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United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

Case No.: 200701753

MAR 25 2010

I refer to your letter dated March 11, 2007 regarding the release of certain Department of State material under the Freedom of Information Act (Title 5 USC Section 552).


We searched for and reviewed the self study guides that you requested and have determined that all except one of them may be released. They are on the enclosed disc. One of the guides is being released with excisions.

An enclosure provides information on Freedom of Information Act exemptions and other grounds for withholding material. Where we have made excisions, the applicable exemptions are marked on each document. With respect to material withheld by the Department of State, you have the right to appeal our determination within 60 days. A copy of the appeals procedures is enclosed.

We have now completed the processing of your case. If you have any questions, you may write to the Office of Information Programs and Services, SA-2, Department of State, Washington, DC 20522-8100, or telephone us at (202) 261-8484. Please be sure to refer to the case number shown above in all correspondence about this case.

We hope that the Department has been of service to you in this matter.

Sincerely,



for Margaret P. Grafeld, Director
Office of Information Programs and Services

Enclosures:
As stated.

63934 Federal Register/Vol. 69, No. 212
Rules and Regulations

Subpart F – Appeal Procedures

§171.52 Appeal of denial of access to, declassification of, amendment of, accounting of disclosures of, or challenge to classification of records.

- (a) *Right of administrative appeal.* Except for records that have been reviewed and withheld within the past two years or are the subject of litigation, any requester whose request for access to records, declassification of records, amendment of records, accounting of disclosure of records, or any authorized holder of classified information whose classification challenge has been denied, has a right to appeal the denial to the Department's Appeals Review Panel. This appeal right includes the right to appeal the determination by the Department that no records responsive to an access request exist in Department files. Privacy Act appeals may be made only by the individual to whom the records pertain.
- (b) *Form of appeal.* There is no required form for an appeal. However, it is essential that the appeal contain a clear statement of the decision or determination by the Department being appealed. When possible, the appeal should include argumentation and documentation to support the appeal and to contest the bases for denial cited by the Department. The appeal should be sent to: Chairman, Appeals Review Panel, c/o Appeals Officer, A/GIS/IPS/PP/LC, U.S. Department of State, SA-2, Room 8100, Washington, DC 20522-8100.
- (c) *Time limits.* The appeal should be received within 60 days of the date of receipt by the requester of the Department's denial. The time limit for response to an appeal begins to run on the day that the appeal is received. The time limit (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays) for agency decision on an administrative appeal is 20 days under the FOIA (which may be extended for up to an additional 10 days in unusual circumstances) and 30 days under the Privacy Act (which the Panel may extend an additional 30 days for good cause shown). The Panel shall decide mandatory declassification review appeals as promptly as possible.
- (d) *Notification to appellant.* The Chairman of the Appeals Review Panel shall notify the appellant in writing of the Panel's decision on the appeal. When the decision is to uphold the denial, the Chairman shall include in his notification the reasons therefore. The appellant shall be advised that the decision of the Panel represents the final decision of the Department and of the right to seek judicial review of the Panel's decision, when applicable. In mandatory declassification review appeals, the Panel shall advise the requester of the right to appeal the decision to the Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel under §3.5(d) of E.O. 12958.

The Freedom of Information Act (5 USC 552)

FOIA Exemptions

- (b)(1) Withholding specifically authorized under an Executive Order in the interest of national defense or foreign policy, and properly classified. E.O. 12958, as amended, includes the following classification categories:
- 1.4(a) Military plans, systems, or operations
 - 1.4(b) Foreign government information
 - 1.4(c) Intelligence activities, sources or methods, or cryptology
 - 1.4(d) Foreign relations or foreign activities of the US, including confidential sources
 - 1.4(e) Scientific, technological, or economic matters relating to national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
 - 1.4(f) U.S. Government programs for safeguarding nuclear materials or facilities
 - 1.4(g) Vulnerabilities or capabilities of systems, installations, infrastructures, projects, plans, or protection services relating to US national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
 - 1.4(h) Information on weapons of mass destruction
- (b)(2) Related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency
- (b)(3) Specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than 5 USC 552), for example:
- ARMEX Arms Export Control Act, 22 USC 2778(e)
 - CIA Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949, 50 USC 403(g)
 - EXPORT Export Administration Act of 1979, 50 App. USC 2411(c)(1)
 - FSA Foreign Service Act of 1980, 22 USC 4003 & 4004
 - INA Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 USC 1202(f)
 - IRAN Iran Claims Settlement Act, Sec 505, 50 USC 1701, note
- (b)(4) Privileged/confidential trade secrets, commercial or financial information from a person
- (b)(5) Interagency or intra-agency communications forming part of the deliberative process, attorney-client privilege, or attorney work product
- (b)(6) Information that would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy
- (b)(7) Information compiled for law enforcement purposes that would:
- (A) interfere with enforcement proceedings
 - (B) deprive a person of a fair trial
 - (C) constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy
 - (D) disclose confidential sources
 - (E) disclose investigation techniques
 - (F) endanger life or physical safety of an individual
- (b)(8) Prepared by or for a government agency regulating or supervising financial institutions
- (b)(9) Geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells

Other Grounds for Withholding

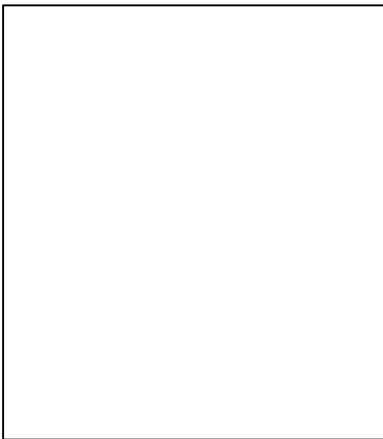
- NR Material not responsive to a FOIA request, excised with the agreement of the requester

ISRAEL

A Self-Study Guide



DAVID BEN-GURION DECLARES ISRAELI INDEPENDENCE, MAY 1948



GEORGE P. SHULTZ NATIONAL FOREIGN AFFAIRS
TRAINING CENTER
School of Professional and Area Studies
Foreign Service Institute
U.S. Department of State

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The Self-Study Guide: Israel is intended to provide U.S. government personnel in the foreign affairs community with an overview of important issues related to the history, geography, politics, religion, culture, economics, and international relations of Israel. The guide merely serves as an introduction and should be used as a self-study resource. Israel is far too complex and diverse a society to be covered in any depth using only the text in this guide. Therefore, the reader is encouraged to explore the questions and issues introduced using the Internet site guide and articles and books listed in the bibliography. Most of the bibliographic material can be found either on the Internet or in Foreign Service Institute or Main State Libraries.

Dr. Bernard Reich, Professor of Political Science and International Affairs and former Chairman of the Department of Political Science at George Washington University in Washington, DC prepared this first edition guide on Israel. The views expressed in this guide are those of the author and attributable sources and do not necessarily reflect official policy or position of the Department of State or the National Foreign Affairs Training Center. This publication is for official educational and nonprofit use only.

First Edition
February 2001

INTRODUCTION

Israel is an independent Jewish state, small in size and population, located at the southwestern tip of Asia on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. It achieved independence in 1948. Since Biblical times, Jews of the Diaspora have hoped that they would return to Zion, the "promised land," where the ancient Jewish state had been located, as described in the Bible. Over the centuries, Zionism focused on spiritual, religious, cultural, social, and historical links between Jews and the holy land. Political Zionism, with the establishment of a Jewish state as its goal, and Jewish immigration to Palestine both developed in nineteenth century Europe, partly as responses to anti-Semitism. The defeat of the Ottoman Empire during World War I and its dismemberment during the subsequent peace conferences led to British administration of Palestine (under a League of Nations Mandate) and set the stage for the eventual independence of Israel.

Israel has achieved rapid development and impressive accomplishments in the social and scientific arenas. It has been the region's most politically and socially innovative state and has achieved prosperity for its people. Israel has built a democratic system unlike that of any other in the Middle East and has melded immigrants from more than seventy countries into a uniquely Israeli population. In a country almost devoid of natural resources, its people have achieved a high standard of living.

Israel's development has occurred despite the fact that it has been in a state of war since independence and continually must be ready to defend its existence. Despite peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan, an aborted agreement with Lebanon, and a series of interim agreements with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and periodic U.S.-sponsored talks with Syria, Israel's pursuit of permanent peace with its neighbors is far

from complete. The continuing Arab-Israeli conflict and the potential for conflict with elements of the broader Muslim world remain central tests of Israel's foreign and defense policies.

Internet Links for a Basic and General Introduction to all Aspects of Israel:

- Department of State background notes. www.state.gov
- CIA World Factbook www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/

The finest source for statistics about every aspect of Israel is its Central Bureau of Statistics. Its web site: www.cbs.gov.il

Internet Links on Current Developments

General sources:

- BBC World News www.news.bbc.co.uk
- CNN News www.cnn.com
- New York Times www.nytimes.com
- Washington Post www.washingtonpost.com
- The Economist www.economist.com

News from and about Israel:

- Ha'aretz www.haaretz.co.il
- Jerusalem www.jpost.co.il
- Ma'ariv www.maariv.co.il
- Yediot Ahronot www.ynet.co.il
- Globes www.globes.co.il
- Jerusalem Report www.jreport.virtual.co.il

Internet Academic Sources:

Each of Israel's major academic institutions, and its component departments, institutes, and centers, maintains a web sit that provides access to a plethora of sources and materials on every aspect of Israel.

- Bar Ilan University www.biu.ac.il
- Hebrew University www.huji.ac.il
- Technion www.technion.ac.il
- Tel Aviv University www.tau.ac.il
- Weizmann Institute www.weizmann.ac.il

GEOGRAPHY

Israel is a small country whose land borders (except with Egypt, Jordan, and the sea) are not permanent and recognized and whose size has not been determined precisely due to the absence of permanent and comprehensive peace. Within its current frontiers (established by armistice agreements signed in 1949 at the end of the first Arab-Israeli War), Israel is less than 8,000 square miles (some 20,700 square kilometers) and is bounded on the north by Lebanon, on the northeast by Syria, on the east by the West Bank, Jordan, and the Dead Sea, and on the west by the Mediterranean Sea. The country is 264 miles long and, at its widest, is some 70 miles.

Israel may be divided into four main natural land regions: the coastal plain, the highlands of Judea and Samaria, the Rift Valley, and the Negev Desert. The coastal plain lies along the Mediterranean and is composed of a generally narrow and sandy shoreline bordered by fertile farmland varying up to 25 miles in width from the northern border to the Israel-Egypt border in the southwest. Most Israelis live in the coastal plain and most of the industry and agriculture are located there. A series of mountain ranges run north-south from the Galilee to the Negev. The mountains of Galilee stretch southward to the Jezreel Valley, south of which are the mountains and hills of Samaria, Judea, and the Negev. Upper Galilee is the highest part of the country. Lower Galilee's hills are more broken. The highlands of Galilee are where most of Israel's Arabs live in a triangular-shaped area that includes the city of Nazareth. Mount Meron, Israel's highest mountain, is here. The Judean hills include Jerusalem. There is also the Carmel mountain range near Haifa.

