

The Misguided Alliance

By Cheryl A. Rubenberg

On February 3, 1948, an election year, Secretary of Defense James Forrestal, an opponent of the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, warned that, even though failure to go along with the Zionists might cost President Truman the states of New York, Pennsylvania and California, "it was about time that somebody should pay some consideration to whether we might not lose the United States."¹

On April 6, 1986, at the annual conference of the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee, Thomas Dine, AIPAC's executive director, quoted Secretary of State George Shultz as saying that the goal of U.S. strategic cooperation was to "build institutional arrangements so that eight years from now, if there is a secretary of state who is not positive about Israel, he will not be able to overcome the bureaucratic relationship between Israel and the United States that we have established."²

The once open debate of the 1940's on whether the U.S. should support a state for Jews in the Arab heartland has evolved into a political orthodoxy of the 1980's that considers the U.S.-Israeli tie the most important—and unquestionable—cornerstone of American Middle East policy. How did the transformation occur?

A variety of reasons are cited to ex-

plain this most unique political alignment; however, in the final analysis two factors account for the U.S.-Israeli partnership.

First, is the perception, dominant for nearly three decades in important sectors of the foreign policymaking elite, that sees Israel as an extension of American power: the so-called "strategic asset" thesis. This thesis forms the basis of U.S. Middle East policy and holds that Israel promotes American interests by: (1) acting as a barrier against Soviet expansion; (2) maintaining regional stability through its absolute military superiority; and (3) ensuring the survival of pro-American Arab regimes.

The second factor is the pro-Israeli "lobby"—passionately committed, well-organized, and well-financed

groups, who have played a major role in reinforcing the strategic asset idea. The lobby exercises its leverage in a variety of ways, including: building of coalitions with non-Jewish constituencies such as organized labor and Christian fundamentalists; influencing the media and public opinion; and, ultimately, through interest-group activities that impact on the electoral system, profoundly affecting both Congress and the Presidency.

In a January 1984 *Link* article I detailed the activities of the pro-Israeli lobby in the United States. This article will examine—and challenge—the assumption that Israel is a strategic asset to U.S. national interests, "national" here meaning that which involves the maximum "good" for the greatest number of Americans.

James Forrestal

Navy Department



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About This Issue

This issue's feature article consists of two parts:

Pages 1-6 examine the most common arguments offered in support of the claim that Israel is a U.S. strategic asset: Israel checks Soviet expansionism into the oil-rich Middle East; Israel's military superiority maintains regional stability; Israel safeguards pro-American Arab regimes from domestic insurrection; Israel provides critical intelligence information to the U.S.; Israel promotes U.S. corporate and commercial interests; Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East and thus a "natural ally" of the United States.

Pages 6-13 trace the historical evolution of the "strategic asset" thesis from the Truman administration up to the present.

Complementing this historical survey are the two new selections on our Book List. They are 1949: *The First Israelis*, reviewed on page 14, and the new edition of Livia Rokach's *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*. Both books are based on recently declassified documents and personal diaries which provide dramatic new insights into the attitudes and intentions of David Ben-Gurion, Moshe Sharett, and other Israeli officials.

These and other books on the Middle East are available at discount prices from A.M.E.U.; see page 15 for details.

John F. Mahoney,
Executive Director

Israel: U.S. Asset or Liability?

America's primary foreign policy objective since World War II has been limiting Soviet expansionism around the globe, particularly in the oil-rich Middle East. Yet, far from containing Soviet influence, Israel's aggressive militarism has actually enabled Moscow to extend its penetration of the region by forcing Arab states to turn to the Soviet Union for arms, technical advice and strategic alliances to protect their national security. For example: Subsequent to a massive Israeli raid on Gaza in 1955, Egypt purchased weapons from the Soviet Union, breaking the exclusive hold of the Western powers over the region. In 1969, following Israel's deep penetration air raids into Egyptian territory (including the suburbs of

Cairo), Egypt requested and received Soviet advisors and Moscow's most advanced military equipment. After Israel decimated Syria's air force and missile batteries in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley during the 1982 war, the Soviets upgraded Syria's military capacity to unprecedented levels of sophistication. And, when in 1985, the Israeli lobby pressured the U.S. Congress to disapprove a \$1.6 billion arms deal with Jordan, the Jordanians turned to the Soviet Union for missiles, armored personnel carriers, tanks and fighter planes.³

Suppose that Moscow did attempt to interrupt oil production in the Gulf or interfere with Western access, could Israel protect us against such a Soviet challenge? Former Under-

secretary of State George Ball has argued forcefully that with a population of only slightly more than three million people and a location far from the Gulf, Israel could do little to halt a serious Soviet threat, adding that "any attempt by the United States to use it as a forward base would automatically alienate the Arab oil-exporting states we would be seeking to protect."⁴

An equally important question is *would* Israel provide the U.S. assistance in the event of a U.S.-Soviet confrontation in the Gulf? A significant divergence of purpose between the Israeli and American interest in "strategic cooperation" came to light after the two countries signed a Strategic Cooperation Agreement in 1983. The Reagan administration believed the accord formalized Israel's commitment to defending the Arabian Gulf against the threat of Soviet encroachment. Israel, however, was only interested in assuring American support for its involvement in future ground and air wars with the Arabs. Prominent Israeli military leaders, said to be "alarmed" by the agreement, opposed to it as a "diversion" from dealing with the Arabs, while numerous high-ranking political officials objected to the accord as causing "unnecessary problems with the Soviet Union on matters such as Jewish immigration."⁵

Such contradictions raise serious questions about Israel's value in containing Soviet expansionism.

Nor does the argument that Israel maintains regional stability through its absolute military superiority fare well under scrutiny. Arab-Israeli animosity has left the region in constant turmoil, triggering seven major wars—1948, 1956, 1967, 1969-70 (the War of Attrition), 1973, 1978 (the first Israeli invasion of Lebanon) and 1982—in addition to a continuous series of raids and reprisals. Israel initiated four of these wars (1956, 1967, 1978 and 1982) and contributed significantly to the onset and/or intensification of the other three. In one example, after Israel initiated the 1967 war, its occupation of Syrian and Egyptian lands led Cairo and Damascus to undertake a limited campaign in Oc-

tober 1973 to regain their national territory. With the exception of the 1948 war, no Arab state has launched an attack against the pre-1967 borders of Israel.

The irony, of course, is that the major cause of Middle Eastern instability is the unresolved question of Palestine. Israel exists at the expense of the Palestinians, whose homes and lands were usurped and who were transformed into stateless refugees in the creation of the Jewish state. Israeli apologists insist that Palestinians, not Israelis, are the ones who refuse to negotiate peace. Besides, they argue, Arab state rejection of Israel's existence as well as Islamic fundamentalism, not the Palestine question, are the main sources of regional instability. The facts suggest otherwise.

In 1977, the Palestine National Council, the supreme legislative body of the Palestine Liberation Organization, agreed to accept a state alongside Israel in the West Bank and Gaza, and formally declared its willingness to participate in the Middle East diplomatic process.⁵ Israel, on the other hand, has persistently denied the existence of a Palestinian people; refused to consider the establishment of the Palestinian state that was stipulated in the same U.N. resolution (Res. 181) which recommended the partition of Palestine; and vowed never to engage in diplomatic or political negotiations with the legitimate representatives of the Palestinians, i.e., the PLO. The longstanding Israeli position on the question of Palestine was reiterated, in one instance, by Yitzhak Rabin, former Labor party prime minister, speaking for Prime Minister Menachem Begin in 1982. The PLO, he said, could not be a partner to any negotiations, "even if it accepts all of the conditions of negotiations on the basis of the Camp David agreements [in addition to Resolutions 242 and 338], because the essence of the willingness to speak with the PLO is the willingness to speak about a Palestinian state, which must be opposed."⁷

There are numerous examples of individual Arab state attempts to seek accommodation with Israel—all, except that by Egypt, rejected.⁸ In addi-

tion, the September 1982 Fez Peace Plan, unanimously adopted by the Arab countries, provides a formal, public declaration of the readiness of every Arab nation to live in peace with the Jewish state on the basis of secure and recognized borders alongside an independent Palestinian state—the premise of Resolution 181. Israel vehemently rejected the Fez Plan and refused to enter negotiations with the Arabs on the basis of the Fez proposals. Moreover, while it is true that for the past eight years or so Islamic fundamentalism has become a destabilizing force in the Middle East, the intensity of the movement in several countries derives, in considerable measure, from Israel's policies (and from America's support of them), e.g., the invasion of Lebanon and the siege of Beirut in 1982, the occupation and "Iron Fist" policies in southern Lebanon, the continued domination of Jerusalem, and the refusal to recognize the Palestinians. (Even in non-Arab Iran, the Shah's Israeli-American connection significantly fueled the Islamic tide.)

It is difficult, indeed, to see what contribution Israel makes to regional stability.

