Military and Strategic Affairs

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CONTENTS

Military and Strategic Affairs

The purpose of *Military and Strategic Affairs* is to stimulate and enrich the public debate on military issues relating to Israel's national security.

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Editor's Foreword

This issue of *Military and Strategic Affairs* incorporates three studies that address social concerns within the context of Operation Protective Edge. These studies are based on fieldwork in the area of the Gaza envelope.

While the essays are anchored in academic theory, they incorporate interviews with individuals in two regional councils in the Gaza envelope: Eshkol and Sha'ar Hanegev. Within this framework, researchers interviewed area representatives, the heads of the regional councils, senior personnel, and leading professionals in both councils, as well as leaders and office holders in the settlements themselves. These interviews reflect different and, at times, opposing viewpoints, and help to create a comprehensive understanding of the difficulties faced by the civilians living in the frontline of conflict with Hamas and jihadist organizations in the Gaza Strip. These essays reflect not only the local situation, but also the civilian, social, and political challenges that characterize the State of Israel as a whole as it grapples with this set of security threats now and in the foreseeable future.

Gabi Siboni
Editor, *Military and Strategic Affairs*

Social Resilience in the Jewish Communities around the Gaza Strip Envelope during and after Operation Protective Edge

Meir Elran, Zipi Israeli, Carmit Padan, Alex Altshuler

With the assistance of Hofni Gartner, Shani David, Maya Kornberg, and Shlomi Ben Meir

This study examines and measures the social resilience of the residents of the Gaza Strip area during Operation Protective Edge in summer 2014 and thereafter. We provide an overview of the concept of resilience, focusing on the phenomenon of bouncing back towards recovery following the functional decline as a result of stressful events. Social resilience is measured here by three behavioral yardsticks: demographics and evacuation, therapeutics and education, and employment and economics. We chose two regional councils to represent the people living in the Gaza envelope, in direct proximity to the Gaza Strip. We collected the data through interviews with council employees, residents in these regional councils, and from the media. Although the residents in the two councils behaved in different manners, the level of behavioral resilience monitored in most of the localities was generally high, whereas the level of psychological-communal resilience

Brigadier General (ret.) Meir Elran is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies, Head of the Homeland Security Program, and Head of the Society-Security Program of the Institute for National Security Studies. Dr. Zipi Israeli is a Research Fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies. Carmit Padan is a Neubauer Research Associate at the Institute for National Security Studies. Dr. Alex Altshuler is a Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Department of Management at Bar-Ilan University, Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and a Research Fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies. Hofni Gartner, Shani David, Maya Kornberg, and Shlomi Ben Meir are research assistants at the Institute for National Security Studies.

was lower and presented a more complex picture. Based on our findings we propose lessons that can be learned for enhancing social resilience in Israel and elsewhere.

Keywords: Operation Protective Edge, social resilience, Gaza envelope, Nahal Oz, Eshkol Regional Council, Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Council

> *Social resilience during Operation Protective Edge was the factor that*
> *allowed the war to be fought. These days, wars are fought in the rear.*
> *The rear is the battlefield.*
> Maj. Gen. Sami Turgeman,
> Commander of IDF Southern Command

Background

For the residents of the Gaza envelope in Israel, Operation Protective Edge (OPE) (July 8-August 26, 2014)[1] actually started ten days earlier, when they were hit by dozens of mortars and rockets during "Operation Brother's Keeper" – the IDF's search for three Israeli teenagers who had been abducted by Hamas terrorists on June 12. For the residents of the Gaza envelope, OPE was a war in every sense of the word, lasting sixty days, and unprecedentedly threatening civilians and putting their social resilience to the test. Three of the five Israeli citizens (plus a foreign employee from Thailand) killed during the operation were Gaza envelope residents, a fact that added a profound element of mourning and shock to the community's mindset.[2]

The objective of this paper is to examine the social resilience of the residents of the Gaza envelope during and after OPE. The research is based on a comparative study, focusing on the regional councils of Eshkol and Sha'ar Hanegev,[3] which suffered a high percentage of attacks during the operation. Out of some 4,500 rocket and mortar attacks launched against Israel during the operation, the Gaza envelope took 2,248 hits.[4] According to one source of data, the localities in the two regional councils were subjected to some 1,600 attacks.[5] In addition, they were affected by the new and frightening threat of Gaza's Hamas offensive tunnels,[6] adding to the overall picture of terrorist intimidations from the Gaza Strip.

There are 32 localities in the Eshkol Regional Council, which shares a forty-kilometer-long border with the Gaza Strip. These include fourteen kibbutzim, fifteen moshavim, and three communal settlements,[7] with a

total of some 15,000 residents. The Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Council, which borders the Gaza Strip to the north, is composed of some 7,500 residents living in ten kibbutzim and one moshav.[8] The population is quite diverse and consists of groups with different social characteristics and mindsets, who, consequently, respond differently to emergencies. Each of these groups has its own characteristics, manifested in different responses to emergencies. Naturally, a closer geographic proximity to the border affects residents and may increase the stress.

The purpose of this study is to learn from these communities about social resilience and the factors contributing to it. When those are analyzed and understood, they can contribute to enhancing resilience in Israel and in other countries. The study examines the levels of social resilience in these communities, using both quantitative and qualitative data about the conduct of the residents, the local communities, and the regional councils before, during, and after the military escalation in summer 2014. We also compared the levels of social resilience during the three rounds of hostilities between Israel and Hamas since 2008, focusing on several parameters: the demographic aspect, and particularly, the phenomenon of evacuation and return; the psychosocial dimension, based mainly on the information provided by the resilience centers and schools; economics and employment; and the role of communication in enhancing resilience. Each of these featured differently in the two regional councils, but together they depict a comprehensive and instructive picture. In brief, the objective of this paper is to provide the decision makers with detailed evidence regarding the manifestations of social resilience and their contribution to the country's strategic response to the man-made risks that threaten Israel's national security.

Social Resilience: Theoretical Background and Practical Implications

The concept of resilience[9] (*hosen* in Hebrew) has been used extensively in Israel by the media and in the political discourse since the Second Intifada (2000 – 2004). It is borrowed from the English concept of *resilience*, which became common in the public discourse in the United States and elsewhere after the 9/11 attacks. In Israel, the erroneous tendency is to relate to resilience in two overlapping ways: 1) as immunity, which manifests a system's ability to isolate itself from the hazard and thereby escape serious damage from

it, mainly through conceptual, mental, and physical steadfastness; 2) and as *hason,* a robustness manifested by physical and mental fortitude.

In fact, the term resilience has a different meaning in the academic and professional literature.[10] It mostly centers on the following components: Resilience will always be manifested in situations involving severe threat and damage. Resilience may refer to the individual, organizational, group or community levels (societal resilience), as well as to infrastructure or economic systems. When these elements are in conjunction with one another, they may also express a more general, national resilience. For the purpose of this study, we propose the following definition: resilience expresses the capacity of a system to respond flexibly to a severe disruption or disaster − in accordance with its magnitude and severity of its consequences − in order to contain the damage and the inevitable decline of the system's functionality, and to bounce back rapidly to its normal entity, structure, and conduct.

The component of bouncing back and rapidly recovering is one of the cornerstones of the concept of resilience and should serve as its major yardstick. The underlying assumption is that a severe disruption will always cause the system's functioning to seriously decline. Lack of a real decline indicates that the disruption has not been significant, even if some would view the disruptive episode as severe. Consequently, a disrupted system whose functional decline is severe and persistent, and whose recovery is slow or does not materialize, would be characterized by having a low rate of resiliency. A system whose functional decline is flexible and manages to quickly bounce back and return to normal functioning is a system with a high level of resilience. A system that recovers quickly and returns to a higher level of resilience than it previously had is a system with a very high resiliency level.

Resilience does not represent a system's inherent or fixed characteristics; rather, it needs to be constantly nourished as an important part of the system's preparedness for severe disruptions. The concept of resilience starts with the assumption that resistance to the disruption, seemingly designed to prevent or protect a system from severe disruptions, would never provide a total and ultimate solution. Therefore, the concept of resilience should be implemented in a concurrent and balanced manner, as it is designed to provide a systemic response to severe disruption, i.e., rapidly bouncing back, which enables the swiftest and fullest recovery

possible, and allows the system to reach its designated functional continuity and optimal reconstruction.

These theoretical assumptions, commonly accepted in different countries,[11] and by international organizations dealing with the challenge of disaster risk reduction,[12] have clear, far-reaching implications for emergency preparedness. Adopting resilience as a strategy – something that unfortunately is not yet fully implemented in Israel – might be recommended as an adequate framework for a comprehensive national plan, both at the macro and micro levels.[13] In general, our research shows that the communities that adopted the concept of resilience in practice, and acted according to its principles, showed a fairly high level of recovery. The commendable performance of the resilience centers in both Eshkol and Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Councils, operated by the Israel Trauma Coalition,[14] doubtlessly contributed to enhancing the bouncing back and recovery of the communities during OPE.[15]

Demographics and Evacuation Scales

One of the more significant phenomena serving to gauge social resilience in the Gaza envelope is the demographic growth of the communities in recent years. Since Hamas started to systematically use high-trajectory weapons after it seized control of the Gaza Strip in 2007, the population of the Gaza envelope has continued to grow steadily and at significant rates. The Eshkol Regional Council had an average growth of some 200 families per year (mostly young adults returning to their home communities) since 2007, resulting in a 35 percent increase by 2014. It is still too early to determine the post-Protective Edge trend, but given residential infrastructures (according to forecasts based on government financing), the picture is encouraging and even higher growth is expected.[16] The situation in Sha'ar Hanegev is similar. The regional council reports an increase of some 1,200 new residents and continuous growth since Operation Cast Lead in 2009.[17] For example, since 2012, Kibbutz Nir-Am has seen a 50 percent increase in membership, a fact that lowered the average age there from sixty-seven to fifty in less than three years, and increased the number of preschool children from one to twelve.[18]

Despite the ongoing threat to security, including three rounds of violence with Hamas (Cast Lead in 2008 – 2009, Pillar of Defense in 2012, and Protective Edge in 2014) and numerous incidents in-between,[19] very few residents in either regional councils actually left – with the exception

of Kibbutz Nahal Oz as we discuss below.[20] The notable trend of staying, as well as the continued population growth – limited primarily because of a housing shortage and local policy of measured and steady growth on the basis of social and economic needs – should serve as indicators of the high level of social resilience.[21] Clearly, the major attraction of the region is economic (the low cost of living) and social (high standard of living and quality education). Furthermore, the construction of the railway line to Sderot shortened the distance to and from the country's center. Integral to this discussion, however, is that the residents do not perceive the very difficult and persistent security challenges as an obstacle in their considerations, at least to this point in time. This reflects a high level of human and social capital in the communities under discussion, which is a clear contributor to social resilience.[22]

Evacuation, Return Home, and Social Resilience

On May 11, 2015, at a meeting with the heads of the regional councils in the Gaza envelope, Maj. Gen. Sami Turgeman, Commander of the IDF Southern Command said, "We embarked on this operation [Protective Edge] with the attitude that the evacuation of the population would represent a gain, a victory for Hamas. That is why we were in no hurry to do so. This approach was wrong. It makes no sense to leave (non-essential) civilians in a war zone."[23] Fundamentally, the Israeli government and the IDF did not think it was appropriate to evacuate civilians from their threatened communities, or apparently sensed that it would be wrong to do so, including evacuating those living right next to the border fence.[24] As Maj. Gen. Turgeman said, the main reason was the traditional Israeli narrative in which the country does not evacuate civilians under enemy fire.[25] With this, perhaps, outdated and not very accurately based ethos in mind, the residents and settlement leaders decided to do what they thought was right, and left home. Many of them were motivated by a sense of disappointment and frustration with the lack of a government decision, which adversely affected their trust in the government and the IDF.[26] With the lack of clear instructions from the government, the IDF, and the regional councils, the decision to stay or leave was made by the residents themselves and at times by local community leaders. In the background, different and even contradictory messages were heard from the two heads of the regional councils; Haim Yellin, the head of the Eshkol Regional Council, generally supported the residents' decision to evacuate,[27] whereas Alon Shuster, the head of the

Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Council, conveyed a message that could have been interpreted as supporting the decision to stay put.[28]

The attitudes of the people in the Gaza envelope towards the issue of evacuation can be divided into three major groups. The first group, which was relatively small, constitutes the communities next to the border fence, which did not evacuate or whose residents did not leave. Kibbutz Alumim, whose residents did not evacuate at all, stands out as a highly ideological, cooperative religious kibbutz, without privatized dwellings, with a core group of English speakers.[29] The other is Kibbutz Erez, where the evacuation rate was less than 50 percent of the mothers and children.[30] This kibbutz is noted for its remarkable communal cohesiveness, a strong tradition going back to pre-statehood times (represented by the old-timers), and a well-trained emergency team; this kibbutz also does not have privatized dwellings. Both kibbutzim, then, have a cohesive communal spirit and faith, two of the well-known attributes of social resilience. This has been translated into a strong sense of self-confidence and trust in the community and its path, which allowed residents to choose to stay put even under conditions of direct physical danger, unlike other kibbutzim in the region.

The second group consists of the other communities along the border fence — all kibbutzim — which were hit the most, and the majority of whose residents left.[31] There is no exact data on the evacuation rates; the common estimate is that 50 percent of the residents, mostly mothers and children, left the communities located within less than seven kilometers from the Gaza Strip.[32] In some cases, the evacuation was the result of personal decisions, whereas in other cases, the kibbutz organized the evacuation.[33] Essential workers, emergency teams, and residents who refused to leave, especially the old-timers, remained in place. The common trend was to evacuate as a community and strive to maintain communal life in the so-called "Diaspora" while preserving continuous — although not trouble-free — contact with home and those who stayed.[34] After the cease-fire ended the hostilities on August 26, the evacuees returned home, almost all of them immediately. A small minority stayed away until the start of the new school year on September 1, and a few did not return until Rosh Hashanah (The Jewish New Year) on September 24. This held true also for those who publicly announced that they would not return home until . . . or ever. There was not any explicit government decision or directive to evacuate nor to return home. Only on August 22-23, as the operation was winding down, the Ministry of Defense

(through the National Emergency Management Agency – NEMA) decided to look for systemic solutions to help the evacuees.

The third group consists of residents of the more distant settlements, living beyond the seven-kilometer range from the Gaza Strip (east of Route 232). Most of them, some 80 percent of the residents, stayed and managed to conduct an "emergency routine."[35] In future rounds of hostilities, these communities could face a serious challenge, as their level of communal preparedness for emergencies is much lower than that of the localities closer to the fence.[36]

The issue of evacuation and return can serve to gauge social resilience. The inevitable decline in the community's functionality is manifested by the evacuation, while the bouncing back is exhibited by the return. In terms of evacuation, indicating functional decline, the decision – whether personal or communal – to temporarily leave a home that is exposed to real life danger reflects both a sober view and flexible conduct, concomitant with the level of risk. Flexible conduct and assuming responsibility for the fate of individuals and the community can be interpreted as an appropriate and positive response to the challenge. This is perceived as a component of social resilience. The fact that almost all the residents in the majority of settlements came back within a few days, and resumed their normal functioning and conduct similar to before the evacuation, also truly manifests social resilience. At the same time, a survey undertaken by the Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Council, using other indexes, found that the level of social resilience among the evacuees as a group was generally lower than of those who stayed in their homes, the majority of whom served in critical positions in the community.[37]

The Story of Nahal Oz[38]

OPE caught Kibbutz Nahal Oz after years of stagnation. Located on the border with the Gaza Strip, the kibbutz numbered 180 members at its height; privatization in the late 1990s, however, led to an acute social and economic decline as well as a deep and persistent leadership crisis. On the eve of the operation, the kibbutz consisted of approximately seventy households, 108 members, and a total of 330 people. The 7-12 age group had only twelve children. The high-tech plant had closed and no more than twenty people worked on the kibbutz itself, ten of them in agriculture. Some said that the kibbutz, with its glorious historic past as the nation's first Nahal para-military outpost in 1951, was on its last legs. During the

fighting, the kibbutz suffered serious blows; it was continuously shelled (269 hits) and terrorist offensive tunnels were discovered nearby, which led to the evacuation of most of the members – only some 35-90 people stayed in the kibbutz. It also suffered the tragic death of four year-old Daniel Tragerman following the decision of the kibbutz leadership to return the evacuated families to their homes; this decision was a horrendous mistake. The atmosphere in the kibbutz completely broke down, as seventeen families left, many more than all of the families who left the other Gaza envelope settlements.

When the fighting ended, the kibbutz suddenly experienced an unexpected growth. Even before all the evacuees had returned, the kibbutz began intense, goal-oriented action, which within a short period of time reversed the atmosphere and led to an unprecedented upswing in construction; since the war, the kibbutz has welcomed eight new families, and eight more families were expected to arrive in the summer of 2015. In the next few years, the kibbutz expects to add ten more families, and, for the first time since the 1980s, the kibbutz is planning to expand by building seventeen housing units. A pre-army educational program with a group of youngsters also moved to the kibbutz, and an economic initiative – a therapeutic parent-child program – was established there. Nahal Oz now enjoys lively cultural and communal activity: the young group has been joined by eight teens from outside the kibbutz, and last Passover the kibbutz held a communal Seder for the first time since 2000. The leadership has changed while the general atmosphere has been radically transformed. Despite the intensity of emotion associated with the events of the fighting, there is a strong sense of growth, drive, collective action, and hope.

What caused the turnaround? What are the roots of this renewal after the ongoing decline and the sense of breakdown that characterized the kibbutz during the severe disruption of OPE? There are a few explanations, including financial grants that the government decided to give after the operation, which were supposed to inject some ILS 20 million into the kibbutz and allow construction and expanded activity. According to kibbutz members, however, it was much more a question of the community recapturing a sense of togetherness that was once the hallmark of all kibbutzim: a fierce connection to the locale, a sense of belonging to the community, a shared vision, attachment, and cohesion. All of these attributes again bring to the fore the kibbutz's strong ideological foundation, as well as its search for meaning. The new local leadership, activated during the fighting, has

earned the trust of kibbutz members who were impressed by how well the leadership functioned during the disruption, its transparency, the inclusiveness of the work, and the fair treatment of individuals. As a result, the members have expressed hope, despite the fragile security situation, the lack of clarity about the future, and the strong emotional low regarding the events of the summer of 2014.

The story of Kibbutz Nahal Oz is one of bouncing back after an extreme functional decline. It is a patent indication of an especially high level of resilience. Despite the uniqueness of this example, Nahal Oz is not alone when it comes to growth. Another example is that of Kibbutz Kerem Shalom, which also continues to grow this year.[39]

Indexes of Social Conduct (Education and Therapy)

OPE took place during the summer vacation; the evacuation of the children and parents, as well as most of the teachers and staff – especially in the kibbutzim abutting the border fence – completely disrupted activities planned by the educational institutions. As early as July 10, the schools started operating in a scaled-back manner,[40] although it was decided not to suspend educational activities, including day camps, and run most activities as long as the army gave the go-ahead. The personnel were provided with a backup, composed of volunteers and soldier-teachers, in order to run at least a minimal emergency routine.[41] The attitude was that the school system serves largely as a communal anchor. It strives to maintain a certain level of functional continuity, and intends to create "conditions of certainty under uncertain conditions," including a persistent situation of severe, harmful, threatening disruption designed to upset the routine.[42] Even when activities took place in well-protected shelters, there was still considerable risk in traveling there and back. The widespread evacuation of children led the school system to operate in the "Diaspora" away from home, on the basis of the regional council's plan.

Already on August 1, 2014, the school system began to prepare for the orderly start of the following school year, even though the hostilities were still at their height. The ceasefire took effect on August 26, and the question arose whether the school year would start on time. A fierce debate ensued, which, in turn, led to the decision of August 28 to begin the school year on time. On September 1, 99 percent of the students and teachers showed up for the new school year.[43] This rapid return to routine activity – only five days after the end of the war – reflects the ability to rapidly bounce

back and manifests the community's high social resilience.[44] Before the start of the school year, some parents and teachers vociferously opposed beginning the school year as planned and declared that they would not send their children to school. In practice, very few made good on this threat. Not all educational activities, however, resumed in full format as in the past. Notable examples have been the annual school trips, including the Passover 2015 trips, in which no more than two-thirds of the students participated. This suggests that the wounds have not completely healed; concern about being caught outdoors still exists, and a full recovery has not been achieved, even months after the end of the fighting. According to the educational index, social resilience has not yet reached the highest possible level, while therapeutic activity among the students is still necessary.

The extent of therapeutic activity among school students reveals a relatively slow although consistent trend towards recovery. The experience of the students during OPE was more severe than during the previous rounds of hostilities with Hamas when recovery was notably faster. The difference may be due to the longer duration of the conflict; the larger number of hits and early warning alarms; the discovery of the offensive tunnels; the widespread evacuation; and other disruptions due to military activity. For example, the number of students – as well as adults – who needed some kind of therapy after Operation Pillar of Defense in 2009 was only some 15 percent of the population aged 4-18, with the overwhelming majority being in elementary school, compared to some 25 percent who needed therapy after OPE.[45] The estimate is that during the 2015-2016 academic year, and perhaps until the spring of 2016, it will be necessary to continue treating some 15 percent of the students.[46]

The students' willingness to participate in group therapy after OPE was higher than in the past. Similarly, the number of therapists, teachers, and other professionals in the Eshkol Regional Council needing and undergoing therapy at the resilience centers is larger than it was in previous rounds of fighting.[47] These findings mean that the students' recovery, as well as that of social welfare professionals – and some would say the residents as a whole – is gradual and requires a measure of ongoing therapeutic maintenance. The sense of crisis is still present in the form of persistent anxiety.[48] In some of the communities where the damage was great, such as Nirim,[49] the recovery and gradual return to the routine started only in the spring of 2015.[50] Generally speaking, this slower ability to recover and bounce back is typical of the kibbutzim west of Route 232.[51] An example

of this is the high turnover among the heads of the Communal Emergency Teams,[52] indicating a high level of burnout.[53] In addition, the local discourse expresses a great deal of concern about the next round of fighting. This mixed picture may point to lower social resilience than indicated by the physical indexes presented above.

