The Disengagement: An Ideological Crisis

Yehuda Ben Meir

The idea of the Greater Land of Israel has been central to the ideological, public, and in many cases personal lives of a large number of Israelis for more than thirty years. For them, Israel's disengagement plan represents a moment of truth and a point of no return. This plan has unquestionably triggered a profound crisis, challenging and destabilizing many of the truths underlying their world view. An important aspect of this crisis stems from the fact that the architect and leader of the disengagement is none other than Ariel Sharon, who until recently served as the community's chief patron. The crisis is likely to have far-reaching repercussions.

This article will assess the scope of the crisis and its implications, primarily for this community but also with an eye to Israeli society as a whole. The threat of civil war has been mentioned more than once, and government ministers, Knesset members, and public leaders from various circles regularly discuss the need to forestall this possibility. It is therefore important to emphasize from the outset that there is no danger of civil war. In some cases, use of the term "civil war" reflects attempts to frighten and threaten the general public in order to reduce support for the disengagement. In other instances, it reflects demagoguery and even ignorance. Yet there can be no civil war in the true sense of the term without two armed forces, and this means that there can be no civil war without a split in the military. During the American Civil War, the military units of the southern states deserted from the United States army and formed

Editor's Note

As this issue of *Strategic Assessment* goes to press, the disengagement is four months away, scheduled to begin in mid-July 2005. With the plan officially approved by the Knesset, much of the focus is no longer on "if," but rather "how," and what will be the impact on the domestic scene. The calls for a national referendum, the legitimacy of refusing military orders, and the various scenarios for evacuation sketched by the police, security forces, and opponents of disengagement have assumed center stage in the Israeli debate, with increasing attention paid to the internal social ramifications of the plan.

This is the backdrop for the opening article, which focuses on one subculture within the religious Zionist movement. Written by Dr. Yehuda Ben Meir, the article describes the evolution of the ultra-Orthodox national religious community, among the sectors most profoundly affected by the disengagement, and explores the deep sense of crisis overwhelming it. Faced with an imminent reality that challenges much of its national religious beliefs and aspirations, this community is searching for practical, ideological, and religious means to grapple with the disengagement.

In his article, Dr. Mark Heller explores some of the ramifications of the new Palestinian leadership. Arafat has been succeeded by Abu Mazen, but will Arafatism be replaced as well with a new style of governance and a rejection of terror? According to Heller, Abu Mazen has yet to make clear how much he will confront the violent factions at home and firmly quell the opposition to a new chapter in Israel-Palestinian relations.

Oded Eran, Israel's ambassador to the European Union, recently submitted a proposal to the NATO directorate regarding Israel–NATO relations and enhanced cooperation between Israel and the organization. In his article, Dr. Zaki Shalom examines the strategic potential for Israel of a closer association with NATO, and also reviews some of the risks to Israel should it be offered formal membership in the organization.

The fourth article, by Dr. Ephraim Kam, evaluates the key findings of the investigative committees formed in the United States to examine the intelligence failures of the September 11 attack and the war in Iraq. Though fundamentally different intelligence failures, taken together the cases testify to recurring systemic problems in the intelligence community. Kam reviews some of the suggestions proposed by the committees to correct these problems as well as the difficulties inherent in their implementation.

The final article of this issue, written by Dr. Anat Kurz, discusses what motivates or restrains terrorist organizations vis-à-vis their use of non-conventional weapons. Kurz argues that while access to non-conventional weapons is clearly a fundamental prerequisite, it alone does not determine whether an organization will or will not employ them. Rather, a major factor underlying terrorist activity is the organizational motivation for self-preservation, and it is this factor that is crucially linked to the relatively few attacks that have involved the use of non-conventional weapons.

The Disengagement: An Ideological Crisis – cont.

the Confederate army, taking their arms and command structure with them. A similar split in the national military was true of the civil war in Spain. Barring a split in the armed forces, therefore, there can be no civil war, and there is little if any possibility that IDF tank, infantry, artillery, or air force units, with their weapons and commanders, will desert and join the opponents of disengagement.

However, the fact that the disengagement has not positioned Israel on the verge of a civil war does not mitigate the crisis faced by the Greater Israel proponents. Nor does it reduce the seriousness of the ramifications of disengagement, or ease the difficult challenges the plan poses to the state and Israeli society.

The Settlement Movement

The population facing this crisis of consciousness is known by a myriad of names, including: the settlers, Gush Emunim ("Bloc of the Faithful"), the Yesha (the Hebrew acronym for Judea, Samaria, and Gaza) Council, religious Zionism, the national religious community, the right wing, and the extreme right wing. A better assessment of the situation and possible developments as the disengagement progresses requires a more precise definition of the population in question. Most importantly, it requires an understanding of the nuances that characterize the different sub-groups within this population.

Indeed, the settlement movement in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, which now numbers some 250,000 people, is far from homogenous and includes a variety of types of people. The residents of Ma'aleh Adumim, Ariel, and Alfei Menashe are different from the residents of Elkana, Efrat, and Paduel, who are different from the inhabitants of Ofra, Elon Moreh, Kedumim, and Karnei Shomron, who in turn are different from those of Itamar, Har Bracha, Yizhar, and Tapuah. Despite the many faces among settler sub-groups, we can draw two major distinctions: the distinction

> Ideological settlers are a minority among the overall settlement population of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, but it is the religious–ideological group that has the dominant voice.

between the religious population (which includes three ultra-Orthodox settlements) and the non-religious population; and the distinction between ideological settlements and settlements that arose primarily from standard of living considerations and affordable housing opportunities. These two distinctions do not overlap completely, but there is a significant correlation between the respective polarities. Numerically, ideological settlers are a minority among the overall settlement population of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, but it is the religious–ideological group that

has the dominant voice. Most Yesha Council leaders are associated with the ideological settlement stream, and the Council's positions are primarily those of the ideological settlers.

The settlement movement, which stands at the forefront of the opposition to the disengagement plan and is officially represented by the Yesha Council, began to take shape during the first few months after the Yom Kippur War. However, its ideological and emotional roots can be traced back to the euphoria that followed Israel's victory and conquest of Judea and Samaria in the Six Day War. This sense of euphoria was experienced by the country as a whole, but took on almost messianic overtones in the national religious community. The decisive lightning victory of the sovereign Jewish army and the liberation of geographical areas teeming with national religious meaning (especially Jerusalem, crowned by the religious and historical icons of the Western Wall and the Temple Mount), in conjunction with the sense of "God's speedy redemption," was understood as the actualization of the religious Zionist ethos – the perfect coalescence of "safra" and "sayfa," the hand of God and military might. This approach even led several religious Zionist circles to propose canceling the Tisha B'Av fast, or at least the minor fasts that commemorate the destruction of the temple.

These deep feelings, which were intensified by the direct physical encounter with sites that religious Jews had for centuries "visited" constantly through their liturgy and Scriptures,

were not immediately translated into a clear political–ideological program obligating individual actualization. Despite the feelings of spiritual uplifting during the first years following the Six Day War, the majority of the national religious public adopted a pragmatic approach to the political question of the future of the territories. On this issue, the community had not yet come to constitute the Israeli right wing.

A small yet extremely close-knit and committed group within the national religious community called for retaining all parts of the Land of Israel at any cost, and strongly supported the physical settlement of the territories conquered during the Six Day War. The inner core of this group was made up of students and graduates of the Merkaz Harav yeshiva in Jerusalem, primarily the students of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, the most zealous prominent figure in the religious Zionist camp with regard to the absolute imperative of maintaining Jewish control over the entire Land of Israel.

This group's first step was the partisan-style settlement in the Park Hotel in the heart of Hebron on Passover 1968, a move that resulted in the establishment of Kiryat Arba outside Hebron and thereafter the Jewish settlement in Hebron itself. In the years preceding the Yom Kippur War, Kiryat Arba was the site of the establishment of the Elon Moreh group, a group that in many ways served as the catalyst for the settlement movement as a whole. Gush Emunim was formed after the Yom Kippur War, to

a large degree as a response to the intense trauma caused by the war. In its nascence, the inner core of Gush Emunim consisted of students of the Merkaz Harav yeshiva, but also included activist circles from religious Zionist movements such as Igud Hamoshavim, Hapoel Mizrahi, and Hakibbutz Hadati. The "young guard" within the National Religious Party likewise supported the new group. The union of Gush Emunim and the Elon Moreh group created the settlement movement, whose evolution and development have had a major impact on the State of Israel.

During the first phase of its existence, the settlement movement enjoyed great support throughout the national religious population, especially among the youth and young adults, despite the fact that it constituted a minority of the religious Zionist population as a whole. In the one and a half generations between 1974 and today (and almost two generations since the Six Day War), Israel's national religious population has undergone far-reaching social, cultural, educational, demographic, and ideological changes. These profound changes within the religious Zionist movement lie beyond the scope of this article, but critical here are two processes that were formative for the movement.

The success of the Sebastia activity in 1974 thrust Gush Emunim on the political map, made the group a force to be reckoned with, and led to government concessions toward the settlement drive. This, and even more importantly, the Likud's rise to

power in 1977, enabled the settlement movement to grow until it reached the critical mass necessary to perpetuate itself. At this point, Gush Emunim faded away and was replaced by two institutional organizations: the Yesha Council and Amana, the settlement movement organization founded by Gush Emunim. Purely for the sake of analogy, and acknowledging the significant differences between them, this transformation can be compared to the Zionist movement's institutionalization and transition to the sovereign state of Israel. Both the Yesha Council and Amana have for years enjoyed (and continue to enjoy) large allocations from the state budget, which has enabled them to build sizable organizations, undertake major organizational and public relations activities, and implement large-scale projects that afford them extensive public exposure.

At the same time, the Merkaz Harav graduates and their associates (including the late Rabbi Moshe Zvi Neria, the founder and head of the Bnei Akiva yeshivas, and Rabbi Haim Druckman, current head of these institutions) began expanding their spiritual and organizational influence within the Bnei Akiva youth movement and the educational system of the national religious sector (yeshiva high schools for boys, religious girls' high schools, yeshiva–military "hesder" programs, and pre-conscription religious academies) until they dominated the system entirely. The Merkaz Harav group is the religious Zionist equivalent to Habad (the activist, high-profile, evangelical Lubavitch

Hasidism movement) in the ultra-Orthodox sector, and, like Habad, is also a missionary group of sorts. In the early 1970s, this group represented a small, closely knit, and extremely energetic minority within religious Zionism. Most parents of Bnei Akiva youth movement members and students of the religious Zionist educational system were still far from this group in terms of worldview and way of life. And in fact, at the beginning, the Merkaz Harav influence was limited. However, as years passed, Merkaz Harav's success in taking over the formal and informal educational systems of religious Zionism had a major impact. While this group still constitutes only a minority of the religious Zionist sector, it is a minority of great importance that wields immense influence.

The combined impact of the two processes described above over the course of one and a half generations, possibly compounded by other processes, resulted in the evolution of a new nationalist ultra-Orthodox sub-culture within religious Zionism. This new sub-culture ("hardal" – the Hebrew acronym for ultra-Orthodox national religious) comprises a population very similar to the ultra-Orthodox in worldview, customs, and lifestyle. The critical difference is their position on the national issue, and their level of identification with the state and its symbols. The ultra-Orthodox national religious identify with the state, serve in its army, fly its flag, and observe its holidays (Holocaust Day, Memorial Day, and Independence Day). The great majority of

this population also differs from the ultra-Orthodox sector in that they are integrated in the country's workforce and support themselves, although there has been a degree of erosion in this context as well. But this population does not differ fundamentally from the ultra-Orthodox population in most other ways, such as its strict religious behavior; its emphasis on the importance of studying Torah at the expense of more general studies;

> The evolution of the ultra-Orthodox national sub-culture moved the mainstream of religious Zionism to the right, to the point that religious Zionism as a whole came to symbolize the right wing of Israeli politics.

its opposition to any type of gender-integrated activity; its tendency toward seclusion and introversion; its negation of the expressions of modern society (television, movies, and other such articles); and its acceptance of their rabbis' authority in all areas of life.

The ultra-Orthodox community sanctified two values: a high birthrate and the study of Torah. The nationalist counterpart of this sector sanctified two values of its own: a high birthrate and the Land of Israel. The ethos of the Greater Land of Is-

rael became the center of life and the primary essence of this sub-culture. More important, the evolution of the ultra-Orthodox national sub-culture has had a major influence on religious Zionism as a whole. Sub-cultures, which are often rebellions against their parent cultures and emerge as counter-cultures, typically undergo progressive radicalization. In the case at hand, this process had two results: it moved the mainstream of religious Zionism to the right, to the point that religious Zionism as a whole came to symbolize the right wing of Israeli politics; and it spawned some extreme and uncontrolled offshoots, such as "noar hagvaot" (the hilltop youth) and movements along the lines of Kach, the outlawed extremist political party.

