

ISRAEL, IRAN, AND THE UNITED STATES: A PRECARIOUS ALLIANCE

by

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## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my inspiring, beautiful, and understanding wife, Frances. She has put up with “I can’t go because I have to finish my history paper” for all the 32 years of our married life, for it has taken me far too long to finish this work.

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## AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Roy J. Ellsworth, M.D.

Roy Ellsworth graduated from high school in Twin Falls, Idaho, then received a Bachelor's degree in General Science (pre-med) at the University of Oregon in 1953. He received his Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of Oregon Medical School (now Oregon Health Science University, OHSU) in 1957. After internship and residency, he practiced ophthalmology in Boise until retiring in 1995. Roy has four children: Mark, Brian, Joe, and Jennifer, who all have successful careers. He continues to live in Boise and has been married to Frances, a talented interior designer, for 32 years. Since retirement, Roy has served on many non-profit boards including the Idaho Humane Society (IHS), chairing their two capital campaigns with his wife Frances (including hosting the annual Lawn Party fund-raiser for IHS at their home for 23 years). He served on the boards of the Boise Art Museum and Saint Alphonsus Foundation and is currently serving on the Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center Trustees and Project Haiti boards. He also serves on the Frank Church Institute and Friends of Nursing boards at Boise State University and the College of Science board at the University of Idaho.

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this work is to examine the relationship between Iran and Israel after Israel became a state in 1948 following the United Nations (UN) Partition Plan for Palestine in 1947, which would lead to independent Arab and Jewish states. The Palestinians and their Arab neighbors rejected the UN Partition Plan and attacked Israel but were defeated by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). Israel and Iran (not an Arab country) quickly became best friends and trading partners, since their Arab neighbors were hostile to both countries. This new partnership included a joint pipeline to transport oil across Israel and the sharing of Israel missile technology with Iran.

Additionally, this research explores how the United States (US) became part of the Israeli-Iranian alliance after the British decided to withdraw their military forces from the Gulf in the late 1960s. President Richard Nixon proclaimed his Twin Pillar Policy of handing over security of the Persian Gulf to Iran and Saudi Arabia. Both countries, especially Iran, were heavily armed by the United States. Iran's close ally Israel subsequently also received billions of dollars in arms from the United States, becoming part of the bulwark intended to prevent the Soviets from increasing their influence in the Middle East.

The triple alliance collapsed after the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran when the US hostage crisis compelled the United States to disengage. The hostage issue turned the United States against Iran; consequently the United States has rejected numerous

overtures by Iran to improve relations over the last 30 years. The Islamic Revolution also ended the robust alliance between Iran and Israel. However, during its war with Iraq (1980-1988), Israel continued to sell arms to Iran in exchange for oil, hoping Iran would become more secular and the alliance could be reestablished. The United States illegally sold arms to Iran as well, leading to the Iran-Contra scandal.

Many Arab states assisted the United States and Western allies in defeating Iraq in the first Gulf War. This was followed by the Oslo Accords prompting a possibility of peace between Israel and the Palestinians. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the possibility of peace with the Palestinians, Israel perceived it was no longer a strategic asset to the United States and would lose vital financial and political support from its major benefactor. To ensure that the crucial support from the United States would continue, Israel turned on Iran, painting it as irrational and therefore the new existential enemy of both Israel and the United States, if it were to develop a nuclear weapon. At the same time, the powerful American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) carried the same message to the US Congress and Administration.

Israel continues to exist, to a large extent because of US aid assured by the pro-Israel lobby in the US.



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIOC	Anglo-Iranian Oil Company
AIPAC	American Israel Public Affairs Committee
APOC	Angelo-Persian Oil Company
ARAMCO	Arabian-American Oil Company
IDF	Israeli Defense Force
IPS	Israel Policy Forum
Mossad	The National Intelligence Agency of Israel
SAVAK	Iranian Secret Police Force
SUSRIS	Saudi National Security Project
TAR	Transport Area Rioplantese
UN	United Nations
US	United States
WINEP	The Washington Institute for Near East Policy

## INTRODUCTION

As this thesis is being written, Israel and Iran appear to be on the verge of a military confrontation leading to another war in the Middle East that will involve the United States (US). It doesn't have to be this way: Israel, Iran, and the United States were fated to be allies. Historically the Persians rescued the Jews (who had been enslaved by the Babylonians) and later hosted the largest Jewish population in the Middle East during the diaspora. The United States tried to assist Iran in developing democratic institutions in the early part of the twentieth century and also allied with Iran during the reign of Mohammad Reza Shah. Israel supplied Iran with technology and weapons, including missiles; this continued even after the Iranians were attacked by Iraq, while at the same time the Ayatollah Khomeini was calling for Israel's destruction and the rest of the world supported Iraq.

Israel and Iran developed a mutually beneficial alliance after Israel declared itself independent in Palestine in 1948. Israel was immediately attacked by most of its Arab neighbors who were adamantly opposed to the United Nations (UN) partition of Palestine and the declaration of the establishment of the state of Israel. Israel was able to defeat the dysfunctional Arab armies who were poorly trained and poorly equipped. The Israeli victory nearly doubled the size of land given to the Zionists by the UN; a humiliating defeat for the Arabs.

To survive, Israel needed oil that the Arab states refused to sell to them. Both Israel and Iran wanted arms from the United States and the West. Israel engaged in seeking friends and trading partners from the Arab periphery—those neighbors who had not joined with the Arabs to “wipe Israel off the map.” Iran had oil and was using oil revenues to continue the modernization started by Shah Reza Pahlavi who had ruled Iran from 1921-1944. Oil had been discovered in Iran by the British in 1908 and was extracted in large quantities to fuel the British fleet during the Great War and into World War II. Iran received little compensation for their valuable resource. Iran’s challenge to this exploitation led to Iran being partitioned for a second time by Britain and Russia (Soviet Union) during World War II. Iran was devastated and humiliated again by a US-led CIA coup in 1953, just as it was again attempting democratic rule. Israel became Iran’s closest ally.

In return for selling oil to Israel, Iran received military and technical assistance from Israel as they attempted to rebuild their shattered economy. This alliance included a joint partnership to build a pipeline for shipping Iranian oil across Israel to the Mediterranean, at the same time avoiding the volatile Suez Canal. The pipeline also supplied Iranian oil to Israel. Later Israel assisted Iran in building ballistic missiles, in addition to providing conventional arms and trade. Both countries became allied with the United States to prevent Soviet expansion into the Middle East. The alliance between Israel, Iran, and the US lasted until Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was toppled during the Islamic Revolution in 1979. The Israel-Iran alliance was re-kindled when a weakened Iran needed military assistance including US spare parts after being attacked by Iraq in 1980. In his book *Treacherous Alliance, the Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran and the U.S.*,

Trita Parsi argues that Israel always needed Iranian oil and was willing to export arms to Iran and they both still needed the United States.<sup>1</sup>

After the humiliation of the 1979 hostage crisis in Tehran, the United States had little interest in maintaining an alliance with Iran after the shah was deposed and the Khomeini fundamentalists were brought into power. The United States did not want Iran to win the Iran-Iraq war and actually supported Iraq, hoping both sides would be weakened.<sup>2</sup> In the late 1980s the Soviet Union pulled out of Afghanistan and was no longer supporting Israel's enemies: the Arab states. Iraq emerged from the exhaustive war with Iran with a somewhat intact military. Still lusting for more oil, Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990; an Arab state attacking another Arab state. A US-led coalition, including many Arab states, quickly defeated Iraq with some assistance from Iran. Also, in 1991 the Soviet Union, the common enemy of Israel, Iran, and the United States, was gone. Their other enemies, the Arabs, were more accommodating with some prospects for peace with Israel.

Almost overnight the key players in the Middle East changed sides. The threat from the Soviet Union was gone; Iraq was weakened and no longer a threat to its neighbors. The Arab States were signaling acceptance of Israel and were acquiescing on the Palestinian State issue. Israel and Iran were emerging as Middle East powerhouses as Iran was aspiring for leadership of all Muslims. Israel contemplated expanding into the West Bank as its economy and population grew.<sup>3</sup> There were, however, obstacles blocking these hegemonic aspirations.

Israel was beginning to sense loss of US backing, as it was no longer of strategic value in blocking Soviet expansion into the Middle East. Israel had few other friends and

so it deemed maintaining US support to be a critical strategy.<sup>4</sup> Israel also feared Iran was becoming the new uncontested Middle East powerhouse. It was time to take action.

Iran was ignored and humiliated by the West once more, following the Gulf War, as they had not been included in either the Madrid or Oslo political processes that had involved all their neighbors. This affront was undermining their quest for a leadership role in regional politics, as they still sought what they envisioned as “great power” status, a self-described “historic right” that had been pursued by the shah and continued by Khomeini. Iran began to support opponents of Oslo, accusing the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Jordan of betraying their own people while characterizing the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem and Haram al-Sharif (Temple Mount) as an insult to all Muslims. Trita Parsi argues, “The cold peace that reigned between Israel and Iran turned into a cold war almost overnight.” Israel’s former ally was now “fanatical and irrational.”<sup>5</sup>

With the common enemies of Israel, Iran, and the United States no more, and both Israel and Iran seeking regional hegemony, Israel began to unexpectedly portray Iran as an existential threat, not only to Israel but to the whole Middle East and even the United States. Convincing the United States to provide continued unwavering backing would be a challenging task. Ensuring that support by painting Iran as the new common threat would be left to the influential Israeli lobby in the United States: The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC).

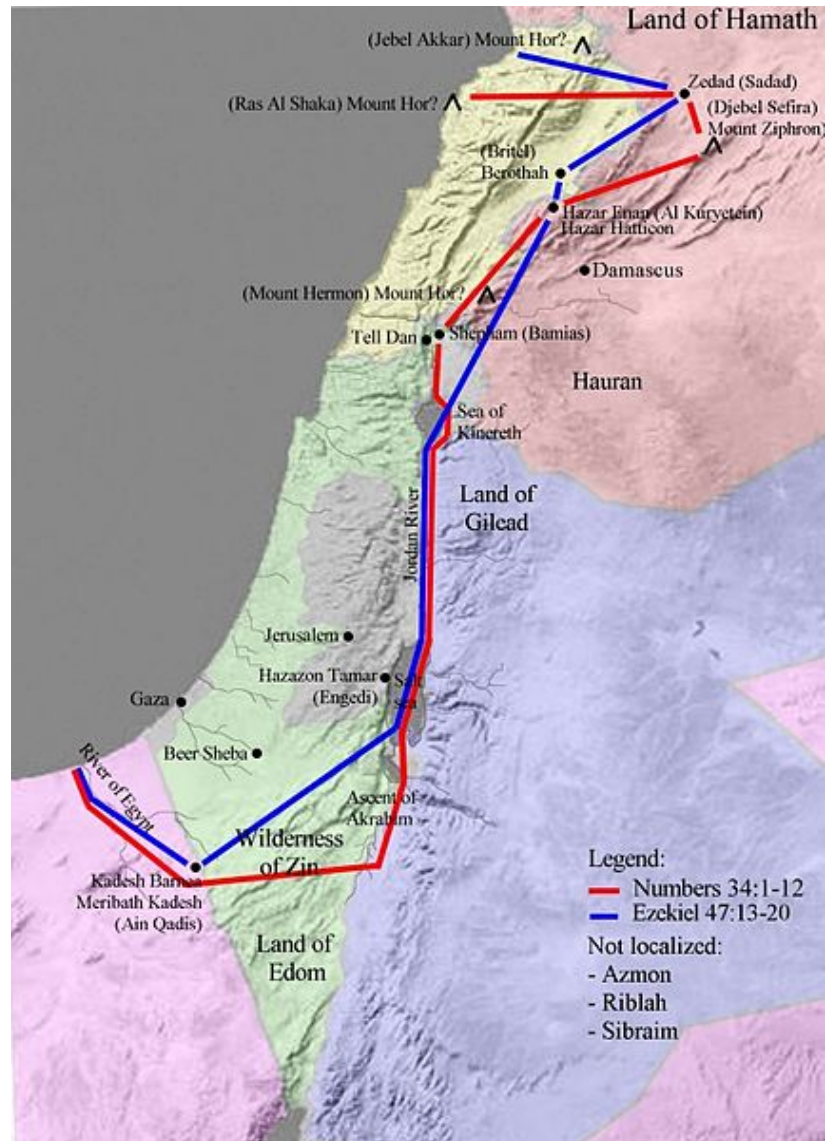
## CHAPTER ONE: HISTORICAL LINKS BETWEEN JEWS AND PERSIANS

A brief review of the early relations between the Persians and Jews will help us to better understand their relations today. Both the Jewish and Persian people had a significant presence in the Middle East long before the Arabs had any national coherence. The religious beliefs and culture of the Persians and Jews have many commonalities and interactions dating back over twenty-five centuries.

Thought to have originated in the Near East (Southwest Asia), the Jewish people are Semitic and related to their Arab neighbors.<sup>1</sup> Many Jews eventually settled in Mesopotamia, then moved on to the land of Canaan, an area in the Fertile Crescent.<sup>2</sup> Jewish history clearly defines their heritage as descending from the biblical patriarch Abraham who was asked by God to leave his home in Ur and move to Canaan to establish a new nation. This was Abraham's "Covenant with God" centered on the land of Israel.

The boundary of the land allegedly given to Abraham by God has always been and still is controversial depending on descriptions in Genesis, Numbers, or Ezekiel, and remains important today as many in Israel refer to those descriptions when claiming the West Bank as their biblical right. The land description in Genesis was quite extensive and rather vague while texts in Numbers and Ezekiel are more widely accepted by most Israelis.





**Figure 1.1. The boundaries of the Land of Israel defined by Numbers and Ezekiel<sup>3</sup>**

As Ofir Haivry argues in his essay “On Zion: Reality that Fashions Imagination,” the Bible “unambiguously insists that the connection to the land is an a priori condition for the fulfillment of the religious commandments. All of Jewish religious ritual is intended for inhabitants of the land, and is possible only within its borders.”<sup>4</sup> Jews point to a passage in Ezekiel: “God will lift you out of your grave and sit you on your own

land,” and “This land will be your inheritance.”<sup>5</sup> The land dispute prevails today as Israel continues to expand its borders.

Abraham had two sons: Ishmael whose mother was Abraham’s maidservant Haagar, and Isaac with Abraham’s wife Sarah. Ishmael and Haagar left the clan, moving to Arabia where Ishmael’s twelve sons built a “great nation,” according to Arab tradition. Ishmael became Father of the Arabs and is recognized in the Quran as an important prophet and an ancestor of Mohammad.<sup>6</sup> Isaac is considered to be the Father of the Jews.

The Jews were eventually forced into slavery in Egypt. Later, around 1446 BCE, the Jews were led from Egyptian slavery by the prophet Moses and settled into tribal areas back in Canaan. Having also received the Ten Commandments from God, Moses is regarded as the most important prophet in Jewish tradition.<sup>7</sup> He also is believed to have authored the Jewish book of Law and the Torah, the first books of the Jewish Bible. Many consider the Bible to be the word of God. Many disagree.

Marcus Borg argues in his book *Jesus: Uncovering the Life, Teachings, and Relevance of a Religious Revolutionary* that the Jewish Bible is “Israel’s story about Israel, not God’s story about Israel. Like the Christian Bible it combines memory, testimony and metaphor.” He goes on to argue that the Jewish Bible is the story of Israel’s “engagement with history, empires, kingdoms, exodus from Egypt, exile in Babylon” and other events.<sup>8</sup>

The Jews had united under the kings David and Solomon and built their first temple in 957 BCE. That temple was totally destroyed in 586 BCE by the Babylonians when they sacked the city. The Persians, led by Cyrus the Great, conquered Babylonia where they encountered many slaves including exiled Jews taken when Babylonia

previously conquered Judea. In 538 BCE, Cyrus allowed the Jews to return to Israel to “build the temple of the Lord, the God of Israel, in Jerusalem” and is revered in Jewish biblical history.<sup>9</sup> The Jews appreciated the Persian king so much they elevated him to a god-like status.<sup>10</sup> Cyrus was the only non-Jew to achieve that standing in the Jewish Bible.<sup>11</sup> Many Jews returned home, although many went to Persia (Iran) where a large Jewish community still exists. There are many Iranian Jews (over 200,000) who live in Israel today.<sup>12</sup>

The 1878 discovery of the Cyrus Cylinder in Mesopotamia refers to Cyrus liberating slaves from Babylonia but does not mention the Jews specifically. It seemed to have been a bigger deal to the Jews than to the Persians.



**Figure 1.2. The Cyrus Cylinder.<sup>13</sup> Photograph by Jona Lendering. Courtesy of The British Museum.**

The Jews prospered until the Romans arrived, razing Jerusalem in 70 AD and causing the Jews to flee to other countries in the Middle East, many to Persia. The Jews, in diaspora, were generally unwilling to assimilate and usually resided in ghettos in the various countries to which they fled. They maintained their culture by learning Jewish history, laws, and customs because of ardent education from their rabbis, in spite of repeated, often violent, oppression. After all, they were God's "special" people and they were determined to survive, as Jews.



**Figure 1.3. 1910 photo of Jewish children in Samarkand with their Rabbi (modern Uzbekistan).<sup>14</sup> Photograph by Sergei Mikhailovich Prokidin-Gorskii. Courtesy of Creative Commons.**

Another historical tradition connecting the Jews, Persians, and then the early Christians is the common belief in one god; most other cultures were polytheistic. The Jews, as late as the tenth century BCE, had apparently not yet entirely embraced the monotheism of Abraham, as Solomon was known to have had polytheistic beliefs.<sup>15</sup> Scholars are still questioning why the monotheistic beliefs of Abraham were not fully embraced by the Jews many generations after his death. Some scholars speculate that the

Jews, while in exile in Babylonia, were exposed to and came to embrace monotheism and the human rights values of Zoroaster while interacting with the Persians after Cyrus conquered Babylonia. Parsi argues that “It was under Persian influence that Judaism became a monotheistic religion,” which might be why many Jews chose to live in Persia during the diaspora.<sup>16</sup>

The early Persians had been exposed to the teachings of Zoroaster, a Persian priest who lived between 1700 and 1400 BCE. Zoroastrianism eventually became the state religion of the Persian Empire. As Mary Boyce argues in her book *Zoroastrians, Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, Zoroaster’s teaching seems to have influenced the Jews, creating a bond with the Persians.<sup>17</sup> Many practices from Zoroastrianism crept into the Jewish tradition, including not only the belief in one god but the cosmic principles of righteousness and truth.

Boyce argues that Zoroastrianism, therefore, may have been as great an influence on the monotheistic beliefs of the Jews (subsequently Christians and Muslims) as was Abraham.<sup>18</sup> Beginning as a cult of light and fire, Zoroastrianism also embraced the ideas of heaven and hell, the last judgment, resurrection, the afterlife, and five times daily prayer.<sup>19</sup> Iran’s major holiday is still Nowruz (the Zoroastrian New Year – celebrated for over 3000 years).<sup>20</sup> The Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashana, has similar origins. Nikki Keddie states in her book *Modern Iran, Roots and Results of Revolution* that “Many scholars agree Zoroastrianism influenced Judaism then Christianity and Islam.”<sup>21</sup>

The Islamic conquest of Persia by the Arabs in 651 CE led to the end of the Persian Empire and the eventual decline of the Zoroastrian religion. The majority of Iranians gradually converted to Islam. However, many of the achievements of the

previous Persian civilizations were not lost but instead were absorbed by the new Islamic culture.

Following Mohammad's death, Islam spread quickly throughout the Middle East and Northern Africa; Islamic civilization was far from unified. When the Arabs conquered Persia in 643-651 AD, most Iranians initially converted to Sunni Islam but later changed to mostly Shi'ite (Shia) during the Safavid dynasty (1501-1722).<sup>22</sup>

The Sunni-Shia chasm occurred following the death of the prophet when the followers could not agree on who would follow Mohammad as the new caliph and Imam. The Shia faction insisted only a direct descendant of Mohammad who was possessed with "special spiritual qualities" was capable of "interpreting the truth." The Sunni faction became more secular. Therefore, as Vali Nasr argues in *The Shia Revival*, only Ali, the prophet's son-in-law and cousin, could lead after the death of the prophet.<sup>23</sup> Ali was assassinated as was Hosain, his son and Mohammad's grandson, who followed Ali as Imam. On his last trip to Mecca, the prophet had stated: "Hosain is of me and I am of Hosain."<sup>24</sup>

The martyrdom of Hosain remains as important an event in Shia Islam as Jesus dying on the cross is to Christianity.<sup>25</sup> The Shia direct line of succession continued until the twelfth Imam, Muhammad Mahdi, who went into "occultation" in 939 CE. The Shia await Mahdi's return.

During the Safavid dynasty, Shia Islam became the state religion of Iran. The Qajar dynasty replaced the Safavids and lasted until 1925. The Qajars were corrupt, needed money, and sold concessions to Europeans. Eventually the Iranian people rose up, wanting democratic rule, leading to the constitutional revolution of 1906-1911.

Continued corruption and exploitation by the West led to a coup d'état in 1921 by a strong Cossack warrior, "the man on horseback" named Reza Khan who toppled the Qajars and made himself shah (king) in 1926. Reza Shah sided with Iran's largest trading partner, Germany, before and into World War II and was overthrown when Iran was occupied by Britain and the Soviet Union. The shah's son Mohammad Reza Pahlavi succeeded as shah but with little power as the Majlis (parliament) became more powerful and the constitution was again in force.

Jews who had migrated to Iran were generally well treated but many, like others in the diaspora, had always longed to return to the homeland from which they had been driven out; however, they were impeded by logistical, financial, and political difficulties.<sup>26</sup> Many small waves of immigration (Aliyas) occurred while Jerusalem was under Muslim rule, always with the hope that the Messiah would appear.<sup>27</sup>

The return-to-Zion notion flourished in the late nineteenth century, promoted by Theodore Herzl, following the Dreyfus affair in France and increasingly violent pogroms sweeping throughout Europe. Baron Edmond Rothschild of France, along with others of wealth, funded land purchases in Palestine for returning Jews in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As Vali Nasr documents in *The Shia Revival*, Jews bought Arab land for prices "forty to eighty times their original purchase price."<sup>28</sup> David Fromkin agrees, in his book *A Peace to End All Peace*, "far from being forced to sell to Jews, the Arabs offered to sell the Jews so much land, that the only limiting factor was money."<sup>29</sup> These historical facts are important, contrasting with the current myth that the Jews took the land from the Palestinians by force.

By the turn of the century a large, vibrant Jewish community existed in Palestine.