The Rift Valley is part of the Great Syrian-African rift—the deepest valley on earth. In Israel, it includes the Jordan Valley, which is located between the mountains of Judea and Samaria in the west and the mountains of Jordan to the east; the Hula Valley between the mountains of Galilee and the Golan Heights; the Jezreel Valley between the mountains of Galilee and Samaria; and the Arava, a long and arid valley running from the Dead Sea to the Red Sea. Portions of the Arava were ceded to Jordan in the 1994 Peace Treaty and then leased back to Israeli farmers. The Dead Sea, a saltwater body, is part of the Rift Valley area and is the lowest land area on earth, about 1,286 feet below sea level. The Negev is an arid area of flatlands and limestone mountains that stretches southward from the Judean Desert, which lies between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea.

The Jordan River, the longest of Israel's rivers, flows north-south through the Sea of Galilee (also known as Lake Kinneret and Lake Tiberias) and empties into the Dead Sea. Most of Israel's other rivers are small and generally seasonal in nature, except for the Kishon (which is about 8 miles long and flows east to west and empties into the Mediterranean north of Haifa) and the Yarkon (which is about 16 miles long and flows east to west and empties in to the Mediterranean at Tel Aviv).

Israel's climate generally is Mediterranean in nature—marked by hot and dry summers and cool but relatively mild winters. There is sunshine from May through mid-October and no rain falls during this season. Periods of hot and dry weather brought by easterly winds occur at the beginning and end of the summer, usually in May and September. The hot, dry, sandy, easterly wind of Biblical fame is commonly known as *khamisin*, from the Arabic for "fifty." The rainy season begins about mid-October, but it is only in December

that rainy days become frequent. Winter weather alternates between short but heavy rainy spells and sunshine. March and April are cool, with occasional rains of short duration. Nevertheless, there is a variation of climate by region, partly as a consequence of differences in altitude. North of Beersheba, Israel has a Mediterranean climate, but the Negev is generally arid and cultivation there is impossible without irrigation. The Jordan Valley is hotter and drier than the coastal plain. Tiberias and the Jordan Valley enjoy warm temperatures and little rainfall. In the hilly regions (including Jerusalem and the Upper Galilee), temperatures drop toward the freezing point, and brief snowfalls are not unusual.

Internet Links for maps of Israel and the Middle East

www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/PCL/Map_collection/middle_east.html

SOCIETY

At independence, Israel had some 806,000 citizens (650,000 Jews and 156,000 non-Jews). Israel's population by January 2000 stood at 6.2 million, some 80 percent of whom were Jews. Israel's non-Jewish population has quadrupled since 1948, mostly as a result of high rates of natural growth. The Jewish population has increased more than fivefold since independence with more than 2.6 million Jewish immigrants, many of whom came from Arab and Islamic countries of the Middle East and North Africa. Beginning in the late 1980s, some 750,000 immigrants from the former Soviet Union added substantially to Israel's population while smaller but more dramatic immigrations came from Ethiopia. Under the Law of Return, any Jew, with some specific exceptions, may immigrate to Israel and receive citizenship. Immigrants are provided with housing and language and vocational training to speed their integration into the mainstream of Israeli society.

Israel's Jews are of a single religious faith and share a spiritual heritage and elements of historical experience. However, ethnically and culturally, they are heterogenous. The Jewish population is composed of immigrants from numerous countries and reflects a variety of ethnic and linguistic groups, degrees of religious observance, and cultural, historical, and political backgrounds. No single ethnic group constitutes even 20 percent of the total Jewish population, although one of the largest is of Moroccan origin.

The two main groups in Israel's Jewish population are the Ashkenazim (that is to say, Jews of central and east European origin) and the Sephardim or Orientals (Jews who came to Israel from the countries of the Middle East and the Mediterranean area). Although the overwhelming majority of the Jewish population was of Ashkenazi origin at independence, Israeli society is now almost evenly split between the Ashkenazim and Jews of Sephardic origin, who are also referred to as "Edot Hamizrach" (eastern or Oriental communities). Increasingly, ethnic divisions are becoming less relevant as the instances of cross-cultural marriages grow and as native-born Israelis identify themselves not as Ashkenazi or Sephardic but as "Sabra".

Geographically, Israel is an Oriental country, but its culture, society, and political system remain primarily Western in nature and orientation. The early Zionists laid the foundations for an essentially European culture in Palestine and subsequent immigration accelerated the trend. The Western immigrants created and developed the structure of land settlement, institutions, trade unions, political parties, and educational systems in preparation for a Western-oriented Jewish national state. Future immigrants from non-Western countries had to adapt to a society that had formed these institutions.

After the Holocaust and the creation of Israel, whole Jewish communities were transported to Israel from the countries of the Middle East and North Africa. This massive Oriental immigration created a situation in which a large portion of the population had societal and cultural traditions different from those of their Western coreligionists who constituted the majority and dominant element in Israel. The religious traditions of Judaism provide a common core of values and ideals, but there are major differences in outlook, frames of reference, levels of aspiration, and other social and cultural components. Although steps have been taken to alleviate the situation, Israel continues to suffer from ethnic-cultural cleavages and a socioeconomic gap and consequent inequalities within the Jewish community.

Israel's non-Jewish citizenry, constituting about 20 percent of the total population, consists primarily of the Arabs who remained in what became Israel after the 1948-1949 Arab-Israeli War and their descendants. The Arab population is composed primarily of Muslims (about 80%) and is predominantly Sunni, although some 11 percent are Christian (mostly Greek Catholic and Greek Orthodox) and some 9 percent Druze.

Although their legal status is the same as Israel's Jewish population, Israel's Arab citizens are confronted by problems qualitatively different. Between 1948 and the mid-1960s, activities of the Arab community were regarded primarily as concerns of Israel's security system, and most of the areas inhabited by the Arabs were placed under military control. The restrictions were gradually modified, and in 1966 military government was abolished. Although Israeli Arabs vote, sit in the Knesset, serve in government offices, have their own schools and courts, and prosper materially, they face difficulties in adjusting to Israel's modern, Jewish and Western-oriented society. The Arabs tend to live in separate sections of major cities. They speak Arabic, attend a separate school system, and generally do not serve in the army. The Arab and Jewish communities in Israel have few points of contact, and those that exist are not intimate; they are separate societies that generally continue to hold stereotypical images of each other which often are reinforced by the tensions and problems generated by the larger Arab-Israeli conflict. There is mutual suspicion and antagonism, and there is still a Jewish fear of the Arabs—a result of wars and terrorism.

Israel is a Jewish state; nevertheless, it guarantees all of its citizens—in law and in practice—freedom of religion and conscience and considerable autonomy under the *millet* system (in which the population was divided by religious allegiance) derived from the Ottoman Empire. At the same time, there have been tensions and often open clashes between the religious and secular segments of the Jewish community and between the

Orthodox and non-Orthodox denominations. At issue are the authority and power of the Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox religious authorities and their desire to mould Israeli society in their preferred image. Debate has focused on the appropriate relationship between religion and the state, between the religious and secular authorities, and between the Orthodox-dominated religious establishment and non-Orthodox movements (i.e., Conservative and Reform/Progressive Jewry). At the core of this debate is the contentious question of "Who is a Jew?" The issue has had philosophical, theological, political, and ideological overtones with specific practical dimensions in connection with immigration, marriage, divorce, inheritance, and conversion as well as in registration of identity cards and in the official collection of data and information. The question relates to the application of legislation such as the Law of Return, the Nationality Law, and others passed by the Knesset. Despite ongoing efforts, no permanent solution to the enduring "Who is a Jew" controversy has occurred.

Selected readings on society and religion:

Abramov, S. Zalman. *Perpetual Dilemma: Jewish Religion in the Jewish State*. Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1979.

Aviad, Janet. *Return to Judaism: Religious Renewal in Israel*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.

Badi, Joseph. *Religion in Israel Today: The Relationship Between State and Religion*. New York: Bookman Associates, 1959.

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Don-Yehiya, Eliezer. "The Politics of Religious Parties," in *Public Life in Israel and the Diaspora*, edited by Sam N. Lehman-Wilzig and Bernard Susser. Jerusalem: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1981.

Kraines, Oscar. *The Impossible Dilemma: Who Is a Jew in the State of Israel*. New York: Bloch, 1976.

Leslie, Samuel C. *The Rift in Israel: Religious authority and Secular Democracy*. New York: Schocken, 1971.

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Marmorstein, Emile. *Heaven at Bay: The Jewish Kulturkampf in the Holy Land*. London: Oxford University Press, 1969.

Rabinowicz, Harry M. *Hasidism and the State of Israel*. Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1982.

Schiff, Gary S. *Tradition and Politics: The Religious Parties of Israel*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977.

Sharansky, Ira. *Rituals of Conflict: Religion, Politics, and Public Policy in Israel*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996.

Weiner, Herbert. *The Wild Goats of Ein Gedi: A Journal of Religious Encounters in the Holy Land*. Cleveland and New York and Philadelphia: World Publishing Company and Jewish Publication Society of America, 1963.

Zucker, Norman L. *The Coming Crisis in Israel: Private Faith and Public Policy*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1973.

HISTORY

The new state of Israel came into being on May 14, 1948, with the termination of the British Mandate, but its creation was preceded by more than fifty years of efforts by Zionist leaders to establish an independent Jewish state in Palestine.

The modern history of Israel may be dated from the Jewish immigration to Palestine in the second-half of the nineteenth century from Europe, especially Russia and Poland. The practical and modern effort to establish a state began with the founding of the Zionist movement and the creation of the World Zionist Organization by Theodor Herzl at the end of the nineteenth century. Waves of state-sponsored anti-Semitism ("pogroms") in eastern Europe and incidents such as the "Dreyfus Affair" in western Europe were important contributing factors in the development of modern political Zionism. Zionist aspirations were given impetus with the issuance of the Balfour Declaration (1917) in which the British Government expressed support for the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine. Jewish immigration to Palestine grew throughout this period, but with the advent of the Nazi regime in Germany and the Holocaust, the numbers escalated rapidly in the 1930s. With the end of World War II there was pressure for the remnants of European Jewry to be permitted to immigrate to Palestine despite British restrictions. The Arab reaction to the effort to create a Jewish state was negative and frequently violent.

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Partition Plan (Resolution 181) which called for the division of Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state (linked by an economic union) and for an international administration for Jerusalem. The Plan was accepted with reluctance by the Zionists but denounced by the Arab world which prepared for war to ensure that all of Palestine would be an Arab state. Between November 1947 and May 1948 the Arab community in Palestine, with the active encouragement of the neighboring Arab countries, waged a campaign of terror against the Jewish settlement ("yishuv") in an effort to prevent implementation of the partition plan. This Arab terror provoked small militant elements of the Zionist community to launch violent reprisals against the Arabs as well as against symbols of a British Mandatory Authority that was accused of siding with the Arabs. With the British withdrawal from Palestine in May 1948, the new Jewish state proclaimed its independence. David Ben-Gurion became the Prime Minister of the State of Israel and Chaim Weizmann was elected President. The new government was soon recognized by the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as by many other states. The Arab League declared war on Israel, and the neighboring Arab states announced that their armies would enter the former Palestine Mandate, ostensibly to "restore order." A long and bitter war ensued between Israel and armies from Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq with assistance from other Arab League members.

