 2005-2009

	2005 (27 items)	2006 (27 items)	2009 (26 items)
Gender	14	3	11
Age	18	7	18
Origin 1 (old version)	12	8	13
Origin 2 (new version)	–	–	12
Religiosity	27	24	24
Education (years)	6	3	18
Academic degree	7	14	19
Monthly expenditures (household)	10	13	18
Army service	24	20	15
Service in the territories	–	–	15

Examination of the data reveals that the demographic characteristics in Israeli society shape public opinion on national security issues to a certain degree but are less important than is conventionally assumed. With the exception of the overwhelming influence of religious identification, which

divides the nation into quite distinct groups, most demographic variables have limited influence on public opinion. In previous years, origin was hypothesized to be the fault line of Israeli society. Jews of Afro-Asian origin (Sephardim) were considered to be much more hawkish than those of European and Anglo-Saxon origin (Ashkenazim). However, the data suggests that country of origin was related to less than half of the questions. Furthermore, even where it was related, in some instances, Jews of West European and Anglo-Saxon origin were more hawkish than the respondents of Afro-Asian origin, primarily because of the mediating effect of religiosity (i.e., the high proportion of religious Jews in the former sectors). The same holds true for gender, which was also related to less than half of the questions.

Overall, religiosity remains the most powerful of demographic characteristics that define the political attitudes of the Jewish public in Israel. No such difference is found for any of the other demographic variables. This split between the religious and secular communities is the new demarcation line that replaces the decades-old ethnic division between Ashkenazim and Sephardim.

Chapter 4

The National Mood and Threat Perceptions

The Mood

The national mood is a prevailing psychological state of the citizens in a country vis-à-vis political, social, economic, cultural, and other national issues. Studying the climate of opinion allows surveying general feelings of optimism or pessimism regarding the future. The general mood and the outlook for the future are related to the collective perception of the national security situation. Moreover, the general atmosphere in the country also shapes conventional political behavior, electoral choices, and the reaction of the public on policy initiatives launched by the government. Societal mood has a distinct nature compared to the individual psychological state of mind, but both share the property of being highly dependent on current events. Measuring the societal mood at any given point in time is important to capture the reaction of the society to a particular constellation of historical, political, and social events. However, perspective is necessary when evaluating the public mood, which by definition is dynamic and subject to change. Therefore, in this section the data obtained in 2009 is analyzed through the perspective of time, by examining changes in the national mood over the relatively long period from 2004 to 2009. This allows observation and analysis of changes within the context of national security events.

Figure 2 shows the average score (here and throughout this chapter items are measured on a 1-9 point scale) for respondents' perception of "the state of the country from the national security perspective" at three different points in time. Figure 3 shows the average score for the personal and individual state of the respondents for the same time periods. The data in figure 2 demonstrates that regardless of the current situation, the Israeli

Jewish public is optimistic in terms of its assessment of the future. The distance between the lines charting "the state five years ago" and "the state five years hence" constitutes a measure of optimism. Based on the data, it appears that over the years the public in Israel has maintained an optimistic outlook for the future of the state (scores are always above the mid-point of 5.00). There was, however, a decrease in the level of optimism in 2007 (down from 5.5 in 2006 to 5.2 in 2007) as well as an even sharper decrease in the assessment of the actual state of the country at the time (down from 4.8 in 2006 to 4.3 in 2007 – significant at the p<.000 level). This result reflects the aftermath of the Second Lebanon War in 2006 and the malaise that fell upon the Israeli body politic. That war left Israelis with a mixed feeling of insecurity and disappointment over what was perceived as a missed opportunity to combat the militant forces along its northern borders and an inadequate performance by the army. In 2009 there was a remarkable rebound in the national mood. One can see a definite increase in the level of optimism, which reached its highest level in the past six years as well as a dramatic and unprecedented rise in the assessment of the national security situation. It was the first time since 2004 that the Jewish public viewed the current situation as better than it was five years prior. Compared to all previous years, in 2009 respondents were more optimistic assessing not only the current state of affairs (5.2), but also the future prospects (5.6).

The sanguine public mood with respect to the situation in the country and specifically in the assessment of Israel's national security situation is probably due to the improved economic situation (Israel was one of very few developed countries in the world relatively unaffected by the global financial crisis) and especially the noticeable improvement in the security situation, as a result of Israel's achievements in the fight against terrorism and the success of Operation Cast Lead in the Gaza Strip. The number of Israelis killed in terror attacks dropped from 451 in 2002 to 13 in 2009, and the number of suicide bombings dropped from 60 in 2001 to zero in 2009.

The assessment of one's individual situation – in the present, past, and future – was on the average 1.5 points higher than one's assessment related to the national security of the country. This pattern is consistent over the years and is known to recur in other studies, indicating that people tend to see their individual situation in a more favorable light than that of the
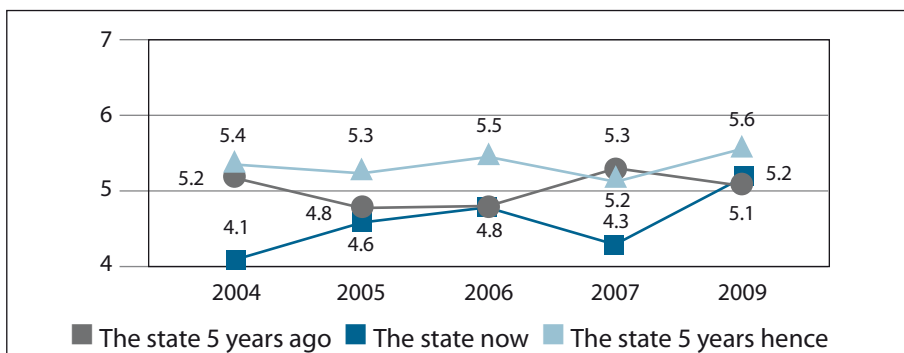
Figure 2. Assessment of the state of the country from the national security perspective, 2004-2009 (mean score on a 1-9 scale)
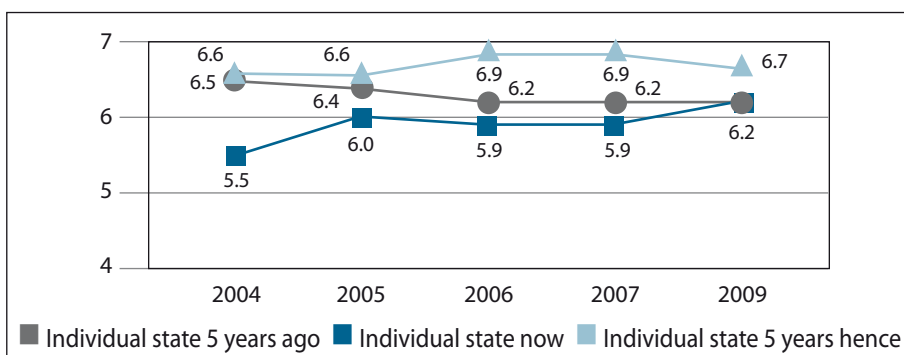
Figure 3. Assessment of the individual's personal state, 2004-2009 (mean score on a 1-9 scale)

country as a whole. Evidently on the individual level, one's mood is a function of a feeling of personal security and safety in everyday life as well as one's economic situation and standard of living. The significant difference between the results shown in figure 2 and figure 3 reflect a tendency, reported in many Western democracies and probably caused to a large degree by the media, to view the state of the country more negatively than would seem justified based on respondents' accounts of their personal situation. There was consistent improvement over the years in the individual situation of Israelis, reaching a high point of 6.2 in 2009. The reasons for this are probably the same as outlined above regarding the high assessment of the overall state of the country in 2009.

In assessing the current state of security in the country, religiosity plays a significant role; ultra-Orthodox were much more pessimistic (3.8)

compared to other groups (religious 5.7, traditional 5.2, secular 5.3). A similar pattern was recorded when assessing the state of the country five years hence. On the personal level the ultra-Orthodox saw themselves as least threatened, yet when referring to the national situation they were the most pessimistic. The religious felt most threatened and most optimistic, while traditional and secular groups found themselves somewhere in between these two poles.

Threat and Security Perceptions

In order to gauge the threat perceptions of Israelis, two similar sets of questions were posed to the respondents. In the first set, respondents were given a list of ten different situations or scenarios and were asked to rate each one (on a 1-7 scale) as to "the degree to which it posed a threat in your eyes." In the second set, respondents were given a list of ten events or situations and were asked "whether the State of Israel could or could not cope successfully with each of them." Tables 8 and 9 provide the results for the sets of questions.

Table 8 exhibits a remarkable degree of consistency over the years. The level of the different threats and the values of the average threat scores remained relatively stable, with a rise in 2007 (an average threat score of 5.1 – up from 4.9 in 2004-2006), probably reflecting the effects of the Second Lebanon War, and another slight rise in 2009 (see note to table 8). The rank order of the threats is almost identical for all five years. A return of territories for peace, unilateral disengagement, and the establishment of a Palestinian state were viewed as least threatening. Nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons in the hands of an enemy state and terrorism on a large scale were consistently viewed as the three most serious threats. Internal issues – social and economic crises, the undermining of Israel's democratic character, and corruption in the public system – attained medium threat levels.

Concern and anxiety at the individual level about personal security and fear of terrorism remained very high. Since the onset of the intifada in late 2000, approximately 80 percent of the respondents expressed concern that they or a member of their family might become a victim of a terrorist attack, reaching a height of 92 percent in 2002. Subsequently, this indicator dropped to 83 percent in 2003, 78 percent in 2004 and 2005, 72 percent

Table 8. Threat perception for a variety of situations, 2004–2009 (mean score on a 1–7 point scale, 1– least threatening)

Items	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009
Return of territories for peace	4.1	3.6	3.7	4.2	4.4
Hamas control of the PA(*)	–	–	5.1	4.0	–
Chemical and biological weapons in hands of an enemy state	5.9	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.9
Undemocratic regime in Israel	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.3	5.3
Unilateral disengagement from the Palestinians	3.6	3.7	4.0	4.5	–
Nuclear weapons in the hands of Iran	6.1	6.0	5.8	6.2	6.2
Establishment of a Palestinian state	4.3	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.5
Renewal of terrorism on a large scale	5.1	5.2	5.5	5.6	5.7
War with Syria	4.5	4.5	4.5	5.3	5.2
A deep social and economic crisis in Israel (**)	–	5.6	5.5	5.6	5.6
Corruption in the public system (***)	–	–	–	5.7	5.4
Average Threat Score	4.9	4.9	4.9	5.1	5.4

Note: If the average threat score for 2007 is calculated based on the items surveyed in 2009, its value reaches 5.34, while for 2009 the mean score is 5.40. The results of the t-test of differences in means suggest that the difference in threat perceptions between 2009 and 2007 is insignificant (p>.26).

* Item introduced in 2006

** Item introduced in 2005

*** Item introduced in 2007

in 2006, 69 percent in 2007, and 70 percent in 2009. The decrease of over 20 percentage points since 2002 reflects the sharp decline in terrorist attacks in Israel during these years. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that terrorism, and specifically the spate of suicide bombings, has left its mark on Israeli society. The number of Israelis killed in traffic accidents each year is overwhelmingly higher compared to those killed by terrorists, yet it is hard to imagine that close to three quarters of the Israeli population would express concern that they or a member of their family might be a victim of a traffic accident.

Table 9. Ability of Israel to cope successfully with a variety of threats, 2004-2009 (percent answering in affirmative)

Items	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009
All-out war with all the Arab countries	67	72	76	64	75
War launched by Syria against Israel	96	96	96	90	97
Potential for an enemy state to attack Israel with biological and chemical weapons	70	78	79	74	76
Potential for en enemy state to attack Israel with nuclear weapons	52	65	66	55	67
Continuous and significant terrorist activity	84	87	88	86	89
A revolt by Israeli Arabs	52	88	89	90	91
Internal dissent with regard to the territories and peace	85	86	91	89	91
A threat of surface-to-surface missile attacks on Israel	86	92	93	90	92
Social and religious cleavages	72	78	83	86	89
US will reduce its support for Israel	53	38	62	62	78

Two major conclusions for the years 2004-2009 emerge from the findings charted in table 9. Although for the entire period a majority of the Jewish population was convinced that Israel can cope successfully with each of the threats presented, in 2009 Israelis enjoyed a higher feeling of security compared to previous years. The three threats felt most acutely in 2004 were nuclear attack, a revolt by Israeli Arabs, and a diminishing of American support for Israel. In 2005 and 2006 it was a diminishing of American support for Israel and the threat of a nuclear attack. In 2007 and in 2009 people were most concerned with the possibility of a nuclear attack, an all-out war with Arab countries, and a diminishing of American support for Israel. It is easy to see that the degree of threat perception is influenced by current events. Thus in 2004, the most serious threat (together with the threat of nuclear attack) is a revolt by Israeli Arabs, reflecting the concerns raised by the intifada. In 2007 and 2009, on the other hand, concern about a revolt by Israeli Arabs clearly receded, while an all-out war with all the Arab countries was viewed as a major threat (superseded only by the threat of nuclear attack) – in all probability a reflection of the effects of the

Second Lebanon War and Operation Cast Lead. In 2009 over two thirds of the Jewish population – and in the majority of cases over 80 percent – were convinced that Israel can successfully cope with the various threats. Thus as of 2009, Israelis felt quite secure, notwithstanding the serious threats facing the country.

Second, the degree of consistency over the five year period is remarkable. The ranking of ten threats in terms of severity is almost identical in 2005-2009 and quite similar for 2004. Overall, the three most severe threats, which stand out relative to all the others, are a drop in American support for Israel, all-out war with Arab countries, and the threat of nuclear attack, although the exact order among them may vary from year to year. The persistence of the threat of a nuclear attack is due to the heightened preoccupation of the international community with the Iranian nuclear issue and Ahmadinejad's belligerent rhetoric. The fact that different samples over four years yield such similar results on a wide variety of items strongly supports the credibility of these studies.

Demographic characteristics are mostly unrelated to respondents' personal sense of fear: neither gender nor age, level of education, income, and army service is correlated with the feeling of threat. Ultra-Orthodox are much less concerned (mean score 4.8) than the other groups (religious 5.8, traditional 5.5, secular 5.4), probably due to their reduced exposure to information. Origin also has some influence on the threat perceptions; respondents born in Israel regardless of their parents' origin feel less threatened (5.3), compared to FSU immigrants (5.4), respondents born in Asia/Africa (5.6), and immigrants from the US and Europe (5.6). It may be that the difficulty of the Israeli security situation is more easily accepted by those born into this situation.

Overall, then, the Israeli public expresses moderate levels of fear toward both external and internal threats, while the former seem to be more acute than the latter. The trend recorded in 2009 suggests a steady improvement in the sense of security previously undermined by the second intifada and the wave of terrorism inside Israel. Respondents' socio-demographic characteristics, except for religiosity and origin, are largely unrelated to the feeling of threat.