Jewish immigration continued until stopped by the British in 1939. The possibility of a Jewish nation had “finally become a reality.”<sup>30</sup>

The distinctive laws and customs of the Jewish culture set them apart from the peoples amongst whom they lived. They believed that, in the end, God would bring them back to Zion. At Passover they have always repeated their ritual prayer “Next year in Jerusalem.”<sup>31</sup> Ruth Gavison makes the case in her piece in *New Essays on Zionism* that “at the end of the nineteenth century the Jews did not have the critical mass to establish a state in Palestine.” However, by “1947, with a thriving Jewish community and political infrastructure, there was justification for a Jewish State.”<sup>32</sup>

The Palestinians were opposed to a Jewish nation as were their Arab neighbors. That land was to be part of the greater “Arab nation” promised to them following World War I, as a reward for the Arabs fighting against the Ottomans. Promises were made by the British during that war to both the Arabs and to the Zionists that Palestine would become part of the “Arab nation” and yet a homeland for the Jews. As Lord Arthur James Balfour (Balfour Declaration) later said, “We sold the land twice.”<sup>33</sup> When British Foreign Secretary Balfour had sent copies of the secret Sykes-Picot agreement, dividing up the Arab-speaking Middle East, to Colonel Edward M. House, President Woodrow Wilson’s chief advisor, House replied: “it’s all bad and I told Balfour so. They are making a breeding place for future wars.”<sup>34</sup>

At the end of World War II, the British mandate for Palestine was over, the British were broke, and they were anxious to leave and turn this difficult and costly League of Nations mandate over to the United Nations. The Zionists deemed US support critical as that support was needed to get the votes for a UN mandate for partition of



Palestine into two parts: one Jewish and one Arab-Palestinian. The UN approved partition in 1947. Like it or not the United States was about to get involved; very involved.

David McCullough argues in his book *Truman* that, for the president, “Palestine was Truman’s most difficult dilemma.”<sup>35</sup> As a Senator, Truman favored a Jewish homeland. “Everyone else who’s been dragged from his country has someplace to go back to,” Truman said, “but the Jews have no place to go.”<sup>36</sup> In the summer of 1947, many agreed that it was “good politics” to support the new Jewish State as there were 2.5 million Jews in New York alone, who “could be campaign contributors to a destitute Democratic Party.” Intense pressure from Zionist organizations, however, was “getting under his skin” as Truman abhorred special interest groups of any kind, and when offered money from the Jewish lobby he told them to “go to hell.” Eddie Jacobson, Truman’s former business partner (a Jew but not a Zionist), feared the intense pressure from the Jewish lobby was “close to causing Truman to be anti-Semitic.”<sup>37</sup> Truman was also mindful of the Arab position in that they “were being made to pay for the crimes of Hitler.”<sup>38</sup>

Truman’s secretary of state, George Marshall, was not convinced. He worried about oil in a possible war with the Soviet Union and the success of the Marshall plan in which a recovering Europe would need Middle East oil. He was also concerned that US troops would have to replace departing British troops.<sup>39</sup> Following a delayed meeting with Jewish activist Chaim Weizmann, Truman finally supported a Jewish state. Truman instructed the US delegation to the UN to vote for partition; it passed by a narrow margin.<sup>40</sup> Pressure from the Jewish lobby in the US, Middle Eastern oil, and the threat of

Soviet expansion were going to dictate relations between Israel, Iran, and the United States for the rest of the twentieth century. Israel needed oil to survive and both Israel and Iran needed US arms and support to thwart Soviet expansion into the Middle East. The alliance between Israel, Iran, and the United States was evolving.

Eleven minutes after the State of Israel was announced on May 14, 1948, in Tel Aviv, the United States gave de facto recognition.<sup>41</sup> After Turkey, Iran was the second Muslim nation to recognize Israel as a sovereign nation; the Soviet Union soon followed with the more formal de jure recognition.<sup>42</sup>



**Figure 1.4. President Harry S. Truman meeting with Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion of Israel and Israeli Ambassador Abba Eban on May 8, 1951.<sup>43</sup> President Truman is receiving a gift of a menorah. Photograph by Abbie Rowe. Courtesy of The Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum.**

The Arabs immediately declared war but their armies were poorly trained, shoddily integrated, and were therefore defeated by a better-trained and equipped Israeli Defense Force (IDF). Israel gained more land (nearly double) than it had been given under the UN partition. As Ruth Galvison argues, the war was a “tragedy for the Arab population.”<sup>44</sup> Previously, King Abd al-Aziz of Saudi Arabia had summed up the Arab position when he questioned President Franklin Roosevelt in 1945, “Why should Arabs

pay with their territory for the crimes committed in Europe against the Jewish people? Why should Arabs be asked to accept the biblical claim of a religion they do not themselves embrace?”<sup>45</sup> After Israelis defeated the immediate attack by the Arab states (Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq) in 1948, they began to accept more immigrants to help build their new country.



**Figure 1.5. In 1949 immigrants flocked to Israel, then one year old.<sup>46</sup> Associated Press. Photograph courtesy of The Associated Press.**

In 1956, Israel initiated a preemptive attack against Egypt and Syria, in collusion with Britain and France, after Egypt’s President Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal Company and closed it to Israel’s ships. President Eisenhower, the Soviet Union, and the UN demanded the British and French withdraw.<sup>47</sup> In 1967, as Egypt, Syria, and other Arab states were preparing to attack Israel, the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) struck a preemptive attack that destroyed much of the Soviet-supplied Egyptian and Syrian air and

ground weapons. According to Isabella Ginor, there is evidence the Soviet Union had been preparing to assist the Arabs.<sup>48</sup> As Lawrence Wright in his book *The Looming Tower* argues, “The 1967 war was a turning point in the history of the modern Middle East. The speed and decisiveness of the Israeli victory in the Six Day War humiliated many Arabs who had believed, until then, that God favored their cause.”<sup>49</sup> Shelby Steele, writing in the *Wall Street Journal* in June 2010, agrees the Palestinians have not yet recovered their self-esteem.<sup>50</sup>

On Yom Kippur in October 1973, better-trained and Soviet-equipped Egyptian and Syrian armies launched a surprise attack against Israel. Israel was able to achieve victory only with substantial last-minute military aid from the United States, as Israel was threatened with defeat.<sup>51</sup> The \$2.2 billion emergency military assistance from the United States, during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, led to the unintended consequence of a dramatic increase in the price of oil, harming the US economy. Iran led the price increase. The shah continued to supply oil to both Israel and Egypt.<sup>52</sup> Iranian oil was Iran’s path to survival and prosperity and oil would intensify Middle East geopolitics for the next quarter century.

As Daniel Yergin argues in his book *The Prize: the Epic Quest for Oil, Money & Power*, “in the Twentieth Century oil was central to the security, prosperity and the very nature of civilization and remains so in the twenty-first century.”<sup>53</sup> In the first half of the twentieth century, Persia and the United States were the major oil producers while the world was becoming dependent on that resource. It started in 1901 when the British obtained a concession from Iran, giving them exclusive rights to develop and sell any

petroleum discovered for sixty years; in 1908, the “greatest oil field ever discovered” was found in Iran.<sup>54</sup>

First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill called the Iranian oil discovery “a prize from fairyland beyond our wildest dreams.”<sup>55</sup>

In 1911, Churchill had warned Germany was in its drive for a “place in the sun” and was rapidly challenging the British navy. Churchill converted the British navy from dependable Welsh coal to the “distant and insecure oil supplies from Persia” (as Iran was then still known); this was risky but would give British ships “greater speed and more efficient use of manpower.”<sup>56</sup> The quest for oil had begun and Iran was the key in the Middle East.

Britain could now obtain all the oil it required at discount prices; after all, they considered it their oil. The British government eventually obtained ownership of fifty-one percent of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC) with tight controls, leaving the Iranians little compensation for their resource. As Nikki Keddie argues, the Anglo-Persian agreement removed one of the last vestiges of Iranian sovereignty leading to the rise of the charismatic leader, Reza Khan, who seized power and then became shah (king) in 1926.<sup>57</sup>

After World War II, the Majlis (Iranian parliament) was becoming more powerful under the leadership of nationalist Mohammad Mossadegh. Mossadegh was maneuvering for a change in the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC) agreement and demanding a larger share of the profits, like Saudi Arabia had negotiated with the Arabian-American Oil Company (ARAMCO). The British rejected Mossadegh’s demands. Mossadegh then persuaded the Majlis to nationalize the AIOC in 1951, making him a national hero.<sup>58</sup>

Mossadegh threatened to oust the British unless they would agree to share oil profits equally. The British again refused.

In his book *All the Shah's Men*, Kinzer argues that Mossadegh was determined to pursue justice as “foreign intervention was the root of Iran’s troubles and Iran could learn to run the oil company. . . . What the British failed to realize was that Mossadegh and the great majority of Iranians were ready to accept and even embrace much pain in their sacred cause.” The Shi’ite (Shia) religious tradition blended perfectly with the nationalist passion sweeping through Iran. Together they “stepped the will of Iranians.”<sup>59</sup> Mossadegh was *Time Magazine*’s “Man of the Year” announced on the cover of their January 7, 1952 issue.

Mossadegh, “the liberator,” expelled the resisting British from Iran. The British were furious but had few options other than to invade Iran or try to overthrow the government. According to the Mossadegh Project website, the Western press, including the *International Herald Tribune* and *New York Times*, weighed in against Iran with scathing editorials.<sup>60</sup> Truman, who had opposed interfering in a sovereign nation, suggested mediation and opposed the use of force against Iran.<sup>61</sup>

A new team, under President Dwight Eisenhower, occupied the White House in 1953. After recent communist expansion, including Soviet domination of Eastern Europe, the fall of China, North Korea invading South Korea, and rumblings in Vietnam, there was high anxiety about the next “domino to fall.” The CIA, collaborating with the British, led the plot to force regime change in Iran in 1953. The spin was that “Mossadegh had communist leanings,” and Iran might fall. As former Secretary of State

Dean Acheson later wrote regarding the way the British had been involved in the coup, it was: “obtuse neocolonialism; never had so few lost so much so stupidly and so fast.”<sup>62</sup>

Mark Gasiorowski, in his piece “The 1953 Coup d’Etat in Iran,” called the government of Mohammad Mossadegh the “last popular, democratically oriented government to hold office in Iran.” He continued, “If Mossadegh had not been overthrown the 1979 revolution might not have occurred, and Iran’s future would undoubtedly have been vastly different.”<sup>63</sup> Gasiorowski agrees the fear of a communist takeover was valid.<sup>64</sup> In Iran, after the coup the shah became more powerful, establishing martial law for many years and forming his powerful secret police entity, SAVAK.<sup>65</sup>

Nikki Keddie summarizes that the coup resulted in imprisonment of the popular Mossadegh while the shah became an increasingly oppressive dictator. The coup, she argues, “had a traumatic effect on Iranian public opinion which has continued down to the present.” So much for the United States “supporting a more democratic government in Iran.”<sup>66</sup> Now the shah needed an ally; so did Israel.

## CHAPTER TWO: THE ISRAELI-IRANIAN ALLIANCE DEVELOPS

Israel's long-time foreign policy generally followed the "Alliance of the Periphery" doctrine outlined by Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion. Israel cultivated engagement with non-hostile Islamic countries around the periphery of their Arab enemies, notably Iran, Turkey, Morocco, and Ethiopia. Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion was convinced the Arabs would eventually accept Israel.<sup>1</sup>

After becoming a state, Israel established a secret permanent delegation in Iran; an un-official de facto embassy. The shah of Iran was selling oil to Israel and determined he could benefit from Israel's technical assistance and get their help in gaining access to advanced United States weapons. As trade blossomed, in order to keep things under wraps, he decided the interactions with Israel would be handled by his "dreaded" secret police, SAVAK. SAVAK in turn dealt through Israel's intelligence agency Mossad. Iranian diplomats traveled to Israel via Turkey and, per mutual agreement between Iran and Israel, never had their passports stamped on arrival in the Jewish state. The shah wanted to keep this mutually beneficial relationship with Israel at a "healthy distance" to appease the Arabs.<sup>2</sup>

In the late 1950s, the Soviets began to ally with the Arab countries after solidifying their relations with Egypt following the emergence of Gamal Abdel Nasser. Nasser was no friend of the shah's, who was increasingly concerned by pan-Arabism and Soviet designs on the region, as were Israel and the United States.<sup>3</sup> In Iran, the Soviets



supported the Tudeh party, a liberal party with a pro-Soviet bent. Israel continued the Ben-Gurion “doctrine of the periphery” and also supported non-Arab minorities, like the Iraqi Kurds and Lebanese Christians.<sup>4</sup> There are countless examples of the robust Israeli-Iranian alliance that peaked in the 1970s but continued until the 1990s.

According to a US Library of Congress analysis:

Until the overthrow of the shah's regime in 1979, Israel and Iran had established government missions in both countries, although this relationship was never formalized by an exchange of ambassadors. Under the shah from 1953 to 1979, Iran was one of Israel's primary suppliers of oil and a major commercial partner. In addition, the intelligence services of the two countries cooperated closely, and Israel exported military hardware and provided training and other assistance to Iranian military forces. These close, but discreet, relations were abruptly terminated in 1979, upon the coming to power of the regime of Ayatollah Sayyid Ruhollah Musavi Khomeini and Iran's joining of the anti-Israel camp. Shortly thereafter, Iran called for the "eradication" of the state of Israel through armed struggle and its replacement by a Palestinian state. As a symbolic gesture, the PLO was given the building of the former Israeli mission in Tehran.

In the 1980s, however, Israeli concern about the fate of the approximately 30,000 Jews remaining in Iran, interest in assisting Iran in its war with Iraq, and cooperation with the United States in its efforts to free American hostages held by Iranian-backed Shia extremists in Lebanon, led to a renewal of contacts between Israeli and Iranian leaders and shipments of Israeli arms to Tehran. Israel reportedly sent arms to Iran in exchange for Iran allowing thousands of Jews to leave the country.<sup>5</sup>

Two major joint ventures between Israel and Iran in the 1950-1979 period were the Eliat-Ashkelon pipeline and a joint missile technology program. In his book *Treacherous Alliance*, Trita Parsi related an interview he had with long time Jerusalem journalist and analyst Ehud Yaari (still a respected commentator on Middle East affairs and for 35 years a commentator on Israeli television). Yaari referred to the “good old days” before the revolution when intelligence cooperation between the two countries was extensive and Israeli tourists flocked to visit Iran—the only Middle Eastern country

where the Israelis were welcome at the time.”<sup>6</sup> In his recent book *Iranophobia: The Logic of an Israeli Obsession*, Haggai Ram cites an article in the Israeli daily, *Davar*, describing the life of Israelis in Iran in those days: “Most Israelis congregated in Iran as representatives of medium and large companies where they rented offices, sometimes buildings, hundreds of cars and hundreds of apartments. They took part in the best parties, attending French and Italian operas imported for foreigners. Most had maids imported from the Philippines.”<sup>7</sup>



**Figure 2.1. Iranian Foreign Minister Reza Saffinia arriving at the house of Israeli president Chaim Weizmann in Rehovot on Yom Ha'atzmaut, 1950. Photograph courtesy The State of Israel National Photo Collection.<sup>8</sup>**

After the 1956 Suez crisis, Iran helped finance construction of an eight-inch oil pipeline from Eliat in southern Israel through Beersheba to Israel's Mediterranean coastline. The first Iranian oil was transported in 1957. The Eliat-Ashkelon Pipeline Company was formalized in 1968 as a 50/50 joint venture between Israel and Iran, to

transport crude oil from Iran to Europe while bypassing the strategically vulnerable Suez Canal. Israel has received all of its crude oil from Iran, with few interruptions, since that time. In 2003 a reverse flow project was completed to allow Russian oil to flow from Ashkelon to Eliat, to be reloaded in ships for delivery to Asia.<sup>9</sup> Oil trumped politics.

Israel and Iran joined forces for an extensive missile development venture in the waning days of the shah's regime. The shah decided Iran needed deterrent capabilities against Iraqi Scuds and turned to the United States to purchase Pershing missiles. The Carter administration turned him down, citing the missiles' potential to carry nuclear warheads. Iran turned to Israel as they were willing to offer the technical assistance that the West wasn't willing to share.

Project Flower was a joint collaboration between Iran and Israel for co-production of Israel's Jericho-2 missile, a sea-to-sea missile with a range of 200 kilometers and an advanced version of the US Harpoon missile. Project Flower involved planning by key players in 1977, including Israeli's former defense minister Ezer Weizmann and General Hassan Toufanian, Iran's deputy minister of war and armaments. The following year, Iran constructed a new missile assembly facility near Sirjan, in south-central Iran, with Israeli assistance.<sup>10</sup> The missile project officially ended when the shah was overthrown.

Documents taken from the *Den of Spies* collection of papers, found in the US Embassy in Tehran in 1979, confirm Project Flower. The documents validate that in the late 1970s the shah provided large quantities of oil to Israel to fund a clandestine project to produce Israel's Jericho-2 missile, eventually capable of carrying a nuclear warhead. The test firings were to be conducted in Iran.<sup>11</sup>

Bergman's book, *The Secret War With Iran*, discusses another missile project

with “Israel agreeing to sell Iran long range surface-to-surface ballistic missiles under the name Operation Tzor (Tzur).”<sup>12</sup> Parsi argues what Israel called Operation Tzor was part of Project Flower.<sup>13</sup>

An article published the *New York Times* in 1986 and written by Elaine Sciolino details how Israel was involved in a multi-billion-dollar project to modify advanced, surface-to-surface missiles for sale to Iran, referring to documents left behind in Tehran by Israeli diplomats. She reports this was “one of six oil-for-arms contracts signed in April 1977 in Tehran by the shah and Shimon Peres, then the Israeli Defense Minister. The documents validate the two nations had robust trade missions and joint missile development”<sup>14</sup>

Parsi quotes Harold Saunders, former assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern Affairs, as saying “It surprises me that the Israelis would have brought the Iranians into the development of a missile that may have been part of their nuclear program.” He also quotes Gary Sick, Iran specialist on the National Security Council staff under President Jimmy Carter, as saying “I was surprised by the documents, surprised to learn that two countries closely allied with the United States were conducting joint military operations without talking to us about them.”<sup>15</sup> Also, Sick mentions Israel’s expertise in irrigation was highly valued by “the technology-starved Iranians” who benefited from Israel’s advances in agriculture.<sup>16</sup>

All these various sources confirm that Iran and Israel had an extensive trade and military alliance during the early 1950s that lasted until the shah was overthrown. Iran’s programs were financed by US aid and oil revenues that quadrupled after the 1973 Arab-Israeli war. Israel was also financed by US foreign aid. Israel and Iran then became allied

with the United States as bulwarks against the threat of communist expansion in the Middle East.

When the British decided to withdraw from East of Suez in 1971, Iran saw an opportunity to control the Persian Gulf. The United States, still bogged down in Vietnam, began to support Iran in order to help deter Soviet penetration into the Middle East. President Nixon proclaimed his Twin Pillar policy, leaving security in the gulf to Iran and Saudi Arabia. "I just wish there were a few more leaders around the world with his foresight," Nixon said of the shah in April 1971.<sup>17</sup> According to the CIA, Nixon offered the shah any and all non-nuclear US weapons. (This is confirmed in secret National Security Archives dated July 25, 1972.<sup>18</sup>) Gary Sick argues in his book, *All Fall Down: America's Tragic Encounter with Iran*, "The arms purchase by the shah can only be described as a stampede. In the first four years after Nixon's visit, the shah purchased over \$9 billion in arms from the United States."<sup>19</sup>

Ram argues the shah dreamt of "resurrecting Iran's past glory and becoming the mighty power it once was. Iran's quest for regional primacy has been the norm for Iran throughout its three thousand year history; therefore Iranians have always aspired to the role of primus inter pares in regional politics."<sup>20</sup> In October 1971, to resurrect Iran's past glory and the shah's dream to re-create the Persian Empire, the shah threw an extravagant party inviting world dignitaries to celebrate the 2500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Persian Empire. The shah's minister of court wrote that Iran was "rapidly assuming leadership not only of the Persian Gulf but over the entire Middle East."<sup>21</sup>

After President Sadat of Egypt broke with the Soviets, Iraq received more support from the Soviets and began to replace Egypt as Iran's major foe. The shah was

increasingly concerned about Soviet support for Iraq since such an alliance increased the threat to Iran from Iraq. At the same time, Ram argues, the shah became increasingly dependent on Israeli know-how.<sup>22</sup> The shah was determined to be the “preeminent power of the Persian Gulf,” the “Japan of the Middle East.” Escalating oil revenues increased his power and wealth. (From 1968-1973 Iran’s gross domestic product [GDP] grew at a 12% annual rate and in 1973 and 1974 by 34% and 43%, respectively.<sup>23</sup>) However, as Keddie argues, “the high growth rate did not lessen the income disparity between the rich and the poor.”<sup>24</sup>

In 1973 the shah pushed the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) for a redoubling of oil prices (oil prices had already been doubled after the 1973 war; later that year the shah successfully pushed for doubling again), proclaiming Iran would soon “become one of the world’s five great powers.”<sup>25</sup> As the shah became more powerful, he no longer needed Israel’s support as much. Besides, Israeli control of Jerusalem and Islamic holy places since the 1967 war was an indignity to all Muslims. Also, the 1973 war had dispelled the myth of Israel’s invincibility.<sup>26</sup> The shah was becoming self-obsessed.<sup>27</sup> Islam and the Middle East had their new leader—or did they?

### CHAPTER THREE: THE ALLIANCE STARTS TO UNRAVEL

The alliance began to unravel. The shah increased tensions by signing the Algiers Accord, without consulting Israel or the United States, in the spring of 1975. The Algiers Accord was negotiated between Iran and Iraq to settle a dispute over borders and the Shatt al-Arab water navigation rights. The shah never sought ratification by the Majles. The shah was his own man.<sup>1</sup> Israel considered the Algiers Accord to be a threat, as peace between Iran and her Arab neighbors would diminish the need for Iran to be allied with Israel. The accord also ended the long-time Israeli support of the Iraqi Kurds. The Iraqi Kurds had also been supported by Iran to destabilize Iraq. Freeing Iraq from Kurdish influence would allow Saddam Hussein to further expand his military.<sup>2</sup>

Israel's Likud Party was voted into power in 1977 under the leadership of Menachem Began, a figure from the Israeli right with an attachment to "Greater Israel." "Greater Israel" is a "secular ideology of the Likud party as a fulfillment of a biblical promise."<sup>3</sup> Steven Erlanger wrote in a *New York Times* article in 2005, quoting Eyal Arad who joined Likud 30 years previously at age 17, "We had a dream – Jewish sovereignty in the biblical Land of Israel, on both banks of the Jordan River, and Palestinians could have self-rule but not independence," he said. "I believe it was a beautiful and just dream, but it crashed against the walls of reality, of a rapidly growing Arab population, a falling rate of Jewish immigration and the Palestinian demand for a sovereign state."<sup>4</sup>

The shah preferred to work with the Israeli Labor Party as he believed they would

listen and were opposed to the Likud policy of expansion of settlements into the West Bank, which Israel had captured in the 1967 war. The Israelis were still determined to intensify their alliance with Iran as they concluded that peace with the Arabs was unlikely and they could deal with Iran; after all they were both culturally superior to the Arabs. The shah, however, determined Israel was becoming an increasingly belligerent state.<sup>5</sup>

The shah was concerned about the development of nuclear power in India and other Middle Eastern countries. In the summer of 1978, after years of negotiation, the shah completed a nuclear pact with the Carter administration to buy nuclear reactors. However, the deal meant that Iran was restricted from producing plutonium or nuclear weapons. The shah also had other nuclear reactor deals with Great Britain, France, and West Germany. To justify the pact: on December 31, 1977 President Carter, agreeing with the Nixon administration, had called the monarchy “an island of stability in a sea of turmoil.”<sup>6</sup> According to documents recently released by the National Security Archive, the Ford and Carter administrations were worried about Iran developing a nuclear weapon.<sup>7</sup>

The Israeli-Iranian alliance was about to abort. No one saw what was happening in Iran, except Israel’s intelligence agency, Mossad. The Iranian air force chief had asked Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan to “tell the Shah what is the reality in Iran.” The Shah, he argued, “is sitting on a high chair, everyone just say yes, yes, yes.” The Iranian generals were “too afraid to challenge the Shah’s authority or even explain the full extent of the instability.”<sup>8</sup>

In 1979, the Islamic Revolution replaced the Pahlavi dynasty with an Islamic republic, the modern world’s first Islamic theocratic regime. The CIA was surprised,



Mossad not so, since they had witnessed the Shah's loss of popular support, the Shah's loss of reality, and his inability to make decisions. Weiner argues in *Legacy of Ashes* that the CIA totally missed the uprising in Iran, writing "We were just plain asleep; we did not understand who Khomeini was."<sup>9</sup> The shah fled the country in January 1979.