In the spring of 1949, armistice agreements were signed between Israel and each of the bordering states (Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon) which established a frontier (armistice line) between Israel and each of the neighboring states and portions of these areas were demilitarized. Peace negotiations to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict were to follow, but did not. As a consequence of the war, Israel encompassed more territory than had been allocated to it by the Partition Plan. At the same time, portions of the territory allocated to the Palestinian Arab state came under Egyptian (the Gaza Strip) and Jordanian (the West Bank) control. Jerusalem was divided between Israel and Jordan. Under the terms of the armistice with Jordan, Israelis and other Jews were to be accorded access to Jewish holy places in Jerusalem's Old City and in the West Bank. However, this did not occur; rather, the Jordanians permitted holy places to be desecrated and destroyed.

Israel has fought six major wars (in 1948-1949, 1956-1957, 1967, 1969-1970, 1973, and 1982) with the Arab states to secure its position, but formal peace has eluded Israel with all but Egypt and Jordan. In addition, Israel has signed a series of interim agreements with the PLO and has held sporadic substantive talks with Syria under U.S. sponsorship. But a comprehensive peace agreement with all of its neighbors appears still far away.

Soon after its independence, Israel moved to function as a regular state. Elections for a parliament (Knesset) were held January 25, 1949, and regular parliamentary and presidential elections have been held, as required by law, since then. But, Israel's progress in its domestic life was not matched by comparable developments with the Arab states; frequent border incidents and clashes characterized the early 1950s.

Tensions continued to increase and the situation was exacerbated by external (primarily Soviet) arms supplies and Palestinian terrorist incursions into Israel and Israeli retaliatory raids on *fedayeen* bases in Egyptian-controlled Gaza. In the summer of 1956, Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal and tensions grew. In late October, Israel invaded the Sinai Peninsula to destroy hostile Egyptian military positions and to reopen the blockaded Strait of Tiran. In a brief war, Israel captured the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula. Following a British and French ultimatum (coordinated in advance in top-level secret tripartite—British, French, and Israeli—meetings), their forces were interposed between Israel and Egypt along the Suez Canal. Eventually Israel was forced by U.S. pressure to withdraw from Egyptian territory and from the Gaza Strip. The United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) was stationed on the frontier between the two states and helped ensure quiet along the border for the next decade. The sea lanes through the Strait of Tiran to Israel's port of Eilat were opened to Israeli shipping. But the hope that peace talks might follow was not realized. Although the other Arab states did not join in the 1956-1957 hostilities, they made no effort to reach a peace agreement with Israel and their territories often became bases for attacks across the border into Israel. Israel maintained its military posture and capability to deal with the Arab threat.

In 1966 and 1967, Israel again focused on the problems associated with the Arab-Israeli conflict. Border incidents became more serious and escalation toward conflict began in late 1966 and early 1967 as clashes between Israel and Syria contributed to regional tensions. In May 1967, President Nasser of Egypt demanded the partial removal of U.N. forces from Sinai and Gaza, mobilized the Egyptian military, and moved troops and equipment into demilitarized areas. Nasser also announced the closing of the Strait of Tiran to Israeli shipping. Other factors also contributed to the growing tensions. Finally, on June 5, 1967, Israel launched a preemptive military strike against Egypt. Other Arab states joined in the hostilities that spread to include Jordan, Syria, and Iraq, among other Arab participants.

The Six Day War of June 1967 substantially altered the nature and parameters of the Arab-Israeli dispute. The realities of Arab hostility, the nature of the Arab threat, and the difficulties of achieving a settlement became more obvious. The issues of the conflict changed with the extent of the Israeli victory: Israel occupied the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights. Israel adopted the position that it would not withdraw from those territories until there were negotiations with the Arab states leading to peace agreements that recognized Israel's right to exist and accepted Israel's permanent position and borders. The Arab response to these terms of reference were the "three nos" adopted at the Khartoum, Sudan, meeting of the Arab League in September 1967: no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, no negotiations with Israel. Throughout the period between the Six Day War (1967) and the Yom Kippur War (1973), the focal point was the effort to achieve a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and to secure a just and lasting peace based on United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967, which recommended an exchange of land for peace between Israel and the Arab states. Although some of the efforts were promising, peace was not achieved and there was little movement in that direction. The 1969-1970 War of Attrition (launched by Egypt against Israel along the Suez Canal in April 1969)

marked the fourth round of hostilities between Israel and the Arabs; it was also unique in the sense of involving direct military engagements between Israelis and Soviet pilots flying Egyptian aircraft. It was also in this period that a restructured PLO emerged under the leadership of Yasser Arafat and posed new challenges to Israel's security, in the form of terrorist attacks inside Israel and on Israeli and Jewish targets internationally.

On October 3, 1973, Egyptian and Syrian military forces launched surprise attacks on Israeli positions along the Suez Canal and in the Golan Heights. Despite initial Arab advances on both fronts, Israel pushed Syria back beyond the 1967 cease-fire line and crossed the Suez Canal to take a portion of its west bank. The war increased Israel's dependence on the United States, as no other country would provide Israel with the vast quantities of modern and sophisticated arms required for war or for the political and moral support necessary to negotiate peace.

The 1973 War was followed by renewed and intensified efforts to achieve Arab-Israeli peace. An extended process of "shuttle diplomacy" launched by United States Secretary of State Henry Kissinger resulted in two disengagement of forces agreements in the Sinai (January 1974 and September 1975) and one disengagement agreement involving Israeli and Syrian forces on the Golan Heights (May 1974). However, efforts at building comprehensive peace out of these partial agreements did not succeed. A major step in this regard occurred in 1977 with the announcement by Egyptian President Anwar Sadat that he was prepared to negotiate peace directly with the Israelis. His November 1977 visit to Israel ultimately led to the Camp David Accords in September 1978 and the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty signed on March 26, 1979 (both witnessed by U.S. President Jimmy Carter). "Normal relations" between Egypt and Israel began officially on January 26, 1980, when Israel completed its withdrawal from two-thirds of the Sinai Peninsula, as called for in the peace treaty, and land, air, and sea borders between the two states were opened. In late February, embassies were opened in Cairo and Tel Aviv, and on February 26, Ambassadors Eliahu Ben-Elisar of Israel and Saad Mortada of Egypt presented their credentials.

Despite the peace treaty with Egypt and its implementation, Israel's other borders remained tense and problems often emerged. The frontier with Lebanon had been relatively quiet between the 1948-1949 war and the early 1970s, when the PLO was forced out of Jordan and ultimately took up positions in Lebanon. Cross-border PLO terrorist raids into northern Israel and Israeli retaliations (such as 1978's "Operation Litani" to push PLO forces out of firing range of northern Israel) escalated tensions. The PLO's presence in Lebanon exacerbated an already complicated balance among that country's indigenous political and military forces, an arrangement that broke down completely in 1975 with the start of civil war in Lebanon. In order to protect its interests, Syria became increasingly involved militarily in Lebanon. The continued presence in eastern Lebanon of surface-to-air missiles (SAM) that had been moved there by Syria in the spring of 1981 remained an Israeli concern, as were PLO attacks against Israeli and Jewish targets worldwide despite a U.S.-arranged cease-fire in the summer of 1981. On June 6, 1982, Israel launched a major military action against the PLO in Lebanon ("Operation Peace for Galilee"). The military objective was to ensure security for

northern Israel, to destroy the PLO infrastructure that had established a state-within-a-state ("Fatahland") in Lebanon, to eliminate a center of international terrorism, and to eliminate a base of operations from which Israel could be threatened; the success of the military operation also involved the early neutralization of the Syrian SAM emplacements in eastern Lebanon. But the political objectives of the operation were not so precise. In many respects, the results were ambiguous. Under U.S. and international protection, the PLO was permitted to withdraw most of its forces from Lebanon in August 1982. Israel's northern border was temporarily more secure, but the Israeli troops that remained in Lebanon became targets of Iranian-backed Hezbollah terrorists and others, and numerous casualties resulted. A May 1983 agreement between Israel and Lebanon that would have facilitated a withdrawal of Israeli forces was abrogated a year later by Lebanon under pressure from Syria. In 1985, the bulk of Israeli forces were withdrawn unilaterally from Lebanon but a narrow "security zone" north of the border was manned by Israeli soldiers and members of the Israeli-backed South Lebanese Army (SLA). The costs of the War in Lebanon were high, as have been the costs of Hezbollah's continuing war of attrition against Israeli and Israeli-backed targets in the security zone.

With the departure of the PLO forces from Lebanon, attention focused on divisions among Israelis over the status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Although the internal debate over these territories had been a core issue since they were occupied by Israel in the 1967 Six Day War, their status took on new immediacy in the wake of the Palestinian rioting in the West Bank and Gaza that began in early December 1987. However, while it prompted extensive public debate, the *intifada* did not facilitate agreement among Israelis about a clear policy option for addressing the complex set of disputes with the Palestinians, a problem exacerbated by the continuation of a widespread Arab consensus on avoiding relations with Israel.

The August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the participation of Arab confrontation states in the multilateral coalition that fought the Persian Gulf War (January-February 1991) caused the first discernible cracking (since the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty) in the Arab consensus concerning Israel. This helped create the atmosphere for the Madrid Middle East Peace Conference (October 1991) that set in motion bilateral and multilateral processes of negotiations cosponsored first by the United States and the U.S.S.R. (later Russia). These negotiations, while unprecedented in their scope, did not generate any immediate substantive progress. Such progress was produced through secret back-channel communications—and then formal negotiations—involving Israelis and PLO representatives in the spring and summer of 1993 that were held under the good offices of the foreign minister of Norway. The exchange of letters of recognition between Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat (September 9, 1993) and the signing of the Israel-PLO Declaration of Principles (September 13, 1993) set in motion a series of interim agreements affecting parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. However, these interim agreements—first with the PLO and then with the Palestinian Authority (elected in January 1997)—did not ameliorate the protracted debate among Israelis over the final political status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip or the Arab and Jewish populations there. To the contrary, the internal debate was exacerbated by widespread terrorism against Israelis in the spring of 1996 by Muslim extremist groups, such as

Hamas and Islamic Jihad, and by secular Palestinian groups opposed to the Oslo Accords—terrorism that the Palestinian Authority under the leadership of Yasser Arafat seemingly was unable or unwilling to combat.

Despite their inherent instability and uncertainty, the Israel-PLO interim agreements established an atmosphere in which substantive progress involving Israel and other Arab parties could be achieved. Principal among these was the Common Agenda for future negotiations signed with Jordan on September 14, 1993, which laid the groundwork for the Washington Declaration (July 25, 1994) and the Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty (October 26, 1994). There were also diplomatic and/or commercial openings with a number of Arab countries, including Morocco, Tunisia, Oman, and Qatar; the secondary and tertiary aspects of the Arab economic boycott of Israel were officially suspended by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC); and periodic high-level talks, under U.S. sponsorship, were held with Syria about security arrangements on the Golan Heights and related issues. While some of these developments were important in and of themselves, all were part of a long-term process that has yet to provide Israel with permanent peace and normalized relations with all of its neighbors. Militating against this goal were a number of factors, including the continued threat of terrorism emanating from the West Bank and Gaza Strip; a protracted war of attrition waged by Iranian-backed Hezbollah and other Muslim extremist groups against Israeli forces in southern Lebanon; the continued domination of Lebanon by Syria, as well as Syrian support for groups opposed to the Arab-Israeli peace process; threats by a number of Arab countries to link normalizing of relations with Israel to the depth of Israeli political and territorial concessions in interim and final-status agreements with the Palestinian Authority; and the long-term strategic threat to Israel posed by active efforts by several Arab and Islamic regimes to acquire and deploy weapons of mass destruction and the long-range ballistic missile capability to deliver those weapons on targets throughout Israel.

