The Prime Minister and "Smart Power": The Role of the Israeli Prime Minister in the 21st Century

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Any defense doctrine, no matter what time and place, must start with one question: what is the objective?

With the various upheavals that Israel and the Middle East have experienced in recent years, we have often lost sight of the objective, but in fact, it is as simple as it was from the first day. On this issue there was rare agreement between two of Zionism's founding fathers, David Ben-Gurion and Ze'ev Jabotinsky. Ben-Gurion based the defense strategy document that he submitted to the government in 1953 on Jabotinsky's well-known Iron Wall essay from 1923.[1] They both stated the basic principle that has not changed since then, despite its various formulations: "Israel must be so strong that its enemies know in advance that they will lose any war against it."

Israel's strength must be disproportionate to its size or to the challenges it faces, and our enemies need to know this. Any other situation will encourage our enemies – whether state actors or terrorist organizations – to test our strength. Israel must be strong enough so that it can win any war or operation, within a reasonable time, while demonstrating complete superiority. It must be even stronger if it aspires for an agreement with its neighbors. Even if someone believes that an agreement with the Palestinians is the solution to all of Israel's security problems, it is worth remembering the sober warning of former National Security Council head Major General (ret.) Yaakov Amidror: "No agreement Israel reaches and signs will have

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any practical significance for the world being established in the Middle East unless Israel has in its hands the power to defend and enforce it."[2] Only such strength – decisive, intimidating strength, along with the willingness to use it – will bring us to the point where we will not have to use it, in other words, to the point where we can secure our future without having to fight.

In order to sustain this strength, we must understand its components. A "strong Israel" is not just a military concept. Military power is part of Israel's strength, but military power alone is not enough to achieve the objective. As Ben-Gurion stated, "Our security is not dependent only on the army…non-military factors will be decisive, no less than military factors."[3] A strong Israel is much more than a strong IDF. It is an Israel that thrives economically, enjoys social cohesion and a shared ethos, is bolstered by undisputed strategic alliances and international backing, and boasts a decisive qualitative and technological edge. These are the basic conditions. Without them we will not be able to be strong enough to prevent wars, win them if they break out, or advance peace.

Creating this integrated power, which unites the military and civilian components into a single force, is the central role of the prime minister of Israel. The prime minister is not a member of the General Staff, and is certainly not supposed to be the one who maps special operations or assesses the deployment of the Border Police in the West Bank when there are attacks. His role is to connect three forces: Israel's military strength, its socio-economic strength, and its political strength. These are not separate elements, but rather a single combined entity. The proper balance between them is a force multiplier for Israel's strength. Creating and fortifying this combination creates "integrated power" (the Israeli version of "smart power"),[4] which is the key to the development of Israel's strength. Creating integrated power is the most important security role of any head of state. It is true in any place, and especially so in the State of Israel, which is a democratic, Western, modern "island" in the heart of a faltering, turbulent Middle East.

> Harming Israel's economy and political standing harms Israel's security. The converse is also true: a strong economy is a basis for security.

Developing integrated power is not a simple task. The need to control the different forces driving the state requires judicious composure, a deep sense of responsibility, a broad view of the current geopolitical map, and effective governance that is able to devise and promote policy.

The Elements of Integrated Power

In order to clarify the importance of integrated power in managing the country and in strengthening security, a micro to macro perspective is in order, from one specific defense procurement to its consequences for Israel's overall strength. Consider the following:

In June 2016, the unveiling ceremony for the Israeli Air Force's first Adir aircraft was held at Lockheed Martin's factory in Austin, Texas. The Adir – better known as the F-35 – is a multirole stealth plane that can reach any location in the Middle East. Aside from its stealth capabilities, its human-machine interface is the first and only one of its kind, and the plane as a whole represents a technological leap forward. The F-35 is also a source of Israeli pride, as some of its parts were developed and built in Israel. The "smart helmet" used by the pilots was developed by Elbit, and with unique technology, Israel Aerospace Industries produces the wings for some of the planes.

The Air Force's representative at the ceremony was Brig. Gen. Tal Kalman, who has been a combat pilot for over 30 years. Brig. Gen. Kalman did not hide his excitement over the plane's capabilities. "It was like holding the future in my hands," he said. In fact, he also held the past and the present in his hands, because this plane, and especially the way it came into Israel's hands, sums up not only Israel's military and technological capabilities, but also the three-pronged model of integrated power.

First, behind the acquisition stands a strong, consistent doctrine on developing military force that began during the days of Ben-Gurion, whereby Israel must maintain disproportionate strategic power, and make clear to its enemies that it will not tolerate existential threats. The corollary to this doctrine is that because Israel is geographically small, it needs to maintain the ability to take the campaign far beyond its borders. This doctrine has dictated the development of the Israeli Air Force, and in recent years has also dictated the upgrading of Israel's naval power.