The Existential Challenge

The disengagement plan hit the ultra-Orthodox national public and religious Zionism as a whole like a clap of thunder on a clear day, creating the current deep identity crisis. For the ultra-Orthodox national religious community, which includes most of the members and institutions of the religious-ideological settlement movement and many other circles, the crisis is twofold:

■ **A religious crisis of faith**: Deep in the consciousness of this group is a belief that the settlement drive in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza is part of a divine plan and the ultimate redemption, and is therefore irreversible. It is a messianic belief, and for this reason there are those who regard it as a transition from religious Zionism to

messianic Zionism (the Temple Mount Movement, and preparations for the rebuilding of the temple and for resuming God's work on the Temple Mount are classic expressions of this belief). Implementation of the disengagement would be a major blow to the religious–ideological worldview or call it entirely into question.

■ **The crumbling of a cognitive cornerstone**: According to this worldview, the establishment of as many settlements as possible throughout Judea and Samaria, and the retention of all the settlements in the Gaza Strip (including the remote settlements of Netzarim and Kfar Darom), was supposed to ensure that no Israeli government would ever be able to vacate settlements, and that there could never be a practical possibility of establishing a Palestinian state with real territorial contiguity. During the debate that took place among settlement leaders between captivating the hearts of the people versus actual physical settlement, the leadership unequivocally chose to regard physical settlement as a priority. Their underlying assumption was that it would be a left wing government that would want to vacate the settlements, and that this could never be carried out in face of the persistent combined opposition of the national religious population, the ultra-Orthodox population, and the entire right wing of Israeli politics. The settlers never imagined that it would be a right wing government, no less one headed by Ariel Sharon, that would threaten the existence of the project that had been his own life's work. Sharon's ability to carry out the

large scale evacuation of all of Gush Katif and some settlements in Samaria unilaterally, not even within the framework of a comprehensive peace settlement, means the total collapse of this conception and raises major uncertainties regarding the future of the settlement project as a whole.

The crisis is fundamental and deep. The question at this point is: what will be the national religious population's response to this crisis? In this context, it is important to distinguish between different sub-cultures within religious Zionism. One possible response is to break all the rules by refusing to accept the decision of the state and commencing a mass uprising against implementation of the withdrawal plan. The most far-reaching expression of this approach is adoption of the extremist approach that says: "if the State of Israel withdraws from the Land of Israel, then we are withdrawing from the State of Israel." And in fact, this approach of breaking all the rules enjoys significant and consistently growing support throughout the ultra-Orthodox national religious population.

At the same time, there are two distinct variations of this approach. For a portion of the ultra-Orthodox national religious population (the majority, as of today), this is primarily a tactical approach, while for the remainder of the population it is strategic. For those who employ this approach tactically, represented first and foremost by the public institutional leadership of the settlers (the Yesha Council), it is primarily a threat against the government and Israeli society, based on

the hope that the threat will serve its purpose and restrain the prime minister from implementing the disengagement. So far, proponents of the tactical approach have been careful not to cross red lines. They speak in obscure, ill-defined terms regarding civil disobedience and a soldier's personal refusal to obey orders, but they rule out organized refusal to obey orders and organized violence.

In contrast, those who employ this approach strategically (with the support of a large number of Yesha rabbis, as well as rabbis located outside of the territories) are willing to stay the course and place their relations with the State of Israel in question. This group's ideology is quickly evolving into an ideology similar to that of Neturei Karta, the ultra-Orthodox sect that has consistently denied the legitimacy of a pre-messianic Jewish state and refused to recognize it. While not precluding the validity of a pre-messianic polity, the crisis of the ultra-Orthodox national religious essentially invites a rejection of the state in its present form. For now, the tactical approach remains dominant throughout this population, although the danger always exists that proponents of the tactical approach will be swept under the ideology of the strategic approach.

The settlement movement's two major power centers are the Yesha Council and the Yesha rabbis. The Yesha Council is more pragmatic, while the rabbis lead the extremist line. Unseen tension exists between these two power centers. This is because the Yesha Council is supposed to repre-

sent the settlements in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as a whole and therefore must take into account the positions of non-ideological settlers. The Yesha Council is also the force leading the public political struggle, and it must consider constraints of political parties and public opinion. Moreover, there are disagreements within the Yesha Council itself regarding the direction the struggle should take: one important indication of this disagreement was the recent resignation of the Council spokesperson. In addition, some leaders of the Yesha Council do not lead an ultra-Orthodox national religious lifestyle and belong to the mainstream of religious Zionism.

In contrast, many prominent Yesha rabbis reflect the fundamentals of the ultra-Orthodox national religious culture and are, to a large extent, its spiritual leaders – the avant-garde leadership that sets the tone of ultra-Orthodox national religious culture overall. More ideological and zealous than the Yesha Council, the statements of many Yesha rabbis are growing increasingly extreme as the withdrawal approaches. Finally, it is also important to take into account the extremist elements of the settlers and their supporters, such as the hilltop youth, Kach-related movements, and the messianic stream within Habad. While these elements represent only a minority of the settlers, it is a minority that consistently incites the population and accepts the authority of neither the Yesha Council nor the Yesha rabbis, not to mention the rule of law and the State of Israel. Herein lie the

dangers of these groups, dangers that the more responsible members of the settlement movement have still not learned or at least not chosen to address in any fundamental way.

The critical question is whether the ultra-Orthodox national religious public will be able to attract the mainstream of the religious Zionist sector as it has done in the past. The situation is highly sensitive and complex: there are often family and other ties between these two strands,

> Religious Zionism for the most part will not serve as a potential partner for withdrawal from the state and Israeli society.

as they both evolved within the same population. There are many adults who belong to the national religious mainstream while their children and grandchildren identify with the ultra-Orthodox national religious stream. It is unusual to find a religious Zionist family without a relative, friend, acquaintance, or family member of a friend or acquaintance who lives in a settlement. Nonetheless, all signs indicate that, at the present, the unequivocal answer to this question is that the mainstream of religious Zionism is not considering any disengagement, political or spiritual, from Israel or from the IDF. The red line for

this population, who constitute the decisive majority of Israel's religious Zionist population, is the issue of refusing to carry out military orders and, on a broader and more fundamental level, the attitude toward the IDF. Indeed, the call to refuse orders, in conjunction with acts of aggression against IDF soldiers and officers (e.g., attacks during the dismantling of the Mitzpe Yizhar outpost, threats against religious officers, and demonstrations outside the homes of senior religious officers and General Security Services officials), resulted in heated responses not only from the mainstream, but also from significant groups living in the settlements themselves.

In this context, it is important to note the petitions and letters of opposition against refusing orders, written and signed by senior religious officers and settlement residents, rabbis, and heads of military yeshiva programs and pre-draft religious academies. There have also been newspaper articles written by figures well-known among settlers and the ultra-Orthodox national religious sector, which minced no words cautioning against religious Zionism's withdrawal from the state and from the Jewish people. One author decried the refusal to obey military orders, the challenging of the authority of Israeli national institutions, and the attempt to move political decisions to the street.[1] Another wrote that even if the state is making the Jewish homeland narrower and smaller, and perhaps using means that are questionable as far as their democratic mandate is concerned, the state should not be totally destroyed,

as this would bring down the roof on everyone.[2] It should also be recalled that Rabbi Shlomo Aviner, one of the most prominent and influential figures in the ultra-Orthodox national religious sector, has consistently rejected the calls for soldiers to refuse to obey orders.

Conclusion

The State of Israel is not on the brink of a civil war, but it faces serious trends that are dangerous in and of themselves, such as the refusal to obey orders, civil disobedience, and mass disturbances. Furthermore, extremist fringe groups will likely attempt to carry out extreme acts. But no matter how serious these fringe phenomena may be, they remain for the most part an operational problem for the police and the IDF, and a problem of domestic subversion for the Israeli security services. Germany had the Baader-Meinhof Gang and Italy had the Red Brigades, and both groups cultivated murder and destruction. Nonetheless, both countries overcame these groups, as many other democratic countries have defeated similar domestic challenges. The IDF will in the end undoubtedly be able to overcome these challenges and succeed in carrying out the disengagement plan. Even if 10,000 or 20,000 soldiers refuse to obey orders – and it is extremely doubtful that anywhere near such a number of soldiers will do so – this will not stop the army from completing its task.

Perhaps the intensive involvement of Knesset members representing the settlers (first and foremost that of Zvi Hendel, who is also a resident and leader of Gush Katif) in amending financial sections of the Evacuation and Compensation Law and searching alternative sites of residence reflects an acceptance of the decree. Perhaps at the end of the day, once the disengagement becomes a fait accompli, a minority of the settler community will get up and leave. Yet in any event, religious Zionism for the most part will not strike a blow at the IDF and will not serve as a potential partner for withdrawal from the state and Israeli society. Indeed, it is quite possible that the ultra-Orthodox national religious population and the mainstream of religious Zionism will part ways, after walking together for more than thirty years. The split in the National Religious Party is just the political expression of this parting of ways, and perhaps the first indicator of a deeper and more fundamental social phenomenon.

Notes

1. See the article by Rabbi Yuval Sherlo, head of the military-yeshiva ("hesder") program in Petah Tikva, *Haaretz*, January 7, 2005.
2. See the article by Yisrael Harel,, one of the founders of the settlement Ofra, former deputy chairman of the Yesha Council, and editor of the Council's journal *Yesha Nekuda*, in *Haaretz*, January 6, 2005.

The Election of Abu Mazen and the Next Stage in Israeli–Palestinian Relations

Mark A. Heller

It has been clear since the reconfiguration of American foreign policy after September 11, 2001 that the wave of violence unleashed by the intifada would not be translated into tangible political gains for the Palestinians. It has also been clear, at least since Operation Defensive Shield of April 2002, that the Palestinians would pay a rising price in both economic and human terms for the continuation of the intifada. True, terrorists could still inflict casualties on Israel, but their ability to do even that diminished in the face of ongoing IDF operations inside Palestinian cities and the progressive extension of Israel's security barrier. Finally, it became increasingly clear during 2004 that the Palestinian leadership had no coherent political or military response to Prime Minister Sharon's proposed "unilateral disengagement" from Gaza and the northern West Bank. Instead, Palestinian politics and society were mired in a morass of policy paralysis, diplomatic impotence, economic regression and impoverishment, administrative chaos and corruption, and growing lawlessness.

The Day after Arafat

As a result, the death of Yasir Arafat in November 2004 removed an already marginalized political figure, one who had long since ceased to be a source of inspiration for or reform of Palestinian politics and policy. Despite growing evidence of fatigue in recent years with the consequences of his leadership, however, Arafat still enjoyed enough stature and semi-mythical status as "the father of the Palestinian cause" to block others who did aspire to reform. Very soon after his demise, it therefore seemed that most Palestinians mourned him much more than they missed him, and the focus of public concern quickly shifted to the issue of succession.

That issue actually involved two questions: "Who would replace Arafat?" and "What, if anything, would replace Arafatism?" The answer to the first question was rather straightforward. On January 9, Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), the long-time secretary of the PLO's Executive Committee and former prime minister of the Palestinian Authority (PA), was elected chairman/president of the PA with a plurality of about 62%. Despite widespread predictions that part of Arafat's political legacy would be chaos and a dysfunctional political system, the immediate aftermath of his death played out according to constitutional norms, and the election proceeded in a distinctly orderly fashion. And notwithstanding some complaints of irregularities by other candidates (e.g., distorted allocation of air-time by state-controlled radio and television, a last-minute extension of voting hours, and permission for unregistered voters to take part), the election met every reasonable test of political transparency. If nothing else, the very fact that Abu Mazen won by "only" 62% (in contrast to the (90+% approval ratings normally given to the establishment candidate in Arab elections) and that his closest

competitor received almost a quarter of the votes attests to these being free and fair elections by almost any standard.

Of course, the elections were held under the most intense scrutiny of the international media and international election monitors. The United States sent a high-level delegation of observers headed by former president Jimmy Carter, and the European Union also dispatched about 260 monitors (in contrast to the barely thirty monitors it sent for the first round of Ukrainian presidential elections). Nevertheless, the conduct and outcome of the election were primarily a testament to the desire of the Palestinians themselves to conduct their own affairs according to the rules of democratic politics. For example, voter turnout was over 60%, as high as in most democratic polities where voting is not mandatory and about the same as in the 2001 prime ministerial election in Israel (which the Palestinian election resembled in the sense that it only involved the direct election of a national leader; Legislative Council [parliamentary] elections are scheduled to be held in July 2005). The turnout is even more significant given the decision of Hamas and Islamic Jihad not to participate. On the other hand, the Islamists merely refrained from running for office. Unlike opposition elements in Iraq, they did not resort to violence or other forms of intimidation in an attempt to sabotage the election or persuade voters to boycott the election. This stance almost certainly reflected their appreciation of the widespread public desire for an exercise in democratic choice and for the resolution of issues like political succession through political, i.e., non-violent means.