Shahpour Bakhtiar became prime minister, stopping oil shipments to Israel. However, he resigned in February 1980 when the Ayatollah Khomeini returned to Iran in order to assume power.<sup>10</sup>

Iran historian Nikki Keddie argues, "The Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979, like many revolutions, unites several groups, classes and parties with disparate ideas who were against the old regime. As in many revolutions, the coalition did not long outlast victory. Iran's revolution had distinctive features, especially the leading role of the clerics. Some revolutions have had religious ideologies, but clerical rule after a revolution was new."<sup>11</sup>

Khomeini and his followers had kept out of circulation in 1978-1979. Khomeini had previously released his treatise on Islamic government: *Velayet-e faqih* (guardianship of the jurisprudent), which endorsed novel Shia arguments including great power for a single *faqih*. Khomeini had made several publicly recorded statements that neither he nor the ulama would hold direct power in a new government. In the initial period of his rule, he had renounced these ideas in his *Islamic Government* publication. By 1983 clerical forces increased their power causing some oppositional Iranians to claim Khomeini had "hijacked the revolution." Many Iranians who had supported the revolution because of the corrupt regime of the shah were riled by the final result.<sup>12</sup>

The alliance between Israel and Iran had come to an end, or so it seemed.

However, Israel still needed oil from Iran and many Jews remained there. Iranians would soon come knocking at Israel's door, as they had no other choice and the door was ajar.

Many Jews left Iran after the revolution, as it became a dangerous place. The Israeli mission headquarters was invaded and burned. Anti-Israeli sentiment intensified, as the revolutionaries labeled Israel "a usurper of Muslim land." Iran's revolutionaries considered the US the "Great Satan" and Israel to be "Little America," both enemies of the revolution.<sup>13</sup>

The deposed shah was ill and sought treatment in the United States, which was finally allowed. Weiner recounts that the CIA warned President Carter this could cause a hostage problem. The unwillingness of the United States to turn over the Shah to the Iranian revolutionaries changed the November 4, 1979, "amateurish plan to take a few American hostages for a few days" into an "unprecedented international ordeal that turned into a 444-day humiliation for the Carter administration."<sup>14</sup> This incident evolved into the birth of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).<sup>15</sup> Carter severed all diplomatic ties with Tehran; however, Israel still regarded Iran as a valuable ally. Israel hoped the new regime would soon collapse and the real Iran would emerge. Israel still considered Iraq a greater threat than Iran to its security.<sup>16</sup>

There were still common fundamental threats that Iran and Israel shared even as the revolution took power. There were hostile Arab nations surrounding them and the Soviet superpower to the north. Egypt had always been the leader of the Arab states but was shunned after the Camp David Accords. Iran was intent on filling the vacuum of Islamic leadership but the Sunni Arab nations like Saudi Arabia weren't buying it.<sup>17</sup> Iran would need Israel's help again and Israel needed oil. Israel wanted the remaining Israeli

hostages returned and sought the release of those Iranian Jews who still wanted to leave Iran.

Following the Camp David Accords and the US-Iranian hostage crisis in January 1981, Prime Minister Begin went back on his word to Carter and resumed the sale of arms to Iran, as soon as Reagan was elected.<sup>18</sup> As Bergman argues in *The Secret War with Iran*, Israel feared Saddam with his weapons of mass destruction more than Iran. Thus, selling arms to Iran made possible the idea to “let them kill each other with them.” Besides, there were Jews in Iran who wanted out.<sup>19</sup>

In 1980 the son of Iran’s Grand Ayatollah Kashani, Ahmed Kashani, visited Israel and was “most likely the first Iranian to do so after the revolution.” The visit resulted in Iran obtaining some spare parts for Iran’s US-built fighter planes. They also discussed possible military cooperation against Iraq’s nuclear program at Osirak. Prime Minister Begin approved parts and weapons shipments to Iran. In return, Khomeini allowed a large number of Iranian Jews to leave Iran. Iran was again secretly dealing with Israel and selling them oil.<sup>20</sup> Israel was continuing the Periphery Policy. With Iraq threatening, suddenly Iran again needed Israeli help for access to American arms; however, the United States had an arms embargo against Iran.

Iraq was assuming a leadership position in the Arab world, vacated by Egypt following the signing of the Camp David Accords. Iraq, lusting for Iran’s southern oil fields, broke relations with Iran and declared the Shatt al-Arab part of its territory, breaking the Algiers Accord. Iraq also feared a Shia revolt in southern Iraq since Iran sought to spread their Islamic revolution to other countries with large Shia populations. Sensing Iran’s vulnerability, Iraq created an incident and invaded Iran on September 22,

1980. As Ali M. Ansari argues in his book *Confronting Iran: The Failure of American Foreign Policy*, Iraq had immediate air superiority because Iran's air force had deteriorated, they lacked spare parts, and military maintenance was neglected since Iran's military had been left "unattended during the 20-month revolution."<sup>21</sup>

Ronen Bergman agrees, explaining that, after the revolution, "thirteen thousand Iranian officers resigned or were dismissed. Seventy senior generals, of the shah's eighty, were executed."<sup>22</sup> In 1980 the Revolutionary Guards had taken command of the armed forces but they were not trained officers. Saddam Hussein was well aware of Iran's weaknesses: the purge of the officer corps and the embargo of any flow of US arms to Iran.

Some in Iran wanted Israel and the United States to stage another coup to dethrone Khomeini.<sup>23</sup> Israel actually did intervene in the war; on June 7, 1981, the Iraqi research plutonium reactor at Osirak was destroyed by the Israeli air force. Israeli and Iranian representatives had met secretly (to plan the attack) in France, one month prior to the Israeli strike.<sup>24</sup> Iran had previously bombed and damaged the facility in September 1980 and indicated they would allow the Israeli air force to land at Tabriz in case of an emergency.<sup>25</sup>

Iran responded to Iraq's attack with a massive army build-up. Bergman argues that Khomeini "grasped that the war held a powerful attraction for Iran's teenagers" and boys older than twelve could join the Basij, who were willing to self-sacrifice in the battlefield, overwhelming Iraqi forces. Iran counter-attacked and finally entered Iraqi territory toward Basara, a Shiite stronghold, in the fall of 1981. The hoped-for support from Iraqi Shia did not materialize and an eight-year stalemate resulted.<sup>26</sup>

Moscow supported Iraq, as did most of the Arab states including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Most Western nations, including the United States, also supported Iraq. Iran had no friends and desperately needed US spare parts for its US-built weapons obtained under the shah. Mersheimer and Walt, in *The Israeli Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*, concluded the United States supported Iraq because it feared Iran might win the war.<sup>27</sup> That eventuality would alter the balance of power and give Iran regional hegemony that would strengthen Islamic revolutionary influence in the Arab world.<sup>28</sup>

Israel began shipping arms to Iran under the clandestine Operation Seashell, by way of Transport Aereo Rioplantese (TAR), an Argentinian cargo airline. Bergman argues that the amount of arms shipped to Iran would “put the Iran-Contra scandal to shame.” Besides hoping for mutual destruction in the war between Iran and Iraq, the Israeli weapons industry wanted to make money. Iran purchased over \$500 million worth of arms from Israel in the 1980-1983 period, mostly paid for by Iranian oil delivered to Israel.<sup>29</sup> Israel used Argentinian air transports to ship arms to Iran on an almost daily basis. On July 24, 1981, an Argentinian cargo aircraft carrying Israeli arms to Iran crashed near the Soviet-Turkish border. Khomeini continued his usual “Israel should be eliminated” mantra. Meanwhile, Israel had other objectives and decided to make their move.

Israel’s air force attacked Lebanon on June 6, 1982, including destroying over 100 Syrian aircraft, without losing any Israeli planes. Ariel Sharon, Israeli Defense Force (IDF) minister, was known to have been planning the attack on Lebanon for many months, in order to kick out the PLO who had moved in and exploited Lebanon during its long civil war. Sharon also wanted to drive the Syrians out of Lebanon. The Shia, in

Southern Lebanon, were sick of the PLO (who treated Southern Lebanon as their own country) and welcomed the invasion at first. However, following the massive destruction of Lebanese infrastructure and killing of Lebanese civilians, the Shia minority quickly turned against the Israelis, who came to be seen as aggressive occupiers. As an unintended consequence a new militant resistance group, Hezbollah, was born.<sup>30</sup>

Lebanon's newly elected President Bashir Gemayel, a Maronite Christian (and CIA source), was assassinated on September 14, 1982. For revenge, Maronite allies, abetted by the IDF, slaughtered seven hundred Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps near Beirut on September 16, 1982. President Reagan sent US Marines to "keep the peace" but there was "no peace to keep."<sup>31</sup> The following spring the US embassy was destroyed by Hezbollah terrorists after the Americans were seen to be "siding with the Maronite-Christians," since the US navy was shelling Muslim positions. On October 23, 1983, Hezbollah's Imad Mughniyah induced his terrorist followers to drive a truck-bomb into the American barracks near the Beirut airport, killing 241 US marines and 58 French paratroopers.<sup>32</sup> Hezbollah also captured a group of US hostages that would prove to be an important bargaining tool for them and for Iran in the future.<sup>33</sup>

In his book *Legacy of Ashes*, Tim Weiner explains the CIA's position on the situation in Lebanon: Many Lebanese despised the "power of the Maronite community" and saw it as arguably "the principle cause of the ongoing Lebanese civil war that had opened the way for the Israeli invasion in 1982." The CIA sought to help rebuild Beirut after the Israeli bombing but did not see "the new force rising from the rubble" (Hezbollah). After the 1983 embassy bombing in Lebanon, most of the CIA operatives were lost in the destruction, leaving the US "with too little intelligence for a long time

thereafter.” The CIA chose to see the Islamic threat in the Middle East through the “Israeli prism” (Israel’s intelligence agency, Mossad).<sup>34</sup>

In 1983, Iraq began to use chemical weapons and missiles against Iran, making Iran even more desperate.<sup>35</sup> Iran decided to reach out to Israel again, in order to get more arms. Israel was anxious to improve relations with Iran to counter Arab and Soviet threats to both Israel and Iran (and presumably to get Iranian oil). US National Security advisor Robert McFarlane was also becoming increasingly concerned about potential Soviet influence in a post-Khomeini Iran. By 1985 President Reagan approved secret feelers toward Iran, bypassing the CIA and the State Department, to see if Iran could help free American hostages still held by Hezbollah in Lebanon.<sup>36</sup> The US embargo on arms sales to Iran was about to change but not everyone was on board.<sup>37</sup>

*The Report of the Congressional Committees Investigating the Iran/Contra Affair*, written by Lee Hamilton and Daniel Inouye, provides details on how Israel, and, then the United States, became involved in the “arms for hostage” arrangement that enabled the United States to circumvent its own policies banning the distribution of arms to a terrorist state. Iran had not only taken US embassy staff as hostages for 444 days in Tehran, it also supported Hezbollah whose terrorists had killed two hundred twenty American marines (plus eighteen navy and three army personnel and fifty-eight French paratroopers). Also, there were the sixty US embassy personnel who had been massacred by Hezbollah terrorists a few months earlier. In addition, there were still US hostages held in Lebanon. On January 11, 1984, the United States had labeled Iran a “terrorist state.”<sup>38</sup>

According to the report, “For many Americans, the most surprising and alarming aspect of the Iran-Contra Affair was President Reagan’s decision to sell arms to Iran.”

This occurred only twenty months after the Lebanese terrorists, supported by Iran, had humiliated the United States by killing Americans and taking American hostages. The United States had “embargoed the sale of arms to Iran” after the attacks on the Americans. The Reagan Administration declared “Iran is supporting terrorism.” United States policy toward Iran was stated clearly: “We make no concessions. We make no deals.”<sup>39</sup> The subsequent sale of arms to Iran destroyed much of the credibility of the Reagan administration.

President Reagan spoke on the subject again on June 30, 1985. The United States, he said, gives terrorists “no rewards and no guarantees.” Just a few weeks later Reagan authorized Israel to sell the Tube-launched, Optically-tracked, Wire command, anti-tank (TOW) missiles to the government of the Ayatollah Khomeini. Seven months later he authorized the direct sale of arms to Iran. The transactions with Iran continued for 15 months. Occasionally a hostage, held by Hezbollah, was released after some of the shipments.<sup>40</sup>

The Iran-Contra report goes on to explain, “In Jerusalem, officials were eager for better relations with Iran, for two very pragmatic reasons: commercial and diplomatic.” Under the shah, Israel had long and friendly relations with Iran. Despite revolutionary Iran’s vow to destroy Israel, the Israelis still regarded Iraq as a greater threat than Iran. Israel wanted to create conditions for resumption of commercial and diplomatic relations with “a post-Khomeini regime.”<sup>41</sup> Manucher Ghorbanifar, an arms dealer living in Paris, facilitated the arms sales. He became the “conduit for US arms to Iran working through Israel, initially without approval of Secretary of State George Shultz, defense Secretary Casper Weinberger or the US embassy in Tel-Aviv. Initially only National Security



Advisor (NSA) Robert McFarlane and his staff were involved with the arms sales.<sup>42</sup>

At first, President Reagan “was not willing to sell arms directly to Iran” but did approve “in principle” the sale of American TOWs by Israel.<sup>43</sup> The first 99 TOWs arrived in Iran in August 1985, resulting in no hostage releases; another 408 TOWs were sent by Israel, resulting in the release of one hostage in Lebanon. The hard-bargaining Iranians wanted more, including a HAWK-200 (Raytheon MIM-23 surface to air) sidewinder missiles and 30 to 50 Phoenix (AIM-54 long range air-to-air) missiles. The arrangement was becoming very complicated.

Colonel Oliver North devised a new plan for selling arms directly to Iran that was approved by the president. (North was on President Reagan’s National Security Council.) Secretary of State George Shultz and Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger opposed North’s plan. Shultz told Reagan the United States was falling into an “arms for hostages” situation; it was a “bad idea,” and the government “shouldn’t do it.”<sup>44</sup> Early in 1986, the United States went ahead and sold arms directly to Iran and funneled some of the profits to a group called the Contras who were fighting the Sandinistas in Nicaragua—another illegal scheme devised by Colonel North. CIA director William Casey was totally behind financing the war in Central America with “money from abroad” but had been forbidden to do so by Congress; he then favored acting covertly.<sup>45</sup> An article written by Jim Hoagland and Glenn Frankel in the *Washington Post* on February 12, 1987, confirmed Secretary of State Shultz was by-passed and remained opposed to the arms shipments, as was Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.<sup>46</sup>

Israel, concerned about the Jews in Iran, was motivated to continue to send arms, while trying to soothe tensions between Iran and Washington. Israel feared an Iraqi

victory; in addition, the Israeli weapons industry “wanted to make money.”<sup>47</sup> Iran was also seeking missile technology from China and North Korea to counter the Scud missiles Russia supplied to Iraq. Iran, using Israeli technology, began producing their own Shahab-1 missiles and eventually had enough to launch a barrage toward Baghdad. In 1988, this became the “War of the Cities,” which lasted 52 days, during which 532 missiles were launched by both sides. Iran was exhausted and petitioned for peace, ending the war in August 1988. As Gary Sick concludes in his book *All Fall Down: America’s Tragic Encounter with Iran*, despite the expenditure of many thousands of lives, the battle lines remained static. Iran, Sick commented, “snatched ruin and humiliation from the jaws of victory.”<sup>48</sup>

In October 1987 Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin declared: “Iran is Israel’s best friend and we do not intend to change our position in relation to Tehran, because Khomeini’s regime will not last forever.” Iran’s interest in Israel was for spare parts for their war with Iraq and access to US weapons including better relations with the United States.<sup>49</sup>

As the Iraq-Iran war ended in 1988, the borders had not changed, there were a million casualties, and yet Iraq had a “larger and mightier army than ever.” Possibly Iraq could attack Israel and recapture their standing with the Arabs. Some in Israel were starting to have a different view: maybe the periphery doctrine was dead. Iraq was still a counter to a fundamentalist Iran; however, the geo-political map would soon change.<sup>50</sup>

Khomeini died on June 3, 1989, bringing a moment of hope that perhaps Iranian moderates would end the Israeli-Iranian estrangement. In November 1989 Israel resumed purchasing Iranian oil. The way the Iran-Iraq war had ended was devastating to Iran’s

ambition of spreading the revolution and resulted in moderation of the ideological zeal and the beginning of what they termed “pragmatic policies.” This culminated in the 1989 election of Ali Akhbar Hashemi Rafsanjani as president. In 1988, before Khomeini died, he created a constitutional committee to more clearly define the powers of the faqih, the Majlis, and the Guardian council. The faqih’s powers would still include serving as commander of the armed forces; declaring war and peace; and controlling appointments to the Guardian Council, the judiciary, and the state media. After Khomeini died, Hojjatoleslam Ali Khamenei was quickly named Ayatollah and faqih, with these powers. Khamenei, with “weak religious credentials,” was not widely accepted by the clerical establishment in Qom.<sup>51</sup>

An Associated Press (AP) article published in the *New York Times* on December 20, 1989, was titled “Israel-Iran Oil deal disclosed and tied to Captives.” Israel, they reported, paid Iran \$36 million for oil hoping to encourage Iran to use its influence to help free the last three Israeli soldiers still held in Lebanon. The United States was backing the deal hoping for release of the remaining American hostages also held in Lebanon. The Israeli position, the article concluded, was that “Iran has oil and Iran has Jews which are reasons to renew connections with them.” The article also quoted Joseph Alpher of Tel Aviv University’s Jaffe Center as saying “considerations other than the release of prisoners could justify ties with Iran.”<sup>52</sup>

Newly elected President George H. W. Bush had announced a “goodwill begets goodwill” gesture in his inaugural speech on January 29, 1989. The Bush administration urged Rafsanjani to use Iran’s “considerable political capital in Lebanon” to obtain the release of the remaining US hostages held by Hezbollah. Bush indicated there would be a

reciprocal gesture toward Iran by the United States.<sup>53</sup>

Iran's new leadership had also lowered its rhetoric against the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf and had not as yet endorsed Sunni fundamentalist groups like Hamas. Rafsanjani indicated Iran would support whatever agreement the Palestinians settled on with Israel. Bush's national Security advisor Brent Scowcroft had said, in late 1991, it might be possible to take Iran off the terrorist list, reduce economic sanctions, and further compensate Iranians for the shooting down of an Iranian civilian Airbus jet with a missile launched by a United States ship in July 1988, by mistake. (All 290 Iranian passengers and crew had been killed.) Scowcroft indicated the administration was even considering allowing the sale of some airplanes and parts and easing other economic sanctions on Iran.<sup>54</sup>

Bush did not respond to Iran's gesture, even after the last hostage, reporter Terry Anderson, was finally released in December 1991. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates had been known as the CIA's "hardliner" on the Soviet Union and Iran and had previously urged Bush not to respond to Iran's goodwill gestures. Gates argued, "We have to look at the history of outreach (to Iran) that was very real, under successive presidents, yet did not yield any results." Gates' vetoing of the Bush plan to reciprocate Iran's goodwill gesture was, as he explained later to Congress, developed because "new intelligence showed Iran was seeking weapons of mass destruction and planning terrorist attacks." Gates often repeated in CIA staff meetings that the "only moderate Iranian is one who has run out of bullets."<sup>55</sup>

Rafsanjani never forgave the Americans for Bush's renegeing on his promise of goodwill after the hostages were released or for Iran's exclusion from the Madrid (and

Oslo) Conferences.<sup>56</sup>

## CHAPTER FOUR: THE TABLES TURN; PROSPECTS FOR PEACE

Dramatic changes came to the Middle East between 1990 and 1992 with the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq on August 2, 1990, and the final collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991. The United States went out of its way to attract Arab support for its coalition to counter Iraq's invasion of Kuwait: an Arab state attacking another Arab state. As a non-Arab state, Israel could not be included in the coalition, even though thirty-four Scud missiles were lobbed toward Tel Aviv by Iraq during the war, with no Israeli response.<sup>1</sup> Israel witnessed their greatest threat: the Arab states now working with the United States, their only remaining friend, to repel Saddam's invasion. Israel was also aware of President Bush's "goodwill that begets goodwill" initiative, reaching out to Iran. The common threats that nourished a volatile alliance between Israel and Iran were diminished or no longer there.

As Iraq was quickly defeated by a US-led coalition that included Arab countries, Iraq was perceived as no longer a significant threat to Iran. Thus Iran was freed up to become more of a threat to Israel. Israel also recognized it was no longer needed to support the United States as a bulwark against Soviet penetration into the Middle East. Suddenly Israel was even more alone. Iran, rebuffed by Bush, began to use more of its resources to increase its support of Hezbollah and further Shia fundamentalist changes in Lebanon and elsewhere. A better-armed Hezbollah was becoming more of a threat to Israel. In order to assure continued unequivocal support from the United States, Israel

needed a new enemy to counter the loss of the Soviet and Arab threats to the region.<sup>2</sup>

Others also agreed that Israel was becoming increasingly irrelevant. In an autumn 1990 interview published in the *Journal of Palestinian Studies*, William Waldergrave, Britain's minister of state for foreign affairs, confirmed he had recently made the statement in Parliament that "In the new Middle East, Israel had ceased to matter."<sup>3</sup> Noted Middle East historian Bernard Lewis went further in 1992, saying "some see Israel as a strategic liability."<sup>4</sup> Parsi argues that Israeli leaders felt the United States was "no longer trustworthy and could not be relied on when it came to Israel's existence."<sup>5</sup>

To make matters worse for Israel, Iran not only came out against Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, they also allowed the United States to use Iran's airspace while denying Iraq's requests for help. US Secretary of State James Baker had praised Iran for its assistance.<sup>6</sup> Israel felt threatened by Iran cozying up to the United States. Following the war with Iraq, Iran acquired Scud-B and Scud-C missiles (renamed Shahab-1 and Shahab-2) and received a production line for missiles from North Korea.<sup>7</sup>

Israelis determined they needed to change direction to keep the United States in line, as the US was becoming too cozy with Iran. As late as June 1991, Israel's leadership still had not yet publicly identified Iran as a major threat. In a June 1991 talk given by Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, Rabin did not identify Iran as a major threat following the outcome of the first Gulf War. Rabin stated, "Arab armies are our main security concern." He referred to Palestinian terrorism as a "nuisance" but not an existential threat to Israel. He also said he did not see the need for another preemptive war as "we have enough land and no territorial need could justify a war initiative." He did not yet mention Iran as a potential enemy.<sup>8</sup>

Iranian president Rafsanjani (1989 to 1997) was known as a pragmatic conservative. In spite of the Bush snub in 1992, he wanted to end international isolation, instead seeking improved relations with the United States, and focus on reconstruction of the economy and the goal of becoming a model for other Muslim states. As we shall see, President Rafsanjani was repeatedly snubbed by the United States. Iran was not invited to either the Madrid or Oslo proceedings and was snubbed again by President George H. W. Bush when he ignored Iran's offer to help get the remaining United States hostages released from Lebanon and ignored again after they did.