Economic and Employment Indexes

Two government decisions have had a decisive impact on the social resilience of the Gaza envelope residents. The first decision was made during OPE, declaring a "special situation in the home front." The second was to compensate and allocate extensive budgets to reconstruct the region after the hostilities. This decision and the start of its actual implementation are already evident on the ground, and may boost the prospects of the beleaguered region to rebuild and prosper, and enhance its social resilience even further.

Eshkol is the largest agricultural council in Israel, providing 60 percent of the nation's fresh produce.[54] The Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Council reports its sources of income as being 60 percent from farming, 30 percent from industry, and 10 percent from small businesses. Generally speaking, agriculture continued in the Gaza envelope throughout OPE in the slow format that characterizes the summer months;[55] however, damage to the agricultural infrastructure due to the heavy traffic of IDF vehicles and limits imposed on civilian traffic, and desertion of the Thai laborers disrupted the work. In the industrial sector, the plants in Sha'ar Hanegev's industrial zone and in the kibbutzim, including those close to the border fence, did not close. Work continued at 60 – 80 percent of the usual volume, mainly due to low attendance of workers. For example, Eco-Energy in Kibbutz Magen did not suffer much of a shortage; only a few workers stayed away.[56] Beeri Printers, the largest industry in the region, did not shut its machines down for the fighting; they only suspended action for a concert of pop star David Broza that was held on the premises.[57] By contrast, Michsaf Housewares Ltd., at Kibbutz Nir-Am, which employs forty-five people, was partly closed, and the number of workers dropped as low as 20 percent. In tourism and other entrepreneurship, the responses varied from a complete halt to sustaining local damage, while the number of businesses that closed for the duration of the hostilities was negligible.[58] Other branches, such as non-essential services, suffered a significant drop in employee attendance, causing temporary work stoppages.

Immediately after the ceasefire, work resumed fully in most sectors – with the exception of small private enterprises – clearly demonstrating an ability to rapidly bounce back. Despite the security challenge, not a single industrial plant in the region shut down or left the area.[59] Government compensation for direct and indirect damage was appropriate and reasonably quick in comparison to previous rounds of hostility, and played a positive role in the economic recovery and general atmosphere.[60] The most important move for systemic recovery was the government's approval of a multiyear strategic plan for the development of Sderot and the Gaza envelope localities.[61] This plan budgeted ILS 1.3 billion over 2014 – 2018, will be financed in part by special supplements, and will complement the government decision, made at the beginning of OPE, to direct ILS 417 million to the region over the next two years.

It is difficult to overstate the importance of the multiyear strategic plan and its contribution to the social resilience of the Gaza envelope communities and residents.[62] It caused an immediate and profound change in the local morale, based on the assumption that the plan would be fully implemented over the next five years. Despite familiar bureaucratic snafus, a strong sense of momentum and hope is apparent; the demand for parcels of land in southern industrial zones is growing, and real estate prices are rising, in part due to the new train station in Sderot. There is a marked increase in entrepreneurial interest in the area, and several deals in the industrial zones have already been signed. It is clear that the economic benefits and reduced investor risk are outweighing the security risk.[63] The budgeting of new construction on the kibbutzim will allow demographic growth and meet the rising demand, while the budgeting of social activities, including those to enhance social resilience, is already lifting the spirits and attitude of those involved.

The Media's Impact on Resilience

In order to enhance social resilience, Eshkol and Sha'ar Hanegev embarked on a mission to solicit all channels of the media to its cause. Indeed, the media served as an important tool in promoting social resilience in the Gaza envelope during OPE. Policy makers in both regional councils formulated media strategies, which were designed, in part, to enhance the resilience of their residents. They used the national and local media, as well as social media, and involved experienced media professionals. When the war

started, they were already prepared and informed, and had studied the lessons of the previous rounds of fighting.

The regional council leaderships focused on several well-defined points, designed to strengthen the resilience of their communities, including those that had remained and had been evacuated. One was to use the media to disseminate information and instructions. The media informed the inhabitants on how they should maintain their safety and carry on with the emergency routine in order to reduce uncertainty; strengthen the residents' sense of control; and convey the multiple message that: a) life goes on; b) all systems are functioning; c) they are not alone; and d) there is someone to talk to and rely on.[64] Another use of the media was to help residents cope with the risks by addressing their stressful emotions and encouraging an open discussion of those feelings. The communiqués to residents suggested,

> to avoid conveying the message of 'self-pity' and the absence of the wish to return following the evacuation. It is possible, even recommended, to talk about fear and concerns, but it is important to balance this by asserting that this is our home and we expect a future of true peace and security. [It is also possible to talk] about the sense of being a refugee (for those who left) and the difficulty in experiencing the war atmosphere (for those who stayed) . . . Our communities are strong and we believe in our ability to bounce back and take care of ourselves . . . and find a way to get back to normal life.[65]

References to difficulties were more prominent in the messages sent out by the Eshkol Regional Council, whereas the Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Council seemed to echo the notion that public discussion of the problems might weaken social resilience.

The topic of evacuation also exposed differences in the messages conveyed by the two councils. Sha'ar Hanegev emphasized remaining put, while Eshkol legitimized temporary relocation; the latter explicitly stated in its communiqués that, "We encourage residents not to be here, so that they do not experience the war." The issue of building trust in the institutions was first and foremost in reference to the regional council itself: "You are not alone. The entire system is thinking about you and is here to help you."[66] Economic recovery was also emphasized. Towards the end of the hostilities, the daily communiqués stated that, "At the next stage, we expect the government of Israel to strengthen the area and treat

it as a region with national priority . . . that will attract new residents who will help ensure this area's prosperity and success."[67]

It is interesting to note the differences in the media strategies of the two regional councils, which stems from the opposing attitudes of their political leaders. Haim Yellin, the head of the Eshkol Regional Council, regarded the media as central to maintaining social resilience. He understood that his appearance in the media was to make his personal voice heard, and help ease the stress and anxiety of his constituency. It was important for him to speak personally and frequently in public about the residents' concerns in order to "embrace them, calm their feelings, show them that they are not alone, that people know what they are living through." The communiqués put out by the Eshkol Regional Council also tried to convey strength as well as concern for the residents: "We still have a long way to go together, but we will make it and come out stronger than ever . . . so that we can once again enjoy the beautiful expanses around us, the reason we are here to begin with. With lots of love, Haim Yellin."[68]

By contrast, Alon Shuster, the head of the Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Council, believed that during the crisis he had to work rather than speak in the media. His rate of media appearances was much lower than Yellin's. Also his approach and messages were that the communities represent "Zionism on the border" and that it was counterproductive to convey a message of weakness or wave the white flag. Accordingly, his media messages focused on remaining put and that the residents were a sort of "civilian army." In interviews, he stated explicitly that he would not call on his residents to evacuate themselves from home.

It is not our domain here to judge which approach to the media was the right one. Both were legitimate, and succeeded in realizing their common goals, which focused on maintaining the resilience of the people. Professionals in both regional councils reported that they succeeded in controlling the messages that were conveyed during the operation, and that the media did indeed play a critical role in maintaining the social resilience of the residents.

Conclusions
Terrorism against civilians in Israel – including terror characterized by high-trajectory fire – is designed to disrupt the normal routine and frighten and demoralize the civilian population, as a means of changing Israel's policy towards the perpetrators. This is the objective of Hamas and the

other Palestinian factions in the Gaza Strip, who try repeatedly to harm civilians and damage the fabric of daily life in Israel. A high level of social resilience can and must serve as an appropriate response to this threat. During OPE, the Israeli home front faced a relatively limited challenge, with the exception of the communities in southern Israel and especially those in the Gaza envelope. Following the events of the summer of 2014, these communities succeeded in bouncing back, a benchmark that best characterizes social resilience and the capacity to stand up to the difficult challenge imposed upon them by Hamas.

An in-depth look at the two regional councils examined in this study shows that the local residents generally demonstrated a reasonable-to-fairly-high level of social resilience in the face of the profound threat.[69] This was manifested by the rapid functional and behavioral bouncing back as expressed by the return to full systemic functioning within a few days after the end of the hostilities. Still, it seems that the ability to bounce back emotionally is less apparent, slower, and more moderate, indicating the complexity of the psychological challenge as manifested in most of the communities, especially those abutting the border fence. The excruciating experience of last summer and the attendant anxieties are still prominent in the local discourse almost a year after the events, and in the slow pace of recovery of both individuals and communities.[70]

In relation to bouncing back and hence social resilience, one can note some differences among the Gaza envelope communities. Some, like Nahal Oz, Alumim, Erez, and Kerem Shalom, displayed a remarkably high level of resilience, despite the direct and acute challenge they faced. Their level of resilience represents an especially rapid and all-encompassing return to full systemic functioning, in some cases even higher than experienced before the summer of 2014.

To a great extent, this encouraging picture of the Gaza envelope following the events of 2014 depends on the relative quiet that the region has enjoyed since the end of the fighting,[71] even if some would suggest that this is a fragile facade liable to crack sooner or later.[72] Many believe such a collapse is imminent as Israel has not reached an understanding with Hamas and severe internal pressures are building up in the Gaza Strip.[73] In interviews, local residents expressed their concern over the minor, but steady onslaught of rockets from the Gaza Strip – a worry that feeds the residents' anxiety and slows down their recovery – and certainly raises concern of another

round of fighting in the future, which is liable to bring the entire system to the risk of collapse.[74]

On the basis of this study several key lessons can be suggested, to enhance the capacity of Israelis to deal with ongoing terrorism. The first is the importance of prior preparedness. This is a constant lesson in emergency management. Preparedness, both organizational (e.g., preparing the Community Emergency Teams) and therapeutic[75] (e.g., the Resilience Centers and Stress Clinics), greatly proved itself during OPE, and contributed directly to the social resilience of the residents. The fact that many of the communities surveyed here are kibbutzim, where the social capital is stronger than in other localities, almost certainly enhances their capacity to cope and adapt, and consequently helps to construct their high level of social resilience. The component of preparedness would be significant for other communities in locations further from the border, which are bound to be targeted by longer-range, high-trajectory weapons, especially those equipped with guided measures. Apart from the imperative to strengthen the active defense and the warning systems,[76] it is necessary to bolster the prior preparedness of the local authorities all over Israel. Even if some of them have already taken steps in this direction, the lessons of the summer of 2014 point to the urgency of reaching a standard level of preparedness, which is the responsibility of the local governments, to be implemented with adequate state supervision.

The second key point is the role of local leadership. Although some differences were manifested in the leadership of the two regional councils of Eshkol and Sha'ar Hanegev during OPE, undoubtedly the conduct of the respective leaderships, both at the council and the community levels, made a significant contribution to strengthening social resilience. The leaders played an important role in designing and leading the preliminary preparations. They maintained close personal relationships with their communities and residents, including representing the plights of their constituencies vis-à-vis the government, the IDF, and the Israeli public at large during and following the hostilities. All these ensured an impressive level of functional continuity of the municipal systems. Many local leaders in Israel can learn from the ways in which Haim Yellin and Alon Shuster led their councils and residents. It has long been understood and established in Israel that local government is a basic building block for the preparedness of the civilian home front. It is the personal responsibility of the elected leaders of the local governments to ensure that this concept is properly

realized, by designing a careful program based in part on the lessons learned in the Gaza envelope during OPE.

Trust in local leadership, the IDF, and the government is the third critical point. Despite some inevitable reservations, the two regional council heads earned the sweeping confidence and trust of their residents for their leadership and conduct during the war. Trust in leadership in general – whether local or state – is an important component in constructing social resilience. In this case, while the local leadership had the backing and trust of their constituency, the same public had a much lower level of confidence in the national leadership. They expected the nation's political leadership to provide them with long-term security, based on an agreement or arrangements with Hamas. The level of trust in the government rose when it decided on the economic plan for the region, and rightly so. The question of confidence in the IDF, including its local commanding officers, is decisive, as they are committed to maintain continuous contact with the local governments and the residents, lend an ear, and show empathy for their legitimate concerns and grievances. This was not always the case to the full satisfaction of the residents.[77] One would assume that the political leadership is aware of this sensitive issue. It also behooves the IDF to study the lessons in this field of what happened and what did not happen in OPE, and pay attention in the future to forming an inclusive and supportive dialogue with the residents and communities they are supposed to serve.[78]

The fourth point is the question of evacuation, which lately has become more relevant in the public discourse and among senior office holders.[79] The evacuation of civilians at acute risk is a legitimate move, representing the autonomous right of individuals and communities to make their own decisions on issues pertaining to their lives. It does not hamper national resilience, even if presented as such by the enemy's propaganda. Those in charge, especially the National Emergency Management Authority, should be commended for updating the "Melonit program," which is supposed to provide organizational and logistical responses to large-scale evacuations.[80] The main problem, however, is that a government decision is required for an organized massive evacuation. As long as a limited evacuation occurs, it does not represent a major challenge. If a massive evacuation is considered, including of people with special needs, it would pose an unprecedented challenge to the decision makers. They might be prejudiced against such a decision, primarily because of the traditional narrative that views – unjustifiably – evacuation as a show of weakness.

The fifth and final point is associated with the economic assistance, which is critical in constructing and maintaining social resilience. The direct contribution to the well-being of the residents and their sense of security in facing the acute threat from the Gaza Strip has been discussed above at length. The government decision to grant these extraordinary benefits to the communities close to the fence, and not to those located farther away, was a correct and important decision. In the future, it would also behoove the government to provide differential support to communities whose direct threat is higher. Another important recommendation for the government is to implement the program it approved to the fullest.

These lessons have direct meaning and relevance to all communities in Israel within the range of high-trajectory weapons, whose numbers and accuracy are ever on the increase. The main message of this essay is that there is an urgent need for the formulation of a national doctrine on social resilience and its translation into practical programs to enhance resilience in each local government in Israel. Such programs will have to provide solid responses to relevant, albeit extreme risk scenarios, which might challenge the capacity of society to bounce back rapidly and to express its inherent resilience.

Notes

1   Residents of the Gaza envelope consciously refer to the events of the summer of 2014 as a war. This is obviously a clear message, reflecting a subjective view meant to depict an event that differs from and is larger than an operation as described by the IDF and in official websites.
2   The resident of the Gaza envelope killed were Daniel Tragerman, Zeev Etzion, and Shahar Melamed.
3   The regional council is one of three types of local government entities in Israel, the other two being city and local councils. As of 2003, there were fifty-three regional councils in the country, with each representing three to fifty-four communities often spread over a relatively large area within the vicinity of each other. Each community within a regional council usually does not exceed a population of 2,000.
4   Uzi Rubin, *Israel's Active Defense in Operation Protective Edge*, Studies in Middle East Security, No. 111 (Ramat Gan: The Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, 2015).

5   Zaki et al, "A Moment of Statistics: A Summary of Alarms During Operation Protective Edge," *RotterNet,* Israel's Community of Forums, August 31, 2014, http://rotter.net/forum/scoops1/135166.shtml; Ronit Minker, spokeswoman for the Eshkol Regional Council during the operation, in an interview on May 14, 2015, presented an expanded version of the number of hits in the Eshkol Regional Council: 1,303 hits during the sixty days of fighting, with 166 hits occurring on the last day alone.

6   During the operation, a total of five attack tunnels penetrating the Gaza envelope were exposed between July 7 and July 28 next to the kibbutzim of Sufa, Beeri, Nir-Am, Erez, and Nahal Oz.

7   Eshkol Regional Council website, May 2015, http://www.eshkol.info. The kibbutzim are Urim, Beeri, Kisufim, Ein Hashlosha, Nirim, Nir Oz, Re'eem, Magen, Nir Yitzhak, Sufa, Holit, Kerem Shalom, Gvulot, and Tze'elim; they represent 46.2 percent of the regional council's population. The moshavim are Ohad, Sdeh Nitzan, Talmei Eliyahu, Amioz, Mivtahim, Yesha, Talmei Yosef, Pri Gan, Yated, Sdei Avraham, Yevul, Ein Habsor, Bnei Netzarim, and Naveh; these represent 48.3 percent of the regional council's population. The communal settlements are Avshalom, Tzohar, and Shlomit, forming 5.5 percent of the regional council's population.

8   Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Council website, May 2015, http://www.sng.org.il. The kibbutzim are Or Haner, Ivim, Erez, Brur Hayil, Gevim, Dorot, Kfar Aza, Miflasim, Nahal Oz, Nir-Am, and Ruhama, while the moshav is Yechini. Also in the regional council is the Shikmim Farm.

9   The Biblical source connects the word with *otzar*, variously translated as "store" or "treasure." "Moreover, I will give all the store [*hosen*] of this city, and all the gains thereof, and all the wealth thereof, yea, all the treasures [*otzrot*] of the kings of Judah" (Jeremiah 20:5).

10 Committee on Increasing National Resilience to Hazards and Disasters, *Disaster Resilience: A National Imperative* (The National Academies Press, 2012); Fran H. Norris, Susan P. Stevens, Betty Pfefferbaum, Karen H. Wyche, and Rose L. Pfefferbaum, "Community Resilience as a Metaphor, Theory, Set of Capacities, and Strategy for Disaster Readiness," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 41 (2008): 127-150; Jerome H. Kahan, Andrew C. Allen, and Justin K. George, "Resilience – Concept Developments: An Operational Framework for Resilience," *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management* 6, no. 1 (2009); K. Tierney, *Conceptualizing and Measuring Organizational and Community Resilience: Lessons from the Emergency Response following the September 11, 2001 Attack on the World Trade Center*, Preliminary Report, no. 329 (University of Delaware, Disaster Management Center, 2003).

11 "Resilience," *Homeland Security*, July 24, 2014, http://www.dhs.gov/topic/resilience.

12 For example, UNISDR. See http://www.unisdr.org/campaign/resilientcities.

13 Several years ago, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services, via the Community Work Service, formulated a comprehensive approach, but it has been implemented only partially. The ministry works to strengthen social resilience in Sderot and in the Gaza envelope communities in accordance with Government Decision No. 2173, from July 4, 2004, which accorded special assistance for these communities, including the idea of communal resilience. See Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services, *Survey of Social Services*, 2011, http://www.molsa.gov.il/CommunityInfo/ResearchAndEvaluation/Documents/591-620.pdf.

14 The centers are located in Sderot and in four regional councils in the first line of fire from the Gaza Strip: Hof Ashkelon, Sdot Negev, Sha'ar Hanegev, and Eshkol. See "Resilience Center," *The Israel Trauma Coalition*, 2015, http://www.israeltraumacoalition.org/?CategoryID=196. See also 2012 report, http://www.israeltraumacoalition.org/_Uploads/dbsAttachedFiles/annual_report2012_short_heb.pdf.

15 T. Levanon and D. Gidron, "Readiness, Resilience and Hope: The Israeli Experience," in *Strategies for Supporting Community Resilience*, ed. Robert Bach (Stockholm: Crismart, Multinational Resilience Policy Group, Swedish Defense University, 2015), pp. 289-309.

16 Boaz Krechmer, Strategic and Economic Division Manager, Eshkol Regional Council, interview, April 21, 2015.

17 Hannah Tal, Social Services Department Manager, Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Council, interview, April 29, 2015. The population of Sha'ar Hanegev grew by 30 percent since 2009, and the growth continues, albeit at a more moderate pace because of the lack of housing. Special emphasis is placed on "community building," i.e., strengthening the community. See Naftali Sivan, Project Manager at the Strategic Staff, Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Council, interview, May 17, 2015.

18 Ofer Lieberman, Community Emergency Team Spokesman at Nir-Am, interview, April 29, 2015.

19 Shay Levy, "From the Disengagement to Operation Protective Edge: The War in the Gaza Strip – Special Survey," *PAZAM*, July 10, 2014, http://www.mako.co.il/pzm-israel-wars/operation-protective-edge/Article-9a4a5e78fb02741006.htm.

20 According to Alon Shuster, head of the Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Council, "An apartment available for renting at Kibbutz Miflasim in the middle of the war was rented out within two day at higher than the asking price. Israelis looking to live at a reasonable standard, who understand that there are problems . . . including explosions from time to time, this is a suitable, even nice place to live. 97 percent of the people who lived here continue to live here; they must have enough good reasons for staying." *Globes*, Man of the Year 2014.

21 Sivan, interview.

22 D. P. Aldrich, *Building Resilience: Social Capital in Post-Disaster Recovery* (University of Chicago Press, 2012).

23 In other words, we never got to that point and we did not evacuate the residents who evacuated themselves. See *Ynet*, May 11, 2015, http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4557268,00.html. On another occasion, Maj. Gen. Turgeman said, "Under similar circumstances [in the future] I would recommend evacuating the settlements." See *Yedioth Ahronoth*, April 3, 2015.

24 Since Operation Protective Edge, the Ministry of Defense (via the National Emergency Management Authority) has carried out staff work designed to prepare a preliminary plan for evacuating residents from the Gaza envelope settlements. See Noam Amir, "This is how the IDF will evacuate Gaza envelope residents and the south in the next conflict," *Maariv*, May 22, 2015, http://www.maariv.co.il/news/military/Article-477953.