In this sense, the conduct and outcome of the election suggest a partial answer to the second question, as well – voters registered their clear rejection of Arafatism, at least in domestic affairs. By most accounts, there was widespread voter dissatisfaction with the growing corruption, cronyism, economic deterioration,

> Soon after Arafat's demise, it seemed that most Palestinians mourned him much more than they missed him.

and breakdown of law and order in recent years. Thus, the demand for greater adherence to legal norms in politics that was implicit in the behavior of voters was actually but one dimension of the demand for broader transparency and accountability in public affairs and greater attention to economic needs after the election. These demands resonated in the promise of all the candidates to bring about change – an unstated but rather obvious rejection of the way that Arafat had (mis)managed domestic affairs up to the very end.

Abu Mazen's election gives him the legitimacy to move forward on matters of domestic reform, including issues of financial transparency on which some progress had already been registered at the prodding of European donors and under the direction of Finance Minister Salam Fayyad. Abu Mazen also has a fairly clear mandate to restore public order by rationalizing the public security agencies and reining in the criminal activities (including extortion of businessmen) by various armed gangs. The major obstacle will be the resistance of vested interests, including those same gangs masquerading as "resistance groups," whose power, independence, and personal prosperity will be threatened. But efforts to overcome this opposition will enjoy a fairly wide measure of public support, as evidenced by the general approval of Abu Mazen's directive to security forces, shortly after his election, to demolish illegal buildings on Gaza beach, and there is some basis for projecting that progress will be made on democratization and good government – the first pillar of President Bush's vision, laid out in June 2002, for Israel and the future state of Palestine.

Relations with Israel

Much more ambiguity attaches to the significance of the election for external affairs, i.e., the future course of relations with Israel. Here, the rejection of "Arafatism" is not so clear cut, either in terms of ultimate Palestinian ends or the means by which they are to be pursued. On the former, Abu Mazen's record suggests that he might be slightly more inclined to consider a

permanent status agreement along the lines formulated in the "Clinton parameters" of December 2000 that Arafat rejected. If so, that would not contradict somewhat greater public receptivity to such ideas in the months following Arafat's death.

But attitudes toward permanent status issues are of less immediacy than are attitudes vis-à-vis de-escalating the current situation in order to facilitate the resumption of negotiations. On this matter, Abu Mazen would clearly prefer to act in keeping with the second pillar of the Bush vision, not to speak of Israeli conditions for a relaxation of military pressure and the resumption of political dialogue, and to establish a leadership "untainted by terrorism." Abu Mazen has long been on record as opposed to the armed intifada, insisting that it is inimical to Palestinian interests, and he persisted in this posture during the election campaign, refusing to retract his condemnation of suicide bombings and mortar and rocket attacks on Israeli towns. Indeed, his desire to rationalize the Palestinian security services in order to rein in terrorists during his brief tenure as prime minister in 2003 brought him into open confrontation with Arafat and resulted in his resignation after only three months in office. As a result, there was every reason to expect that Abu Mazen would not persist in Arafat's policy of denouncing terrorism for Western audiences while encouraging it in domestic rhetoric and back-channel subsidies.

On the other hand, it was precisely the exigencies of electoral politics that forced him to trim his message, to the point of portraying himself as Arafat's protégé and successor despite the fact that he had not exchanged a word with "the old man" for over a year following his resignation as prime minister. In particular, he could not make an unequivocal commitment to deal forcefully with terrorists given the widespread popular conviction that violence against Israel – whatever its utility – does not qualify as terrorism but is instead legitimate resistance in

> Progress by the Palestinian Authority on the democratization track of the Bush agenda may inhibit progress on the terrorism track.

the cause of national liberation. Consequently, Abu Mazen insisted that he would avoid coercion and rely only on "dialogue" and "persuasion" to bring about a ceasefire, that Palestinian security forces would not be used against terrorist groups but would actually protect them from Israeli preemption or reprisal, and that in any event he would do nothing to provoke a Palestinian civil war. Since these positions appear to be firmly within the Palestinian consensus, that raises the possibility, perhaps paradoxical, that progress on the democratization track of the Bush agenda for the Palestinian Authority may inhibit progress on the terrorism track. Moreover, they leave unanswered several critical questions: how long will Abu Mazen pursue his non-confrontational approach; what, if anything, will persuade him that it has run its course if he fails to secure voluntary compliance; does he have a fallback position; and what can or will Israel do while this internal dialogue plays itself out.

Because of Abu Mazen's established record and known preferences, Israel (along with the United States and most other outside parties) was inclined to look favorably on his candidacy. Many of his pre-election statements were discounted by the Israeli government as campaign rhetoric (after all, Ariel Sharon's own campaign slogans turned out to be poor predictors of his post-election policies), and Israeli action and inaction before and during the election seemed almost designed to minimize any adverse impact on his domestic credibility. Moreover, his election was greeted by barely disguised expressions of relief. Both the president of Israel and the prime minister sent him messages of congratulations, and Sharon immediately announced that a high-level meeting would take place soon, thereby hinting at the possibility that Israel's impending disengagement, already the subject of consultations with the United States, Egypt, and others, might not even be unilateral with respect to the Palestinians. Moreover, Israeli leaders focused their initial expectations on matters such as incitement in the PA-controlled media that Abu Mazen could attend to without the concurrence of his do-

mestic opposition, and they signaled some appreciation of Abu Mazen's need for time to confront the question of terrorism. They even indicated an understanding of the argument made by Abu Mazen's defenders that he required Israeli help to consolidate his position and hinted at a continuation of the technical coordination with PA agencies and the easing of constraints on movement within the West Bank that were instituted in order to facilitate election logistics.

The Challenge of Violence

The honeymoon was brief. Within a week of Abu Mazen's inauguration, a barrage of rocket and mortar attacks and suicide bombings killed ten Israelis and wounded dozens more in settlements and military positions in Gaza, at the Karni cargo transfer facility on the border between Gaza and Israel, and in the Israeli town of Sderot, a few kilometers east of Gaza. One of these attacks actually took place on the day Abu Mazen arrived in Gaza to initiate direct discussions with Hamas and Islamic Jihad, as if to underscore by deed the defiant statements issued by spokesmen of those organizations.

These developments confronted the Israeli government with a serious dilemma. On the one hand, the entreaties of outside actors reinforced its own calculus that self-restraint was best designed to help Abu Mazen consolidate his authority. On the other hand, public opinion rejected the notion that Israel should passively absorb casualties while Abu Mazen

got his affairs in order, and it pressed for some forcible response. The tentative resolution of this dilemma was to buy time by announcing a suspension of high-level political contacts with the PA and signaling that large-scale military action was imminent. This prompted more resolute declarations of intent on the part of the PA and PLO leadership, orders banning public displays of weapons on the streets, and plans by the Palestinian Security Service to prevent rocket attacks from

> The functioning of a Palestinian government is unlikely to affect the substance or timing of the Israeli disengagement.

the northern Gaza Strip. These actions averted, at least temporarily, further escalation of violence and a further complication of Abu Mazen's task of asserting his authority through political means. Indeed, opposition elements showed more receptivity to Abu Mazen's demands even as they insisted on far-reaching Israeli commitments in exchange for compliance, and the level of violence did drop dramatically. As a result, security contacts between Israel and the PA intensified and political contacts were resumed, focusing first on modalities for an incremental handover of security responsibility to the PA in areas where

its determination and ability to suppress violence were evident. At the same time, Israel began to consider measures of its own, such as prisoner releases, that might further enhance Abu Mazen's domestic credibility.

But in the absence of a more comprehensive program, such actions provided few reliable guidelines for predicting future developments. Resistance to any plans by Abu Mazen to reformulate Palestinian strategy, and especially to act on Israeli demands that he actually dismantle terrorist infrastructures, can be expected from two main sources: the Islamist opposition (Hamas and Islamic Jihad), and the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, which are nominally an offshoot of the Tanzim (i.e., subordinate to Fatah) but in practice constitute an assortment of small, loosely coordinated gangs that answer to local warlords and are even sometimes organized along clan lines. The former, especially Hamas, are relatively disciplined organizations with political agendas, meaning that they are responsive to public opinion, including indications of a growing conviction that terrorism has become counterproductive. As a result, they are potentially amenable to a ceasefire as part of a broader effort to stabilize conditions in PA-controlled territories, provided there is an incentive (e.g., power sharing) appealing enough to override the inclination to reject a political agreement in the absence of a credible PA threat to use force. Against the backdrop of almost a decade of fruitless on again–off again PA–Hamas discussions, often encouraged by Egypt, there is little reason to

expect that current discussions will end differently unless new variables – the death of Arafat and the prospect of Israeli disengagement – make a critical difference. By late January, expressions of PA confidence in the outcome were still rendered suspect by Hamas' ambiguous declarative policy and its unambiguous actions on the ground. And even if some agreement were reached, it could not long endure unless the Islamists underwent a strategic transformation.

Despite their ostensible subordination to Fatah, the Aqsa Brigades are equally problematic. Their chaotic structure makes them resistant to central directives and the mixture of ideological and instrumental motives that animates them makes them targets of a "bidding war" between a PA tempted to co-opt them and outside elements (Iran and/or Hizbollah) bent on sabotaging any stabilization efforts.

The degree to which these uncertainties about the evolution of the Palestinian Authority are resolved may influence the modalities of the Israeli disengagement: a functioning government able to enforce some measure of public order in Gaza will make it easier for Israel to coordinate with the PA and withdraw in an orderly fashion, which is its own preference and that of Abu Mazen (though not of Hamas). But it is unlikely to affect the substance or timing of the Israeli disengagement, which are almost exclusively subject to internal Israeli variables. The question of disengagement has been constitutionally and legally settled by government approval and Knesset ratification, and the decision is reinforced politically by the persistent support of approximately two-thirds of the public and the incorporation of the Labor Party into a stable "disengagement coalition." The settlers' movement and its supporters continue to wage a campaign of resistance, but they have failed thus far to persuade the government or the public to reverse course. Furthermore, the very fact that the disengagement has been justified as a unilateral measure makes the outcome of the settlers' campaign relatively immune to Palestinian intervention, one way or another. Any hopes they still have of preventing the disengagement therefore rest on the belief that while their opposition to withdrawal is firm, support for it may be ambivalent and might be swayed by some traumatic event before or during the actual evacuation of settlements.

But barring such a trauma, the Israeli road to disengagement is unlikely to be affected by developments in the PA. It is the post-disengagement course that is hostage to Abu Mazen's own fortunes. If he manages to make Arafatism simply a chapter in Palestinian history, that road may well lead to a serious political reengagement and a real prospect of conflict resolution. If not, the road may or may not pass through further unilateral actions by Israel, but either way it will only lead to continued conflict along a new set of frontlines.

Israel and NATO: Opportunities and Risks

Zaki Shalom

Introduction

Jaap de Hoop Scheffer visited Israel on February 23-24, 2005, in the first official visit by a NATO secretary. The visit was intended to promote strategic cooperation between NATO and Israel, thus implementing a resolution passed during the NATO summit held in Istanbul on June 28-29, 2004, calling for increasing strategic cooperation between NATO and specific Mediterranean countries, including Israel. The issues intended in the context of cooperation are activities against terrorism; activities against weapons of mass destruction; guaranteeing of borders; preparations for mass disasters and states of emergency; participation in NATO maneuvers; consultations regarding defense reforms, including relations between the political and military levels; and the prevention of arms and drug smuggling.[1]

The final communiqué in Istanbul had concrete implications regarding NATO's intention to deepen the ties with each of the Mediterranean countries named, according to specific circumstances and needs. Official Israeli representatives, including Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom and Chief of Staff Moshe Ya'alon,

were invited to participate in the NATO sessions; for the first time Israel received a formal invitation for its armed forces to participate in multilateral NATO maneuvers; and Israel was also invited to participate in NATO security activities against terror threats, currently underway in the Mediterranean. Israeli ambassador to the EU Oded Eran recently submitted to the NATO headquarters a proposal for development of relations between Israel and NATO. In this document Israel proposes raising the level of its dialogue and cooperation with NATO along bilateral and regional tracks.[2]

These events clearly indicate increasing interest on NATO's part in greater cooperation with Israel than in the past. The change in NATO's attitude to Israel reflects the turnaround that has taken place in recent years in the nature of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, in its concept of the threats it faces and, consequently, its sense of who should be a member. NATO was set up in order to confront the Communist threat presented by the USSR, a threat that decreased significantly with the Soviet collapse. Following the events of September 11, 2001, NATO's concept of the nature

of the threats it confronted changed further. For the foreseeable future the major threat facing the free world, which NATO is supposed to defend, comes from radical Islam, whose primary sources of power lie mainly in the Middle East. Iran's nuclear activities have made a grave and more concrete contribution to the feeling of the threat facing NATO.[3]

In order to neutralize or at least reduce this threat, the growing assessment among NATO member countries is that it is important to increase military cooperation with Israel as well as with other Mediterranean states. These states share the fear of radical Islam, and accordingly cooperation should be established more firmly than in the past. It is therefore natural that Israel, which is vulnerable to the same threat and has earned much experience in combating it, would be integrated in NATO activities.