Following the 1991 Gulf War, US Secretary of State James Baker concluded the time was right and the United States had the political capital to enable a breakthrough in peace negotiations between the Palestinians and Israelis. His first step was brokering the Madrid Conference that took place in October 1991. Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Israel were included. Iran was not invited. Altogether forty-three nations had been invited including fifteen regional states. Parsi argues that Tehran believed "that its opportunity had come to be accepted as a regional power and they should be included in Middle East decision making." Baker's snub frustrated Rafsanjani's policy of detente with Washington. Iran felt humiliated again and began to increase support for Hezbollah and now Hamas.<sup>9</sup>

The next peace initiative, the Oslo Accords, was concluded in 1993. As in Madrid, Iran was again excluded. PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat even renounced violence. Following the Oslo Accords, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres called the meeting "The Dawn of Peace." Israel, he said, wanted a "secure future," stating, "we gave the most." Israel stopped all settlements in the West Bank, gave autonomy for Jerusalem



including universal access, and was willing to exit Lebanon and the Golan Heights in exchange for the right to exist within “secure borders.”<sup>10</sup> Peres had always hoped the Arabs would produce another leader like Anwar Sadat to negotiate with, lamenting that if “Ben-Gurion had had a realistic counterpart, the history of the Middle East would have been different.”<sup>11</sup>



**Figure 4.1. The Handshake: Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat with US President Bill Clinton, September 13, 1993.<sup>12</sup> Courtesy of The William J. Clinton Presidential Library.**

Rabin was given the Nobel Peace Prize, along with Shimon Peres and Yasser Arafat, for signing the Oslo Agreement (Oslo 1 Accord) in 1993. The agreement included, for the first time, Israel recognizing the PLO and Arafat recognizing Israel including territorial agreements with land swaps.<sup>13</sup> The Israeli right was horrified and maligned the agreement, leading to the assassination of Rabin in 1995 by an Israeli right-wing fanatic. Bethine Church (widow of former Idaho Senator Frank Church), a friend of Rabin’s, blames the rhetoric of opposition leader, Benjamin Netanyahu (Israel’s Prime Minister 1996-1999 and 2009-present) and the increasing influence of the Israeli right

wing as provoking the assassination.<sup>14</sup>

As a result of the Oslo negotiations, a peace treaty between Israel and Jordan was signed in 1994. Investment in Israel began to skyrocket and Oslo made it possible for African, Asian, and even some Arab states to accept Israel one by one. Next a peace treaty between Israel and Syria almost happened.

Israel concluded the Arab threat had diminished and anticipated that if Iran came to terms with the United States, Iran could impose a “new order” in the Middle East. Iran’s expanded missile program intensified the threat, as did its increased support of Hezbollah.<sup>15</sup> Iran also indicated it would “offer limitless support for the opponents of Oslo.” Parsi argues, “Almost overnight the cold peace that reigned between Israel and Iran in the 1980’s turned into a cold war.”<sup>16</sup>

Not everyone was supportive of Oslo. Noted Professor Edward Said in an article titled “The Morning After,” called Oslo “an instrument of Palestinian surrender.” He argues that in Rabin’s September 1993 press conference, it was stated the agreement gave Israel the right to continue to “hold the Jordan river, the boundaries with Egypt, Jerusalem and the land between Gaza and Jerico.”<sup>17</sup> Anthony Chase commenting on Said’s *Anti-Oslo Writings* argues he understands Said’s position but notes that Said and other rejectionists offered no “positive alternatives.”<sup>18</sup>

Oslo soon failed mainly because opposition leaders Benjamin Netanyahu and Ariel Sharon (Prime Minister 2001-2005) did not want Oslo to succeed.<sup>19</sup> The PLO again began resorting to violence, while Israel increased settlements in the West Bank. (Israelis refer to the West Bank as Judea and Samaria.)

Even after the Oslo Accords were signed in September 1993, Israel continued to trade with Iran through third parties. Parsi argues that Iran felt threatened by a potential peace treaty between Israel and Syria, as Iran would lose its influence and access to Hezbollah in Lebanon, becoming further isolated.<sup>20</sup> The assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Rabin on November 4, 1995, was hailed in Iran as “the will of providence.” Some in Iran referred to Rabin as a terrorist.<sup>21</sup>

An editorial by the award-winning foreign correspondent for the *Washington Post*, David Hoffman, reported on this transformation. In a March 1993 article, Hoffman argued that “Israel is attempting to convince the United States that Iranian-inspired Islamic extremism and Iran’s military rearmament drive have become a major threat to the stability of the Middle East and the interests of the West.” He noted that, just the week before, the United States had accused Iran of being the “leading state sponsor of terrorism.” Israel, he reported, “has the conviction that American public opinion and political leaders need to be further convinced of the urgency of restraining Iran and that the US is the only global power capable of doing so.” Israel, he argues, hopes the United States will “put the brakes on Iran’s quest for nuclear weapons and regional hegemony, saving Israel from a multibillion-dollar weapons program.” He quotes Prime Minister Rabin, who was then visiting Washington, as saying “Iran is on a mega-maniacal quest to be a Middle East empire, by using all the varieties of fundamentalist Islam to shake-up Arab regimes.”

Hoffman quotes a speech Rabin made to the Knesset (Israel’s Legislature) arguing that “Israel’s struggle against murderous Islamic terror” is “meant to awaken the world which is lying in slumber.” The American Jewish Committee, Hoffman states,

recently warned: “we cannot run away or avoid” the possibility that Iran by the end of the decade may become “the dominant force in the Middle East with the ability to wreak long-range mass destruction.” He also quotes Benjamin Netanyahu, the opposition front-runner, as saying “the World Trade Center bombing is not the work of a solitary madman but a deliberate and systemic organization of murder in the heart of New York City.”<sup>22</sup>

Parsi gives some more perspective. In his book, *Treacherous Alliance*, within a chapter subtitled “The Iranian Threat—Real or Imagined,” Parsi argues that no one “believed that Iran overnight had turned into a major threat to the region.” Saudi Arabia’s military spending dwarfed Iran’s. Israel’s military spending also dwarfed Iran’s with Israel having a population just one-tenth the size. Parsi argues “Iran hadn’t changed; everyone else had.” Some Israelis agreed, “Israel needs an existential threat.” With Iraq diminished, Iran was chosen, focusing on Iran’s expanding missile and nuclear technology. By seeking peace with the Arab states and portraying Iran as a threat, Rabin and Peres turned the periphery doctrine on its head.<sup>23</sup>

However, not all political leaders in Israel agreed with the new Israeli policy toward Iran. Parsi quotes Israeli Chief of Staff Ehud Barak (who served as Labor Party Prime Minister 1999-2001) as arguing in 1993, “Iran does not pose a threat to Israel at this time and focusing on Iran is counterproductive.” The desired policy was to “reinvigorate Israel’s strategic relationship with Washington.” He concluded that the strategic significance Israel had enjoyed during the Cold War could be regained through the common threat of Iran and Islamic fundamentalism.<sup>24</sup>

The key players in the adversarial change toward Iran by Israel were clearly Yitzhak Rabin and Simon Peres (Labor Party), who assumed power in 1992, along with

Ariel Sharon and Benjamin Netanyahu of the opposition Likud right, who were seeking power. A close look at their speeches, writings, and biographical material can provide clues regarding this dramatic policy shift. By 1992 the Iranian revolution was already thirteen years old and Khomeini had passed away in 1989, resulting in a more moderate leadership assuming power. As previously pointed out, Iran received nuclear reactor technology from the Carter administration and missile technology from Israel in the late 1970s. Iran's focus on nuclear arms started to surface only after the death of Khomeini, who had been opposed to nuclear weapons.

Efraim Inbar, Rabin's close friend and advisor, wrote a comprehensive 1999 biography titled *Rabin and Israel's National Security*. Inbar describes Rabin as Israel's longest serving and most important defense minister; his contributions began when he prepared the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) for the 1967 war. Following a near military disaster in 1973 under Prime Minister Golda Meir, Rabin resumed leadership and was either defense minister, prime minister, or both until his assassination in 1995. His mantra never changed: "maximum security constitutes the true peace as only Israel's military might guarantees our existence."<sup>25</sup> Although Rabin expressed concern about Iranian fundamentalism, he was optimistic about Israel's future.<sup>26</sup>

Inbar argues that Rabin, as defense minister during the Irangate affair, defended sending Israeli Hawk missiles to Iran to "open channels of communication to the Islamic regime and prevent Iraq from gaining an upper hand." Rabin emphasized Israel badly needed continued US help to settle the thousands of refugees from the Soviet Union.<sup>27</sup> As ambassador to the United States (1968-1973), Rabin was not tied to the American Jewish community preferring Israel not be too "dependent on them," and was critical of AIPAC

for their support of the Likud party, cautioning AIPAC members “not to be Likudnicks on his (Rabin’s) watch.”<sup>28</sup> Rabin always pushed to maintain Israeli military might, remarking to Israeli citizens that purchasing US F-15 fighters should be “more important to Israel than Israelis buying corvettes.”<sup>29</sup> Inbar argues that during the last chapter of his career, Rabin focused on attempts to achieve peace between Israel and its neighbors.<sup>30</sup>

Inbar argues that, after Oslo, Rabin tried to conclude an Anwar Sadat style of peace with Syria before his death by agreeing even to Israel’s withdrawal from the Golan Heights, which Israel had been holding, for guaranteed security. Rabin, he argues, gave Arafat many concessions at Oslo while “encountering much domestic resistance” but he felt peace would be “more beneficial to Israel than more territory.”<sup>31</sup> The Oslo Accords had passed the Knesset by only two votes as opposition leader Netanyahu was gaining strength. Although Rabin was concerned about terrorism, he concluded, “the only way to dry the swamp of radical Islam is through economic development with an improved standard of living.”<sup>32</sup> In a speech before the Knesset in October 1994, Rabin remarked “we will confront Khomeinism and peace will not come without security.”<sup>33</sup> Peace with Jordan, he said, was easier than with the Palestinians since “Jordan was a State.”<sup>34</sup> Inbar’s book gives us a perspective on Rabin and his quest for peace toward the end of his life.

Rabin’s foreign minister Shimon Peres (former prime minister and current president of Israel) wrote his book, *The New Middle East*, in 1993, giving his insight to the geopolitical changes of the early 1990s that differs from Rabin’s. Peres argues that Khomeinism strives to achieve the kingdom of God by “ends that justify the means including lying, bribing, stealing and murder.” The dangers of nuclear weapons in the “hands of religious fanatics cannot be exaggerated.”<sup>35</sup> He was critical of Israel’s 1982

“tragic and unnecessary venture into Lebanon blaming the Likud leadership of being short sighted and stubborn,” leading to the Intifada and the rise of Hezbollah. Peres argued that Israel took many Jewish refugees from Arab countries and Russia and therefore the Arabs should step up and “do the same.”<sup>36</sup> Peres was Minister of Foreign Affairs from July 1992 to November 1995 and was clearly more hawkish than Prime Minister Rabin.

Benjamin Netanyahu became prime minister in 1996 (and again in 2009). Some of his speeches reflect his position. In a speech to the US Congress in 1996 shortly after being elected, he argued that “peace must include security” and “diplomacy will lead to peace but terrorism won’t. ... Our conflict is with Islamic radicals not that Islam has replaced communism,” he continued, warning that Iran was a most “dangerous undemocratic regime and could wed cruel despotism into fanatic militancy.” A nuclear Iran or Iraq would be catastrophic for Israel, the Middle East and all mankind. “We are not interested in ‘peace now’ but peace that will last for all time based on democratic principles.”<sup>37</sup>

In a speech to the Council of Jewish Federations on November 16, 1997, he argued: “The Arabs must understand there is no alternative to an all-out war on terrorism. They must disabuse themselves once and for all of the illusion they can destroy Israel, in stages, or through an alliance with such regimes as Saddam Hussein or Iran.”<sup>38</sup>

In a speech to the US Government Reform Committee just after “9/11” (September 11, 2001), Netanyahu stated, “We have received a wake-up call from hell.” He asserted that “terrorism cannot exist without sovereign state support” and that Iran, Iraq, Syria, the Taliban Afghanistan, the PLO, and other Arab regimes are part of the

“international terrorist network.” Chief among them is Iran and its “Islamic clerical state.” On nuclear weapons, he argued, “we have the power to crush them now but with nuclear weapons the equation will fundamentally change.” He concluded that the United States “must do everything in its power to prevent regimes like Iran and Iraq from developing nuclear weapons.”<sup>39</sup>

Speaking before the UN General Assembly in New York eight years later, Netanyahu described Iran as the “greatest threat that Israel has ever faced. Iran is Germany with an atomic bomb.”<sup>40</sup>

Foreign Affairs Minister Ariel Sharon took center stage just after peace talks sponsored by President Clinton were concluded at Camp David in July 2000. Negotiations were stuck on the Jerusalem issue. Prime Minister Barak insisted on Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem but agreed to Palestinian custodianship over Haram al-Sharif (Temple Mount). Likud opposition leader Sharon tried to topple Barak from power over the Temple Mount issue. Sharon had become Likud leader in 1999 and later became Prime Minister in 2001. Earlier he had been forced to resign as Defense Minister after the Sabra and Shatila refugee massacres by Lebanese Phalange (Christian) forces in Lebanon in 1982 while the IDF stood by.

Sharon informed Prime Minister Barak that he intended to “take a public walk on the Temple-Mount to emphasize his position.” He took the walk on September 26, 2000, surrounded by hundreds of police. Sharon said to the press, “I came here with a message of peace; we can live together with the Palestinians. I came here to the holiest place of the Jewish people in order to see what happens here.” The next day seven Palestinians who protested Sharon’s walk were killed by Israeli police. This was followed by the



beginning of the al-Aqsa Intifada, dooming the peace process. Sharon remarked that the Palestinian Authority sponsored this “pre-meditated campaign in violation of the Oslo Accords” and further stated the “Palestinians must recognize the historical right that Jews have to occupy their capital.”<sup>41</sup>

The 1996 Likud Party Platform confirms the policies of Netanyahu and Sharon. It affirms the Israeli control of Jerusalem, claims Jewish settlement and water rights in Judea and Samaria, and defines the eastern border of Israel. “The Jordan River shall be the eastern border of the State of Israel; this will be the permanent border between Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.”<sup>42</sup>

Not everyone agreed that Iran suddenly became the “new Middle East threat.” The Clinton Administration (1993-2000) was more focused on Iraq and was not yet convinced that “Iran overnight had turned into a major threat to the region.”<sup>43</sup> By 1993, “Dual Containment” of both Iran and Iraq became the Clinton policy, though many Washington insiders did not agree with it.

Former National Security Advisor (NSA) to both presidents Ford and George H. W. Bush, Brent Scowcroft, complained dual containment was a “nutty idea.” Writing a joint 1997 paper with Zbigniew Brzezinski (President Carter’s NSA) and Richard Murphy (former ambassador and assistant secretary of state), Scowcroft summarized: “The US approach should be keeping a straitjacket on Saddam while seeking improved relations with Iran.”<sup>44</sup> The increasing influence of the Likud right in Israel and the Jewish Lobby in the United States were quickly distancing themselves from the containment idea and were focused on Iran as an existential threat.

The Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979 and left in 1989. The CIA supported the

mujahedin, the Afghan holy warriors, by supplying many of their weapons—including stinger anti-aircraft missiles that brought down Soviet helicopter gun-ships. The CIA helped the Afghan rebels repel the Soviets while achieving a CIA goal of giving the Soviets “their Vietnam.”<sup>45</sup> After the Soviets departed, Taliban fundamentalists, organized in the southern province of Kandahar, were able to occupy a weakened Afghanistan. The CIA had no plan for Afghanistan after the Soviets left and just “walked away from it.” One of the mujahedin fighters was Osama bin Laden; Taliban leader Mullah Omar invited him to stay in Afghanistan as a guest.<sup>46</sup> Bin Laden declared the world of Islam had “three great threats: Christians, Jews, and Shia.”<sup>47</sup> In late 1998 the Taliban executed eleven Iranian diplomats in northern Afghanistan, nearly causing a full-scale war between Iran and the Taliban. Iran and the Taliban were not friends.<sup>48</sup>

Still trying to reach out, in March 1995 President Rafsanjani agreed to give Conoco, a US oil company, a contract for petroleum exploration in Iran worth one billion dollars. A mid-rank US state department official approved the deal. The American-Israeli Political Action Committee (AIPAC) “went into orbit” and pressured President Clinton to ban all trade with Iran, which he did, making the announcement during a speech before the World Jewish Congress meeting in March 1995. Secretary Warren Christopher denounced the Conoco deal, stating it would “put money into the evil hand of Iran.”<sup>49</sup>

The game was about to change. The United States left the alliance with Iran when the hostages were taken during the Islamic Revolution, even though Iran elected more moderate leadership after Khomeini died. Presidents Rafsanjani and Khatami reached out to the United States many times, starting during the First Gulf War, and responded to President George H. W. Bush’s goodwill gestures with help getting the final hostages

released from Lebanon. As we will see, Iran reached out again when the United States invaded Afghanistan after 9/11, offering to help defeat the Taliban plus proposing a Grand Bargain to negotiate political differences.

Iran was rebuffed and humiliated by not being included in either Madrid or Oslo political agreements, though both conferences involved all their neighbors. Still hoping to preserve a relationship with Iran, Israel hung on to the alliance a little longer, dealing with Iran for oil and sending Iran arms during the Iran-Iraq war. Now the tide in Israel was turning against Iran, after Netanyahu and Sharon came to power from the Israeli right. The powerful Israeli lobby in the United States, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), would help facilitate that change.

## CHAPTER FIVE: THE ISRAELI LOBBY, IRANOPHOBIA, AND THE BOMB

The Israeli lobby in the United States has always played a major role promoting a pro-Israeli policy within the United States government, as their mission is to help insure the survival of the state of Israel. As AIPAC's Idaho state chair and member of AIPAC's national council, Skip Oppenheimer argues that, while AIPAC has considerable influence in Washington, it doesn't determine Israel's policy and all sides of issues are represented on the council.<sup>1</sup> As previously discussed, the Jewish lobby in the United States was key in helping convince President Truman to support the UN plan to partition Palestine in 1947 and recognize the State of Israel in 1948, and has successively continued to promote Israel's case ever since. The strong United States-Israel-Iran alliance that began shortly after Israel became a state continued until the Islamic Revolution. Iran again turned to Israel when it needed US arms in order to halt the Iraqi invasion in 1980. Then, in the early 1990s, Israel's relationship with Iran changed abruptly. Fearing the loss of US support through the strategic alliance that had been formed to counter Soviet expansion and Arab hostility, Israel decided Iran was to be the new common enemy as those threats diminished. Israel just had to convince the United States that Iran was becoming an actual threat. AIPAC supported that transformation and began promoting the idea of Iran as the new common enemy of Israel and the United States.

AIPAC began advancing the policies outlined by David Hoffman in the last chapter, arguing that Iranian inspired Islamic terrorism and Iran's military build-up has

become a major threat to the stability of the Middle East and the West. As Parsi argues, AIPAC is the “King of Lobbies.” Their job is to keep the United States “engaged in supporting Israel financially, militarily and politically. Following the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin and the unraveling of the Oslo Accords, Israel’s Likud party came to power, was determined to expand into the West Bank and work toward regional hegemony and security.”<sup>2</sup>

Sensing a move toward US accommodation with Iran, AIPAC continued to be engaged in promoting Israel as the reliable United States ally and Iran as a radical Islamic state. The Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP), a fellow lobby allied with many United States neoconservatives (neocons) on its board, had been supporting “using American economic and military power to bring liberalism, democracy and human rights to other countries.”<sup>3</sup> As Joel Benin argues, many WINEP Board members ended up in the George W. Bush administration.<sup>4</sup>

In their provocative and controversial book *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*, John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt detail the tremendous influence AIPAC has in Washington to promote Israeli foreign policy. Mearsheimer and Walt argue, “There is no lobby that matches AIPAC; they are in a class by themselves.” They and the neoconservatives began to “extol the virtues of American hegemony by spreading democracy and preserving US dominance as the best route to long-term peace.” AIPAC favored a combination of “unilateral exercise of American power with its hawkish ideology.” AIPAC, they add, collaborates with another powerful lobby, the Christian Zionists, a subset of the Christian Right, who are equally dogmatic in their beliefs on the return of the Jews to Palestine. This, the Christian Zionists believe, is a “preordained

process that will lead to the Second Coming” (of Christ). An example: The Christians United for Israel organization claims to have millions of followers in the United States.<sup>5</sup>

Mearsheimer and Walt’s book on AIPAC’s powerful political influence got a lot of attention from the Jewish community, who came down hard on the authors. Ed Pilkington, writing in *The Guardian Unlimited*, describes how Mearsheimer and Walt were assailed in the *Washington Post* as anti-Semitic and anti-Jewish. He cites op-eds by William Kristol and Alan Dershowitz in the *Wall Street Journal* calling the book a “bigoted attack on the Jewish community.” Mearsheimer and Walt have been compared with white supremacist David Duke.<sup>6</sup>

Mearsheimer and Walt argue that well over half of the US House of Representatives “do reflexively whatever AIPAC wants.”<sup>7</sup> They report that as of 2005, Israel has received over \$154 billion in direct economic and military assistance from the United States (not counting private donations from US citizens, that are tax-deductible) and argue the United States has vetoed 42 UN Security Council resolutions critical of Israel.<sup>8</sup>

One example is when Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982; President Reagan and Secretary of State George Schultz opposed a precipitous \$250 million increase in military assistance to Israel, sponsored by the US House of Representatives. Mearsheimer and Walt quoted Secretary Schultz: “The supplement sailed right by us and was approved by Congress as though President Reagan and I had not even been there. This brought home to me, vividly, Israel’s leverage in our Congress.”<sup>9</sup> When former Secretary of State Schultz wrote the forward to Abraham Foxman’s recent book *The Deadliest Lies: The Israel Lobby and the Myth of Jewish Control*, he emphasized that the Israeli lobby has a

right to try and influence US policy and the US government is responsible for the policies it adopts.<sup>10</sup>

A few close-to-home examples of AIPAC's influence include observations by Idaho's senator Jim McClure (US Senate 1973-1991). Senator McClure observed first-hand the powerful influence AIPAC had on Congress. McClure stated that AIPAC is one of the most powerful lobbies in Washington, explaining, "AIPAC assigned a personal lobbyist to me who visited my office every week. Even though, with my strong support in Idaho, they knew they could not influence my re-election campaigns, they were relentless in expressing their views."<sup>11</sup> One of McClure's biographers, Dr. Wilma Woods-Davis, argues in her Ph.D. thesis "Portrait of a Pragmatic Conservative," that McClure was neither pro-Arab nor pro-Israeli, but McClure did remind his fellow senators there was an "Arab Side."<sup>12</sup>

In 1986, when former Idaho Governor John Evans campaigned to unseat Senator Steve Symms, he needed to raise out-of-state money for the race. Evans was told to contact AIPAC. AIPAC explained they were not a PAC (political action committee) that gives money to candidates but they could put him in contact with Jewish PACs "all over the country," which they did. He raised over \$200,000 from Jewish PACs for his unsuccessful race against Symms.<sup>13</sup>

Boise pediatrician Dr. David Peterman became involved with AIPAC in 1990 when he helped raise Jewish PAC campaign money for former Idaho State Senator Ron Twilegar. Twilegar ran an unsuccessful campaign against Congressman Larry Craig for retiring Senator Jim McClure's senatorial seat. Peterman agrees with the influence AIPAC has on political races.<sup>14</sup>

Harry Lonsdale ran against Oregon's Senator Mark Hatfield, also in 1990.