25 See also the debate on mass evacuation of Tel Aviv residents in the First Gulf War, who were labeled "deserters" by then-Mayor Shlomo Lahat. See, for example, "The Gulf War in Tel Aviv," Tel Aviv Municipality, January 17, 1991, http://tel-aviv.millenium.org.il/NR/exeres/FB17AEC8-6875-4D4F-AEF8-E1CF4B7DC992,frameless.htm.

26 Michal Shaban, Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Council Spokeswoman, noted that, "There was a sense of refugeehood. There was criticism of the central government directed at the entire establishment, including the regional council." Interview, April 29, 2015.

27 From the daily communiqué of the Eshkol Regional Council: "There are many communities in which almost all the residents have left for an orderly respite, either communally or individually, outside the settlement. We very much encourage leaving the area, especially families with children. Our area is a war zone and there is no reason to experience these events unnecessarily. You are invited to take advantage of respite [options] available to us through the Community Emergency Teams in the settlements or through the range of respite [possibilities] through the regional council." Daily communiqué no. 17, July 19, 2015, http://www.eshkol.info/1669-11544-he/Eschol.aspx?pos=30.

28 "The message of the regional council and its head was 'The council will help anyone who wants to leave, but will in no way urge people to do so.'" Shaban, interview.

29 Kibbutz Alumim is located in the Sdot Negev Regional Council, http://www.sdotnegev.org.il/11/.

30 More information on Kibbutz Erez is available at the website of the Rural Settlement Organization, http://www.homee.co.il/%D7%90%D7%A8%D7%96/.

31 "Home, which is supposed to be the safest place of all, has become the most dangerous place of all." Anat Sarig, the Israel Trauma Coalition, interview, March 29, 2015.

32 Matan Tzuri and Itamar Eichner, "Promises are one thing, reality another," *Yedioth Ahronoth*, August 5, 2014. During summer vacation, some residents leave their homes in any case. The number of people who stayed was much greater in the settlements that were further away from the border fence.

33 The website of the Eshkol Regional Council, daily communiqué, no. 9, July 10, 2014, http://www.eshkol.info/1669-11516-he/Eschol.aspx?pos=48.

34 "Diaspora" was the term applied to residents who evacuated as a group to a single site and maintained communal life there. From the website of the Eshkol Regional Council, daily communiqué, no. 27, July 30, 2014, http://www.eshkol.info/1669-11564-he/Eschol.aspx?pos=12.

35 "See, for example, the moshavim that host the Gush Katif evacuees, who represent a unique group in the Eshkol Regional Council, characterized by their religious nature." Meirav Vidal, Resilience Center Manager, Eshkol Regional Council, interview, March 29, 2015.

36 "By their nature, the moshavim are less communally organized than kibbutzim and therefore less prepared for emergencies." Hannah Avni, Social Services Division Manager, Eshkol Regional Council, interview, March 29, 2015.

37 "By all parameters examined in the survey held on September 11, 2014, involving 412 residents of the regional council, the responses of those who stayed in their settlements revealed a higher level of resilience manifestations – according to the models used at Ben-Gurion University – than those who were evacuated. For example: 'My settlement is prepared for an emergency' – 4.2 compared to 3.6 (out of 5); 'I trust the upper command structure of the IDF' – 4.3 compared to 3.6; 'The council is functioning properly' – 4.1 compared to 3.3." Maya Silverbush, Resilience Center, Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Council, interview, April 29, 2015.

38 Yossi Wagner, one of the leaders of the Community Emergency Team at Nahal Oz, interview, April 29, 2015; Yanina Barne'a, Economic Development Coordinator, Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Council and the kibbutz's Community Emergency Team Spokeswoman, interview, May 17, 2015.

39 Shirley Seidler, "Kerem Shalom Growing in War," *Haaretz*, April 3, 2015; Noam Berko, "Shifting Border," *Yedioth Ahronoth*, November 4, 2014.

40 From the Eshkol Regional Council website, daily communiqué no. 8, July 9, 2014, http://www.eshkol.info/1669-11510-he/Eschol.aspx?pos=51.

41 From the Eshkol Regional Council website, daily communiqué no. 10, July 12, 2014, http://www.eshkol.info/1669-11524-he/Eschol.aspx?pos=43; "We had a problem operating the system also because of a lack of workers, the majority of which had evacuated." Maya Silverbush, interview, April 29, 2015.

42 Yael Adar, Education Division Director, Eshkol Regional Council, interview March 29, 2015. Adar stated that, "A brief overview of the activity in Eshkol: day camp for grades 1 – 6 and daycare centers. About half of the residents did not avail themselves of the educational system. During July, attendance

at the day camps of the moshavim ranged from 36 to 80 percent. Attendance at the kibbutzim ranged from 31 to 86 percent, and at the kibbutz preschools from 34 to 60 percent. The daycare centers also had low attendance rates. After normal activity hours, many of the day camps served as respite centers in the Shalom, Zohar and Ein Habsor sectors and provided a solution for children in grades 1 – 6."

43 The only exception was children in preschools from settlements located farther away, who did not come back at all. Adar, interview; Vidal, interview.

44 A similar situation occurred at the end of the Second Lebanon War, which ended two weeks before the start of the new school year.

45 "In the year after Operation Pillar of Defense, the Eshkol Regional Council's Resilience Center received 250 calls. In the six months after Operation Protective Edge, the center received about 450 calls." Vidal, interview.

46 The data on the number of people in treatment are based on psychological treatment reports at the Eshkol Regional Council's Resilience Center. The estimate of expected continuing treatment was based on past experience. "Children, especially with attention deficit disorders, are considered to be at very high risk." See Naomi Kamin, Eshkol Regional Council's Resilience Center, interview, April 29, 2015.

47 Yizhar Sha'ar, Educational Psychological Services Director, Eshkol Regional Council, interview, June 3, 2015.

48 Aliza Ben Yehuda, Therapy Center Director, Eshkol Regional Council, interview, March 29, 2015.

49 Arnon Avni, Itzuvnik Studio, editor and publisher of *232*, Kibbutz Nirim, interview, March 29, 2015. According to Avni, three families left Nirim after Operation Protective Edge and three families were welcomed.

50 Sarig, interview.

51 Hannah Avni, interview. There is still need to invest much in kibbutzim's emergency preparedness, even though it is fundamentally higher than that of the moshavim east of Route 232.

52 The heads of the Community Emergency Teams play a critical role in emergencies, but they also play a central role in managing the community in general, including evacuations. There is high turnover also among those who fill social roles, but not in other positions such as coordinators and secretaries. Hannah Avni, interview.

53 Vidal, interview. This is in reference to volunteers whose ability to function before, during, and after the operation created a concern about damage to their place of work and their status vis-à-vis some of the residents and perhaps even vis-à-vis the IDF.

54 The Eshkol Regional Council's internet page, http://www.eshkol.info/sip_storage/FILES/2/6822.pdf.

55 In previous rounds, the damage was greater. Interview with Boaz Krechmer, April 21, 2015.

56 Orah Koren, "Factory at Kibbutz Magen: How Much Can Workers Take?" *The Marker*, August 21, 2015, http://www.themarker.com/news/macro/1.2411532.

57 Yigal Zore'a, "Reports from the Field: Gaza envelope, Operation Protective Edge, Day 14," July 21, 2014, https://kavimvenekudot.wordpress.com/2014/07/21/שיגרת-חרום-דיווחים-מהשטח-עוטף עזה-צו/.

58 In terms of tourism, hostels were occupied by journalists and others involved in the war effort.

59 Barne'a, interview.

60 Information from the Israel Tax Authority website, http://taxes.gov.il/EmergencyInformationA_CompensationfundPropertyTax/Pages/ZukEitan2014.aspx.

61 Government Decision No. 2017, approved on September 21, 2014, http://www.pmo.gov.il/secretary/govdecisions/2014/pages/govdes2017.aspx.

62 This program encountered explicit reservations among heads of more distant settlements who claimed that the decisions represented "a difficult message for the residents of the southern cities regarding their contribution to national resilience." *Maariv*, September 1, 2014.

63 Barne'a, interview.

64 Minker, interview.

65 From the information page for Eshkol Regional Council residents, August 3, 2014.

66 Minker, interview.

67 From the Eshkol newsletter, August 3, 2014

68 Letter to residents, Eshkol Regional Council, August 3, 2014.

69 Haim Yellin feels that social resilience during Operation Protective Edge was lower than that in the previous two rounds of fighting with Hamas because of the higher security challenge, and estimates that the general recovery afterwards was not quick. See Haim Yellin, interview, May 31, 2015.

70 "Operation Protective Edge exposed and created many cracks and fractures, not all of which we are capable of identifying, naming, or explaining at this point, and not all of which the residents, communities, and even we, the professionals, can handle. It is still painful, hard, and complicated. Almost six months have passed since the operation and the anger and hurt bubble and burst out in direct and indirect spurts in whatever or whoever we touch. The process of rebuilding trust and security, the distress and anxiety, will apparently be a long one." See Hannah Tal, "Summary of 2014 in Resilience Centers in Sderot and Gaza Envelope Settlements" in *The Israel Trauma Coalition*, ed. Tali Levanon (2015), p. 59.

71 In addition to the number of red alerts since the summer of 2014, area residents noted several disruptions: the noise they hear almost daily from Hamas rocket fire to the west; the noise of explosions of Hamas tunnels set off by the Egyptian army; and a large number of attempts – 250 by June

2015 – to penetrate eastwards through the border fence, news of which are immediately disseminated via cellphone applications.

72 A survey conducted by Mina Tzemach before the 2015 Herzliya Conference determined that 82 percent of Israelis expect another round with Hamas. See *Ynet*, June 7, 2015, http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4665484,00.html.

73 On this issue, see the essay by Carmit Padan about the protest movement of the western Negev in this issue of *Military and Strategic Affairs*.

74 Yellin, interview. The emerging picture is one of shorter breaks between rounds of violence on the one hand, and a longer recovery time required by the communities on the other hand.

75 "It's important to relate to preliminary preparation on the part of **all** pertinent staff in the regional councils: the educational psychological service, counselors, therapists from the resilience center, therapists from the Telem Center, therapists from the child development center, and volunteers. The Eshkol Regional Council handled some 1,300 calls during the fighting. In every location there are residents, and these responses prevented acute damage to residents and communities in Eshkol and in exile and strengthened their resilience and ability to bounce back, also by means of responses down the line." See Sha'ar, interview.

76 In September, the installation of radar systems, which will discover more launches and reduce warning of less than fifteen seconds, will be completed. See Lilach Shoval, "New in the Gaza Envelope: Mortar Bomb Warning System," *Israel Hayom*, May 27, 2015, http://www.israelhayom.co.il/ article/285065.

77 "For the residents of the Eshkol region, Operation Protective Edge ended with a crisis of trust in the leadership of the nation and the IDF, particularly because of unsuitable instructions on defense." See Tal, "Summary of 2014 in Resilience Centers in Sderot and Gaza Envelope Settlements," p. 82.

78 Yellin, interview; Naama Angel Mishali, "'Gaza Envelope: New Unit to Prevent Damage to Farmers," *NRG*, May 3, 2015, http://www.nrg.co.il/ online/1/ART2/692/386.html?hp=1&cat=875. It seems that Gaza envelope residents are dissatisfied with the insufficient degree of sensitivity accorded by the IDF to their needs; the IDF has decided to implement the decision to establish a special unit to minimize damage in the agricultural terrain in future operations, after military vehicles damaged the fields during OPE due to lack of coordination with local settlements. Another lesson learned by the IDF from Operation Protective Edge is transferring the responsibility for the contact with the citizens to the Southern Command, together with the liaison personnel of the Home Front Command. One of the decisions was to establish an "overall rear command," consisting of Home Front Command personnel who would be in charge of liaising with the residents and improving communication with them. See *Ynet*, May 28, 2015. Another point relating to this issue is the IDF's decision to post soldiers as guards in the settlements adjacent to the border; this was criticized by residents. See

Matan Tzori, "Abandoning the Rear," *Yedioth Ahronoth*, January 4, 2015; Yossi Yehoshua and Matan Tzori, "The Regimental Policeman's Post Is Empty," *Yedioth Ahronoth*, January 5, 2015; Noam Amir and Moshe Cohen, "Gaza envelope Furious at Soldiers Leaving: 'Not before saying the tunnel threat has been removed,'" *Maariv,* January 5, 2015.

79 Evacuation was drilled as part of the annual Turning Point exercises on June 15, 2015.

80 See interview with Betzalel Treiber, Acting Head of National Emergency Authority, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Defense, in *Yedioth Ahronoth* supplement, May 29, 2015; Noam Amir, "This Is How the IDF Will Evacuate Gaza envelope Residents and the South in the Next Conflict," *Maariv*, May 22, 2015, http://www.maariv.co.il/news/military/Article-477953.

Debts of Honor, Costs of War: The Media's Treatment of the Question of Casualties during Operation Protective Edge

Zipi Israeli and Elisheva Rosman

Casualties first appeared on the public, political-military, and media agenda in the democratic, Western world in the 1990s. This article seeks to examine the Israeli media's coverage of military casualties during Operation Protective Edge, especially in light of past patterns of reporting. Despite the public feeling that the operation was necessary, coverage did not totally revert to "traditional" patterns. During the case in point, the media dealt with casualties and the human price paid in war; however, it tried consciously to prevent damage to national morale and avoided being critical. The price in human lives was presented in such a way so as not to induce a sense of demoralization, but rather an intensified sense of national pride. Such conduct leads us to reflect on the Israeli media's role in issues of security, as well as how the media perceives its role in these contexts.

Keywords: army, media, casualties, bereavement, soldiers, Operation Protective Edge

Introduction

At the end of Operation Protective Edge, the daily *Yedioth Ahronoth* devoted its entire front page to a huge collage made up of photos of each of the sixty-seven soldiers killed during the operation. The glaring headline accompanying the photos read, "Thanks to them [*BeZhutam*]." This collage is a perfect example of the way the Israeli media covered casualties during Operation Protective Edge, and it raises questions concerning the media's

Dr. Zipi Israeli is a research fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies and a lecturer at Tel Aviv University. Dr. Elisheva Rosman is a lecturer in the Department of Political Science, Bar Ilan University.

treatment of military fatalities during the operation. The choice of the expression "Thanks to them" – which has a deeper meaning in Hebrew and conveys a feeling of deep gratitude and a debt of honor to the fallen – and the characteristics of the coverage ostensibly tell a clear story. In essence, the newspaper is stating that the loss of soldiers in battle was not in vain, but rather a price that needed to be paid. Does this narrative indeed represent the way the media conducted itself on this issue throughout the course of the operation?

This article examines the Israeli media's coverage of military casualties during Operation Protective Edge, especially in light of past patterns of reporting. How was the subject presented? Can a pattern of conduct be discerned? Does it continue previous patterns, or is it new? This paper will follow media coverage of military casualties during Operation Protective Edge using Israel's three major newspapers (print and online versions): *Yedioth Ahronoth*, *Israel Hayom*, and *Haaretz*.[1] The first part of the article reviews the relevant literature, while addressing the media and the issue of casualties, as well as changes and trends in literature concerning coverage of military casualties and bereavement. We then present our findings, following the phases of Operation Protective Edge. Finally, we discuss the findings and their implications.

Changes and Trends in Casualties and Bereavement in Military Warfare

In the democratic Western world, the subject of casualties began to appear more prominently on the public, political-military, and media agenda in the 1990s. This change led to an amplified sensitivity to casualties, also known as "casualty phobia."[2] Based on this outlook, the "post-heroic" war – as opposed to the "heroic war" – is characterized by two commandments that dictate post-modern society: The first commandment is that "thou shalt not kill"; the army must avoid enemy casualties (mainly civilians). The second, considered more dominant, is "thou shalt not be killed." The army must do its utmost to avoid suffering casualties.[3] In other words, achieving good operational results no longer suffices; rather society measures its success on the battlefield based on the minimum number of casualties to its forces. At times, this principle dictates the actual taking of military action. At the same time, it is difficult to measure a society's capacity to tolerate casualties. Such an estimate is an attempt to foretell the "consensual limit" of the loss of human life. In any case, the effect of the number of casualties cannot be

measured in absolute numbers, but rather is seen as relative to society's readiness to absorb them.[4]

Technology in the 1990s made it possible to go to battle with minimal losses, as seen in the First Gulf War (1991), the Kosovo War (1999). In the Israeli case, this became apparent during the country's presence in the South Lebanon Security Zone (1985-2000). During that period, the fear of casualties prevailed to the point that it became a decisive factor in tactical decision-making. The IDF therefore sought to avoid risks inherent in a land offensive. Consequently, the only land forces that routinely dealt with deep incursions were elite units, and heavier attacks on Hizbollah infrastructure were virtually all executed via air or artillery. IDF commanders have indicated that missions were often halted due to fear of entanglement and possible casualties.[5] This tendency continued into the 2000s: the Second Lebanon War and Operation Cast Lead opened with aerial attacks, and not land incursions; this approach was also used in Operation Pillar of Defense. Thus, the tendency in Israel has been to avoid land maneuvers as much as possible.

Casualty phobia, however, cannot be seen as a consistent trend. Different factors, both external and internal, influence this tendency, including the circumstances under which the fighting is conducted. Such factors can mollify or, alternatively, exacerbate sensitivity to casualties.[6] These factors can arise during the fighting or before it. They are inter-connected and produce a specific and subjective climate that affects the feelings of a given country and society with respect to casualties. These factors include:

1. *Moral justification*. Readiness to absorb casualties increases when the fighting is perceived as inevitable, justified, and necessary.[7] This factor is usually more likely to be relevant prior to embarking on warfare. That said, the perception of the fighting can transform over time and even during the event itself, thus changing the attitude toward casualties. In the first phase of violence, casualties typically are perceived as justified and necessary, and there is willingness to pay the price and suffer the losses. In subsequent phases, this attitude might change, as the third factor (duration of fighting) becomes increasingly significant.

2. *Success/failure of the operation*. When warfare is perceived as unable to fulfill its objectives or is seen as a failure, society's willingness to absorb casualties decreases; in contrast, when the fighting is seen as successful, the ability to accept higher numbers of casualties is strengthened. Studies show that this variable might outweigh the first variable (moral

justification) in determining the attitude toward casualties.[8] It appears that this might be a "chicken or egg" question: are failure or success measured according to the number of casualties, or does the number of casualties determine the perception of failure/success?

3. *Duration of the fighting.* Often, when combat is prolonged, it brings about a heightened sensitivity to casualties.[9] If the violence is protracted, and the fatalities are spread out over a long period of time, society may be willing to adapt to the situation, and thus express a higher readiness to absorb the casualties.[10]

4. *The number and identity of the casualties in the fighting.* The rise in casualties affects the willingness to absorb deaths.[11] As noted above, it is not only the absolute numbers that are important, but also the accumulation rate of casualties. In other words, the same quantity of fatalities distributed differently over time will produce a varied effect. For example, a single event comprising a high number of simultaneous casualties will be perceived differently than a string of events consisting of an identical number of accumulated casualties.[12] The identity of the casualties, too, is also significant and influences the discourse on the subject.[13] For example, the deaths of high-ranking officers are perceived differently than those of rank-and-file soldiers.

5. *Leadership during combat.* This variable is usually approached via two aspects:

   a. *Degree of determination* – A leadership that presents a clear and determined course regarding the goals of warfare, influences the perception of casualties and the human cost of war. Clarifying the justification for casualties strengthens readiness to absorb the deaths, and vice versa. Luttwak argues that leaders with extraordinary willpower and outstanding leadership abilities may (albeit not always easily) be able to bend the public disposition to their will and thus overcome, at least partially, the lack of willingness to absorb casualties.[14]

   b. *Perception of the public* – When the leadership is doubtful regarding the degree to which the public is ready to absorb casualties, it presents a casualty-preventing policy. This may be the case even if such a perception may be completely unfounded. At times, the leadership miscalculates the public's readiness (or inability) to absorb casualties. A casualty-sensitive policy is, in fact, typically based upon the assessment of the reaction of the social elite to a

high number of fatalities.[15] An Israeli study in 2009 revealed that numerous commanders believed that Israeli society was tired of paying the price of war, and that this perception influenced their tactical decision-making prior to and during the fighting.[16]

6. *Change in social values*. A society that still believes in collectivist social values facilitates higher casualty absorption than one that values individualistic tendencies. Perceiving the fallen soldiers as individuals whose loss cannot be survived or accepted, weakens society's readiness to come to terms with casualties.[17] Israeli society in the 1990s evolved into a more individualistic society. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, this identity became complex,[18] and included a return to more collectivist values. However, at the same time, it still encompassed within it individualistic components.[19] This shift in the perception of soldiers as individuals was, in part, due to the status of the soldiers' families, as seen in the next factor.