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Defense, Security and Military Issues

Defense and security issues have been a crucial element of Israel's history and foreign relations since its independence in 1948.

The following internet sites provide details for further examination of the subject:

www.un.org/Depts/dhl/maps/pk/unof.htm

www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/english/htmain.htm

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- Ministry of Defense www.mod.gov.il

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GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Israel is a parliamentary democracy but has no formal written constitution. A series of Basic Laws has been enacted since independence that guide Israel's actions and which

are intended, in time, to form portions of a consolidated constitutional document. Pressure has been building recently for the promulgation of a written constitution with a bill of rights.

The President is the head of state and is elected by the Knesset (parliament). The President's powers and functions are primarily ceremonial and his or her actual political power is very limited. The Prime Minister is head of government and, as the chief executive officer, wields considerable power. He or she is now chosen through direct popular election. The Prime Minister forms the Government (or Cabinet) whose members head the ministries. The Prime Minister determines the agenda of Cabinet meetings and has the final word in policy decisions, although such decisions are often arrived at through bargaining and compromise among the coalitions of parties that, since independence, have constituted Israel's governments. Decisions by the Government determine the direction and policy of the state.

Legislative power resides in the Knesset, a unicameral body of one hundred twenty members that is the supreme authority in the state. The Knesset's main functions are similar to those of other modern parliaments and include votes of confidence or no confidence in the government, legislation, participation in the formulation of national policy, approval of budgets and taxation, election of the President, and general monitoring of the activities of the executive branch. All members of the Knesset are elected at-large in a national and general election in which seats are apportioned by a complex system of proportional representation.

The judiciary consists of secular and religious court systems. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the land and hears appeals from lower courts in civil and criminal cases and acts to protect the rights of Israeli citizens. While it does not have the power of judicial review, the Supreme Court has in recent years adopted a more activist role, both in invalidating administrative actions it regards as contrary to the law and in commenting on broader social issues. Each major religious community has its own religious courts that have jurisdiction over matters of personal status such as marriage and divorce, alimony, probate, and inheritance.

Israel has a large number of political parties that represent a wide spectrum of views, positions and interests. There are also religious and special-issue parties that focus on a particular subject or theme as well as political parties that represent the interests of Israeli Arabs and other minority and ethnic communities.

Internet sources on government and politics in Israel:

- Prime Minister's Office www.pmo.gov.il
- Knesset Likud Party www.knesset.gov.il
- Meretz Party www.meretz.org.il

The web site of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs acts as a gateway to foreign policy but also to a plethora of sources on all aspects of government and politics:

www.mfa.gov.il

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ECONOMY

Israel's economy has made impressive progress and the economic well-being of its people has improved significantly since independence when Israel was a poor country with weak agricultural and industrial sectors and a dependence on imported consumer goods, raw materials, and food. Economic growth was stimulated by a massive influx of immigrants and large governmental and private capital flows from abroad. Although virtually bereft of natural resources and faced with substantial burdens of immigrant absorption and of defense, Israel achieved relatively prosperous economic levels by the late 1980s with a standard of living comparable to that in many Western European countries. Life expectancy is among the highest in the world; Israel has maintained a substantial level of social services for its population; and its gross national product (GNP) has made dramatic progress. Nevertheless, Israel's economy remains dependent on foreign assistance and is burdened with an extraordinarily heavy debt-repayment responsibility.

Israel's economy grew rapidly after independence. Between 1950 and 1972, the country maintained a real economic output rate of nearly 10 percent per year and its output per worker nearly tripled. This was accompanied by significant increases in the standard of living. Inflation became a problem as the economy reached double-digit inflation in the

early 1970s and triple-digit inflation (more than 400%) by the 1984 election. It was subsequently brought down to some 15 percent by 1987 through the efforts of the 1984-1988 National Unity Government. Balance of payments problems also marked the economy in the 1980s.

Israel lacks substantial natural resources—it has limited amounts of various chemicals, such as potash and phosphates, and water supplies—but this has been offset by the unusually valuable asset Israel has in its human resources. Massive immigration created problems in Israel's early years, but it also endowed Israel with a motivated and skilled labor force. Israel has developed its own highly regarded educational and scientific establishment. Illiteracy is virtually nonexistent, and Israel's population is one of the most highly educated in the world. It is in the forefront of scientific accomplishment in fields such as irrigation and water usage, energy technology, and medical-scientific research.

Israel's only significant domestic energy source is solar power; it has no coal or hydroelectric power potential and possesses very little oil and natural gas. Energy requirements are met largely by crude oil and coal imports, and nuclear power is under study.

Israel has lacked the capital necessary for its economy to function efficiently and since 1948 it has relied on foreign capital inflows to finance the economy and for current expenditures. External sources have included loans, grants, contributions, outside investments, United States government aid, the sale of Israel Bonds, German reparations and restitution payments, and donations from Diaspora Jewish communities. These sources have permitted Israel to pursue a policy of rapid economic and demographic expansion.

The country's economy today is a mixture of state and private enterprise. The service sector remains large because of government and quasi-government activity, including the machinery to integrate large immigrant populations and the trade and transport functions connected with a high level of foreign imports. However, in the 1990s successive governments set as a priority the privatization of state-owned institutions and the opening-up of the economy to increased competition and foreign investment.

Agriculture (most often associated with the kibbutz) traditionally has occupied a position of prominence in Israel and in Zionist ideology greater than its economic contribution has warranted. Its central place in Zionist ideology, dominant role in the settlement of the country, important function in absorbing new immigrants, and security aspects have assured agriculture its priority in Israel's economic policies. The government has been involved in developing, subsidizing, and controlling agricultural activity, including fishing and forestry, since independence. The agricultural sector uses modern scientific methods and has significantly expanded the area under cultivation through irrigation drawn basically from the Jordan River. Agricultural research is extensive, and farmers are quick to adopt improved techniques and respond to changes in market conditions. Israel has become self-sufficient in food production and is an exporter of various foods,

including citrus and other fruits, vegetables, and poultry products. In spite of its rapid growth, agriculture's prominent position has gradually eroded to the point where it contributes only about 5 percent of the GNP and it is a diminishing source of employment primarily because of improved techniques and mechanization. Farm organization is predominantly cooperative, with the moshav (an agricultural settlement run on cooperative lines) being the most popular, while private farming is primarily the domain of non-Jewish sectors, mostly Arabs and some Druze.

Industry became an important, diverse, and fast-growing sector of the economy that contributed about one-third of the GNP by the late 1970s and also became a major source of employment and of commodity exports. The manufacturing-sector output is similar in range, sophistication, and quality of products to that of smaller industrialized countries. Textile manufacturers produce a range of goods including knitwear and high-fashion clothing and there are also plastics, electronics, high-technology scientific and optical equipment, and food processing. The cutting and polishing of diamonds remains a major export industry. Israel's defense industries are dominated by government-owned plants, of which Israel Aircraft Industries is the largest. The mineral and chemical industry depends heavily on the Dead Sea, which is the country's leading mineral source and includes magnesium chloride, potassium chloride (potash), table salt, chlorine, and calcium and magnesium bromide. The Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty and interim agreements with the PLO both included provisions for the joint exploitation of minerals extracted from the Dead Sea region as well as tourism and manufacturing in the region.

Government policy supported industrial development with an export orientation to ease the country's chronic balance-of-payments problem. Emphasis was given to science-based industries with a large value added by domestic manufacturing, particularly since the 1960s. This was the kind of export (e.g., chemicals, metal products, machinery, and electronic equipment) that, along with polished gem diamonds, grew most rapidly in the 1970s. Diamonds are the only product in which Israel has more than a peripheral share in any foreign market, although Israeli-manufactured arms and weapons systems have become very popular internationally and have become an important dimension of the country's export policy.

The foreign markets for Israeli products, and even the pattern of industrial growth, were shaped by the Arab boycott that precluded the possibility of Israel developing close trade links to the economies of its immediate neighbors. Instead the country had to seek more distant markets. The peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan, and the accords with the PLO, led to a partial suspension of the Arab boycott in the early 1990s, which resulted in only modest improvements in the level and quality of commercial interaction between Israel and its neighbors. It is also a fact that there is limited compatibility between Israel's advanced industrial economy and those of its Arab and Muslim neighbors.

Israel's exports reached about \$23.5 billion in 1999 and included such products as manufactured goods including high-tech electronics and computer software, diamonds, citrus and other fruits and other agricultural products, chemicals, plastics, rubber products, mining and quarrying, textiles, processed foods, wood products, paper, and

jewelry. Tourism is also an important earner of foreign exchange. Israeli imports, valued at more than \$30 billion in 1999, included raw materials; machinery; equipment and vehicles for investment; consumer goods; rough diamonds; fuels; and ships, aircraft; and other military equipment. Israel's major trading partners include the United States and the European Union. The establishment of free trade agreements with the U.S. and the EU were important for Israel's export market. Israel also has signed free trade zone agreements with Canada, Turkey, and several countries in eastern Europe, and it has made important economic inroads in the former Soviet Union and Asia. Israel's economy is fully interconnected with the global economy, to the extent that economic trends elsewhere in the world, such as in Russia and Asia, have a direct bearing on the well-being of the Israeli economy.

Internet Links on the Israeli economy:

- Bank of Israel www.bankisrael.gov.il
- Ministry of Finance www.mof.gov.il
- Chamber of Commerce www.chamber.org.il
- Tel Aviv Stock Exchange www.tase.co.il

Two of Israel's largest banks maintain web sites:

- Bank Hapoalim www.bankhapoalim.co.il
- Bank Leumi www.bankleumi.co.il

The crucial role of energy in Israel's economy and national life is best documented in the US Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration's web site:

www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/israel.html

ISRAEL IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Since independence, Israel has sought positive relations with the members of the international community. It has joined and participated in the work of international organizations (despite longstanding efforts by the Arabs and their supporters to isolate and ostracize Israel at the United Nations and in other international fora) and it has sought to establish and maintain friendly relations with as many states as possible. Within the framework of this broad effort, there has been a particular focus on relations with the United States and the Soviet Union (and subsequently, with Russia).

Israel had a variable relationship with the Soviet Union and the members of the Eastern bloc since before independence. Although the Soviet Union supported the United Nations Partition Plan of 1947 and Israel's independence in 1948, relations deteriorated rapidly and the Soviet Union shifted to a pro-Arab position, including providing economic assistance and arms to front-line Arab states such as Egypt and Syria by the mid-1950s. Since 1967, when the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc states, except Romania, broke diplomatic relations with Israel, the questions of a Soviet role in the Arab-Israeli conflict

and the peace process and the status of Jews in the Soviet Union were central themes in Israel-Soviet relations. Under Mikhail Gorbachev a thaw developed and relations between Israel and the Soviet camp improved in a number of spheres. Formal diplomatic relations between Israel and the Soviet Union were restored in October 1991 in conjunction with the start of the Madrid Middle East Peace Conference under joint U.S. and Soviet sponsorship. Moscow permitted the migration of Soviet Jews to Israel, a process that ultimately swelled to some 750,000 Jewish immigrants in the 1990s.