Thus far formal membership in NATO has not been proposed to Israel. It seems that members of NATO hesitate to establish full relations with Israel as long as the Israeli–Palestinian conflict continues and a political agreement is not in sight. However, the encouraging developments that have taken place recently in the Middle

East have increased NATO's interest in expanding strategic cooperation with Israel. These developments include Israel's determination to implement the disengagement plan; the strengthening of Abu Mazen's regime in the Palestinian Authority; the growing recognition by the Palestinian leadership of the need to prevent terrorism against Israel; the Sharm el-Sheikh conference; and the strengthening of relations between Israel and Egypt.

This is the backdrop to NATO's current interest in establishing close working relations with Israel, without far-reaching formal commitments. This approach allows the NATO countries to observe from close up the development of the political process between Israel and the Palestinians, and to upgrade relations, based on a timetable convenient both for them and Israel, where at the end of the process the option of Israel's formal integration in NATO might arise. If a viable political process between Israel and the Palestinian Authority does not begin, it will be possible to reduce, or even totally halt the cooperation, by relatively simple "administrative" means.[4] With this in mind, the essay that follows addresses the various considerations that Israel must take into account when deciding on the nature of its future relations with NATO. The essay presents the various considerations at two different points on the time axis: the advantages latent in practical strategic-military cooperation at the present time; and the pitfalls in formally joining NATO, if and when

it is proposed to Israel in the future. Also included are the understandings that Israel should conclude with NATO before it would agree to join the organization.

Greater Cooperation between Israel and NATO

From Israel's point of view, strengthening the security cooperation with NATO has important potential advantages in four areas: diplomatic,

> The argument that integration in NATO will increase Israel's deterrent capability is true to only a limited extent, if at all.

strategic-defense, military-technological, and economic.

From the diplomatic aspect, strengthening the security cooperation with NATO countries will considerably enhance Israel's political status. It will be made clear to the Palestinian Authority and Arab countries, including Egypt, that the international community does not necessarily hinge cooperation with Israel on broad political agreement. It is clear that most NATO countries do not agree with Israel on its obligations in a final status agreement with the Palestinians, its activities in the occupied territories, and many aspects of its defense policy

as it combats the terrorism threat. However, this does not prevent them from establishing broad cooperation with Israel in the military, political, and economic fields. As such, this denies legitimacy to actions that were and perhaps are still in effect on the part of the Palestinians and other Arab countries, such as forceful activities aimed at weakening Israel's strategic posture or isolating it in the political and economic arenas.

Strengthening the cooperation with NATO countries will most probably enhance Israel's bargaining ability in its contacts with the American administration and also with the countries of the European Union, most of which are NATO members. Until now Israel has acted with the image of a fairly isolated country in the international community, whose sole ally is the US. When cooperation with the NATO countries increases, it will become clear that Israel no longer bases its security only on links with the United States. A greater supportive environment makes Israel less dependent on any one ally, and thus boosts its bargaining potential.

From the strategic-defense aspect, cooperation with NATO countries will enhance Israel's deterrence capability regarding potential enemies threatening it, mainly Iran and Syria. Enemy countries will have to take into account at least the possibility that Israel will not stand totally alone in the event of a war with them, even if actual assistance is not obligated by the protocol. The more Israel's image is strengthened as a country facing enemies who attempt to attack it for

no justified reason, the greater will be the possibility that aid will be extended to Israel by NATO. Furthermore, Iran and Syria will have to take into account the possibility that the increasing cooperation between Israel and NATO will strengthen Israel's links with Turkey, also a member of NATO. Given Turkey's impressive military potential and its geographic proximity to both Iran and Syria, Israel's operational options against them, if and when it sees the need, could gain considerable strength.

At the same time, increased practical cooperation with NATO countries does not excessively tie Israel's hands. As long as Israel is not a formal member of NATO, it can undertake a unilateral military initiative if it feels threatened or if its vital interests are endangered, without necessarily being accused by members of the organization of a betrayal of trust. This would be the case if, for example, Israel were to decide to attack Iran's nuclear facilities, or if it were to see fit to initiate a military operation against Syria or the Palestinian Authority.

Regarding the military-technological dimension, cooperation with NATO countries is likely to expose Israel to advanced technologies and military operational methods that will help it cope better with future threats that it may encounter, both in the event of war or during current security activities. Joint maneuvers with NATO countries will enhance IDF knowledge and experience in the large-scale operation of land, sea, and air forces. In addition, as part of the war against terrorism, Israel may

be exposed to sources of information and methods of operation that up to now have not been accessible.

From the economic aspect, increased cooperation with NATO countries will award Israel a special status regarding arms deals – both in exports and imports. Although Israel already enjoys a significant status as a major non-NATO ally of the US,[5] it may be assumed that increased cooperation will expose the NATO countries to Israel's special military-

> The inclination of NATO members will be to demand that Israel reduce even further the extent of its military operations.

technological capabilities, including methods of combating terror. The result may well be the expansion of export markets for Israeli weapon and combat systems.

In the final analysis, the continuation and strengthening of military cooperation with NATO countries serves the political-military-economic interests of Israel. It has significant potential gains with relatively few costs. The major issue that must be addressed regarding increased cooperation with NATO is the final product at the end of the road, i.e., the possibility that Israel will be offered full, formal membership in NATO. Is-

rael must take into account the danger that increased practical cooperation with NATO countries will entangle it in a mass of dependencies that will not totally prevent, but will make it difficult to refuse, accepting an offer of full membership of NATO.

Israel's Membership in NATO: A Problematic Option

At present the Israeli-Palestinian conflict constitutes the foremost obstacle to Israel's membership in NATO. If and when there appears on the horizon the possibility of a political settlement, even if only a limited one, it may be assumed that the question of Israel's full and formal membership in NATO will arise. Formal membership in the organization will certainly enhance the advantages discussed above that are latent in cooperation with this powerful strategic organization. Furthermore, if additional Arab countries join NATO at the same time as Israel, this is likely to strengthen the fabric of cooperation in relations between Israel and the Arab world in establishing a solid peaceful atmosphere.

However, the question of Israel's formal membership in NATO – when this becomes relevant – obligates a different and more extensive set of considerations than those regarding the cooperation that is currently under discussion. This set of considerations raises grave questions regarding the value of this step.

The argument that integration in NATO will increase Israel's deterrent capability is true to only a limited extent, if at all:

■ The order of battle currently possessed by Israel awards it considerable strength, permitting it to create a reliable dimension of deterrence against potential threats of a military confrontation.

■ Israel possesses strong bilateral relations with the US, which in practice award it the status of an informal ally. Since Israel's establishment, all US administrations have declared their deep commitment toward Israel and to preserving its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

■ Israel possesses a nuclear option, i.e., it enjoys a situation in which the countries of the region, and in fact, the entire international community, regard it as a country having a nuclear capability without it itself ever having stated whether or not it possesses such a capability.

■ Practical cooperation with NATO countries has already expanded and will continue to expand Israel's deterrent capability.

Thus the question that must be asked is: will Israel's formal membership in NATO increase its deterrent strength *beyond* that which it would already possess and likely possess in the foreseeable future? It seems that joining NATO will contribute to Israel's deterrent capability only marginally, if at all.

Furthermore, the major threat confronting Israel currently and in the foreseeable future is not that of an all-out war involving regular military forces, for which the additional strength of NATO would indeed be significant. The possibility of such a threat has decreased in recent years,

and the more immediate threat confronting Israel now and in the foreseeable future is that of low-intensity warfare, which might include the use of certain types of mass destruction capabilities. Israel is therefore required to find a deterrent capability against these types of threats, all the while aware that it lacks internal and external legitimacy for the use of its total capability and as such is compelled to restrict its use of force.

Consequently, it is doubtful if the

> Israel would be required to neutralize or place under supervision its own nuclear facilities in order to justify similar action against other states in the region.

additional capability that may be achieved by joining NATO will be of significance in increasing Israel's deterrent capability against these threats. Moreover, it is difficult to assume that membership in NATO will increase Israel's political ability to use the entire strength it currently possesses. On the contrary, it is reasonable to assume that the inclination of NATO members will be to demand that Israel reduce even further the extent of its military operations and avoid taking steps that might impinge on individual liberties or norms of war within the international community.

Even if we posit that an Arab–Israeli military confrontation is a real possibility in the foreseeable future and that it is worthwhile for Israel to have a NATO guarantee, the question remains regarding the reliability of the commitments of member countries to come to Israel's aid if its security or vital interests are endangered. The history of the State of Israel contains not a few cases in which the international community, including the United States, preferred to ignore its commitments, even when signed agreements and understandings existed. When put to the test, various considerations and interests are likely to cause NATO countries to reach the conclusion that it is preferable for them to avoid providing real aid to Israel in order to minimize the damage incurred by honoring their commitments.

The NATO treaty, like many international agreements, supplies the member countries with a broad range of legal and formal arguments that elegantly permits them to evade fulfilling their commitments. Various terms that appear in Article 5 of the organization's convention – the article defining the nature of the mutual guarantee – are terms capable of a variety of interpretations. As such they can provide a wide range of reasons justifying a failure to implement the guarantee to supply aid in the event of an attack. The capability of each country to realize this option of evasion is of course conditional on its relative strength in the organization and its dependence on the other member countries.

Another possibility that must be taken into account is that the NATO countries might wish to act as required by the treaty and aid Israel in the event of its being attacked, but will be unable to do so because of objective, concrete reasons. For instance, if member countries are involved in another conflict at the same time, they may already be obligated to allocate most of their resources elsewhere. Or, there may be strong internal opposition to military involvement on Israel's behalf and it will be necessary to achieve a broad national consensus for such a step. Such processes can take a long time and involve protracted negotiations between opposing elements.

From Israel's point of view, however, the time element is liable to be critical in periods of strategic crisis, and aid that is not supplied immediately may become irrelevant. At the same time, the American administration, considered the major element in Israel's defense, already demonstrated its willingness to defend Israel at a time when it faced grave danger during the Yom Kippur War, without being formally obligated to do so as part of any defense treaty. It is therefore doubtful if the marginal addition of NATO membership will provide a significant contribution to Israel's security, and thus it seems preferable for Israel to examine strengthening its strategic links with the US in the direction of a bilateral treaty, rather than joining NATO.

Another consideration is the risk that NATO membership would considerably restrict Israel's military freedom of action at a time of crisis involving an Arab or Islamic state. The NATO convention does not formally rule out unilateral action by one of the member countries taken in order to defend its vital interests. However, without doubt at least some of the senior member countries would expect Israel, which would rely on protection by the powers in the event of its being attacked, to consult with them, or at least inform them before it took action liable to drag them toward an overall military confrontation with another country.

These circumstances would confront Israel with a grave dilemma. If it decides to consult members of NATO before taking military action, it must expect to encounter opposition from most if not all of them. If it acts despite this, it will be regarded as ignoring the views of its fellow members. If it acts without prior consultation with NATO countries, it will take the risk of prompting angry responses by them because they have been presented with a fait accompli contrary to the atmosphere that is supposed to exist between the members of the organization.

Furthermore, Israel's membership in NATO would likely incur increased pressure to surrender the nuclear option it currently possesses. One of Israel's major arguments justifying its nuclear option was that the Western powers were not prepared to provide it with "absolute" guarantees for its defense as part of a permanent defense treaty, along the lines of the NATO alliance. Consequently, survival considerations dictated that Israel had no alternative other than to develop an independent nuclear option. If Israel did in fact join a strong and stable international defense treaty organization, in which the US is also a member, it could easily be argued that it no longer has a reason to justify retaining the nuclear option.

Such a step would confront Israel with a dangerous situation regarding one of its major sources of strength. At this stage and in the foreseeable future Israel is unable to give up the nuclear option. However, its demand that nuclear threats by other countries in the region be neutralized will encounter demands to practice what it preaches. In other words, Israel will be required to neutralize or place under supervision its own nuclear facilities in order to justify similar action against other states in the region. It is very doubtful if Israel's leadership will be capable of withstanding the pressures applied to it at a time when an apparently generous and far-reaching proposal of formal membership in the most powerful strategic alliance is extended.