7. *Changes in the status of the soldiers' families*. The more soldiers' families are involved in their children's military service, the less society is ready to absorb casualties. When a soldier is perceived as a boy, as someone's son, the less expendable he becomes. This contrasts with the notion that the sacrifice of soldiers for the sake of society's security is legitimate. In Israel, the conduct of the soldiers' parents vis-à-vis the military system changed over times. Following the Yom Kippur War (1973), families began to criticize decision makers over the death of their sons.[20] In the 1990s, parents of soldiers became increasingly more critical of official policy.[21] At the same time, the pattern of behavior among bereaved families also changed. To some extent, parents began to behave as though it was the role of the state to protect the soldiers, rather than viewing the soldiers as defenders of society. This relationship, however, appears to have changed from 2000 onwards, as parents reverted to more "traditional" behavior and refrained from challenging issues related to national security. This change may have stemmed from (among other reasons) the intensifying of security issues during this period.[22] Some argue that, in contrast to the anti-war discourse of the period between the First and Second Lebanon Wars, recent years have given rise to a new discourse, one that is more accepting of the inevitability of casualties of war.[23]

The Media and the Issue of Casualties

In recent decades, the media has become central to shaping attitudes towards casualties and the way in which war deaths are expressed in Western democracies. Luttwak has suggested that media coverage was the deciding factor in the refusal to accept even the smallest number of war fatalities.[24] In Israel, the way the media has presented the issue of casualties demonstrates two different and opposing roles; a phenomenon that has existed since the establishment of Israel. On the one hand, there is a desire to use the memory of the fallen to increase patriotism; accordingly, this brings about enhanced coverage. On the other hand, extensive media coverage of casualties is liable to dampen public morale, cause political damage, and even encourage the enemy. Such coverage is viewed as dangerous and should therefore be limited. In the first decades after the establishment of Israel, the second approach prevailed. In many cases, attempts were made to prevent the public from knowing the number of casualties, and the media mentioned them only minimally. Newspaper editors were also asked to scatter the day's obituaries throughout the pages of the newspaper in order not to generate the onerous impression of multiple casualties. The sprinkling of coverage that did appear was discreet, dry, and succinct, containing factual details on the fallen without employing emotional quotes. Personal stories or detailed obituaries were rare.[25]

Over time, coverage of the issue changed. The Yom Kippur War was the first war in which the issue of casualties became significant, even though coverage of fatalities in events after the Yom Kippur War still remained marginal. Thus, for example, in the *Nun-Daled* Helicopter Disaster (1977), in which fifty-four soldiers were killed, coverage was laconic. The names of the dead appeared in a single list, printed within a single frame. The description of each soldier was brief and technical, and included his name and the location of the funeral. Personal stories about those killed did not appear.[26]

During the First Lebanon War, new norms in the media's coverage of casualties emerged, and the media began to emphasize the topic. Casualty numbers were published each day, stressing the increasing loss of life. These trends strengthened in the 1990s. The low intensity combat (LIC) during that period, combined with the introduction of Western social mores (such as individualistic values), and the media's accelerated development,[27] helped the Israeli media to expand its focus on the issue of casualties. Accordingly, if in the past it was customary to just publish the names of

the dead, without their photos and without individually addressing each and every soldier's social context, now the soldiers' personal stories were at the top of the media's agenda. Coverage included extensive information, as well as personal photos.

The tone with which the topic was addressed changed accordingly. Critical statements began to appear regarding the number of dead and the inevitableness of their deaths in the circumstances of the events. Often, this framed casualties as lives just thrown away for no "real" reason. Casualties were no longer described as necessary sacrifices needed in order to protect society, as in the past, but as boys who were merely cannon fodder and to children that "the army did not protect."[28] Naturally, this shift also influenced the way the media covered bereavement and this too acquired a more personal framing. Thus, funerals began to receive broad coverage. Soldiers crying in public became a legitimate item of public interest, and detailed first-hand accounts by soldiers of what "really" happened on the battlefield began to appear.

This trend first began in 1998, when soldiers crying at military funerals were shown for the first time in the media. In subsequent years, the media began to feature close-up images of crying – and even sobbing – soldiers at funerals. Additionally, quotes by soldiers stressing their fear of death and their distress were highlighted to the point of their being portrayed as genuinely frightened.[29]

Interviews with media professionals in the 1990s reveal that they were aware of this process and the above-mentioned dilemmas of coverage. On the one hand, they viewed coverage of a funeral as a gesture honoring the soldier and his family for their national sacrifice. On the other hand, they realized funeral coverage also affected morale. As one media professional put it: "There's no doubt that funeral coverage has a cumulative effect . . . . In th[is] sense . . . television constitutes an anti-war agent that weakens the army's goals." To address such negative effects, the media coverage of funerals was more controlled. As one media professional put it, "Theoretically, [we] should broadcast every [funeral], but this would just produce an intolerable situation of cheapening [the sacrifice by the casualties and] demoralization."[30]

It is widely accepted that coverage during the Second Lebanon War continued the media's critical approach, particularly regarding casualties. However, a more academic examination of the coverage reveals a far more complex picture. During the first weeks of the war, the media avoided the

question of whether fatalities were justified or necessary. To be frank, during this period, the media actually leveled criticism at the precautions taken in order to minimize military casualties. This was protecting soldiers while leaving civilians in harm's way, exposing the home front to continued rocket fire, and endangering the inhabitants of northern Israel. Criticism over military fatalities appeared in the media only towards the end of the war and immediately following it. Media criticism focused on the high number of casualties during the final days of fighting, in a specific battle perceived as superfluous and unnecessary.[31] In other words, this was very specific, tactical, criticism regarding casualties.

Operation Cast Lead (2008-9) was perceived as essential and necessary, and had widespread public support. In media interviews during the operation, families of the injured and dead supported the political and military echelon in their decision to continue the fighting in order to reach their goals, despite the personal price they had paid.[32] That said, the relatively small number of casualties in this operation does not enable an in-depth analysis of media coverage. Operation Pillar of Defense (2012), was comprised only of aerial attacks, and does not enable a discussion of the pattern of reporting on casualties since there were no Israeli fatalities.

As stated, this paper focuses on the media coverage of casualties in Operation Protective Edge (July-August 2014) and is based on a qualitative content analysis. We examined all types of newspaper items: news reports, photos (presented separately or accompanying a report/article), editorials, op-eds, and reports published every day of the operation in Israel's major printed and online press media. We checked *Yedioth Ahronoth, Ynet, Israel Hayom,* and *Haaretz*, both the printed and online versions. In accordance with this review of the literature, we took care to note whether the media related to the subject of casualties during Operation Protective Edge. If so, in what manner? What subtopics were on the agenda? How was the issue presented in the media?

Media Coverage of Casualties during Operation Protective Edge

Coverage of casualties during Operation Protective Edge revolved around two main themes: first, the actual question of the willingness to absorb casualties; and second, the story of bereavement. Our findings indicate that the first theme was almost absent from the media's agenda. When it was on the table, so to speak, it was only addressed minimally. The second theme, however, was highly prominent. The marginal coverage of the

question of the willingness to absorb casualties is surprising in light of the literature cited above and we therefore concentrated on this aspect.

The media's discussion of the "price of war" seldom appeared as the main focal point of coverage. When it did appear, it seems this was due to external circumstances connected to the four phases of the operation:

- The aerial offensive (July 8-17, 2014)
- The ground incursion (July 17-27, 2014)
- The end of the tunnel phase (July 28-August 5, 2014)
- The unilateral withdrawal and last ceasefire (August 5-26, 2014)

The aerial offensive (July 8-17, 2014). The operation began with an aerial offensive against targets in the Gaza Strip. During this phase, the question of casualties and the willingness to absorb them were not at the forefront of the media's agenda. This seems understandable due to the lack of involvement of ground forces. However, the media's agenda also did not raise the question of the human cost of war when the possibility of a ground operation was discussed. Beginning with the aerial offensive (and actually during the operation in its entirety), the media supported a (limited) ground operation. The media's choice to directly cite politicians in prominent headlines reflected this support. Thus, we find headlines such as "Minister Saar: We Need to Inflict a Strong Blow on Hamas";[33] "Lapid: Calm in Exchange for Calm is No Longer on the Agenda";[34] and "PM: When There's No Ceasefire, Our Response is Fire – We Will Intensify the Campaign."[35] Senior officials in the military system also were quoted: "IDF Supports a Limited Military Operation";[36] "Senior Officer: 'We're Ready for a Ground Maneuver'";[37] and more.

The ground incursion (July 17-27, 2014). In the next stage of the operation, IDF ground forces entered the Gaza Strip. The media presented the ground operation as a necessary step; a "war of no choice." Especially large headlines supported this sentiment such as "Inevitable,"[38] "War of No Choice,"[39] and others. Prominent articles also carried headlines such as "They're Right";[40] "Hamas Draws Israel into Ground Operation";[41] "Our Right to Defend Ourselves",[42] in which it was asserted that "if someone comes to kill you, rise up and kill him first"; and "Hamas Leaves Us No Choice." Again, it should be noted that the media did not note the potential fatalities or the possible human price of the war; rather, the media only made a show of support for the operation, without questioning or criticizing the possible results.

As in previous military operations during the 2000s, the media showed considerable support for the soldiers themselves.[43] Given its support for both

the operation itself and the soldiers, during this phase of the fighting, media attention focused on the soldiers set to enter Gaza. Thus, a giant photo of soldiers being briefed before the ground incursion was published with the caption, "Come Back in Peace." The headline of the article accompanying the picture read, "Our Heart Goes Out to the Soldiers," while the article's message asserted that "now we are all united in prayer that they return home in peace."[44]

The battle at Shuja'iyya on July 20, 2014 marked an important point in coverage dealing with casualties. Contrary to what we would have expected, the seven soldiers killed in the battle were not featured prominently on the front pages of the newspapers the following day, but rather these pages were dedicated to bolstering national morale. The front pages of both *Yedioth Ahronoth* and *Israel Hayom* carried the message that it was a "war of no choice." For example: "the war to demolish the tunnels is not an offensive operation. It is a preventative blow, a clearly defensive operation."[45] Other headlines stated: "We will win: From the day we first returned to this land, the Arab enemy attacks us and seeks to destroy us, and from that same day we are prevailing. Not without paying a price, not without clenching our teeth in pain. But always, when the battle is over, Israel stands strong and united against its enemies who flee from her. We will win this time too."[46] Another article proclaimed "To win, come what may: 'Protective Edge' is a war declared by a murderous and abominable organization whose existence is justified solely by its goal to destroy us."[47] Other headlines and quotes on that day reinforced this message: "13 Brothers in Heroism";[48] "The Loyal and the Brave";[49] "Regiment commanders and fighters are killed so that families can sleep safely; this too is the price of the current fighting, which for a long time, has not been one of maintaining routine security."[50]

The message that appears in the press is clear: the focal point is not casualties and pain, but rather forging sentiments in support of the military operation. In other words, the fatalities are a painful, but necessary price of war. When society must fight for its life, there is a sad price to be paid. Conforming to this line of thought, the front-page headline in *Yedioth Ahronoth* on the day after the Battle of Shuja'iyya extolled the "exemplary commanders."[51] Further headlines emphasized heroism, fighting, and determination: "They Defended With Their Bodies";[52] "IDF: Don't Stop Now";[53] "We Are Strong and Will Complete the Mission to the End";[54] "This is the moment to strengthen [those in] despair, [with] a weak knee, a dry tongue and trickling tears; to clench our teeth and continue uphill,

repeating the words of [the poet] Nathan Alterman, that 'No nation can retreat from the trenches of its life.' For this purpose, broad mobilization is essential";[55] "The Chief of Staff: the Price is Painful, the Achievement is Tremendous."[56] Additional headlines and articles read: "Don't Stop Yet";[57] "It might be that we have already seen the epitome of victory this week: Tens of thousands of Israelis at the funerals of three lone soldiers, the victory of an Israel we once knew and thought no longer existed";[58] "A Difficult Day: Clenching our Teeth and Fighting";[59] "Brigade Commander: They Fire – and We Win."[60]

Criticism voiced during this phase was scant and referred to the tactical management of the operation, rather than the human costs of war. For example, a representative headline read: "Shuffling [our feet] at the End of the Tunnel."[61] The article criticized the faulty handling of the tunnel issue, not the actual fighting. The media message was clearly that the military must "buck up" and continue fighting due to the explicit threat to security.

This pattern of coverage continued. Front-page photos of soldiers who had been killed, and a daily and cumulative tally of the number of dead featured on the front pages. However, the personal stories of the fallen soldiers appeared only on the inner pages of newspapers and in supplements (places reserved for "color" stories), and not on the front page. While these were still covered in the traditional formats of the past, their visibility was minimized. The effect of the numbers and the photos on the front page was, naturally, cumulative. That said, the sense was that coverage honored those who had paid the ultimate price without giving disproportional weight to mourning.

Towards the end of the tunnels phase (July 28-August 5, 2014). In the third phase of Operation Protective Edge, the withdrawal of IDF ground forces from the Gaza Strip was completed; the fighting continued via aerial attacks, as it had during the first period of the operation. During this phase, the press expressed the feeling that the operation was scuffling along rather than actually accomplishing its objectives due to an indecisive leadership. While the first two phases of the operation had a clear objective and message, at this stage the leadership began to sound confused. Is there a plan of action? Is Israel merely being drawn into a protracted conflict?

Possible options were either expanding the military operation; ending it with an official ceasefire; or ending the operation unilaterally. In light of this uncertainty on the part of the leadership, the media too began to voice doubts, no longer sure of the effectiveness of the ground offensive, and

even advocated for the end of the operation altogether. As a result, criticism of the fighting itself began to appear. For example, a large and prominent headline proclaimed that this was "not an operation, it is a war."[62] One article asserted that, "Yesterday's events[63] were grave. Mainly they were sad . . . But that must not obscure the goals the Israeli government set at the beginning of the operation. We have not been defeated . . . We won't achieve the remainder [of our goals] by force in any case, but only through agreements and understandings."[64] Another headline proclaimed that "the gut feeling says to expand [the operation]; the head says: [take care of the] tunnels – and get out."[65]

It was only when the media presented the position that it was better to check the ground operation that criticism began to appear. This criticism focused on the feeling of confusion and a general sense of "muddling-through" that led to needless deaths. This position enabled some attention to be paid to the issue of casualties, even if it was not in-depth. During this phase, when the issue of casualties surfaced, it was framed within the context of the operation's lack of clear goals, which also led to inaction. One of the articles, for example, stated:

> When I heard Netanyahu last night describing in exactly the same words the merits of deterrence without a [political] agreement, I thought of 33 fighters, good Israelis, who could have still been among us were it not for Netanyahu's huge fear of arriving at a decision . . . I was both angered and happy. Better late than never . . . The immediate advantage of the idea was that being drawn in by Hamas had ended. Someone got things mixed up here: Hamas is the one that needs an understanding with Israel – not vice versa.[66]

Another article entitled "Costs of War" stated:

> The second path strives for a unilateral thinning out of forces. The ground forces have completed their mission, the Prime Minister knows this. Rockets will be answered by bombing. Calm will be answered by calm. This path was proposed to Netanyahu ten days ago. He did not say 'yes'; he didn't say 'no.' He did not know how to decide. Since then, more than thirty soldiers have been killed in Gaza and on the border. Morale among the ground forces is high, but fear of merely shuffling along is seeping in. The tunnel openings are in

territory the IDF doesn't want to enter. The price in lives won't justify the returns.[67]

This notion came into sharper focus when soldiers were killed while waiting in assembly areas, and not during battle. Coverage of casualties created differences between the active fighters (killed during battle) and the "sitting ducks" (killed while waiting behind the lines). The latter were perceived as unnecessary deaths. In other words, the nature of the combat determined the attitude toward the casualties. A representative example is as follows:

> The killing of the soldiers yesterday in Israeli territory clarifies, more than anything else, the situation after three weeks of fighting. The IDF is treading water, perhaps through no fault of its own. But for already a week there has been no real progress in the operation aside from dealing with the tunnels, which has turned out to be chaotic and certainly not keeping up with the timetable set by the defense minister, who said it would take 'two or three days.' This standstill exacts a price in the form of grave events such as yesterday's mortar shell hit, the infiltration of terrorists, and the death of a fighter from a missile during the ceasefire in Gaza. Soldiers waiting behind the lines have become sitting ducks.[68]

It seems, therefore, that during this phase the question of the price of war became more central and was even subject to criticism; however, coverage was concise, specific, and appeared only during this relatively later phase of Operation Protective Edge.[69]

Along with the media's referral to military standstill and lack of decisiveness, prominent articles also appeared with titles such as "The Bereavement of Us All." These contained statements such as "Israel these days is united, both in the sense of feeling its cause is just, as well as through the pain over its fallen."[70] Another article's headline read "Completion of the mission – neutralization of tunnels – is imminent, indeed at a heavy price, 56 dead soldiers . . . but with a heavy blow to all Hamas structures."[71] An additional article stated that "If they would have told me before the operation that these would be the results, I would have signed on to it unreservedly. The price of 56 dead is painful, very painful; but the de facto number of dead is not the only test of whether the mission is fulfilled. The

test is the restoration of trust and confidence of inhabitants of the Gaza Envelope vis-à-vis the tunnel incidents."[72]

From the unilateral ground exit until the final ceasefire (August 5-26, 2014). During this phase, media coverage was mixed. On the one hand, the media leveled criticism at the military's senior echelon, and on the other hand, it showed support and even admiration for the soldiers themselves. A clear separation between the two existed; a similar phenomenon existed a decade earlier, as shown in previous studies.[73] In this phase too, no linkage was created between the criticism of the senior echelon's conduct in Operation Protective Edge and the casualties of the war. The brunt of the reproach directed at the senior echelon ranged from merely raising questions to sharp criticism. Specific focal points for criticism included sending improperly armored military vehicles into battle, the existence of tunnels, the fact the Chief of Staff, allowed southern residents to return home before it was safe to do so, and more. The following headlines are illustrative: "Operation Confused";[74] "We'll Meet Up in the Next Round";[75] "Fifty Days of Pounding, Attrition, and Questions";[76] "To be Frank, We're Disappointed";[77] "For Your Examination";[78] and "In Hamas' Hands."[79]

At the same time, the media expressed admiration for the fighting soldiers and presented them as heroes. Media coverage focused on stories of heroism and held the fighters and the injured in great esteem. One sees a representative pattern in the especially large headlines that appeared on the front pages of *Israel Hayom* and *Yedioth Ahronoth*, with the following illustrative headlines: "And Thanks to the Fighters";[80] "The Return of the Magnificent";[81] and "We Salute You."[82] The accompanying subheading of the last article elaborated this point: "Senior Officer: We Ought to Salute the Fighters. Generation Y has proven that it fights no less courageously than its predecessors." The article itself stresses that, "along with the great success of the IDF and its commanders, the displays of heroism, and the amazing accomplishment of the Iron Dome, difficult questions also arise, chiefly: Did the government and IDF address the threat of the tunnels with all due seriousness?" Another article read:

> Operation Protective Edge was not a war of generals. It was the war of the simple soldier and junior officer; they were the ones who made decisions during the hand-to-hand fighting. It was the war of the late major Bnaya Sarel . . . and of many other good soldiers whose stories of heroism will appear in the upcoming days . . . The fighters . . . exhibited strength,

persistence, and determination to continue the mission until destruction of the final tunnel was complete. In this operation, the fighters were the light at the end of the tunnel. Facing the complexity of the battlefield and the threats positioned against our forces were our fighters. We ought to salute them. Senior officials will need to supply answers to no small number of questions.[83]

It seems, therefore, that at the end of Operation Protective Edge, there is reference to the loss of soldiers and the human cost of war; however, the casualties are presented as heroes and the media does not challenge the inevitability of the human cost. In other words, the issue is not presented in a critical manner, despite the criticism levelled at the military's senior echelon. The feeling generated by the media coverage is that there was no way to avoid paying the price of war in casualties. Even when criticism made an appearance, it was aimed at the political echelon or the higher echelons of the IDF and focused on tactical conduct. It did not include reference to the human cost of the fighting.[84] As a matter of fact, to date, one year after the operation, this pattern remains unaltered.[85]

This observation is complemented by the way bereavement was treated during the course of Operation Protective Edge. In analyzing coverage of the funerals of the soldiers killed during the operation, we see that their stories were kept neutral in terms of questioning the price paid. The conspicuous headlines told the story of collective values and bravery, of self-sacrifice coupled with manliness and heroism, with headlines such as, "The People of Israel Can Be Proud";[86] "The Final Repose of Heroes";[87] "He Fell in a Country-Saving War";[88] and "They Gave Up Their Lives Defending the Homeland."[89] In this indirect manner, the media-constructed sentiment was that the price paid in casualties was acceptable and was justifiable for a just goal. This notion is further reinforced when considering the photos that accompanied the coverage of the funerals. In contrast with the past, photos of crying soldiers do not appear at all. As a matter of fact, we found only a few photos of soldiers at the funerals. This is a highly significant choice, especially when comparing coverage of Operation Protective Edge to previous events, such as Israel's presence in the Security Zone or in the Second Lebanon War.[90] The prominent figures appearing in photos at Operation Protective Edge funerals were of civilian women, not of soldiers.

In addition, we checked whether other, more critical voices in the media addressed the issue of casualties during Operation Protective Edge. Such

voices were indeed heard, but they were few and very marginal.[91] These were mainly quotes from bereaved families. For example, one family member said, "We didn't want him to be a hero or 'everyone's soldier' . . . Nor am I able to say that I am proud of my boy. My boy is gone and he won't return."[92] Another bereaved family member was quoted in the media as saying:

> I have no strength to count how many times I heard slogans such as 'thank you, he saved us' . . . those angered me very much. I don't want them to thank me, I want my sweetheart here in the living room, reading the children a bedtime story. But another woman, a stranger, came up to me and said, 'I live in the South and I just wanted to apologize that you had to pay this price because of us.' She didn't say 'thank you,' but rather 'I'm sorry'; and she didn't say 'for us,' she said 'because of us.' She moved me . . . The children need a story that will accompany them in their future lives. Slogans such as 'Daddy died for the sake of the homeland' don't do it for me.[93]

In addition, a few opinion articles had statement such as: "The price is in blood. Even if we say how intolerable it is over and over, we won't succeed in saying what cannot truly be articulated: just how unbearable it really is."[94] Another article explained why the soldiers' deaths resulted from the failure of the IDF: "When There's no Brilliant Idea – Sacrifice is Demanded."[95]

Conclusion

Our findings depict a complex picture, especially in light of the review of the literature. When examining how the media discussed the issue of casualties during Operation Protective Edge, despite framing it as "a war of no choice," coverage does not entirely revert to "traditional" coverage patterns. While casualties and the price paid in human lives appear in the media, coverage does not focus on mourning and bereavement as it did in the 1990s. Photos of sobbing soldiers were not featured, for example. In contrast with the critical coverage of casualties in the past, the media's presentation of the casualties and the human cost of the operation did not foster a sense of demoralization, but rather one of national pride.