The belief that Israel enhances American interests by promoting the security of pro-American Arab regimes is equally illusory. The fallacies in this argument are particularly apparent on the issue of domestic insurrection. During the Iranian revolution in 1978, Israel watched helplessly as indigenous forces overthrew the most staunchly pro-American government in the region. If Israel could not assist a non-Arab regime with whom it had excellent, though covert, relations (involving cooperation between the Mossad and SAVAK as well as strong commercial links including trade in arms and oil), how can it reasonably be argued that Israel protects the monarchy in Saudi Arabia, King Hussein in Jordan, or any other Arab regime from domestic upheaval? Surely nothing would more rapidly escalate domestic opposition to an Arab government than assistance from Israel in shoring it up. In fact, it is the pro-American regimes

that are the main targets of militant Islamist and other opposition groups from both the right and left, in no small part because of Washington's partnership with Tel Aviv.

The assumption is further demonstrated as erroneous when Israel's efforts to obstruct the sale of U.S. arms to Arabs are considered. Israel has successfully opposed (with two exceptions⁹) every proposal to sell weapons to Arab states friendly to Washington. Several recent examples will illustrate: In the spring of 1984 Israel succeeded in dissuading Washington from responding to Kuwait's request for defensive, shoulder-held stinger missiles, at a time when that country was coming under increasing threat from the Gulf War [Kuwait subsequently purchased weapons from the Soviet Union.¹⁰] During the same period Israel effectively pressured the Reagan administration to halt development of an elite Jordanian mobile strike force—the "Joint Logistics Planning Program"—intended to assist in the Western defense of the Arabian Gulf.¹¹ And, in June of this year, Congress sizably downscaled President Reagan's proposed arms package to Saudi Arabia, which, according to Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Richard Murphy, was needed to "reinforce our strategic interests in the Persian Gulf, maintain a 40-year relationship of supporting the defense of Saudi Arabia, and reduce the possibility that we might have to commit American troops to protect our interests."¹² Reagan wanted to send the Saudis equipment valued at several billion dollars, including tanks and helicopters. In the end \$354 million worth of equipment was approved, consisting only of types of missiles already in the Saudi arsenal. "They didn't get what they wanted," declared Sen. Alan Cranston, a leading opponent of the sale. "They got 10 percent of what they wanted."¹³

How, then, is Israel ensuring the survival of pro-American Arab regimes?

An oft-cited benefit the U.S. allegedly enjoys from its strategic "partner-

ship" with Israel is close cooperation between the two countries' intelligence services. Yet, consider the following:

1. In 1954, an Israeli-led ring of spies and saboteurs operating in Cairo bombed and set fire to a number of American facilities to disrupt Egyptian-American friendship and to deter Egypt from joining a U.S.-sponsored Middle Eastern alliance. [The spy operation is known as the "Lavon Affair."¹⁹]

2. During the 1967 war, Israel deliberately attacked the U.S. intelligence ship *Liberty*, killing 34 American servicemen and wounding 100 others.²⁰

3. After the 1982 war in Lebanon, Israel withheld from the United States the military intelligence gained from its experience with Soviet weapons and electronic systems during the hostilities.²¹

4. From January through March 1983 the Israeli Defense Forces undertook a campaign of "harassment" against U.S. Marines in Lebanon, detailed here in the words of the Marine commandant:

The Israeli troops are deliberately threatening the lives of American military personnel . . . [the IDF] has persistently harassed, endangered, and degraded . . . [American soldiers in a series of incidents] timed, orchestrated, and executed for obtuse Israeli political purposes . . . [these incidents have occurred] in life threatening situations, replete with verbal degradation of the officers, their uniforms and country.²²

Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger confirmed the accuracy of the commandant's report.

5. Israel has used its embassy in Washington to run a spy operation against the United States. The arrest of American citizen Jonathan Jay Pollard in November 1985 for passing highly classified intelligence to Israelis was initially presented as an isolated and aberrant event.²³ In May 1986, however, U.S. government officials told reporters that the Pollard affair

was but "one link in an organized and well-financed Israeli espionage ring operating within the United States." Said one official: "The Israelis lied to us. This was no small-time rogue operation; it was much more systematic than that."²⁴ Moreover these officials are convinced that Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres knew of the espionage network, despite his formal assurances to U.S. investigators that any spying was conducted without the authority of the Israeli government.²⁵

6. In violation of the embargo on arms sales to Iran enacted in 1979, Israel sold arms to that country at least through 1984.²⁶ In April 1986, three Israelis were arrested in connection with a conspiracy to sell \$2 billion worth of American weapons to Iran. Israel's government disclaimed any part in this deal, described as "mind-boggling in scope,"²⁷ but one of the three, Brig. Gen. (Res.) Avraham Bar-Am, a 30-year IDF veteran, threatened the Israeli government to "go public" with the details of the operation if it did not prevent his extradition to the United States.²⁸ In a *Ha'aretz* interview, Israeli Brig. Gen. (R.) Emanuel Shaked stated that any \$2 billion arms deal would have been impossible without the consent of the Israeli government.²⁹ A U.S. Justice Department source told Cable News Network that there is "at least circumstantial evidence" that the Israeli government knew of the planned sale.³⁰ More startling was the revelation made by the *Wall Street Journal* that a link existed between the Pollard affair and the arms sales to Iran:

The court papers show Mr. Pollard had been asked by his Israeli supervisor to search U.S. intelligence files for U.S. analysis of foreign missile systems that "might be available for sale to Iran." One of Mr. Pollard's selections was CACTUS, a French-built surface-to-air missile used by the South African Air Force. "Cactus" became a pre-arranged code-word, which Mr. Pollard used after his arrest in an unsuccessful attempt to signal his wife to destroy a suitcase of stolen documents. These included a let-

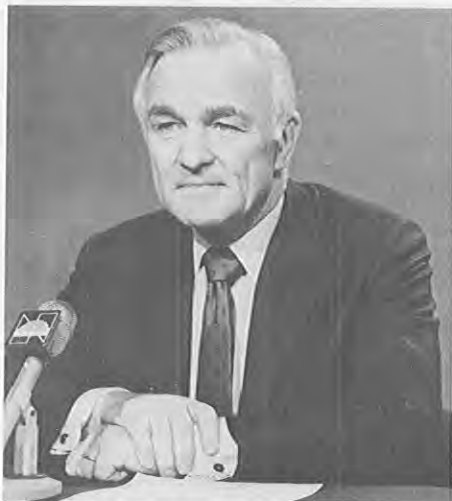
ter from Mr. Pollard discussing other missiles that the Israelis might ship to Iran.³¹

7. Recently U.S. Customs officials and the Justice Department cracked down on the illegal shipment of arms and classified technology to Israel. Last year a grand jury indicted a California businessman, Richard Kelly Smyth, on charges of illegally exporting to Israel 800 devices of the type used to trigger nuclear explosions. In December 1985, U.S. Customs raided factories in three states for possible illegal sales to Israel of electroplating technology used to improve tank cannon barrels. And, in July of this year, subpoenas and search warrants were issued to a number of American firms and to several Israelis at Israel's defense mission in New York in an investigation of charges that Israel tried to illegally obtain classified technology for making improved cluster bombs.³²

Are such Israeli activities consonant with the concept of "strategic cooperation" and the meaning of a "strategic asset"?

Equally striking are the comments of former CIA Director Stansfield Turner on the value of Israel's intelligence services to the U.S. (made in an interview with an Israeli journalist). In Turner's words: "Israeli intelligence has failed. Ninety percent of the statements made about Israel's contributions to America's security are public relations . . . It [Israeli intelligence] is best in overselling its own capabilities."³³

Nor has the U.S.-Israeli partnership promoted American corporate and commercial interests. American companies and the U.S. economy suffer an estimated \$1 billion loss per year due to "anti-boycott" laws that pro-Israeli groups induced Congress to pass in "retaliation" for the Arab boycott of Israel.³⁴ Moreover, each time Congress, surrendering to pro-Israeli pressure, declines approval of American military sales to Arab regimes, lucrative contracts providing Americans with jobs are lost to Western European states or to the Soviet Union. In one example, in October 1985, Saudi Arabia requested



Stansfield Turner

AP/Wide World Photos

approximately \$4 billion worth of F-14's and related hardware. When the Israeli lobby blocked the sale the Saudis turned to Britain for the \$4 billion contract, buying Tornados rather than American F-14's, and then added another \$3 billion in follow-ons and related services. As Dr. Thomas R. Stauffer has noted, "In that one contract alone the United States lost \$7 billion, which is the equivalent of 350,000 to 700,000 American jobs."³⁰

In addition, a number of American industries have sustained severe losses as a result of a free trade agreement concluded between Washington and Israel in 1985 which eliminates all tariffs between the two countries within ten years.³¹ And, Congress has been providing Israel \$550 million in military credits annually to finance construction of a new fighter aircraft, the Lavi, that will be in competition with American planes (e.g., Northrop's) whose manufacturers receive no subsidy

from the U.S. government. Worse, Congress's haste to fulfill Israel's wishes resulted in the failure to carefully analyze production costs of the Lavi. While Israel places the figure at \$13-\$15 million a piece, American analysts place it at \$22 million each. There is also considerable skepticism within the United States regarding Israel's ability to construct the Lavi as well as the plane's technical capability.³²

And what has this "strategic alliance" cost the American people in economic and military aid to Israel? Between 1949 and 1984, it amounted to \$28.1 billion in direct U.S. government assistance, more than half in outright grants. Indirect assistance (e.g., tax exemptions for individuals contributing money to Israel through American Jewish organizations, Export-Import bank loans, grants and contracts from the Department of Energy and the National Institute of Health, military contracts, contingent

aid such as the oil supply agreements of 1975 and 1979 and other) makes the figure many times higher.³³ One estimate calculates combined direct and indirect U.S. annual aid to Israel at more than \$2,000 per person,³⁴ far more than the American government provides its own citizens in subsidies. For FY 1986 alone, combined military and economic aid to Israel stands at an all-time high of \$3.75 billion, all in non-repayable grants.³⁵

One final assumption regarding the U.S.-Israeli relationship, i.e., that it rests on common democratic political cultures, also deserves analysis.