Another factor that should deter Israel from joining NATO is the commitment made by every candidate member according to Article 5 to supply military aid to a NATO member attacked by another country.[6] Consequently Israel must consider the possibility, remote though it may seem, that NATO membership may lead to pressure to send forces to distant areas for a war in which it has no direct interest. This is a situation that Israel has not experienced, and

without doubt would spark broad opposition among the Israeli public. The IDF, it will almost certainly be argued, was established as an army to defend the state and the people of Israel, and it is therefore inconceivable that the lives of Israeli soldiers should be endangered in missions that do not directly relate to Israel's defense.

The final consideration involves the political dimension of the settlement with the Palestinians. The European countries play a dominant role in NATO, but their stance on a final settlement is in general contrary to Israel's position. Israel's joining NATO is liable to award the European countries greater legitimacy for involvement in the political process, along with a variety of forms of pressure. The overall result might be a major reduction in the status and weight of the US in the Arab–Israeli conflict. Such a development is contrary to Israel's interests. It is therefore important for Israel to ensure that the United States, rather than European states, continue to lead the political process in the Middle East.[7]

Conclusion

The Istanbul declaration provides a clear expression of a new marked tendency by NATO to upgrade its relations with Israel. The invitation to senior Israeli representatives to take part in varied sessions of the organizational institutions and the invitation to Israel to participate in multilateral NATO maneuvers are among the clear indicators of this trend. Such a process awards Israel important political, strategic-military, and economic advantages, and imposes no excessive restrictions on it. It permits each of the sides to cooperate up to the level it finds convenient, on the understanding that such a move will serve its interests. It is therefore not surprising that various circles in Israel regard this status most favorably.[8]

Until now Israel has not been formally invited to join NATO. It seems that the major obstacle to membership is the absence of a viable political process that could lead to a settlement between Israel and the Palestinians. If and when such a process begins, Israel may be required to address the question of whether membership in NATO serves its interests. Now, however, is the time for Israel to deliberate the issue, particularly given the weight of the factors opposing formal NATO membership. Israel's overall interest is to strengthen the strategic cooperation with member countries of NATO without crossing the threshold of formal membership. It is virtually certain that in the foreseeable future NATO will have a similar interest, namely, to maintain or else enhance the strategic cooperation with Israel.

If however, the option is raised of formal membership, it is essential that Israel achieve understanding with the leading countries in NATO regarding two major issues. The first is that NATO members will agree to the existing strategic understandings between Israel and the US regarding the nuclear option. In addition, Israel's military freedom of action must not be limited by NATO countries if and when Israel feels that a real threat exists to it or to its vital interests.

Notes

1. The Istanbul declaration followed the Mediterranean Dialogue initiative announced at the meeting of NATO ministers in December 1994. At that time strategic cooperation was discussed between NATO members and seven Mediterranean countries: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia: http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2004/12-december/e1208c.htm

2. Amir Oren, "Muhammad, 30 Push-ups," *Haaretz*, February 11, 2005. See also Amos Harel, "They want an affair with the IDF, but not a marriage: as part of the world struggle against terror NATO is vigorously courting Israel and is inviting it to numerous exercises. However, Israel's joining the organization is still out of the question," *Haaretz*, December 16, 2004.

3. Chuck Hagel, "NATO Expands Its Boundaries," *USA Today*, March 2004, pp. 54-57. See also Thomas L. Friedman, "Expanding Club NATO," *New York Times*, October 26, 2004; and "NATO, the Mediterranean and the Middle East," Deputy Secretary General's Keynote Address at the Royal United Services Institute Conference, November 29, 2004.

4. Amir Oren, "Don't Misunderstand Us," an interview with the secretary of NATO, *Haaretz*, February 24, 2005.

5. On the status of an ally that is not a member of NATO, see: Dore Gold, *Israel as an American Non-NATO Ally: Parameters of Defense-Industrial Cooperation*, Tel Aviv: Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, 1992.

6. "The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defense recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area."

7. For the official positions of the European Union regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, see the European Union and the Middle East Peace Process, http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/mepp/index.htm. On the disputes between Israel and the EU, see Akiva Eldar, "Europe is Investing, Europe Wants a Return," *Haaretz*, April 22, 2004; Shlomo Shamir and Aluf Ben, "A Crisis between Israel and Europe following the Condemnation of the Fence in the UN," *Haaretz*, July 22, 2004; Natan Gutman, "The EU demands that Israel Halt Construction of the Fence and Dismantle it. The US Opposes Transferring the Debate to the UN," *Haaretz*, July 11, 2004.

8. See the announcement of the Israeli ambassador to the EU, Oded Eran, regarding Israel's desire to expand its cooperation with NATO countries, Mark John, Reuter's Agency, February 9, 2005. See also Amnon Abramovitz, "Israel is approaching NATO," Ulpan Shishi, Channel 2 television, January 28, 2005, from Yifat, Media Information, Tel Aviv.

The Recent American Intelligence Failures

Ephraim Kam

Leading Western intelligence communities are currently confronting a wave of intense criticism following two serious intelligence failures: one relating to the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, and the other relating to the war in Iraq. The most serious criticism is leveled at the American intelligence community, in part because it was involved in both failures but also, and primarily, because the results of the failures were extremely damaging to the United States. Critics perceive these failures of the American intelligence community as symptomatic of systemic, non-isolated defects. Additional – albeit less severe – criticism is directed against the British and Israeli intelligence communities, and the calls for reform of these systems match similar efforts elsewhere in Europe. Some of these proposals have far-reaching implications.

While the two intelligence chapters reflect an overall systemic weakness within the American intelligence community, they also represent two distinct types of intelligence failures. The failure of September 11 was primarily a combination of inadequate intelligence gathering and organizational problems. In other words, a lack of solid information on the planning and preparation of terrorist attacks joined obstacles that prevented the little intelligence information available from reaching the hands of experts who might have been able to use it to warn of the attack. These factors produced the defective intelligence assessments preceding the attack itself. In the case of Iraq, the main problem was one of research and analysis: a lack of high quality intelligence information, poor management, and organizational deficiencies meant that the fundamental premise underlying the intelligence assessment was mistaken. The two cases are thus fundamentally different, yet when examined together complement one another and provide a better understanding of the challenges facing the world's intelligence communities today.

Three investigative reports on the intelligence system were prepared in the United States in the aftermath of September 11: a joint report by the intelligence committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives; a report by a national commission of inquiry; and a report by the CIA's inspector general (which remains classified, with only some of its conclusions leaked to the media).[1]

A comprehensive report on the Iraqi case was also prepared by the Senate intelligence commission,[2] and another investigation is supposed to be conducted according to specific government directives. The Iraq affair prompted two smaller foreign reports: one prepared by the British parliament, which examined the British intelligence community;[3] and one prepared by the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.[4]

All the reports, but above all the reports published in the United States, shed new light on the complex issue of intelligence failures. This article examines how the findings enhance the understanding of intelligence failures on a strategic level, and considers what intelligence communities around the world can learn in their efforts to minimize future strategic surprises. To this end, selected issues in the American reports that have fundamental implications for the phenomenon of intelligence failures are explored. The analysis below is based specifically on these reports, and therefore the article does not address other aspects of intelligence failures or elements that bear on the American intelligence community alone.

The Intelligence Conundrum of September 11

The investigative reports addressing the September 11 attack highlight serious intelligence problems. The early warning puzzle that the American intelligence community attempted to construct in the period before the attack had too few pieces. Furthermore, the pieces that were present were not interconnected within an overall picture; their position in the scheme of things was not at all apparent; and they did not yield a clear early warning assessment.

The pieces of the puzzle were as follows: since 1997, the American intelligence community clearly understood that al-Qaeda was more than just another terrorist organization and that it was working to develop a new brand of terrorism. US agencies had intelligence that al-Qaeda was planning either a plane hijacking to secure the release of imprisoned Islamists, or a large-scale attack to be carried out against American targets, perhaps in the United States. New York's World Trade Center was not an unfamiliar target, as Islamic extremists had already attacked it in February 1993. Prior to September 11, intelligence agencies uncovered slivers of information indicating that terrorists were considering using planes as weapons, along with another intelligence item that mentioned the idea of blowing up a plane at CIA headquarters. Towards the summer of 2001, there was a growing feeling that a large attack was imminent, with preparations either complete or nearly so.

These pieces of the puzzle, however, did not mesh to yield a clear understanding of the threat, and therefore did not facilitate issuing a warning. Despite the feeling of an impending attack, intelligence agencies had no solid information clarifying the nature of the threat or details such as time or place. No one imagined that the attack would involve crashing planes into buildings. There was no precedent for such an attack, and it appeared too fantastical to be logical. Agencies therefore focused on the more "reasonable" familiar possibilities of an attack on American installations outside the United States and the use of more standard forms of terrorism, such as a plane hijacking to secure the release of prisoners.

Although the reports fail to explain why these warnings did not result in an estimation that planes might be hijacked and used for mass-casualty attacks, this can be partially explained by the manner in which intelligence analysts interpret information. When analysts face unfamiliar material, they attempt to understand it by drawing parallels with events familiar to them from their personal or national histories. This approach is clearly inadequate when an event has no precedent or parallel, yet because the warnings leading up to September 11, which were not based on solid information, did not coalesce to form a clear picture, analysts kept working along traditional lines, with scenarios of attacks outside the United States or attacks for the release of prisoners or other concessions. The possibility of a plane hijacked as a suicide attack was considered low. The sense that something drastic was imminent had little impact, nor do the reports sufficiently explain why American security agencies did not mobilize to prevent even a familiar attack designed to extract some ransom. And, while the number and severity of warnings was unprecedented, the report concludes that even in retrospect it is still not clear if these non-specific warning signs were related to the September 11 attack or to something else.

The reports reveal that between January 2000 and August 2001 ten opportunities to begin understanding the preparations for the attack were missed. Using intelligence terminology, it can be said that at these junctures, early warning indicators pointing at the nature of the imminent attack and the fact that preparations were underway emerged from the activities of those who eventually carried it out. Some signals were related to the entry of two of the hijackers into the United States. However, ten indicators, some of them unrelated to each other, are relatively few, and it would have been difficult to generate

> Because the warnings leading up to September 11 did not coalesce to form a clear picture, analysts kept working along traditional lines.

a meaningful understanding of the situation based solely on them. Before the Yom Kippur War, Israeli intelligence had hundreds of indicators, yet it was still difficult to construct an unequivocal early warning picture. In the case of September 11, all ten opportunities were missed, whether because the intelligence analysts did not realize the importance and meaning of the indicators or because the information was not passed on to those who might have been able to understand its significance.

In any case, the inquiry's findings reveal how weak these indicators actually were. FBI officials testified before the national commission of inquiry that even if they had arrested one or two of the hijackers, this would not have prevented the attack. The committee itself did not reach a decisive conclusion on this point. In one part of the report, the committee reasoned that if two of the hijackers had been arrested, it is possible that their interrogation might have led authorities to other hijackers, thus obstructing the attack. In another part of the report, the committee stated that arresting two of the hijackers would not have prevented the attack: the two individuals in question were hijackers and not pilots, and were therefore not of critical importance for the attacks. When other non-pilot hijackers were denied visas to the United States, al-Qaeda was able to adapt to the situation and replace them with substitute operatives.

In retrospect it is clear that the low quality of indicators and the lack of a precedent for such an attack were critical problems for the American

intelligence community before September 11. Based on the information at its disposal, American agencies had almost no chance of generating an accurate assessment regarding the attack. The only way to master such a problem would have been to obtain much higher quality intelligence information from within al-Qaeda itself by infiltrating its ranks, an unusually difficult task. For this reason, FBI director Robert Mueller's testimony before the joint congressional inquiry

> For intelligence communities, the only constructive outcome of September 11 is that it presents a mega-attack precedent.

appears justifiable: "Looking at each of the areas that we could have done better, I'm not certain you get to where we stop these individuals." For intelligence communities, the only constructive outcome of September 11 is that it presents a mega-attack precedent, requiring analysts to focus more on obtaining information, generating early warning scenarios, and taking preventative measures against possible mega-attacks in the future.

The Failure with Regard to Iraq

The mistaken assessment that in 2003 Iraq possessed weapons of mass de-

struction (WMD) represents a classic formula for a strategic surprise. This formula has three fundamental components:

- evolution of a prevalent conception in part as a result of group thinking
- reliance on problematic intelligence information
- adapting intelligence information to fit the prevalent conception.

The Prevalent Conception: During the 1990s, the American intelligence community generated an assessment that Iraq had an active program for developing weapons of mass destruction, and that this program was more extensive than the one that had existed prior to the Gulf War. This assessment, which remained unshaken until the 2003 war, was based on a number of premises: Saddam Hussein had not changed his strategic approach; Iraq had possessed chemical and biological weapons, long-range missiles, and an active nuclear program before the Gulf War; Iraq's supply of scientific personnel had not been damaged, and the country knew how to produce these types of weapons; Iraq did not provide satisfactory answers regarding what happened to some of the weapons it possessed up to the Gulf War, and there was reason to suspect that the government had hidden them; Iraq had a history of concealment and fraud; the reports of the UN weapons inspectors reinforced suspicions against Iraq, and their expulsion from the country in 1998 was perceived as evidence of Iraqi intentions to continue developing weapons of mass destruction.