This might be a new phenomenon worth noting: contrary to the past, casualties did not generate media pressure and criticism over the human cost of the war; rather, the pain of casualties and bereavement produced a feeling of national "togetherness" and assisted in justifying the fighting.

This tendency manifested itself particularly during the critical stages of Operation Protective Edge. The old patterns of coverage shifted, and assumed a form that merged the need to talk about bereavement and casualties, together with the reluctance to discuss their significance and effect on national morale.

As discussed above, a number of components influenced the perception of casualties. The number of casualties at the beginning of the operation (the second phase) was concentrated and high, with high-ranking officers included among them. Accordingly, this should encourage critical media coverage. Yet the sense of undergoing a "war of no choice," along with a certain revisiting of collective values, apparently neutralized this tendency, and returned coverage to the traditional propensities of the past.

At this point, it should be asked: Does such coverage indeed have implications for the actual management of the battlefield? It is possible that the media's behavior might have been conducive to creating a public mood whereby casualties did not dictate military tactics.

Can these findings be explained? It could be claimed that the media behaved according to a liberal model based on market forces and ratings; thus, the media is only supplying the public with what it wants. In this case, the public craved elevating national morale and a feeling of unity and got what it wanted. However, it seems to us that this explanation cannot truly explain the behavior depicted here. A careful analysis reveals that the watershed in terms of coverage of casualties was after the battle in Shuja'iyya, when a conscious editorial decision was made to play down the issue. The editor-in-chief of *Ynet*, Eran Tiefenbrunn, admitted that he knowingly chose this policy, i.e., to reduce the amount and centrality of coverage of bereavement during the fighting. The rationale was to try to prevent bereavement from dictating policy: "Journalistic and public common sense in wartime necessitate an editorial hierarchy that draws readers' attention to what is central — the military activity . . . We must not allow emotional matters to determine how the country's conduct is handled nor the manner according to which media is edited."[96] Conforming to this line of thinking, major media platforms agreed jointly how funerals would be covered. This led to the creation of a uniform and official position in the media, contrary to the past.

Such conduct is thought provoking when considering the part Israeli media plays in security matters, and its place in Israeli public discourse − particularly the coverage of casualties − and how it perceives its own

role in these contexts. These points are worthy of a direct and in-depth discussion in light of their possible ramifications for warfare and in light of Israel's reality as a democratic country amid a state of constant conflict.

Notes

1   Our research did not extensively utilize electronic media. A pilot study we conducted indicates similar findings in this venue as well.
2   Yagil Levy, *Who Governs the Military? Between Control of the Military and Control of Militarism* (Jerusalem: Magnes University Press, 2010).
3   Edward Luttwak, "Toward Post-Heroic Warfare," *Foreign Affairs* 74, no. 3 (1995): 109-122.
4   Steven Rosen, "War power and the willingness to suffer," in *Peace, War and Numbers*, ed. Bruce Russett (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1972), pp. 167-183.
5   Moshe Tamir, A *War without a Medal* (Tel Aviv: IDF − Ministry of Defense, 2005).
6   Levy, *Who Governs the Military?*
7   See, for example, Meital Eran-Yona and Batya Ben-Hador, "On the Sensitivity to Casualties: Comparative and Local Perceptions of Commanders and Significance in the IDF," in *Military Operations in Civilian Environments: Sociological and Psychological Perspectives*, ed. Meital Eran-Yona (Tel Aviv: IDF Behavioral Sciences Center, Bemachane Publishing, 2013), pp.126-142.
8   Levy, *Who Governs the Military?*; Eran-Yona and Ben-Hador, "On the Sensitivity to Casualties."
9   Edward Luttwak, *Strategy of War and Peace* (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Defense, 2002); John Mueller, "The Iraq Syndrome," *Foreign Affairs* 84, no. 6 (2005): 44-54.
10 This happened, for example, during most of the period of Israel's Security Zone in the South Lebanon (1985-2000). See Zipi Israeli, "Relations between a political-security establishment, protest groups and media in a low intensity conflict: Israel in Lebanon (1985-2000)" (PhD diss., Bar Ilan University, 2007).
11 Zipi Israeli, "Media and Strategic Aspects of Low Intensity Conflicts; Case Study of Israel in Lebanon, 1985-2000," *Mekhkarim BePolitika Yisraelit* 4 (2011): 255-288; Levy, *Who Governs the Military?*; Mueller, "The Iraq Syndrome."
12 Thus, for example, in June 2009, when eight British soldiers were killed in Afghanistan, photos of the coffins being taken out of transport planes were publicized. This event stimulated discussion over British involvement in Afghanistan.
13 As is the case when high-ranking officers are the casualties, such as when Brigadier General Erez Gerstein, commander of the Lebanon Liaison Unit in South Lebanon, was killed by a roadside bomb in February 1999.

14 Luttwak, *Strategy of War and Peace.*

15 Levy, *Who Governs the Military*? Thus, for example, decision makers in the
    United States declared they were removing troops from Somalia in light
    of the images in the media. This was despite the fact that public opinion
    indicated the public felt otherwise. See Cori Dauber, "Image as Argument:
    The Impact of Mogadishu on U.S. Military Intervention," *Armed Forces &
    Society* 27, no. 2 (2001): 205-229.

16 Eran-Yona and Ben-Hador, "On the Sensitivity to Casualties."

17 The attitude to bereavement and commemorating the fallen underwent
    a significant change during this period. See, for example, Shelly Geffen-
    Koshilevitch, "From Sacrifice to Victim, Functioning of the Media in
    Covering Bereavement in Military Disasters," in *Security and Media: The
    Dynamics of a Relationship*, ed. Udi Lebel (Beersheva: Ben Gurion Research
    Institute for the Study of Israel, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, 2005),
    pp. 284-309; Udi Lebel, "Recruited in their Death, Bereaved Parents, Secrecy,
    and Challenging the Military Hegemony," *Studies of Israeli and Modern Jewish
    Society* 17 (2003): 267-286; Levy, *Who Governs the Military?*

18 Uri Ben Eliezer, *Israel's New Wars: A Historical-Sociological Explanation* (Tel
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19 Elisheva Rosman and Zipi Israeli, "Our Forces Become Alexei, Yuval and
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21 Lebel, "Recruited in their Death."

22 Udi Lebel, "We Will Break the Wall of Secrecy: Civilian-Military
    Bargaining over Transparency of the Security Space in the Arena of Israeli
    Bereavement," *Medina VeHevra* 1 (2007): 19-41.

23 Yagil Levy, "An Unbearable Price: War Casualities and Warring
    Democracies," *International Journal of Political Culture and Society* 22 (2009):
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24 Luttwak, *Strategy of War and Peace.*

25 Rafi Mann, "Letter to a Bereaved Father," *HaAyin HaShvi'it*, April 19, 2010,
    http://www.the7eye.org.il/34062.

26 Zipi Israeli, "The Air Force and the Media, an Analysis of the Relationship
    between the Air Force and the Printed Press in 1977-1997 in Light of Air
    Accidents in the Air Force" (master's thesis, Bar Ilan University, 2000).

27 During the 1990s, electronic media changed completely. Both television
    and radio expanded significantly. Additionally, the magazine section of the
    printed press also developed. Accordingly, the media began functioning
    according to commercial models. Such models brought with them, among
    other things: competition, drama, focus on the individual and human

interest stories, emotions, and, occasionally, yellow journalism. Naturally, the topic of bereavement and casualties is accorded broad coverage in this sort of media.

28 Geffen-Koshilevitch, "From Sacrifice to Victim"; Israeli and Rosman, "From 'Warrior' to 'Momma's Boy'?"; Elisheva Rosman and Zipi Israeli, "From 'Rambo' to 'Sitting Ducks' and Back Again: The Israeli Soldier in the Media," *Israel Affairs* 21, no. 1 (2015): 112-130.

29 Israeli and Rosman, "From 'Warrior' to 'Momma's Boy'?"

30 Drora Kalfon, "Coverage of Funeral Ceremonies of Soldiers on Mabat News, Goals and Functions" (master's thesis, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1993).

31 Eran-Yona and Ben-Hador, "On the Sensitivity to Casualties."

32 Israeli and Rosman, "From 'Warrior' to 'Momma's Boy'?"; Eran-Yona and Ben-Hador, "On the Sensitivity to Casualties."

33 Yoav Zitun, Matan Tzuri, Roi Kais, Elior Levy, and Atilla Shumplabi, "Minister Saar: We Need to Inflict a Strong Blow on Hamas," *Ynet,* July 8, 2014, http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4539416,00.html.

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40 Ari Shavit, "They're Right," *Haaretz*, July 24, 2014.

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57 Yuval Diskin, "Don't' Stop Yet," *Yedioth Ahronoth*, July 22, 2014.

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87 "The Final Repose of Heroes," *Israel Hayom*, July 23, 2014.

88 Goel Beno, "He Fell in a Country-Saving War," *Yedioth Ahronoth*, July 21, 2014.

89 "They Gave Up Their Lives Defending the Homeland," *Israel Hayom,* July 23, 2014.

90 Israeli and Rosman, "From 'Warrior' to 'Momma's Boy'?

91 It is interesting to point out that this criticism was voiced mainly by female journalists. Naturally, similar thoughts were not heard in *Israel Hayom*.

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95 Amir Oren, "Between Brilliance and Sacrifice," *Haaretz,* August 8, 2014. Similar ideas appeared in pieces such as "Time is Blood," *Haaretz*, July 29, 2014.

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Social Protest in Operation Protective Edge: A Civilian Attempt to Challenge the Political-Security Discourse

Carmit Padan

This essay examines the new civilian protest movement formed in the western Negev during Operation Protective Edge, and its implications for the political-security discourse at the local and national level in Israel. Although this social movement arose out of a local security hardship, its activity is relevant to the country as a whole; the movement challenges the "rounds approach" that has emerged in recent years as the prevalent pattern of action in the context of the Israel-Hamas conflict. The movement tries to convey the message that using military means alone, as in the case in the last three rounds of fighting between Israel and Hamas, is hopeless at the strategic level as long as political efforts aimed at a long-term settlement between the warring sides are absent. From the movement's perspective, such a settlement is meant to create the conditions necessary for a comprehensive Israeli-Palestinian settlement. Building upon the case in the Gaza envelope, another relevant message is that political action concurrent with military activity may be essential to forging a long-term settlement in any future conflict between Israel and Hizbollah during which the Israeli civilian front may face widespread missile attacks, similar and possibly even worse than those in the South.

Keywords: Operation Protective Edge, Gaza envelope, civil society, protest, new social movement, political-security discourse

From the perspective of the residents of the Gaza envelope, the period preceding the start of Operation Protective Edge was characterized by distrust and anger directed at both the local[1] and central government. These

Carmit Padan is a Neubauer Research Associate at the Institute for National Security Studies.

feelings emerged from the lack of government response to the dozens of mortar bombs and rockets fired by Hamas at Gaza envelope settlements over ten days during Operation Brother's Keeper to locate the three Israeli teenagers kidnapped in the West Bank on June 12, 2014. At that point, the residents felt they had been totally and completely forgotten. That perception changed when Operation Protective Edge was launched, and even more so when ground troops entered the Gaza Strip. Only then did the residents start to feel that their security had been placed at the top of the agenda of the nation's decision makers. During the fifty days of fighting, the residents experienced anxiety, tension, and worry from the well-known threat of high-trajectory fire, the emerging threat of attack tunnels (new in terms of their scope), and the endless alarms, thuds, and booms from IDF activity in the area, all occurring during summer vacation when children are normally at home. As expressed in the activity of the Movement for the Future of the Western Negev, many local residents hoped that the situation that had persisted for fourteen years – emergency conditions and routines – would end with an attempt to create a different reality with some sort of political settlement. As far as they were concerned "real security will be ensured only by the institution of a political settlement."[2]

This essay examines the Movement for the Future of the Western Negev from a broad political view, and asserts that, even though the movement emerged from a situation of local security distress and failed to generate real interest at the national level, its activity is relevant for the country as a whole. This relevance is manifested in the movement's central statement and the message it tries to convey. The movement states that the use of military power, as conducted in the last three rounds of fighting in the Gaza Strip, is hopeless in and of itself. It is not enough to operate military means; rather, it is necessary to use political means as well, and convey the attendant message that a political resolution in the Gaza Strip can serve as a platform for resolving the entire Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Background

Since 1967, the Israeli political arena has focused mostly on relations with the Arab nations, the Palestinians, and the future of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.[3] Most Israeli political and social identities that assumed the form of protest were born out of and focused on war and peace.[4] One exception was the social protest in the summer of 2011, which presented a new form of political action and challenged some established understandings about

politics and society in Israel.[5] Other exceptions include protests dealing with fair distribution of resources, such as those of the Black Panthers and recently of the Ethiopian community. Overall, war and peace are the key issues in establishment and anti-establishment politics, which significantly define the social and political identities, voting patterns, and demands of many of the social movements such as Peace Now, the Bloc of the Faithful (Gush Emunim), the opposition to the withdrawal from Sinai, the opposition to the First Lebanon War, the opponents and supporters of the Oslo process, and those who objected to the disengagement from the Gaza Strip in 2005.[6]

Another feature of the Israeli political field, typical also of other Western democracies, is the alienation of the Israeli public from the established political system, even though political and social issues continue to interest the public.[7] When aware citizens conclude that the political system does not want or cannot provide an answer to their demands, they develop alternate channels of activity. Social movements are one manifestation of civil society's wish for change. They express a disappointment with organized politics, and use their actions to challenge the establishment's centralized hold. Social movements do not necessarily serve the good of their members as individuals; rather they serve the greater goals of the group and are interested in generating change in the broader sociopolitical context.[8]

Civil society is an arena primed for new ideas. It contributes to the fair distribution of resources among citizens and is involved in decision-making. That is, civil society operates within the economy, politics, and culture, and contributes to the state, community, and individual; hence, its importance.[9] The test of civil society lies in the autonomy it assumes from the state, the type of demands it makes of the state, and its ability to motivate citizens to participate in public life and imbue them with civic values. Four types of organizations operate in civil society: interest groups, social movements, grassroots organizations, and volunteer organizations.[10] The common denominator of these organizations is that all engage in extra-parliamentary political activity, while the first two engage in what one could call anti-establishment political activity. Political activity outside the establishment's own setting is characterized by political protest events. Such activity seeks to generate political change and is aimed primarily at the authorities.[11] As part of civil society, individuals join together voluntarily in common action for attaining a shared interest. Political sociologists conceptualized this move three decades ago, calling it "collective action,"[12]

thus expressing their reservations with the concept of "collective behavior," which dominated research on anti-establishment political patterns.[13]

"Social movements" and "interest groups" emerged as dominant terms used to describe people organizing collective action to promote their political objectives.[14] Of the many understandings of social movements, this article uses the following definition: "collectivities with some degree of organization and continuity outside of institutional or organizational channels for the purpose of challenging or defending extant authority, whether it is institutionally or culturally based, in the group, organization, society, culture or world order of which they are a part."[15]

The field of research dealing with social movements includes several main theories.[16] This essay examines the activity of the Movement for the Future of the Western Negev using the approach of "new social movements." This approach emerged in the 1950s, and refers to voluntary organizations of individuals expressing the desire to create or prevent a change in the broader sociopolitical context. New social movements differ from traditional social movements in their strategies, goals, and manner of group participation. The initiators, leaders, and many of the supporters are young, middle, and upper-class students of higher education. The new social movements usually have supporters rather than members, and loosely communicate for the purpose of collective action. In principle, these movements reject establishment politics and engage in protest practices that express and emphasize this rejection. Fluid organizational structures with seemingly a lack of hierarchy; democratic patterns of decision-making with participation and debate; and creative and innovative protest actions incorporating humor, games, and theatrical performance, all play a central role.[17] New social movements are typical of post-industrial societies as they are inevitably a product of the changes in the social, economic, and political relations within these societies. These movements seek structural change rather than revolution, and therefore do not seek to dismantle existing political and economic structures.

The central strategies of the new social movements are empowerment and self-help. They seek independence rather than ways of connecting to an existing centralized political powerbase. Therefore, community participation in these movements strives for freedom from state institutions. The principles of social consciousness shaped by the new social movements are the involvement of regular people who, until now, were oppressed and have to make their voices heard to affect history; and social participation that gives

a voice to those who had been silenced in the public discourse – a voice that is, in their minds, necessary to improving the decision-making process.[18]

The importance of the Movement for the Future of the Western Negev as a social movement lies in proposing an alternative to the traditional security doctrine, which manages the conflict with the Palestinians by military means.[19] According to members of the Movement, the last three rounds of fighting in the Gaza Strip proved that this doctrine is hopeless, and that it is necessary also to use political means to resolve conflicts, including the one between Israel and Hamas. Broadly, this approach could be applied to a future scenario in which most of Israel's populated areas could be under persistent missile threat, a situation that could create social and perhaps also political pressure. The idea underlying the Movement for the Future of the Western Negev is that Israel should also create the conditions for a political settlement alongside the military responses used to deal with the security challenges on the different fronts. Moreover, the Movement seeks to apply a political resolution to not only the Gaza Strip, but also the West Bank; in practice, the Movement uses the concept of a political resolution in Gaza as a platform to renew negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians and to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in its entirety. This demand stands out, given the Movement's insistence on conducting direct talks with Hamas, which controls Gaza, and despite the general stance in Israel that one should not conduct negotiations with Hamas. The strength and legitimacy of this demand stem from the fact that the Movement's founders have lived for more than a decade within the political and security-based reality of high-trajectory fire.

Members of the Movement claim that the Israeli public, both in the Gaza envelope and elsewhere, should know that the decision makers seek to integrate military, political, and other means in finding or creating a solution to the existing political-security situation, and will apply it not only to the Gaza envelope, but also to the West Bank. This is, in fact, a demand to apply renewed (and creative) thinking to an old and familiar situation. The alternatives may go beyond common approaches, e.g., that Israel and Palestinians should have direct negotiations or the notion that the existence of two independent nations between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River can provide a solution to the long-standing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as fixed in the Oslo Accords.[20] An alternative is the proposal to accept the Arab initiative as the basis for mutual talks in negotiations with the Palestinians, or the proposal for Israel to join the moderate and

pragmatic Arab nations in order to solve creatively the Israeli-Palestinian issue, as well as other issues in which Israel has shared interests.