Second, Israel's economic strength enabled it to purchase 33 F-35 aircraft, at a cost of $5.25 billion, as part of a comprehensive deal in which Israel will eventually acquire 50 planes.[5] In order for Israel to continue to sustain its qualitative edge, it must maintain a strong export-oriented economy, based on technology. This requires investments in education and infrastructure, and responsible management of the Israeli economy.

In this context, Israeli civil society must believe that the government has the right motivations and makes decisions in a thorough, judicious

manner. The enormous expense of the planes prompts the question whether there are alternatives that are more relevant to civilian life, such as smaller classrooms or more hospital beds. The fact that the acquisition of the planes is a higher national priority bespeaks a sacrifice on the part of civil society. Israeli society is willing to make this sacrifice, because it trusts that the government understands the ramifications of its actions. The public is unable to know, and does not need to know, the government's entire set of considerations, but it must believe that the government knows what it is doing. The trust in government and the existence of a shared ethos are the foundation of civil strength. A divided, conflicted society that lacks agreement on rules and values will not be able to meet the challenges of national security.

Third, Israel's international standing and the fact that it is considered a responsible and legitimate country enables the purchase of the planes. Israel and Turkey are the only countries in the region that were permitted by the American administration to purchase the F-35.[6] Despite significant pressure from the American weapons industry, the administration has refused to sell the aircraft to other countries in the Middle East, because the vast majority of them are irresponsible countries, many with illegitimate regimes. The American administration assumes that Israel will not use the formidable weapon it has acquired for unnecessary military adventures; will notify it in advance of any strategically significant courses of action;[7] will not act in violation of international law; and will maintain the standards of warfare accepted in Western countries.

Of all the responsibilities of a prime minister, the most challenging one is actually the one that is not in the rulebook: the need to navigate constantly among contradicting interests based on a broad perspective of the national good.

As with military strength and economic strength, Israel's political strength comprises several elements: political, intelligence, and diplomatic ties; standing in international institutions (the UN, NATO, the European Union, the World Bank, and others); stature in international legal institutions; its image in the media, in social media, in academia, and in public opinion; and personal connections between leaders.

Israel's political standing is determined in three main arenas: Washington, the European Union, and international institutions (while countries like China and India have vast economic importance for Israel, on geopolitical issues the combined forces of the West set the tone, and this will continue in the foreseeable future).

Of these three arenas, the United States is the most important element. We must prevent cracks in our historical alliance with the US, and maintain our bipartisan standing in Congress. The change of administration in the United States should not make Israel complacent. Israel's standing in Washington has suffered in recent years, and this trend must not continue.

This is also the reason that Chief of Staff Gadi Eisenkot saw fit to define the securing and preservation of the State of Israel's legitimacy as one of the defense establishment's top strategic objectives.[8] The Chief of Staff knows that Israel's legitimacy, while created in the international arena, affects local security. Legitimacy is the defense establishment's main means of persuasion when it seeks to acquire F-35s from the US (or to convince it not to sell them to certain countries in the region) or Dolphin submarines from Germany, or when it seeks intelligence cooperation with the European Union.

The story of the Adir – one of many – is proof that an up-to-date defense doctrine cannot rely solely on an operational or military perspective. Without properly integrating the three components of Israeli strength – military, socio-economic, and political – Israel would not have this aircraft. More generally, the IDF's qualitative advantage would erode, and Israel's security would suffer.

Comprehensive Integration

In order to develop and maintain the strength we need, military, socio-economic and political power must work together, based on an integrated outlook. This is exactly the difference between a security doctrine (which is the role of the military) and the concept of a national security policy, which is currently lacking. Ofer Shelah wrote: "From the political leadership to the IDF's top brass, Israel has difficulty formulating comprehensive definitions, and has even more difficulty acting on them – therefore it prefers not to formulate them at all."[9]

This phenomenon was especially prominent in the summer of 2014, when Israel launched Operation Protective Edge without defining the result it wanted to achieve, the exit strategy, or the timeframe. The decision makers knew during Operation Protective Edge that Hamas was embracing what Gabi Siboni called "the victim doctrine"[10] against Israel, meaning that it was interested in drawing out the operation as much as possible in order to place international pressure on Israel and harm its political and economic standing. Nonetheless, those managing the operation, led by the

Prime Minister, did not think that they needed to provide the army with a timeframe or a required objective. In their no-longer relevant view, while the cannons roar, there is no room for economic or political considerations. During the operation the Prime Minister publicly declared: "We will continue to operate until this objective [returning the quiet] is achieved, as long as it takes and with as much force as necessary."[11] This decision to let the campaign continue without a set timeframe was not based on professional deliberation. Rather, the working assumption was that a security event can be isolated from its economic and political consequences. This is a mistake. There is no such separation.