The commission of inquiry found that most of the key components of this assessment were either not supported by intelligence information or were exaggerated beyond what the information indicated, due to flaws existing primarily in the realm of analysis. In a number of important instances, portions of the assessment were based on old material, unconfirmed with updated intelligence. The heads of the intelligence community instructed their analysts to reassess neither the components of the assessment nor their relationship to intelligence information.

Problematic Intelligence Information: The intelligence community had no high quality, solid information at its disposal with regard to the issue of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. It therefore relied on indicators or pieces of information on Iraqi activities that could be interpreted in different ways. A significant portion of these signals were reports that Iraq purchased dual use equipment and materials that could be used for legitimate civilian purposes as well as for WMD development. The intelligence community chose to interpret these factors as stringently as possible, as indication of the existence of a military program. Retrospective analysis of this information by the commission of inquiry reveals that the intelligence did not explicitly indicate that the activity in question was related to WMD development programs. Rather, this was a conclusion of the intelligence community, which lacked unequivocal supporting evidence.

Adapting the Intelligence: Because the intelligence information was of low quality, it was easily tailored to fit the prevalent conception. Intelligence analysts disregarded indications that dual use materials were meant for civilian or conventional military purposes, and not necessarily for non-conventional use. Information that contradicted the prevalent conception was quickly rejected. For instance, when the UN inspectors returned to Iraq in 2002 and reported that they found no

> The assessment that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction prompted intelligence gathering and analysis that were mutually reinforcing.

evidence of biological weapons in a suspected installation, intelligence agencies claimed that the report resulted from a lack of experience on the part of the inspectors in overcoming Iraqi duplicity. The absence of high quality information should have encouraged the intelligence community to reassess and challenge its longstanding prevalent conception. In practice, however, the absence of information was attributed to Iraqi attempts at concealment and therefore did not cast doubt on the conception. In fact, as late as the end of 2003, months after the war in Iraq, the CIA announced that it still upheld its assessment, and that the failure to uncover WMD in Iraq stemmed from the difficulties of disclosure within such a large area.

The assessment that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction prompted intelligence gathering and analysis that were mutually reinforcing. Information garnered from human intelligence sources did not include questions such as did Iraq have non-conventional weapons. Furthermore, questions were phrased based on the premise that Iraq did in fact possess such weapons and focused on uncovering the nature and location of activity in this realm. Thus, analysts never received information indicating that Iraq had ceased producing weapons of mass destruction and as a result, sources denying the existence of WMD production programs were considered to be either deceitful or uninformed.

The report on the intelligence failure regarding Iraq includes a detailed and systematic analysis of pieces of the information that were at the disposal of the American intelligence community until the war. Today it has been officially determined that on the eve of the war Iraq did not possess weapons of mass destruction, and the retrospective analysis of the information as presented in the report is correct. But the report's analysis is only wiser after the fact, and does not help address the analytical difficulties that intelligence analysts faced during the period leading up to the war. These difficulties included:

- The construct of assumptions that Iraq had weapons of mass

destruction appeared cogent, while alternative assessments showing that Iraq did not possess such weapons were less convincing.

■ It is true that the assessment strayed from the intelligence information and was not fully supported. However, that is the nature of intelligence information, especially when dealing with strategic issues. In such cases, intelligence information does not unequivocally determine situations, but rather leaves them open for interpretation and assessment. When a dominant assessment seems logical and is not contradicted by other intelligence information, it is difficult to dislodge it in real time.

■ There was more justification for interpreting ambiguous information in a suspicious direction, concluding that Iraq did in fact possess weapons of mass destruction, than dismissing the suspicions. For instance, intelligence information indicated that Iraq had rebuilt or expanded installations that had in the past been related to its biological weapons production program, and that the country was undertaking studies that could be applied to biological weapons production. At the same time, only a small number of reports held that Iraq's activity was directly related to a program for the development or production of biological weapons.

The result was that even though the information did not prove it explicitly, it made more sense to interpret the information in a suspicious manner. After all, the commissions investigating September 11 were critical of the intelligence community for failing to interpret suggestive factors in this way.

> The commission regarding September 11 criticized intelligence agencies for not being creative enough in their interpretation of the existing signals to envision the unprecedented possibility of planes being crashed into buildings.
>
> ■
>
> In contrast, the commission on Iraq was critical of intelligence agencies for being too creative, and for interpreting the signals at their disposal in an overall assessment that Iraq possessed WMD.

Committee Recommendations

Although the intelligence failures surrounding Iraq and, to a degree, September 11 were in the realm of assessments, the investigative committees made no recommendations aimed at improving the analysis process. Instead, they made due with pointing out some of the problems

with the process. Apparently, this is no coincidence. During the last ten years, various suggestions have been made within the intelligence community, the political system, and academia aimed at improving the analysis process. Some of these suggestions are related to advanced methods of processing information and different approaches to establishing and assessing premises. On the one hand, implementing these suggestions may do no damage and may even be useful at times. On the other hand, they address only the peripheral problems and thus far have failed to inspire a significant breakthrough in this realm.

For example, the committees of inquiry offer no remedy for one of the main difficulties in generating intelligence assessments: how to interpret signals that do not provide an unequivocal answer to a question and can be interpreted in different ways. As there is no clear solution to this problem, the committees chose to look in other, sometimes contradictory directions. Thus, the commission of inquiry regarding September 11 criticized intelligence agencies for not being creative enough in their interpretation of the existing signals to envision the unprecedented possibility of planes being crashed into buildings. In contrast, the commission of inquiry on Iraq was critical of intelligence agencies for being too creative,

and for interpreting the signals at their disposal in an overall assessment that Iraq possessed WMD.

Nonetheless, between the lines of the report of the committee of inquiry on Iraq there is a contribution of sorts to an improvement of the analysis process. The commission undertook a comprehensive evaluation of the degree to which the American intelligence assessment on Iraq's WMD was based on hard intelligence information. It revealed the intelligence community's systemic tendency to generate assessments that were not based squarely on intelligence information. Therefore, it would make sense for intelligence communities – including the Israeli intelligence community – to initiate regular comprehensive assessments of important issues by means of internal bodies, or even better, external bodies. While the type of investigation undertaken by the commission of inquiry on Iraq served as a clear advantage when determining the after-the-fact assessment that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction, similar inquiries can also be undertaken retrospectively in order to shed light on the weak links in the system of premises underlying intelligence assessments.

The bulk of recommendations offered by the American commission of inquiry are organizational, and their major motivation was the failure surrounding September 11 and the conclusion that the compartmentalization of information and the lack of coordination among and within the various intelligence agencies played an important role in the failure. The commission's major organizational recommendation was to institute closer integration among intelligence agencies by:

■ establishing a separate position of director of national intelligence, which until now was a job performed by the director of the CIA. The director of intelligence is meant to hold extensive powers, and his/her tasks are to include improving coordination among the intelligence agencies, breaking down inter-agency barriers, determining priorities for the intelligence community as a whole, shaping intelligence community policy, and determining budget distribution within the community.

■ establishing integrated intelligence centers for certain realms, first and foremost, a national center for the war on terrorism. This center will comprise a joint center for intelligence and a center for joint operations, and will include representatives of all the intelligence agencies. It will take the lead in strategic intelligence analysis based on intelligence information provided by all possible sources. Next, integrated intelligence centers in other realms will be established as well, based on the center for the war on terrorism.

■ establishing a control body that will examine certain intelligence issues, identify problems and ways of addressing them, assess the overall intelligence community, and assist in coordination, cooperation, and breaking down inter-agency barriers.

At the present, only time will prove if the reforms within the American intelligence community are suc-cessful. In the meantime, President Bush has approved the recommended reforms and in mid-February 2005 appointed John Negroponte, the American ambassador to Iraq, as the director of national intelligence. The administration did express doubts about some aspects of the reform, especially the exercise of far-reaching budgetary powers by the director of intelligence. However, it remains to be seen whether the director of national intelligence will garner the necessary power to establish the position seriously, or whether the position will not be taken seriously by the various agencies and thus fail to take off. On this issue, former CIA director George Tenet opined that a director of national intelligence who is isolated from the CIA will be powerless.

While organizational change is likely to help decrease certain problems emerging from the intelligence process, it is also likely to damage the system. Moreover, in some instances it will not be clear at the outset whether the expected improvement will outweigh the damage caused. Therefore, the best approach towards implementing organizational reform within the intelligence community is careful, gradual change, and only to the extent necessary. In this context, the conclusions of the chairman of the commission of inquiry on Iraq are especially relevant. It is important, he stressed, that the proposed reforms do not cause damage, that change is not implemented simply for the sake of change, and that it is kept in mind that many of the solutions under consideration are unattainable.

The recommended increase in integration among the various intelligence agencies has generated concern that organizational changes might cause damage. During the 1960s and 1970s, the trend in the United States and Israel was to work towards pluralism within the intelligence community in order to provide decision-makers with a wide spectrum of assessments. In this context, the intelligence agency of the American Department of Defense (the DIA – Defense Intelligence Agency) was established in 1961, among other reasons, in order to create a counterbalance to the CIA. In Israel, the Agranat Commission (1974) recommended creating a counterbalance for the monopoly in the realm of intelligence assessments enjoyed by Military Intelligence and strengthening competing research and analysis bodies. Yet while pluralism likely (but by no means definitely) facilitates a wider variety of assessments, it can also cause damage by allocating resources in an imbalanced manner, causing conflicts over budgets and human resources, and bringing about a lack of coordination and cooperation between agencies.

The reports' recommendation to increase integration suggests that perhaps they were aware of the damage that pluralism can cause. It is not yet clear how strengthening integration will affect pluralism. The major intelligence agencies in the United States – the CIA, the DIA, the FBI, and the NSA – are large, strong organizations that will strive to preserve their independence. However, if pluralism does real damage, differentiation among intelligence assessments may be compromised as disagreements among the agencies recede. As an example, it is helpful to consider the issue of Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction. The research units of the State Department and the Department of Energy were less convinced than other agencies that Iraq had such weapons. In a more integrated structure, such atypical assessments would be likely to disappear.

> It is important that the proposed reforms do not cause damage, and that change is not implemented simply for the sake of change.

The tension between integration and pluralism will continue to burden intelligence communities, as each of these general directions can cause damage in addition to the benefits they provide. The tendency towards integration reflected in the American inquiry reports is likely to increase coordination among intelligence organizations, but may also impede creativity, innovative thinking, and the expression of atypical opinions. This problem has no unequivocal solution, and each intelligence community will need to offer its own response, at times through trial and error. In the Israeli context, the solution may be found in enhanced coordination among intelligence agencies without substantial integration, in order to preserve each organization's independent thinking and operating style.

The commissions that investigated the events of September 11 pointed to real coordination problems, such as information compartmentalization and obstacles blocking the transfer of information within and among the intelligence agencies. Compartmentalization has resulted from the legitimate desire to protect sensitive intelligence sources, as well as from inter-agency power struggles. However, it also has the potential to cause damage, sometimes serious damage, to the intelligence community's assessment capability. It would therefore be a good idea for all intelligence communities – the Israeli intelligence community included – to reexamine and ease restrictions on information flow to the degree that such changes do not threaten source security.

It is still too early to judge how applicable the recommendations presently considered in the United States are to Israel. After all, there are fundamental differences between the two intelligence communities in structure, aims, and working methods. In any case, however, it is important to wait for outgrowths of the reforms to see what they can reveal about the Israeli intelligence community, for good and for bad. It is also important to remember that organizational change for its own sake will not solve problems within the process of generating intelligence assessments, which is the cause of one of the intelligence system's main weak

points. The structure of the American intelligence community differs from that of England and Israel, yet all three communities were mistaken on the issue of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Still, of all the elements of proposed organizational change, one of the most important recommendations has been increased inter-agency coordination and cooperation in the war on terrorism. This is because the task involves a large number of actors and organizations, as well as an urgent need to acquire exact and accurate information and to pass it on quickly to those who need it.

The reports also suggest two lessons regarding the relationship between intelligence communities and political leadership. One is that the intelligence system should be required to inform political officials of the degree to which its assessments are based on solid intelligence information: what does the information include, and what does it not include? What is based on data and what is based on assumptions? What is certain and what is uncertain? Another lesson is to encourage the trend now on the rise in the United States, Europe, and Israel, namely, to increase the political leadership's supervision of the intelligence system by means of professional advisors. Expanded external supervision from both the executive branch and the legislative branch may motivate intelligence communities to undertake more in-depth evaluation of their intelligence

assessments in order to identify weak links.