Chapter 5

The Iranian Nuclear Threat

By 2009 the Iranian nuclear issue had taken center stage in Israeli national security discourse. The efforts by Iran to achieve a military nuclear capability are of course not new and have been a subject of deep concern in Israel over the past few years. However, the preoccupation with the Iranian nuclear threat reached new heights following the election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as president of Iran in 2005, both as a result of his belligerent rhetoric and violent threats against Israel and the rapid progress in Iran's nuclear program and its blatant disregard of the international community's efforts to curb it. Already a few years ago, an item was introduced in the questionnaire regarding the threat of nuclear weapons in the possession of an enemy state (in 2007 and 2009, the term "enemy state" was replaced with "Iran"), alongside an item dealing with chemical and biological weapons in both sets of items measuring threat perception (tables 8 and 9). In view of the increased centrality of the Iranian nuclear issue by 2009, it was decided to introduce a number of questions dealing specifically with various aspects of this issue so as to get a clearer picture of Israeli public opinion on the Iranian challenge.

Evaluation of the Threat

Nuclear weapons in the hands of Iran are consistently viewed by the Israeli Jewish public as the most serious threat facing the country, although a strong majority of Israelis are increasingly confident that Israel can cope with this threat. Careful examination of table 9 shows that over the years, the only threat that receives an average score of 6 or above (on an ascending 1-7 scale evaluating the severity of the threat) is nuclear weapons in enemy (from 2007: Iran's) hands.

Moreover, only once in the last six years did the level of this threat fall below a score of 6 (5.8 in 2006). In the current study, 69 percent of the respondents ranked the nuclear threat level as 7, i.e., the highest level possible. The threat of chemical or biological weapons in enemy hands (the next most severe threat) was given a rank of 7 by 59 percent of the respondents. At the same time, Israelis are becoming more and more confident of their ability to cope with the potential nuclear threat. Table 10 presents, for a ten year period, the percentage of respondents believing that Israel can cope successfully with five strategic threats.

Table 10. Ability of Israel to cope successfully with a variety of threats, 2000-2009 (percent answering in affirmative)

Items	2000	2002	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009
1. All-out war with all the Arab countries	48	58	67	72	76	64	75
2. Potential for an enemy state to attack Israel with biological and chemical weapons	53	68	70	78	79	74	76
3. Potential for an enemy state to attack Israel with nuclear weapons	48	51	52	65	66	55	67
Δ rows 2 and 3	[5]	[17]	[18]	[13]	[13]	[19]	[9]
4. A threat of surface-to-surface missile attacks on Israel	80	85	86	92	93	90	92
5. US will reduce its support for Israel	61	51	53	38	62	62	78

With the exception of 2007, the trend is clear. During the first part of the decade, barely half of the respondents believed that Israel could cope successfully with this threat; in the latter part, the percentage rose to two thirds (the discrepancy in 2007 probably reflects the general despondency that reflected Israeli public opinion in the months following the Second Lebanon War). In 2009, the gap between the perception of Israel's ability to cope with nuclear weapons versus chemical and biological ones narrowed and fell below 10 percentage points. At first glance, the result may seem paradoxical, as in 2009 Iran is seen as being much closer to acquiring a military nuclear capability than it was in the early part of the decade. The

answer probably lies in the public's perception of Israel's nuclear posture and available answers to the threat. The results of the analysis may reflect the success of the IDF in Operation Cast Lead and the reports in the foreign press of the destruction of the Syrian nuclear reactor by the Israeli air force. It may also be that the public is persuaded by the confidence characterizing the speeches of Israeli political leaders.

Respondents were asked what Israel's response should be if it learned that Iran has nuclear weapons. Fifty-nine percent supported a military attack on Iran's nuclear installations while 41 percent opposed a military strike. Respondents were also asked how they believe Iran would behave if it did acquire nuclear weapons. Although Israelis view this possibility quite seriously, only one fifth (21 percent) of the respondents believed that Iran would ever attack Israel with nuclear weapons, while another third (35 percent) believed that Iran would threaten Israel with nuclear weapons but would refrain from an actual attack for fear of Israeli retaliation. One quarter (26 percent) of the respondents believed that Iran would pressure and blackmail countries in the area, including Israel, to further its aims; 13 percent believed that it would encourage Hizbollah and Hamas to escalate their actions against Israel; and only 4 percent believed that Iran would act in a cautious and pragmatic fashion.

Israel's Nuclear Posture

A key factor in the evaluation of the Iranian nuclear threat is the public's perception of Israel's nuclear capability. The Israeli public is almost totally convinced that Israel is a nuclear power; 60 percent are positive that Israel has nuclear weapons while another 30 percent believe so. Only 2 percent believe that Israel does not have nuclear weapons and there is not even one respondent who is positive of this – 8 percent are uncertain. The policy of ambiguity regarding Israel's nuclear capability, adopted and followed by all Israeli governments over the past 50 years, enjoys massive public support; 80 percent of the respondents support this policy and believe that Israel should keep its nuclear capability a secret, 19 percent believe that Israel should go public in order to deter its enemies, and only 1 percent believe that Israel should give up its nuclear arsenal. Table 11 shows changes in the scope of public support for various policy options related to Israel's nuclear posture over the last ten years. As can be seen, public support for

the government's policy of ambiguity has increased significantly during this period.

Table 11. Public opinion with regard to the policy of nuclear ambiguity, 1999-2009 (percent answering in affirmative)

Items	1999	2002	2003	2009
1. Give up nuclear arsenal attributed to Israel	–	4	5	1
2. Maintain secrecy with regard to Israel's nuclear capabilities and continue the policy of ambiguity	73	62	72	80
3. Go public and confirm the existence of a nuclear arsenal to deter the enemy	27	32	21	19

Support for the creation of a nuclear weapons-free zone in the Middle East (NWFZ) is very low, even if Iran should acquire nuclear weapons. Asked what Israel's response should be to a nuclear Iran if it decides not to attack Iran's nuclear facilities, only 13 percent were in favor of working towards the creation of a NWFZ in the entire Middle East (including Israel).

The Response to the Threat

Respondents were fairly confident that Israel can cope with the threat of a nuclear Iran. It is reasonable to assume that this confidence is primarily grounded in the strong conviction as to Israel's deterrent capability. However, when respondents were asked how Israel should respond in the event that Iran does indeed acquire nuclear weapons, responses varied over a number of options. Respondents were presented with two items regarding this issue: the first as to where Israel should invest most of its resources in meeting this threat, and the second as to what should Israel do if it nevertheless decides not to attack Iran's nuclear installations. On the first question, opinion was almost equally divided between two of three options presented to the respondents: 39 percent were in favor of Israel "strengthening its deterrent capability," while 42 percent were in favor of strengthening its defensive capability against missiles through "active defense systems such as the Arrow anti-ballistic missile system." Eighteen percent were in favor of passive defense, i.e., "building nuclear shelters for the population." Israeli public opinion by and large is aware of the futility

of passive defense against nuclear weapons. At the same time, it seems to give equal weight to Israel's deterrent capability and active defense – anti-ballistic missile systems. This runs contrary to accepted strategic thought in Israel, which views deterrence as the only real answer to the nuclear threat. The high percentage emphasizing active defense systems is probably due to the extensive coverage during the past year in the Israeli media of the development of such systems by Israel.

Responses to the second question show that the above notwithstanding, Israelis are keenly aware of the importance of effective deterrence. Respondents were presented with four options: a defense treaty with the United States under which Israel would enjoy an American nuclear umbrella; a policy of open deterrence, with Israel acknowledging its possession of nuclear weapons; a continuation of the policy of ambiguity; and a nuclear-free Middle East. Almost half of the respondents (42 percent) chose the first option; close to a quarter (22 percent and 23 percent, respectively) chose either the second or the third option, and only 13 percent chose the fourth option (NWFZ). In order to further examine the efficacy of the American option, respondents were asked to what degree Israel could depend on American guarantees if Iran were to acquire nuclear weapons. A majority answered in the affirmative; 9 percent believed that Israel could depend on such guarantees "to a very large degree" and 49 percent believed "to a large degree." Thirty percent believed that Israel could depend on such guarantees only "in a small degree," while 12 percent were of the view "not at all."

On the Personal Level

Much has been written and discussed in Israel regarding the potentially disastrous effects of a nuclear Iran on the morale of the Israeli civilian population. Some pundits have gone as far as sketching apocalyptic prophesies of a massive emigration from Israel in the event that Iran develops a full nuclear capability. An attempt was made in the current study to assess the potential effects on Israeli behavior in such an event. Respondents were asked how they thought a nuclear Iran would affect their lives.

Before presenting the results, a caveat is in order. The question presented to the respondents was highly hypothetical in nature and as such

the responses should be taken with a grain of salt. That said, the results are, nevertheless, quite dramatic. Eighty percent of the respondents stated that "they do not expect their life to change," whereas only 3 percent said that they would leave the country; 9 percent stated that they "would consider moving to another community," and the remaining 8 percent said that "they would consider moving to another country, for instance by acquiring a foreign passport." Thus, at least at this juncture, at the personal level Israelis seem quite relaxed regarding the Iranian nuclear threat, the impression being that they could learn to live with the threat. This cannot be construed, however, as in any way minimizing the severity of the threat in the minds of the Israeli public due to a different psychological nature of personal and societal fears.

Chapter 6

The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been the central national security issue in Israel since 1967. The public has engaged in an ongoing dialogue over its direct and indirect consequences and various formulae for its solution. Thus, any meaningful discussion of this issue from the Israeli internal point of view must take into account the immense complexity of public opinion with regard to the entire Israeli-Palestinian problem, and it is the very complexity that perhaps best accounts for the range of public opinion findings on this issue. As is often the case in public opinion studies, the slightest change in the wording of a question can lead to different results. Stating a basically similar question in alternative terms can paint a contrasting picture and lead to a different conclusion.

Juxtaposing similar questions shows what apparently seem to be contradictory results. An uninformed and non-professional observer, upon examining all the results and specifically comparing answers to particular questions, might reach the conclusion that either the respondents were totally confused or that they did not take the interview seriously. However, that was likely not the case. The seemingly tangled and sometimes incongruous results merely demonstrate the complexity of public opinion in Israel on issues of national security in general, and with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular. They also explain why any genuine attempt to understand public opinion and even more so, to fathom its implications for policy decisions, cannot be based on a limited number of questions. Rather, such an attempt must include a wide range of items that incorporate different wording and divergent approaches. Only by considering the various responses and examining the results in the context

of the overall data can one arrive at a comprehensive and accurate picture of Israeli public opinion.

Territories and Settlements

A major issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the future of the territories occupied by Israel in 1967 – primarily Judea and Samaria, otherwise known as the West Bank – and the future of the Jewish settlements established in these areas. Does Israeli public opinion support the principle of land for peace? The answer depends to a large degree on how the question is framed. Figure 4 shows that Israeli public opinion is far from taken with the concept of land for peace. As can be seen from the graph, support for the principle of land for peace peaked in 2005 (just prior to the implementation of the disengagement from Gaza), with half of the respondents supporting the principle and supporters clearly outnumbering those opposed. This was followed, however, by a sharp decrease in 2006 and a further significant drop in 2007, with the latter results recurring in 2009. In both 2007 and 2009, the principle of "land for peace" was rejected by a margin of two to one. The sharp decline in support from 2005 to 2007 was most likely due to a growing conviction among many Israelis that concessions to the Palestinians in particular and to the Arabs in general do not lead to peace but only to more terrorism and hostility – a conviction rooted in the events of 2006 and 2007. The drop in support for the principle of land for peace in 2006 probably reflects the initial disappointment with the results of the withdrawal from Gaza. The further decline recorded in 2007 was probably caused by the overall disillusionment with the withdrawal from Gaza as well as the Second Lebanon War, the Hamas takeover of power in Gaza, and other events.

However, when one is faced with the need to choose from alternatives, a different picture emerges. In the previous studies, respondents were asked: "What do you prefer: an agreement involving major territorial concessions, a unilateral disengagement with fewer territorial concessions, or neither." In 2004 and 2005, a majority of the respondents chose one of the two alternatives involving some form of territorial concessions, with a clear preference for the alternative involving fewer territorial concessions. In 2006, however, respondents were evenly divided between those who were willing to accept some form of territorial concessions and those who
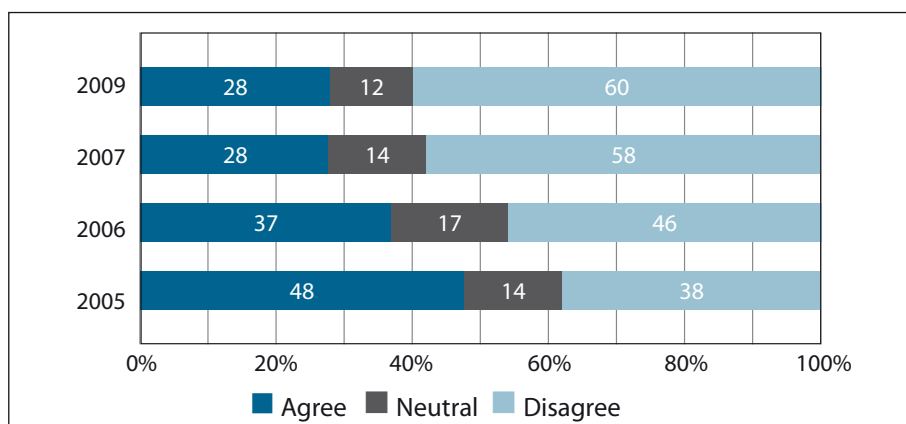
Figure 4. Support for the principle of land for peace, 2005-2009 (percent)

were opposed, and by 2007 over 60 percent were opposed to any territorial concessions – an outcome consistent with the results presented in figure 4. The overall decrease, both in 2006 and 2007, stemmed entirely from a decrease in support for unilateral disengagement, and this was probably due, as in the case of figure 4, to the bitter disappointment of many Israelis with the negative results of the Gaza disengagement and the Second Lebanon War. Thus in order to get a better picture of the full range of opinions on this key issue, an additional option was introduced in the current study, namely "a partial agreement with fewer territorial concessions" – an option much debated in current discourse. Figure 5 shows the results for this question for the years 2004-2009.