Israel has seen Europe and the developing world (especially Africa and Latin America) as important components of its overall policy. It has sought to maintain positive relations with Europe based on the commonality of the Judeo-Christian heritage and the memories of the Holocaust. The European Union is also an important trading partner for Israel given the long-standing refusal of its immediate neighbors to engage in normal commercial relations. Israel's approach to the developing world has focused on its ability to provide technical assistance in the development process. Despite substantial effort in those sectors, the growing centrality of the United States as the primary facilitator of assistance to Israel, as well as of mediation in Arab-Israeli peacemaking, has caused Israelis to focus increasingly on solidifying relations with the United States.

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- World Bank www.worldbank.org
- International Monetary Fund www.imf.org

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE U.S.

The special but central and complex relationship between Israel and the United States has been more significant. The relationship revolves around a broadly conceived ideological factor. Moreover, it is based on substantial positive perception and sentiment evident in public opinion and official statements and manifest in political-diplomatic support and military and economic assistance. However, the U.S.-Israeli relationship has not been enshrined in a legally binding commitment joining the two states in a formal alliance. Undergirding the relationship is a general agreement on broad policy goals. The two states maintain a remarkable degree of parallelism and congruence on such objectives as the need to prevent major war in the Middle East, to achieve a negotiated resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict that does not endanger Israeli security, and to strengthen Israel's economic and social well-being. Nevertheless, there have been instances of noncongruence of policy between Washington and Jerusalem on specific issues which have derived from various differences of perspective; for example, disputes with the Begin and Shamir governments over West Bank settlement activity, and differences between the Netanyahu government and the Clinton Administration over the depth and pace of Israeli redeployment in the West Bank. These differences aside, the United States is an indispensable ally that provides Israel with economic, technical, military, political, diplomatic, and moral support. It was seen as the ultimate protector against the Soviet Union in the Cold War and, since the demise of the Soviet Union, against militant Islamist terrorism and rogue regimes, and it is the primary (if not sole) guarantor of Israel's qualitative military advantage over its regional adversaries.

Over time the United States has changed from a power of limited direct support for Israel to the world's only superpower linked to Israel in a free trade area and a crucial provider of political, diplomatic and strategic (security) support as well as economic aid.

There is a widespread misperception that United States support for Israel has been a major element of United States Middle East policy since the creation of the state. United States economic and military assistance was far more substantial to other regional states (such as Turkey, Iran and Greece — in part reflected by the Truman Doctrine of 1947) than to Israel until the Kennedy-Johnson and, later, Nixon years. United States diplomatic-political backing for Israel in the United Nations and elsewhere is marked by the post-1967 war efforts reflected in Johnson's Five Principles of Peace speech of June 19, 1967 and, United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 (which is substantially similar in its approach to peace). A well-developed strategic link derives from the Reagan administration and the president's perception of Israel as a "strategic asset" and the subsequent Memorandum of Understanding (1981), although the Nixon administration certainly identified value in support of King Hussein during Black September (1970). United States military aid and military sales to Israel were negligible in amount and unimpressive in content until the Kennedy administration sold Israel Hawk missiles and the Johnson administration sold Israel modern jet aircraft. It is useful to recall that the well-regarded Israel Air Force of the 1967 war was primarily equipped with modern French jet aircraft, not those of the United States. The first Phantom (F-4) jet aircraft arrived in Israel only in 1969. Total United States military aid to Israel was less than \$1 million until the Kennedy tenure and increased dramatically to substantial levels first with the Nixon administration and then in the wake of the Camp David Accords (1978)

— the so-called "Camp David dividend". Indeed Israeli efforts to secure a formal relationship with the United States in the mid-1950s was rebuffed by the Eisenhower-Dulles administration and it was Britain and France that collaborated with Israel in the Suez War (without US knowledge). It was also then that the Eisenhower administration forced Israel to withdraw from the territories it occupied in the conflict under pain of sanctions.

Israel's special relationship with the United States — revolving around a broadly conceived ideological factor based on positive perception and sentiment evident in public opinion and official statements and manifest in political and diplomatic support and military and economic assistance — has not been enshrined in a legally binding commitment joining the two in a formal alliance. Despite the extensive links that have developed, the widespread belief in the existence of the commitment, and the assurances contained in various specific agreements, the exact nature and extent of the U.S. commitment to Israel remains imprecise. Israel has no mutual security treaty with the United States, nor is it a member of any alliance system requiring the United States to take up arms automatically on its behalf.

The United States commitment to Israel has taken the generalized form of presidential statements (rather than formal documents), which have reaffirmed the U.S. interest in supporting the political independence and territorial integrity of all Middle East states, including Israel. These statements do not, however, commit the United States to specific actions in particular circumstances. The arrangements has been codified in the Sinai II accords of 1975 and in the MOUs since 1981.

It has largely been assumed by both parties that the United States would come to Israel's assistance should it be gravely threatened; this perception has become particularly apparent during times of crisis. Despite this perception and the general feeling in Washington (and elsewhere) that the United States would take action if required, there is no assurance that this would be the case. Israeli leaders continue to be interested in military and economic assistance as the primary tangible expression of the U.S. commitment and have been particularly cautious about potential U.S. participation in a conflict, fearing that combat losses might lead to a situation analogous to that in Vietnam. Thus, the exact role of the United States in support of Israel, beyond diplomatic and political action and military and economic assistance, is unclear.

The United States is today an indispensable if not fully dependable ally. It provides Israel, through one form or another, with economic (governmental and private), technical, military, political, diplomatic, and moral support. It is seen as the ultimate resource against potential enemies, it is the source of Israel's sophisticated military hardware, and its interest in lasting peace is central to the Arab-Israel peace process. Although there is this positive relationship, there is also an Israeli reluctance, bred of history, to abdicate security to another party's judgment and action. Israel will continue to consider its perceptions of threat and security as decisive. In Israel's elite and collective popular judgement, the special relationship must be sustained. It has been a vital foundation of Israel's security and foreign policy for years. Based on shared democratic values and

similar conceptions of the world there have been concerns about threats from terrorism and dangerous (now called "rogue") states.

The two states maintain a remarkable degree of parallelism and congruence on broad policy goals. The policy consensus includes the need to prevent war, at both the regional and international levels, the need to maintain Israel's existence and security and to help provide for its economic well-being. At the same time, however, there was, is, and will be a divergence of interests that derives from a difference of perspective and overall policy environment. The United States has broader concerns resulting from its global obligations, whereas Israel's perspective is conditioned by its more restricted environment and lesser responsibilities. Israel's horizon is more narrowly defined and essentially limited to the survival of the state and a concern for Jewish communities and individuals that goes beyond the frontiers of the Jewish state.

Despite these areas of shared interests and concerns, and generally positive nature of the relationship, congruence is not always assured and Israelis also recall a series of negative episodes. They have other interests as well, and their perspective of the world emanates from different positions. Full accord being unattainable, there is nevertheless a need to reduce strains and discord in the relationship. There was and will be discord on issues relating to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and particularly the future of the Palestinians.

There has also been a divergence on methods and techniques to be employed, as well as discord on specific issues.

The general consensus on major issues does not ensure agreement on all aspects or specifics of each problem. As the dialogue has increasingly focused on details, rather than broad areas of agreement, there have been disturbances in the relationship. Both parties understand that this is inevitable but seek to minimize the areas of discord. Strains are probably inevitable given the extensive nature of the issues in the dialogue.

The objective of securing the special relationship that exists between Israel and the United States has developed over the years and is now a central focus of foreign policy objectives. This was not always so to the extent it now is. Today Israelis see the relationship as among the loftiest goals of policy. Sustaining and enhancing the relationship is a prerequisite for domestic political success.

Israel has developed a multifaceted and intense special relationship that is both vital and natural. It encompasses both the strategic imperatives of the Jewish state and the ideological connection. In the earliest days of Israeli independence, some argued for non-alignment in the cold war, but the central and dominating concept of David Ben-Gurion, and most of the political elite, was that Israel clearly stood with the West. From those early days Israel has emerged as a "major non-NATO ally" and a country clearly linked with the US for its political and strategic support as well as more clear economic and ideological reasons.

Changing administrations in Washington, and of governments in Jerusalem, have all affected the nature and content of the links between the United States and Israel within the broad parameters of the enduring special relationship. The patterns of agreement and discord established from the outset have manifested themselves subsequently — broad areas of concern on the more strategic and existential issues, accompanied by disagreement on the specifics of many of the elements of the Arab-Israeli conflict and on the means to achieve congruent objectives.

At Israel's birth the United States seemed to be a dispassionate, almost uninterested, midwife — its role was essential and unconventional but also unpredictable and hotly debated in U.S. policy circles. Today, more than fifty years later, some of the policy debate continues, and there are periods of discord in the relationship. Some of this reflects personality and related differences between U.S. and Israeli leaders. But there is little doubt about the overall nature of U.S. support for its small and still embattled ally.

In all relationships there are limits to the ability of one party to influence the other and limits beyond which a state will not go (and concessions it will not make) given its perception of its national interest. As with other states, Israel has imposed limits ("red lines") for its behavior and policies and there is an ultimate "independence" of action that Israel ascribes to itself. Many have assumed that because of the overwhelming importance of the United States to Israel (and especially because of the vast amounts of aid and political-diplomatic support) that the United States retains the ability to "influence" Israel to move in certain directions and adopt certain policies. There are a wide range of actions that Israel is likely to take at the suggestion of the United States. At the same time Israel is able to forestall such suggestions for a variety of reasons relating to the nature of the American political system (including checks and balances, the role of public opinion, the importance of lobbying groups, etc.) and others that are a direct consequence of Israel's self-perception. For Israel, as for other states, core values and vital national interests are not subject to compromise or policy modification, even under substantial external influence from an important and close friend. Reflecting the perspective of numerous Israeli leaders, before and since, Yitzhak Shamir noted in the Knesset in September 1982: "on the fundamental life-and-death issues ... we have no choice but to stand by our position firmly, strongly and clearly, even against our great friend the United States." For the Jewish state the ultimate decisions on peace, security and well-being remain in the decisions of its senior decision-makers.

Readings on the Israel-United States Special Relationship –

A Select Bibliography of Books

The U.S.-Israel relationship has been the subject of extensive writing by scholars, academics, politicians, journalists, and other observers. Also, many of the participants in the diplomatic and other connections between these two states have written memoirs and other works that provide interesting, although not always wholly accurate, accounts of the linkage. These are important sources and tell us a good deal about what happened, how these two states interacted, and -- often -- why.

The list which follows is a select one -- it contains only books and monographs written in English. The reader is reminded of a vast periodical literature and is referred to the bibliographical indexes just noted as well as to the bibliographies and notes in the works cited below for guidance to that literature. In addition to scholarly studies, it includes works that advocate a particular approach in the relationship and those that are highly critical of it, the latter group include some that are of the conspiracy theory genre. In sum they help to explicate the special relationship between the United States and Israel.

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ISRAEL FACES THE FUTURE

At the heart of Israel's agenda for the future is the continuing Arab-Israeli conflict, with its dimensions of potential conflict and of peace, but placed within the context of numerous territorial and political disputes still to be resolved. Israel's need and desire for peace is not a subject for debate among Israelis, although the means to that end are. Nevertheless, the quest for peace remains a central theme of national life and Israelis are preoccupied with survival and security.