Lonsdale was pro-Israel and when meeting with AIPAC in Washington, he was quizzed regarding his opinion on various Middle East subjects. To gain their support, in the final analysis he was told what his opinion "must" be and the "exact words he was to use to express those opinions in public."<sup>15</sup>

US media began to heed the new mantra from AIPAC and WINEP regarding the threat to Israel from Iran. Clyde Haberman, writing his column for the *New York Times* in November 1992, gave the new Clinton administration some foreign policy advice from Israel: "Watch out for Iran." Iran, not Iraq, is the "bigger threat in the Middle East."<sup>16</sup>

Donald Neff, writing in 1996 for the *Washington Report on the Middle East Affairs*, agrees, "It was three years ago that the media in Israel and Israel's supporters in the United States began a coordinated campaign to enlist America into an alliance against Iran." The effort has been so successful that today, Secretary of State Warren Christopher considers Iran as "public enemy No. 1." Neff quotes former Ambassador Andrew I. Killgore as saying, "Bill Clinton believes he cannot be re-elected without media and financial support from the Israeli lobby." Clinton and Secretary Christopher "buy Israeli exaggerations of dangers from Iran, whether they really believe them or not." Neff argues, "Israel is calling the shots in Washington."<sup>17</sup>

Groups in the lobby also attempted to marginalize those who criticized Israeli policy. For example, after former President Jimmy Carter published his book, *Palestine: Peace not Apartheid* in November 2006, he was labeled "anti-Israel" and an "anti-Semite" in editorials and ads taken out in prominent newspapers. Carter argues, "few newspapers including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* or the *Wall Street Journal*



ever support the Palestinian side.” The “US media is pretty well controlled by AIPAC.” Some universities, he argues, are threatened if they hire non-pro-Israeli faculty.<sup>18</sup> Long-time Carter Center Fellow and former Carter Center Executive Director, Kenneth Stein, resigned in protest a few days after Carter’s book was published although he did not dispute any accuracy in it.<sup>19</sup>

Michael B. Owen’s op-ed in the *Wall Street Journal (WSJ)* in December 2006 denounced Carter’s book, arguing Carter “seems to have a religious problem with the Jewish State.” Owen states he has a problem with Carter who claims to be a “full time Christian,” when he doesn’t agree with previous presidents like Lincoln, Wilson, and Truman who favored “restoring Jews to their homeland.”<sup>20</sup>

In the same issue of the *WSJ*, Ali Abunimah rebutted Owen in an op-ed titled “And a Palestinian One.” Abunimah argued that Carter has done “what few American politicians have dared to do: speak frankly about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.” Abunimah agrees with the conclusion that there has been unequal treatment of Palestinians by the Israel government. Abunimah further states Carter has “done the United States an enormous service.”<sup>21</sup>

Joel Beinin, writing in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, argues that WINEP “concentrates on influencing the media and executive branch” while AIPAC “targets Congress.” Founded in 1985, WINEP was at first just “friendly to Israel” and doing “credible research on the Middle East.” Following Oslo and during the 1990s they also concentrated on maintaining US pro-Israel Middle East policy. WINEP promoted Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin’s view that Israel was a reliable US ally against radical Islam. Iran, WINEP claims, is the “new enemy in the post-Cold War world order.” Beinin

argues WINEP affiliates “colonized” the Clinton and, especially, the George W. Bush administrations and that “WINEP has also drifted toward the Israeli right.”<sup>22</sup>

Responding to AIPAC pressure, Senator Alphonse D’Amato was successful in getting his bill, The Libya Sanctions Act, passed in 1996, effectively eliminating all US trade with Iran. It then passed in the US House of Representatives by 415 to 0 votes even though the Clinton administration lobbied against the bill.<sup>23</sup>

The Clinton Administration was criticized for not doing anything about terrorism pre 9/11. A list of anti-terrorism measures introduced during the Clinton administration—most of which were introduced in congress but never acted on—is provided on the cdt.org website.<sup>24</sup> Following Rabin’s assassination a new round of Iranian and Israeli statements, each calling the other group “terrorists,” emerged.

In his recent book *The Arab Lobby*, Mitchell Bard argues the Arabs, too, have always had a powerful US lobby. He attempts to diminish the Mearsheimer and Walt book, calling the authors “racist and paternalistic as they attempt to portray the Arabs as impotent.” Saudi Arabia, the main Arab lobby supporter, Bard argues, “seeks to influence US Middle East policy.”<sup>25</sup> He diminishes Carter’s book by arguing “President Carter received the smallest proportion of the Jewish vote since 1924 because his policies were viewed as a threat to Israel’s security.”<sup>26</sup>

Benjamin Netanyahu defeated Peres and became prime minister of Israel in 1996 and was able to influence AIPAC’s shift to the right. Parsi argues this marked a “beginning of the end of the Oslo Accords.” The new dividing line was “those within the Oslo process and those outside of it.” Abiding by the Oslo Accords would be the end of Israeli expansion into the West Bank unless there were further land swap negotiations.

Iran feared peace with the Palestinians would lead to peace with Syria, turning the Arab world in Israel's favor and leaving Iran more isolated. Iran began to support Hamas to undermine Oslo.<sup>27</sup>

In a speech to a joint session of the US Congress on July 10, 1996, Prime Minister Netanyahu said, “we do not have a quarrel with Islam nor do we believe in the inevitable clash of civilizations.”<sup>28</sup> Netanyahu continued, “Democracy is promoted but not if it brings Islamic Fundamentalism to power. We do not believe that Islam has replaced Communism as the new rival of the West. Our quarrel is with the militant fanatics.” He identified Iran as “the most dangerous regime.” He made the case that Jerusalem would always remain under Israeli control, and why it must be that way.<sup>29</sup>

Former President Jimmy Carter, in his book *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*, argues that Netanyahu, on becoming prime minister of Israel, “promised never to exchange land for peace.” Netanyahu’s foreign minister Ariel Sharon declared the Oslo Agreement to be “national suicide.” Sharon told his countrymen, “Everybody has to move, run and grab as many hilltops as they can to enlarge the settlements because everything we take now will be ours—everything we don’t grab will go to them.”<sup>30</sup>

Dr. David Peterman argues that AIPAC began to “turn right” when it eased Thomas Dine, long-time executive director (1980-1993) and a moderate, out of AIPAC. “AIPAC began to embrace the anti-Iranian rhetoric coming from Jerusalem.”<sup>31</sup> According to M. J. Rosenberg, AIPAC’s current executive director Howard Kohr “is a conservative Republican who was hired largely because of his personal and political closeness to Newt Gingrich. In the Israeli context Dine was Labor and Kohr is Likud.” Dine, Rosenberg argues, “was fired in the early 1990s by a very right-wing (AIPAC) board having decided

it wanted a Republican executive director.” Rosenberg also remarks that AIPAC “gets its direction from a foreign government [Israel].”<sup>32</sup>

Thomas Dine was on the staff of the US Senate Special Committee on National Emergencies in 1973 and 1974, and worked closely with Idaho’s Senator Frank Church. Bethine Church, widow of Senator Church (who died in 1984), remembers Dine well, trusted him, and agreed AIPAC became more “Likud-like” after he left. She remained friends with Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres. They invited her back to Jerusalem in June 1995 to receive the “Jerusalem Apple Award.” She relates being upset then by the “troublemaker” Netanyahu, as she did not like his “rejection of Oslo policies,” and never “trusted him.” She blames Netanyahu for inciting hostility toward Rabin, leading to his assassination. Bethine was a member of AIPAC before Senator Church died but resigned in the early 1990s. Ms. Church was pleased when the moderate Mohammad Khatami assumed power in Iran in 1997 and considered him a “straight-shooter.”<sup>33</sup>

Seyed Mohammad Khatami was elected as Iranian president May 23, 1997. A moderate who would try to improve relations with the rest of the world, he would follow the lead of his predecessor Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. Khatami and Rafsanjani are referred to as “the reformists.” Relations between Iran and the Arabs were starting to improve, leading to Iran’s formation of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia, addressing the first conference in Tehran, praised Iran for their “invaluable contributions throughout our glorious Islamic history.” He praised Khatami’s effort to “consecrate the spirit of solidarity and interdependence.” He warned against attempts at hegemony and the use of “violence to create an Islamic state.”<sup>34</sup>

CNN reporter Christianne Amanpour interviewed President Khatami on January 7, 1998. In the interview, Khatami argued that “over the past two centuries the Iranian nation has been humiliated as its fate was decided by others,” the last time being when the Shah “capitulated,” making American advisors “immune from prosecution in Iran.” Khatami explained that the Iranian hostage incident had been due to “revolutionary fervor” for which he apologized. He argued that since the fall of Communism, Islam has been declared by some as the “new enemy.”<sup>35</sup>

During the Rafsanjani and Khatami years there were signs of improving relations between Iran and the West and also with Iran and their Arab neighbors. However, there was the problem of Iran’s support of Hezbollah, a “terrorist” group in Lebanon. Hezbollah, an organization of “Shi’ite extremists,” came into existence in Lebanon following Israel’s brutal invasion of Lebanon in 1982. Keddie explains that Hezbollah (The Party of God) started in Iran as a violent arm of the Islamic Republic Party (IRP).<sup>36</sup> Weiner, in *Legacy of Ashes*, argues Hezbollah in Iran was raising money and obtaining explosives to forward Khomeini’s messianic vision of “conquering Iraq, seizing the holy shrine of Karbala and marching on Jerusalem.”<sup>37</sup>

In his book *Hizbollah: the Story From Within*, Naim Qassem (Hezbollah’s Deputy Secretary General) argues that Hezbollah rose up following the intense destruction of Lebanon and the killing of civilians by the Israeli military and the “horrifying massacres at the Sabra and Shantila Palestinian refugee camps” by the Israelis and Phalangist (Christian) forces. Hezbollah rose up from the Lebanese Shi’ite resistance fighters and was later supported by Iran. Qassem claims Hezbollah will eventually be more active in Lebanon’s political process when the occupiers leave.<sup>38</sup> Hala Jaber, in his book

*Hezbollah: Born with a Vengeance*, agrees that Hezbollah will exist until Israel no longer is an “occupier” of Palestinian land.<sup>39</sup>

Dr. Ronen Bergman, a long-time Israeli security and intelligence correspondent for the Tel-Aviv newspaper *Yedith Abronoth*, is considered an authority on Israeli intelligence. In Bergman’s recently published book *The Secret War with Iran*, he discusses the origin of Hezbollah and the Iranian involvement with the organization. He argues the “Shi’ites in Iran and the Shi’ites in Lebanon have always been linked.” Mussa al-Sadr, who in 1975 founded Amal, a political/social organization in Lebanon, came from Iran. Al-Sadr’s niece married Khomeini’s son and Amal received assistance from the shah through SAVAK. Al-Sadr disappeared in 1978 on a trip to Libya. His deputy, Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah, became Hezbollah’s supreme spiritual authority in Lebanon and remains so today. Some members of Amal joined Hezbollah; Amal still remains a political party in Lebanon. Bergman argues, “It is hard to believe that Israel and the West failed to foresee the birth of Hezbollah.”<sup>40</sup>

September 11, 2001, was not an attack on the United States by Shia radicals in Iran but by Sunni extremists from Saudi Arabia. The US response was to invade Afghanistan in order to remove the Taliban who harbored al-Qaeda, who in turn trained the terrorists. Iran was a “bitter enemy of the Taliban” and was willing to help defeat them, assisting the US-led coalition. Iran had previously armed and trained the Northern Alliance and was willing to continue that effort. The United States began secret meetings with Iran in Geneva initiated by Ambassador James Dobbins, President Bush’s special envoy to Afghanistan.<sup>41</sup> In his recent book *The Twilight War*, David Crist details the negotiations between the Iranian and US delegations meeting in Geneva after the

September 11 attack on the World Trade Center. The “Iranians made it clear they wanted to support the United States in Afghanistan. Iran offered its airfields, also offered to continue to train the Northern Alliance, and agreed to help form a post-Taliban government in Kabul with the Northern Alliance as the nucleus.”<sup>42</sup>

Gareth Porter, writing for the Inter Press Service (IPS), argued that the United States and Iran were on course to “work closely together in the war against al-Qaeda and its Taliban sponsors in Afghanistan in late 2001 and early 2002.” The cooperation proposal, Porter argues, was “scuttled by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.” It was the Northern Alliance troops, supported by Iran, that drove the Taliban out of Kabul by mid-November.<sup>43</sup>

Parsi argues that Iran offered the United States use of its air bases and was instrumental at the Bonn Conference in December 2001 to get the Northern Alliance to agree to a coalition government for Afghanistan. Iran was the largest donor, pledging \$500 million in assistance for Afghanistan (more than any other country including the United States). Iran even offered to train and equip another 20,000 Northern Alliance troops in Afghanistan.<sup>44</sup> Instead of embracing Iran’s gestures, pressure was put on President Bush to include Iran in his “Axis of Evil” speech in January 2002. Israelis feared the United States cooperating with Iran would threaten them and weaken their relationship with the US. Israel quickly labeled all their adversaries terrorists.

Ambassador Ryan Crocker, interim charge’ d’affaires to the new government in Afghanistan in 2002, gave the keynote speech at the Frank Church Institute Conference on Afghanistan in Boise on October 16, 2012. Crocker argued that Iran was indeed anti-Taliban and was supportive of the US effort to defeat the Taliban in Afghanistan. He

confirmed Iran's leadership role at the Bonn Conference and their support of the new Karzai government. "The dialogue stopped," he argued, "when President Bush gave his 'Axis of Evil' speech. The United States lost a strategic opportunity."<sup>45</sup>

The "Axis of Evil" speech by President Bush came after the interception by the Israel navy of the *Karin A*, a ship allegedly from Iran filled with arms for the Palestinians, that was captured by Israel in the Red Sea in January 2002. This incident ended Washington's efforts to continue a dialogue with Iran. The Khatami government denied any involvement with the affair but had lost credibility. Some claim the *Karin A* incident was a hoax, trumped up by Israel.<sup>46</sup> Bergman disagrees, arguing the *Karin A* was dispatched by Iran's Revolutionary Guards and "the ship contained a large number of arms that would have made a significant difference in supplying Palestinian terrorist groups."<sup>47</sup>

James Bennett quoted a speech by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon saying that cooperation with Iran risked "appeasing Arab nations the way European democracies appeased Hitler on the eve of World War II." Sharon went on "Don't repeat the terrible mistakes of 1938, when the enlightened democracies in Europe decided to sacrifice Czechoslovakia for a comfortable, temporary solution. [Israel] will not be Czechoslovakia." Mr. Sharon concluded: "We can depend only on ourselves."<sup>48</sup>

Bette Stockbauer, writing for the *Information Clearing House* in a piece titled "Rebuilding America's Defenses – a Summary: Blueprint of the PNAC Plan for U.S. Global Hegemony," argued that a Washington think tank, Project for the New American Century (PNAC), was founded by neoconservative William Kristol, with a board that included Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, Lewis Libby, and Richard



Perle. PNAC began outlining a new US strategy for the Middle East back in 1997. Their policy targeted a pre-emptive strike against Saddam Hussein, in order to accomplish a regime change, as the number one priority. PNAC, Stockbauer continues, has a “philosophy that was formed in response to the ending of Cold War hostilities and the emergence of the United States as the only preeminent superpower.” Stockbauer claims that this is a “strategic movement that should not be squandered” and that America should use its position and power to establish democracies to replace regimes “considered hostile to US interests” and should use all means “including military” to achieve those ends.<sup>49</sup>

Neil Mackay wrote in Scotland’s *The Sunday Herald* in September 2002 arguing that the PNAC blueprint called for regime change in Iran, Libya, Syria, and North Korea. After the event of the terrorist attacks on the US on 9/11, Wolfowitz and Cheney “were calling for an invasion of Iraq” before anyone knew who was responsible. Afghanistan, Iran, and Syria were also considered to be threats and should also be dealt with next.<sup>50</sup> Parsi argues that the pro-Israeli lobby had helped push the Bush administration into invading Iraq. PNAC labeled Iran the “bigger threat” but Iraq to be dealt with first, then Iran to follow “the day after Iraq was crushed.”<sup>51</sup>

After the quick defeat of Iraq in May 2003, a *Newsday* report by Gregory Beals revealed that Iran sent a proposal through the Swiss ambassador in Tehran to be forwarded to the US. The proposal allegedly had the approval of both Ayatollah Khamanei and President Khatami and asked for “mutual respect, a halt to hostile behavior, [and] abolishment of sanctions on Iran” in exchange for their support of a democratic government in Iraq. They were open to “put on the table” access to inspect

Iran's peaceful nuclear technology.<sup>52</sup> Iran wanted members of the Iranian terrorist organization based in Iraq, the Mujaedin-e Khalq Organization (MKO), handed over to them by Iraq in return for the al-Qaeda operatives the Iranians held. The Iranians would also agree to end their support of Hezbollah and the Islamic Jihad. Iran would even agree to honor the Arab League's 2002 proposal recognizing Israel via the 1967 borders and a two-state solution. An article written in the *New York Times* by Nicholas Kristof also supports the Grand Bargain proposal.<sup>53</sup>

In his recent book *The Twilight War*, David Crist details the May 4, 2003, "Grand Bargain" initiative by Iran through the Swiss foreign ministry involving the Swiss ambassador to Iran Tim Guldemann. The Iranian ambassador to France, Sadeq Kharrazi, worked with President Khatami on the proposal, who related, "We are ready to normalize relations [with the United States]."<sup>54</sup> UN ambassador John Bolton was adamant about not talking to Iran and helped persuade Secretary Colin Powell and his assistant Richard Armitage that Swiss ambassador Guldemann had "gilded the lily" and that it was not a serious proposal so there was no need for a US response.<sup>55</sup>

Another confirmation of the Beals article in *Newsday* and the response by the United States was argued by Gareth Porter in a March 26, 2006 article in *IPS*. He asserted the neoconservative secret "cabal," led by Vice President Dick Cheney in Washington, blocked Iran's 2003 "Grand Bargain" initiative. This ended direct diplomatic contacts between Iran and the United States. Iran viewed the negative response as another "humiliation," along with the previous rebuffs to their overtures at Madrid and Oslo and to their offer to help defeat the Taliban.<sup>56</sup>

Some concluded there was not a legitimate "Grand Bargain" offer by Iran.

Stephen Rosen argues in the *American Thinker* that Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage told *PBS Frontline* that he and Secretary Powell were “very interested” in the opening to an Iran proposal but neither thought the message they received in May 2003 was a “serious endeavor.” Armitage later admitted that if he had known Iran’s ambassador to the UN, Javad Zarif, had been involved he would have “taken the proposal far more seriously.”<sup>57</sup>

Marc Perelman, writing in the *Jewish Daily Forward*, argued that US and Israeli hawks were leading the charge for invading Iran while Gary Sick, director of Middle East Studies at Columbia University, was advocating “engaging Iran.”<sup>58</sup>

Israel invaded Lebanon again on July 12, 2006, following an incident involving the killing of three Israeli soldiers and the capture of two more by Hezbollah. Israel once more destroyed much of Lebanon’s infrastructure, hoping to destroy Hezbollah’s resources. Matt M. Matthews of the Combat Studies Institute (CSI) argues that the “stalemate for Israel confounded military analysts around the world.” The IDF had been considered the most powerful army in the Middle East and had “emerged from the campaign with its enemies undefeated and its prestige severely tarnished.”<sup>59</sup>

Nawaf Obaid, managing director of the Saudi National Security Project (SUSRIS) and critical of Hezbollah, had pushed Bush to pressure Israel for an early cease-fire after their “ridiculous onslaught” into Lebanon. President Bush did not immediately respond. (Amazingly, Bush did not call on Israel for a cease-fire until more than a month after the invasion.)<sup>60</sup>

Meanwhile, clandestine relations and trade between Israel and Iran continued. Stanley A. Weiss’ 2010 article in the *International Harold Tribune*, “Israel and Iran, The

Bonds That Tie Persians and Jews,” argued “ancient cultural bonds and common strategic interests between the Persians and Jews made Iran and Israel close allies.” During Khatami’s reformist presidency, Israel was exporting agricultural equipment to Iran to pay “shah-era oil debts to Iran.” Weiss quotes Benjamin Disraeli [Weiss misquoted, the quote was actually made by former British Prime Minister Lord Palmerston] as saying “nations have no permanent friends and no permanent enemies, only permanent interests” which will, in time, make “Persian Iran and Jewish Israel, now enemies, friends again.”<sup>61</sup> The trade continues.