The United States, a genuinely secular democracy with explicit constitutional guarantees of equality before the law, fosters equality of opportunity for all people in the context of a pluralist political culture. Israel, a self-consciously Jewish state in which Jewish religious law tends increasingly to determine the social laws of the land,³⁶ practices institutionalized discrimination against its Arab citizens and denies them full protection under the law.³⁷ In one recent example, Knesset member Mohammed Mi'ari, of the Progressive List for Peace (PLP), had his parliamentary immunity lifted for engaging in political activity, while the Jewish representative of the PLP, Matti Peled, retains his immunity, though he participated in exactly the same activity as Mi'ari.³⁸

The second-class status of Israeli Arabs is well described by Philippa Strum, president of the American-Israeli Civil Liberties Coalition:

Israeli Arabs . . . are not permitted to serve in the armed forces . . . which not only precludes their sharing an otherwise universal citizenship experience, but also disqualifies them for such armed service-linked benefits as government-backed mortgages, government-backed scholarships, and the regular welfare payments all families receive per child . . . Numerous statistics indicate that Arab municipalities receive far less government funds than do Jewish municipalities for roads, schools, water supply, sewage, etc. Most land in Israel is owned by the

Jewish National Fund, which rents it on long-term leases; it will not rent land to Arabs. Most land within Israel proper has been confiscated by the state.³⁹

The same writer also notes that Israel has no constitution, no bill of rights or domestic civil courts; there is state censorship over the electronic media; and no newspapers or magazines may be published without a government license.⁴⁰

The claim that Israel is the only

democracy in the Middle East and therefore the "natural ally" of the United States thus bears some reconsideration.

In light of the foregoing, the most obvious question is how did the strategic asset thesis become the foremost assumption undergirding America's Middle East policy? Similarly, how did the pro-Israeli lobby acquire its power in America's domestic politics? To answer these questions, a look at past U.S. policy in the Middle East is necessary.

The Partition of Palestine

The United States emerged from the Second World War as the preeminent power in the international system. Of particular interest to American policymakers were the Middle East's oil reserves, geostrategic location and potential commercial advantages. However, the Middle East was rent with conflict as the Zionist movement intensified its drive for a Jewish state in Palestine, and the indigenous Palestinians, backed by the Arab governments, increased their resistance to the Zionist goal. In the aftermath of its contradictory promises to the Arabs and the Zionists about the disposition of Palestine, and its supervision of the development of Zionist institutions and Jewish immigration, Great Britain turned the problem of Palestine over to the United Nations. It was then that the U.S. became the dominant power in determining the fate of Palestine.

Virtually every U.S. foreign affairs bureaucrat, including the secretaries of state and war (later defense) and the joint chiefs of staff, opposed the creation of Israel from the standpoint of American national interests. U.S. support for the Zionist program, they said, would: create an opportunity for Soviet penetration of the Middle East, including possible alignments be-

tween the Arabs and the Soviets; create a barrier to American access to the region's oil and markets; violate the principle of self-determination for the Palestinian Arabs; and result in destabilization of the entire Middle East.⁴¹

In the final analysis, however, domestic political considerations, not national interest, decided American policy on Palestine. President Truman's closest political advisors, David Niles and Clark Clifford, convinced the President that supporting the Zionist program would help Democratic Party fortunes in 1946 and Truman's uphill battle for the Presidency in 1948.⁴² At the same time, Truman's close friend and business partner, Eddie Jacobson, secured access for world Zionist leaders to the American President, greatly assisting the Zionist cause.⁴³

After a special United Nations committee recommended partition, the U.S. supported the idea of dividing Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state, leading to the adoption of U.N. Resolution 181. America was thus midwife to the birth of Israel. Within minutes of its proclamation of independence in April 1948, Truman offered recognition to the new state and shortly thereafter invited Israel's

first president, Chaim Weizmann, to Washington. One of the most important leaders of the Zionist movement, Weizmann had had personal access to Truman through Jacobson.

Zionism's victory was a disaster for Palestinians who became a nation in diaspora. Approximately 770,000 indigenous people, nearly half the total population, were transformed from a secure existence on land they had inhabited for countless generations into stateless refugees, the majority crowded into squalid camps in surrounding countries, the others dispersed to the corners of the globe. Those remaining became third-class "citizens" in the new Jewish state.

Truman made no effort to facilitate implementation of the Palestinian Arab state called for in Resolution 181 or to oversee the internationalization of Jerusalem under a permanent U.N. trusteeship, also stipulated in the resolution. (Israel's March 1949 transfer of governmental agencies to West Jerusalem met with no reaction from Washington.) Likewise, Truman ignored Resolution 194 (passed in 1949 with an affirmative U.S. vote), calling for the repatriation of the Palestinians to their homes or for compensation to those who chose not to return. Indeed, Truman's policies appear to reflect accurately the comment he once made to a group of State Department representatives concerned about the direction of U.S. diplomacy: "I am sorry gentlemen, but I have to answer to hundreds of thousands who are anxious for the success of Zionism. I do not have hundreds of thousands of Arabs among my constituents."⁴⁴

Perhaps the most striking aspect of this period is the lack of strategic planning regarding the Palestine/Israel question. Instead, domestic political considerations, personal relationships, and an ad hoc, short-term foreign policy perspective dominated the president's choices—choices that profoundly affected the future of American foreign policy in the Middle East. Yet in retrospect, the presence of the Truman administration's foreign affairs professionals is indeed remarkable.

The Eisenhower Administration

When Dwight D. Eisenhower became President in 1953, a new tone was set in U.S. Middle East policy. Eisenhower and his secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, attempted to pursue an evenhanded approach between Israel and the Arab states and to repair some of the damage caused by the Truman administration.

Several initiatives to settle the regional conflict, though well intentioned, proved fruitless. One of these involved the mission of Elmore Jackson. In January 1955, Egypt's President Gamal Abdul Nasser asked Jackson, a prominent American Quaker, to secretly attempt to facilitate a settlement with Israel. With the backing of Washington, Jackson made three round trips between Israel and Egypt.⁴⁵ His efforts, however, were aborted by Israel's raid on Gaza in February of that year.

Eisenhower and Dulles took an especially dim view of Israel's growing militarism, initially manifested by a policy of "massive retaliation" against neighboring Arab states—allegedly undertaken to stop Palestinian incursions but actually to force the Arab states to conclude peace agreements with Israel on its terms.⁴⁶ One of these attacks, the Gaza raid, resulted in Egypt's purchase of weapons from the Soviet Union—the "Czech Arms Deal"—and provided Moscow its first opportunity for involvement in the Middle East.

In 1956, when Israel, in league with Britain and France, invaded Egypt and occupied the entire Sinai, the U.S. insisted that Israel withdraw and not gain any political concessions. Eisenhower warned Israel repeatedly that he would impose sanctions if it failed to comply with United Nations demands for a total retreat from Egyptian territory. Sanctions were never implemented and Israel

did withdraw completely, but only after five months of diplomatic maneuvering in Washington and at the U.N. during which it won several concessions from the United States.

However, despite its more balanced approach to the Middle East, the Eisenhower administration's response to the global great power conflict was very rigid, resulting in a number of misguided and short-sighted policies.⁴⁷ McCarthyism, which dominated domestic politics, insisted that any country not willing to align itself wholeheartedly with the U.S. was, by definition, "Communist." Eisenhower and Dulles had no patience with states that attempted to pursue non-alignment; nor was there tolerance for economic experiments that deviated from Washington's ideas.

Nasser ran afoul of the U.S. on both counts. Together with Nehru of India and Tito of Yugoslavia, Nasser was a leader of the non-aligned movement, and he attempted to pursue an economic development program known as "Arab socialism"—a program that Washington strongly disapproved of. Consequently, even though Nasser was staunchly anti-Communist, Washington set out first

to "co-opt" the Egyptian president, then decided he had to be removed.

The administration's policies were full of contradictions: Eisenhower and Dulles attempted to persuade Nasser to join the Baghdad Pact; when he refused they tried to build up Iraq and Saudi Arabia against him. Eisenhower offered to sell Egypt weapons following the Gaza raid, but later withdrew the offer (after which Nasser turned to the Soviets). Dulles pledged to construct the Aswan Dam, then reneged because Egypt accorded diplomatic recognition to China. Finally, the inability to induce Nasser to follow Washington's directives led to the conviction within policymaking circles that his tenure had to be ended. "Nasserism"—in essence an expression of Arab nationalism—came to be perceived as an enormous "threat" to American interests in the Middle East. This misjudgment in turn precipitated consideration of an alignment between the U.S. and Israel in order to unseat Nasser and project American influence in the region. Israel's eagerness for an alliance with Washington made the idea particularly appealing.