A clear example is what happened at Ben Gurion Airport, Israel's only international airport. During Operation Protective Edge, a single rocket landed in the town of Yehud, 2 km from the airport. While it did not cause any casualties, it prompted the following chain of events: an American airplane that was supposed to land at Ben Gurion Airport turned around mid-air and landed in Europe; another American plane took off empty, leaving behind 300 passengers. Officials at the United States' Federal Aviation Administration decided to suspend all flights to Israel for 24 hours in order to assess the situation. The European aviation authority (EASA) followed suit and issued a "serious warning" that caused a series of European and other companies to stop their flights to Ben Gurion Airport. For the first time since 1973, Israel found itself cut off from the world.[12]

A concerted diplomatic effort, aimed mainly at the United States, led to a cancellation of the flight warnings after 24 hours. Had they continued for another two or three days, they could have had a domino effect on the Israeli economy. In the age of the global economy, which operates at the speed of light, Israel cannot afford to "go offline." In contrast to the landing of one rocket, which in military terms is a marginal event, the set of events described here is the precise implementation of Hamas's strategy since its establishment: Hamas knows that it is unable to destroy the State of Israel, and therefore seeks to harm Israel's economy, diplomacy, and public relations.

Hamas is a malevolent organization with a modern operational concept. Harming Israel's economy and political standing harms Israel's security. At the same time, the converse is also true: a strong economy is a basis for security. In the "National Security Strategy" document published by the White House in February 2015, President Obama noted US economic strength as foremost among the foundations of American national security.

Without a strong economy, the army does not have educated fighters, advanced weapon systems, or a strong home front in times of war. Later the document notes: "Scientific discovery and technological innovation empower American leadership with a competitive edge that secures our military advantage."[13] Reflecting an idea familiar to every Israeli, this is the famous "qualitative edge" that Israel must preserve at all costs. This watchtower is not posted within an army camp, but rather in the civilian arena. A technologically advanced defense system cannot exist over time in a country that lags technologically. Without an advanced economy and society, we will not have an advanced military.

Professional Coordination

Since David Ben-Gurion formulated the foundations of Israel's security doctrine in 1953, it is customary to say that our security doctrine rests on three foundations: early warning, deterrence, and decision. The Meridor Commission report from 2006 added a fourth element to this doctrine: defense. At the Herzliya Conference in 2014, Alex Mintz and Shaul Shay proposed adding a fifth element: adaptation,[14] meaning the flexibility to adjust the defense policy to an ever-changing world (while the idea received little public attention, I believe that it is critical and worthy of development).

There is an entire military doctrine behind each of these definitions, but the nature of dealing with security is such that we must reassess them as frequently as possible. MK Shelah, for example, has insisted that the concept of decision has changed dramatically in recent years, and may not be relevant any more.[15] Whether or not this is the case (to my mind it is certainly true regarding Hamas in Gaza and against Hezbollah in the north), we must reevaluate the role of the political leadership in developing Israel's security doctrine.

All five of the elements – stated by Ben-Gurion, Meridor, and Mintz and Shay – are essentially operational. The prime minister has influence over them, but he cannot reduce his role to the operational aspect. It is no accident that the prime minister does not sit on the top floor of the Ministry of Defense at the Kirya in Tel Aviv, but rather in his office in Jerusalem. From there, he must steer the entire system such that Israel's centers of power do not clash with one another, but rather serve the cause of national security together. Years of bad habits and the political leadership's evasion of responsibility have led to a situation where it seems that the defense establishment and the IDF are the ones who must provide the political

leadership with the hierarchy of threats, analysis of the current military and political environment, and even the set of economic and political considerations. In fact, it should be the opposite. The defense establishment needs to provide the best intelligence that it can provide, and it is worth listening to its intelligence assessments (with a degree of healthy skepticism), but the prime minister and the cabinet are those who need to set policy. The prime minister needs to shape policy based on the principle of integrated power, and make all parts of the system operate in this vein.

Clearly the prime minister cannot do this alone. The establishment around him must be built such that the set of considerations brought before him is as broad as possible. The key body is the National Security Council (NSC). Since its establishment, it has gone through many changes and setbacks (since December 2015 no one heads the NSC), and all of Israel's prime ministers have yielded to the temptation to bypass it and speak directly with Military Intelligence, the generals in command of the respective territorial commands, the Israel Security Agency, and the Mossad. Faced with urgent events this is not necessarily bad, and in any case is unavoidable. The prime minister is the one who will pay the price for a serious operational mishap, and it is natural that he would want to be in contact with operational officials. The problem is that this leads to bad habits: this direct connection also occurs with long term strategic discussions, which should take a completely different form.

None of the security agencies can be aware of the entire range of economic considerations, the current political reality, or legal complications. Neither can they (nor should they) deal with Israel's long term strategic objectives (including the technological and commercial arenas, and issues such as social cohesion). This is not their role. The correct situation is that minor tactical discussions not be handled by the prime minister at all, while strategic discussions go through the NSC alone. The role of the NSC is to coordinate the information, input, and staff work for the prime minister and for the cabinet. This is especially true when not in the midst of a crisis, as this is when policy can and should be determined. Discussions on issues like the defense budget cannot be led by the IDF or dissolve into the perpetual conflict between the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Finance. The question of what we want to happen regarding Gaza should not be discussed during a confrontation in Gaza.