In an April 4, 2008 article in the *Guardian*, Richard Silverstein agrees there is still trade between Iran and Israel despite an “ironclad boycott of all things Iranian” being observed by Israel. Citing a recent multi-billion-euro contract for Iran to supply Switzerland with natural gas, Swiss sources reveal Israel has been “buying Iranian oil for years.” The oil goes to Rotterdam and then to Haifa in Israel, imported by the Eilat-Ashkelon Pipeline Co., which doesn’t disclose its sources. The Iranian oil is of the “higher quality” preferred by Israel. Silverstein uses the term “hypocrisy” in his article.<sup>62</sup>

B. Joffe-Walt, writing in *Arab News* on January 19, 2010, also confirms there is currently trade between Israel and Iran. “An Israeli IT company has admitted to selling an on-line business management system to the Tehran Chamber of Commerce.” The million-dollar deal was signed at the company’s Belgium headquarters. Trade between Iran and Israel is “illegal in both countries.”<sup>63</sup>

Another recent article in *The Wall Street Journal* by Charles Levinson recounts the use of Iranian marble in Israeli buildings. The “high-ceiling lobby and stately exterior” of the new headquarters of Bank Leumi (a partly state-owned Israeli lender) are

swathed in thousands of square feet of Gohara stone. This marble is found only in Iran and is transported through Turkey where it is re-packaged and shipped to Israel. Gohara marble also adorns the new Conference Center near Ben-Gurion airport.<sup>64</sup>

According to AIPAC, the greatest contention between Iran and Israel in the last twenty years is the possibility of Iran obtaining a nuclear bomb. (Israel reportedly has over 200 nuclear bombs including two Dolphin class submarines carrying nuclear missiles.) The other major issue is the threat to Israel from Hezbollah (and Hamas). The 2006 invasion of Lebanon by Israel, attempting to marginalize Hezbollah, failed. Israel again destroyed roads, bridges, and airfields throughout Lebanon but could not defeat Hezbollah. Since the end of the war Hezbollah has re-armed. The cover article in *The Economist* issue of January 1, 2011 reports, “Iran and Syria have provided Hezbollah with an arsenal of perhaps 50,000 missiles and rockets, many with ranges and payloads well beyond what Hezbollah had last time.” The article concludes that Iran “has the desire to acquire nuclear weapons at any cost and Israel’s desire is to stop Iran at any cost.” From this a “war might arise.”<sup>65</sup>

AIPAC describes Iran as “a leading sponsor of international terrorism,” and says “a nuclear-armed Iran would pose unacceptable threats to the United States and its allies.” They recommend stronger sanctions, for now. AIPAC’s analysis of the possibility of a nuclear Iran is that “a nuclear-armed Iran would constitute an existential threat to Israel, but would not threaten Israel only.” Iran, they argue, has also been conducting research and tests on technologies needed to deliver a nuclear weapon, including the rapid advancement of its long-range ballistic missile and space program. They conclude “a nuclear Iran would destabilize the world by leading to nuclear proliferation in the

region and alter the strategic balance of the Middle East.”<sup>66</sup>

Not everyone agrees with AIPAC’s analysis. In his recent book, *Iranophobia: The Logic of an Israeli Obsession*, Haggai Ram disagrees. Ram reflects that Iran was the Jewish state’s former intimate ally and today its most bitter foe. He compares the similarity of Iranian Islamic revolution to the history of Zionism.<sup>67</sup> Israel, he argues, shipped about “five hundred million dollars of arms to Iran each year during the 1970s.”<sup>68</sup> He argues that following Camp David and peace with Egypt, which were followed by the Gulf war, then the Oslo agreement, Israel “needed to relocate the image of the diminished threat from the Arab vicinity. Israel turned to another source: the Persian periphery, even though as late as the 1980s no one even mentioned Iran as a threat.” He asserts that Israel is dependent on the drug of militarism and thereby the continuation of an existential enemy.<sup>69</sup>

Hezbollah and Hamas, Ram maintains, are not “manufactured banalities like al-Qaeda but are grass-root movements; a political manifestation of the historically denied and politically repressed.” Both groups were comprised of resistance fighters who organized to combat Israeli aggression in Lebanon and Gaza.<sup>70</sup>

Ram argues that Israel seized on Bush’s antiterrorist agenda following 9/11 and escalated the rhetoric of the threat of Palestinian and Lebanese (Hamas and Hezbollah) terrorists by using the tactic of “dehumanizing” them. Ram explains the far right followers in Israel are “Iran-like” in their religious and ethnic beliefs. Ram suggests: With a nuclear Israel and a nuclear United States (plus Iran’s nuclear neighbors India, Pakistan, China, and Russia), an Iran leader not pursuing nuclear technology should be considered a madman, “not the other way around.”<sup>71</sup> Ram portrays the “presumed

apocalypse in Iran” as “irrational.”<sup>72</sup>

Fellow Israeli academic Benny Morris sees it differently. In an editorial published in the *New York Sun* titled “The Second Holocaust,” Morris describes the Nazi Holocaust as “one-to-one” contact with the victims. This time, he argues, it will be different, since “nuclear-tipped Shihab III and IV missiles will wipe out the Israeli population” (including the 3.5 million Arabs in the West Bank and Gaza and 1.3 million Arabs living in Israel, nearly all Sunnis). This holocaust, he argues, will occur because of a “supreme divine command” with the martyrs serving a “noble cause.” He thinks the West will “do nothing” to prevent it just like they did nothing before and it will be all over for Israel in “a few minutes.”<sup>73</sup>

Iranophobia is the official party line of many Israeli officials. In an address to the United Nations on October 1, 2007, Israeli Foreign Affairs Minister Tzipi Livni declared “No responsible state disagrees that Iran is the most prominent sponsor of terrorism. It is a major source of instability and conflict in Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine and across the entire Middle East and it is the enemy of Arab-Israeli co-existence.” She challenged the UN and the world to live up to the promise of “never again.”<sup>74</sup>

Yet the same Tzipi Livni commented, in a series of closed discussions a few weeks later, that in her opinion “Iranian nuclear weapons do not pose an existential threat to Israel.” The *Haaretz* article also discloses: “This same opinion was also expressed by former Mossad chief Ephraim Halevy.”<sup>75</sup>

Many in Israel call for military action. Efraim Inbar, director of the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, recently argued that “diplomacy has run its course” and that “only military action can stop Iran’s race for nuclear arms.” Tehran with nuclear arms

“will destabilize the Middle East, by having a chain effect leading to further nuclear proliferation.”<sup>76</sup>

Elliott Abrams, President George W. Bush’s deputy national security advisor, recently weighed in on the AIPAC side in a *Wall Street Journal* op-ed. titled “Why Israel is Nervous.” Abrams argues that over 80% of US Jewish voters cast ballots for President Obama in 2008. He recounts that relations between US presidents and Israel have been mixed, starting with Truman who defied Secretary Marshall by supporting a Jewish state. President Johnson was the first president to send Israel serious arms (fighter jets). Then Nixon became more involved, warning the Soviets not to interfere in the 1973 war while airlifting massive arms shipments when Israel faced losing that war.

Abrams examines the position of recent presidents, stating “There is no love lost between Israel and President Carter especially after his ‘hostile’ book on Palestinian Apartheid.” He indicates Presidents George H. W. Bush and Clinton had “mixed” relations and that President George W. Bush was “closer” to Israel during their joint “war on terror.” Abrams argues that President Obama’s popularity in Israel dropped considerably when Obama favored Tzipi Livni in the last election and pushed Israel to stop West Bank settlement expansion after Netanyahu formed a government. Abrams asserts the “military option” must be kept on the table in dealing with Iran’s nuclear initiative. Israel believes, he says, the only thing worse than bombing Iran is Iran having a nuclear bomb, but this, he argues is “not the Obama view.” He contends Israeli construction in the West Bank provides jobs for Palestinians and new construction takes place only “inside already existing Israeli communities.” Some Israelis feel the current Obama administration offer of engaging Iran is “unrealistic, even naïve” and should be



more “realistic.”<sup>77</sup>

Admiral Mike Mullen, speaking in Boise in April 2011, agrees that Iran having the bomb would be “catastrophic” for the region, as it would stimulate other countries in the Middle East to follow, resulting in further instability.<sup>78</sup>

Parsi summarizes: “Iran hadn’t changed, everyone else had.” Israel focused on Iran “because all other previous threats had more or less evaporated. There were simply no other conventional military threats left.” Israel needed to “reinvigorate its strategic relationship with the United States. After Iraq’s defeat Iran could be seen as a threat for the future.”<sup>79</sup>

## CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

Wendy Hansen, writing for the *Los Angeles Times*, reported on Judean date palm tree seeds found thirty years ago during an archeological excavation at the Masada. Carbon dating showed them to be approximately 2000 years old; about the time of the Roman siege of the Masada in 73 C.E. Some of the seeds were recently planted and have grown to seedlings that are now over four feet tall. Similarly, a 1,300-year-old Chinese lotus, after being dormant for over a century, is able to emerge and grow under new conditions.<sup>1</sup>

Like those of rare desert trees, the seeds of Zionism and Iranian nationalism were sown in the ancient Middle East, sprouted and grew, then became dormant during centuries of wars, oppression, and religious strife. These seedlings have recently been nourished both by the quest for a homeland for the Jews, intensified by the Holocaust, and the emergence of Iranian nationalism, with a quest for democracy. Both nations have struggled to flourish following a break in the clouds, as suppressive empires collapsed around them in the early years of the twentieth century. Although Zionism and Iranian nationalism are still struggling in the midst of Arab Sunni populations, they have been fertilized by a chance for revival; for this could be their time in the sun.

Persians and Jews had their first encounter in the sixth century BCE when Cyrus conquered the Babylonians as the Achaemenian Dynasty expanded to become the world's greatest empire. Cyrus allowed the Jews, who previously had been enslaved by the

Babylonians, to return to Judea where they built their temple with Jerusalem as their capital. During their captivity in Babylonia, they encountered the teachings of Zoroaster, the Persian priest who taught monotheism and justice for all. Monotheism had already been introduced to the Jews by Abraham as part of his covenant with God, according to the Jewish Bible, but had not yet been totally accepted.

Following their return to Israel the Jews achieved prosperity and superiority over their neighbors. The Roman Empire eventually disrupted their hegemony in the second century CE and forced them once again into diaspora that would last for nearly two thousand years. The Jews maintained their Jewish culture in countries to which they fled. Many settled in Iran where they were generally well treated. Many Jews have always wanted to return home and reclaim their kingdom and their capital Jerusalem. Other Jews chose to stay in Arab countries and Iran rather than return to Judea.

The horrible European pogroms in the nineteenth century and the Holocaust in Europe under the Nazis made it clear that the Jews, in order to survive, would have to have their own nation and start defending themselves from then on. The “Return to Zion” immigration finally gave the Jews sufficient population for Israel to become a state following World War II. The United States, with its large, influential, and politically-active Jewish population, would become their critical benefactor. It wasn’t going to be easy, but this time they had to do whatever it took to stay together and survive as a state; “never again” meant to them “never again.”

Israel was immediately attacked by most of their Arab neighbors after declaring their new state in 1948. After the 1948-1949 war, Israel began reaching out to countries in the periphery of their Arab enemies. Iran, with historic and cultural ties to Israel, had

oil critical to Israel's existence and was not hostile to the new Jewish state. There is clear evidence from my research that Israel and Iran had a strong and robust alliance during that time. Israel needed oil and Iran needed Israeli expertise in technical and agricultural areas (as well as arms) to rebuild their shattered economy, making their alliance mutually beneficial. Although becoming Israel's most important Middle Eastern ally, Iran wanted their relationship to be secretive so as to avoid acrimony from their Muslim neighbors. Iran and Israel jointly built a pipeline across Israel to ship Iranian oil to the Mediterranean, avoiding the Suez Canal. Israel has since received Iranian oil almost continually, with brief interruptions, to the present time. Israel provided Iran with arms and new missile technology, realizing the missiles might eventually be capable of carrying a nuclear warhead. Israel's sale of arms to Iran continued even after the Islamic revolution, while Ayatollah Khomeini continued to call for Israel's destruction.

The fundamentalist revolution in Iran left them with a weakened military. They needed spare parts for the air and ground weapons they had purchased from the United States by the shah when they went to war with Iraq in 1980. Because of the US arms embargo following the hostage crisis, Iran turned to its former ally who was willing to sell it US parts and weapons, including missiles. It was good business; besides, Israel wanted its hostages released and also feared Iraq more than Iran. There were also US hostages held by Hezbollah in Lebanon. After giving Israel a wink and nod approval to sell some of their stockpile of US weapons and missiles to Iran, the United States got conned into dealing with Iran directly, hoping to get the remaining hostages released. The Reagan administration, ignoring their own US arms embargo on sales to Iran, sold arms to them directly, leading to the Iran/Contra scandal.

Following the Gulf War in 1991 and the collapse of the Soviet Union, conditions were promising for peace between Israel and the Palestinians. Peace with the Palestinians was perceived as a threat by the Israeli right who wanted time for more settlement expansion toward a “Greater Israel” with the Jordan River as its eastern border. Iran also felt threatened by peace between Israel and the Palestinians, as peace would damage their relationship with Syria; hence Hezbollah and Iran’s vision of a Shia revival. Yitzhak Rabin lost his life after signing the Oslo Peace Agreement that would have confined Israel to the pre-1967 borders via some land swaps. This agreement infuriated the Israeli conservatives, as further expansion would be restricted.

Iran was humiliated by not being asked to participate in the Madrid or Oslo peace processes in the early 1990s when all other countries in the region were asked to be involved. Iran began supporting Oslo opponents: Hezbollah, then Hamas. With the demise of the Soviet Union, there was no longer a common enemy to keep the United States fully committed to Israel. A new common enemy was needed. Iran became the logical choice. The Israeli-Iranian alliance was turned upside down and became adversarial. Now Israel had to convince their most important backer, the United States, that Iran had become an irrational terrorist state. It was up to AIPAC to persuade Washington.

Iran continues to pursue its nuclear enrichment program and perhaps a nuclear weapon, while Israel threatens to attack, potentially plunking the United States in the middle of another war. The powerful Israeli lobby in the United States supports Israel’s right to exist as they always have, and continues to support the Netanyahu government even though many in AIPAC disagree with expanded settlements in the West Bank.

Israel's existence was initially enabled by the Jewish lobby pressuring President Truman to support the UN decision for partition in 1947, and Israel continues to exist as a nation today largely because of AIPAC's commitment to sustain US support.

As Mossad spymaster Meir Dagon argued in a recent *Sixty Minutes* interview, "The 'unintended consequences' of bombing Iran and starting another war makes no sense at this time as there is still time for negotiations and sanctions to work."<sup>2</sup> The Iranian regime is not irrational and the Iranian people, he argues, covet and respect peace and a chance to move toward democracy but resist being told what they must do; however, they are not yet in control of their own destiny.

Sheera Frenkel, writing for *McClatchy Newspapers*, recently reported that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu "had ordered a heightened military alert during a meeting in late 2010." The report described the country's top military and intelligence leaders, Israel Defense Forces chief Gabi Ashkenazi, and the director of the Mossad spy agency, Meir Dagan, as shocked by Netanyahu's move; both argued strongly against the measure. Dagan argued that placing the military on such a heightened alert could lead to an illegal decision to go to war. "That is not something you do unless you are certain you want to use it at the end," Ashkenazi concurred. Both Dagan and Ashkenazi have been replaced.<sup>3</sup>

*New York Times* columnist Tom Friedman's recent commentary "Hagel's views on Israel make him a good pick [for secretary of Defense]," reprinted in the *Idaho Statesman* December 29, 2012, argues that Hagel as a US senator "bluntly stated that his job was not to take orders from the Israel lobby but to advance US interests." Friedman goes on, "if ever [there was a time] Israel needed a US defense secretary who was

committed to Israel's survival as Hagel has repeatedly stated—but who was convinced that survival didn't mean having America go along with Israel's lunatic, self-destructive drift into settling the West Bank and obviating a two-state solution—it is now. Most US senators, policymakers, and Jews prefer to stick their heads into the sand because confronting Israel is so politically dangerous; at least Hagel cares enough about Israel to be an exception.”<sup>4</sup>

Ben Stein eloquently summarized the Jewish position in a recent *CBS Sunday Morning* commentary, arguing that half the Jews in the world were wiped out by the Holocaust in Europe only two generations ago so the Jews know “the absolute worst that can be imagined CAN happen. It is fine to urge patience on Israel, to assure Israel that sanctions ‘maybe’ will work.” Stein argues that “Israeli Jews, the children and grandchildren of the wretched survivors of the Holocaust, cannot accept ‘maybe’; if they are to be saved, they have to save themselves.”<sup>5</sup> Hopefully there is more time for the sanctions on Iran to work, in order to avoid another destructive Middle East war that would have devastating consequences.

## ENDNOTES

## Introduction

1. Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran, and the United States* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007): 114-116. "Israel and Iran need each other, it has always been that way and will always remain the same."
2. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 113.
3. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 175-176.
4. Howard Berger, "Palestine-Israeli Conflict," Lecture, Osher Symposium, Boise State University, Boise, ID, September 2-23, 2009. Berger, "Themes in Jewish History," Lecture, Osher Symposium, Boise, ID, March 3-25, 2010. Berger is a history professor at The College of Idaho.
5. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 2-4.

## Chapter 1. Historical Links Between Jews and Persians

1. "Semitic people and language," *Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company. 1913, Volume XIII, accessed October 2012, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semitic>.
2. The Fertile Crescent includes today's Palestine, Lebanon, and parts of Syria.
3. Emmanueim, "Map of the land of Israel as defined in Numbers 34 and Ezekiel 47," Wikipedia, last modified October 21, 2007, accessed October 2012, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Map\\_Land\\_of\\_Israel.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Map_Land_of_Israel.jpg).
4. Ofir Haivry, "On Zion: A Reality That Fashions Imagination," in *New Essays on Zionism*, edited by David Hazony, Yoram Hazony, and Michael B. Oren (Jerusalem, Shalem Press, 2006): 70. Haivry is an Associate Fellow at the Shalem Center in Jerusalem and served as editor in chief of *Azure*.
5. Ezekiel verses about land, 38:14, 39: 25-29 and 48:22-29 (New Revised Standard Version).



6. Wikipedia, "Ishmael," Wikipedia.org, last modified October 26, 2012, accessed November 2012, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ishmael>.
7. Exodus 20:1-21; Deuteronomy 34:10 (NRSV).
8. Marcus J. Borg, *Jesus, Uncovering the Life, Teachings, and Relevance of a Religious Revolutionary* (New York: HarperOne, 2006): 77-85. The "Kingdom of David" includes all of today's Israel and the West Bank. It does not include the Gaza area, which belonged to the Philistines but it extends north to include Damascus. Marcus Borg is a Christian and a historical Jesus and biblical scholar.
9. Ezra 1:1-4 (NRSV).
10. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 7.
11. Haivry, "On Zion," p. 76.
- 12 "Iranian Jews in Israel wary hoping for the best," Fionnuala Sweeney, *CNN US*, March 5, 2012, accessed October 2012, [http://articles.cnn.com/2012-03-05/middleeast/world\\_meast\\_iranian-jews-israel\\_1\\_herzliya-interdisciplinary-center-meir-javedanfar-iran-nuclear-issue?\\_s=PM:MIDDLEEAST](http://articles.cnn.com/2012-03-05/middleeast/world_meast_iranian-jews-israel_1_herzliya-interdisciplinary-center-meir-javedanfar-iran-nuclear-issue?_s=PM:MIDDLEEAST).
13. Jona Lendering, "The Cyrus Cylinder," Livius: Articles on Ancient History, last modified January 8, 2007, accessed January 2013, [http://www.livius.org/ct-cz/cyrus\\_I/cyrus\\_cylinder.html](http://www.livius.org/ct-cz/cyrus_I/cyrus_cylinder.html). Photograph courtesy of The British Museum, Museum Number ME90920 [http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight\\_objects/me/c/cyrus\\_cylinder.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/me/c/cyrus_cylinder.aspx)
14. Sergei Mikhailovich Prokudin-Gorskii, "Jewish children in Samarkand with their Rabbi." Photograph courtesy of Creative Commons, Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Unreported (cc BY-SA 3.0), 1905 to 1915, accessed January 2013, [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jewish\\_Children\\_with\\_their\\_Teacher\\_in\\_Samarkand.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jewish_Children_with_their_Teacher_in_Samarkand.jpg).
15. Robin Wright, "God," *Time Magazine*, June 15, 2009, p. 43.
16. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 7-8.
17. Mary Boyce, *Zoroastrians: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (London: Routledge, 2001): 50-51.
18. Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, pp. 19-20. Boyce argues that Zoroastrians were the first to believe in one universal god called Ahura Mazda (the one uncreated God – the Creator), following the principles of Asha (the cosmic principles of order, righteousness, and truth.)

19. Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, pp. 50-52. "Good, they teach, will be separated from and triumph over evil resulting in immortality."
20. Iraj Bashiri, *The Persian New Year, a Novella*, published 2001, accessed July 2012, <http://www.angelfire.com/rnb/bashiri/NowRuztoc.html>.
21. Nikki R. Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005): 3. It is estimated there are about 150,000 Zoroastrians left in the world today. Laura Ellen Shulman, "Zoroastrianism Today," *Religions of the World II: Western Traditions*, updated September 2002, accessed July 2010, <http://www.nvcc.edu/home/lshulman/rel232/lectures/Zoroastrianism/today.htm#resources>.
22. Iran Chamber Society, "Islamic Conquest," November 12, 2012, last accessed January 2013, [http://www.iranchamber.com/history/islamic\\_conquest/islamic\\_conquest.php](http://www.iranchamber.com/history/islamic_conquest/islamic_conquest.php).
23. Vali Nasr, *The Shia Revival* (London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006): 38-40.
24. Nasr, *Shia Revival*, p. 42.
25. Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006): 45.
26. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 8-10.
27. Wikipedia, "Aliya," Wikipedia, last updated December 4, 2012, accessed July 12, 2013, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aliya>.
28. Nasr, *Shia Revival*, pp. 38-39.
29. David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: Creating the Modern Middle East, 1914-1922* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1989): 522-523. According to Fromkin, "The Arabs sold the land only if they chose to do so. The Jewish settlers did not have enough money to buy all the land that the Arabs offered to them." The Jews worked their own land so Arab farm laborers did loose their jobs. He continues, "The Arab opposition to Zionism was rooted in emotion, religion, and xenophobia."
30. Howard Berger, "Themes in Jewish History," Osher Symposium, Boise State University, Boise, ID, March 3-25, 2010.
31. Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, p. 271.
32. Ruth Gavison, "The Jewish State: A Justification," in *New Essays on Zionism*, p. 10. "Today Israel has not only the right to exist but also the right to promote and strengthen its Jewish character and the validity of the Jewish claim to statehood which is one of Zionism's major achievements," Gavison explains. She also

claims “If the Arabs had won the war in 1948, they would not have allowed a Jewish state to come into being.”

33. Ronald Florence, *Lawrence and Aaronsohn: T. E. Lawrence, Aaron Aaronsohn and the Seeds of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (New York: Penguin Books, 2007): 33. Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, p. 257. Sykes-Picot agreement provided for Britain and France to divide up the Arab-speaking Middle East. Wikipedia, “Sykes-Picot Agreement,” Wikipedia, last modified March 3, 2013, accessed March 2013, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sykes-Picot\\_Agreement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sykes-Picot_Agreement). Wikipedia, “Balfour Declaration,” Wikipedia, last modified February 24, 2013, accessed March 2013, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balfour\\_Declaration](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balfour_Declaration).
34. Fromkin, p. 257.
35. David McCullough, *Truman* (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1992): 595.
36. McCullough, *Truman*, p. 597.
37. McCullough, *Truman*, p. 598.
38. McCullough, *Truman*, p. 596.
39. McCullough, *Truman*, p. 601.
40. McCullough, *Truman*, pp. 601-604. Weizmann, a famed British chemist, had synthesized acetone and was one of the architects of the Balfour Declaration. Acetone is crucial in the production of explosives.
41. McCullough, *Truman*, p. 618.
42. Wikipedia, “Recognition of Israel,” Wikipedia, last updated January 24, 2013, accessed June 2010, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foreign\\_relations\\_of\\_Israel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foreign_relations_of_Israel). McCullough, *Truman*, p. 619. While the United States was first to recognize Israel with de facto recognition, the Soviet Union soon recognized Israel with a more formal de jure recognition.
43. Abbie Rowe, “President Truman, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, and Ambassador H. E. Abba Eban,” photograph, May 8, 1951, accession number 59-1584-1, courtesy of The Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum, accessed September 2011, <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/photographs/view.php?id=814>. Photographer Abbie Rowe, Ben-Gurion & Eban presented Truman a menorah as a token of esteem for his timely recognition of the state of Israel on May 14, 1948.
44. Ruth Gavison, “The Jewish State,” *New Essays on Zionism*, p. 15.
45. Henry Kissinger, *Years of Renewal* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999): 350. He wrote, “The Arabs misjudged Israel’s military capabilities. The war led to

doubling of Israel's UN mandated territory, which became the much discussed pre-1967 border.”