In 2009, the option of a partial agreement with fewer territorial concessions was clearly the favored option among the three options involving territorial concessions – chosen by two to one over each of the other two options. Furthermore, with this option comes a majority in favor of some form of territorial concessions. In order to fully understand the implications of these results, one must be aware of the complexity of Israeli public opinion on the issue of territorial concessions. Territorial concession is not the preferred option for most Israelis; indeed they view it with much trepidation and wariness. At the same time, however, as will be demonstrated below, the Israeli public is acutely aware of the centrality of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the need to find some solution – a solution that most Israelis believe cannot be found without some form of territorial concession.
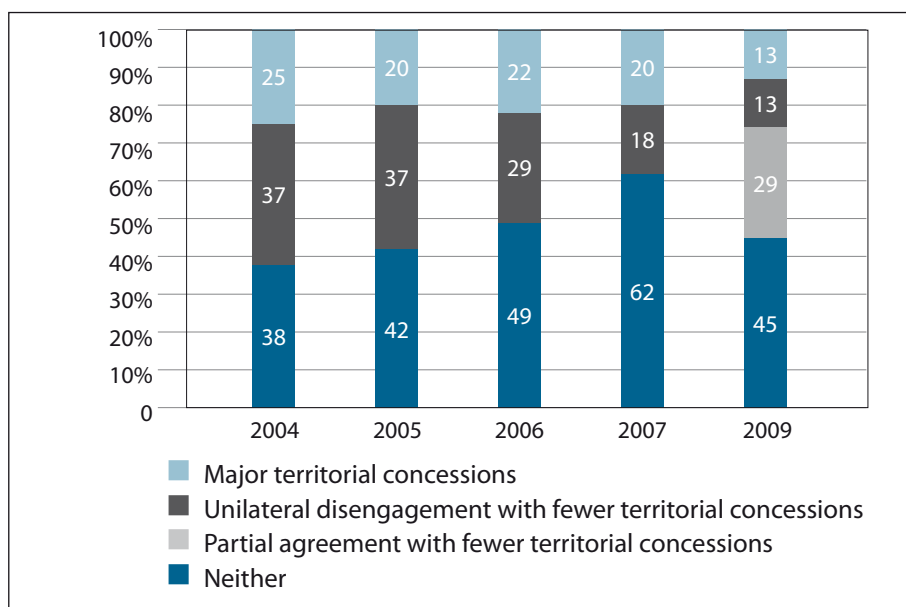
Figure 5. Support for territorial alternatives for an Israeli-Palestinian agreement, 2004-2009 (percent)

This effect becomes evident when the question of territorial concession is posed in the context of a permanent settlement and specified in more detail. Respondents were asked "whether in the context of a permanent settlement that would terminate the conflict, Israel should be ready to return any of a list of specific areas, or continue to retain them even at the cost of avoiding a permanent settlement." The results are presented in figure 6.

Clearly there is a range in the attitude of the Israeli public to different areas in the West Bank as well as a great deal of consistency over time with regard to each specific area. In 2009, readiness to transfer various areas to the Palestinians ranges from a mere 14 percent (the Jordan Valley) to almost 50 percent (isolated settlements on the mountain ridge of east Samaria). Presumably the various attitudes reflect the emotional attachment Israelis have for specific areas, i.e., their religious, historical, or emotional significance as well as their security value. Although the actual percentage may vary from year to year, the order remains constant. On the basis of the results for 2009, one can classify the various areas into four groups:
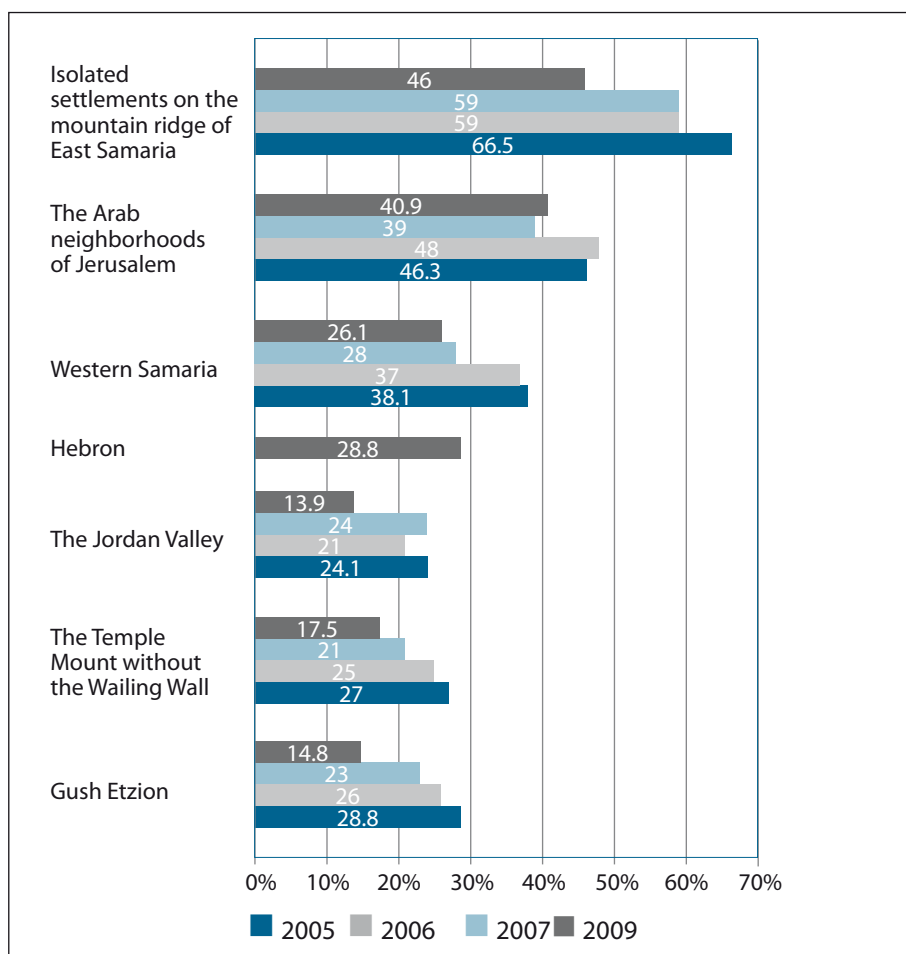
Figure 6. Support for returning specific areas of the West Bank, 2005-2009 (percent)

a. Gush Etzion, the Jordan Valley, and the Temple Mount (excluding the Western Wall) – only 15 percent of the population was willing to return, down between 5 and 10 percentage points from previous years.

b. Western Samaria – approximately one quarter was willing to return, down from about a third in previous years; 30 percent were willing to return Hebron.

c. The Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem – 40 percent of the Jewish population was willing to return these areas, a drop of 5 to 10 percentage points compared to previous years.

Table 12. Support for evacuation of Jewish settlements as part of a permanent agreement, 2004-2009 (percent)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009
No removal of the settlements under any circumstances	27	28	36	41	42
Removal of the small and isolated settlements	57	52	46	45	43
Removal of all settlements, including the large settlement blocs	16	20	18	14	15
Total	100	100	100	100	100

d. Isolated settlements on the mountain ridge of eastern Samaria – close to half of the respondents were willing to return this area (46 percent), down 15 percentage points from previous years, when a decided majority was willing to return this area.

The concept of land for peace in the West Bank is deeply intertwined with the question of settlements. Over 300,000 Jews live in more than 100 communities throughout the West Bank. When one talks of withdrawing from Judea and Samaria or returning certain areas, this has a direct bearing on the future of the communities and their residents. Does Israeli public opinion support the removal of these settlements? Here too the answer depends to a large degree on how the question is posed. As with the concept of land for peace, Israeli public opinion is far from happy with the idea of removing settlements. Nevertheless, from a practical point of view, there is significant support under certain conditions for the evacuation of many settlements – primarily the small and isolated ones, though not the large settlement blocs.

The respondents were asked their opinion regarding "evacuation of Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria in the context of a permanent settlement," and were given three alternatives. Table 12 shows the results over a period of six years. The results for 2004 and 2005 are quite similar. Strong opposition to removal of any settlements, i.e., the hard core right, was limited to about one quarter of the Jewish population (27-28 percent). While support for evacuation of all the settlements, i.e., the hard core left, did not exceed one fifth of the Jewish population (16-20 percent), a little over a majority of the respondents were in favor of removing all the small and isolated settlements, which are viewed by many Israelis as

"political settlements." In 2006, after the traumatic disengagement from Gaza and Hamas' surprise victory in the Palestinian elections, there was a clear decline in support for settlement evacuation. Hard core opposition increased from one quarter to slightly over a third, with less than half supporting the removal of all the small and isolated settlements. In 2007, there was a further drop in support for settlement evacuation, with hard core opposition reaching 40 percent and support for removal of all the settlements down to a mere 14 percent. This is probably due to the continued deterioration of the situation in Gaza, with the disengagement as well as the Second Lebanon War viewed by most Israelis as a failure. Public opinion on this issue stabilized after 2007; results for 2009 were almost identical with those of 2007. In any case, a clear majority (in the vicinity of 60 percent) still supported some settlement evacuation.

Unilateral Withdrawal

In December 2003, Ariel Sharon presented the Israeli public with his disengagement plan, i.e., the removal of all twenty-one Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip and the complete withdrawal of the Israeli civilian and military presence in Gaza, as well as the dismantlement of four settlements in northern Samaria. The disengagement plan did not stand on its own, rather reflected the political concept of unilateralism. The essence of this concept is that inasmuch as there is no Palestinian partner – evidenced, inter alia, by Arafat's rejection of the Barak-Clinton plan and the outbreak of the violent intifada – Israel must take its future into its own hands and undertake unilateral steps that change the reality on the ground, i.e., without prior agreement with the Palestinians. For most intents and purposes, unilateralism is viewed primarily as Israeli withdrawal from areas currently controlled by the IDF, in the context of Israel determining its permanent borders by itself. In this sense, Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon to the recognized international border in May 2000 was an expression of unilateralism. Similarly, the construction of the fence, a physical barrier between the West Bank and Israel, is a manifestation of unilateralism, albeit with a different logic behind it.

How do Israelis view unilateral withdrawals today? Given the events since mid-2005 it is no surprise that by 2009 Israelis were overwhelmingly disillusioned with unilateralism. Returning to figure 5, we can see a clear

preference for unilateral disengagement over major territorial concessions in 2004 and 2005, but this preference dropped significantly in 2006 – evidently as a result of the negative effects of the disengagement from Gaza – and vanished completely in 2007, reflecting the continued attacks from Gaza and the Second Lebanon War. Thus in 2007 respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree "to a unilateral separation (disengagement) from the Palestinians even if it involves evacuation of settlements." The results were quite dramatic – 72 percent disagreed. Given the difficult consequences of the evacuation of the Gush Katif settlements in August 2005 and the events of 2006, the Israeli public does not support any further unilateral forced evacuation of settlements.

The decline in support for unilateral withdrawal is also manifest where unilateralism was actually implemented, i.e., following the disengagement from Gaza. Respondents were asked in 2004 and 2005 whether they agreed or disagreed with Prime Minister Sharon's disengagement plan. In 2006, 2007, and 2009, they were asked whether after the fact they supported or opposed the disengagement plan from Gaza and northern Samaria. Results are presented in figure 7. In 2004, a clear majority supported the plan. In 2005, just prior to its implementation and in 2006, half a year after its implementation, Israeli public opinion was evenly split about the plan. In 2007, after the sharp increase in Qassam rocket attacks from Gaza against
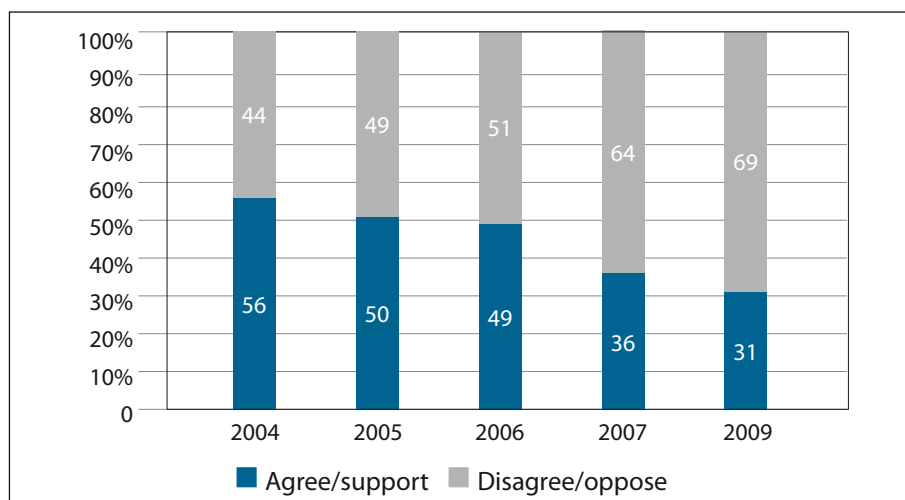

Figure 7. Support for the disengagement plan in Gaza and northern Samaria, 2004-2009 (percent)

Israeli towns and the abduction of the Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit – and six months after the Second Lebanon War – close to two thirds of the Jewish population opposed the plan. In 2009, opposition to the disengagement rose to 69 percent, with less than one third of Israeli Jews supporting it.

At the same time, it is a mistake to dismiss the option of unilateral withdrawals altogether. This policy has its own logic, and under certain circumstances might yet be revived. Beginning in 2005, the survey introduced a hypothetical question that asks: "If after the fence is completed there is no possibility of any progress with the Palestinians and the terror in the territories resumes, do you agree or disagree that Israel should declare the fence as its permanent border and move the settlers who live outside (i.e., east of) the fence to Israeli territory?" Note that most Israelis have probably never actually seen the fence and are quite unaware of its exact route – it is the concept that is important. In 2005, 57 percent of the respondents agreed, increasing to 60 percent in 2006. One must bear in mind that we are dealing with a hypothetical situation based on two hypothetical conditions – a diplomatic stalemate and a surge in terrorism; consequently, the results should be viewed with much caution. In 2007, however, there was a decrease in support for this option, with 49 percent agreeing to this option. In 2009, there was a further decline in support, and only 43 percent agreed. Still, the very fact that notwithstanding disenchantment with disengagement and unilateralism over 40 percent of the Jewish population does not reject this option is quite notable. The results suggest that many Israelis have internalized the view that the fence is more than just a security barrier and has attained features of an eventual permanent boundary.

Policy Implications

What does this data suggest? What are the possible implications for future policies of Israeli governments? What does it say about the chances of advancing toward a solution of the conflict? Presenting some additional findings and analyzing a number of deeply held beliefs will help describe where the Israeli body politic stands on these issues.