Is the prime minister the only person who can set in motion the kind of strategic processes that I have described here? The answer is no, but

the systems of government cannot operate without leadership that has direction. On a number of occasions I have read to those who work with me the "Moon Speech" that President Kennedy delivered at Rice University in Texas. "We choose to go to the moon," he said. All the experts berated Kennedy for setting a goal that the US would surely fail to achieve, but the young and energetic president understood that leadership means setting lofty goals and then continually striving to achieve them.

I am a big believer in the power of the individual; in the ability of determined leadership to shape history; in the fact that democracy is a form of government based on optimism; in the fact that there needs to be someone at the top of the pyramid who knows how to lead people to places that they hadn't thought of beforehand. Note, however, that President Kennedy did not say, "I will get to the moon" in his speech; he said "we." In order to fulfill Israel's national missions and overarching objectives, in order to defend our security and navigate among the various threats, the prime minister first of all must have a large staff of talented, opinionated people around him who are fully committed, and who will provide him with the informational and conceptual framework and meticulous staff work that will enable Israel to advance, prosper, and be secure.

Henry Kissinger stated that the basic questions of policy are simple: "what do we want to achieve, and what do we want to prevent?"[16] In the Israeli version of this dilemma, the prime minister needs to decide whether his goal is to achieve an agreement with our neighbors based on the principle of two states, or to work toward perpetuating the existing situation with the Palestinians. The two options are on the table, and there were prime ministers who worked toward one or the other, but whether we seek peace or war, every prime minister will need all of Israel's might behind him. The Middle East believes in living "by the sword," that violence is a reasonable and readily available solution for most problems. In light of this, Israel will always need to sport power, indeed, a great deal of power.

The Network Approach

Even under optimal conditions, properly analyzing and determining policy in the reality of the Middle East is an incomparably complex task. In the past few years, even the United States often failed to read the regional map correctly, despite having enormously greater means at its disposal than Israel has (the Pentagon's budget is 50 times larger than Israel's defense budget; the State Department's budget is 80 times larger than that of Israel's

Ministry of Foreign Affairs). A few months before his departure from the State Department, Secretary of State John Kerry was asked what advice he has for his successor. Kerry answered: "It's really important to make sure that the entire policymaking establishment understands the country they're making policy about and sees it through the eyes of the people in it, not just through our eyes. We don't always do that."[17] We too, the Israelis, don't always do this. The difference, however, is that the US can afford to have failures. Israel cannot.

The political and military environment has changed decisively in recent years. We are living in a completely different reality from the one of the first sixty-something years of existence: our enemies are no longer hostile states or conventional armies. Instead, we are faced with an age of civil wars and coups, terrorist organizations that are growing more sophisticated while gaining political recognition,[18] cyber warfare that is increasingly dominant, nuclear ambitions of more than one country in the region, and an international front that is subject to the influence of hostile media and radical human rights organizations. All of these create an ongoing intelligence and operational campaign that is very different from the previous reality, in which the army fought an all-out war once every few years, followed by a lull when the army could draw conclusions and develop its strength. In today's world, there is no longer a clear separation between times of peace and times of war.

Under such conditions, studying the enemy – and studying the players in the region that are not defined as enemies – cannot be limited to a single truth, or to a single layer of information. The prime minister needs to create a work environment in which the IDF, the Israel Security Agency, the Mossad, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the cabinet are synchronized and complement one another, with economic and social professionals an integral part of the discussion. For example, the ongoing struggle against Hezbollah and Hamas's sources of funding involves the international banking system and agents who specialize in financial crime. The banking system's series of successes in identifying sources of funding for terrorism, the series of international partnerships, and the American Anti-Terror Law have enabled lawsuits to be filed against terrorist organizations and the companies that gave them funding. This created significant difficulties for terrorist organizations and forced them to look for complicated sources of funding that do not use banks, which expose them to being tracked. This struggle is far from being over, but this is additional proof that the

economy, foreign policy, and law are not separate worlds from the world of security. It is a single complex reality.

A proper analysis of the reality must include a state's history, religion, culture, regime structure, economic components, and social forces. This has always been complex, but in the past decade it has become even more so. The social media revolution that began in 2006; the economic crisis of 2008 whose effects are still being felt; the Arab Spring that began in 2010 – all of these present us with previously unknown challenges. Analytical tools have also become more complicated and sophisticated. As in other areas, regarding security the world is moving to a network-based approach (and as General Stanley McChrystal put it: "It takes a network to defeat a network").[19] In the current era, conflicts are no longer one-time and local. They do not have a start or end point; they are everywhere and all the time. The attempt to keep track and adapt ourselves to the threats undermines the system and causes instability. In order to avoid this, the political leadership must always return to the starting point. The means may have become more complex, but the objectives remain clear and simple: a militarily and economically strong Israel, whose international standing is stable and firm.