46. Associated Press, 1949 photo of new immigrants in Israel, *New York Times*, August 14, 2005, accessed November 2010, [http://www.nytimes.com/imagepages/2005/08/14/weekinreview/14bron\\_CA0ready.html](http://www.nytimes.com/imagepages/2005/08/14/weekinreview/14bron_CA0ready.html). Ethan Bronner, “Why ‘Greater Israel’ Never Came to Be,” *New York Times, Week in Review*, August 14, 2005, accessed November 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/08/14/weekinreview/14bron.html>.
47. Matthew Neely, “The Suez Crisis,” Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, October 2006, accessed October 2011, <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/projects/suez/suez.html>.
48. Isabella Ginor, “The Russians Were Coming: The Soviet Military Threat in the 1967 Six-Day War,” *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (December 2000): 31-34.
49. Robin Wright, “God,” *Time Magazine*, p. 38. The author explains “They lost not only their armies and their territories but also faith in their leaders, in their countries, and in themselves.”
50. Shelby Steele, “Israel and the Surrender of the West,” *Wall Street Journal*, June 22, 2010, opinion page. Steele argues, “If the Palestinians got everything they want—a sovereign nation and a nuclear weapon—they would wake up the next morning still hounded by a sense of inferiority. Arafat knew without Jews to hate, an all-defining cohesion would leave the Muslim world, so he said no to peace. The quickest cover for inferiority is hatred.”
51. Robert Dallek, *Nixon and Kissinger: Partners in Power* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007): 523. On October 9 (three days after Egypt and Syria attacked Israel), Dallek explains, “the Israeli ambassador called Kissinger at one-thirty in the morning to warn that Israel was losing the war and desperately needed supplies.” Kissinger responded with a massive airlift of weapons. (The United States replaced France as the major arms supplier to Israel in 1968 after President Lyndon Johnson agreed to sell Israel Phantom jets.)
52. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 46. Egyptian president Sadat personally called the shah to request crude oil supplies from Iran, which were quickly dispatched to Cairo. The shah refused to join the Arab oil embargo to Israel. “We don’t believe in using oil as a weapon,” he stated.
53. Daniel Yergin, *The Prize: the Epic Quest for Oil, Money, & Power* (New York: Free Press, 2009): xiv-xvi.
54. Keddie, *Modern Iran*, p. 48. Making the British transformation possible, in 1908 British financier William Knox D’Arcy struck “the greatest oil field ever discovered” in Iran. D’Arcy bought the oil concession from Persia’s Muzaffar al-

Din Shah in 1901 and obtained exclusive rights to develop and sell any petroleum he discovered for a term of sixty years. Britain began to extract “huge quantities of oil from beneath Iranian soil.”

55. Stephen Kinzer, *All the Shah's Men: An American Coup, and the Roots of Middle East Terror* (Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons, 2008): 39.
56. Yergin, *The Prize*, p. xiii.
57. Keddie, *Modern Iran*, pp. 80-88. The British backed Reza Khan and “encouraged him to undertake a coup.”
58. Keddie, *Modern Iran*, p. 124.
59. Kinzer, *All the Shah's Men*, pp. 104-105.
60. International Herald Tribune editorial board, “Oil Up for Grabs?” excerpt, *The International Herald Tribune, Iran Archives 1951-1954*, May 14, 1951, accessed May 2012, <http://www.mohammadmossadegh.com/news/international-herald-tribune/>. The editorial describes Mossadegh's action as “illegally grabbing something that belongs not to him but to Britain.” New York Times editorial board, “Mossadegh Plays With Fire,” excerpt of *New York Times* editorial, *The Mossadegh Project New York Times* assembled by Arsah Noouzi, opinion page, August 15, 1953, accessed May 2010, <http://www.mohammadmossadegh.com/news/new-york-times/august-15-1953/>.
61. Keddie, *Modern Iran*, p. 125.
62. Kinzer, *All the Shah's Men*, pp. 199-206.
63. Mark J. Gasiorowski, “The 1953 Coup D'Etat in Iran,” *The International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Aug. 1987): 264-279. <http://jft-newspaper.aub.edu.lb/reserve/data/pspa237-wh-gasiorowski/Gasiorowski.pdf>. The article was also made available in August 1998, courtesy of Mohsen Banan, at [http://iran.sa.utoronto.ca/coup/web\\_files/markcoup.html](http://iran.sa.utoronto.ca/coup/web_files/markcoup.html).
64. Gasiorowski, “The 1953 Coup D'Etat in Iran,” p. 275.
65. Gasiorowski, “The 1953 Coup D'Etat in Iran,” p. 279.
66. Nikki Keddie, *Modern Iran*, pp. 130-131. Keddie argues the Iranians “expected little more of the British, whereas the Americans had raised high hopes among some Iranians in the past.”

1. Berger, "Themes in Jewish History," Osher Symposium.
2. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 26-27.
3. Matt Rosenberg, "Aswan High Dam Controls Nile," *About.com Guide*, November 14, 2010, accessed November 2011, <http://geography.about.com/od/specificplacesofinterest/a/nile.htm>.
4. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 21
5. Helen Chapin Metz, ed. *Israel: A Country Study*. Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1988, accessed November 2012, <http://countrystudies.us/israel/107.htm>.
6. Ehud Yaari, "Q&A with Ehud Yaari on U.S.-Israeli Relations," interview by Gideon Rose, managing editor of *Foreign Affairs*, March 26, 2010, accessed March 2011, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/discussions/interviews/qa-with-ehud-yaari-on-us-israeli-relations>. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 13.
7. Haggai Ram, *Iranophobia: The Logic of an Israeli Obsession* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009): 53.
8. State of Israel National Photo Collection, "Iranian minister Reza Saffinia arriving at the house of Israeli president Chaim Weizmann in Rehovot on Yom Ha'atzmaut," photograph, April 23, 1950, courtesy State of Israel National Photo Collection [<http://www.gpo.gov.il>, <http://147.237.72.31/topsrch/defaulte.htm> (English)], photo code D725-074 |Author=EL, accessed January 2013, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Saffinia\\_Israel.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Saffinia_Israel.jpg). Wikipedia, "Weizmann House," last updated August 16, 2012, accessed July, 2010, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weizmann\\_House](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weizmann_House).
9. Daniel Ammann, *The King of Oil: The Secret Lives of Marc Rich* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2009). Wikipedia, "Daniel Ammann," last updated November 8, 2012, accessed February 2012, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel\\_Ammann](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_Ammann). Wikipedia, "The Eilat Ashkelon Pipeline," last updated 22 September, 2011, accessed March 2010, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eilat\\_Ashkelon\\_Pipeline\\_Company](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eilat_Ashkelon_Pipeline_Company).
10. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 75 The Shah and Defense Minister Shimon Peres signed the \$1 billion oil-for-arms contracts in April 1977.
11. Steven L. Spiegel, Jennifer Kibbe, and Elizabeth G. Matthews, *The Dynamics of Middle East Nuclear Proliferation, Volume 66* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001): 132. Mark Bowden, "Into the Den of Spies," interview by Henry Terrence, *The Atlantic* (December 2004), accessed January 2013, <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2004/12/into-the-den-of-spies/303639>. Henry is a research reporter for *The Atlantic*; Bowden is author of *Among the Hostage-Takers*. According to Bowden, "When the students seized the

embassy, they siezed thousands of classified documents, spanning decades, that they later published as the Den of Spies collection.” Shlomo Aronson with Oded Brosh, *The Politics and Strategy of Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East, Opacity Theory and Reality, 1960-1991* (New York: State University Press, State University of New York, 1992): 161-162.

12. Ronen Bergman, *The Secret War with Iran: The 30-Year Covert Struggle for Control of a 'Rogue' State* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008): 5. Bergman describes General Toufanian as a CIA informant, and argues there was also “clear evidence that Israel had developed, manufactured and intended to sell to Iran long-range missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads under the code name of ‘Operation Tzor’.” Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dyan also met with Toufanian.
13. Iran Defense Forum, *Iranian and Israeli Military Rapport CIA 2005*, accessed May 2013, <http://www.irandefence.net/showthread.php?t=609>.
14. Elaine Sciolino, “Documents Detail Israeli Missile Deal with the Shah,” *The New York Times*, April 1, 1986, accessed May 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/1986/04/01/world/documents-detail-israeli-missile-deal-with-the-shah.html>.
15. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 76.
16. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 24.
17. Tim Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: the History of the CIA* (New York: Doubleday, 2007): 368. Weiner argues, “The Shah ran a virtual dictatorship in a benign way.”
18. National Security Archive, “Follow-up on the President’s Talk With the Shah of Iran,” July 25, 1972, accessed March 2011, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB21/03-01.htm>.
19. Gary Sick, *All Fall Down: America’s Tragic Encounter with Iran* (New York: Random House, 1986): 17.
20. Ram, *Iranophobia*, p. 53. Ram argues, “When the Shah embarked on his ambitious modernization programs in the 1960s, he became increasingly dependent on Israeli know-how in technology, transportation, construction and agriculture.”
21. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 35-43.
22. Ram, *Iranophobia*, p. 53.
23. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 35-39.
24. Keddie, *Modern Iran*, p. 158-163.
25. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 39-40.

26. Keddie, *Modern Iran*, p. 163.
27. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 44.

### Chapter 3. The Alliance Starts to Unravel

1. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 54-55.
2. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 47. The Kurds are descendants of the ancient Medes, and are therefore of Iranian stock and have long sought independence from Iran, Iraq and Turkey. Parsi argues that “The accord was hailed as one of the Shah’s greatest triumphs, as it boosted Iran’s status as the paramount power in the Middle East.” Ami Isseroff, “Algiers Accord – 1975,” Middle East Web, copyright 2002, accessed November 2010, <http://www.mideastweb.org/algiersaccord.htm>.
3. *Greater Israel*, Encyclopedia of the Middle East. The Greater Israel Movement is an “Israeli extremist ideology that believes variously that Israel should settle as much as possible of the territories conquered in the Six Day War” The Greater Israel Movement is a “secular ideology of the Likud party as fulfillment of a biblical promise.” This encyclopedia is a work in progress; suggestions and corrections are welcome. Accessed May 2013, <http://www.mideastweb.org/Middle-East-Encyclopedia/greater-israel.htm>.
4. Steven Erlanger, “How Reality Cut Likud’s Vision Down to Size,” *New York Times* (November 27, 2005), <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/27/weekinreview/27erla.htm>.
5. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 70.
6. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 69-72.
7. William Burr, ed., “U.S.-Iran Nuclear Negotiations in 1970s Featured Shah’s Nationalism and U.S. Weapons Worries,” National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 268, *The National Security Archive*, January 13, 2009, accessed March 2011, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb268/index.htm>.
8. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 80.
9. Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, p. 369. In 1973, President Nixon sent Richard Helms to be ambassador to Iran. The Iranians blamed Helms, a CIA man, for the “fall of Mossadegh.” Just a few months after missing signals of the impending Islamic transformation in Iran, the CIA had also told the president the Soviets would not invade Afghanistan.



10. Gary Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 43. Sick argues: “The Israeli representative in Tehran had written a gloomy prognosis in early June, 1978, expressing the view that the Shah might not survive for more than two or three years.” The report never reached Sick in the White House; he learned about it years later, in 1984.
11. Keddie, *Modern Iran*, p. 240.
12. Keddie, *Modern Iran*, p. 241.
13. Nadar Entessar, “Israel and Iran’s National Security,” *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, No.4. (2004): 4. Many of the thousands of Jews in Iran in 1979 have migrated out, many to the United States. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 82.
14. Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, p. 371. Weiner argues, “The only thing that could trigger an attack (on the embassy) would be if the Shah was let into the US—and no one in this town is stupid enough to do that.”
15. BBC News, “Profile: Iran’s Revolutionary Guards,” *BBC News*, last updated October 18, 2009, accessed September 2011, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\\_east/7064353.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7064353.stm). In recent years the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps has become a vast military-based conglomerate. It is active in oil and gas, telecom, and farming, to name a few sections, and has considerable economic and political influence. This has led many analysts to argue that its political power has surpassed even that of the Shiite clerical system. A November 2009 op-ed in the *Wall Street Journal* by Farnaz Fassini confirms the IRGC controls much of the media (“they want to control public opinion”) along with Iran’s long-range missiles, gas, oil and other businesses. Farnaz Fassini, “Revolutionary Guards Extend Reach to Iran’s Media,” *Wall Street Journal*, November 4, 2009, accessed November 2012, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125730352972127145.html>.
16. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 91-92.
17. David Menashri, *Post Revolutionary Politics in Iran: Religion, Society and Power* (London: Frank Cass, 2001): p. 244. Years later in 1999, Rafsanjani visited Saudi Arabia, declaring the opening of a “new phase” in Iran-Saudi ties.
18. Sick, *October Surprise*, p. 114.
19. Bergman, *The Secret War with Iran*, p. 43.
20. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 95.
21. Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran: The Failure of American Foreign Policy and the Next Great Conflict in the Middle East* (New York: Perseus Book Group, 2006): 98.

22. Bergman, *The Secret War with Iran*, pp. 33-40.
23. Sick, *October Surprise*, p. 207.
24. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 101. The nuclear reactor had been damaged first by an Iranian air strike in 1980, after the start of the Iran-Iraq war. During the Gulf war, US jets finally finished off the partially rebuilt reactor.
25. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 107.
26. Bergman, *The Secret War with Iran*, p. 42.
27. John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, *The Israeli Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007): 281. Mearsheimer and Walt argue, "Israel was equally adverse to Iran dominating the Gulf."
28. Gary Sick, *October Surprise: America's Hostages in Iran and the Election of Ronald Reagan* (New York: Random House, 1992): 200. Sick also reported that Iran accounted for more than "one quarter of Israel's exports" and that arms sales to Iran were "good business."
29. Bergman, *The Secret War with Iran*, pp. 41-43. There is no evidence the United States was aware of these shipments.
30. Bergman, *The Secret War with Iran*, pp. 56-59. Prime Minister Begin declared publicly that the aim of the war was to advance "only 40 kilometers." After Israel destroyed over one hundred Syrian planes, Syria, for the first time, allowed Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and weapons into Syria to train and arm the new Lebanese resistance force, Hezbollah. Syria had previously denied the IRGC entry into its country. Bergman argues that Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon hoped the PLO would return to Jordan, unseat King Hussein, and settle the Palestinians there.
31. Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, p. 390. Britain and France also sent peacekeepers.
32. Bergman, *The Secret War with Iran*, p. 58.
33. Borzou Daragahi and Sebastian Rotella, with Ziad Haydar and Ramin Mostaghin, "Hezbollah Warlord was an Enigma," *Los Angeles Times*, August 31, 2008, accessed November 2012, <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-mysteryman31-2008aug31,0,2857349.story?page=2>.
34. Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, pp. 391-393.
35. Julian Perry Robinson and Jozef Goldblat, "Chemical Warfare in the Iran-Iraq War 1980-1988; SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) Fact Sheet," Iran Chamber Society: History of Iran, May 1984, accessed November 2012,

[http://www.iranchamber.com/history/articles/chemical\\_warfare\\_iran\\_iraq\\_war.php](http://www.iranchamber.com/history/articles/chemical_warfare_iran_iraq_war.php).

36. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 117-119. Parsi argues, “The US should avoid a situation in which Iran would feel that it had no choice but to turn to the Soviets.”
37. Malcolm Byrne, ed., “20 Years after the Hostages: Declassified Documents on Iran and the United States,” National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 21, *The National Security Archive*, November 5, 1999, accessed November 2012, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB21/>. Byrne discusses President Reagan’s feelers toward Iran to “gain release of several American hostages.” Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger called it “almost too absurd to comment on.”
38. Lee H. Hamilton and Daniel K. Inouye, *Report of the Congressional Committees Investigating the Iran-Contra Affair with Supplemental, Minority, and Additional Views*, November 17, 1987, p.7, accessed May 2011, [http://books.google.com/books?id=ew\\_K3auTwEgC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Lee+Hamilton+Iran+Contra+report&source=bl&ots=IwMrWrTjzx&sig=zhdv1RtnAAXNqkag253LKsuPMJY&hl=en&ei=3vP6S\\_uPMIO2NpLLrIQI&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=2&ved=0CBsQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q&f](http://books.google.com/books?id=ew_K3auTwEgC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Lee+Hamilton+Iran+Contra+report&source=bl&ots=IwMrWrTjzx&sig=zhdv1RtnAAXNqkag253LKsuPMJY&hl=en&ei=3vP6S_uPMIO2NpLLrIQI&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=2&ved=0CBsQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q&f).
39. Hamilton and Inouye, *Report of Congressional Committees*, p. 157.
40. Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, p. 396. Actually, there were fourteen American hostages taken in Beirut during the Reagan years. *The Reagan Diaries* indicates President Reagan was deeply concerned about the hostages held in Lebanon. Ronald Reagan, *The Reagan Diaries*, edited by Douglas Brinkley (New York: HarperCollins, 2007).
41. Samuel Segev, *The Iranian Triangle: The Untold Story of Israel’s Role in the Iran-Contra Affair* (New York: The Free Press, 1988): 168. Segev argues that selling a few TOW missiles to Iran would “strengthen the standing of the US in Iran and that helps Israel.”
42. Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, p. 398. Ghorbanifar was an “Iranian wheeler-dealer and former SAVAK agent.”
43. Hamilton and Inouye, *Report of Congressional Committees*, p. 167.
44. Hamilton and Inouye, *Report of Congressional Committees*, p. 167. Also, Segev explains in that “Reagan seemed prepared to violate the policy of his own government,” p.170. President Reagan’s notation in *The Reagan Dairies*, dated November 24, 1986, claims “North didn’t tell me about giving the arms profits to the Contras and John Poindexter knew and didn’t tell me either.” p. 453.
45. Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, p. 400.

46. Jim Hoagland and Glenn Frankel, "Shamir Urges U.S. To Pursue Possible Contacts With Iran; Israel Indicates Opposition to Arms Sales," *The Washington Post*, February 12, 1987, accessed November 2012, <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P2-1305749.html>.
47. Bergman, *The Secret War with Iran*, p. 43.
48. Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. xxiii.
49. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 127-128.
50. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 130. Iraq was still Israel's biggest threat.
51. Keddie, *Modern Iran*, p. 261.
52. Associated Press, "Israel-Iran Deal Tied to Captives," *Associated Press, New York Times, World*, December 20, 1989, accessed May 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/1989/12/20/world/israel-iran-oil-deal-disclosed-and-tied-to-captives.html>.
53. George H. W. Bush, *Inaugural Address*, US House of Representatives, Washington DC, January 29, 1989, accessed March 2011, <http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres63>.
54. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 165.
55. Gareth Porter, "Is Gates Undermining Another Opening to Iran?" *Asia Times Online*, July 14, 2009, accessed March 2011, <http://www.campaigniran.org/casmii/index.php?q=node/7355>.
56. David Crist, *The Twilight War: The Secret History of America's Thirty-Year Conflict with Iran* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2012): 408-409.

#### Chapter 4. The Tables Turn: Prospects for Peace

1. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p.140. Parsi argues, "In this instance Israel was a liability, not an asset." 3,300 Israeli apartments or buildings were destroyed or damaged by the Scud missiles.
2. Berger, "Themes in Jewish History," Osher Symposium.
3. William Waldergrave, "The European Role in the Middle East," interview by Michael Adams ed., *Journal of Palestinian Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 1. (Autumn 1990): 80.
4. Bernard Lewis, "Rethinking the Middle East," *Foreign Affairs* (Fall 1992): 99-119,

accessed November 2012, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/48213/bernard-lewis/rethinking-the-middle-east>. When Iraq attacked Kuwait (one Arab state against another Arab state), a group of Arab states joined the Western powers as allies. Oil, he states, then became “less of a weapon in the hands of the producer countries.” Some, he argues, “see Israel as a strategic liability,” leading to embittered US relations with the Arab world and causing the failure of United States policies in the region.

5. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 141.
6. Michael Baird, “The Gulf War,” *Jewish Virtual Library*, updated February 2013, accessed November 2012, [http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/Gulf\\_War.htm](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/Gulf_War.htm). Saddam had promised “our fire will eat half of Israel if it tries to wage anything against Iraq.”
7. James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, “Iran Overview,” *Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI)*, last updated July 2012, accessed July 2012, <http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/iran/>. NTI is an anti-nuclear proliferation organization. The board includes former Senator Sam Nunn and CNN founder Ted Turner. They also focus on missile proliferation and technological advances in various countries. (In 2009 Iran launched a vehicle into space, increasing fear of their long-range ballistic missile technology.)
8. Yitzhak Rabin, “After the Gulf War: Israel’s Defense and Security Policy,” speech by Lt.-Gen. (res.) Yitzhak Rabin MK, Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, Bar-Ilan University, Tel-Aviv Israel, June 10, 1991, translated and edited by David M. Weinberg, accessed November 2012, <http://www.biu.ac.il/Besa/books/25/after.html>. Rabin was Israel’s Prime Minister until 1977, following the resignation of Golda Meier in 1974. He became Defense Minister in 1977, then Prime Minister again in 1992. He was assassinated in 1995 for signing the Oslo Accords.
9. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 152-154. NSA advisor Brent Scowcroft argued, “Our relations with Iran were pretty bitter; we were not, at this time ready to include them.” Rafsanjani already stated that Iran would accept any settlement agreeable to Israel and the PLO. Wikipedia, “Madrid Conference of 1991,” Wikipedia, last updated June 2, 2012, accessed October 2012, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madrid\\_Conference\\_of\\_1991](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madrid_Conference_of_1991).
10. Shimon Peres, *The New Middle East* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1993): 26-29.
11. Peres, *The New Middle East*, pp. 166-167.
12. White House photographers, “The Handshake: Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat with President Bill Clinton,” photograph ID P7291\_10a, courtesy of The William J. Clinton Presidential Library, taken July 13, 1993, accessed January 2013,

<http://clintonlibrary.gov/photogallery.html?galItem=864&galAlbum=35&galTag=>  
 =. [http://clintonlibrary.gov/photogallery.html?galTag=P7291\\_10a](http://clintonlibrary.gov/photogallery.html?galTag=P7291_10a).

13. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 175-176. The Oslo Accords were completed in August 1993. Although Fatah and the Knesset ratified them (by only two votes), the Israeli right and Hamas were opposed.
14. Bethine Church, author interview, July 13, 2011, Boise, ID. Bethine Church is widow of Senator Frank Church (D-Idaho), who was Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee during the Carter administration.
15. James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, "Country Profile: Iran: Missile," Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI), October 2010, accessed June 2012, <http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/iran/delivery-systems/>.
16. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 175. Iranian president Rafsanjani remarked: "The leaders of the PLO and Jordan have betrayed their own people by sitting down with the leaders of Israel."
17. Edward Said, "The Morning After," *London Review of Books*, Vol. 15, No. 20-21 (October 1993): 34-37, accessed July 2012, <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v15/n20/edward-said/the-morning-after>. Said is an advocate of the Palestinian cause.
18. Anthony B. Tirado Chase, "Edward Said's Anti-Oslo Writings," *The Middle East Quarterly*, Vol.4, No.1 (March 1997), reprinted in *The Middle East Forum*, accessed November 2012, <http://www.meforum.org/342/edward-saids-anti-oslo-writings>.
19. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 176. Parsi argues, "The Netanyahu victory in 1996 marked the beginning of the end of the Oslo process."
20. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 191. Hamas receives far more support from Saudi Arabia than Iran.
21. National Council of Resistance on Iran, "Brief on Iran, No.289," *The National Council of Resistance on Iran*, Washington DC, November 7, 1995, accessed July 2011, <http://www.iran-e-azad.org/english/boi/02891107.95>.
22. David Hoffman, "Israel Seeking to Convince U. S., the West is Threatened by Iran; Jewish Leaders Say Only Washington Capable of Restraining Iran," *The Washington Post* (March 13, 1993): 3, accessed May 2011, <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P2-936782.html>. Hoffman quotes Ephraim Sneh, a senior Israeli Labor Party legislator, as saying "Iran is the Bermuda Triangle of American politics." David Hoffman is an award-winning reporter who has covered the White House, Jerusalem, and Moscow for *The Washington Post* since 1982. He became managing editor of the *Post* in 2005.

23. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 160.
24. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 168.
25. Efraim Inbar, *Rabin and Israel's National Security* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999): 9.
26. Inbar, *Rabin*, p. 23.
27. Inbar, *Rabin*, p. 48.
28. Inbar, *Rabin*, p. 55.
29. Inbar, *Rabin*, p. 88.
30. Inbar, *Rabin*, p. 133.
31. Inbar, *Rabin*, p. 155.
32. Inbar, *Rabin*, p. 158.
33. Inbar, *Rabin*, p. 183.
34. Inbar, *Rabin*, p. 157.
35. Shimon Peres, *The New Middle East*, p. 42.
36. Peres, *The New Middle East*, p. 186.
37. Benjamin Netanyahu, "Speech to Joint Session of the US Congress," US House of Representatives, Washington DC, July 10, 1996, accessed November 2012, [http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFAArchive/1990\\_1999/1996/7/PM%20Netanyahu-%20Speech%20to%20US%20Congress-%20July%2010-%201996](http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFAArchive/1990_1999/1996/7/PM%20Netanyahu-%20Speech%20to%20US%20Congress-%20July%2010-%201996).
38. Benjamin Netanyahu, "Speech to Council of Jewish Federations," The General Assembly of the American Council of Jewish Federations, Indianapolis, IN, November 16, 1997, accessed June 2011, <http://www.cdn-friends-icej.ca/isreport/speech.html>. The only other mention of Iran was Iran's nuclear ambitions.
39. Benjamin Netanyahu, Statement to the US Government Committee on Oversight & Government Reform, US House of Representatives, Washington, DC, September 20, 2001, accessed November 2012, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/netanyahu.htm>.
40. Benjamin Netanyahu, Speech to the United Nations General Assembly, UN Building, New York, NY, September 24, 2009, accessed November 2012, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benjamin\\_Netanyahu#Oslo\\_Accords](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benjamin_Netanyahu#Oslo_Accords).

41. Ariel Sharon, "Public Walk to the Temple Mount," September 26, 2001, accessed May 2011, <http://www.ariel-sharon-life-story.com/16-Ariel-Sharon-Biography-2000-Visit-to-the-Temple-Mount.shtml>.
42. Likud Party, "1996 Likud Party Platform," Jewish Virtual Library, 1996, accessed October 2010, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Politics/likud.html>.
43. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 171.
44. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Brent Scowcroft and Richard Murphy, "Differentiated Containment," *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 1997), accessed November 2012, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/53042/zbigniew-brzezinski-brent-scowcroft-and-richard-murphy/differentiated-containment>. The authors argue, "A more nuanced and differentiated approach to the region is in order. Keep Saddam boxed in and realize that unilateral isolation of Iran is costly and ineffective and we should instead relax the opposition to the Iranian nuclear program in exchange for rigid inspection and control procedures."
45. Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, p. 420. Robert Longley, "The Taliban and the Northern Alliance," About.com: US Government Info (a *New York Times* company), last updated November 2012, accessed November 2012, <http://usgovinfo.about.com/library/weekly/aa092801a.htm>.
46. Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, pp. 421-423. Weiner argues, "One by one we killed them." "And they went home." "And that was a terrorist campaign." Lawrence Wright, *Looming Tower*, pp.245-246.
47. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 142-143. Iran supported the Northern Alliance, the non-Pashtun militias in the north.
48. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 143.
49. John Greenwald, "Down Goes the Deal," *Time Magazine*, March 27, 1995, accessed September 2012, <http://www.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,982733-2,00.html>.

## Chapter 5. The Israeli Lobby, Iranophobia, and the Bomb

1. Arthur F. (Skip) Oppenheimer, author interview, April 21, 2011, Boise, ID. Skip is Idaho State Chair of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and a member of AIPAC's national council.
2. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 182-184. Parsi argues that, since 1993, "AIPAC is currently dominated by individuals closer to Likud than Labor, representing the hawkish end of strategic Israeli thinking." AIPAC has had an "opportunity to



reinvent itself in the Oslo era. AIPAC made Iran a “major issue since it didn’t have any other issue to champion.” AIPAC, Parsi argues, needed “a new issue and Israel needed help in turning Washington against Iran.”

3. Wikipedia, “Neoconservatism,” last updated December 18, 2012, accessed December 18, 2012, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neoconservatism>. The Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP), home website page, WINEP, accessed January 2013, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/about>.
4. Joel Beinin, “Tel Aviv’s Influence on American Institutions: US: the pro-Sharon thinktank,” *Le Monde diplomatique*, July 6, 2003, accessed November 2012, <http://mondediplo.com/2003/07/06beinin>. Beinin argues, “Bush ’43 brought to Washington a clique of Middle East policy makers linked to Israel’s Likud party and to neo-conservatives.” AIPAC includes many pro-Israel groups, like the Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP), the American Jewish Committee, Jewish Council for Public Affairs, and many more. Beinin is professor of history at Stanford University.
5. Mearsheimer and Walt, *The Israeli Lobby*, pp. 129-133. Bill Moyers, “Christians United for Israel (CUFI),” *Bill Moyers Journal*, October 5, 2007, accessed November 2012, <http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/10052007/transcript5.html>. The group Christians United for Israel, founded by Pastor John Hagee in San Antonio in 2006, promotes biblical Greater Israel arguing President Bush’s “Road Map for Peace” between Israel and the Palestinians was “flawed and not biblically sound” for being willing to give up land for peace. Hagee’s organization claims to have 99 million listeners to his radio and television programs.
6. Ed Pilkington, “Articles of Faith,” *The Guardian Unlimited*, September 15, 2007, reprinted in *The Guardian World News Internet Site*, accessed March 2012, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/sep/15/usa.israel>.
7. Mearsheimer and Walt, *The Israeli Lobby*, p. 10.
8. Mearsheimer and Walt, *The Israeli Lobby*, pp. 26-29. Unlike with aid to any other country, many of the substantial private donations from US citizens to Israel are tax-deductible due to a “special clause” in the US-Israel income tax treaty.
9. Mearsheimer and Walt, *The Israeli Lobby*, pp. 40-46. Mearsheimer and Walt argue, “The American government seems sometimes to be working for the Israeli Prime Minister.”
10. George P. Shultz, forward, in Abraham Foxman *Deadliest Lies: The Israel Lobby and the Myth of Jewish Control* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007): vi-viii.
11. James A. McClure, former Idaho Senator, author interview, Arid Club, Boise, ID, March 6, 2006.
12. Wilma Woods-Davis, “Portrait of a Pragmatic Conservative” (Ph.D. Thesis,

University of Idaho, 2005, Publication No. 3202051, <http://gradworks.umi.com/32/02/3202051.html>). McClure often reminded his fellow senators of the Arab side. Woods-Davis' conclusion was that McClure was neither pro-Arab nor pro-Israeli but pro-US.

13. John J. Fialka, "Linked Donations," *The Crusader*, June 24, 1987 accessed May 2011, <http://www.crusader.net/texts/ygg/y36.html>. Fialka is a *Wall Street Journal* staff reporter. There are more than 51 pro-Israel PACS.
14. David Peterman, M.D., author interview, January 27, 2011, Boise, ID. Dr. Peterman was a representative from Idaho to the national AIPAC committee.
15. Mearsheimer and Walt, *The Israeli Lobby*, p. 155.
16. Clyde Haberman, "The World: Israel Focuses on the Threat Beyond the Arabs – Iran," *New York Times, Archives*, November 8, 1992, accessed July 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/1992/11/08/weekinreview/the-world-israel-focuses-on-the-threat-beyond-the-arabs-in-iran.html?src=pm>. Haberman joined the *NYT* staff in 1982.
17. Donald Neff, "Israel Lurks Behind Harsh U.S. Policy Aimed Against Iran," *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (February/March 1996): 88-92, <http://www.washington-report.org/backissues/0296/9602088.html>.
18. Mearsheimer and Walt, *The Israeli Lobby*, pp. 193-194. Mearsheimer and Walt argue, "It was remarkable reaction to the man who, in his stewardship of the Egyptian-Israeli peace process, had done as much as any human being to enhance Israel's overall security. . . . If it can happen to Jimmy Carter, a man with impeccable moral credentials, then no one is really politically safe."
19. Kenneth W. Stein, "Resignation from the Carter Center," letter, December 5, 2006, accessed March 2012, <http://www.ismi.emory.edu/Articles/resignationltr.html>.
20. Michael B. Owen, "Jimmy Carter's Book: An Israeli View," *Wall Street Journal* (December 26, 2006): opinion page, accessed May 2011. [www.thecaseforisrael.com/pdf/Jimmy%20Carters%20Book.pdf](http://www.thecaseforisrael.com/pdf/Jimmy%20Carters%20Book.pdf).
21. Ali Abunimah, "And a Palestinian One," *Wall Street Journal* (December 26, 2006): opinion page, accessed November 2012, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB116709416381459276.html>. Ali Abunimah, *One Country: A Bold Proposal to End the Israeli-Palestinian Impasse* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006).
22. Bein, Joel, "Tel Aviv's Influence on American Institutions: The Pro-Sharon Think Tank," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, July 6, 2003, accessed November 2012, <http://mondediplo.com/2003/07/06bein>. Bein argues The Washington Institute for Near East Policy influences the thinking of the United States government and has a near monopoly on the supply of expert witnesses to the media. After almost

two decades of relative moderation, the institute is now drifting toward the Israeli right. Benin is professor of history at Stanford University.

23. Embassy of the United States in Tel Aviv, Israel, "Fact Sheet: The Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996," August 6, 1996, last accessed January 2013, [http://www.usembassy-israel.org.il/publish/press/security/archive/august/ds1\\_8-7.htm](http://www.usembassy-israel.org.il/publish/press/security/archive/august/ds1_8-7.htm).
24. SpeedBallBlues, GZsound, and other posters "Nine/Eleven Was the Fault of Clinton and Carter; Clinton and Carter didn't do anything about terrorism pre 9/11," Includes postings by David Kopel on "Terror Legislation," Barry Rubin on "The U.S. in the Middle East, 1996," and James Bovard on "The Hypocritical War on Terrorism." Harmony Central Forums, March 2, 2012, accessed December 2012, <http://acapella.harmony-central.com/showthread.php?2575511-9-11-You-guys-were-right-Clinton-really-didn-t-do-anything-about-terrorism-pre-911>. One of the posts shows a list of measures taken during the Clinton Administration.
25. Mitchell Bard, *The Arab Lobby: The Invisible Alliance That Undermines America's Interests in the Middle East* (New York: HarperCollins, 2010): xi-xii.
26. Bard, *The Arab Lobby*, p. 108.
27. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 192-193.
28. Richard E. Rubenstein and Jarle Crocker, "Challenging Huntington," *Foreign Policy*, No. 96 (Autumn 1994): 113-128.
29. Netanyahu, "Speech to Joint Session of the US Congress." U Netanyahu proclaimed: "Let me speak of Jerusalem. For the first time no group in the city or among its pilgrims has been persecuted. There is now security and protection of every nationality that sought to come and pray there. Jerusalem will not be re-divided."
30. Jimmy Carter, *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 2006): 147.
31. David Peterman, author interview, March 17, 2011, Boise, ID.
32. M. J. Rosenberg, "AIPAC: The Unrivalled Lobby," *Al jazeera*, June 6, 2011, accessed November 2012, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/06/201164151342193909.html>. A very right wing board fired Dine in the early 1990s, having decided they wanted a Republican director. Mr. Rosenberg is Senior Policy Fellow at Media Matters Action Network. He was editor of the AIPAC weekly *Near East Report* from 1998-2009.
33. Bethine Church, author interview, July13, 2011, Boise, ID. Ms. Church recalls Senator Frank Church (as Senate Foreign Relations Chair during the Carter years) was not "upset, nor surprised" by the shah being deposed as he felt the shah had

been “out of touch.” The shah, Frank Church understood, was an unstable dictator and would not last. Like many, Frank Church did not think Iran would become a theocratic state. Ms. Church said President Carter never listened to Senator Church, as Carter thought he “knew everything.”

34. Abdullah bin Abdulaziz, Saudi Arabia Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister Address to the 11<sup>th</sup> Summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Summit, Tehran Sha’aban 9-11, 1415, December 9, 1997, accessed December 2012, <http://www.saudiembassy.net/archive/1997/speeches/page0.aspx>.
35. President Mohammad Khatami, interview by Christianne Amanpour, January 7, 1998, accessed May 2011, <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/9801/07/iran/interview.html>.
36. Keddie, *Modern Iran*, pp. 247, 268. Keddie argues that Lebanese Hezbollah became the “fighters for the liberation of Lebanon and Palestine from Israeli occupation.”
37. Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, p. 390.
38. Naim Qassem, *Hizbullah: The Story from Within* (London: SAQI, 2005): 88-89. Qassem’s explanation on page 50 of martyrdom as a “legitimate strategy” when there is “military imbalance” is worth reading.
39. Hala Jaber, *Hezbollah: Born with a Vengeance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997): 59.
40. Bergman, *The Secret War with Iran*, pp. 51-53. Amal and Fadallah preceded the Islamic Revolution in Iran.
41. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 227-228.
42. David Crist, *The Twilight War*, pp. 431-435.
43. Gareth Porter, “How Neocons Sabotaged Iran’s Help on al-Qaeda,” *Inter Press Service (IPS)*, February 23, 2006, accessed November 2012, <http://www.antiwar.com/orig/porter.php?articleid=8590>. US envoy to Afghanistan James Dobbins presented Iran’s proposal to Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary Colin Powell, and NSA advisor Condoleezza Rice. “To my knowledge, there was never a response,” Dobbins stated.
44. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 229.
45. Ryan Crocker, “Afghanistan after America,” keynote speech, The Frank Church Institute conference, Boise State University, Boise, ID, October 16, 2012. Afghanistan, Crocker argued, was “very underinvested” by the United States. Crocker made the case for continued support of Afghanistan following the exit of US troops in 2014 as “significant headway has been made there.” Crocker has been ambassador to Pakistan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria under different

administrations. Crocker was ambassador to Afghanistan again from July 2011 to July 2012 under the Obama administration. He is supportive of President Karzai. I was able to ask him a few questions before his talk and during the Q & A following his address.

46. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p186. The Iranian hard liners were delighted with Bush's speech; this made Khatami a lame duck president.
47. Bergman, *The Secret War with Iran*, p. 270.
48. James Bennett, "Sharon Invokes Munich in Warning U.S. on 'Appeasement'," *New York Times* (October 5, 2001): opinion page, accessed May 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/10/05/world/sharon-invokes-munich-in-warning-us-on-appeasement.html>.
49. Bette Stockbauer, "Rebuilding America's Defenses – A Summary: Blueprint of the PNAC Plan for Global Hegemony," *Information Clearing House*, May 6, 2003, accessed May 2010, <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article3249.htm>.
50. Neil Mackay, "Bush planned 'Iraq Regime Change' before becoming president," *The Sunday Herald* (Scotland) (September 15, 2002), reprinted by Common Dreams.org, accessed November 2012, <http://www.commondreams.org/headlines02/0915-01.htm>.
51. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 238-240. Parsi argues, "Many speculated that America went to war with Iraq primarily to serve Israeli interests". James Petras, *Zionism, Militarism and the Decline of US Power* (Atlanta: Clarity Press, Inc., 2008): 21.
52. Gregory Beals, "A Missed Opportunity," *Newsday*, February 18, 2006, accessed June, 2012, <http://www.newsday.com/news/a-missed-opportunity-with-iran-1.679374>.
53. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 341-346 (appendix A,B,C). The Mujaedin-e khalq Organization (MKO), an anti-Iranian terrorist group supported by many in the United States and Israel, is based in Iraq. Not everyone agrees as to the authenticity of the Iranian "Grand Bargain" proposal, although an editorial by Nicholas D. Kristof also supports the authenticity of the proposal. Nicholas D. Kristof, "Iran's Proposal for a 'Grand Bargain'," *New York Times*, April 28, 2007, accessed November 2012, <http://kristof.blogs.nytimes.com/2007/04/28/irans-proposal-for-a-grand-bargain/>.
54. David Crist, *The Twilight War*, pp. 476-477. Crist is a former marine who served in the first Gulf War, was part of the Special Forces in Afghanistan, and holds a Ph.D in history from Florida State University.
55. Crist, *The Twilight War*, p. 479.
56. Gareth Porter, "'Cabal' Blocked 2003 Nuclear Talks with Iran," *Inter Press Service*,

March 28, 2006, accessed May 2011, <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=32672>. *IPS* argues this snub by the United States ended direct talks with Iran. Now the “neoconservatives had a clear path to raising tensions and building political support for regarding Iran as the primary enemy of the US,” according to Porter.

57. Stephen J. Rosen, “Did Iran Offer a Grand Bargain in 2003?” *American Thinker*, June 2, 2011, accessed January 2013, [http://www.americanthinker.com/2008/11/did\\_iran\\_offer\\_a\\_grand\\_bargain.html](http://www.americanthinker.com/2008/11/did_iran_offer_a_grand_bargain.html). Zarif had been educated in the United States.
58. Mark Perelman, “New Front Sets Sights On Toppling Iran Regime,” *Jewish Daily Forward* (May 2003): 1, accessed October 2012, <http://forward.com/articles/8807/new-front-sets-sights-on-toppling-iran-regime/>. Gary Sick, “Engaging Iran,” *Harvard Review*, September 28, 2008, accessed November 2012, <http://hir.harvard.edu/climate-change/engaging-iran>.
59. Matt M. Matthews, “We Were Caught Unprepared: the 2006 Hezbollah-Israeli War,” *Combat Studies Institute Press*, The Long War Series, Occasional Paper 26, pp. 11-12, 2008, accessed May 2012, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/7116582/Israel-Lebanon-2006>.
60. SUSRIS, “Dampened Trust? A Conversation with Nawaf Obaid,” Saudi-US Relations Information Service (Susris, IOI), August 22, 2006, accessed March 2011, <http://www.susris.com/articles/2006/interviews/060822-obaid-interview.html>. Obaid is the Managing Director of the Saudi National Security Assessment Project and has written extensively about Saudi security issues. Saudi officials met with President Bush pressing for an immediate cease-fire but were unsuccessful in their efforts.
61. Stanley A. Weiss, “Israel and Iran: The Bonds That Tie Persians and Jews,” *International Herald Tribune* (July 7, 2010): opinion page, accessed November 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/10/opinion/10iht-edweiss.2165689.html>. Israeli exports to Iran during Khatami’s time exceeded \$300 million and were mainly in the form of agricultural equipment, to pay for Iranian oil shipments to Israel.
62. Richard Silverstein, “Israel’s Iran Connection,” *The Guardian*, April 4, 2008, accessed May 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/apr/04/israelstehranconnection>. Silverstein argues, “This begs the question: if Iran is, as Bibi Netanyahu argues, an existential threat to Israel, why does the government allow such trade? Israel is happily buying Iranian oil again.”
63. Benjamin Joffe-Walt, “Iran-Israel Trade Revealed,” *Arab News*, January 19, 2010, accessed October 2011, <http://archive.arabnews.com/?page=4&section=0&article=131427&d=19&m=1&y=2010>. “Lots of Israelis do business with Iran,” Joffe-Walt explained. “From

cherry tomatoes to high tech, it's a \$250 million trade.”

64. Charles Levinson, “In a Battle for All the Marble, Israel Can’t Resist Iran,” *The Wall Street Journal*, December 7, 2010, accessed March 2011, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703678404575635981796965438.html>.
65. Economist editorial board, “Iran,” *The Economist* (January 1, 2011): 11. This was the magazine’s cover story for the issue.
66. Sasan Fayazmanesh, “The EU, US, Israel and Iran – The Good The Bad, the Ugly and the ‘Mullas’,” *The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy*, December 4, 2004, accessed November 2012, <http://66.241.209.237/Display.cfm?DocId=5796&CategoryId=5>.
67. Ram, *Iranophobia*, p. 10.
68. Ram, *Iranophobia*, p. 53.
69. Ram, *Iranophobia*, p. 19.
70. Ram, *Iranophobia*, p. 93.
71. Ram, *Iranophobia*, p. 88.
72. Ram, *Iranophobia*, p. 94.
73. Benny Morris, “The Second Holocaust,” *The New York Sun* (January 22, 2007): opinion page, accessed May 2012, <http://www.nysun.com/opinion/second-holocaust/47111/>. Morris, like Haggai Ram, is a history professor at Ben-Gurion University in Beersheba. “The Iranians don’t especially like Arabs, especially Sunnis,” he explains.
74. Tzipi Livni, “United Nations Speech,” transcript, United Nations building, New York, NY, October 1, 2007, accessed March 2012, <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Government/Speeches+by+Israeli+leaders/2007/Address+by+FM+Livni+to+the+UN+General+Assembly+1-Oct-2007.htm>. Livni received more votes than Benjamin Netanyahu in the February 2009 Israeli election but was unable to form a government.
75. Tzipi Livni, “Behind Closed Doors: Iran’s Nukes Pose Little Threat to Israel,” *Haaretz Daily Newspaper*, October 25, 2007, accessed March 2012, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/livni-behind-closed-doors-iran-nukes-pose-little-threat-to-israel-1>.
76. Efraim Inbar, “Halt Nuclear Iran,” *Defense News*, November 15, 2010, accessed March 2012, <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20101115/DEFFEAT05/11150311/Halt->

Nuclear-Iran. Inbar is a professor of Political Studies at Bar-Ilan University and the director of the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies. (In 1991 Iran spent \$6.7 billion on arms while Saudi Arabia spent \$40 billion, and Israel spent \$8.7 billion.)

77. Elliot Abrams, "Why Israel is Nervous," *The Wall Street Journal* (August 1, 2009): opinion page, accessed August 2009, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204619004574320532174317294.html>. Abrams was one of President Bush's neo-conservative advisors. There are over 500,000 Israelis living in West Bank settlements.
78. Admiral Mike Mullen, "Conversation with the Country," City Club Forum, Boise, ID, April 4, 2011. Admiral Mullen, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the biggest current threat to the United States, however, is "the US debt crisis."
79. Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 166-168.

## Conclusion

1. Wendy Hansen, "Palm grows from seed 2,000 years old, Judean date tree, now 4 feet tall, is the last link to the forests in the Middle East," *Los Angeles Times*, reprinted in the *Idaho Statesman* (June 13, 2005): 1. One little lotus tree has been named Methuselah.
2. Leslie Stahl, "The Spymaster: Meir Dagan on Iran's Nuclear Threat," *Sixty Minutes*, March 11, 2012, accessed March 2012, [http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-18560\\_162-57394904/the-spymaster-meir-dagan-on-irans-threat/?pageNum=5&tag=contentMain;contentBody](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-18560_162-57394904/the-spymaster-meir-dagan-on-irans-threat/?pageNum=5&tag=contentMain;contentBody).
3. Sheera Frankel, "Leaders Were Split Over Possible Attack on Iran," *McClatchy Newspapers*, reprinted in *The Idaho Statesman* (November 6, 2012): 7.
4. Tom Friedman, "Hagel's views on Israel make him a good pick [for secretary of Defense]," *New York Times*, reprinted *Idaho Statesman* (December 29, 2012): opinion page.
5. Ben Stein, commentary, *CBS Sunday Morning*, April 8, 2012.



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