John F. Kennedy inaugurated the concept of a "special relationship" between the U.S. and Israel, and it was President Kennedy who initiated the American commitment to the regional military superiority of the Jewish state. By the time Lyndon Johnson became President, Israel's "strategic utility" was being widely discussed among prominent policymakers.

The June 1967 War: A Turning Point

President Lyndon Johnson had little sympathy for Arab nationalism or for Arab sensibilities in general while he displayed great affinity with Israel. According to Abba Eban, Johnson had "within a few months . . . established

with Prime Minister Levi Eshkol the kind of intimate confidence that had never existed between heads of American and Israeli governments . . . I found that his intuition about Israel had filled out and deepened."⁴⁸

Indeed, Johnson had no interest in pursuing an evenhanded policy between the Arabs and Israel and no interest in facilitating an Arab-Israeli settlement. In one instance, Johnson pointedly ignored proposals put forward by Dr. Joseph Johnson, president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, who had been appointed by the United Nations Conciliation Commission in August 1961 to explore practical means for dealing with the Palestinian issue.⁴⁹ By 1967 Johnson faced a number of foreign policy dilemmas including the deepening Vietnam quagmire, the ongoing cold war with the Soviet Union, changes in the arms race between the great powers, and inter-Arab rivalries that increasingly complicated the Middle East scene for American interests.⁵⁰

As the May-June 1967 crisis between Israel and the Arabs deepened, several of Johnson's closest advisors felt that an Israeli attack against Egypt would be beneficial to the United States by discrediting Nasser and likely bringing about his downfall. Specifically, they argued, it would: end Egyptian participation in the civil war in the Yemen (considered a threat to the security of Saudi Arabia and the oil fields in the Arabian peninsula); embarrass the Soviets by crushing the military establishments of states they had been heavily arming; weaken and destabilize the Ba'ath regime in Syria; provide the U.S. with information about Soviet weapons systems; and leave Israel as a powerful instrument for the extension of American domination in the region.⁵¹ Moreover, American intelligence informed the President that Israel would "whip hell out of the Arabs."⁵²

While Johnson may never have given the Jewish state the "go-ahead" to initiate war, many in Israel believed that the U.S. favored an Israeli assault on Egypt.⁵³ Equally important are the following facts:

Israeli aggression;

3. There was covert American participation in the form of tactical reconnaissance support for Israel;⁵⁴

4. The U.S. used its veto at the United Nations to ensure that the cease-fire resolution was not accompanied by a call for a return to the pre-war lines; and

5. In the post-war period, Washington refrained from asking Israel to withdraw from the territories it had seized. In a speech made shortly after the fighting ended, on June 19, 1967, Johnson stated that "a return to the fragile and perilous armistice is not a prescription for peace but for renewed hostilities," and called on the Arab states to engage in direct negotiations with Israel.⁵⁵ As one Israeli commented: "those points which the president chose to stress . . . fully accorded with Israel's position."⁵⁶

Israel's spectacular military performance in June 1967, defeating three major Arab states in six days, validated for many Israel's potential strategic importance. The Arab world seemed shattered, in disarray, and Israel appeared as an impregnable Sparta. Almost immediately, however, the fallacies in the thesis became apparent: American influence with the Arab world declined—six Arab states severed diplomatic relations with the United States. Instability in the region escalated—the War of Attrition began along the Suez Canal; 200,000 more Palestinians became refugees as a result of Israel's new occupation of the West Bank; the PLO rose like a phoenix out of the ashes of Arab defeat; and the first of Israel's continuous ground and air raids against Lebanon commenced (eventually contributing to that nation's plunge into civil war in 1975). Soviet influence escalated significantly as Moscow moved to rebuild the militaries of Syria and Egypt, to support the PLO, and to befriend the Arabs. Nasser survived and continued as president of Egypt while retaining his position of leadership in the Arab world. The Ba'ath party remained in power in Syria. And South Yemen eventually became the first—and

only—Marxist state in the region. American policymakers, however, appeared oblivious to such considerations.

The mythology concerning Israel's importance was further embellished in September 1970, during Jordan's "Black September" crisis between King Hussein and the PLO. At that time President Richard Nixon and his national security advisor, Henry Kissinger, urged Israel to mobilize its forces and intervene on the side of Jordan "if it became necessary."⁵⁷ Though Israel performed no function other than to mobilize—Hussein alone crushed the PLO—thereafter the event was cited as a testament to Israel's alleged value in protecting pro-American Arab regimes.

The perceptions about Israel's strategic utility were further institutionalized as a result of the Nixon Doctrine—a proclamation concerning the role of regional surrogates in the defense of American interests. It was also Nixon and Kissinger who oversaw the transfer to Israel of the most massive and sophisticated military equipment in the U.S. arsenal.

As for the Palestinians, no one of significance was speaking on their behalf, and virtually no one was addressing the concerns of the Arabs in general. From 1967 to 1973, balance and evenhandedness between Israel and the Arabs were not even contemplated as policy options by the President and his national security advisor, and America became totally wedded to Israel. During this period Secretary of State William P. Rogers made a notable attempt to promote a comprehensive Middle East settlement. However, the "Rogers Plan" was undermined equally by Israel, its American supporters and Dr. Kissinger.

The inter-war years were important in another respect; the June 1967 war had a profound impact on American Jews. Israel's praetorian achievements galvanized the sentiments of thousands, and subsequently organized activism on behalf of Israel reached extraordinary heights. Jews contributed money, time and energy to assure Israel all the economic and military assistance it desired, to rein-

force the perceptions concerning Israel's strategic utility, and to create an image of the Jewish state in the media and public opinion of a feisty, struggling, democratic little country—America's only friend in the Middle East—facing nearly insurmountable odds against aggressive, warlike Arabs ever poised to drive it into the sea. Thanks to a highly successful public relations campaign, Israel's new occupation over East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza (plus the Golan and Sinai) was seen as the "most humane and benign" in history, while Israel itself was portrayed as "a light unto nations."

Some thirty-eight major pro-Israeli organizations grew and developed, including: the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee, the official pro-Israeli lobby; the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations; the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith; the American Jewish Congress; and others. Officials of the American Jewish community moved quickly to the center stage of U.S. political life as spokesmen for the pro-Israeli cause.⁵⁸

The rapid acquisition of power by pro-Israeli forces after the June war resides in the convergence of three factors: the strength of elite perceptions concerning Israel's value as a strategic asset; the general public's fascination with Israel's June triumph; and the high level of pro-Israeli activism, which together catapulted the movement into a position of unrivaled influence in domestic politics.⁵⁹ Thereafter, pro-Israeli legions were able to derail policies that did not accord with Israel's objectives, while at the same time eliciting increasing amounts of arms and aid at evermore favorable terms.

Shulamit Aloni, a member of the Israeli Knesset, recently said this of the pro-Israeli leaders in the American Jewish community:

[They] are servants of the Israeli government. They see Israel as their church, the same way the Catholics see the Vatican or the Muslims Mecca. They are happy to send money to this country

because it is a kind of redemption, and they like to come here and rub shoulders with important people, which will later on make them more important in their own country . . . They don't criticize the Israeli government . . . They always back whoever is in power in Israel.⁶⁰

The October 1973 War

During the October 1973 war the U.S. sided publicly with Israel, providing a massive military airlift, including 40 F-4 Phantoms, 38 A-4 Skyhawks, 12 C-130 transports, 20 tanks, and much more. In all, America dispatched more than 22,000 tons of equipment, ferried in both American and Israeli aircraft.⁶¹ In addition, the U.S. Congress passed emergency legislation giving Israel \$2.2 billion in financial assistance, including \$1.5 billion in outright grants.⁶²

The Arab countries responded by instituting an oil embargo and a rapid series of price hikes. Undeterred, Washington permitted Israel to massively violate a cease-fire it had arranged (U.N. Resolution 338). The Israeli "violation" lasted six days and amounted to a major offensive against Egypt, including: massive troop movements across the Suez Canal; attacks on the city of Suez and the severing of its main roads to Cairo; and the completion of the encirclement of the Egyptian Third Army on the east side of the canal.⁶³

No single event ever shattered so many premises buttressing American foreign policy as did the October war. Prior to the Egyptian-Syrian campaign policymakers believed that the Middle East was stable and secure under the deterrent of Israel's awesome might. But Israel's vastly superior military strength (plus its "strategic depth" via the occupied territories) did not prevent war. Officials had doubted that Arab oil could be used effectively to pressure the West;

This cadre of American Jews, passionately committed to Israel and to implementing its policy objectives, has had an effect on American politics unlike any other interest group in the history of the Republic.

the unified OPEC action, however, destroyed that assumption. And the common wisdom that Arabs were inept at war-making and mutual cooperation, and would never challenge the Israeli Sparta, was shown to be incorrect. Yet the strategic asset thesis underwent no revision.