Over the course of almost 70 years, the Israeli leadership spoke in terms of an "existential threat." The great fear was of an army or armies racing toward our borders in order to conquer Israel. No one in the professional echelons uses this terminology today. In the past year alone, those who served most recently as head of the Mossad, IDF Chief of Staff, and Minister of Defense strongly emphasized that today "Israel does not face an existential threat."[20] Instead, there are increasing sets of threats from terrorism, the collapsed states in the region, and an escalating delegitimization campaign against Israel. National decision making has not succeeded in adapting itself to this change. Try to imagine, for example, the impact of wisely investing $10 million a year into Israeli public diplomacy focused on the Egyptian street, which is still hostile to us after 40 years of peace. Ten million dollars is about 0.0001 percent of the State of Israel's budget (which is about $100 billion a year), but in a country like Egypt it could make a decisive difference.

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In the absence of up-to-date, innovative, and comprehensive staff work, the prime minister will be unable to provide appropriate guidance to security agencies. Without understanding the overt and covert aspirations of each

regional player and properly analyzing its strengths and weaknesses, Israel will be unable to shape an effective foreign policy and develop the army in a way that is most suitable for its missions. Without close cooperation with the US and effective work with the European Union and international institutions, we will not receive the intelligence and operational partnerships (or the acquisitions) that are necessary for Israel's security.

The operational doctrine and development of military force cannot be defined in a vacuum, but rather in relation to threats and enemies. The well-known saying that we are "always preparing for the previous war," can only be avoided with proper teamwork, in which different voices and different opinions are heard. The size of the army and principles behind the development of military force, foreign policy guidelines, trade deals, and economic alliances – these all derive from knowing who is an enemy and who is a friend, what visible and invisible dangers Israel faces, which threats the army is supposed to address, which threats must be met with non-military capabilities, which opportunities we should exploit before others, and where we must be careful in order not to become entangled in wars that are not ours. Today, the government of Israel is not providing clear answers to these questions, because the prime minister doesn't have the professional tools or a suitable team to respond to changes and shape a realistic, up-to-date policy.

After a staff is put together, the principles of the staff work are defined, and up-to-date work plans are written, the prime minister's test will be his ability to work in accordance with them. This sounds like an easy task, almost obvious, but this is not so. Only very rarely do the security reality and the political reality overlap. Politics demands simple and immediate solutions, while security is complex, is based on processes, and requires staying power. In today's politics, there is constant longing for the simpler and more decisive days when it was clear who the enemies were, what war and victory were. Security professionals, in contrast, know that in the network-based world of terrorism and guerrilla warfare – in which even the definitions of "friend" and "enemy" are no longer absolute – most operations are surgical, complex, and unseen.

Is the army more moderate than the government? I don't believe so. We have a fighting army that is not daunted by conflicts and threats. Deeply ingrained in the IDF's organizational memory is Moshe Dayan's statement during his eulogy of Roi Rotberg: "This is the fate of our generation. This is our life's choice – to be prepared and armed, strong and determined,

lest the sword be stricken from our fist and our lives cut down."[21] Rather, the army operates in accordance with long term national objectives, and based on recognition of its responsibility for Israel's social and economic resilience, its international standing, and Jewish and democratic values. Chief of Staff Eisenkot has emphasized this to the General Staff and to field officers.[22]

There has been increasing discomfort in the army in recent years with the political leadership's evasion of its responsibility for defining policy for the IDF. When there is no policy, the expectation of the army is to address all threats – instead of an "either-or" policy, it is expected to cope with a policy of "and, and, and," and address low probability existential threats, high probability terrorism threats, familiar threats, and threats that may appear one day. In a world of limited resources, this is of course an impossible task.

Balancing Priorities

Of all the responsibilities of a prime minister, the most challenging one is actually the one that is not in the rulebook: the need to navigate constantly among contradicting interests based on a broad perspective of the national good. There is a clash of interests in almost every decision. When you pave a road in the south, you do not pave a road in the north. When you lower customs duties in order to lessen the cost of living, you harm local industry and people will be fired. If you improve relations with Russia, you pay a price in America. The easy solution, of course, is "both," but in a world of limited resources and conflicting interests, the role of leadership is to hold thorough discussions, assess the advantages and disadvantages, and then make decisions that some people will not like. This is not a simple or rewarding process, but it is the essence of the role of leadership and the role of the prime minister.

This becomes especially critical when discussing the building blocks of integrated power. In the winter of 2013 for example, when I was a member of the cabinet, I demanded that a discussion be held in the cabinet on Israel-US relations and their effect on national security. To this very day, such a discussion – on one of the most critical issues for Israel's security – has not taken place. Since then, there have been a number of dramatic events in Israel-US relations, foremost among them the signing of the US-led nuclear agreement with Iran, despite the vehement protests of Israel, the Prime Minister's speech in Congress, an unprecedented crisis between

Israel and the Democratic Party, and the unexpected election of President Trump. Not even these events prompted the cabinet to meet in order to shape a coherent policy in light of the new reality.