One can say with a great degree of confidence that Israelis are committed to a two-state solution. Support for the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza in the framework of a permanent settlement

rose from 21 percent in 1987 to 35 percent in 1993 (just prior to the Oslo agreements) and up to 50 percent in 1997. From 1997 to 2009, the level of support fluctuated between 50 and 60 percent; in 2004, 50 percent supported the establishment of a Palestinian state, 58 percent in 2005, 61 percent in 2006, 55 percent in 2007, and 53 percent in 2009 (figure 8). After the Oslo agreements and until the outbreak of the intifada in late 2000, the percentage of respondents predicting that within five years a Palestinian state would come into being was over 70 percent. Between 2001 and 2006, the response was between 50 and 60 percent – 51 percent in 2004, 55 percent in 2005, and 58 percent in 2006. However, starting from 2007, there was a dramatic decrease in the belief that a Palestinian state would
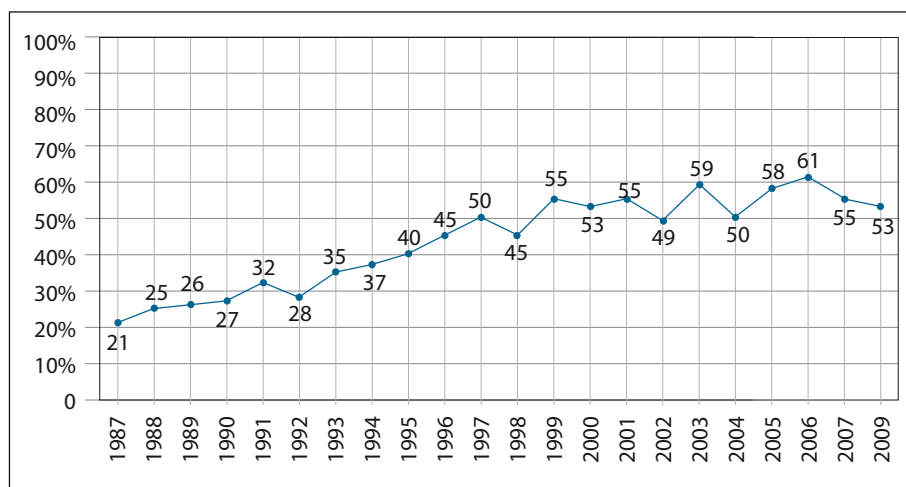
Figure 8. Support for the establishment of a Palestinian state, 1987-2009 (percent)

indeed be established within the next five years; 47 percent expressed such a belief in 2007 and only 34 percent in 2009. In 2009, 14 percent thought that a Palestinian state would be established in the West Bank and Gaza, 10 percent only in the West Bank, and another 10 percent only in Gaza.

Although a clear majority of the Jewish public supports the establishment of a Palestinian state, the term "Palestinian state" still has a negative connotation for many Israelis. In order to neutralize this effect, in 2006 we introduced a new question: "Do you support or oppose the solution of two states for two peoples?" In 2006, 70 percent answered

in the affirmative, i.e. 9 percent more than those who supported the establishment of a Palestinian state. In 2007, 63 percent answered in the affirmative, i.e., 8 percent more than those supporting a Palestinian state, and in 2009, 64 percent answered in the affirmative, i.e., 11 percent more than those answering in the affirmative with regard to a Palestinian state. The 2009 study was conducted more than a month before Prime Minister Netanyahu's speech in June, in which he declared for the first time his support for a demilitarized Palestinian state. Following and perhaps because of PM Netanyahu's speech, support for both a Palestinian state and for the "two states for two peoples" solution likely increased.

Both items have the same underlying logic. One cannot support a "two states for two peoples" solution without agreeing to the establishment of a Palestinian state, and vice versa. This finding is only one of many examples demonstrating the importance of the exact wording of a question. Table 13 shows the combined results for both questions for 2009. As can be seen from the table, 77 percent of the respondents answered in a "logical" way and fell in the two expected diagonals. Slightly over 20 percent answered in a seemingly contradictory way. However, in accordance with our hypothesis, the vast majority of these respondents – close to three quarters of those answering in an "illogical" way – fell in square 2, i.e., opposed a "Palestinian state" but supported the "two-state solution." Only 6 percent of the entire sample opposed a two-state solution and at the same time agreed to a Palestinian state. Table 14 presents the combined results for both questions for 2006. The picture is almost identical. Eighty percent of the respondents answered in a "logical" way and fell in the two expected diagonals. Less than 20 percent answered in a seemingly contradictory way; three quarters of these fell in square 2, i.e., opposed a "Palestinian state" but supported the "two-state solution." Less than 5 percent of the entire sample opposed a two-state solution and at the same time agreed to a Palestinian state.

An interesting finding is that despite all the dramatic changes, disappointments, disillusionments, terrorism, and bloodshed, Israeli public opinion has remained committed to the search for a solution. Respondents were asked over many years to express their agreement or disagreement with the proposition that "the peace process should be brought to a halt, even if it entails the risk of another war." The results for 2004 through

Table 13. Contingency table of public opinion on establishment of Palestinian state and two-state solution, 2009 (percent)

Two-State Solution				
		Support	Oppose	Total N
Establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza	Support	① 48 (284)	③ 6 (36)	(320)
	Oppose	② 17 (99)	④ 29 (178)	(277)

(N) = number of respondents in a cell   Ⓝ = cell number

Table 14. Contingency table of public opinion on establishment of Palestinian state and two-state solution, 2006 (percent)

Two-State Solution				
		Support	Oppose	Total N
Establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza	Support	① 56 (393)	③ 5 (32)	(425)
	Oppose	② 15 (104)	④ 24 (169)	(273)

(N) = number of respondents in a cell   Ⓝ = cell number

2009, charted in figure 9, are relatively stable throughout the entire period. There is little support for stopping the peace process – only one fifth of the respondents agree with the proposition that it should be halted. A clear majority (59-69 percent) of the Jewish population opposed discontinuing the peace process if it could lead to war. However, here we see the same trend found regarding so many other items, namely a drop of between 5 and 10 percentage points in active support for the continuation of the peace process. The disillusionment with the peace process and the doubts as to the existence of a Palestinian partner as a result of the events in 2006 and 2007 is manifest in the shift of 10 percentage points, from 2006 to 2009, from those disagreeing with the proposition to halt the peace process to those taking a middle position.

Finally, respondents were presented with six possible elements of a peace treaty with the Palestinians and were asked whether they supported or opposed each proposal in the context of a peace treaty. Table 15 displays
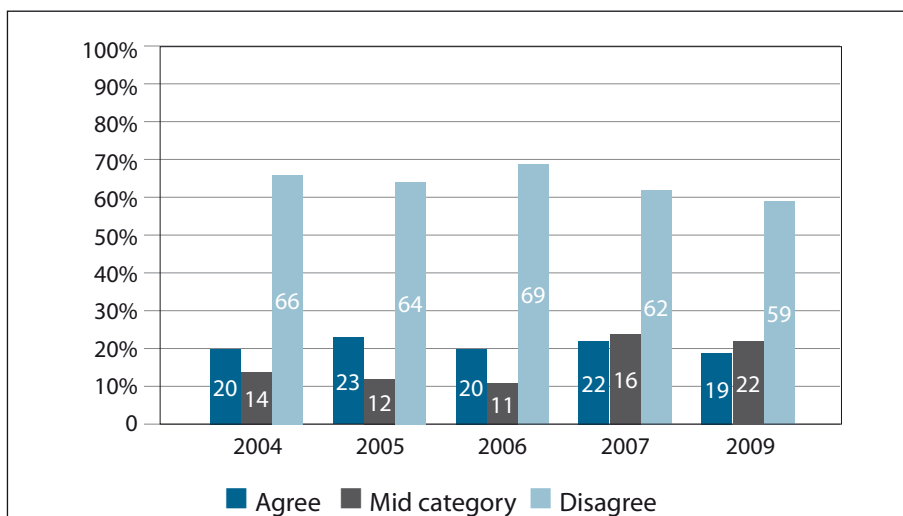
Figure 9. Agreement with halting the peace process, 2004-2009 (percent)

the results for 2004 to 2009. Except for the Temple Mount proposal, there is a slight increase in support from 2004 to 2006, but in three out of five cases, the difference is well within the sampling error. In effect, only with regard to the second and third proposals can one speak of an increase in support during this period. In line with the general picture, there is a definite decrease, from 2006 to 2007 (1 to 8 percentage points) and from 2006 to 2009 (4 to 13 percentage points), in support for the various proposals. The relative order, however, of the various elements in terms of the degree of support is identical with the previous years. Thus, the first three and especially the first two proposals enjoy a wide degree of support, though less than a majority, while the last three proposals seem to lie outside of the Israeli consensus.

The fact that the relative support for the various proposals remained steady over time has clear policy implications. The first two proposals enjoy a substantial degree of support among the Jewish population – close to half of the population registered support for them. These are of course hypothetical questions that survey support or opposition for specific solutions that might be involved in a peace treaty that in reality is nowhere in sight. However, an Israeli government can assume that if it presented the Israeli public with a signed peace treaty incorporating these proposals, i.e., establishing a Palestinian state on 93-95 percent of the land while

Table 15. Support for elements of a peace treaty with the Palestinians, 2004-2009 (percentage of respondents who express strong support or support for an element)

Items	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009
A Palestinian state on 93% of the West Bank and Gaza, with Israel retaining the large settlement blocs	43	46	45	41	41
Giving areas to the Palestinians in return for areas remaining as part of Israel	48	50	54	46	41
Transferring the Arab neighborhoods in Jerusalem to the Palestinians, except for the Old City	36	40	45	37	32
The Temple Mount will be given to the Palestinians and the Wailing Wall will be retained by Israel	30	29	28	27	17
A limited number of refugees will be permitted to return to Israel	14	20	16	17	11
Transfer by Israel of control of the Jordan Valley within a few years	20	24	21	22	14

retaining the large settlement blocs, undertaking an exchange of territory, and transferring the Arab neighborhoods of East Jerusalem (excluding the Old City) to the Palestinian state, it would stand a good chance of winning a majority in support of such a treaty. On the other hand, the remaining three proposals enjoyed little support (from less than one fifth to at most about a quarter of the sample). It would thus seem to be difficult if not impossible for any Israeli government – barring some dramatic change in the region – to agree to the return to Israel of even a limited number of refugees or to relinquish control of the Jordan Valley or the Temple Mount.

Chapter 7

Perceptions of the Arab-Israeli Conflict

The previous chapter charted a wide gamut of opinions among Israel's Jewish population regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its possible solutions. Specifically, it detailed opinions relating to territories, settlements, components of a peace treaty, and unilateral withdrawals. This chapter analyzes basic perceptions and assumptions that underlie public opinion in this crucial area of national security. It presents data on the perceptions of the Israeli public toward the Arab-Israeli conflict in general and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular. The analysis suggests that there is indeed a relationship between one's perceptions and expressed opinions.

Is There a Partner?

Since the intifada and the wave of terrorism that started in 2000 there has been an ongoing intense debate within Israeli society regarding whether there is a genuine Palestinian partner with whom a permanent peace agreement, which would put an end to the conflict, can be reached. This is, in effect, the critical question of Israeli public opinion. Presumably one's opinion regarding this key question reflects, at least to some degree, one's perception of the aspirations and intentions of the Palestinians and of the Arabs is general. One would also expect these perceptions to fluctuate over time, reflecting the course of events and the changes in Israeli-Palestinian relations.

Two core questions were posed to the respondents. The first question, relating to respondents' assessment of the possibility of peace was, "Do you think it is possible to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians?" The second question relates to Palestinian intentions: "In your opinion, to what

degree do most Palestinians want peace?" Figure 10 presents the results for the first question. From 2001 onward, a majority of Israelis did not believe in the possibility of reaching a peace treaty with the Palestinians. In 2006 two thirds of the Jewish population thought it was impossible to reach such an agreement, while in 2009, 70 percent of the respondents were of that opinion.
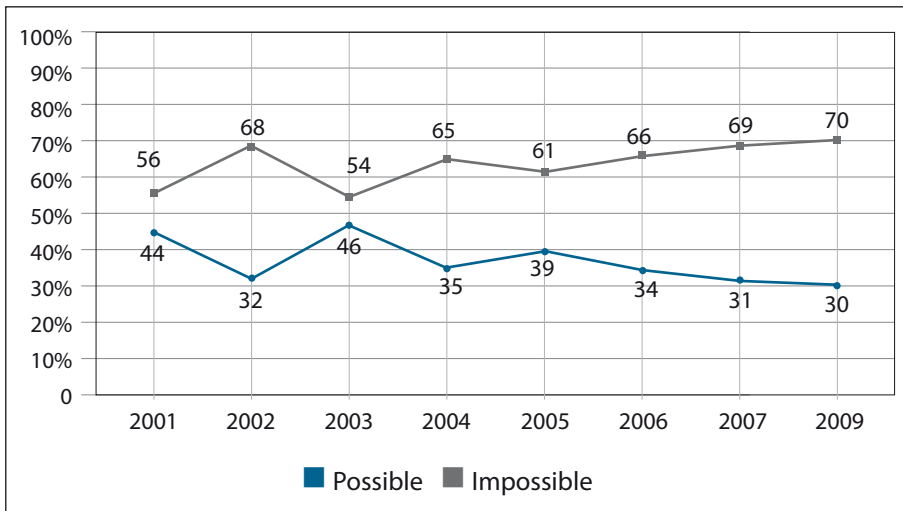

Figure 10. Possibility of reaching a peace agreement with the Palestinians, 2001-2009 (percent)

The answers to the question on Palestinians as potential partners for a peace agreement differ from respondents' perceptions regarding the aspirations of the rank and file Palestinian. While Israelis are very pessimistic about the chances of reaching a peace agreement with the Palestinians, they have a more favorable view as far as the desire of "most Palestinians" for peace. Until the intifada, a majority of Israelis believed that most Palestinians want peace. As a result of the intifada, this percentage decreased – though in 2005 the numbers rebounded to 56 percent. In 2006, it dropped again to 49 percent and in 2007 and 2009 the number of Israelis who believed that most Palestinians want peace stood at 44 percent. Thus while during these years close to half of the Jewish population believed that "most Palestinians" want peace, only a third or less believed in the possibility of reaching a peace agreement with them. A possible explanation

for this is that while many Israelis may have a fairly positive view of the average Palestinian, they have little faith in the Palestinian leadership. The perception held by most Israelis of a weak and rigid Palestinian leadership, unwilling or unable to compromise, explains the result that only a third of the respondents in 2006 and even slightly fewer in 2007 and 2009 saw a possibility of reaching a peace agreement.

In order to further examine perceptions related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, respondents were asked if they thought it would be possible to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians "if the Palestinians would forego the 'right of return.'" The percentage answering in the affirmative in 2009 rose to 40 percent. Upon removing certain factors considered as hindering the attainment of a peace agreement with the Palestinians, such as the "right of return," the percentage of Israelis perceiving a peace treaty with the Palestinians as an achievable target is about equal to the percentage of those believing that most Palestinians want peace.