In part, the durability of this dominant misperception may be traced to Kissinger's personal attachment to it, coupled with his preeminence in foreign policymaking. In addition, decision-makers believed that the strength of the U.S.-Israeli tie, and the perceived influence in the Arab world this gave Washington over Israeli policy, would impress the Arabs and convince them that the U.S. could obtain for them what they desired. (President Anwar Sadat of Egypt, who succeeded Nasser in 1970, subscribed wholeheartedly to this idea, thus contributing perhaps to American illusions with regard to the Arab world in general.) Finally, domestic pro-Israeli strength placed considerable constraints on the conduct of Middle East diplomacy. In Congress, for example, Israel's friends ably dissuaded senators and representatives from approving arms sales to Arab states—virtually the only means the U.S. had of wooing the Arabs, especially after it became apparent that Israel would make no concessions in the post-war peace process.⁶⁴

The extent of the pro-Israeli movement was evident in 1975, when President Gerald Ford and Secretary of

State Kissinger announced a "re-assessment" of U.S. policy in an attempt to pressure Israel into being more forthcoming in negotiating a second Sinai accord with Egypt. Pro-Israeli groups responded by inducing 76 senators to sign a letter to the President (drafted in part by AIPAC) demanding that he make clear that "the United States acting in its own national interest stands firmly with Israel in the search for peace in future negotiations, and that this premise is the basis of the current reassessment of United States policy in the Middle East."⁶⁵ A *New York Times* story from Israel quoted a senior Israeli official as stating: "Buoyed by recent demonstrations of congressional support, Israel has decided to ignore repeated United States requests that it produce new negotiating proposals before the American-Egyptian meeting in Salzburg."⁶⁶ One White House official commented that the senators' letter cost the United States an extra \$500 million in aid tied to the Sinai II agreement.⁶⁷ George Ball argued that the letter weakened Kissinger's ability to secure concessions from Israel and increased the amount of assistance the U.S. had to give Israel in order to achieve the agreement.⁶⁸ Whatever else the letter did, it clearly betrayed any U.S. claim to "impartiality."

Kissinger, as secretary of state, undertook intense diplomatic activi-

ty in the Middle East following the October war. However, heightened attention did not mean any alteration in basic orientation: the belief about Israel's strategic value remained the cornerstone of policy. Kissinger's major objectives included:

1. ending the oil embargo;
2. concluding a separate Egyptian-Israeli peace;
3. excluding the Palestinian issue and the PLO from the political process;
4. increasing American influence over Egypt;
5. maintaining and strengthening the U.S.-Israeli relationship;
6. avoiding genuine cooperation with the Soviet Union; and
7. the continuance of Israel functioning as an outpost of American power.

The means Kissinger employed to achieve these goals was a "step-by-step" approach—a tactic designed to avoid a comprehensive settlement. Moreover, since the fundamental assumption which girded the new diplomacy remained the same as before the war, it was inevitable that Kissinger's efforts would result in continued regional instability, increased Soviet influence and a diminution of American influence.

2. secure and recognized borders, including a U.S.-Israeli defense pact as part of an overall settlement; and

3. a new U.S. position on the Palestine question which would include creation of a "homeland" for the refugees.⁷⁰

Despite the fact that Carter's objectives maintained the traditional U.S. alignment with Israel (he was even prepared to formalize it in a defense agreement), Israel and its domestic supporters strongly opposed both his concept of a comprehensive settlement and his procedural attempt to reconvene the Geneva Conference. Presidential statements expressing concern about the Palestinians elicited strong denunciations. When the President issued the joint communique with Moscow, the outcry was overwhelming. Israeli officials—both from the ruling Likud Party and the Labor Party—condemned and rejected the U.S.-Soviet proposal, claiming it portended American willingness to allow PLO participation in a Geneva Conference and represented a possible first step toward a Palestinian state.⁷¹ Domestically the disapproval was equally severe. In one instance, Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, declared that the joint statement, "on its face, represents an abandonment of America's historic commitment to the security and survival of Israel!"⁷²

Israel dispatched Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan to the U.S. to persuade Carter of the errors in his thinking. At a meeting in New York on October 4, Carter backed down on all his positions, and the evening ended with the issuance of a joint Israeli-U.S. statement.⁷³ The October 4 meeting terminated Carter's advocacy of a resumption of the Geneva Conference and resulted in his abandonment of the Soviet-American initiative on the Middle East. It also led to a major retreat on the Palestinian question. The influence of domestic pro-Israeli sentiment as well as the perceived value of the strategic partnership both played a role in the President's change—the former probably more

The Camp David Process

President Jimmy Carter came to office with the intention of facilitating a Middle East peace. Convinced of the need for a comprehensive settlement, Carter attempted to reconvene the Geneva Peace Conference as a meaningful forum for negotiation. (It had initially been convened by Kissinger, but primarily as a charade.) Carter recognized the necessity of including the Soviet Union in the diplomacy,

and participated with Moscow in issuing a joint statement on October 1, 1977, outlining the requirements for a comprehensive settlement.⁶⁹

Carter's main objectives in pursuing Middle East peace included:

1. normalization of relations between Israel and its neighbors, e.g., an exchange of ambassadors, trade, open borders and tourism;

than the latter.

On November 19, President Anwar Sadat went to Israel, undertaking a dramatic, unilateral peace initiative. The U.S. administration thereafter focused on the conclusion of an Egyptian-Israeli treaty. At the outset Carter tried to fashion the bilateral process into a wider peace settlement involving some Palestinian concerns. But within a few months after Sadat's overture, the President abandoned the effort to construct a comprehensive peace, and in the end settled for mere window dressing to a "separate" Egyptian-Israeli accord.⁷⁴

The Camp David Summit (September 5-17, 1978) produced two documents: (1) A Framework for Peace in the Middle East (that purported to settle the Palestinian question); and (2) A Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt. Completely fraudulent as an effort to resolve the Palestinian dilemma, the first document "legitimized" Israel's permanent control over the West Bank and Gaza after a five-year period of "autonomy" (a term not even defined in the accord) for the residents of the territories. Indeed, the monumental failure of the Camp David process was its inability to secure a just resolution of the Palestinian issue.

Camp David led to the signing of a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel on March 26, 1979. It also preceded:

1. increased regional instability culminating in another major war (the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982);
2. greater Soviet penetration of the Middle East as Arab states and the PLO, fearing the threat of an Israeli-Egyptian military alliance backed by the U.S., sought arms and aid from Moscow (e.g., Syria and the Soviet Union concluded a formal defense alliance in 1981 while Moscow increased its supply of arms to the PLO); and
3. a diminution of American influence.

Indeed, Egypt's isolation in the Arab world (a result of its abandonment of all Arab interests at Camp David including East Jerusalem, the Palestin-

ians and the Golan) was mirrored in American isolation, a condition that grew enormously in the next five years.

Immediately after the Camp David accords were signed Israel began expanding its settlement program on the West Bank in preparation for the eventual extension of its sovereignty over the area. In August 1980, Israel passed legislation "reunifying" Jerusalem, fully annexing the city to the Jewish state. In June 1981, Israel bombed and destroyed a nearly-completed nuclear reactor in the outskirts of Baghdad. That July, Israel initiated a two-week long series of bombing

raids in South Lebanon, capped by the bombardment of a residential sector of Beirut on the 17th, during which 300 civilians were killed and many hundreds more wounded. Sadat was assassinated on October 6, 1981. In December Israel annexed the Golan Heights. And in June 1982, Israel initiated the fifth major Arab-Israeli war with its invasion of Lebanon. Clearly, Camp David neither contributed to stability or peace in the Middle East, nor enhanced American interests in the region. Somehow, though, the repeated lessons were not absorbed by American policymakers.

The Reagan Administration

Ronald Reagan, who became President in 1981, and his first secretary of state, Alexander Haig, were intensely wedded to the concept of Israel as an outpost of American power. In Reagan and Haig's view, Israel would secure the Middle East against the anticipated encroachments of the Soviet Union.

The attitude of the new administration quickly became apparent. On February 3, 1981, contradicting four previous administrations, Reagan stated that Israeli settlements in the occupied territories were "not illegal." Asked if he had any sympathy toward the Palestinians, the President responded with a flat "no."⁷⁵ American complaisance over Israel's bombings in Iraq and Beirut in the summer of 1981 was further indication of the meaning of the new partnership. Then in November 1981, the U.S. signed a formal strategic cooperation agreement with Israel.⁷⁶ That agreement was temporarily suspended the following month (as a result of Israel's annexation of the Golan), but was reinstated in November 1983. In between the U.S. provided Israel virtually unqualified support during its three month-long invasion of Leb-

anon and siege of Beirut in the summer of 1982.⁷⁷

At the termination of hostilities, U.S. Marines entered Beirut to oversee the PLO exodus and to protect the Palestinian civilians left behind. But the Marines withdrew before their scheduled departure time—thereby negating a written agreement given to the PLO. The result was the massacre of hundreds of Palestinians in Sabra and Shatila by Israel's Lebanese allies, the Phalange, while Israel looked on.⁷⁸ The Marines returned to Lebanon under the rubric of "peacekeepers," but eventually became directly involved in Lebanon's renewed civil war, attempting to shore up the Israeli-imposed Phalange regime of the Gemayel clan against its domestic opponents. After the U.S. exercised fire power—including the 16-inch guns of its naval warships—against the Druze and Shi'ite factions, the Marine headquarters was bombed in September 1983, and 264 Americans were killed. Six months later the U.S. withdrew the Marines.

American's position in Lebanon had so drastically declined that American institutions and individuals became the targets of Lebanese frus-

tration and hatred. The American University of Beirut, the American Hospital and the American Embassy, as well as American professors, teachers, doctors and journalists, were attacked by angry Lebanese in retaliation for the policies of the American government.