Thus, in the opinion of Movement members, the knowledge that decision makers do not rely solely on military solutions, but also integrate political means into possible solutions to the political-security situation (including some that have never been looked at before) would give the Israeli public a sense that it has not been abandoned and that its leaders will, in fact, make every effort both to resolve the political-security situation and prevent another round of fighting. This is important to the population's social resilience in a situation of persistent disruption,[21] and may even affect the public's attitude toward embarking on a future war and increase the public's preparedness for it.[22]

The Movement for the Future of the Western Negev as a New Social Movement

The protest of the Movement for the Future of the Western Negev arose out of anxiety, loss of control, helplessness, tension, worry, and threat to life and limb – the lot of most residents of the Gaza envelope during Operation Protective Edge. These feelings were fused with a lack of trust in the army (e.g., the "anemone speech" by the chief of staff, in which Lt. Gen. Benny Ganz urged the residents of the South to come home and assured them that the early August ceasefire would hold; it broke down a few days later) and the nation's decision makers. These feelings were present during the early stages of Operation Protective Edge and even before the residents were fully aware of the security situation to which they were subjected; the message conveyed was to continue the routine, which they did, even though Gaza envelope residents understood that attack tunnels were located close to their settlements. They also sensed that Hamas was controlling the ceasefire, that the Israeli political-security cabinet was divided and avoided making the decision to evacuate residents from the settlements abutting the border, and noticed that national leaders did not even visit and show solidarity with local residents.[23] It should be remembered that during Operation Protective Edge, three residents of the Gaza envelope were killed by mortar bombs: four-year-old Daniel Tragerman (August 22, 2015), Zeev Etzion, Kibbutz Nirim's security coordinator, and Shahar Melamed, the kibbutz's garage manager (both on August 26, 2015).[24]

Given this background, it is no wonder that many Gaza envelope residents felt abandoned, unprotected, and not in control of their lives. As

Haim Yellin, then head of the Eshkol Regional Council and currently an MK on Yesh Atid's slate, said, "The Movement for the Future of the Western Negev tried – and to a great extent succeeded – in giving many area residents strength because it provided the sense that they could control their lives. It therefore played a significant local communal role."[25] During the military operation, the Movement received the open support of two regional council heads, Alon Shuster, of the Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Council, and Yellin of the Eshkol Regional Council. "The Movement embraced the entire councils. There is support for the Movement – Alon's and my own," said Yellin.[26] Michal Shaban, spokeswoman for the Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Council, added that the council was working together with activists in the Movement.[27] In other words, the Movement was sending a clear message that it would be proactive in changing the reality of the region in which its members lived, and this message matched the narrative that the councils wanted to present. Although the Movement founders said that their struggle was not limited to the Negev, and that they were fighting on behalf of all Israelis, the mainstay of its support came from the region's residents, especially those who identified with the left and center in traditional Israeli party politics, and at whom the Movement aimed its messages.[28]

While old social movements organized around political bases, such as social class, ideology, or workers' rights (i.e., organized labor or equal rights movements), the new social movements unite around ethnicity, gender, or geographical community, and often combine identity, community and culture; a striking feature of such movements is the lack of class ideology.[29] In practice, the Movement for the Future of the Western Negev is a blend of several groups formed in the western Negev, including the Qassam Generation, Western Negev Women, No Stopping on Red, and Fly the Missiles from Gaza.[30] Although most share the same social class, their social class did not serve as the basis for organization or as a means of recruiting members; rather, it was the desire of those involved "to change the reality of their lives."[31]

As all the founders of the Movement for the Future of the Western Negev are residents of the western Negev, the communal-geographic basis of the organization represents a collective identity for its organizers. It is worth devoting some space to the movement's chosen name. The choice of the phrase "residents of the western Negev" rather than "residents of the Gaza envelope" may stem from the desire of the movement's founders not to define themselves in relation to something external, on the other

side of the border (Gaza), because that would constitute a confrontational definition determining the movement's identity; rather, they chose to define themselves in relation to something internal – the western Negev – as an inseparable part of the State of Israel. Moreover, the struggle of the Movement's founders was marked as a local one, defined as ensuring the "welfare and horizons for the region's residents." For them, the way to attain this goal was by implementing "a permanent solution in Gaza."[32]

To a great extent, the new social movements question the cultural and social identities of its members. In that process, they ask, who are we? How do we live as part of our movement and our society? What do we contribute to them? What do we get from them? What are our rights? At the outset, the members of the Movement for the Future of the Western Negev chose to identify as a citizens' movement distinguished by their geographical location. Alongside the real distress experienced by the Movement's members and founders,[33] their journey began with an attempt to figure out who they were, how they identified themselves, and what their demands were, as clarified by Anat Hefetz, a member of Kibbutz Nirim and one of the Movement's founders.[34]

The founders of the Movement insisted on their right to speak and to be heard, and noted that this right was acquired through their suffering. On their message board they wrote, "After four years of living under missile threat, we swore we would not stay silent anymore."[35] This was, in fact, a demand, legitimized by years of suffering, to create a different reality, based on "peace, security and prosperity for the residents of the Negev."[36] The Movement's founders saw their demand as representing a different voice on the political-security situation in the Gaza envelope, a voice that they believed had not yet been heard within the public discourse.[37] This demand was directed towards the decision makers, while the Movement's founders gave a sense of urgency, saying, "We have no time to waste."[38]

In fact, central to the Movement's demand was to create an alternative to the "fighting rounds" paradigm, by holding talks with Hamas and creating the conditions for a political settlement in Gaza; and perhaps even to promote a process that would lead to a permanent resolution. This alternative was presented to decision makers not only for the western Negev, but also for the entire State of Israel. Movement members called upon the government to use Operation Protective Edge to promote a political settlement that would ensure peace and quiet for western Negev residents, and therefore, also for the entire state.[39] That is to say, the Movement

attempted to transcend its local community identity, but failed to leverage its core demand at the national level. Despite the relatively sympathetic coverage the Movement received in the press during Operation Protective Edge, its demand achieved neither prominence nor widespread support within the Israeli public as a whole.[40]

From its inception, the intention of the Movement's founders was to establish a social protest movement with continuity, because they knew they were "fighting for a stable, secure, personal, family, and economic *future* [emphasis added]."[41] However, the Movement's local emphasis may have undermined it, rendering it incapable of going beyond the local level in order to expand its circle of supporters. Moreover, the ceasefire declaration and the end of fighting bumped the Movement's struggle off the national and public agenda; now, a year after the military operation, its voice is barely heard at the national level. Current coverage of the Movement's activities takes place mostly within social media, and most of the people aware of the Movement are among its social media followers.

The founders of the Movement for the Future of the Western Negev strove to formulate a proposal for a different discourse, one that lies outside of political parties and official state institutions. Although activists who clearly identified with political parties were among the Movement's founders, they chose not to join a political force with a partisan affiliation.[42] They chose to realize this desire by ensuring that they were economically independent, a factor that – in their minds – granted them political independence. Their source of funding was their group of supporters. The Movement used Headstart as a platform for online social recruitment, and crowdfunding for a range of different projects.[43] This decision to be politically independent, however, may not have helped the Movement expand its base of support, because the vast majority of supporters identified with left wing and centrist political parties, with a small-to-negligible minority identifying with the moderate right. It was, in fact, the clarification of the core demand ("a political settlement in the Gaza Strip") that led some activists – identified with the right wing of the Israeli political map – to leave the movement; in the Israeli political reality, an insistent demand for a political settlement and suggestion of an alternative to the approach that "there is no partner for peace" is identified with the left-wing political parties.[44]

The Movement's Activities

The Movement for the Future of the Western Negev is manifested in three major realms: public activity, consciousness-raising activities, and political involvement. Publicly, the Movement has tried to maintain a variety of activities, both during and after Operation Protective Edge. These include organizing demonstrations, putting up street banners, and holding parlor meetings.[45] The parlor meetings bring representatives of the Movement together with security and political experts to discuss various formats for a possible settlement with the Gaza Strip. In addition, the Movement holds meetings with various delegations and organizations, state representatives, and extra-territorial organizations. For example, Movement members met with the head of the National Emergency Authority, with officeholders in the Prime Minister's Office, tourist groups, schools, students, and more.[46] By accompanying tours, the Movement tries to disseminate its messages to the broader Israeli public and keep the Movement on the public agenda. Movement activists document their activities on their website[47] and on social media (Facebook and Twitter),[48] conveying their messages to the public at large. Although the Movement's Facebook page has received more than 6,000 "likes," the conversation is mainly among residents of the western Negev.

In terms of consciousness-raising activities – largely an extension of its public activity – the Movement tries to expose and make accessible "existing and new knowledge about handling the rear, security solutions, and various possibilities for a political settlement."[49] To this end, Movement members seek to arrange encounters between residents of the region and former security personnel, politicians, and researchers. For example, in November 2014, the Movement held a parlor meeting in Jerusalem, and hosted Alon Liel, former director general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry and a former ambassador to Turkey; two weeks later, the Movement hosted another parlor meeting with Gen. (res.) Gadi Zohar, a member of the Peace and Security Movement, and another meeting with Gen. (res.) Ami Ayalon, former head of the Shin Bet and a former commander of the Israeli Navy. By using security experts, the Movement attempts to create a basis of social legitimacy for their demand to "hear a different civilian voice," and promote a political settlement in the Gaza Strip. Using this method of action, they have tried, and continue to try to achieve both a broad consensus for their path and legitimacy for their approach.

The Movement's activities in the political sphere combine the public consciousness-raising activities described above and encounters with decision makers in order to promote its goal of a political settlement in Gaza, and to maintain the interest of politicians and the public at large. Movement activists meet with ministers and Knesset members and send them parliamentary questions. The election of Haim Yellin, former head of the Eshkol Regional Council, as a member of the twentieth Knesset may help the Movement to receive special attention. Yellin is identified – and self-identifies – as a representative of the region, and has on several occasions been heard to say that "a military move must have a political leg to stand on."

In practice, because the Movement's public presence throughout Israel is limited, it has failed to break out of the local communal level in which it operates. Hence, the Movement's demands have failed so far to affect the public agenda in any significant way. Nonetheless, after many years in which residents of the Gaza envelope have been exposed to missile fire and after a decade of military operations in the Gaza Strip following the disengagement, it may be time to examine the movement's demand for a political settlement in Gaza from a broad political perspective. This would include a comprehensive examination of a potential situation in which high-trajectory fire is aimed at all of Israel, for which the use of the military option would be an insufficient response, as well as a reassessment of the entire Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

If all of Israel is threatened by high-trajectory fire, the use of military means alone will not provide an adequate response to the political-security situation; it will be necessary also to apply political means. Although the Israeli public strongly wishes to view the conflict with the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip as a security problem only,[50] and, at times, to sever the link between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, Israel's ability to bring about an era of calm, as part of a solution that includes a ceasefire / comprehensive reconstruction of the Gaza Strip - a very complex challenge indeed - can also mitigate the entire Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This is possible because the Gaza Strip, in broader political and geostrategic terms, continues to play a central role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.[51] This is the underlying message in the Movement's demand to promote a political settlement in Gaza. As noted, this message contains a request for a political settlement in Gaza, which has already been made in Israeli public discourse in the past; at the same time, it connects the existence of such a settlement to the

nation's ability to create a comprehensive solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and hence the relevance of the activities of this social movement for the country as a whole.

Conclusion

Although the Movement for the Future of the Western Negev is a social movement that emerged as the result of a local security adversity, its manner of action and the message it tries to convey within the context of the existing Israeli political-security discourse render the Movement relevant to the entire country. The Movement represents an alternative to the traditional security approach, which upholds that the conflict with the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip (and elsewhere) reflects a security problem only, and therefore must be managed by military means.[52] In light of the last three rounds of fighting in the Gaza Strip, the members of the Movement claim that this approach is strategically hopeless in the absence of a political effort aimed at a long-term settlement between the opposing sides. As noted, the Movement's relevance to the future of the western Negev stems both from the message it seeks to impart through its activities and its mission statement. The message links the demand for a political settlement in Gaza to the nation's ability to present a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and states that the use of military tools alone is hopeless and that political means must also be used.

In addition to this type of political-security message, an examination of the Movement's actions sheds light on the social-political message emerging from its activities. Accordingly, the public's knowledge that the decision makers are doing absolutely everything they can to integrate military means with political means will help the nation's citizens to gain the sense that they have not been abandoned and that they have someone upon whom they can rely. This sentiment could raise the citizens' level of preparedness to handle a situation of persistent fighting, and provide them with the knowledge that they can bounce back from this situation after the fighting – two elements that are the essence of the social resilience of a population living under persistent disruption.[53]

The formation and activities of the Movement for the Future of the Western Negev restored among residents of the Gaza envelope the sense that they are in control of their lives, and imbued them with a great deal of strength.[54] Hence, the movement played a significant local community role. At the same time, the movement failed to break through the factionalism

that characterized its method of action. While it succeeded in enlisting many supporters among western Negev residents, it was unable to gain support from other Israelis, and thus failed to create a broad national support base. Nonetheless, binding a political settlement in Gaza to the platform of a comprehensive settlement between Israel and the Palestinians provides a possible alternative to the existing security-political discourse, thereby giving the Movement's demand national relevance.

Notes

1   This essay is based on data gathered in two Gaza envelope regional councils: Eshkol and Sha'ar Hanegev.

2   Message page of the website of the Movement for the Future of the Western Negev. http://negevforce.project.org.il/cgi-webaxy/item?index.

3   Despite the disengagement from the Gaza Strip, the debate about the future of this area in the context of relations with the Arab nations and the Palestinians has not been resolved.

4   Zeev Rosenhek and Michael Shalev, "The Political Economy of the 2011 Protest: A Class and Generational Analysis," *Theory and Criticis*m 41 (2013): 45-68.

5   Ibid., p. 64.

6   Tamar Hermann, *The Israeli Peace Movement: A Shattered Dream* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), quoted in Rosenhek and Shalev, "The Political Economy of the 2011 Protest."

7   Omri Shamir, "Political Consumerism, Sociopolitical Entrepreneurs and Public Policy in Israel: Conceptual Framework and Case Studies," in *Studies in Public Management and Policy*, ed. Guy Ben Porat (Ben-Gurion University: Department of Management and Public Policy, Guilford Glazer Faculty of Business and Management, 2012).

8   Yael Yishai, *Between Enlistment and Reconciliation: Civil Society in Israel* (Jerusalem: Carmel, 2003), pp. 22-49.

9   Yishai, *Between Enlistment and Reconciliation*; Elisheva Sadan, *Community Work: Methods for Social Change* (Tel Aviv: United Kibbutz Press, 2009), pp. 307-18.

10   For more, see Yishai, *Between Enlistment and Reconciliation*.

11   Eitan Alimi, "Calling It by Its Rightful Name: Differences (and Similarities) in Social Movements and Interest Groups," *Civil Society and the Third Sector in Israel* 2, no. 2 (2008): 29-51.

12   See the works of political sociologists such as Charles Tilly and William Gamson.

13   The research orientation of social scientists using the term "collective behavior" views the extra-establishment political activity as a threat to the normative social order and the political behavior of its members as a social deviation. By contrast, the research orientation of social scientists using

the term "collection action" stresses the strategy, planning, choice, and purposefulness of the collective action in question. See Alimi, "Calling It by Its Rightful Name."

14 Alimi, "Calling It by Its Rightful Name." According to Alimi, the existing terms in the literature describing such movements are: challenging groups, protest groups, pressure groups, mass movements, and political movements. The choice of one term over another is thus a direct derivative of the discipline from which the social scientists hail, as well as of the paradigmatic approach they use.

15 David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi, "Mapping the Terrain," in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, eds. David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), p. 11.

16 These theories include early theories dependent upon psychosocial approaches of collective behavior belonging to the functional-structural tradition in sociology; organizational theories of resource management based on conflict theory and rational-economic theories; the structural theory of political opportunities; the "new social movements" approach; and the examination of social movements as the foundation for the establishment of new collective identities and generation of an alternate culture. See, e.g., H. Blumer, "Social Movements," in *Principles of Sociology*, ed. L.A. McClung (New York: Barnes & Nobles, 1951), pp. 199-220; W.A. Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest*, 2nd ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1990); C. Tilly, *Social Movements, 1968-2004* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004); A. Swidler, "Cultural Power and Social Movements," in *Social Movements and Culture*, eds. H. Johnston and B. Klandermans (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995).

17 Rosenhek and Shalev, "The Political Economy of the 2011 Protest."

18 "The demand is directed at the government that happens to be in charge, the decision makers whoever they might be, to promote a settlement in the Gaza Strip." Interview with Anat Hefetz, April 21, 2015.

19 Uri Ben Eliezer, *Through the Scope: The Creation of Israeli Militarism, 1936-1956* (Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1995).

20 See, e.g., Gideon Sa'ar, "To Calculate a Political Track Again," *Yedioth Ahronoth*, June 7, 2015.

21 Meir Elran and Alex Altshuler, "The Civilian Front in Operation Protective Edge," in *The Lessons of Operation Protective Edge*, eds. Anat Kurz and Shlomo Brom (Tel Aviv: The Institute for National Security Studies, 2014), http://www.inss.org.il/uploadImages/systemFiles/ZukEtanENG_final.pdf.

22 This is reinforced by the fact that 82 percent of the Israeli public expects another conflict with Hamas, according to a survey conducted by Mina Tzemach and the Midgam Polling Research Center, and published on June 7, 2015, http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4665484,00.html.

23 Yizhar Sha'ar, "A Look at the Emotional-Experiential Sphere of the Residents of the Eshkol Regional Council" (The Educational Psychological Service,

Eshkol Regional Council, 2014), http://www.eshkol.info/1637-he/Eschol.aspx.

24 These three deaths had a devastating psychological effect on residents. As Haim Yellin said, "As long as we don't have to face funerals, we can take anything. The minute we have to deal with funerals, it's a different story." Interview with Haim Yellin, May 31, 2015.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid.

27 "The Movement for the Future of the Western Negev has done a good job. It's an extra-establishment movement, but [it] works with the council. The messages are similar. Its message was taking our fate into our own hands and not relying on the establishment. The council's message was that we are a strong community. There are difficulties, and difficulties are there to be resolved. Give us the tools to do what we know how to do in the best way possible." Interview with Michal Shaban, May 29, 2015.

28 "There was intensive work on the ground . . . to build regional strength. Because if you build something *for the long term*, you have to be connected to the region" [emphasis added]. Interview with Avi Dabush, April 29, 2015.

29 It is important to note that the expression "social movements" is more commonly used by researchers in the field of sociology, whereas the term "protest movements" is more commonly used by researchers in the field of political science. I follow the activity of the Movement for the Future of the Western Negev from the sociological perspective, and therefore distinguish its characteristics and activity as a social movement; from a theoretical perspective I discuss its features as a new social movement.

30 In theoretical terms, these are interest groups. See Alimi, "Calling It by Its Rightful Name."

31 "We started seeing that throughout the region protest initiatives were forming . . . People were being interviewed and writing on Facebook . . . The dissatisfaction reached a critical mass and there's the potential for joint organization." Hefetz, interview.

32 Message page of the website of the Movement.

33 In this context, it is important to note that when the Movement first was founded, most of the activists were parents of young children. This fact had a decisive effect on the way in which they acted in face of the situation in the Gaza envelope. For more on this, see the essay published in this issue.

34 "We asked ourselves the direction this thing should take, what we see in our mind's eye, and we said it cannot be an association only of kibbutz members or leftists who speak about peace and love . . . For it to be real and effective and powerful it has to be with people from the entire Gaza envelope, and it has to be as varied as possible in terms of the population – religious, Mizrahi, Ashkenazi – because the goal was to create a group that, on the one hand, reflects the heterogeneity of the Gaza envelope and, on the other hand,

shows solidarity and a stance that in some way takes responsibility for our own fate." Hefetz, interview.

35 "We Have No Time to Lose," The project for the Movement for the Future of the Western Negev, https://www.headstart.co.il/project.aspx?id=12164.

36 Ibid.

37 "We felt that a strong, clear civil voice had to be raised." Avi Dabush, one of the founders of the Movement, in an interview with Nahman Gilbo'a. Nahman Gilbo'a, "With the Renewal of the Fighting: Tension and Protest at the Kibbutzim of the Gaza Envelope," *Ynet*, August 20, 2014, http://www.mynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4560722,00.html.

38 "We Have No Time to Lose."

39 Ariel Delumi, "The Political Deadlock Dangerous to Nahal Oz," *Ynet*, November 3, 2014.

40 Media coverage greatly affects the ability of any social movement to garner public support because "the chances of protests groups that are not covered, or whose coverage is negative, to get attention and sympathy from the public and the establishment are very low, especially when their demands clash with the establishment's policies." Tamar Hermann, 1996, quoted in Z. Israeli and Y. Orbach, "Headline-Seeking 'Doormats' and VIPs: Protest, the Media and National Security," *Connection* no. 47 (2015): 61-75.

41 "We Have No Time to Lose."

42 "We clearly said that we would not be identified with a political party. We did not want to be a marginal group but a group that would enlist the support of the wider public." Hefetz, interview.

43 Funding was needed to pay the salary of the Movement's coordinator. All the other activists, including Nissim Duek, the group's media consultant, worked and continue to work on a voluntary basis.

44 At first, the movement sought – and still seeks – to appropriate the needs of the western Negev residents as they see them, and to demand a political settlement for the residents of the western Negev and the State of Israel as a whole, and together their aspiration, is to reach the general public. This issue places a challenge before the members of the Movement. One of the ways of the Movement to deal with this issue is through the existence of a strategic process in which they will try to "gather anew around goals" and to examine how "to speak with the pragmatic feasibility of some settlement in Gaza and it is the greatest interest of the residents of the region . . . in a way that won't sound leftist." Hefetz, interview.

45 For example, on Friday, August 22, 2014, at the beginning of its activities, Movement representatives set up a protest tent across the street from the Prime Minister's residence and invited him, telling him "to sit with us and discuss a permanent settlement for the Gaza Strip." About a month later, just a few days before the end of the ceasefire, Movement members organized a ceremony at the Sha'ar Hanegev Junction with the demand "to

care for our security in the face of the rocket and tunnel threats" and "to work towards achieving a political settlement."

46 "We succeeded in becoming almost the first stop for people coming to hear about the Gaza envelope . . . to position ourselves as the authoritative body on the issue . . . as a movement that can provide the civilian perspective . . . [But] we are conducting a discourse about the solution, thereby doing more than someone who [just] talks about life here." Hefetz, interview.

47 The Movement's website: http://negevforce.project.org.il/cgi-webaxy/item?harshama.

48 The Movement's Twitter handle: @SouthIsraelHope.

49 Message page of the website of the Movement.

50 See also Yoav Zeitun, "'There Is No Military Solution for Gaza' – Head of Operations Division Says Goodbye," *Ynet*, June 19, 2015.

51 Benedetta Berti and Anat Kurz, "Gaza First (Again?)," *INSS Insight,* No. 710, June 6, 2015, http://www.inss.org.il/index.aspx?id=4538&articleid=9906.

52 Ben Eliezer, *Through the Scope: The Creation of Israeli Militarism*.

53 Elran and Altshuler, "The Civilian Front in Operation Protective Edge."

54 "What happened with the Movement was healthy. It's to feel that you're in control of your life. That's important. And if they managed to bring someone in to visit or gained the support of the council's head, that gives strength, and they give strength to the civilians in the Gaza envelope." Yellin, interview.

Will Hamas Be Better Prepared during its Next Confrontation With Israel?
Insights on Hamas' Lessons from Operation Protective Edge

Gabi Siboni and A.G.

Operation Protective Edge (July 7-August 26, 2014) was the longest and most complex military challenge in a continuing cycle of violence between the State of Israel and Hamas since the organization's inception in 1987. It is still too early to assess the achievements and the results of the military campaign, which are still not sufficiently clear for either side, and to determine whether Israel succeeded in achieving its primary aim of establishing long-term deterrence.

Throughout the campaign, Hamas used all its capabilities, employing numerous types of weaponry and diverse methods of warfare from the outset. These included rocket fire (short-range, medium-range, and long-range) into Israel; the use of underground tunnels to carry out attacks infiltrating into Israeli territory and to support Hamas' infrastructure throughout the Gaza Strip; the employment of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs, also known as drones); maritime infiltration attempts by commando forces; urban warfare; and more.