Another important issue relates to the relationship between intelligence systems and decision-makers. The commission of inquiry on Iraq discussed at great length the possibility that officials of the American administration attempted to influence intelligence assessments of WMD in Iraq in order to justify a war that would topple Saddam Hussein's regime. Although there was evidence of indirect influence in this direction, the commission did not identify an intentional attempt by administration officials to influence intelligence assessments. Still, the issue is one of great importance, as the relationship between the intelligence system and political decision-makers must be free of any such influence.

Conclusion

September 11 and Iraq represent the two relatively new paradigms that intelligence communities need to address today and in the foreseeable future: international terrorism, which knows no borders regarding the sovereign space of the countries within which it strives to operate and the number of casualties it strives to cause; and radical states striving to acquire weapons of mass destruction. Both challenges present intelligence communities with serious difficulties in acquiring exact, reliable, and unequivocal information, perhaps more so than in the realm of conventional

warfare This is because the realm from which such intelligence information can be obtained is small, closed, and difficult to penetrate. This is what the two intelligence failures had in common – an absence of reliable intelligence information that resulted in mistaken assessments. This challenge demands the development of a fundamentally new approach to means of intelligence gathering, closer cooperation within intelligence communities, and more extensive cooperation among different intelligence systems within the international community.

Notes

1. *Joint Inquiry into Intelligence Community Activities Before and After the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001.* Report of the US Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and US House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Washington, DC, December 2002, www.gpoaccess.gov; *The 9/11 Commission Report*, www.9-11commission.gov.
2. *Report on the US Intelligence Community's Prewar Intelligence Assessments on Iraq*, www.globalsecurity.org.
3. *Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction*, Report of a Committee of Privy Counsellors, House of Commons, 14 July 2004, www.official-documents.co.uk.
4. *Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee Report on the Committee of Enquiry into the Intelligence System in Light of the War in Iraq (March 2004)*, The Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, March 2004 - http://www.knesset.gov.il/committees/eng/docs/intelligence.htm.

Non-Conventional Terrorism: Availability and Motivation

Anat Kurz

> To many people, the most frightening prospect for the future is that terrorist groups might gain access to and use weapons of mass destruction, specifically, nuclear, biological or biochemical weapons.
>
> (Grant Wardlaw, 1982)[1]

The fear of convergence of the two extremes of asymmetrical warfare – terrorism and non-conventional weapons – existed well before precautions against mega-terror rose to the top of the international agenda. In recent years the threat of non-conventional terror has grown to become the gravest aspect of non-conventional weapons proliferation.[2] The usual estimate of the threat balances the frequency of spectacular attacks, the declared intentions of terrorists to implement a non-conventional option, and the access to materials that will permit the construction of chemical, biological, or nuclear devices. Yet the focus on these factors often marginalizes an additional important element of the threat potential – the rationale behind the activities of terrorist organizations, including those who are regarded as the prime candidates for using non-conventional weapons.[3]

On the assumption that access to weapons is a necessary but not sufficient condition for terrorist attacks in general and those involving non-conventional weapons in particular, this essay will evaluate the organizational motivation that lies between accessing non-conventional means and actually using them. This will form the basis for an attempt to answer the question: why as of today has non-conventional terrorism remained primarily a potential threat that has not been realized in a sweeping manner? The intention of the discussion is neither to argue that the situation will necessarily remain the same, nor to detract from the gravity of the non-conventional terrorist threat. Rather, the goal is to distinguish from the other factors underlying terrorist activities the organizational rationale that in many cases prevents terrorist organizations from striving to acquire non-conventional weapons or translating their potential into reality.[4]

The Question of Access

According to the commonly-accepted evaluation, terrorist attacks in which non-conventional weapons are used represent a clear and immediate danger, unless preventive measures are taken on a broad international scale and restrictive conventions are implemented. This assessment is to a large extent based on supply and demand calculations.

The difficulty in limiting the proliferation of nuclear materials and technologies through conventions and the possible leakage in states lacking close supervision form a basis for the fear that these weapons will reach terrorist elements. Furthermore, in recent years evidence has accumulated regarding the efforts being made by terrorist organizations to purchase the materials and know-how required for the assembly of non-conventional weapons. Thus, evaluation of the threat potential focuses on explicit threats by terrorist elements, as well as the sources of leakage, access to a range of weapons, and inadequate securing of facilities liable to be targeted for theft, illegal trading, or attack.

Far less attention is devoted to the small number of non-conventional terrorist attacks, particularly in proportion to the overall number of terrorist attacks executed. The few attacks that have occurred are repeatedly cited as representative of an overall trend. They include minor incidents that had no direct strategic consequences but increased awareness of the danger of non-conventional terror. To these have been added the attacks using sarin gas perpetrated by Aum Shinrikyo (the most outstanding was the attack in the Tokyo underground in March 1995), and the wave of anthrax envelopes in the US in the months following the September 11, 2001 attack. These attacks, even though not causing mass fatalities, were taken to be a portent of the future.

Apart from the Aum Shinrikyo incidents, none of these non-conventional attacks contained examples of diffusing gas in crowded places. Although the list includes cases

> Operational choices of terrorist organizations are testimony to self-imposed constraints whereby certain modes of action receive priority over others.

of poisoning (some of which were already recorded in the 1970s) and indicates that terrorist elements possess chemical agents, there is no instance of a nuclear attack, which would be the gravest of all regarding its psychological influence and the magnitude of the response it would arouse. The September 11 attack itself, even though non-conventional weapons were not used, indicated that a threshold was crossed in terms of casualties and destruction, as well as in audacity and brazenness. This implied that a "logical" next step would be a non-conventional attack. Moreover, additional showcase attacks perpetrated in recent years by al-Qaeda, against a background of militant socialization in the Islamic world and the legitimization of jihad in the Middle East and among many Muslims in Western states, have made a significant contribution to strengthening the threat perception.

It may be assumed that the warning and defense systems developed and implemented over the years and the efforts devoted to prevention of unauthorized transfer of non-conventional materials and technologies have arrested the spread of non-conventional terrorism, at least for the moment. Possibly the struggle against the smuggling, production, and implementation of non-conventional materials is effective to a commendable extent, especially when compared to the struggle against smuggling conventional sabotage materials that are widespread on both the black and free markets, and the expertise for use that is readily available. This may therefore provide at least a partial explanation of the relatively small number of non-conventional terrorist attacks, and even a basis for re-evaluation of the threat potential in the foreseeable future. However, the effectiveness of the efforts to prevent the realization of an apocalyptic scenario should also be assessed against the fact that a significant number of conventional terrorist attacks involving many victims have not been thwarted, notwithstanding the far-ranging measures employed against terror, which include the de-

fensive and offensive steps taken after September 11, 2001.

Moreover, it is difficult to argue with facts: numerous facilities throughout the world for the manufacture of non-conventional materials or facilities in which non-conventional materials are used are not controlled absolutely. The list detailing the disappearance of materials from nuclear installations has grown longer in recent years. The knowledge required to handle nuclear, biological, and chemical materials has become commercially available, and its easy acquisition may compensate terrorist elements for the lack of necessary expertise among their members. Obstacles originating in and imposed by the environment on the defensive are limited. Nonetheless, the list of non-conventional attacks is still not a long one. If so, what prevents the terrorist organizations from translating availability into implementation?

The answer to this question should include an important element of the threat potential, apart from availability: the organizational motivations. The analysis of this complex factor does not extend to the efforts of anarchistic sects or alienated individuals to acquire chemical or biological materials, or to assemble a radiological device based on instructions that can be found on the internet. The possibility that they may choose to act using poisonous or environmentally destructive material may not be theoretically dismissed or prevented entirely. However, the widely accepted evaluation of the threat is based mainly on the intentions and capabilities of organized bodies that have financial and human resources at their disposal and enjoy varying degrees of popular support; also included are elements whose strategy legitimizes mass killing by conventional or non-conventional weapons. It is the rationale of action of these organizations that can be identified and analyzed.

The Question of Motivation

Despite spates of terrorist attacks, it is possible to recognize in the activities

> Even the organizations that turned suicide bombings into the symbol of their struggle are not themselves inclined to organizational suicide.

of terrorist organizations certain constraints that define the extent of their struggle and their methods. These constraints point to a framework in which certain modes of action receive priority over others. The implied organizational rationale indicates tactical and strategic choices made over the course of time. These choices are not a direct result of a balance between capabilities and intentions, since even efforts to achieve specific capabilities are a result of intentions.

The constraints vary from one organization to another. Certain organizations are more blunt and provocative than others regarding the selection of targets for attack, the frequency of attacks, the scale of the planned damage, and the style of action. However, in the majority of cases, notwithstanding differences in ideological or strategic imperatives, the operational choices are testimony to self-imposed constraints. These constraints, which change over time in accordance with situational conditions, are designed to protect the organization against a destructive counterattack on its infrastructure and erosion of popular and national support.

The preservation of the organizational core is an aim in and of itself. In recent years the terrorist threat has been linked to sophisticated use made by extremist Islamic elements of an unsophisticated mode of action – suicide attacks. These spectacular attacks were taken by many to indicate that a non-conventional attack was not far off. However, even the organizations that turned suicide bombings into the symbol of their struggle are not themselves inclined to organizational suicide, and as such are not immune to the reaction that these terrorist attacks are likely to incur.

The fall of the Taliban regime does not necessarily dictate that any mass-casualty massive-damage terrorist attack will be followed by military reprisals on a similar scale against the organization responsible. It will not always be possible to locate the headquarters and the bases of the organization, as in Afghanistan, nor will the state that has been at-

tacked always find itself facing a backward state lacking the capability of resistance and isolated on the international scene, again such as Afghanistan before the invasion of the US-led coalition forces. However, it may be estimated that the psychological effect of a spectacular attack using non-conventional weapons will sharpen sensitivities that perhaps became blunt during the period that has elapsed since September 11, 2001. As such, it would award further international legitimization to determined acts of punishment against states in which there is an infrastructure of terrorist organizations, even when it is impossible to find solid evidence of their direct involvement in the planning or execution of the terrorist attack. Concentrated military, diplomatic, and economic pressure on states that have not participated in a systematic determined fight against terror will generally evoke at least some efforts to join the struggle. As a result, terrorist organizations are likely to be forced to seek alternative places of refuge in an already dwindling list of locations.

It is possible that here lies part of the explanation why a terrorist attack using non-conventional weapons (including mass poisoning using chemicals, relatively simple to implement) has still not been perpetrated by extremist Islamic organizations. Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad have for some years been subject to ongoing military pressure. The possibility that in such circumstances these organizations will seek expression using non-conventional

weapons is not viable, as this would free the Israeli decision-makers from limitations that still circumscribe retaliation. In addition to efforts focusing on the perpetration of attacks, the Hamas leadership in the territories is deliberating participation in the official Palestinian leadership. Turning to non-conventional terror will remove this option from the agenda. In other cases, military pressure is not direct but exists as a threat. The Lebanese Hizbollah is already act-

> Leaders of terrorist organizations are aware that a non-conventional attack is liable to be very costly in terms of support by the public in whose name they purport to act.

ing in the shadow of Israeli deterrence against the implementation of conventional capabilities both in its own country and on the international scene. It is difficult to conceive of objectives whose chances of being advanced by non-conventional terror will, in the view of the leadership of the organization, override the danger of retaliation.

The motivation of self-preservation is not unique to organizations that fear for their status and operational capabilities (i.e., those that have something to lose), but is also applicable to organizations lying in a state of retreat and difficulty,

perhaps even with their backs to the wall. Significant erosion of status and even a state of siege do not necessarily lead to campaigns of revenge and indiscriminate attacks. Extremist factions in the IRA or ETA, for example, did not escalate their struggle in order to thwart a process of compromise that rejected their participation in the emerging political system, but concentrated on preserving their remaining assets. The fear of further damage to the already weakened organizational infrastructure deters the Muslim Brotherhood from showcase terrorist attacks in Egypt and Jordan, and instead encourages non-violent methods of persuasion in order to retain support from within and without and build the forces that will, when the time comes, proclaim the victory of the Islamic revolution. This case also points to the importance of popular support for the entrenchment of the organizational core.

By their very nature, terrorist organizations act in a hostile environment where the balance of forces is decidedly not in their favor. Consequently, popular support and a positive public image may well improve their capability of resisting pressure and heighten their chances of survival. Organizations striving for national liberation have better chances of achieving broad popular support, and thus strengthening their resistance and enhancing the chances of the success of the struggle. Conversely, the demise of organizations in the face of pressure on the part of security forces is frequently hastened because of the lack of popular sup-

port. Typical examples of this are the collapse of the Red Brigades and the Baader-Meinhof group.