Another set of questions further clarified the perceptions of the Jewish population regarding the genuine intention of the Arabs. Two items surveyed these perceptions: "In your opinion, what in the end of the day is the aspiration of the Arabs"; and, "If there were a peace treaty with the Palestinians and the main Arab states, in your opinion will it put an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict or not?" Figure 11 summarizes the results for the first question. The question might be considered as framing respondents' answers in a specific direction and not including all possible options, but for the sake of continuity and comparability the question was phrased in the same manner as in previous years. As can be seen, the Israeli perception of the ultimate goal of the Arabs is quite negative. Although there has of course been some variation from year to year, the overall picture is stable and pessimistic in nature. At no time have a majority of Israelis perceived the ultimate goal of the Arabs as limited to recovering the territories conquered by Israel in 1967. Those who believe so varied from a low of 26 percent in 2004 to a high of 44 percent in 2005 (which may have represented a rise in Jewish optimism as a result of the death of Yasir Arafat in October 2004), dropping to 36 percent in 2006 and 28 percent in 2007, but rising again to 34 percent in 2009. The majority believed that the Arabs aspire to destroy the State of Israel and over a third (about 40 percent in 2007 and 2009) were convinced that this would include the killing of a large part of

the Jewish population. The increase in 2009 (6 percentage points) of those espousing a moderate opinion is out of line with other results for 2009 and with the general trend. It is not clear whether this is indeed a change in the trend or merely an artifact of survey timing that would not recur in future studies.
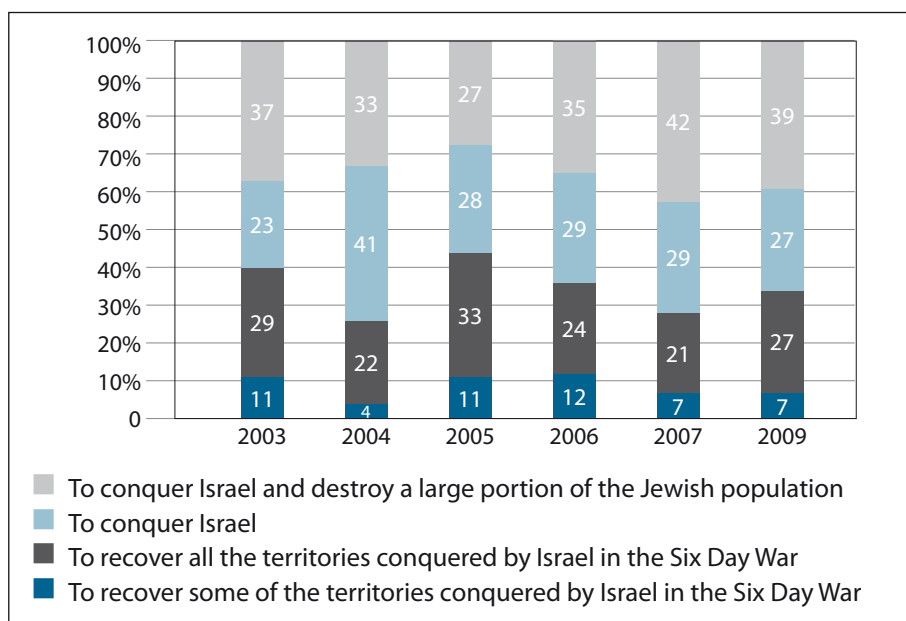

Figure 11. Perception of the ultimate aspirations of the Arabs, 2003-2009 (percent)

The grave mistrust of the Arabs and their ultimate intentions is borne out by the responses to the second question. Starting with the Oslo agreements in 1993, a majority – reaching a high of almost two thirds in 1997 (65 percent) and 1999 (67 percent) – believed that the peace treaties would translate into an end to the conflict. However, after the onset of the intifada in 2000, this optimism gradually vanished. From 2001 onward, the percentage of Jews believing that peace treaties would indeed spell an end to the conflict was consistently lower. In 2001 it constituted 30 percent of the population, 25 percent in 2002, 35 percent in 2003, 26 percent in 2004, 38 percent in 2005, 31 percent in 2006, 25 percent in 2007, and a mere 20 percent in 2009. When taken together, the results for these two questions reflect a deeply held fear that in the final analysis, in the Middle East even

the supposedly permanent is only temporary. It seems that the conviction that the Arabs remain committed to the destruction of Israel in stages (the "phases" plan) is deeply ingrained in the Israeli psyche.

Evidence of the above can be found in the results for a number of items introduced in 2009. Respondents were asked whether in their opinion there was a chance that Hamas would go in the way of Fatah and eventually recognize Israel's right to exist. Forty-four percent said there "was no chance" and another 45 percent said there "was very little chance"; 7 percent said there "was a good chance" and 4 percent said there "was a very good chance." Not surprisingly and in line with these results, 74 percent of the respondents were against negotiating with Hamas. Further evidence for the high levels of suspicion and doubt that Israelis harbor as to the true intentions of the Arabs can be found in their reaction to the Saudi peace initiative – 19 percent were in favor of Israel responding favorably "in principle" to the Saudi initiative, 60 percent were against, and 21 percent were in the middle.

The ostensible incongruity between the questions assessing Arabs' intentions and common Palestinians' desire for peace may be explained by different perceptions of these collectives in the eyes of the Israeli public. Some Israelis differentiate between individual Palestinians, who are believed to want to live in peace, and the Arab collective, which is seen as determined to destroy Israel. A positive note is that all the pessimism and suspicion notwithstanding, Israelis still believe in negotiations and are against halting the peace process (as charted in figure 9).

Israelis are torn between their deep desire for peace on the one hand and their overriding concern and preoccupation with security. Respondents were asked: "What should Israel emphasize in order to prevent war between it and the Arab countries – advancing negotiations for peace or increasing its military power?" From 1987 to 2006, with the exception of 1995, 2001, 2002, and 2004 (years marked by intensive Palestinian terrorism, specifically suicide bombings), a majority supported focusing on negotiations – 61 percent in 2005 and 58 percent in 2006. In 2007, reflecting the trauma of the Second Lebanon War and the increased threats against Israel from many quarters (Iran, Syria, and Hamas), the situation was reversed: only 40 percent supported focusing on negotiations while 60 percent were in favor of putting the emphasis on increasing Israel's

military strength. In 2009, the results were similar – 42 percent supported the former versus 56 percent who focused on the latter; 2 percent insisted on adopting both approaches. Based on a twenty year perspective, one can conclude that in principle, most Israelis realize that the best way to prevent war is through negotiation. However, when faced with severe and more or less immediate military threats or threats to their physical security, Israelis put their trust in the IDF and in their capability for self-defense.

War and Peace and the Fight against Terrorism

Security concerns are indeed paramount in the minds of most Israelis. Respondents were asked to look three years ahead and assess the chances "that war might break out between Israel and an Arab country," or "that there will be terrorism to a significant extent." In 2009, the first question was reworded, referring to "a military confrontation in the north or south." Figure 12 shows the percentage of the respondents for the last five years who estimated the likelihood of each of the two scenarios to be "high" or "medium" (versus "low" or very low").
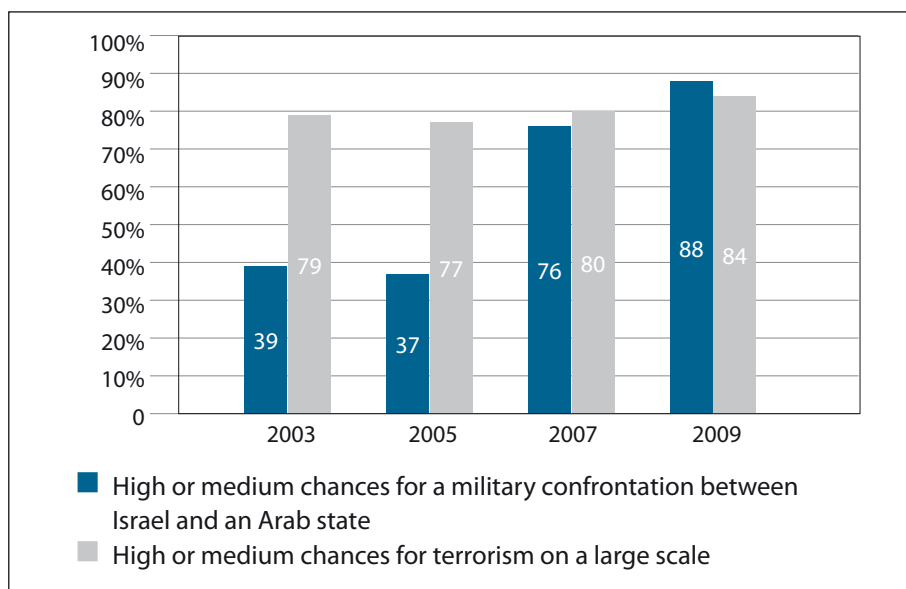

Figure 12. Likelihood of war and terrorism in the coming three years, 2005-2009 (percent)

Predictably, perceptions regarding the probability of various scenarios are subject to extensive fluctuations over time as a consequence of events on the ground. In the year 2000, which opened with expectations of a breakthrough and a possible permanent settlement on the Palestinian front, only 39 percent were concerned abut a possible outbreak of war. This picture was completely reversed in 2001, as a direct result of the failure and breakdown of the Camp David summit in July 2000 and the outbreak of the intifada a few months later. By 2002, 80 percent saw the dark clouds of war. However, within a year, the trend was reversed; during the four year period from 2003 to 2006, only a little over a third of the Jewish public was concerned about an outbreak of hostilities with an Arab country.

The Second Lebanon War brought about a major change in Israeli perceptions, a change that was probably exacerbated as a result of Operation Cast Lead in December 2008-January 2009. This is clearly reflected in the numbers for 2007 and 2009. A sense of the likelihood of war increased to 76 percent in 2007 and 88 percent in 2009, higher than ever before and even surpassing the concern regarding terrorism. (The fact that the wording of the question was changed in 2009 and the phrase "war with Arab countries" was replaced by the phrase "armed conflicts on Israel's southern and northern borders" might in part explain the result.) The complacency regarding a future conflagration that characterized Israeli society prior to the war in 2006 was completely gone. Terrorism remained a major concern of Israelis. Figure 12 suggests that 80 percent of the Israeli public believes that there is a real danger of terrorism on a large scale in the near future.

Finally, what do Israelis see as a solution? Do they believe in a military solution to the conflict? Do they believe in a political solution to the conflict? Figure 13 summarizes the findings that taken together are quite interesting and to a certain degree surprising. During the first half of the decade, most Israelis did not believe in a military solution to the conflict. Starting from 2006, Israeli public opinion has become more divided on this issue. In 2009 – possibly under the impression of the IDF's military success in Operation Cast Lead – for the first time respondents disagreeing with the statement that there is no military solution to the conflict outnumbered those agreeing (45 percent to 40 percent). Yet even in 2009, less than half of the population believed in a military solution. The results are clearer when it comes to the belief in a political solution to the conflict. Israeli

public opinion is not willing to give up on a political solution, even though it hardly sees one on the horizon. From 2005 to 2007, only one third of the respondents agreed that there was no political solution to the conflict, dropping to a quarter in 2009. The results for 2009 are also striking because they go against the overall tendency of a shift to the right. For the first time, a strong majority rejected the proposition that there is no political solution to the conflict – this notwithstanding the fact that only 30 percent believed that it was possible to reach a peace agreement in the near future with the Palestinians (see figure 10). This underscores the finding that the majority of the Israeli public is disenchanted with the Palestinians as political partners but simultaneously does not see any option other than a political solution in the long run.

The reservations many Israelis have regarding a military solution to the conflict are to a certain degree consistent with their views on the fight against terrorism. When asked "whether it is possible or impossible to wipe out Palestinian terrorism by military operations alone," only 22 percent in 2005, 20 percent in 2006, 21 percent in 2007, and 18 percent in 2009 answered in the affirmative. At the same time, 60 percent in 2005, 62 percent in 2006, 61 percent in 2007, and 70 percent in 2009 answered that terrorism can be reduced, albeit not wiped out by military means. In view of the continued success in the war against terrorism, Israelis are evidently more confident in the ability of the security services to control terrorism, yet remain convinced that military means alone cannot put an end to it.

The results thus suggest that the Israeli public differentiates between individual Palestinians and the wider Palestinian and Arab collectives. In the long run, it views political agreement as the only viable solution for the conflict, but simultaneously is highly pessimistic regarding the prospects of an agreement to be signed in the foreseeable future.

No military solution to the conflict

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009
Disagree	39	38	42	40	45
Mid category	12	11	13	17	15
Agree	50	50	45	43	40

■ Agree ■ Mid category ■ Disagree

No political solution to the conflict

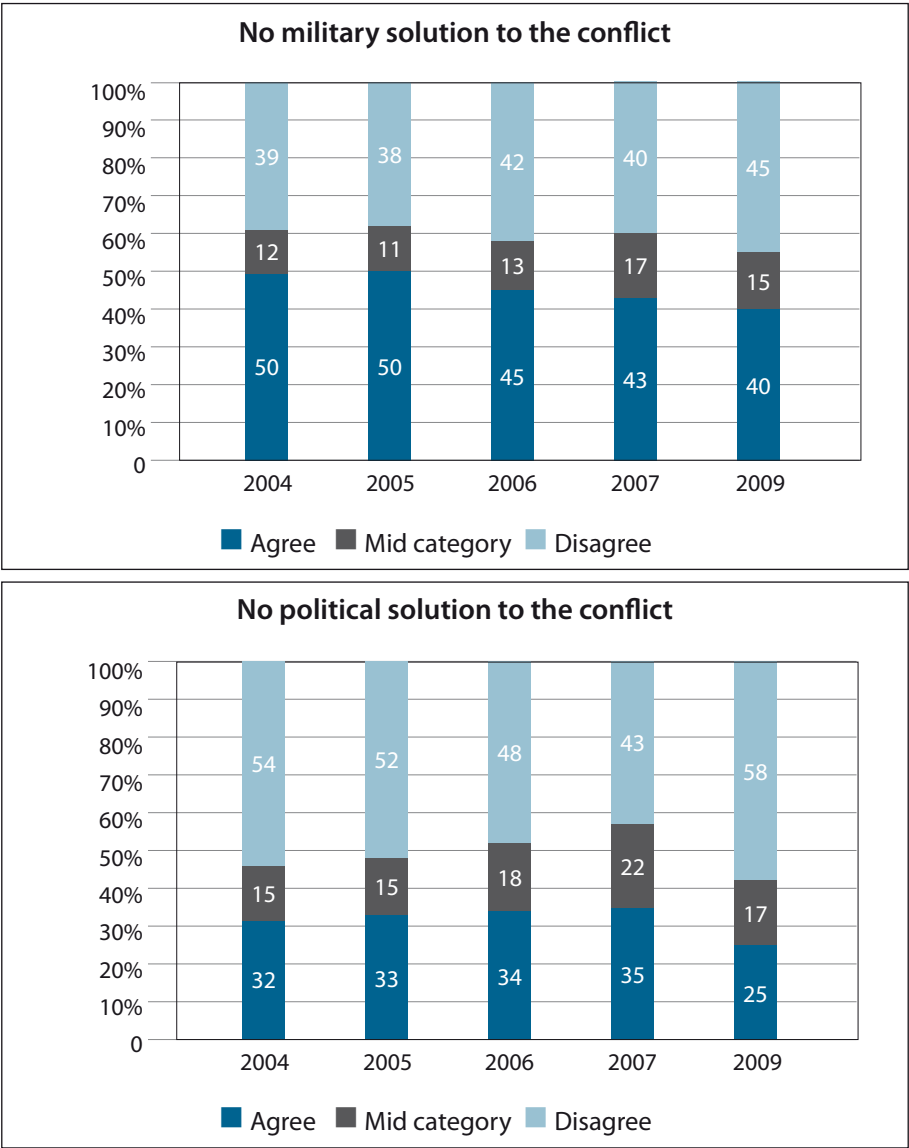|	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009
Disagree	54	52	48	43	58
Mid category	15	15	18	22	17
Agree	32	33	34	35	25

■ Agree ■ Mid category ■ Disagree

Figure 13. Support for propositions on solutions to the conflict, 2004–2009 (percent)

Chapter 8

Domestic Issues: Sluggish Strife or Stiff Acceptance?