Hamas learns from every confrontation or round of warfare with Israel, effectively implementing the results in its methods of operation during each new round of fighting. Hamas learns first and foremost from its own experience on the battlefield, but also from other terrorist organizations

that have fought against Israel, such as Hizbollah, and from the accumulated knowledge and experience of state actors such as Iran and Syria.

Hamas acquired knowledge from Operation Protective Edge on three levels: at the strategic level, in its geopolitical context; the military level, in terms of its strength and buildup; and at the operative level, in terms of using its military force. Assumingly, the organization will implement this knowledge in its next round of fighting with Israel. The lessons learned by Hamas can provide Israel with understanding as to how the IDF can be prepared for future military confrontations with the group. This article examines the knowledge that Hamas acquired during the fifty days of fighting in the summer of 2014, concluding with a general assessment, and insight from Israel's perspective.

Introduction

On July 7, 2014 Hamas launched a heavy rocket attack on Israel's cities and communities, dragging the IDF into the longest military campaign ever engaged in between the two parties. Hamas entered the campaign at an unprecedented political-diplomatic and economic low point.[1] Two important factors motivated the organization to launch rockets into Israel, and initiate the military confrontation. The first was Operation Brother's Keeper, launched by the IDF following the abduction and murder of Israeli teenagers Naftali Frenkel, Eyal Yifrach, and Gil-Ad Shaer in June 2014. It is doubtful that Hamas' political leadership in Gaza knew about the planned abduction, and even if it did know, it is reasonable to assume that it was not interested in the scenario that developed – the murder of the three teens – during the extremely sensitive period following its agreement with Fatah to establish a Palestinian unity government. As a result of this event, the already rocky relationship between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority further deteriorated. The second factor was the IDF's discovery of, and major strike against, an attack tunnel in Kerem Shalom, adjacent to the southern part of Gaza and resulting in the deaths of members of Hamas' military wing.[2]

Beyond these immediate factors – which for Hamas constituted the straw that broke the camel's back, and caused them to fire rockets into Israel and spark a wide-scale military confrontation with the IDF – other,

more profound, and deep-seated reasons included the group's internal deterioration and regional isolation, and a genuine concern among Hamas' leadership for losing control over the Gaza Strip. These reasons, which will be discussed in greater detail below, led Hamas to conclude that it had nothing to lose, and that the only remaining option was to provoke a war in an effort to ensure its future.[3] From Hamas' perspective, launching the rockets into Israel was a form of "politics by other means," and the decision to embark upon a new round of fighting was a choice not between war and peace, but rather between war and slow strangulation. According to Hamas' assessment, such a war could relieve the pressure on Gaza by placing the burden on Israel, even if the likelihood of the war's actual success was low.[4]

On the eve of Operation Protective Edge, Hamas found itself in a severe geopolitical crisis, which had begun just a few months after the conclusion of Operation Pillar of Defense (November 2012). In July 2013, Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi was removed from power by the Egyptian military and replaced by Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. The Muslim Brotherhood, which had been the major political supporter of Hamas' government in the Gaza Strip, was outlawed in Egypt, and Hamas became an undesirable entity in the country.[5] The new Egyptian regime was determined to block and destroy the smuggling tunnels between the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip, which had served as Hamas' primary source of income. The systematic destruction of these tunnels, in addition to Egypt's frequent closure of the Rafah border crossing – the Gaza Strip's exit to the outside world – resulted in a deep economic crisis in the Strip; the most concrete expression of this crisis was the Hamas government's inability to pay the salaries of more than 40,000 employees of its public institutions.[6]

At the beginning of 2014, the Hamas leadership became aware that its governance in the Gaza Strip had weakened and was unstable, and that it was unable to meet the needs of Gaza's economy – most importantly, by paying the salaries of thousands of local Palestinian government employees. In April 2014, this understanding led the Hamas leadership to sign a reconciliation agreement with the Palestinian Authority and to establish a unity government;[7] this measure failed to bring about the salvation the organization longed for, and Hamas became the target of criticism among its own supporters.[8] The bitterness among Gazans continued to intensify, and soon the voices of other Palestinian groups in the Gaza Strip could be heard charging that Hamas had abandoned the path of "resistance" (*muqawama*).[9] The troubling feeling that the rug was being pulled out from

under Hamas led the organization to believe that in order to improve its position, the security situation vis-à-vis Israel would have to deteriorate. This mood, in conjunction with the more immediate factors discussed above, led Hamas to launch its rocket attack against Israel on July 7, 2014.

After the fifty days of fighting during Operation Protective Edge, Hamas was left bruised and battered. The rebuilding of the Gaza Strip has not progressed at the pace and scale as Hamas had expected at the conclusion of the campaign. Moreover, the economic situation in Gaza remains severe, despite the investments that have started to arrive; the grave humanitarian crisis could lead to public protest and threaten Hamas' rule. At the same time, the group's ability to control the other armed factions operating in the Gaza Strip and to prevent them from violating the cease-fire continues to deteriorate.

At this point in time, no change in Hamas' policy toward Israel is discernable; the armed struggle remains a central component of the organization's doctrine. That being the case, another round of fighting between the two parties appears to be only a matter of time. Hamas is well aware of this fact and is currently processing and implementing the knowledge gained from Operation Protective Edge, and at an increasing pace. Hamas' ability to derive knowledge becomes quicker and more effective from one round of fighting to the next. Between Operation Cast Lead (December 2009 – January 2009) and Operation Protective Edge, Hamas' military capability improved immeasurably, both qualitatively and quantitatively, as its military wing, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, continues to develop new ways of fighting against Israel. In its next clash with Israel, Hamas presumably will be better prepared and more dangerous than in the past. It continues to prepare itself well for this confrontation, and is in the process of rehabilitating and rebuilding its military force and infrastructure. Its leadership understands that these efforts may take an extended period of time and may require the organization to humble itself and refrain temporarily from taking action.

This article aims to provide insights and assessments of the knowledge acquired by Hamas during Operation Protective Edge, and to examine the major methods of action that the organization can be expected to employ during the next round of fighting with Israel. This knowledge will be considered at three levels: first, the strategic level, revolving primarily around the impact of inter-Arab regional processes on Hamas; second, the military level, relating to the processes of augmenting Hamas' military

strength and its kinetic and cybernetic buildup; third, at the operative level, relating to the use of this force, and the lessons that the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades may have learned from the battle. Just as Hamas learns from experience, the State of Israel and the IDF must also derive and internalize lessons from Operation Protective Edge and immediately implement them. Doing so will enable the IDF to deal more effectively and efficiently with Hamas and the other terrorist organizations during the next round of hostilities, and to bring about a quicker and more decisive conclusion to the fighting.

The Strategic Level

Hamas began Operation Protective Edge at an unprecedented political low point since having seized control of the Gaza Strip in 2007, and at the height of its isolation in the international arena in general and the inter-Arab regional arena in particular. Following Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's seizure of power in Egypt in July 2013, Egypt – which had been Hamas' most important source of support during the rule of the Muslim Brotherhood – became the group's bitter enemy. The new Egyptian regime's expressed its hostility toward Hamas primarily by destroying the smuggling tunnels between the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip, and periodic closing the Rafah border crossing. In the months following Operation Protective Edge, the Egyptian regime continued maneuvers to delay the negotiations that had been agreed upon at the end of the fighting in an attempt to prevent Hamas from achieving any gains.

For a while, Hamas appeared to have found a new patron in the wealthy country of Qatar. This relationship emerged after the group's leadership took refuge in the Gulf emirate following its expulsion from Syria in disgrace in 2012, and after losing the support of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Hamas' honeymoon with Qatar, however, ended with the reconciliation agreement between the Gulf emirate and Egypt during the second half of December 2014. Preliminary signs that the relationship between Hamas and Qatar was about to rupture were visible already before Operation Protective Edge concluded. In the ceasefire agreement, Hamas was forced to concede Qatar's patronage in light of the united front of Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia that was opposed to endowing the emirate with any standing whatsoever in the agreement. The agreement of Hamas' Political Bureau Chief Khaled Mashal to leave Qatar as a result of the ceasefire was an insult to the Qatari emir's dignity. This development, in conjunction

with heavy pressure exerted by Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states, resulted in a volte-face by Qatar in relation to its policy vis-à-vis Hamas, Egypt, and the other Gulf states.[10]

In this context, Hamas learned a major geostrategic lesson that the diplomatic isolation it had long been suffering, and which had grown even more intensive since Operation Protective Edge ended, could not continue. That is, if Hamas wanted to rebuild its image in the eyes of the Palestinian public in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and among other Palestinian factions in Gaza, or if it wanted to replenish its depleted weapons stores and rebuild its military infrastructure, which had been severely damaged by IDF attacks, it would have to end its isolation. From Hamas' perspective, the group needed to secure the support of a different regional, diplomatic actor.

To this end, Hamas cast its eyes toward Iran. Hamas leaders understood that Iran was the only actor that could help them extricate themselves from the deep pit in which they found themselves after Operation Protective Edge. Hamas looked to Iran despite that their relationship had ruptured following Hamas' support for the opponents of Bashar al-Assad in Syria's civil war, raging since 2011, and the subsequent expulsion of Khaled Mashal and his close associates from Damascus in early 2012. Up until their falling-out, Iran had supported Hamas for years by transferring hundreds of millions of dollars to the Gaza Strip; providing comprehensive military training and knowledge; and establishing the infrastructure for Gaza's independent production of weapons, primarily rockets.

From the end of Operation Protective Edge onward, and more intensively following the Egyptian-Qatari reconciliation, senior Hamas officials voiced resolute declarations regarding the group's wish to renew relations with Iran. These declarations soon translated into action, when a delegation headed by Muhammad Nasr, a member of Hamas' political bureau, officially visited Tehran on December 8–9, 2014 and met with senior Iranian officials. At the end of the visit, Nasr maintained that Hamas "is very interested in strengthening its age-old relations with Iran and is making special efforts to do that."[11] Mashal's deputy, senior Hamas official Moussa Abu Marzouk, effectively articulated the group's desire to return to Iran's warm embrace, and praised Iran as "the only country that has stood beside Hamas and provided the resistance movement with financial, weaponry and training assistance."[12] Another delegation, headed by senior Hamas official Jamal Issa, visited Iran on January 6, 2015 and met with the country's deputy

foreign minister.[13] According to a statement by Osama Hamdan, who is responsible for Hamas' foreign relations, the visits of these two delegations apparently were intended to lay the groundwork for a visit to Iran by Khaled Mashal, although a date for this visit has yet to be announced.[14] At the beginning of January 2015, Hamdan also announced the official renewal of relations between Hamas and Iran, and the fact that the two parties had overcome their various disagreements.[15]

If Iran also had not been interested in renewing close relations with Hamas, this process never would have taken place.[16] The Iranian willingness to renew ties with Hamas stems from Tehran's ambitions to enhance its standing in the region, and is intended to send a signal to other actors in the arena (and perhaps also the United States) that it still has an influence on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.[17] The Iranian desire for warmer relations with Hamas also was reflected in reports about Tehran's resumption of funding to the organization.[18] Under Iranian pressure, it is possible that Hamas will need to pay lip service of some kind to the Syrian regime in order to regain the patronage of Tehran. This could be discerned in statements made by Moussa Abu Marzouk at the end of 2014, when he denied Bashar al-Assad's accusations that Hamas had abandoned Syria. In this context, Abu Marzouk stated that, "the movement opposes any activity on the part of any of its members against the Syrian state, and will distinguish itself from anyone who takes any action against the regime."[19]

The opportunity to share knowledge and expertise between Hamas and Hizbollah, which occurred prior to the crisis in relations with Iran, has also led to the increasingly warm relations between Iran and Hamas. Some of the knowledge implemented by Hamas in its last round of fighting previously had been applied by Hizbollah in its clashes with Israel. We can assume that Hizbollah will be interested in learning from Hamas as many in-depth insights as possible regarding the actions, tactics, and modes of operation of the IDF during Operation Protective Edge, as well as those of Hamas itself. It is possible, and even reasonable to assume that the learning and knowledge-sharing process will take the form of a tripartite effort by Iran, Hizbollah, and Hamas.

The moderate Arab countries, particularly Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt, whose relationship with Hamas is discussed above, do not view favorably the strengthening of relations between Iran and Hamas. This relationship is likely to have a negative impact on these countries, as a result of Hamas' close affiliation with the Muslim Brotherhood, in their

fight against the impact of the Brotherhood within their borders, and the fear of terrorist attacks being carried out on their soil.[20] In this context, it is important to note that the detention of members of Hamas' military infrastructure in the West Bank in September 2014 revealed that many Hamas activists were recruited in Jordan where they underwent military training under the supervision of its military wing, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades.[21]

Hamas' diplomatic isolation and weak condition must be considered in conjunction with its problematic relations with the Palestinian Authority and its leader Abu Mazen, which deteriorated following the establishment of the Palestinian reconciliation government in June 2014. The tensions intensified further after Operation Protective Edge, as reflected in the mutual levelling of accusations: Hamas attacked the Palestinian Authority for failing to transfer funds to pay the salaries of government employees in the Gaza Strip and for preventing the rebuilding from moving forward, whereas Fatah spokespeople accused Hamas of causing the failure of the rebuilding of Gaza and "tainting the atmosphere of reconciliation."[22] The placing of explosive devices beside the homes of ten senior Fatah officials in Gaza in early November 2014 marked a particularly low point in relations.[23]

As a result of the situation at the regional, internal organizational, and inner-Palestinian levels following Operation Protective Edge, Hamas' leadership apparently has no desire or interest in renewing hostilities with the IDF.[24] The organization's leadership learned from the last round of fighting with Israel that it cannot permit itself – at least not in the near future – to enter into another confrontation with Israel on the same scale as it did in the summer of 2014.[25] The rebuilding of the Gaza Strip will take an extended period of time, as will the rehabilitation of Hamas' military infrastructure and the building up and replenishing of its weapons so that it can reach a level of readiness comparable to that which it enjoyed during Operation Protective Edge. At the same time, we must also remember that waiting, even for a long period of time, is a drop in the bucket when compared to realizing the Islamic fundamentalist ideology of Hamas, which is decisively opposed to the existence of the State of Israel.

The Military Level

Following Operation Pillar of Defense in 2012, Hamas prepared itself for an asymmetrical confrontation with Israel, focusing on several central components: rocket capability, an intricate tunnel network (an attack

network vis-à-vis Israel, and an internal network within Gaza for a variety of operative uses), a ground assault force, and to a lesser extent, the use of naval and air capabilities. During Operation Protective Edge, Hamas made use of all of these components, and in each case, claimed to have experienced both successes and failures. We can assume that at the end of the fighting, the officers and members of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades began a process of study and inquiry so that they could reach the next round of fighting with Israel with a better-prepared force, despite the difficulties created for them by Israel and Egypt.[26]

The destruction of Hamas' attack tunnels into Israeli territory constitute a fundamental issue, and their rebuilding is a major goal of the organization, toward which it has been working since the end of the fighting. Hamas sustained a lethal blow during Operation Protective Edge, with the destruction of thirty-two attack tunnels, fourteen of which infiltrated Israeli territory.[27] In just five days, the IDF wiped out years of digging and concrete reinforcement. Hamas regards the attack tunnels as a central component of its doctrine of warfare and recognizes their strategic importance, even though the results of their use during Operation Protective Edge were not directly proportional to the importance that the organization ascribes to them; although attacks from within the tunnels took a heavy toll on Israel in terms of the number of soldiers killed, their potential for death and destruction was not fully actualized according to Hamas' expectations.[28]

Hamas recognizes that the large number of tunnels and the scale of their use strategically surprised Israel, despite the fact that the Israeli defense establishment has known about the threat of the tunnels for many years.[29] Hamas also recognizes that Israel does not have the capacity to contend with these tunnels through prevention and preliminary thwarting tactics, while an adequate solution for dealing with this threat has not yet been found elsewhere in the world. It is therefore quite likely that the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades will continue to dig attack tunnels into Israeli territory in an effort to surprise Israel once again, enact a heavy toll in casualties, and resonate regionally and internationally. [30]

The events of Operation Protective Edge have proven to Hamas that the tunnels deter and intimidate the civilian population in the Gaza envelope, and that Israel regards the tunnels and their destructive potential as a strategic threat. Indeed, the tunnels infiltrating Israeli territory constituted one of the most important and creative factors contributing to both the sense of insecurity within the settlements adjacent to the border fence and the

decision of many residents to leave the area during the war.[31] Hamas military wing spokesman, Abu Hamza has even stated that, "the next campaign will be conducted on the threshold of Ashkelon and the Negev,"[32] perhaps hinting at Hamas' intention to make more extensive use of the tunnels in the next confrontation and to conduct operations within Israeli territory on a more substantial scale than it did during Operation Protective Edge.

Another insight Hamas gained in the aftermath of Operation Protective Edge is the need to continue expanding and bifurcating the network of tunnels beneath the Gaza Strip. The tunnel network served a number of purposes, which in retrospect, contributed significantly to Hamas' ability to survive the fifty days of hostilities, and gave its forces considerable cool-headedness in how they conducted the fighting.[33] The tunnels were used for storing and transporting weapons; carrying out ambushes against IDF forces using suicide terrorists in an effort to cause as many casualties as possible, and particularly to abduct soldiers; launching rockets from hidden sites and firing a "daily dose" of rockets into Israel; withdrawing troops; and perhaps the most important purpose of all – protecting its fighting forces from Israeli air and ground force attacks, especially Hamas' central command of the military wing and the senior members of the political leadership. This final use of the tunnels facilitated the organization's functioning and continuity over the course of the campaign. Hamas can therefore be expected to utilize the tunnels during the next round of fighting with Israel.

In the course of Operation Protective Edge, Hamas and the other Islamic groups in the Gaza Strip fired a total of 4,564 rockets of various ranges, reflecting the importance of rocket power from Hamas' perspective.[34] The ongoing rocket fire throughout the entire period of fighting severely damaged and disrupted the daily routine of Israeli citizens, undermining their sense of security. Even though the Iron Dome system almost completely neutralized the organization's ability to damage and destroy Israeli lives and property, it did not solve the problem of rockets being fired into Israel. Indeed, Hamas now understands that even if it failed to cause death and injury to the Israeli civilian population as it had hoped at the outset of the campaign, its success in forcing millions of citizens into bomb shelters on a daily basis and in harming the Israeli economy were nonetheless significant accomplishments. Although Hamas did not achieve military victory over the State of Israel, its use of rockets during Operation Protective Edge and it "battle of attrition" enabled Hamas to claim a narrative of victory, based

on its success in standing up to "the strongest army in the Middle East," and to assert a victory of sorts from the perspective of Gaza's civilian security.

Two additional insights from Operation Protective Edge have reinforced Hamas' decision to continue producing large quantities of rockets, to improve their accuracy, and to increase their range. Hamas understands that its success at disrupting the civil aviation in Israel for a period of two days during the military operation by firing rockets toward Ben Gurion Airport has the potential to harm the morale of Israeli society, and, more importantly, cause significant economic damage to the state of Israel.[35] The second insight regards the effectiveness of Hamas' rockets; the massive rocket launchings carried out against the settlements of the Gaza envelope during Operation Protective Edge (in conjunction with the threat of the tunnels) caused virtually all their residents to abandon the region.[36] As far as Hamas' criteria for success are concerned, the abandonment of the settlements was a major achievement.

With insights and knowledge gained from Operation Protective Edge, Hamas can be expected in the next round of fighting with Israel to fire heavier volleys of rockets at Ben Gurion Airport, as well as at the nuclear reactor in Dimona, the refineries in Haifa, the Ashdod Port, and other such strategic targets. From Hamas' perspective, striking a strategic facility – even if only a partial hit or if the attack fails to cause substantial damage – would constitute a significant, if not symbolic, achievement.

Due to the difficulty of smuggling goods into the Gaza Strip, Hamas has armed itself with rockets primarily through independent production. Indeed, from Hamas' position, the renewed strengthening of relations with Iran should facilitate Iranian assistance in rocket production and in establishing the complex infrastructure needed to improve the accuracy and range of its rockets. Just a few months after the end of Operation Protective Edge, Hamas began conducting test firings apparently aimed at improving the performance of its rockets, indicating the reactivation of their local assembly line.[37] If the organization did not intend on firing rockets during its next confrontation with Israel, it would not have undertaken efforts to conduct frequent test firings.[38]

During and even prior to Operation Protective Edge, Hamas also used a variety of advanced, precise, and effective weaponry, including the most advanced guided anti-tank missiles, the Russian-made Fagot, Konkurs, and Kornet; SA-7, SA-18, and SA-24 shoulder-launched anti-aircraft missiles,[39] also produced by Russia; and unmanned aerial vehicles

(UAV). Hamas also established an air unit that operated UAVs during the fighting, albeit with relatively little success. In this area the organization has the potential to make the greatest quantum leap, particularly given the technological developments in this realm. The gradual drop in the price of these technologies has accelerated the increase in the destructive power, range, and accuracy of various aerial weapons.[40] Iran, which possesses advanced capabilities in the field of UAVs, has already provided Hamas with assistance in this field and can be expected to continue doing so, especially as their relationship grows closer. It can be assumed that, among other things, Hamas will make use of UAVs during its next confrontation with Israel in order to carry out suicide missions or reconnaissance missions to identify targets for rocket or mortar fire. The use of UAVs serves as a suitable alternative to the launching of rockets, with the aim of increasing the potential of causing death and destruction in Israeli territory.