Israel has fought six major wars and countless skirmishes with the Arabs, has built an impressive and highly sophisticated but costly military capability, and holds a strategic edge over its neighbors. Despite, or perhaps because of, its battlefield successes and the specter of future combat, Israelis continuously recalculate the increasingly sophisticated military balance between themselves and the Arab and Islamic worlds and concerns about

weapons acquisitions, force structure, and capability, as well as willingness of Arab and Islamic nations to engage in battle with Israel, are never far from the center of attention. Factors in these assessments include the post-Gulf War build up of conventional weapons by several of Israel's immediate neighbors as well as the transfer of nonconventional (nuclear, biological, and chemical) weapons and weapons technology and long-range missiles by extra-regional actors (such as Russia, China, and North Korea) to militant Arab countries (such as Iraq, Libya, and Syria) and to Iran. The possibility of war with potentially high levels of casualties and other unbearable costs remains a matter of deep public concern.

For most Israelis, the prospects for a future in which they will live in peace with their immediate and more distant neighbors in the Middle East seems to lie at a point beyond the immediate future. This perception was not significantly affected by the process of negotiations ensuing from the Madrid Peace Conference or by the completion of interim agreements with the PLO or the signing of the peace treaty with Jordan, despite the fact that each of these events may be viewed as part of a long-term process that will lead to a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Israelis also hope that an eventual end of the conflict with the Arabs will allow them to address a multitude of domestic challenges—relating, *inter alia*, to the role of religion in the state, social and economic disparities among Jewish Israelis, and the political status of Israel's non-Jewish citizenry—most of which were subsumed during the first fifty years of statehood to the more immediate challenge of protecting the state against existential external threat.

ISRAEL – DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE (1948)

DECLARATION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL

ERETZ ISRAEL [the Land of Israel] was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and political identity was shaped. Here they first attained to statehood, created cultural values of national and universal significance and gave to the world the eternal Book of Books.

After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people kept faith with it throughout their Dispersion and never ceased to pray and hope for their return to it and for the restoration in it of their political freedom.

Impelled by this historic and traditional attachment, Jews strove in every successive generation to re-establish themselves in their ancient homeland. In recent decades they returned in their masses. Pioneers, *ma'pilim* [immigrants coming to Eretz Israel in defiance of restrictive legislation] and defenders, they made deserts bloom, revived the Hebrew language, built villages and towns, and created a thriving community, controlling its own economy and culture, loving peace but knowing how to defend itself, bringing the blessings of progress to all the country's inhabitants, and aspiring towards independent nationhood.

In the year 5657 (1897), at the summons of the spiritual father of the Jewish State, Theodor Herzl, the First Zionist Congress convened and proclaimed the right of the Jewish people to national rebirth in its own country.

This right was recognized in the Balfour Declaration of the 2nd November, 1917, and re-affirmed in the Mandate of the League of Nations which, in particular, gave international sanction to the historic connection between the Jewish people and Eretz-Israel and to the right of the Jewish people to rebuild its National Home.

The catastrophe which recently befell the Jewish people—the massacre of millions of Jews in Europe—was another clear demonstration of the urgency of solving the problem of its homelessness by re-establishing in Eretz-Israel the Jewish State, which would open the gates of the homeland wide to every Jew and confer upon the Jewish people the status of a fully-privileged member of the comity of nations.

Survivors of the Nazi holocaust in Europe, as well as Jews from other parts of the world, continued to migrate to Eretz-Israel, undaunted by difficulties, restrictions and dangers, and never ceased to assert their right to a life of dignity, freedom and honest toil in their national homeland.

In the Second World War, the Jewish community of this country contributed its full share to the struggle of the freedom- and peace-loving nations against the forces of Nazi wickedness and, by the blood of its soldiers and its war effort, gained the right to be reckoned among the peoples who founded the United Nations.

On the 29th November, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the establishment of a Jewish State in Eretz-Israel; the General Assembly required the inhabitants of Eretz-Israel to take such steps as were necessary on their part for the implementation of that resolution. This recognition by the United Nations of the right of the Jewish people to establish their State is irrevocable.

This right is the natural right of the Jewish people to be masters of their own fate, like all other nations, in their own sovereign State.

ACCORDINGLY WE, MEMBERS OF THE PEOPLE'S COUNCIL, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF ERETZ-ISRAEL AND OF THE ZIONIST MOVEMENT, ARE HERE ASSEMBLED ON THE DAY OF THE TERMINATION OF THE BRITISH MANDATE OVER ERETZ-ISRAEL AND, BY VIRTUE OF OUR NATURAL AND HISTORIC RIGHT AND ON THE STRENGTH OF THE RESOLUTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HEREBY DECLARE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JEWISH STATE IN ERETZ-ISRAEL, TO BE KNOWN AS THE STATE OF ISRAEL.

WE DECLARE that, with effect from the moment of the termination of the Mandate, being tonight, the eve of Sabbath, the 6th Iyar, 5708 (15th May, 1948), until the establishment of the elected, regular authorities of the State in accordance with the

Constitution which shall be adopted by the Elected Constituent Assembly not later than the 1st October, 1948, the People's Council shall act as a Provisional Council of State, and its executive organ, the People's Administration, shall be the Provisional Government of the Jewish State, to be called "Israel."

THE STATE OF ISRAEL will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

THE STATE OF ISRAEL is prepared to cooperate with the agencies and representatives of the United Nations in implementing the resolution of the General Assembly of the 29th November, 1947, and will take steps to bring about the economic union of the whole of Eretz-Israel.

WE APPEAL to the United Nations to assist the Jewish people in the building-up of its State and to receive the State of Israel into the comity of nations.

WE APPEAL—in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months—to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions.

WE EXTEND our hand to all neighbouring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighbourliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land. The State of Israel is prepared to do its share in common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East.

WE APPEAL to the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora to rally round the Jews of Eretz-Israel in the tasks of immigration and upbuilding and to stand by them in the great struggle for the realization of the age-old dream—the redemption of Israel.

PLACING OUR TRUST IN THE ALMIGHTY, WE AFFIX OUR SIGNATURES TO THIS PROCLAMATION AT THIS SESSION OF THE PROVISIONAL COUNCIL OF STATE, ON THE SOIL OF THE HOMELAND, IN THE CITY OF TEL-AVIV, ON THIS SABBATH EVE, THE 5TH DAY OF IYAR, 5708 (14 MAY, 1948).

CHARTS AND TABLES

President

Prime Minister

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Minister of Defense
 Minister of Finance
 Israel Defense Forces: Chief of Staff
 Attorney General
 Immigration of Palestine and Israel, 1882-1989
 Population at End of Year

President

Chaim Weizmann	1949-1952
Yitzhak Ben Zvi	1952-1963
Shneur Zalman Shazar	1963-1973
Ephraim Katzir	1973-1978
Yitzhak Navon	1978-1983
Chaim Herzog	1983-1993
Ezer Weizman	1993-2000
Moshe Katzav	2000-

Prime Minister

David Ben-Gurion	1948-1954
Moshe Sharett	1954-1955
David Ben-Gurion	1955-1963
Levi Eshkol	1963-1969
Golda Meir	1969-1974
Yitzhak Rabin	1974-1977
Menahem Begin	1977-1983
Yitzhak Shamir	1983-1984
Shimon Peres	1984-1986
Yitzhak Shamir	1986-1992
Yitzhak Rabin	1992-1995
Shimon Peres	1995-1996
Benjamin Netanyahu	1996-1999
Ehud Barak	1999-2001
Ariel Sharon	2001-

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Moshe Sharett	1948-1956
Golda Meir	1956-1966

Abba Eban	1966-1974
Yigal Allon	1974-1977
Moshe Dayan	1977-1979
Menahem Begin	1979-1980
Yitzhak Shamir	1980-1986
Shimon Peres	1986-1988
Moshe Arens	1988-1990
David Levy	1990-1992
Shimon Peres	1992-1995
Ehud Barak	1995-1996
David Levy	1996-1998
Benjamin Netanyahu	1998-1998
Ariel Sharon	1998-1999
David Levy	1999-2000
Shlomo Ben-Ami (acting)	2000-

Minister of Defense

David Ben-Gurion	1948-1954
Pinhas Lavon	1954-1955
David Ben-Gurion	1955-1963
Levi Eshkol	1963-1974
Moshe Dayan	1967-1974
Shimon Peres	1974-1977
Ezer Weizman	1977-1980
Menahem Begin	1980-1981
Ariel Sharon	1981-1983
Moshe Arens	1983-1984
Yitzhak Rabin	1984-1990
Moshe Arens	1990-1992
Yitzhak Rabin	1992-1995
Shimon Peres	1995-1996
Yitzhak Mordechai	1996-1998
Moshe Arens	1999-1999
Ehud Barak	1999-

Minister of Finance

Eliezer Kaplan	1948-1952
Levi Eshkol	1952-1963

Pinhas Sapir	1963-1968
Ze'ev Sharef	1968-1969
Pinhas Sapir	1969-1974
Yehoshua Rabinowitz	1974-1977
Simha Ehrlich	1977-1980
Yigael Hurvitz	1980-1981
Yoram Aridor	1981-1983
Yigal Cohen-Orgad	1983-1984
Yitzhak Moda'i	1984-1986
Moshe Nissim	1986-1988
Shimon Peres	1988-1990
Yitzhak Moda'i	1990-1992
Avraham Shochat	1992-1996
Dan Meridor	1996-1997
Yaacov Ne'eman	1997-1998
Meir Sheerit	1999-1999
Avraham Shochat	1999-

Israel Defense Forces: Chief of Staff

Yaacov Dori	1948-1949
Yigael Yadin	1949-1952
Mordechai Maklef	1952-1953
Moshe Dayan	1953-1958
Chaim Laskov	1958-1961
Zvi Tsur	1961-1964
Yitzhak Rabin	1964-1968
Chaim Bar-Lev	1968-1972
David Elazar	1972-1974
Mordechai Gur	1974-1978
Raphael Eitan	1978-1983
Moshe Levy	1983-1987
Dan Shomron	1987-1991
Ehud Barak	1991-1994
Amnon Lipkin-Shahak	1995-1998
Shaul Mofaz	1998-

Attorney General

Ya'acov Shimshon Shapira	1948-1950
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Haim Cohen	1950-1960
Gideon Hausner	1960-1963
Moshe Ben Ze'ev	1963-1968
Me'ir Shamgar	1958-1975
Aharon Barak	1975-1978
Yitzhak Zamir	1978-1986
Yosef Harish	1986-1992
Michael Ben Ya'ir	1992-1996
Ronnie Bar-On	1997 (3 days)
Elyakim Rubinstein	1997-

**Immigration to Palestine and Israel
1882-1989
(part 1 of 2)**

1882-1903	20,000-30,000
1904-1914	35,000-40,000
1919-1923	35,183
1924-1931	81,613
1932-1938	197,235
1939-1945	81,808
1945-1948, May 15	56,467
1948 (May 15-Dec 31)	101,819
1949	239,576
1950	170,215
1951	175,129
1952	24,369
1953	11,326
1954	18,370
1955	37,4878
1956	56,234
1957	71,224
1958	27,082
1959	23,895
1960	24,510
1961	47,638
1962	61,328
1963	64,364
1964	54,716
1965	30,736

1966	15,730
1967	14,327
1968	20,544
1969	37,804

(continued)

**Immigration to Palestine and Israel
1882-1989
(part 2 of 2)**

1970	36,750
1971	41,930
1972	55,888
1973	54,886
1974	31,981
1975	20,028
1976	19,754
1977	21,429
1978	26,394
1979	37,222
1980	20,428
1981	12,599
1982	13,723
1983	16,906
1984	19,981
1985	10,642
1986	9,505
1987	12,965
1988	13,034
1989	24,050
1990	199,500
1991	176,000
1992	77,100
1993	77,080
1994	82,000
1995	76,400
1996	70,605
1997	66,500
1998	56,700
1999 (as of September)	17,100