In other words: over the past eight years, the world has undergone upheavals of epic proportions. The forces on the global chess board have rearranged themselves. For the first time since 1945, the US is considering what its next grand strategy will be.[23] During all these years, the cabinet – the State of Israel's supreme defense body – has not held even one discussion on the question of how we should respond to the new reality and what we must do in order to maintain Israel's special status in Washington.

Strategy spilling over into tactics is human and unavoidable. Most people prefer to deal with what is familiar and easily understood. Politically as well, dealing with tactics is more convenient and rewarding than dealing with strategy, whose benefits will only be reaped in the future, and possibly by someone else. Exactly for this reason, part of the prime minister's role is to ensure that the political leadership deals with the foundations of integrated power, and not with operational matters. We have no shortage of talented commanders, but we have a shortage of leaders who act like leaders. When the leadership is immersed in the details instead of charting the course, it neglects its duty, and also interferes with the IDF's work.

The discomfort that this causes the army resonates loudly in the *IDF Strategy* prepared by Chief of Staff Gadi Eisenkot, which, in an exceptional step, was published in August 2015. In this document, the Chief of Staff writes the following:

> **The Relation between National Goals and the Employment of Force**
> 6. When the military needs to be deployed, it is recommended that the political level instruct the military, as follows:
>   a. The goals and the required strategic End States.
>   b. The military's role and how it should integrate into the achievement of these goals.
>   c. The constraints involved in the use of military force.
>   d. Defining additional efforts (political, economic, media, social) and the IDF's role in their context.
> 7. The political echelon's guidelines require an ongoing discourse between the senior military echelon (the Chief of the General Staff) and the political echelon. Political guidance is the basis for the General Staff's strategic thinking processes, but is also affected by these processes – the effect is mutual.[24]

Lt. Gen. Eisenkot uses careful language, but the message is clear. This is in effect an unprecedented demand by the IDF of the political leadership to act like leadership; to define strategic goals and not tactics; not to interfere in operational decisions (elsewhere in the document, he emphasizes that during a campaign, the only one who can give orders to the army is the Chief of Staff),[25] but rather to fulfill the true role of the cabinet and especially the prime minister; to assess the use of force as "the continuation of politics by other means," in the words of von Clausewitz, and to use it only when it matches the wider context of the state's objectives, values, capabilities, and realistic limitations – political, economic, social, and legal.

The Wider Context

One of the problems with security policy and strategy is that often the wider context is not visible to the public. A country is an intricate web, in which each event sets off a series of other events. The public – and the media – is unable to see in real time how the map of interests changes. Here too, a micro event to a macro perspective is in order.

At first sight, there is no connection between national security issues and the argument over the Western Wall plan, which was meant to resolve the issue of prayer services by Reform and Conservative Jews at the Western Wall plaza. But a broader and more in-depth perspective reveals more than one connection. The Western Wall plan was meant to end the conflict that has continued for more than two decades regarding Reform and Conservative prayer services at the Western Wall plaza. The plan is the result of a compromise reached by a special team appointed by the prime minister, after negotiations of no less than three years. The team was composed of representatives of all streams, including ultra-Orthodox, and was led by Attorney General Avihai Mandelblit, who at the time served as cabinet secretary. According to the plan, a separate plaza was to be built for Reform and Conservative Jews, underneath Robinson's Arch, where they could worship according to their customs. The central plaza was to remain in the hands of the Orthodox establishment.

Like all compromises, no one was fully satisfied with the plan, but it was clear to both sides that without an understanding, the Supreme Court would impose a solution. The plan was brought before the cabinet, and with the blessing of Prime Minister Netanyahu (who at the start of the cabinet meeting emphasized that the team had operated under his personal guidance, and said: "This is a fitting and creative solution, as is usually necessary in such

sensitive issues")[26] it was approved for implementation in a government decision. As expected, this caused an uproar on ultra-Orthodox websites, and the Prime Minister suspended the plan.

The suspension of the plan went unnoticed among most of the Israeli public, but created a crisis of unprecedented proportions between the State of Israel and the vast majority of Jewish congregations in the United States (53 percent of American Jews are Reform or Conservative, only 10 percent are ultra-Orthodox. The rest do not belong to any organized community).[27] A video of an angry ultra-Orthodox man tearing apart a Reform prayer book in the middle of the Western Wall plaza went viral in the US. The leaders of the Rabbinical Assembly, the umbrella organization for Conservative Jewish rabbis, co-authored a furious letter to the Prime Minister in which – for the first time – they raised serious question marks about "the vital relationship between the State of Israel and world Jewry."[28] At a certain stage, they filed a petition to the Supreme Court to implement the plan. This too is unprecedented: world Jewry suing the State of Israel because there is no freedom of religion for Jews in Israel.