In any case, a reduction in popular support is likely to encourage a change in the modes of action, and not always in the form of escalation intended to demonstrate capability of action under difficult conditions. The erosion of the support in the Tamil diaspora for the Tigers, which in part took the form of reduced financial contributions, was one of the factors that in 2002 led to an end of the suicide bombing campaign in Sri Lanka. The Lebanese Hizbollah acts within a framework of conditional popular legitimacy that dictates restraint, particularly since the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon. True, the casualties and the extensive damage to infrastructures caused by Israeli reprisals following suicide bombings did not reduce the popular Palestinian support for the organizations responsible for them. However, this does not guarantee that support for the perpetrating organizations would remain irrespective of developments on the ground, for example, after the adoption of non-conventional methods. The response to the crossing of the threshold is liable to strengthen doubts regarding the effectiveness of the struggle, erode the status of the militant organizations, and weaken the resistance to Israeli military pressure. It is hard to imagine that this risk will be ignored by the leaders of the organizations.

Popular support, however, is not the decisive prerequisite for organizations that enjoy state sponsorship.

Yet even state-sponsored organizations are not likely candidates for transition to non-conventional terrorism. In general, states that sponsor terrorist organizations tend to shun activities that will involve them in an international scandal, liable to produce economic or even heavy military consequences. The wariness of states regarding exposure of their direct involvement in terrorism implies that in matters related to the transfer of non-conventional tech-

> In the case of al-Qaeda and less provocative organizations, the potential of conventional terrorism is still far from exhausted.

nologies and materials to terrorists, they will be particularly cautious. This estimate should reduce the non-conventional terrorism potential associated with state-sponsored organizations because of difficulties in access to means.[5]

Furthermore, it may be assumed that survival rationale is what prevents state-supported organizations from making the effort to acquire what the sponsoring state does not supply from other sources. Deviation from the framework dictated by the sponsoring state, and especially a shift towards non-conventional terror, is liable to cost the organizations

a heavy price in terms of operational assistance and a territorial foothold. The organizations close to Syria, for example, have acted in recent years against a backdrop of fear of a policy change in Damascus, because of a decrease in the international tolerance of support for terrorism. This fear decreases the chances of non-conventional provocations being implemented, which would likely end the era of aid and hospitality.

The Case of al-Qaeda

Al-Qaeda's characteristics do not make it easy to explain its adherence to conventional terrorist attacks despite explicit threats to turn to non-conventional terrorism. The strategic objective at which al-Qaeda is aiming – renewal of the Islamic caliphate – places rapprochement and compromise out of the question. For this reason al-Qaeda does not restrain its activities out of a drive to create a positive image, which will prepare the ground for its participation in a political process. Moreover, the geographic dispersion of its activists makes it difficult to conduct extensive countermeasures that would obliterate the conventional and non-conventional threat latent in this organization, its cells, and its imitators.

Nevertheless and notwithstanding the continuous terrorist drives, it seems that cell leaders are doing their best to preserve organizational infrastructures. Without a doubt the defensive posture they have adopted is a result of the global attack being waged against the organization, but

the ramifications of the countermeasures do not reduce the significance of self-preservation as a restraining influence, and even emphasize this motivation. Support for the evaluation that even al-Qaeda is not exempt from operational considerations that take reprisals into account lies in the statement of one of the planners of the September 11 attack, who related that a plan to crash the plane into a nuclear reactor in the US was rejected because of the fear of a reprisal that would undermine the organizational infrastructure.[6] Presumably the magnitude of the American response to the September 11 attack itself far exceeded that estimated in advance by its planners, since the response was as unprecedented as the scale of the attack.

Al-Qaeda is not directly associated with a geographical community and is not based on a specific territory like the Lebanese Hizbollah or Hamas. It is reasonable to assume, however, that the leaders of the organization are aware that a non-conventional terrorist attack, particularly if it involves numerous victims, is liable to be very costly in terms of support by the public in whose name they purport to act. Such an attack would intensify the opposition that has been developing for several years, mainly in the US and Western Europe, to the domestic cultural and social changes emanating from the growth of immigrant Muslim communities. To be sure, reactions to terror attacks with measures such as blocking sources of employment, preventing access to educational institutions, or foiling the next terrorist attack with steps that infringe on civil rights heightens the militancy within Islamic communities. However, at the same time it may be estimated that potential ostracism will likewise propel these communities to criticize inciting elements. This will make the recruiting of activists and the preservation of a terrorist infrastructure increasingly difficult.

Al-Qaeda does not belong to the category of state-sponsored organi-

> The escalation of terrorism recorded in recent years does not necessarily indicate a linear progression toward a non-conventional era.

zations. Precisely for this reason it is easy to isolate among the factors influencing its range and nature of activity organizational motivations that do not involve considerations of a supporting government. The limitations of control by the coalition forces in Iraq gave the organization an opportunity to establish an alternative stronghold to what it lost with the downfall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. This theater of operations is apparently free of political and operational inhibitions. Is it possible to infer from this that at the first opportunity al-Qaeda will carry out its declared intention to perpetrate a non-conventional terrorist attack? It may be assumed that the reprisal for such an attack will set back the construction of the infrastructure in Iraq and its consolidation as a base for action on the international arena, and thus weaken the status of al-Qaeda as the flag-bearer of the Islamic revolution. Presumably such a consideration explains the fact that the organization's efforts to overcome the limitations of availability and operational expertise have not yet found practical expression in Iraq or on the international scene. The intermediate objectives guiding al-Qaeda – intensifying the tension between the Muslim world and Western states, and between Western states themselves against the background of the dilemmas involved in the fight against terrorism; and interference with the stabilization of the political system in Iraq and underscoring the problematic nature of the American occupation in the Iraqi and international consciousness – are advanced by conventional means. As far as al-Qaeda is concerned, conventional terrorism is neither a default option nor compensation for the difficulties of access to non-conventional weapons. Apparently, in the case of this organization, and even more so in the case of less provocative organizations, the potential of conventional terrorism is still far from exhausted.

Conclusion

The escalation of terrorism recorded in recent years does not necessarily indicate a linear progression toward a non-conventional era. Terrorist or-

ganizations are walking on the brink and their attacks play a decisive role in heralding them as the bearers of a political message and the leaders of the struggle. At the same time, violent provocations serve these aims up to a limit only. If a red line is crossed, the chances increase of countermeasures that aim to destroy the capability of these organizations. Caution not to cross this brink, which differentiates between maintaining the organizations in the public consciousness, for good or bad, and stimulation of a resounding response, explains the frequently observed disparity between ideological dictates and practice. This gap, whether conventional or non-conventional terrorism is concerned, is not due solely to difficulties in access to weapons. Often, profit and loss considerations prevent the use of conventional means. It may be assumed that these same considerations guide the caution displayed towards the use of non-conventional weapons.

If the efforts fail to thwart the realization of the non-conventional threat, this will not necessarily inaugurate a new era regarding the tactics of terrorist organizations active throughout the world. It is even likely that the response to a catastrophe of this sort would create an opposing drift, which would take the form of a lower profile by other organizations. This effect of added caution impacted on the policy of the states involved in international terrorism following the overthrow of the Taliban regime and the invasion of Iraq. However, the strategic significance of terrorism is not derived from the frequency of terrorist attacks but from the chain reaction triggered by spectacular attacks. As can be learned from the developments following the events of September 11, a single combined offensive, on an unprecedented scale regarding casualties and damage, is enough to revise concepts, intensify sensitivities, and produce a change in international relations and policy. Consequently it is impossible to overstate the vital need for international supervision of the development, manufacture, and marketing of non-conventional weapons, and for coordinated steps to prevent access by unauthorized elements to these weapons.

Notes

1. Quoted from *Political Terrorism: Theory, Tactics and Counter-Measures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 175.
2. "The greatest threat before humanity today is the possibility of secret and sudden attack with chemical or biological or radiological or nuclear weapons," President Bush on weapons of mass destruction proliferation, February 11, 2004.
3. Before the estimate of the Iraqi non-conventional threat was lowered and emphasis was diverted to non-conventional terrorism (as expressed in the president's speech referred to above), President Bush said, "If the Iraqi regime is able to produce, buy, or steal an amount of uranium a little bigger than a softball, it could have a nuclear weapon in less than a year." Graham Allison criticized the president for ignoring the terrorist dimension of the threat and listed candidates for use of weapons of mass destruction – all of them extremist Islamic organizations: "With the same quantity of HEU, al-Qaeda, Hizballah, or Hamas could do the same," G. Allison, "How to Stop Nuclear Terror," *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 1 (2004): 64-74.
4. For various types of weapons – poisons, germs, and nuclear materials – there are typical requirements for development, storage, transfer, and implementation. For each type there is a corresponding risk potential. Nonetheless, for the purpose of this essay, the materials generally implied by the term non-conventional weapons are grouped together because precise differentiation between them is not essential for the fundamental evaluation of the factors that influence realizing their potential.
5. In fact, both developed and failed states that support terrorism, including those possessing non-conventional weapons, avoid supplying chemical and other materials to elements liable to use them in an uncontrolled manner. Iran, which is first on the list of state sponsors of terrorism published yearly by the US State Department, is not an immediate candidate for transferring non-conventional weapons to terrorists. Against the background of the efforts made by its government to resist international pressure aimed at delaying the completion of its nuclear program, it seems highly unlikely that Iran would risk inviting additional direct pressure by supplying non-conventional weapons to a sub-state organization of any kind. North Korea supplies weapons and technologies to the highest bidder. Yet in any case, while terrorist organizations can exploit this flexibility, access to weapons is not the sole key to a realization of threats.
6. Yoram Schweitzer, "The Age of Non-Conventional Terrorism," *Strategic Assessment* 6, no. 1 (2003): 26-31.

JCSS Memoranda 1998–

No. 75, March 2005, Uzi Eilam, *L'Europe de la Défense* [Hebrew].

No. 74, December 2004, Paul Rivlin and Shmuel Even, *Political Stability in Arab States: Economic Causes and Consequences*.

No. 73, November 2004, Shaul Kimhi and Shmuel Even, *Who are the Palestinian Suicide Bombers?* [Hebrew].

No. 72, October 2004, Aviezer Yaari, *Civil Control of the IDF* [Hebrew].

No. 71, July 2004, Anat Kurz, ed., *Thirty Years Later: Challenges to Israel since the Yom Kippur War* [Hebrew].

No. 70, June 2004, Ephraim Asculai, *Rethinking the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime*.

No. 69, January 2004, Daniel Sobelman, *New Rules of the Game: Israel and Hizbollah after the Withdrawal from Lebanon*.

No. 68, November 2003, Ram Erez, ed., *Civil-Military Relations in Israel: Influences and Restraints* [Hebrew].

No. 67, October 2003, Asher Arian, *Israeli Public Opinion on National Security 2003*.

No. 66, October 2003, Shlomo Gazit, *Between Warning and Surprise: On Shaping National Intelligence Assessment in Israel* [Hebrew].

No. 65, June 2003, Daniel Sobelman, *New Rules of the Game: Israel and Hizbollah after the Withdrawal from Lebanon* [Hebrew].

No. 64, May 2003, Shmuel L. Gordon, *Dimensions of Quality: A New Approach to Net Assessment of Airpower*.

No. 63, January 2003, Hirsh Goodman and Jonathan Cummings, eds. *The Battle of Jenin: A Case Study in Israel's Communications Strategy*.

No. 62, October 2002, Imri Tov, ed. *Defense and Israel's National Economy: Exploring Issues in Security Production* [Hebrew].

No. 61, July 2002, Asher Arian, *Israeli Public Opinion on National Security 2002*.

No. 60, August 2001, Asher Arian, *Israeli Public Opinion on National Security 2001*.

No. 59, June 2001, Emily Landau, *Egypt and Israel in ACRS: Bilateral Concerns in a Regional Arms Control Process*.

No. 58, April 2001, David Klein, *Home-Front Defense: An Examination of the National Cost* [Hebrew].

No. 57, September 2000, Paul Rivlin, *World Oil and Energy Trends: Strategic Implications for the Middle East*.

No. 56, July 2000, Asher Arian, *Israeli Public Opinion on National Security 2000*.

No. 55, March 2000, P. R. Kumaraswami, *Beyond the Veil: Israel-Pakistan Relations*.

No. 54, November 1999, Shmuel Even, *Trends in Defense Expenditures in the Middle East* [Hebrew].

No. 53, August 1999, Asher Arian, *Israeli Public Opinion on National Security 1999*.

No. 52, August 1998, Abraham Ben-Zvi, *Partnership under Stress: The American Jewish Community and Israel*.

No. 51, July 1998, Aharon Levran, *Iraq's Strategic Arena* [Hebrew].

No. 50, June 1998, Shmuel Even, *Trends in the World Oil Market: Strategic Implications for Israel* [Hebrew].

No. 49, July 1998, Asher Arian, *Israeli Public Opinion on National Security 1998*.

Strategic ASSESSMENT