In an era when policymakers are increasingly sensitive to the public mood, the nexus in Israel between external threats and domestic concerns has become more prominent. Previous chapters described trends in public opinion that reflect difficulties and challenges faced by the country in the sphere of foreign affairs, defense, and security. This chapter examines two important domestic issues that bear directly on national security: relations between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority, and ideological and political differences within the Jewish public.

Jewish-Arab Relations

According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, in 2010 there are more than 7.6 million citizens in Israel, among them close to 1.6 million Arabs. Arab Christians constitute a relatively small group (approximately 8.5 percent of all Arabs), and the overwhelming majority of this population is Muslim. Any nation state that comprises such a large and distinct minority – differing from the majority in language, culture, religion, and national affiliation – faces a serious challenge in the realm of inter-group relations. Given the reality of the continuous deadly and bloody conflict between Israel and the Arab states as well as the Palestinians, and given the inherent conflict of interests between the two communities, the challenge of Jewish-Arab relations in Israel is of a very grave nature with far reaching consequences and potential repercussions for national security.

How does the Jewish majority view the Arab citizens of Israel, and how in its view should Israel relate to this minority? Figure 14 shows the views

of Jews regarding several distinct approaches towards Israeli Arabs. A careful analysis of the findings reveals the complexity and ambivalence of Jewish majority attitudes toward Israeli Arabs. When faced with a specific question regarding equal political rights for Israeli Arabs, the response is negative. A large majority oppose enabling Israeli Arabs to participate in crucial national decisions or including Arab ministers in the cabinet. In 2005-2009 fewer than a quarter of Israeli Jews supported the idea that Israeli Arabs should participate in crucial national decisions such as the future borders of the country. Similar results emerged on the suggestion to include Arab parties in the government and Arab ministers in the cabinet: 40 percent in 2005 and merely 30 percent in 2009 supported the idea. A majority of Jews were in favor of encouraging voluntary emigration of Israeli Arabs from Israel – rising from 50 percent in 2001 to 72 percent in 2009. On the other hand, when faced with a general question on equal rights for Israeli Arabs subject to fulfillment of their civil obligations, a majority of Jews expressed support, though – in line with the results regarding specific items – the trend is clearly negative; support for equal rights dropped by some 15 percent (from 70 percent in 2005 to 56 percent in 2009). As might be expected, religiosity and ideology both play a significant role in determining attitudes toward Israeli Arabs. Respondents with rightist political views and those belonging to non-secular groups are less willing to grant equal rights to Arabs and are more supportive of voluntary Arab emigration. Since demographic trends in the society suggest an increase in the political power and representation of these groups, one can expect that these negative tendencies toward Israeli Arabs will intensify over time

The findings reflect the dilemma faced by many Israeli Jews in their attitude towards their fellow Arab citizens. On the one hand, the majority of Israeli Jews are committed to the ideals and principles of equality and civil rights – ideals engraved in Israel's Declaration of Independence. On the other hand, they cannot overcome their misgivings as to the loyalty of the Arab citizens. The suspicion is reinforced each time major security events shake a fragile societal balance. This happened during the intifada; the Second Lebanon War – which brought about a deepening of the schism between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority in Israel; Operation Cast Lead; and in various smaller skirmishes between Israel and the Arab states or the Palestinians. An especially exacerbating factor is the strong
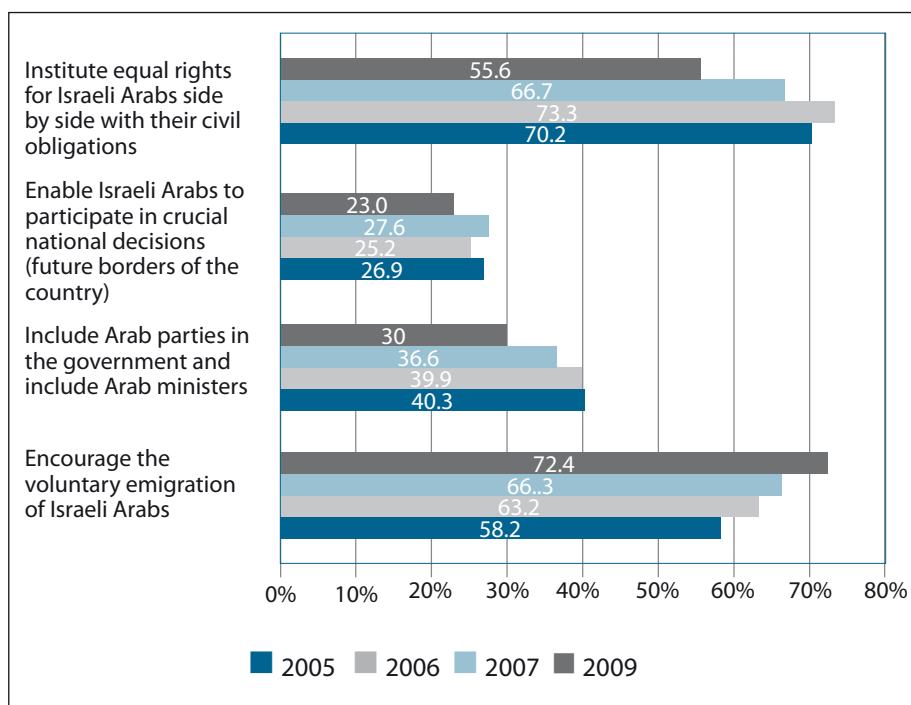
Figure 14. Support for approaches towards Israeli Arabs, 2000-2009 (percent)

support – in rhetoric and deed – of key Israeli Arab politicians and other leading personalities for Hamas and Hizbollah. This negative effect is reflected in the gradual increase in those supporting voluntary emigration of Israeli Arabs and decrease in support for equal rights.

In 2006 a question was added on the transfer of Arab communities in Israel, such as Umm el-Fahm, to a Palestinian state that would be established in the context of a permanent settlement and a land swap. In 2006-2009 approximately 30 percent (31 percent in 2006, 30 percent in 2007, and 26 percent in 2009) were in favor of the transfer of as many Arab communities as possible; about 15 percent (16 percent in 2006, 17 percent in 2007, and 14 in 2009) were in favor of transferring a small number of communities. On the other hand, around 30 percent (29, 27, and 29 percent in 2006, 2007, and 2009, respectively) were in favor of transfer only on condition that it was with the consent of the Arab residents of those communities. Approximately one quarter (24 percent in 2006, 25 percent

in 2007, and 31 percent in 2009) were against the transfer of territories to a Palestinian state under any circumstances. Overall, the results throughout the 2006-2009 period are consistent and reflect the ambivalent attitude towards Israeli Arabs embedded in a desire to find a way to minimize the challenge they present to the nation state.

Finally, respondents were asked their preference regarding measures that should be emphasized by Israel in its treatment of Israeli Arabs – equalizing their conditions with those of other citizens of the state or intensifying punitive measures for behavior that is not appropriate for Israeli citizens. In 2002, 58 percent chose the punitive measures option, in 2003, 49 percent chose this option, and 53 percent in 2004. In 2005 -2007 there was a dramatic change of heart on this issue – the majority (60 percent in 2006 and 57 percent in 2007) chose the equality of conditions option. The trend, however, reverted again in 2009, when 55 percent of the Jewish population preferred to put emphasis on punitive measures rather than on the equality of conditions. On the basis of these results, one can conclude that the attitude of the Jewish population towards Israeli Arabs is to a large degree a function of the actual conduct of the Israeli Arab community and its leadership, and the urgency of the issue in the public debate. The emphasis on "punitive measures" in 2002, 2003, and 2004 reflects the trauma of the rioting by Israeli Arabs in October 2000 (coinciding with the onset of the second intifada), which resulted in the death of thirteen Arabs from police gunfire. The trauma evidently wore off by 2005. In 2006, on the other hand, Israeli Arabs were highly critical of the Israeli government and the IDF in the Second Lebanon War. This criticism was quite strident, raising questions as to the loyalty of Israeli Arabs, but did not express itself in any way through disruptive behavior – and thus was, evidently, taken in stride by the Jewish community. In 2009 the issue of loyalty of Arab Israelis was one of the popular topics of the electoral campaigns for several political forces, and the results of the campaign may be partially reflected in the attitudes of the Jewish public.

Ideological Tensions in the Jewish Public

The complex mosaic of Jewish society poses a different but no less serious challenge to Israel. The country has to accommodate the deep ideological divisions among different groups of Israeli Jews. The national debate over

the future of the settlements and the territories has a strong ideological component. For some segments of the Jewish population, namely, many of the Jewish residents of Judea and Samaria (and prior to the disengagement of August 2005 nearly all of the residents in Gaza) and a large portion of the religious Zionist community, the issue is one of ideology and/or religious belief. Their support for settling the Land of Israel, maintaining Israeli control of the areas conquered in 1967, and preventing the uprooting of any Jewish settlement is based on a strong ideological commitment, nationalistic fervor, and/or deep religious conviction. Many Israelis oppose territorial withdrawal and removal of settlements for pragmatic reasons – security considerations, deep suspicion of the true intentions of the Arabs, and other geo-political factors. For the ideologically and religiously motivated groups, however, such policies are not only anathema but the destruction of their life's work and dreams. The readiness of these groups to put up a tough fight was demonstrated during the disengagement from Gaza in late 2005.

Many Israelis are highly concerned about the possibility of serious clashes and great internal strife should the Israeli government decide on a major withdrawal from the West Bank. An attempt was made to gauge how serious this concern is. In 2005-2007 respondents were asked if in their estimate a civil war could come about "as a result of agreements regarding the territories" or "as a result of further disengagement and the evacuation of settlements in Judea and Samaria." In 2009, both questions were combined into one item: respondents were asked to provide their assessment of a possibility of civil war as a result of evacuation of settlements in Judea and Samaria in the context of a permanent settlement with the Palestinians. Results are presented in figure 15. In previous years, the level of concern about the possibility of civil war peaked just prior to the actual implementation of the disengagement from Gaza. Thus in 2005, close to half of the Jewish population saw a possibility of civil war in both instances. This changed in 2006, after the successful and relatively peaceful implementation of the disengagement. From 2006 onward, only a minority of respondents, albeit a significant one, were seriously concerned about the prospect of civil war. The percentage manifesting this concern dropped even further in 2007, while in 2009 the trend reverted to the level of 2006. In 2007, 29 percent saw a substantive possibility of civil war as
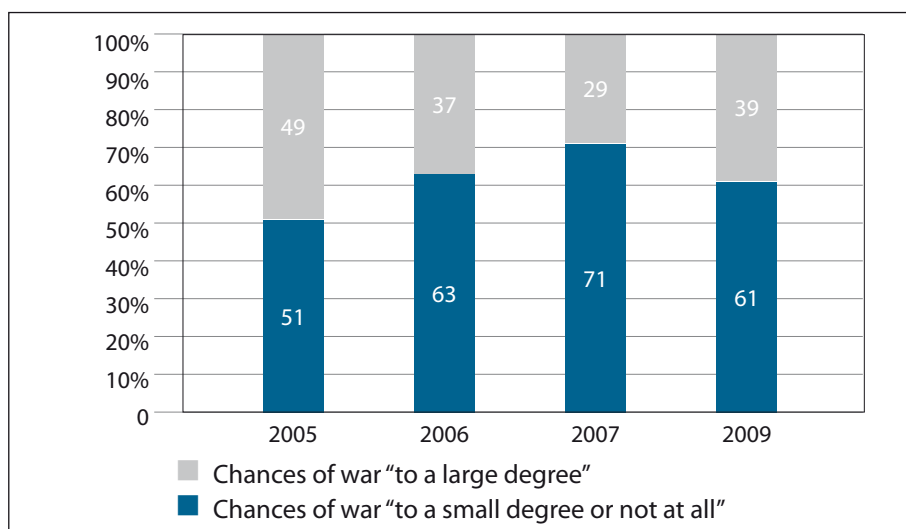
Figure 15. Possibility of civil war as a result of further disengagement and evacuation of settlements, 2005-2009 (percent)

a result of Israeli withdrawal from Judea and Samaria in the context of a permanent settlement with the Palestinians, down from 37 percent in 2006 and 49 percent in 2005, while in 2009, the group constituted 39 percent of respondents.

Respondents also assessed Israel's ability to cope with a possible disintegration of society along religious and social lines. In 2009, an overwhelming majority of the Israeli Jewish public (89 percent) believed that Israel could successfully cope with this threat.

The next set of items that examines intra-Jewish tensions includes the question of potential refusal by soldiers to obey orders for ideological reasons. This issue has been a part of the Israeli public discourse for many years. Initially it arose with regard to soldiers who out of ideological reasons refused to serve in the territories. However, more recently and especially in connection with the 2005 disengagement, it became a serious issue for many religious soldiers when a number of leading religious leaders called upon them to refuse to obey orders and participate in any way in the evacuation of settlements. Both cases deal with implementation by the IDF of orders given by the legitimate government, approved by the Knesset and sanctioned by Israel's Supreme Court as both legal and binding.