U.S. credibility was further damaged by the Reagan administration's failure to follow through on a peace plan it had enunciated. On September 1, 1982, with great fanfare, the President had put forward the Reagan Plan—a set of proposals that sought a resolution of the Palestinian issue. Israel, however, rejected Reagan's proposals out of hand: Prime Minister Begin told the Knesset on September 10, "This plan, in my opinion, died at its birth. Today it no longer exists, and certainly in the future there will be no trace of it."⁷⁹ The Israeli Cabinet voted unanimously to ignore the plan and to immediately proceed with the establishment of new settlements in the West Bank and Gaza.⁸⁰ In less than eight months the U.S. administration dropped any further reference to the Reagan Plan—after publicly berating the Arabs for its demise.

The United States was even unable to facilitate an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, a situation also carefully noted among the Arabs. In May 1983, a new secretary of state, George Shultz, presided over the conclusion of an agreement between Israel and Lebanon which, in essence, ratified Israel's objectives and compromised Lebanon's sovereignty, while completely ignoring Syria. But as the regional power equation shifted, Syria, battered by Israel during the war, made a dramatic comeback—due mainly to Soviet weapons and technicians as well as to changing alliances within Lebanon. By March 1984, Lebanon was again under the influence of Syria, and abrogated its agreement with Israel.

With the collapse of the Israeli-Lebanese accord, Israel's plans for regional hegemony lay in shreds while U.S. influence languished at an all-time low throughout the Middle East. Henry Kissinger's optimistic predictions at the beginning of Israel's

adventure in Lebanon had a particularly hollow ring. At the time the former secretary had written:

[Israel's action] opens up extraordinary opportunities for a dynamic American diplomacy throughout the Middle East . . . the results [will be] congruent with the interests of the peace process in the Middle East, of all moderate governments in the area and of the United States . . . Lebanon can be another testing ground for proving that radical Arab regimes and Soviet backing offer no solution to any of the central issues of concern in the area. Lebanon thus offers an opportunity for Egypt to reenter Arab politics . . . The Lebanese crisis creates an opening for American diplomacy to overcome the impasse in the autonomy talks between Egypt and Israel.⁸¹

Kissinger had further argued that Israel's invasion of Lebanon would solve the four-fold crises facing the governments in the Gulf region, i.e., Shi'ite radicalism, Moslem fundamentalism, Iranian revolutionary agitation and Soviet imperialism.⁸²

The war engendered none of the positive outcomes predicted by Kissinger (and others), and despite all the negative consequences that befell the United States, the U.S.-Israeli partnership grew closer. Secretary Shultz became a devoted advocate of the strategic asset thesis and presided over the intensifying relationship. The 1983 reinstatement of the strategic cooperation agreement was but one indication of the growing intimacy. Aid provided Israel reached record high levels and all was given in outright grants. The U.S. concluded the free trade agreement with the Jewish state and provided the funding for it to construct the Lavi. Cooperation between the C.I.A. and the Mossad became more intimate, including Washington's sharing with Tel Aviv aerial reconnaissance photographs of Arab states.⁸³ And in May of this year, the U.S. gave Israel a memorandum of understanding enabling it to compete with American companies for research contracts in the multi-billion dollar Strategic

Defense Initiative ("Star Wars").⁸⁴

It is apparent, on analysis, that the history of the U.S.-Israeli "strategic alliance" is filled with mistaken assumptions, incorrect beliefs, faulty understanding of political reality in Middle East, and completely misdirected policies. The result of this sorry history and of America's total alignment with Israel is a situation of unprecedented animosity toward the United States among Middle Eastern peoples. Accelerated terrorism against American individuals and institutions is only one expression of this hostility. And while such acts of violence must be deplored, it must be understood that it is the policies of the American government that make it impossible for Americans to safely and securely live, work, travel, study, conduct research or carry out business in the Middle East. Moreover, the situation now extends to Americans in Europe.

Yet, rather than seeking political solutions to resolve the grievances of the Arab people and to solve the multiplicity of problems in the area, the U.S. has instead added direct military force (e.g., the bombing of Tripoli and Benghazi) to its other mistakes. At the same time hostile rhetoric against the Arabs has been intensified, while the official U.S. attitude toward the area could be described as "malignant neglect." In the wake of such "policies" traditionally pro-American governments in the Maghreb and the Arab East fear for their continued existence as the renewed wave of anti-Americanism sweeps the region.

Surely the time has come for a reappraisal of American policies in the Middle East. This requires a clear understanding of the concept "national interest" as involving the greatest good for the greatest number of Americans. Since present U.S. policy does not meet that criteria, it becomes necessary to reevaluate the assumptions on which the policy is based as well as the objectives of the policy.

The objectives of U.S. Middle East policy should be to: foster peace, justice and stability; establish mutual respect between *all* the states in the

region and the U.S.; and facilitate the freedom of access of American individuals and institutions throughout the area. In order to achieve such goals, Washington must pursue several specific policies, including: Palestinian self-determination in an independent state with leaders of their own choosing; Syrian territorial integrity including return of the Golan; Jerusalem either internationalized or divided between Jewish, Muslim and Christian rule; Israeli security within the pre-1967 boundaries; and, while not a specific aspect of the Arab-Israeli conflict, U.S. recognition of and normalization of

relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is also obvious at this historical juncture that cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union is essential to achieving and maintaining durable peace. Without joint cooperation the excluded side would have every incentive to disrupt a settlement and attempt to alter the regional power balance.

If American policy in the Middle East is to serve the "national" interest, it must disentangle itself from its exclusive partnership with Israel, through which it has attempted to impose its will by proxy on the entire region. In the long run American

security and the American national interest can be served only by mutual respect between the Arabs and America. The United States would not entertain the thought of trying to dominate all of Europe by building up one state, as its surrogate, against the others. The Middle East should be viewed as Europe—as a group of diverse countries with pride, interests, aspirations and sensibilities with whom the United States shares interests—and some conflicts—but with whom it must build constructive, durable and equitable relations.

Notes

1. *The Forrestal Diaries*, ed., W. Mills (New York: The Viking Press, 1951), p. 263.
2. Thomas A. Dine, "The Revolution in U.S.-Israeli Relations" from transcript of talk given at AUMC's annual conference in Washington, April 6, 1986, p. 8.
3. *New York Times*, July 8, 1986 (UPI Wire Service), quoting a report from *Jen's Defense Weekly*.
4. George W. Ball, "What is an Ally?" *American-Arab Affairs*, 6 (Fall 1983), pp. 11-12.
5. Leslie Gells, "United States-Israeli Talks Said to Aim at Sovereignty," *New York Times*, July 20, 1984. Also see: Henry J. Shaw, "Strategic Dissensus," *Foreign Policy*, no. 61 (Winter 1985-86), pp. 125-41.
6. For a discussion of the transformations within the PLO on both strategy and objectives see Alain Gresh, *The PLO: The Struggle Within: Towards An Independent Palestinian State* (London: Zed Books, 1985). For a document of the latest peace proposals put forward by the PLO (and the U.S. State Department's specious reasons for rejecting them) see *Mideast Observer*, vol. 9, no. 12 (June 13, 1986), pp. 2-4.
7. David R. Isidor, November 11, 1982, cited in Noam Chomsky, *The Fatal Triangle: The United States, Israel and the Palestinians* (Boston: South End Press, 1983), p. 112.
8. For a comprehensive discussion of Arab state proposals for peace and Israeli rejectionism see Cheryl A. Rubenberg, *Israel and the American National Interest: A Critical Analysis* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1986), passim. Also Chomsky, in *The Fatal Triangle*, presents a comprehensive discussion of Arab state and the PLO efforts to reach accommodation with Israel.
9. The two exceptions are the 1978 arms "package" the Carter administration facilitated for arms to Israel, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, and the 1981 Reagan administration sale of AWACS to Saudi Arabia. More recently (May 1986) both Houses of Congress approved a resolution blocking a proposed arms package to Saudi Arabia, although AIPAC did not officially oppose the sale. However, President Reagan vetoed that resolution and was subsequently able to persuade the Senate—by a margin of only one vote—not to override his veto, although the arms package the Senate finally approved was severely emasculated. See Steven Roberts, "Senate Upholds Arms for Saudis, Reeking Reagan," *New York Times*, June 6, 1986.
10. For an analysis of Kuwait's vulnerability see Judith Miller, "Kuwait's Starting to Feel the Impact of Shipping War," *New York Times*, May 29, 1984. On the refusal of Washington to sell Kuwait stinger's see Jim Anderson, "No Stinger's for Kuwait," *UPI Wire Service*, June 5, 1984 and Bernard Gwertzman, "United States Tells Kuwait It Can't Have Missiles," *New York Times*, June 20, 1984. Kuwait then turned to the Soviet Union and bought missiles from Moscow. For an analysis see Ned Temko, "Moscow Reaps Windfall Profits in the Mid-