Population at End of Year
(thousands)
(part 1 of 2)

	Jews	Moslems	Christians	Druze & Others	Total
1948	758.7	----- 156.0 -----			
1949	1013.9	111.5	34.0	14.5	1173.9
1950	1203.0	116.1	36.0	15.0	1370.1
1951	1404.4	118.9	39.0	15.5	1577.8
1952	1450.2	122.8	40.4	16.1	1629.5
1953	1483.6	127.6	41.4	16.8	1669.4
1954	1526.0	131.8	42.0	18.0	1717.8
1955	1590.5	136.3	43.3	19.0	1789.1
1956	1667.5	141.4	43.7	19.8	1872.4
1957	1762.8	146.8	45.8	20.5	1976.0
1958	1810.2	152.8	47.3	21.4	2031.7
1959	1858.8	159.2	48.3	22.3	2088.7
1960	1911.3	166.3	49.6	23.3	2150.4
1961	1981.7	179.4	51.3	26.3	2234.2
1962	2068.9	183.0	52.6	27.3	2331.8
1963	2155.6	192.2	53.9	28.5	2430.1
1964	2239.2	202.3	55.5	28.6	2525.6
1965	2299.1	212.4	57.1	29.8	2598.4
1966	2344.9	223.0	58.5	31.0	2657.4
1967	2383.6	289.6	71.0	32.1	2776.3
1968	2434.8	300.8	72.2	33.3	2841.1
1969	2506.8	314.5	73.5	34.6	2929.5
1970	2582.0	328.6	75.5	35.9	3022.1
1971	2662.0	344.0	77.3	37.3	3120.7
1972	2752.7	360.7	73.8	37.8	3225.0

(continued)
Population at End of Year
(thousands)
(part 2 of 2)

	Jews	Moslems	Christians	Druze & Others	Total
1973	2845.0	377.2	76.7	39.3	3338.2
1974	2906.9	395.2	78.7	40.8	3421.6
1975	2959.4	411.4	80.2	42.2	3493.2

1976	3020.4	429.1	82.0	43.9	3575.4
1977	3077.3	446.5	83.8	45.6	3653.2
1978	3141.2	463.6	85.5	47.3	3737.6
1979	3218.4	481.2	87.6	49.0	3836.2
1980	3282.7	498.3	89.9	50.7	3921.7
1981	3320.3	513.7	91.5	52.3	3977.9
1982	3373.2	530.8	94.0	65.6	4063.6
1983	3412.5	542.2	95.9	68.0	4118.6
1984	3471.7	559.7	98.2	70.0	4199.7
1985	3517.2	577.6	99.4	72.0	4266.2
1986	3561.4	595.0	100.9	74.0	4331.3
1987	3612.9	614.5	103.0	76.1	4406.5
1988	3659.0	634.6	105.0	78.1	4476.8
1989	3717.1	655.2	107.0	80.3	4559.6
1990	3946.7	679.8	115.7	81.9	4821.7
1991	3947.0	680.0	116.0	79.0	4822.0
1992	4177.0	715.0	135.0	86.0	5113.0
1993	4335.2	751.2	149.2	90.6	5327.6
1994	4441.1	782.4	158.7	93.0	5471.5
1995	4549.5	814.7	162.9	95.5	5619.0
1996	4637.4	840.8	184.3	97.9	5759.4
1997	4731.8	879.1	188.8	100.0	5900.0
1998	4783.0	901.3	129.6	102.6	6037.0

Israel and Jewish History -- A Selected Chronology

c.17th Century BCE The period of the Jewish Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob.

c.1250-1210 BCE The Exodus of the Jews from Egypt; wandering in the desert of Sinai and the conquest of Canaan under Joshua.

c.1020-1004 BCE King Saul. Establishment of the Israelite kingdom.

c.1004-965 BCE King David. Consolidation and expansion of the kingdom.

c.961-928 BCE King Solomon. The Temple is built in Jerusalem.

c.928 BCE Division of the state and the establishment of Kingdoms of Judah and Israel.

c.722 BCE Assyrian conquest of Samaria, Kingdom of Israel; large number of Jews exiled.

c.586 BCE Jerusalem is conquered and the Temple is destroyed. Mass deportation of Jews in the Babylonian captivity.

c.520-515 BCE The Temple is rebuilt.

c.167-160 BCE Hasmonean rebellion under Judah Maccabee.

164 BCE Jerusalem is liberated and the Temple is rededicated.

37-4 BCE Reign of Herod.

c.19 BCE The Temple is rebuilt.

66 AD/CE Jewish revolt against Rome.

70 Siege of Jerusalem; Destruction of the Temple by Romans. Direct Roman rule is imposed until 395. Beginning of the Jewish Diaspora. Beginning of the Jewish Diaspora.

73 Fall of Massada.

132-135 Bar Kochba War.

135 Jews are expelled from "Palestine", a name given to Judea by Rome.

395-638 Byzantine rule.

638 Arab Muslim armies conquer Jerusalem.

c. 636-1072 Arab rule.

1072-1099 Seljuq rule.

1099 Jerusalem captured by the Crusaders.

1099-1291 Crusader rule with interruptions.

1187 Jerusalem is captured by Saladin.

1291-1516 Mameluke rule.

C. 1517-1917 Ottoman Turkish rule.

1882-1903 First Aliya.

1894 Dreyfus trial in France.

1896 Publication of *Der Judenstaat* by Theodor Herzl.

1897 First Zionist Congress is held in Basle, Switzerland. The World Zionist Organization is established.

1904 Herzl dies.

1904-1914 Second Aliya.

1917 November 2 The Balfour Declaration is issued.

1919-1923 Third Aliya.

1920 The British Mandate over Palestine is granted at San Remo although it is not formalized until 1922. Herbert Samuel is appointed High Commissioner for Palestine. The Histadrut and Hagana are founded.

1922 July Palestine Mandate ratified by League of Nations.

1924-1928 Fourth Aliya.

1925 Hebrew University is inaugurated on Mt. Scopus, Jerusalem.

1929 Arab riots take place in Jerusalem and massacres occur in Hebron and Safed.

1929-1939 Fifth Aliya.

1935 The Revisionist movement, headed by Vladimir Zeev Jabotinsky, secedes from the World Zionist Organization and establishes the new Zionist Organization.

1937 Peel Commission Report; first proposal to partition Palestine..

1942 May Biltmore Program promulgated by Zionists at conference in New York.

1945 November Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry established.

1947 Great Britain turns the Palestine issue over to the United Nations. The United Nations Special Committee On Palestine (UNSCOP) examines the problem and recommends solutions.

November 29 The United Nations General Assembly adopts a resolution (UNGA Res 181 (II)) providing for an independent Jewish state in Palestine to be united economically with an independent Arab state. An international regime is to be established in Jerusalem. US and USSR support the partition plan.

1948 May 14 Proclamation of the independence of the State of Israel. US extends *de facto* recognition. Ben-Gurion becomes first Prime Minister of Israel.

May 15 The British Mandate for Palestine is terminated; Arab armies of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria invade and the first Arab-Israeli War (Israel's War of Independence) officially begins. The United States and the Soviet Union recognize Israel.

December 11 UNGA adopts Resolution 194.

1949 February 16 Chaim Weizmann is elected the first President of Israel.

February 24 Armistice Agreement with Egypt.

March 10 The first regular Government is established under David Ben-Gurion as Prime Minister.

March 23 Armistice Agreement with Lebanon.

April 3 Armistice Agreement with Jordan.

May 11 Israel becomes a member of the United Nations.

July 20 Armistice Agreement with Syria.

December Abdullah annexes that part of Palestine occupied by the Arab Legion (West Bank) and East Jerusalem. (Annexation ratified by Jordanian parliament in April 1950).

December 13 A resolution to transfer the Knesset and the Government to Jerusalem is adopted.

1953 Ben-Gurion resigns as Prime Minister. Moshe Sharett becomes Prime Minister.

1956 October 29 Israel moves against Egyptian fedayeen bases and prepares for attack in the Sinai Peninsula to eliminate commando bases. Israel invades Sinai. Sinai/Suez (second Arab-Israeli war) War begins.

November 5 France and the United Kingdom invade the Suez Canal Zone.

November 7 Egypt, France, and the United Kingdom accept the cease-fire.

1957 January 22 Israel evacuates all of Sinai except Gaza and Sharm El-sheikh.

March 1 Israel agrees to evacuate Gaza and Sharm el-Sheikh.

March 8 UNEF forces take over from Israel the garrisoning of Sharm al-Sheikh and the administration of the Gaza Strip.

1960 April 26 Israel's National Water Council approves a plan for laying a giant conduit to carry water from the Sea of Galilee to southern Israel.

May 23 Adolf Eichmann is kidnaped from Argentina for trial in Israel.

1961 April 11 The Eichmann Trial opens in Jerusalem.

1962 May 31 Adolf Eichmann is executed.

September 27 The Foreign Ministry announces that the United States has agreed to supply Israel with Hawk ground-to-air missiles for defense. First direct sale of significant American weapons to Israel.

1963 June 16 David Ben-Gurion resigns from his post as Prime Minister and Minister of Defense.

June 26 A new government, with Levi Eshkol as Prime Minister, takes office.

1964 January Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is created in Cairo. Ahmed Shukairi becomes first chairman.

1965 January 1 Fatah is established and launches its first attack against Israel

1967 April 7 During an air clash six Syrian MIG 21s are shot down by Israeli planes.

May 22/May 23 UAR President Gamal Abdul Nasser announces an Egyptian blockade of the Gulf of Aqaba, cutting off Israel's access to the Red Sea through the port of Eilat.

June 1 Prime Minister Levi Eshkol forms a broadly-based "National Unity Government" in which former Chief of Staff Moshe Dayan becomes Minister of Defense.

June 5 Hostilities commence between Israel and the Arab states in the Six Day (third Arab-Israeli) War.

June 10 The USSR breaks diplomatic relations with Israel. Other Soviet bloc European countries, except Romania, follow suit.

June 12 In a policy speech to parliament, Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol declares that Israel could not return to the prewar situation and demands that the Arabs make peace with Israel.

August-September Arab Summit Meeting at Khartoum, Sudan declares no recognition, no negotiation, and no peace with Israel.

November 22 The United Nations Security Council adopts Resolution 242.

1969 The War of Attrition (the fourth Arab-Israeli War) begins along the Suez Canal.

March 7 Golda Meir becomes Prime Minister.

1970 August 7 The War of Attrition is ended by a cease-fire.

September Jordan civil war between armed forces and the PLO. PLO is ousted from Jordan by Hussein's army.

1972 May 30 Japanese gunmen, acting for the PFLP, shoot up Lod Airport.

September 5 Munich Olympics massacre of Israeli athletes by Black September terrorists.

1973 October 6 The fifth Arab-Israeli (Yom Kippur or Ramadan War) begins.

November The Agranat Commission established.

November 11 Israel-Egypt cease-fire is signed at Kilometer 101.

December 21 Geneva Peace Conference is convened.

1974 January 17 Egypt-Israel Disengagement Agreement is signed at Kilometer 101.

April 22 Yitzhak Rabin becomes Prime Minister.