Respondents were asked whether a soldier is permitted to refuse to serve in the territories and whether a soldier is permitted to refuse to obey an order to evacuate settlement residents. Figure 16 shows that 2005 was an exceptional year diverging from the general trend. Results for the other surveys show a relative degree of consistency. In both cases of insubordination, between two thirds and three quarters of the population considered refusal illegitimate, yet in 2005, close to half of the Jewish population was willing to accept refusal to obey an order to evacuate settlers, and 30 percent sanctioned refusal to serve in the territories. The 2005 survey was conducted in the month just prior to the disengagement, i.e., when the tension reached its highest point and calls for refusal to obey orders were voiced repeatedly. During the time of the survey, there were one or two highly publicized instances of actual refusal to obey orders by soldiers and an officer. This charged atmosphere evidently had an effect on public opinion and led to a greater willingness to condone such insubordination. Reversal of the trend occurred quite rapidly, and by 2006 the numbers returned to the previous trend. At the same time, sympathy for insubordination regarding orders to evacuate settlers has always exceeded support for refusal to serve in the territories. It should also be noted that there is a slight increase in legitimization for refusal to obey orders to serve in the territories from 2007 to 2009 and a significant increase in legitimization for refusal to obey orders to evacuate settlers from 2006 to 2009. In both cases, however, legitimization remains significantly below the level of 2005.

In sum, the two major divides, between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority and within the Jewish public, differ in nature and scope. The minority-majority confrontation is nationalistic and based upon deeper contradictions embedded in the history of the region and complexity of relations between Israel and external forces (states, international organizations, non-state actors). This strife is nurtured, inter alia, by the standstill of the political process in the region and is very sensitive to the shifts in Israeli foreign policy in general and relations with the Palestinians in particular. Intensification of this strife clearly seems possible, conditioned by radicalization of both the Jewish and the Arab Israeli public. In contrast, the internal ideological contradictions within the Jewish public seem less ominous for the public.
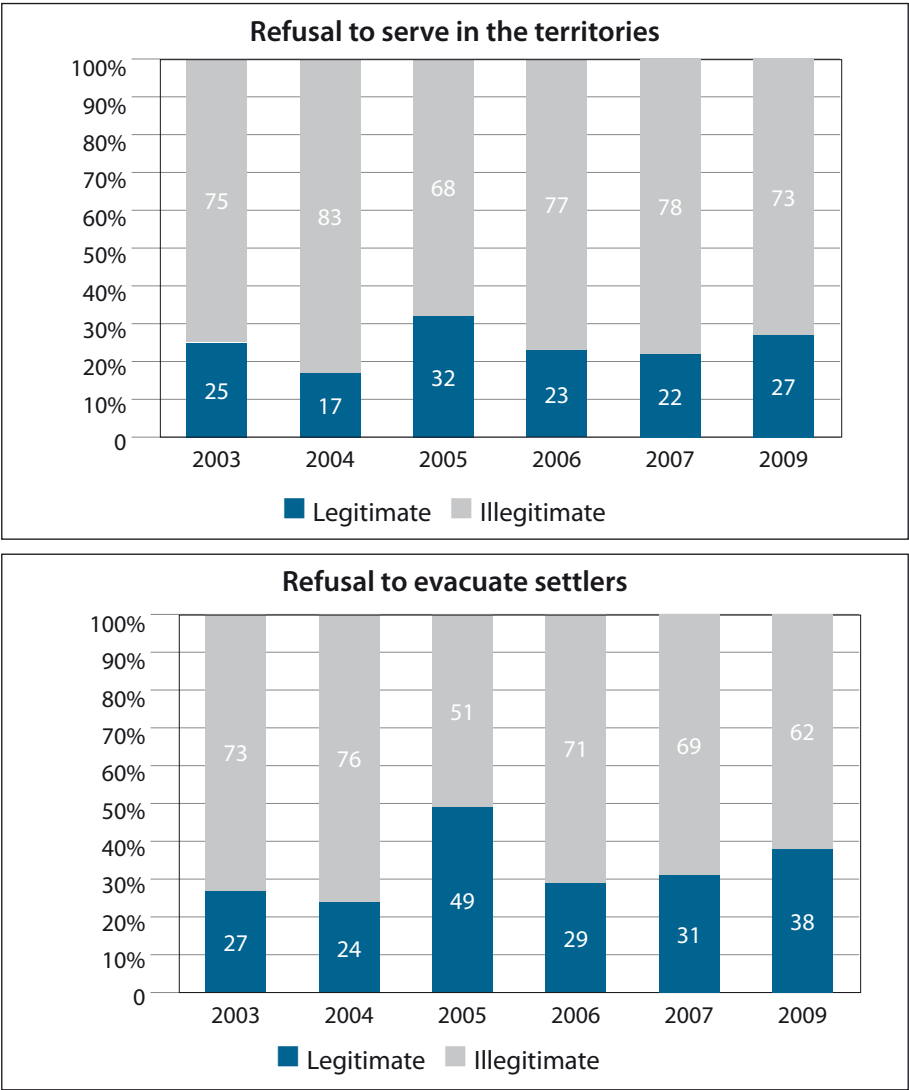
Figure 16. Attitudes on refusal by IDF soldiers to obey orders, 2003-2009 (percent)

Chapter 9

Assessments and Ramifications

To draw an accurate picture of Israeli public opinion on national security issues, this memorandum uses a vast and varied amount of empirical data assembled primarily over the past five years. The data was compiled by utilizing contemporary methodological approaches and analytical techniques.

The task of interpreting the findings and assessing their meaning and ramifications, however, is equivocal. When researchers move from systematic and objective observation of behavior into the realm of interpretation and implications, they leave the safe ground of scientific methodology and veer towards uncharted waters. In Israel, data interpretation is even more difficult because Israeli public opinion has a highly politicized and inherently complex nature. One must tread very carefully when deriving operational conclusions from the empirical realm, including in many cases the seeming contradictions embedded in the results presented in this study. Yet with all the requisite reservation and caution, the study is not complete without an attempt to identify a number of conclusions that address at least to some degree the question of the study's practical implications.

Analyzing Israeli public opinion over the past twenty-five years, one can clearly see a progressive moderation in the attitude of the Israeli public with regard to a possible political solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Few observers or students of Israeli public opinion would argue with this conclusion. Thus while Israelis remain hawkish on security, over the past two and a half decades, they have become more and more dovish on political issues. This is reflected in figure 8, which shows that support for the establishment of a Palestinian state tripled during this period, rising

from 21 percent in 1987 to 61 percent in 2006; 70 percent supported the "two states for two peoples" solution. This dramatic shift is reflected not only in public opinion but in the positions and policies of Israel's political elite as well. Israel's last three prime ministers – Ariel Sharon, Ehud Olmert, and Binyamin Netanyahu – and the current leader of the opposition, Tzipi Livni, all came from the right of the political spectrum. Olmert and Livni grew up within the ultra-right Herut movement, Sharon was the spiritual and practical mentor of the settlement movement in the territories, and Netanyahu represented the hard nucleus of the Likud. Yet each of them in turn espoused positions that twenty-five years ago would have been unthinkable. To a certain degree, this could also be said of Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin.

Did public opinion follow in the footsteps of the political leadership, or did the political leadership simply give expression to and adopt the changing attitudes and opinions of the electorate? This is indeed the age-old question of whether the leader shapes public opinion or merely reflects it. A discussion of this question is beyond the scope of this study. The trend is most probably the result of a circular effect and an interactive process, whereby each part of the equation is affected by and at the same time reinforces the other. In any event, the dramatic shift over time is a fact.

The data presented here indicates that this long term trend to the left has been arrested and in recent years has given way to a shift to the right. Careful examination of the data enables us to identify the year 2006, the mid point in the five year period covered by this study, as a watershed, a turning point in public opinion. The shift to the left continued during the 2004-2006 period. A shift to the right, however, is clearly present in 2007 and 2009 but the extent of the shift is limited and should not be considered as a full scale reversal of public opinion. The study of 2006 was conducted during February and March of that year, prior to the events that seem to be the root of the change in the trend. It represents for almost all the items the high point of the dovish trend. Again, this is reflected in figure 8 and can also be seen in table 3, which shows the profile of the Israeli Jewish electorate – over a quarter (27 percent) are in the left and slightly more than a fifth (22 percent) are in the right; the difference between the left and the right is double that of 2005. This picture of Israeli public opinion was reflected in the results of the national elections held in March 2006.

Kadima, established by Ariel Sharon and headed by his deputy, Ehud Olmert – the party behind the unilateral disengagement from Gaza – won the election and the center-left bloc achieved its best result (56 percent of the vote) in over two decades.

For almost all questions, the results for 2007 show a significant – albeit in most cases not overly dramatic – shift to the right. A further shift to the right was registered in 2009, although for most items, the extent of the shift was less than in 2007 and some items showed signs of stabilization. Thus support for a Palestinian state dropped in 2007 from 61 percent to 55 percent and to 53 percent in 2009; support for a two-state solution dropped in 2007 from 70 percent to 63 percent and remained at 64 percent in 2009.

The shift to the right in 2007 and 2009 is explicitly manifest with regard to the profile of the Jewish public. Thus as the analysis in chapter 2 demonstrates, while the center has remained stable over the years and encompasses half of the population, the center in 2009 is not the same as the center in 2006. During this period, people have moved from the left to the center and from the center to the right. As a result, by 2009, 30 percent had a right profile (of which two thirds were classified as "extreme right") versus only 18 percent with a left profile.

Once again, the shift in public opinion was reflected in the results of the national elections for the Knesset held in February 2009. Although no single party came out a clear winner, the right-center bloc received 54 percent of the vote, enabling the Likud under Binyamin Netanyahu to form a government. Election results are determined by many factors aside from the positions and attitudes of the electorate on the key issues of the day. In 2009 the party in power was hampered by the public's poor assessment of the government's performance in the Second Lebanon War as well as by the charges of corruption and misdeeds leveled against its key leaders. Thus the shift in the vote between the two competing blocs from 2006 to 2009 of 10 percent (5 percent is usually enough to bring about a change of government) probably reflects a constellation of factors, including the change in public opinion.

It is easy to understand 2006 as a watershed year for public opinion. Two key events that year apparently had a considerable effect on public opinion, namely, the perceived failure of the disengagement from Gaza and the Second Lebanon War. As the year progressed, it became more

and more evident that Gaza had not become more peaceful as a result of the disengagement but was turning into a major base for terror attacks against Israel. The abduction of Gilad Shalit by Hamas was an extreme proof of this phenomenon. This was followed within less than three weeks by a major attack by Hizbollah, which crossed into Israel from southern Lebanon – an area from which Israel had withdrawn in May 2000. This attack led to the Second Lebanon War, which saw large areas of Israel under heavy rocket attacks, related civilian casualties, and major disruption of everyday life, the likes of which Israel had not experienced since the War of Independence in 1948.

The situation in Gaza became progressively worse, especially after the armed takeover of Gaza by Hamas in June 2007. The continued and increasingly severe rocket and mortar attacks on Israeli towns and cities in the south eventually led to Operation Cast Lead in December 2008-January 2009. Within a period of two and a half years, Israel found itself in two wars, one in the north and one in the south, both launched from areas from which Israel had withdrawn fully and unilaterally. It is no wonder that the argument of the right that withdrawal from territories does not lead to peace but only to more terror fell on fertile ground.

Two questions must be asked here: what is the exact extent of the shift to the right, and does the shift reflect primarily demographic changes or is it characteristic of all segments of the population. Results presented and analyzed in chapter 3 reinforce the findings of previous studies regarding the overwhelming influence of religious identification on one's political attitudes – the ultra-Orthodox and the religious sectors are significantly more to the right than the rest of the population. Could the shift to the right reflect primarily an increase in the representation of these two groups in the overall sample as a result of their higher birth rates? To answer this question, an analysis was performed on the question regarding the establishment of a Palestinian state, and the results appear in chapter 3. With the exception of the religious sector – which showed no change on this question – there was a decrease in support for a Palestinian state, i.e., a shift to the right, from 2006 to 2009, of an identical magnitude (7 percent) for each of the other three groups – ultra-Orthodox, traditional, and secular. The idea of a Palestinian state lost on average 6 percent of its supporters in all sectors of the Jewish population from 2006 to 2009. For the overall

sample, support for a Palestinian state dropped during this period by 8 percentage points (from 61 percent to 53 percent). Thus, the shift to the right is a genuine phenomenon; the effect of demographic factors in this instance is minimal. However, as the years go by the percentage of the religious and especially the ultra-Orthodox public within the overall adult Jewish population will increase significantly, and in all probability this will have a dramatic effect on public opinion in general.

The exact extent of the shift to the right is hard to define, as it varies from item to item; for most items the range is anywhere from 2 percent to 11 percent. Based on the profile analysis and some key items, the best approximation would be between 7 percent and 8 percent, i.e., a significant shift, above and beyond the sampling error. The shift to the right, which was observed in 2007 and confirmed in 2009, counteracting the trend manifested during the 2004-2006 period, is one of the major findings of this study. Nevertheless, it should not be exaggerated or overly dramatized. There remains a great deal of stability in Israeli public opinion. A majority of Israeli Jews support a Palestinian state, close to two thirds support the "two states for two peoples" solution, and a solid majority (58 percent) still support the evacuation of some settlements in the context of a permanent agreement with the Palestinians. The center remains strong with the extreme right and extreme left together comprising less than a quarter of the population. Inasmuch as the moderate right and moderate left are not that far from the center, this means that there is a significant degree of flexibility in Israeli public opinion. The strength, resilience, and stability of its center or what is otherwise known as "middle Israel or the silent majority" is considered by many to be one of Israel's major assets.

The results also point to a high degree of stability in basic political values. The dominance of demography over geography remains a basic feature of the Israeli value system. The value of preserving Israel as a Jewish state, i.e., a state with a solid Jewish majority, was chosen over the past years as a supreme value; close to three quarters of the respondents chose this value as the most important or second most important value – a result significantly higher than for any of the other three values presented to them. In 2009, the value of peace was definitely the second most preferred value – over half of the respondents (57 percent) chose it as the most or second most important value (compared to a third each for "democracy" and for

"Greater Israel"). One may assume that the two wars Israel experienced in two and a half years as well as the continuing threats from near and far have highlighted the importance of peace for many Israelis.

One may ask whether the results of 2009 are relevant to today. The aim of this project is not to supply information on the public stand on any given issue at any given moment. Rather, its purpose is to examine long range trends in Israeli public opinion on national security issues at large over time. This data complements reports of ongoing public opinion surveys, almost all of which are based on telephone surveys. The results of these ongoing surveys, when compared with results for specific items in this study, by and large confirm the results presented here and certainly do not point to any dramatic changes from those reported in this study.

What is the bottom line? What conclusions can be derived from the data, as far as the chances for advancing towards a solution to the conflict? On the one hand, Israelis are highly preoccupied with their security, deeply mistrustful of the Palestinian and Arab collective, and see little chance of reaching a peace agreement. At the same time, they are deeply desirous of peace, believe – at least in principle – in a political solution, are adamant that negotiations continue, and perceive demography, i.e., preserving Israel as a Jewish state, as more important than geography and overriding the importance of preserving "Greater Israel." The majority of Israelis support the solution of "two states for two peoples," but the results clearly indicate that the perception of most as far as the borders and parameters of these two states is quite far from that of the Palestinians.