11. "United States Ends Bid to Form Jordanian Strike Force," *Miami Herald*, May 24, 1984; "Reagan to Revoke Offer of Missiles to Saudi Arabia," *New York Times*, May 24, 1984.
12. *New York Times*, May 20, 1986. Also see: Steven Roberts, "Blending a Chorus of Nots to Saudis on Arms," *New York Times*, May 19, 1986.
13. Roberts, "Senate Upholds Arms."
14. Nadav Safran, *Israel, The Embattled Ally* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 1978), p. 251. Also see Stephen Green, *Ising Sides: America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel* (New York: William Morrow, 1984), pp. 107-11.
15. See James M. Ennes, Jr., *Assault of the Liberty* (New York: Random House, 1979), Green, *Ising Sides*, pp. 21, 42.
16. *New York Times*, September 3, 1982. Israel withheld the intelligence until March 1983, using it as a lever with which to pressure the U.S. to: (1) drop the Reagan Plan; (2) support its objectives in Lebanon (specifically a "full peace treaty" that provided for normalization of relations, trade, tourism, etc., as well as other goals such as retaining "security" zones in southern Lebanon, etc.); and (3) decrease its pressure on Israel to withdraw unilaterally from Lebanon. The U.S. dropped the Reagan Plan, brokered a Lebanese-Israeli treaty that fulfilled most all of Israel's objectives (even to the extent of compromising Lebanon's territorial integrity), and ceased entirely calling for a unilateral Israeli withdrawal (according to Israel's demand that its withdrawal be tied to the withdrawal of Syrian troops and remaining PLO forces in Tripoli and the Bekaa).
17. *New York Times*, March 18, 1983 (the letter from the Marine commandant, Gen. Robert H. Barrow, had been sent to Weinberger in January).
18. See for example Dan Fisher and Ronald J. Ostrow, "Covert Israeli Spy Unit Linked to Pollard Case," *Los Angeles Times*, November 29, 1985, and Thomas L. Friedman, "Leaders in Israel Apparently Split in Espionage Case," *New York Times*, December 1, 1985. The Pollard case is by no means the first time that Israel has spied on the U.S. See Michael P. Saba, *The Amalgamated Network* (Baltimore, VT: Amiana Books, 1984).
19. See Michael Wines and Ronald J. Ostrow, "U.S. Investigation May Bare Spy Ring Directed by Israel," *Miami Herald*, May 30, 1986.
20. *Ibid.*
21. *Christian Science Monitor*, July 30, 1984.
22. Hugh Ogels, "Israel Denies Involvement in Conspiracy to Sell U.S. Arms to Iran," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, April 24, 1986.
23. See for example Avi Hoffman and Wolf Blitzer, "Five Held in Bermuda face Deportation to the U.S.," *Jerusalem Post*, April 25, 1986.
24. Reported by Michael Widlanski, "From War Hero to Arms Vendor," in *Austin American-Statesman*, May 7, 1986.

25. Reported by Jim Anderson, "Israelis Deny Knowledge of Illegal Arm Sales," *UPI Wire Service*, April 22, 1986.
26. John I. Fialka, "Spy Case Links Israelis to Sale of Arms to Iran," *Wall Street Journal*, June 6, 1986. Also see Jane Hunter, "The Covert Iran Arms Sale Plot," *Israeli Foreign Affairs*, vol. 2, no. 6 (June 1986), pp. 37-7. Charlotte Sakowski, "Alleged Smuggling Latest in Series of U.S.-Israeli Incidents," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 10, 1986. Also see Steven Engelberg, "Possible Israeli Plot to Import Bomb Technology Investigated," *New York Times*, July 9, 1986.
28. Nili Shabak-Bufman, "Israeli Intelligence: Pure Bullshit," *Motzav* (Hebrew), January 1986, translated by Israel Shahak, available from *Israel Source*, Washington DC, vol. 2, no. 3 (April 25, 1986).
29. Richard H. Curtiss, *A Changing Image: American Perceptions of the Arab-Israeli Dispute* (Washington, DC: American Educational Trust, 1982), pp. 13-32.
30. Thomas R. Stauffer, "Economic Implications of Lost Trade Opportunities in the Middle East, Military and Commercial," *American-Arab Affairs*, no. 16 (Spring 1986), p. 12.
31. *Mideast Observer*, March 15, 1984 and *Miami Herald* (Business Monday), June 4, 1984.
32. See for example the analysis by Leonard Silk, "Military Costs an Israeli Issue," *New York Times*, June 4, 1986.
33. For an analysis of U.S. aid to Israel see: Mohamed El Khawas and Samir Abdel Rabbo, *American Aid to Israel: Nature and Impact* (Baltimore, VT: Amiana Books, 1984) and Thomas R. Stauffer, *United States Aid to Israel, The Vital Link*, Middle East Problem Paper No. 24 (Washington, D.C.: Middle East Institute, 1983).
34. El Khawas and Rabbo, *American Aid*.
35. Mary Curtiss, "Israel-U.S. Ties Never Better," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 13, 1986. (This article details the extremely intimate relations between Washington and Tel Aviv at all levels.)
36. Shula Koenig, "The Rule of Religious Orthodoxy or a Civil Libertarian State?" *Newsletter American-Israeli Civil Liberties Coalition*, Inc., vol. 5, no. 2, (Spring 1986), pp. 1 and 10. See other articles in same newsletter and other newsletters put out by the Coalition.
37. See for example Sabri Jiryis, *The Arabs in Israel* (NY: Monthly Review Press, 1978); Ian Lustick, *Arabs in the Jewish State: Israel's Control of a National Minority* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980); Uri Davis, "The Zionist Society: Consequences for Internal Opposition and the Necessity for External Intervention," in *Jahannam-Zawamir: What Difference for the Middle East?*, ed., Eford and Aziz, (London: Zed Press, 1986), pp. 176-205; Eila I. Zurek, *The Palestinians: Israel: A Study in Internal Colonialism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979).
38. For an ongoing account of this discussion see *The Other Israel*, Newsletter of the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace (Tel Aviv, Israel: November-December 1985—March-April 1986).

39. Philippa Strum, "Israel's Democratic Dilemma," *Reform Judaism*, Publication of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, vol. 14, no. 2 (Winter 1985-86), p. 13.

40. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

41. *Foreign Relations of the United States 1941*, vol. 5, *The Near East, South Asia, and Africa* (in two parts), Part 2, "Israel," Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976), pp. 526-54. *Foreign Relations of the United States 1947*, vol. 5, *The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, "Palestine" (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1975), pp. 1166-70. There is an enormous documentary material in both these volumes to illustrate the thesis that support for the creation of Israel ran counter to all U.S. national interests.

42. The best analysis of ways in which domestic factors affected Truman's decisions is found in John Sneyd's *Truman, the Jewish Issue, and the Creation of Israel* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1974).

43. For an analysis of the important contribution of Eddie Jacobson to Peter Crane, *Israel in the Mind of America* (New York: Schocken Books, 1944), pp. 230-31, 272-73, 277, 293, 298.

44. William Eddy, *E.D.R. Meets Ben Sudd* (New York: American Friends of the Middle East, 1954), pp. 36-7. See *New York Times*, November 28, 1952, for an account of Jacobson's efforts and Nasser's interest in seeking accommodation.

45. A survey of the best accounts of Israel's early militancy may be found in Kenneth Lewin, *Suez: The Twice Fought War* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959); Wilbur Crane Eveland, *Ropes of Sand: America's Failure in the Middle East* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1980); David Hirst, *The Gun and the Olive Branch: The Role of Violence in the Middle East* (London: Futura Donaldson, 1978); Green, *Taking Sides*.

47. For example, it was the Eisenhower administration that orchestrated and implemented the overthrow of the second freely elected president of Guatemala, Jacobo Arbenz. See: Michael McIntinock, *The American Connection, II: State Terror and Popular Resistance in Guatemala* (London: Zed Press, 1986) and Cheryl A. Rubenberg, "Israel and Guatemala," MERIP Reports, no. 140 (May-June 1986).

48. Abba Eban, *An Autobiography* (New York: Random House, 1977), p. 335.

49. See Joseph E. Johnson, "Arab vs. Israeli: A Persistent Challenge" address given before the American Assembly, Arden House, Harriman, N.Y., October 24, 1963, in Fred J. Khouri, *The Arab-Israeli Dilemma*, 2nd ed. (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1976), p. 146.

50. On the inter-Arab rivalries and competitions see Malcolm Kerr, *The Arab Cold War: Gama' al-Nasir and His Rivals, 1950-1960*, 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.

51. For a similar analysis see Green, *Taking Sides*, p. 199. Also see Ibrahim I. Ibrahim, "The American-Israeli Alliance: Reason d'Etat Revisited," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, vol. 15, no. 3, 59 (Spring 1986), p. 25. Johnson had a number of particularly pro-Israeli advisors who advocated this thesis both for its benefits to Israel as well as its utility in serving U.S. interests, including Abe Fortas (later appointed by Johnson to the Supreme Court), Clark Clifford (a Washington attorney and Truman's former advisor), Abe Feinberg and Arthur Kirk (wealthy Jewish contributors to the Democratic Party), John P. Roche, Johnson's "Intellectual-in-residence," Walter Rostow, the national security advisor; and Eugene V. Rostow (Walker's brother who was undersecretary of state for political affairs). For an analysis of the impact of these advisors see Donald Nefz, *Narratives for Jerusalem: The Six Days that Changed the Middle East* (N.Y.: Linden Press-Simon and Schuster, 1984), pp. 80-1, 83-4, 110-11, 113, 143, 156-59, 164, 169-70, 172-73, 171, 211-12, 235-36, 259-60, and 307.