Why and how is the Western Wall plan connected to security policy? Because Reform and Conservative Jews are not just a demographic majority; they are also the wealthiest, most influential, and most politically well-connected communities in the United States. Their wealth and political power is a pillar of AIPAC, Washington's pro-Israel lobby. It is they who helped Israel in its struggle against the nuclear agreement with Iran (and failed along with us). It is they who ensure that the military aid agreement with Israel is the largest of all American aid agreements (the total amount of aid since the establishment of Israel is over $125 billion). It is they who pressure the American administration to ensure that Israel is the first to receive advanced weapons – from F-35 aircraft to JDAM smart bombs. It is they who know how to talk to members of the Senate and Congress in order to prevent anti-Israel decisions.

At the height of the struggle against the nuclear agreement, an influential Jewish member of Congress told me about his meeting with President Obama, in which he demanded that he "compensate Israel" for the emerging agreement. What he meant was not monetary compensation, but that America equip Israel with military and technological means that would enable it to defend itself against any future attack by Iran or its agents in the region. The President promised that he would do so, but the concerned member of Congress asked that the promise be made in writing. A few days

later, the President sent a public letter to another Jewish member of Congress, Jerry Nadler, which said: "This commitment to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge lies at the heart of our bilateral security cooperation relationship.... We will continue to consult with our Israeli partners on how to strengthen Israel's defensive capabilities in light of our shared concerns vis-à-vis Iran."[29] Later, the letter was substantiated by the military aid agreement signed in September 2016 and the series of strategic understandings between the Pentagon and the Ministry of Defense. The two Jewish members of Congress that initiated the process are members of Reform congregations.

When the Americans speak about the alliance with Israel as rooted in "shared values," they do so because that is the message they receive from American Jewry. (When I spoke at the 2012 AIPAC conference, at a certain point I started to count the signs that included the words "shared values" – after 300 signs I gave up.) Simply put, American Jewry is what stands behind the second most important component of Israeli security after the IDF – the military and political alliance with the United States.

A momentary crisis with the ultra-Orthodox parties is not comparable to the future harm to Israel's security caused by the distancing of these communities in the US. The job of the Prime Minister is to place macro security considerations front and center, and to act in accordance with them. This involves PR; it involves paying a price vis-à-vis the public; and it involves the discomfort of standing up to a public that doesn't have much patience for details. These are not easy prices to pay, but whoever wants integrated power has to be able to handle them.

Conclusion

The story of the Western Wall plan, like the story of the F-35 purchase, is one of many. The details change, but the basic principle remains the same: if the preservation and strengthening of integrated power is the Prime Minister's top priority, he must ensure that other interests – less important but more urgent – do not harm Israel's security. The test of leadership is not just the willingness to provide citizens with what they want, but also the ability to demand responsibility from them. In order for leadership to be able to demand this, it must itself demonstrate responsibility. A principled struggle that does not involve paying a price is not a struggle.

The security of the State of Israel five years from now will depend on an entire range of elements uniting as a single force. These factors – economic, social, international – can interfere with and contradict one another, or

become force multipliers that enhance our national strength and resilience. The role of the prime minister is to prevent the contradictions and to create the force multipliers. In order to be able to do this and to place Israel in a better situation, the following steps should be taken, which will place integrated power at the center of Israel's national security policy (some of the following points appear in the "7-Point Plan for the State of Israel's Future" published last September):

a. To initiate comprehensive staff work that assesses the central threats Israel will face in the coming years, including economic and foreign policy aspects.

b. To set up teams that will study how to face each threat and help the political leadership define what scenarios Israel is unwilling to permit under any circumstances.

c. To initiate staff work on the security-economy interface and to assess how Israel's economic connections can serve its security.

d. To implement a national program that will base the Israeli economy on innovation industries.

e. To carry out a comprehensive reform to strengthen the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to transfer the struggle against BDS to it, to cancel all of the overlaps in Israel's public diplomacy system, and to concentrate all work on the issue within the Public Affairs department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

f. To rehabilitate the National Security Council, expand its powers, and make it responsible for the connection between the prime minister and the various defense forces.

g. To formulate a new cabinet law that would enable ministers to better prepare for discussions, prevent leaks, and focus discussions on strategic affairs instead of tactical matters.[30]

h. To create a shared forum of the NSC, the National Economic Council, the National Cyber Bureau, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that will focus on future threats, especially in the cyber realm, the Internet of Things, and space warfare.

i. To strengthen the Ministry of Justice's International Law department. Using the integrated power model, we can harness the power of the IDF, the Mossad, and the Israel Security Agency, along with Israel's economic and political strength and the energy and vision of its citizens, so that Israel can fulfill the overarching goal that has accompanied it since its

establishment: to be so strong that its enemies know in advance that they will lose any war against it**.**

Notes

1   Isaac Ben-Israel, "Israel and the Palestinians: Basic Assumptions for Updating the Defense Doctrine after Operation Protective Edge," September 2014, p. 2, website of the Israel National Defense College Alumni Association, http://www.amutatmabal.org.il.