The results of this study reinforce the assessment of previous years, namely that the issue will likely be decided by two factors: events on the ground, specifically confidence building measures, and charismatic leadership. There is no substitute for strong leadership. There is good reason to believe that a charismatic political leader, backed by a strong and united government and with support of the defense establishment, could go very far regarding a permanent settlement with the Palestinians that would enjoy, albeit begrudgingly, approval of the Israeli public.

Appendix A

The Sample

The study described in this publication was based on a representative sample of the adult (eighteen years and above) Jewish population of Israel. The sample size of the survey was set at 600 respondents. Using a stratified random sampling procedure, the questionnaire was administered by trained interviewers (from a pool of 80 trained face to face interviewers) to 616 respondents in the spring of 2009 (from mid-April to mid-May). The interviews were conducted at the permanent residence of the respondents and each interview lasted approximately one hour. Each household was visited at least three times to increase the response rate and decrease the number of refusals. At each household, one adult (over the age of 18) was interviewed. The overall response rate reached 51 percent. The rest of the units (households) were either unpopulated/offices (2 percent) or were made up of people who could not communicate in Hebrew (14 percent), were empty (7 percent), or were households where the respondent was ill or abroad (6 percent). Less than one quarter of potential respondents (21 percent) refused to take part in the survey for various reasons. Thus in effect, out of every four households populated by Hebrew speakers visited by the interviewers, close to three were actually surveyed, i.e., our research design allowed minimizing the self-selection bias that stems from possible differences between those willing and those refusing to participate in the study.

Units of analysis (households) were chosen by a two-stage random sampling procedure that included the stratification of geographic areas and a construction of representative statistical areas. The households were drawn from 45 statistical areas, chosen randomly and spread over 27 different localities. Each statistical area was constructed as a representative

segment of the overall socio-demographic composition typical for that area. The sampling error constitutes ± 4 percent.

In order to check whether the sample is indeed representative of the adult Jewish Israeli population, the results for several demographic indicators were compared with nationwide data reported by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS). Table A1 shows the distribution according to gender, as reported by the CBS, for the entire Jewish population eighteen years and older, and as found in the 2009 sample. The distribution for 2009 is similar to the data provided by the CBS for 2008; the differences are small and all well within the sampling error.

Table A1. CBS Jewish population in 2008 and INSS survey distribution by gender

Gender	CBS data, 2008 %	Sample, 2009 %
Men	49.2	47.7
Women	50.8	52.3
Total	100	100

Table A2 presents the distribution for age. As can be seen there is a clear similarity between the 2009 sample and the CBS data, except for two instances, namely the age groups of 25-29 and 55-64, which are overrepresented in the INSS survey. Even for these two categories, the divergence is only slightly above the sampling error. Increasing the number of categories within a given variable increases the sensitivity of a variable but also raises the probability of sampling error for any given category. Thus, if age were divided into three categories (instead of nine), namely young (18-29), adult (30-64), and senior citizens (65 and above), the differences between the CBS data and that of the sample would all be within the sampling error.

Tables A3 and A4 present the distribution for two key demographic variables: education measured in years of schooling and country of origin.

Comparison of the sample with the CBS data suggests that overall the sample is representative of the general adult Jewish population, albeit with some discrepancy on both educational level and country of origin – discrepancies that might very well be related. Individuals with post-high

Table A2. CBS Jewish population in 2008 and INSS survey distribution by age group

Age groups	CBS data, 2008 %	Sample, 2009 %
18-19	4.4	3.3
20-24	11.3	10.5
25-29	10.9	16.9
30-34	10.7	9.5
35-44	15.2	12.3
45-54	15.9	13.2
55-64	14.6	18.7
65-74	8.7	10
75+	8.3	5.6
Total	100	100

Table A3. CBS Jewish population in 2008 and INSS survey distribution by education

Years of schooling	CBS data, 2008 %	Sample, 2009 %
0	1.9	1.1
1-4	0.8	0.3
5-8	6.0	5.7
9-10	6.3	6.7
11-12	34.9	44.9
13-15	26.1	20.7
16+	24.0	20.6
Total	100	100

school education (for the most part academic) are underrepresented in the sample, while those with a full or almost full high school education are overrepresented in the sample. Regarding the country of origin of the respondents, individuals born in Europe and US, including the European parts of the former Soviet Union, are slightly underrepresented in the sample while those born in Asia and Africa are overrepresented in the

Table A4. CBS Jewish population in 2008 and INSS survey distribution by geographic origin

Origin	CBS data, 2008 %	Sample, 2009 %
Father born in Israel, respondent born in Israel	20.3	19.6
Respondent born in Europe, US (Western, Central, Eastern, USSR)	28.4	23.1
Respondent born in Asia and Africa (including USSR)	13.1	20.1
Respondent born in Israel, father born in Asia and Africa	23.8	21.3
Respondent born in Israel, father born in Europe, US	14.4	15.9
Total	100	100

sample. This discrepancy is, however, partially compensated for by an opposite discrepancy regarding individuals whose father was born in these countries. Thus, when examining the ethnic composition of the sample, Sephardic (oriental) Jews are overrepresented by 4.5 percent while Ashkenazi (Western) Jews are underrepresented by 3.8 percent, i.e., within the sampling error. The source of the discrepancy for both demographic variables may be the fact that the massive immigration of Russian Jewry in the 1990s is not properly represented in the sample due to the language barrier (an inability to answer the survey questions in Hebrew).

As demonstrated throughout this monograph, religious identification is the single most influential factor in determining attitudes and opinions on national security issues. Indeed, the weight of this factor in determining one's opinions is equal or even greater than that of all other demographic variables combined. It is therefore essential to examine whether the distribution on this key variable in our sample is equivalent to the distribution for the entire population. In 2009, as part of a nationwide social survey conducted by the CBS on a sample of 7,600 respondents representing the entire adult population of twenty years and older, the CBS gathered data as to one's religious self-identification. Table A5 presents the distribution on religious self-identification as reported by the CBS in 2009 and responses to an identical question for the sample.

Table A5. CBS Jewish population in 2009 and INSS survey distribution by religious self-identification

Religious affiliation	CBS data, 2009 %	Sample, 2009 %
Ultra-Orthodox	8.0	11.5
Religious	12.0	11.2
Traditional	13.0	13.3
Traditional – non-religious	25.0	18.5
Secular	42.0	45.5
Total	100	100

The main differences are in the traditional non-religious and ultra-Orthodox groups. It would seem that the ultra-Orthodox group is slightly overrepresented at the expense of the traditional-non-religious group. However, this discrepancy can be partially explained by the different basis for the two sets of data – twenty years and older in the CBS data versus eighteen years and older in the INSS sample – and the different fertility rates of the two groups. The natural population growth is higher among the ultra-Orthodox – more than double that of the secular population. Since the CBS surveys people twenty years and older and the INSS 2009 study included also eighteen and nineteen year old respondents, one would expect a slightly larger representation of ultra-Orthodox and a lower representation of other groups in the sample than that reported by the CBS as a natural result of demographic trends. As such, the real differences are in all probability well within the sample error.

Taken as a whole, the sample of the Jewish adult population of Israel drawn for the INSS survey in 2009 constitutes a representative sample of the population and the analysis of the sample data can be safely used to infer conclusions about this population. To the degree that there may be any bias in the data, it would be in the direction of slightly more right or hawkish responses.

Appendix B

The National Security and Public Opinion Project (NSPOP)

Launched in 1984, the National Security and Public Opinion Project (NSPOP) monitors Israeli public opinion on issues related to national security. Surveys undertaken and cited in the framework of this project were bases on representative samples of the adult Jewish population of Israel. The project was conceived and until 2004 directed by the late Professor Asher Arian, and all the surveys through that year were prepared, conducted, and analyzed by him. As of 2005, responsibility for the project was transferred to Dr. Yehuda Ben Meir.

This study is based on the data derived from five surveys. The first was conducted during February 2004; the second from July 5 to August 11, 2005, just prior to the disengagement from Gaza. The third survey was conducted in February 21-March 27, 2006, just prior to the national elections. The fourth survey was conducted in February 25-March 25, 2007. The current survey was conducted during May-June 2009. The sampling error at the 95 percent level of the 2005 survey is ±3.76 percent, of the 2006 survey is ±3.72 percent, of the 2007 survey is ±3.75 percent, and of the 2009 survey is ±3.76 percent.

The dates of the project's surveys were: (1) June 1985 (2) January 1986 (3) December 9, 1987-January 4, 1988 (4) October 2-30, 1988 (5) March 5-October 27, 1990 (6) March 16-31, 1991 (7) June 1-21, 1992 (8) January 1-15, 1993 (9) January 11-February 9, 1994 (10) January 4-February 7, 1995 (11) February 1996 (12) March 1-31, 1997 (13) January 26-March 9, 1998 (14) January 25-March 7, 1999 (15) January 24-Febrary 26, 2000 (16) April 12-May 11, 2001 (17) January 30-Febrary 27, 2002 (18) April

27-May 23, 2003 (19) February 2004 (20) July 5-August 11, 2005 (21) February 21-March 27, 2006 (22) February 25-March 25, 2007 (23) May-June, 2009.

Sample sizes were 1,171 in 1985; 1,172 in 1986; 1,116 in 1987; 873 in 1988; 1,251 in 1990; 1,131 in 1991; 1,192 in 1992; 1,139 in 1993; 1,239 in 1994; 1,220 in 1995; 1,201 in 1996; 1,126 in 1997; 1,207 in 1998; 1,203 in 1999; 1,201 in 2000; 1,216 in 2001; 1,264 in 2002; 1,103 in 2003; 1,100 in 2004; 704 in 2005; 724 in 2006; 709 in 2007; and 616 in 2009.

The fieldwork for the surveys through 1995 was done by the Dahaf Research Institute, in 1996 by Modi'in Ezrachi, between 1997 and 2002 by the Almidan/Mahshov Research Institute, and starting in 2003 by the B. I. and Lucille Cohen Institute of Public Opinion Research at Tel Aviv University.

Notes

1 M. Rokeach, *Beliefs, Attitudes, and Values* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1970); M. Rokeach, *The Nature of Human Values* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); and M. Rokeach, ed., *Understanding Human Values: Individual and Societal* (NY: Free Press, 1979).

2 S. S. Schwartz, "Universals in the Content and Structure of Values: Theoretical Advances and Empirical Tests in 20 Countries," *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 25 (1992):1-65 extends Rokeach's definition.

3 M. Shamir and J. Shamir, *The Anatomy of Public Opinion* (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 2000).

4 C. Seligman and A. Katz, "The Dynamics of Value Systems," in C. Seligman. J. M. Olson, and M. P. Zanna, eds. *The Psychology of Values: The Ontario Symposium,* Volume 8 (Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 1996), pp. 53-75.

5 E.g., S. Feldman and J. Zaller, "The Political Culture of Ambivalence: Ideological Responses to the Welfare State," *American Journal of Political Science* 36 (1992): 268-307; and P. M. Sniderman, "The New Look in Public Opinion Research," in A. Finifter, ed., *Political Science: The State of the Discipline II* (Washington, DC: American Political Science Association, 1993), pp. 219-45.

6 The National Security and Public Opinion Project adopted this approach to the study of individuals' value systems.

7 Average threat score for individuals choosing democracy is 4.9 (on a 7 point scale when 7 indicates the maximum level of threat); while for respondents prioritizing peace, Greater Israel, and a Jewish majority, it is respectively, 5.5, 5.7, and 5.4). The post-hoc Games Howell test for significance of difference in means was performed.

8 Six percent was obtained in the following way: (2006-2009)/N of categories, i.e., [(21-14) +(36-37) +(58-51) + (76-69)]/4 = 5.8 percent change.

INSS Memoranda 2007 – Present

No. 106, November 2010, Yehuda Ben Meir and Olena Bagno-Moldavsky, *Vox Populi: Trends in Israeli Public Opinion on National Security 2004-2009*.

No. 105, August 2010, Meir Elran and Yoel Guzansky, eds. *Vision and Reality in the Middle East: Security Challenges of the 21st Century – Conference Proceedings*.

No. 104, June 2010, Gallia Lindenstrauss, *Mediation and Engagement: A New Paradigm for Turkish Foreign Policy and its Implications for Israel* [Hebrew].

No. 103, May 2010, Tamar Malz-Ginzburg and Moty Cristal, eds., *A Nuclear Iran: Confronting the Challenge on the International Arena* [Hebrew].

No. 102, December 2009, Michael Milstein, *Muqawama: The Challenge of Resistance to Israel's National Security Concept* [Hebrew].

No. 101, November 2009, Meir Elran and Judith Rosen, eds. *The US and Israel under Changing Political Circumstances: Challenges of the 21st Century – Conference Proceedings*.

No. 100, September 2009, Aron Shai, *Sino-Israeli Relations: Current Reality and Future Prospects*.

No. 99, June 2009, Meir Elran, ed., *The Civil Front* [Hebrew].

No. 98, April 2009, Anat N. Kurz, *The Palestinian Uprisings: War with Israel, War at Home*.

No. 97, March 2009, Shmuel Even and Amos Granit, *The Israeli Intelligence Community: Where To?* [Hebrew].

No. 96, September 2008, Ron Tira, *The Struggle over the Nature of War* [Hebrew].

No. 95, August 2008, Anat N. Kurz, *The Palestinian Uprisings: Struggle on Two Fronts* [Hebrew].

No. 94, July 2008, Ephraim Kam, ed., *A Nuclear Iran: Implications for Arms Control, Deterrence, and Defense*.

No. 93, April 2008, Shmuel Even and Zvia Gross, *Proposed Legislation on the IDF: Regulating Civil-Military Relations in the Wake of the Second Lebanon War* [Hebrew].

No. 92, December 2007, Dani Berkovich, *Can the Hydra be Beheaded? The Campaign to Weaken Hizbollah* [Hebrew].

No. 91, July 2007, Benny Landa and Shmuel Even, *The Israeli Economy in the Age of Globalization: Strategic Implications* [Hebrew].

No. 90, May 2007, Yehuda Ben Meir and Dafna Shaked, *The People Speak: Israeli Public Opinion on National Security 2005-2007*.

No. 89, March 2007, Ron Tira, *The Limitations of Standoff Firepower-Based Operations: On Standoff Warfare, Maneuver, and Decision* [English and Hebrew].

No. 88, February 2007, Ephraim Kam, *A Nuclear Iran: What Dies it Mean, and What Can be Done*.

No. 87, January 2007, Ephraim Kam, *A Nuclear Iran: Analysis and Implications* [Hebrew].