May 31 Israel and Syria sign a Disengagement Agreement in Geneva.

October 28 Arab League summit meeting at Rabat, Morocco declares the PLO as "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people".

November 13 Yasser Arafat addresses the UN General Assembly. PLO is later granted observer status.

1975 September 4 Egypt and Israel sign Sinai II disengagement agreement.

November 10 United Nations General Assembly resolution declares Zionism to be a form of racism.

1976 July 4 Israeli commandos free hostages at Entebbe Airport, Uganda.

1977 April Rabin resigns as Prime Minister. Shimon Peres is selected as Labor Party leader.

May 17 Election for the Ninth Knesset. Likud, under the leadership of Menachem Begin, emerges as the largest party.

June 21 Begin forms the government coalition with himself as Prime Minister, the first non-Labor government in Israel.

November President Anwar Sadat of Egypt announces to the Egyptian National Assembly his willingness to visit Israel to discuss peace; the Israeli Knesset overwhelmingly approves an invitation to Sadat. Sadat arrives in Jerusalem and addresses the Israeli Knesset. Negotiations begin.

1978 March Following an attack on an Israeli bus, Israel launches (on March 14) Operation Litani against Palestinian bases in Lebanon.

September 5-17 Sadat, Begin, and Carter meet at the Summit at Camp David, Maryland. The Camp David Accords are signed on the 17th at the White House in Washington, DC.

December 10 Nobel Peace Prize is awarded jointly to Sadat and Begin

1979 March 26 The Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty is signed in Washington.

1980 February Egypt and Israel exchange ambassadors.

July 30 The Knesset adopts a Basic Law reaffirming united Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

1981 June 7 Israel destroys the Iraqi Osirak nuclear reactor near Baghdad.

June 30 Election for the Tenth Knesset. Likud secures the largest number of seats. A Begin coalition government secures a vote of confidence from the Knesset in August.

June 6 War in Lebanon (sixth Arab-Israeli war) begins.

November 30 The United States and Israel sign a Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Cooperation.

December 14 Israel extends its "law and jurisdiction" to the Golan Heights.

1982 April 25 Israel completes its withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula and returns it to Egypt.

June 6 Israel invades Lebanon. War in Lebanon (Operation Peace for Galilee). Israel launches an attempt to destroy PLO bases in Lebanon.

1983 May 17 Israel and Lebanon sign an agreement concluded with the assistance of United States Secretary of State George Shultz.

September 16 Menachem Begin resigns as Prime Minister.

October Yitzhak Shamir forms a new government and takes office as Prime Minister.

1984 March 5 Lebanon abrogates the May 17, 1983 agreement with Israel.

1985 January Israel announces its intent to withdraw unilaterally from Lebanon.

July The Israel Defense Forces completes its withdrawal from Lebanon. A security zone is established in southern Lebanon astride the Israeli-Lebanese frontier.

1987 December 8 An Israeli truck hits a Palestinian car in Gaza killing four people. Anti Israeli violence erupts throughout Gaza.

December 9 An Arab uprising (intifada) begins in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip challenges Israel's authority in the territories.

1988 February Hamas is created in Gaza

November 15 The Palestine National Council (PNC), meeting in Algiers, declares an independent Palestinian state and issues ambiguous statements concerning acceptance of UNSC Resolutions 242 and 338.

December 13 Arafat, at press conference, recognizes Israel's right to exist, accepts UNSC Res. 242 and 338, renounces terrorism. US announces that it will begin a dialogue with the PLO in Tunis.

December 22 Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir presents his coalition government to the Knesset. It is approved by a vote of 84 to 19 with three abstentions.

1989 March 15 Egypt takes control of Taba.

1990 January Soviet Jews begin to arrive in Israel in large numbers.

March 15 The Knesset passes a motion of no-confidence in the government led by Yitzhak Shamir by a vote of 60 to 55.

June 11 The Knesset approves Yitzhak Shamir's government composed of Likud and right-wing and religious parties.

June 20 President George Bush suspends the US dialogue with the PLO.

September 30 Consular relations are reestablished between Israel and the Soviet Union.

November 5 Rabbi Meir Kahane, leader of the Kach Party, is assassinated in New York.

November 25 The cabinet approves Gen. Ehud Barak to replace Lt. Gen. Dan Shomron as chief of staff of the IDF when Shomron's tenure ends in April 1991.

1991 October 18 Israel and the Soviet Union restore diplomatic relations.

October 30 Peace conference organized by the United States and the Soviet Union meets in Madrid, Spain.

December 10 Beginning of Washington rounds of bilateral Arab-Israeli negotiations.

December 16 United Nations General Assembly repeals the "Zionism is Racism" resolution.

1992 June 23 Election for the Thirteenth Knesset. Israel Labor Party wins under leadership of Yitzhak Rabin.

January 1993-February Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin discloses existence of Oslo talks to Peres, who in turn informs Rabin. Oslo negotiators begin drafting declaration of principles for interim Israel-PLO agreement.

March 23 Benjamin Netanyahu is elected leader of the Likud Party, replacing Yitzhak Shamir.

May Rabin agrees to upgrade Oslo talks to official level.

July 25 Israel launches bombardment of Hezbollah bases in southern Lebanon ("Operation Accountability"); US brokers cease-fire and agreement between Israel and Lebanon (acting on Hezbollah's behalf) to avoid firing on the other's civilian populations.

August 20 Israeli and PLO officials initial Declaration of Principles in Oslo.

August 30 Israel cabinet approves Declaration of Principles with no amendments allowed.

September 9 Rabin and Arafat exchange letters of mutual recognition on behalf of Israel and the PLO.

September 13 Israel-PLO Declaration of Principles is signed by Peres and the PLO's Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) on the White House lawn in Washington. Prime Minister Rabin and PLO leader Arafat shake hands.

September 14 Israel and Jordan sign Common Agenda for future negotiations. Rabin meets with King Hassan II in Morocco.

September 23 Knesset approves DOP by vote of 61-50 with 8 abstentions.

1994 April 29 Israel-PLO economic cooperation agreement signed in Paris.

May 4 Israel and the PLO sign the Cairo agreement for establishing self-rule in Gaza Strip and Jericho.

June 16 Israel and Vatican establish full diplomatic relations.

July 25 Washington Declaration on Israel-Jordan peace is signed; Rabin and King Hussein address joint session of US Congress.

August 3 Knesset, by vote of 77-9 with 4 abstentions, approves resolution reaffirming Jerusalem's status as the "eternal capital of Israel, and Israel alone".

August 29 "Early empowerment" agreement on transfer of civilian authority in parts of West Bank and Gaza Strip is signed.

October 26 Israel and Jordan sign Peace Treaty; King Hussein subsequently makes first official visit to Israel where he and Rabin formally exchange copies of the treaty.

November 27 Israel and Jordan establish diplomatic relations.

December IDF Chief of Staff Ehud Barak and his Syrian counterpart, Hikmat Shihabi, meet in Washington to discuss security arrangements for the Golan Heights and related matters.

December 10 Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres and Yasser Arafat receive the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway.

December 26 Rabin becomes first Israeli prime minister to visit Persian Gulf Sultanate of Oman.

1995 March 14 Israel and Syria agree to resume direct peace talks involving Israel's Ambassador to Washington, Itamar Rabinovich, and his Syrian counterpart, Walid al-Moualem.

October 24 US Congress passes "Jerusalem Embassy Relocation Act", requiring transfer of Embassy to Jerusalem by May 1999.

November 4 Yitzhak Rabin is assassinated by Yigal Amir in Tel Aviv; Peres becomes Interim Prime Minister; inquiry headed by retired Supreme Court President Meir Shamgar finds serious lapse in security around Rabin but no evidence of conspiracy.

November 22 The Knesset votes its confidence in the new government of Shimon Peres by a vote of 62-8 with 32 abstentions.

1996 February 20 David Levy announces the establishment of his new political party, Gesher (Bridge).

May 29 In the first direct election of the prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu defeats Shimon Peres by less than 1% (50.4% to 49.5%),

though among Jewish voters there is an 11% differential (55.5% to 44.5%). Concurrent election to 14th Knesset is held.

1998 January 4 David Levy resigns as foreign minister and withdraws his Geshet faction from the governing coalition to protest stalemate in peace process and proposed budget cuts.

November 17 The Knesset ratifies the Wye River Memorandum by vote of 75-19, with 9 abstentions and 14 absent.

November 18 Foreign Minister Sharon and Palestinian Authority minister Abu-Mazen (Mahmoud Abbas) formally launch final-status negotiations.

December 22 Dan Meridor quits Likud, announcing intention to run for prime minister as head of a new centrist political party. This proposed party ultimately is subsumed within the new Center Party headed by Yitzhak Mordechai.)

December 28 Ze'ev Binyamin Begin quits Likud, announcing intention to enter race for prime minister as head of New Herut (Herut Hahadasha) Party. This party subsequently is incorporated into new right-wing National Union coalition, with Begin as its candidate for prime minister.

1999 March 25 Azmi (Ahmed) Bishara becomes first Israeli Arab to declare his candidacy for Prime Minister.

May 15-16 On the eve of general elections, Azmi Bishara, Yitzhak Mordechai, and Ze'ev Binyamin Begin, withdraw from prime ministerial race, creating 2-way contest between Benjamin Netanyahu and Ehud Barak.

May 17 Israel Labor Party/One Israel leader Ehud Barak defeats the Likud's Benjamin Netanyahu in the direct election for Prime Minister, receiving 56.08% of the popular vote (1,791,020) compared to 43.92 (1,402,474) for Netanyahu. In elections for the 15th Knesset, One Israel wins 26 seats, Likud 19, and Shas 17.

July 6 The Knesset approves Ehud Barak's government and policy guidelines and he is sworn in as prime minister. Barak presents his seven party, 75-member governing coalition and its program before the Knesset for ratification; in his inaugural speech as Prime Minister, Barak urges Israel's Arab neighbors to resume pursuit of peace initiated by his mentor, Yitzhak Rabin. Labor MK Avraham Burg is elected speaker of the 15th Knesset.

September 2 Ariel Sharon is elected leader of the Likud Party.

September 4 Barak and Arafat sign agreement at Sharm el-Sheikh, to implement outstanding elements of the October 1998 Wye River Memorandum, a target date for completing final-status peace negotiations is set for September 2000.

September 13 Foreign Minister David Levy and Palestinian negotiator Abu Mazen formally launched the final status peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians.

October 28 Mauritania establishes diplomatic ties with Israel, becoming the third Arab country (after Egypt and Jordan) to do so.

November 8 Israel and the PLO begin permanent status talks in earnest in Ramallah.

December Evidence is uncovered of President Ezer Weizman's having received substantial financial gifts; Weizman resists growing pressure to resign.

December 8 President Clinton announces agreement of Israel and Syria to resume formal talks.

December 15-16 Barak and Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk al-Sharaa meet with Clinton in Washington.

2000 January 3-10 Barak and Sharaa and their respective delegations meet with U.S. mediators in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. Clinton presents a 7-page document designed to "bridge" differences between Israeli and Syrian positions on key issues, and to serve as a blueprint for a comprehensive peace treaty.

Bibliography – A Selected Guide to Further Reading

The academic and scholarly literature on Israel is massive, although uneven in both areas and subjects covered and quality of analysis and style. The following selected list records some of the major and more useful works available for further reading.

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