52. Lyndon B. Johnson, *The Vantage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency, 1963-1969* (N.Y.: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), p. 293. Also see Green, *Taking Sides*, pp. 199-200.

53. Eban, *Autobiography*, pp. 385 and 394. Also see Malcolm Brecher, *Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 420.

54. Green, *Taking Sides*, pp. 204-11.

55. Lyndon B. Johnson, "Principles for Peace in the Middle East," *Department of State Bulletin*, July 10, 1967, pp. 31-34.

56. Shlomo Shalom, *United States-Israeli Relations, 1947-1973: A Study in the Convergence and Divergence of Interests*, Jerusalem Papers on Peace Problems No. 8 (Jerusalem: Leonard Davis Institute of International Relations, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1974).

57. See the analysis by Seymour M. Hersh, *The Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House* (New York: Summit Books, 1983), pp. 234-49.

58. See Stephen Isaacs, *Jews and American Politics* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974).

59. On the influence and impact of the pro-Israel lobby see Paul Findley, *They Dare to Speak Out: People and Institutional Conflict: Israel's Lobby* (Westport, CT: Lawrence Hill, 1985); Cheryl A. Rubenberg, "The Middle East Lobbies," *The Link*, vol. 17, no. 1 (January-March, 1984); Cheryl A. Rubenberg, "The Conduct of U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East in the 1983-84 Election Season," *American Arab Affairs*, no. 9 (Summer 1984), pp. 22-45; and Cheryl A. Rubenberg, "Pro-Israel Lobbying on the Media and U.S. Middle East Policy," *Mideast Monitor*, vol. 2, no. 2 (March 1985).

60. "Interview with Shulamit Aloni," *Israeli-Palestinian Peace*, Newsletter of the Washington Area Jews for an Israeli-Palestinian Peace, vol. 2, no. 2 (Spring 1986), pp. 3 and 6.

61. *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, vol. 99, no. 24, December 10, 1973.

62. Edward R. Sheehan, *The Arabs, the Israelis, and Kissinger: A Secret History of American Diplomacy in the Middle East* (New York: Readers Digest Press/Thomas Y. Crowell, 1976), pp. 69-70 and U.S. Congress, Senate, "Report No. 93-620: Foreign Assistance and Related Programs Appropriations Bill, 1974, December 13, 1973," *Senate Reports*, 93rd Congress, 1st Session, vol. 9, Miscellaneous Reports on Public Bills (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1973), pp. 121-23.

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64. See for example John F. Roehm, Jr., "Congressional Participation in United States Middle East Policy, October 1973-1976: Congressional Activism vs. Policy Coherence," in *Congress, the Presidency and American Foreign Policy*, eds., John Spanier and Joseph Noyes (N.Y.: Pergamon Press, 1982), pp. 24-59 and Robert D. Frie, *Interest Groups and the Foreign Policy Process: United States Policy in the Middle East*, Sage Professional Paper in International Studies, vol. 4, no. 02-047 (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1976).

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68. George Ball, "How to Save Israel in Spite of Hersh," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 55 (April 1977), p. 471.

69. "U.S.-U.S.S.R. Joint Communiqué, October 1, 1977," *The Search for Peace in the Middle East: Documents and Statements, 1963-1978* Report prepared for the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1979), pp. 159-60.

70. William B. Quandt, *Camp David: Peacemaking and Politics* (Washington: The Brookings Institute, 1986), pp. 38-40.

71. Seth P. Tillman, *The United States in the Middle East: Interests and Obstacles* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1982), pp. 233. Cites numerous statements by Israeli leaders (quoted from the *New York Times*).

72. Tillman, *Interests and Obstacles*, pp. 234, citing Schiff's comment and other statements of pro-Israeli leaders from the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*.

73. Quandt, *Camp David*, pp. 126-31 and Tillman, *Interests and Obstacles*, pp. 235-36.

74. Quandt, *Camp David*, passim. He illustrates in a thorough but subtle way the effect of pro-Israeli pressure on Carter during the Camp David process.

75. *Mideast Observer*, February 15, 1981.

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77. For a discussion of American support for and encouragement to Israel in its war in Lebanon see Zeev Schiff, "The Green Light," *Foreign Policy*, no. 50 (Spring 1983), pp. 73-85, and Zeev Schiff and Ehud Yaron, *Israel's Lebanon War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984).

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80. *New York Times*, September 3, 1982; *Miami Herald*, September 3, 1982.

81. *Washington Post*, June 16, 1982.

82. *Ibid.*

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Book Views

1949: The First Israelis

By Tom Segev
Free Press, 1986.
379 pp., \$19.95

Reviewed by Merle Thorpe, Jr.

1949: *The First Israelis* is an impressive book, recently Israel's number-one bestseller. Its author, Tom Segev, is a former writer for *Ha'aretz* and currently co-editor in chief of the Israeli newsweekly, *Koteret Rashit*. A native of Jerusalem and graduate of Hebrew

University, Segev holds a Ph.D. in history from Boston University.

Segev's work considers the myriad problems that had to be addressed in the founding of Israel, such as immigration policy, the struggle between the orthodox and secular in education and religious observance, and the realities of everyday life.

For those interested principally in the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis and its peaceful resolution, the book's first section, "Between Jews and Arabs," will be more interesting

than the inter-Jewish issues.

The preface advises us that the book "is based almost entirely on recently declassified official documents." The disclosures leave many common perceptions of the conflict in tatters. Apropos the 1948 fighting, Segev states that "Tens of thousands of Arabs remained in their homes—only to be driven out by the Israeli army." He cites a subsequent Israeli Foreign Ministry report predicting that "the most adaptable and best survivors [of the refugees] would manage by a process of natural selection, and the others would waste away. Some will die but most will turn into human debris and social outcasts . . ." He

reports Aharon Cizling, minister of agriculture, telling a 1949 cabinet meeting:

We still do not properly appreciate what kind of enemy we are now nurturing outside the borders of our state. Our enemies, the Arab states, are a mere nothing compared with those hundreds of thousands of Arabs who will be moved by hatred and hopelessness and infinite hostility to wage war on us . . .

And to close the circle, Segev quotes from the diary of Jewish National Fund head, Yosef Weitz, the response of Ben-Gurion to the refugee prob-

lem: "In his [Ben-Gurion's] opinion, time will cure all, and all will be forgotten."

1949: *The First Israelis* should give Israelis and Israeli supporters a clearer view of the issues raised by the creation of the Jewish state and of Israeli attitudes toward the other people who also claim the contested land. Segev's candid writing provides an invaluable service in understanding, and possibly contributing to a resolution of, the conflict.

Merle Thorpe, Jr., is President of the Foundation for Middle East Peace in Washington, D.C.

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New Selections

□ Tom Segev, *1949: The First Israelis*, Free Press, 1986, 379 pp., \$19.95. An Israeli journalist uses newly declassified Israeli documents to provide insights into the actions of the Jewish statebuilders during their first full year of independence. Four sections analyze treatment of the Arab population, including forced expulsion and property confiscations, the harsh treatment accorded oriental Jewish immigrants, the conflicts between the religious and secular communities, and the gap between Zionist ideals and Israeli realities. Our price, \$12.75. See review, page 14.

□ Livia Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*, Association of Arab-American University Graduates, 1986, 63 pp., \$5.95. This is the third edition of Livia Rokach's examination of the personal diary of Moshe Sharrett, Israeli prime minister from 1953-1956. Sharrett opposed the prevailing policy of "sacred terrorism" whereby Israel sought to intimidate Arab civilians, disperse Palestinian refugees, and sabotage peace plans with Arab states until Israel could expand territorially by military conquest. Our price, \$4.50.

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□ Paul Findley, *They Dare To Speak Out: People and Institutions Confront Israel's Lobby*, Lawrence Hill and Company, 1985, 362 pp., \$16.95. The former eleven-term Congressman from Illinois, through documentation and case studies, shows how Americans are victimized for putting their own country's interest before Israel's, and how coordinated efforts are made throughout the country to control open debate on Middle East issues. Our price, \$9.95.

□ Stephen Green, *Taking Sides: America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, William Morrow, 1984, 370 pp., \$14.95. Exploring America's behind-the-scenes relations with Israel, the author spent two years examining files, recently declassified, many at his request. Important new information emerges concerning Israeli army strength vis-à-vis the Arabs since the 1940's, Israel's shaky friendship with the Eisenhower administration, the nuclear power plant at Dimona, and U.S. participation in the 1967 war. Our price, \$11.50.

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Mohamed el-Khawas and Samir Abed-Rabbo, *American Aid to Israel: Nature and Impact*, Brattleboro, VT: Amana Books, 1984, 191 pp., \$8.95. Historical review of U.S. aid to Israel, public and private, since 1949. The book also reproduces the full uncensored version of the U.S. General Accounting Office's 1983 report, "U.S. Assistance to the State of Israel." Our price, \$5.95.

Alfred Lilienthal, *The Zionist Connection II: North American*, New Brunswick, NJ, 904 pp., \$9.95 (paperback). Covers the Arab-Israeli conflict from the time of Herzl to the 1982 Israel invasion of Lebanon. Research involved is monumental. Contains much information of which most Americans are unaware. Our price, \$5.95.

Sally V. Mallison and W. Thomas Mallison, *Armed Conflict in Lebanon 1982:*

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