2   Yaakov Amidror, *Perfect Storm: The Implications of Middle East Chaos*, Memorandum No. 8 (Ramat Gan: Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, 2015), p. 35.

3   Isaac Ben-Israel and Nicki Kons, "Ben-Gurion's Approach to Risk Management," *Maarachot* No. 435, pp. 32-37.

4   Prof. Joseph Nye, head of Harvard's School of Government and former special assistant to the US Secretary of Defense, coined the term. See, for example, "Get Smart," *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2009).

5   While the purchase was made using US aid money, at the end of the day it is the same acquisitions budget. Whoever buys planes in dollars will have to buy APCs in shekels. If Israel buys planes using aid money, it is because it is able to fund its basic acquisitions by itself.

6   Turkey is not defined as a "Middle Eastern country," but it is the second country in the region that has received the US administration's approval to purchase F-35 aircraft.

7   The US administration does not expect prior coordination, but expects to be informed in advance. Israel did not coordinate its attack on the Iraqi reactor in advance; it operated in Syria (according to foreign sources, including former President George W. Bush) without coordinating with the administration; and if necessary will attack Iran without American approval.

8   *The IDF Strategy*, 2015. An English translation is available at https://www.idfblog.com/2015/11/23/idf-strategy/.

9   Ofer Shelah, *The Courage to Win: Israeli Defense Policy* (Tel Aviv: Yediot Ahronot, 2016), p. 85.

10 Gabi Siboni, "Operations Cast Lead, Pillar of Defense, and Protective Edge: A Comparative Review," in *The Lessons of Operation Protective Edge*, eds. Anat Kurz and Shlomo Brom (Tel Aviv: Institute for National Security Studies, 2014), p. 33.

11 Prime Minister's speech, August 2, 2014, http://www.mako.co.il/news-military/security-tzuk-eitan/Article-f21a0dbf9e79741004.htm.

12 The description of the series of events according to Brig. Gen. Asaf Agmon, "The Secrets of Ben Gurion Airport during Operation Protective Edge," *Israel Defense*, October 2014.

13 The White House, "National Security Strategy," February 2015, p. 16, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2015_national_security_strategy_2.pdf.

14 Alex Mintz & Shaul Shay, "Adaptation as a Component of Israel's National Security Doctrine," Policy paper, Herzliya Forum to Formulate Israel's National Security Doctrine, 2014.

15 Shelah, *The Courage to Win: Israeli Defense Policy*, pp. 86-89.

16 Henry Kissinger, *World Order* (New York: Penguin, 2015), p. 372.

17 Jonathan Tepperman, "The Envoy: A Conversation with John Kerry," *Foreign Affairs* (October 2016).

18 One of many examples: In July 2016, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jean-Marc Ayrault, met with representatives of Hezbollah in Beirut. When I angrily protested this to the French ambassador in Israel, he responded with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' official response: "The meeting was with people from the political arm of Hezbollah, not with people from the military arm." The fact is that there is no such separation between arms. In fact, even Hezbollah does not claim that there is such a separation.

19 Quoted by Niall Ferguson, "It Takes a Network to Defeat a Network," Belfer Center for International Affairs, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, March 2016.

20 Tamir Pardo to *Maariv*, January 2016; Moshe "Bogie" Ya'alon, speech at medical conference, January 2016; Lt. Gen. (ret.) Benny Ganz, meeting of Ascolot in Haifa, June 2016.

21 From the eulogy of Roi Rotberg, Ministry of Defense archive, April 1956.

22 *IDF Strategy*, from the staff work on developing a national security doctrine (Meridor document, 2007).

23 For further reading, see Hal Brands, Peter D. Feaver, John J. Mearsheimer, and Stephen M. Walt, "Should America Retrench?" *Foreign Affairs* (October 2016).

24 *IDF Strategy.*

25 Ibid.

26 Moshe Steinmetz, Yaki Adamker, and Omrri Nahmias, "Kotel Outline Approved despite Objections by Ultra-Orthodox," *Walla*, January 31, 2016, http://news.walla.co.il/item/2930318.

27 "A Portrait of Jewish Americans," Pew Research Center, 2013.

28 "Letter to Prime Minister Netanyahu Expressing Disappointment Regarding Kotel Agreement," July 11, 2016, http://www.rabbinicalassembly.org/story/letter-prime-minister-netanyahu-expressing-disappointment-regarding-kotel-agreement.

29 "Obama's Letter to Congressman Nadler," August 20, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/08/20/world/middleeast/document-obamas-letter-to-congressman-nadler.html?_r=0.

30 Such a law was proposed at the Knesset by MK Ofer Shelah in June 2016.