Despite the siege on the Gaza Strip and the Egyptian authorities' forceful policy against the smuggling tunnels, it is only a matter of time and creative thinking until Hamas finds alternative smuggling routes and manages to bring large quantities of high quality weapons into Gaza. Doing so will help the group maximize the number of casualties among IDF soldiers in the next round of fighting with Israel, and their accomplishments will lend to a victorious narrative within Gazan public opinion. For this reason, Hamas is expected to invest great efforts in building up and arming its forces with a variety of advanced missiles, including guided anti-tank missiles, shore-to-ship missiles, and shoulder-launched anti-aircraft missiles. Hamas will also strive to strengthen its air defense system, despite recognizing the superiority of the Israeli air force, as the successful interception of a plane or helicopter, or a direct hit on an Israeli naval vessel, also would generate a story of victory, which it long has been hoping to achieve.

Hamas' modes of warfare during Operation Protective Edge also included cyber warfare. Since Operation Cast Lead, during which Hamas carried out limited cyberattacks, the group's capabilities in this realm has improved markedly. During Operation Protective Edge, this improvement was noticeable by the significant increase in the number of cyberattacks carried out against Israel, which accompanied the entry of ground forces into the Gaza Strip.[41] Hamas began Operation Protective Edge with greater preparedness in the internet and cybernetic arena than in previous rounds of fighting, in part as a result of its having sent personnel abroad to undergo training in the realm of cyberattacks.[42] Hamas possibly could

begin outsourcing future cyberattacks against Israel using groups within the world of organized crime who are motivated solely by financial profit, as well as independent terrorist groups that specialize in the cyber arena and operate under state auspices.[43] Hamas did not succeed in implementing cyber strategies against Israel during Operation Protective Edge.[44] Still, it can be expected to continue investing in tools and the ability to intensify its cybernetic activity so that during its next round of fighting with Israel, it will be able to disrupt Israeli civilian and military infrastructure, which rely almost completely on internet communications systems.

The Operative Level

Operation Protective Edge furnished additional evidence of the asymmetrical war underway between the IDF and the military wing of Hamas. Although the group concluded the operation bruised and battered, considering the campaign from the perspective of the concept of "resistance," in which it believes and which guides its operations, provides a different perspective. Indeed, in the eyes of Hamas, its success in conducting a complex, intensive fifty-day military campaign against the IDF is an impressive accomplishment – one that Hamas can boast about, particularly to the population of Gaza, and that might secure political profit vis-à-vis Iran and Hizbollah, its old-new allies, as well as some of the Arab states. It is reasonable to assume that Hamas will not dramatically change its doctrine of warfare in the lead up to the next confrontation with Israel; rather it will attempt to improve and strengthen this doctrine, while internalizing and applying the lessons learned during Operation Protective Edge.[45]

As for its rocket fire, Hamas can be expected to conduct an analysis of the intercepting capabilities of the Iron Dome, quite likely in conjunction with Iran and Hizbollah. By analyzing the system, Hamas may be able to improve the operation of its rocket launches and even, however slightly, the percentage of hits and casualties within built-up areas in Israel in the next round of fighting, in contrast to the meagre results achieved by Hamas during Operation Protective Edge.

Hamas learned two major lessons about the functioning of the Iron Dome batteries during Operation Protective Edge. One is that the system cannot defend the entire territory of the State of Israel, and does not provide a solution for short-range missiles or mortar shells with ranges of five-to-seven kilometers or less.[46] Hamas may also reach the conclusion that, like every missile defense system, the Iron Dome system has a saturation point

beyond which it cannot provide coverage, leading to the conclusion that rockets fired at close range may be able to penetrate the system's defensive envelope.[47] Indeed, during Operation Protective Edge, Hamas was already firing heavy volleys, most likely for the purpose of testing the Iron Dome's saturation point.

The limitations of the Iron Dome's interception batteries left many parts of Israel without protection during Operation Protective Edge.[48] In order to defend all of the populated areas of Israel and its strategic facilities, Israel will need to equip itself with a few dozen batteries. The high cost of the system's intercepting missiles (Tamir) severely limits Israel's ability to arm itself with the quantity of batteries and intercepting missiles necessary for providing hermetic coverage of the country's populated areas during prolonged hostilities. Such a situation would leave some areas undefended, and enable Hamas to exploit this breach for the firing of heavy, dense volleys of rockets at various ranges.[49]

Given the small number of Iron Dome batteries, Hamas understands that in the next round of fighting with Israel, it will need to fire at a dispersed number of targets. This will force Israel to saturate the Iron Dome's batteries and focus its defensive system on specific targets, enabling Hamas to increase the accuracy of the rockets it launches. Hamas can therefore be expected to launch heavy and dense rocket volleys against Israel's civilian population, and more precise rockets and missiles against strategic targets. The group is expected to increase the effectiveness of its launches and the chances of hitting its targets, which translates into increased killing and more severe property damage.[50] In an effort to disperse its targets and saturate the Iron Dome's batteries, Hamas may seek the assistance of its allies to fire rockets into Israel from the north and the south.[51]

Hamas can be expected to continue its efforts to accumulate as large a stock of high quality, precise, and longer-range rockets and missiles as possible, despite their high cost and the great difficulties involved in smuggling them into the Gaza Strip. In terms of strategic targets, the possibility of a rocket striking a gas production facility could be very damaging.[52] Although Hamas' rocket system is not precise and has extremely slim chances of striking such a facility, from the lessons learned during Operation Protective Edge, the organization may conclude that the massive launching of dozens of rockets against such a production facility may increase the chances of hitting it. This is significant, as striking a gas

production facility could cause heavy damage and paralyze gas production for an extended period of time.

The cross-border attack tunnels into Israel and the network of infrastructure tunnels beneath the Gaza Strip are another major operational component of Hamas' military wing. Undoubtedly Hamas is now studying and rethinking the tactical use of its tunnels. The organization did not optimally use its attack tunnels during Operation Protective Edge, and the lesson learned in preparation for the next round of fighting will probably have to do with the timing of their use and maximal actualization of their destructive potential. As already noted, Hamas can be expected to continue digging attack tunnels across the border with Israel. Yet given the time necessary to dig tunnels and the difficulties involved in acquiring the quantities of concrete required for their reinforcement, Hamas' efforts could focus on digging a relatively small number of highly effective routes. The goal of this strategy would be to reach, when the time comes, what it regards as the ultimate achievement − the abduction of a live Israeli soldier (or, on a lower scale, the abduction of corpses) for the purpose of negotiating the release of its own prisoners.

The infrastructure tunnels, which were dug as a bifurcated network deep beneath the Gaza Strip, constituted a key component of Hamas' ability to conduct ongoing fighting during Operation Protective Edge, and they proved to be extremely effective. These tunnels helped Hamas' command staffs and supreme command to move around freely from region to region without the fear of being discovered. That almost the entire senior chain of command and political leadership of Hamas remained intact at the end of the operation highlighted the importance of the infrastructure tunnels.[53] As a lesson to be taken from the campaign, the organization almost certainly will rehabilitate the infrastructure tunnels that were damaged or destroyed, and will continue to develop the tunnel network as vigorously as possible.

Hamas entered Operation Protective Edge after learning and assimilating lessons from earlier rounds of fighting with Israel, as well as lessons learned from Hizbollah from its experience fighting against the IDF, particularly during the Second Lebanon War.[54] As a result, Hamas' tactical units within the battalions were more effective and aggressive than in previous confrontations with the IDF. The group's military wing understood that, in addition to the use of advanced weaponry, the use of standard, non-technologically advanced weapons and basic methods of warfare also would be extremely effective and deadly. Indeed, Hamas made widespread

use of sniper fire, landmines, machine guns, mortar shelling, the planting of dense zones of improvised explosive devices, and attempts to lure IDF forces into kill zones. Using these methods and weapons, Hamas succeeded in exacting a heavy price on Israel, killing sixty-seven soldiers – more than in any previous clash between the two parties in the past eight years.[55]

Hamas took advantage of the breach in the Iron Dome's defense range by firing thousands of mortar shells, which caused 25 percent of all the Israeli casualties in Operation Protective Edge, disrupted the lives of the inhabitants of the Gaza envelope, and resulted, among other things, in the local population's mass flight from the region. The absence of an early warning system for mortar fire and of an operative solution to intercept them contributed to Hamas' increasing use of this weapon.[56] Whether or not a defensive solution is found, Hamas can be expected to make substantial use of mortar fire against the settlements of the Gaza envelope in the next round of fighting, in an effort to cause the local population to flee. Hamas can also be expected to aim mortar fire at IDF assembly and deployment points, in order to cause as high a number of military casualties as possible.

During Operation Protective Edge, Hamas failed to damage Merkava tanks and Namer armored personnel carriers with its guided anti-tank missiles. The organization recognizes the IDF's supremacy in defending its armored vehicles, primarily by means of the new active "Trench Coat" defense system, which proved itself during the fighting.[57] As a result, the Izz al-Din ad-Qassam Brigades used the guided anti-tank missiles against vulnerable infantry forces who did not have protection against anti-tank missiles in an effort to cause as many deaths and injuries as possible.[58] It is reasonable to assume that Hamas will also apply this lesson in future fighting against the IDF.

Hamas surprised the IDF during Operation Protective Edge by undertaking a number of military operations, whose results indicate that they had not yet fully evolved into effective operational tactics. In the next round of fighting, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades can be expected to make repeated use of the same "surprises" with the primary aim of instilling constant fear within the Israeli population, although it is possible that some of these operations will also succeed in harming lives and property. These surprises may include the infiltration of Hamas naval commandos,[59] the more widespread use of unmanned aerial vehicles (for reconnaissance and/or for attack/suicide missions), and possibly also drones.

Hamas continues to train and conduct large-scale military exercises, implementing the knowledge acquired from the discovery of its infiltration into Israel during Operation Protective Edge in order to be better prepared during its next confrontation with Israel. Hamas does so primarily through urban warfare training, in order to improve its ability to attack IDF positions and abduct soldiers, live or dead. In this framework, Hamas' military wing conducted a large military exercise on December 18, 2014, which included light weapons fire, the firing of anti-tank missiles and mortar shells, and the use of naval forces.[60] Hamas' National Security forces also conducted a final officers' training course exercise, simulating the charge and conquest of an Israeli military position.[61]

Within the framework of the knowledge incurred from Operation Protective Edge, Hamas has also established a "Popular Army."[62] On November 7, 2014, in the Jabalia refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, Hamas' military wing declared the establishment of the Popular Army's first battalion, consisting of 2,500 fighters. According to senior Hamas official Muhammad Abu-Askar, the new body is "aimed at preparing young Palestinians for any possible attack on the part of Israel."[63] The Popular Army appears to serve as an auxiliary semi-military force in order to expand the future mobilization potential of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades and to bolster popular support for Hamas among the Gazan population. From Hamas' perspective, this militia can be used as a tool to taunt the IDF in the media in the event that those mobilized are killed during the hostilities, and as a means of facilitating accusations against Israel for the killing of uninvolved teenagers and young adults.[64]

In addition to the military tactics employed by Hamas during Operation Protective Edge, the group also adopted a defensive strategy incorporating successful media tactics. This integrated strategy, described as "the victim doctrine,"[65] involved the launching of rockets and using weaponry from within densely populated areas of the Gaza Strip, with the intent to force Israel to respond, whereas the civilian population in Gaza was turned into live, "human shields."[66] Hamas operatives concealed themselves in the center of neighborhoods in the Gaza Strip and turned them into battle sites; they positioned command posts in hospitals and residential homes, stored rockets in educational institutions, and shot them from within mosques, hospitals, and schools. In this manner, the military wing of Hamas forced Israel to return fire to the sources, resulting in the death and injury of many innocent civilians. In practice, Hamas turned the

inhabitants of the Gaza Strip into their own Iron Dome of sorts; Hamas caused injury to an uninvolved population in service of the ultimate aim of the victim doctrine: to create international pressure on Israel, and increase the country's isolation and delegitimization by exerting diplomatic, media, and legal pressure, as well as leveling accusations against Israel of use of disproportional force.[67]

Hamas combines use of the victim doctrine - an integral component to the operation of its force - with a media campaign and diverse psychological warfare, leading to the portrayal of the inhabitants of Gaza as the "victims of Israeli aggression" in the international media. The group understands that this is an effective approach that causes the international media to focus more on the Palestinian victims than on the circumstances in which they died or on victims in other parts of the Middle East, such as Syria and Iraq, thereby garnering greater support for its cause. In this way, Hamas maximizes the suffering of the inhabitants of the Gaza Strip for the sake of its own public relations. Given its success in conveying the message of the "victim," Hamas will almost certainly operate in a similar manner in its next confrontation with Israel, despite the immense suffering and destruction this approach has caused to the people of Gaza.

Conclusion

This article explored the knowledge and insights that Hamas most likely gained during fifty days of fighting in Operation Protective Edge. On the geopolitical, strategic level, the organization has understood that it cannot be left in the Middle East arena without the support of a dominant regional actor, and therefore, Hamas has pinned its hope on Iran to help rearm and build up its military force. Once again Iran is taking its protégé in the Gaza Strip under its wing, thereby completing a strategic process aimed at (almost) completely surrounding Israel with its emissaries in Lebanon, the Golan Heights, and the Gaza Strip.

Most likely, Hamas will not dramatically change its overall doctrine of warfare; it will continue rebuilding its force in order to gain strength and further develop its rocket capabilities, improve its abilities to carry out cross-border actions, and arm itself with high quality advanced weaponry. It is feasible that if the group keeps its head down for a few years and refrains from heating up the region, in the next round of fighting it will be prepared, well equipped, and in a position to cause maximum damage to Israel. Presumably, Hamas will continue to invest in its military force,

protection, and survivability, enabling the organization to be prepared for more extended fighting than during Operation Protective Edge. Hamas can also be expected to improve its rocket-firing regime and the tactical use of attack tunnels into Israeli territory.

Hamas would not consciously have drawn Israel into a new round of fighting in the summer of 2014 had it not felt that it was backed into a corner and that its rule in the Gaza Strip was in danger. Indeed, continuing its control remains one of its top priorities, along with its desire to seize the leadership of the Palestinians from the Palestinian Authority and the Fatah movement. The Hamas leadership does not take into consideration the death and destruction suffered by the inhabitants of the Gaza Strip during the fifty days of fighting of Operation Protective Edge, as well as in previous rounds of fighting with Israel. In their opinion, the damage to civilian infrastructure, the massive destruction of residential homes, and the tens of thousands of displaced inhabitants are outcomes that can be accommodated, as long as the group continues its control in the Gaza Strip and its rule remains stable. It is therefore incumbent upon Israel to consider using force and military might in the next round of fighting in order to compel Hamas to face the horns of the dilemma regarding the survival of its regime. When Hamas feels that the ground beneath its feet is secure and not threatened, the dilemma is not tangible, and it continues to shoot, launch rockets, and fight. Israel, therefore, must make Hamas face the dilemma; Israel must ask itself whether it intends on toppling Hamas' regime not only through rhetorical means, but also through the appropriate use of force.

From Israel's perspective, the parameter of time is important. The longer the fighting continues, the more accustomed Hamas grows to the realities, the more "achievements" (from its perspective) it secures, and the more difficult it becomes for Israel to achieve its goals. The targets attacked by the IDF in the Gaza Strip during Operation Protective Edge met the criteria of international law, which raises the question of whether Israel could have achieved what it did in a shorter time. Concentrating the blow within a period of a few days could have great psychological value, and presumably, the number of injured and killed and the damage on both sides would have been less. Had the IDF caused the same damage in a shorter period of time already at the outset of the fighting, the nature of the battles might have been different, and Hamas' defeat might have been reached more swiftly and clearly. Thus, the bombing by the Israeli

air force of multi-story buildings in the Gaza Strip during the initial days of the fighting instead of in the final days could have had an impact on Hamas' conscience and its resolution to continue the fighting.

In addition, the IDF must find a solution for one of Hamas' intrinsic advantages: its intimate knowledge of the Gaza Strip. The commanders of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades never leave the borders of the Gaza Strip and constitute a "center of knowledge" regarding the region. In an area as small and densely populated as Gaza, this constitutes a major advantage, and renders the organization's system of learning extremely effective. In contrast, due to various constraints, the IDF does not leave its experienced brigade and battalion commanders in the field for extended periods of time, and the military echelon must also consider its position on this issue.

The survival of the senior military command of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades and of Hamas' political leadership after fifty days of fighting raises an important question about the conception of Israeli security and the building of the IDF forces. The IDF's conception of building a force, which has fundamentally changed in recent decades and places great emphasis on the defensive component, demands a separate in-depth analysis. Defensive systems, such as the Iron Dome, designed to intercept mortar shells, and the system currently being developed to detect tunnels, are undoubtedly important, life-saving factors that can provide political and military decision makers with the patience, space, and time needed to effectively plan and operate under less pressure; yet they do not win wars. A decisive military achievement requires offensive actions, including those that lead to "beheading the snake." The State of Israel must examine the relative proportion of its investments in defensive systems vis-à-vis the development of offensive systems and maneuvers, which, in a focused and wise manner, can inflict severe damage to Hamas' senior military command and political leadership. Such modern conceptions and systems could bring about a swifter and more decisive conclusion to the next campaign.

In preparation for the next military campaign, Hamas expectedly will strive to manufacture and smuggle into the Gaza Strip more precise rockets, to be launched at strategic targets within Israel. Such action will force the IDF to divert some of its existing Iron Dome batteries to the defense of these targets, leaving fewer batteries to defend Israel's cities and settlements. Decision makers must therefore make clear to the Israeli population the importance of passive defense, and the fact that the active defense systems

preferably will be operated to meet the needs of the IDF's offensive force and to maintain the functioning of essential strategic systems.

Upon engaging Israel in Operation Protective Edge, Hamas believed it would successfully change the situation in the Gaza Strip and force Israel into an arrangement that would follow the hostilities. Following the campaign, however, the organization emerged bruised and battered from the mighty blow it had sustained and from the failure to bring about the change it had sought. Nonetheless, from its perspective, Hamas' military wing can be credited with a number of achievements. First of all, Hamas still rules the Gaza Strip and has managed to preserve its political and military leadership. Moreover, the organization survived fifty days of fighting and reclaimed its position as the leader of the "resistance" movement. Other achievements include its success in firing rockets at Tel Aviv and northern Israel and forcing millions of Israelis into bomb shelters on a daily basis; undermining the sense of security of Israeli civilians and causing most inhabitants of the Gaza envelope to abandon their homes during the hostilities; disrupting civil aviation in Israel via Ben Gurion Airport; and, by means of the "victim doctrine," bringing about the establishment of a UN commission of inquiry to investigate whether Israel committed war crimes in the Gaza Strip during Operation Protective Edge.

Despite its successes, Hamas was also forced to fight alone against the IDF, and failed to open a second front during the entire period of fighting. In preparation for the next confrontation with Israel, Hamas is trying to overcome this situation by rehabilitating and strengthening its relations with potential allies in the north and the south, including Hizbollah and radical Islamic groups in the Sinai Peninsula and Lebanon, and by strengthening its infrastructure in the West Bank and in Jordan. It is undertaking these efforts in order to open at least one additional active front against Israel, even if only at low intensity, in the event of another confrontation as this will make it more difficult for the IDF to fight Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

In order to delay the next round with Hamas, Israel must undertake two necessary steps. First, Israel must prevent the group's military buildup by means of standard and advanced weaponry and the raw materials that may be used for their production. This effort poses Israeli decision makers with a complex dilemma: on the one hand, there is a genuine need to bring essential materials and equipment into the Gaza Strip for the purpose of rebuilding homes and infrastructure damaged during Operation Protective Edge; on the other hand, Hamas is known to confiscate some building materials

and equipment that reach Gaza in order to dig tunnels and build other military infrastructure. Second, Israel must improve the dire economic and humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip. Israel has already undertaken a number of steps in this direction: allowing agricultural exports from Gaza to enter the Palestinian Authority, which Israel had prohibited prior to the hostilities of the summer of 2014; examining the possible entry of workers from Gaza into Israel; and authorizing construction inputs for the civilian sector in the Gaza Strip. These and other necessary steps may not only ease the suffering of the local inhabitants, but also might reinforce the sense of survival of the Hamas regime. In such a situation, devoid of a concrete threat to its rule, it can be assumed that Hamas will not be in any hurry to return to the battlefield.

Nonetheless, we must not have illusions and not be mistaken: despite the heavy price it paid during Operation Protective Edge, Hamas is currently engaged in preparations for the next war. Fighting Israel, even as part of its doctrine of resistance, is one of Hamas' tools for the strategic change it yearns to bring about so that it can continue its rule of the Gaza Strip and establish itself as a key actor in the arena – one that is more powerful than the regime of Abu Mazen and the Palestinian Authority.

Operation Protective Edge created unprecedented regional and geopolitical opportunities for Israel. The Egyptian regime's hostility toward Hamas, perhaps best reflected in the late February 2015 Cairo court ruling that classified Hamas in its entirety (both the military wing and the political leadership) as a terrorist organization, paved the way for the Israeli government to intensify its security cooperation with Egypt in an effort to thwart Hamas' renewed military buildup and the rebuilding of its military infrastructure. Moreover, in addition to its security cooperation with Egypt, which promotes the development of strategic relations between Israel and el-Sisi's regime, the Israeli government is currently facing a rare and even more challenging window of opportunity for forging a new constellation of regional relations with the pragmatic Sunni Arab states (Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and most of the Gulf states), who, along with Israel, currently share one major interest – the struggle against the Islamic State organization. Another important unifying interest of all of these countries is the prevention of a nuclear Iran. For this reason, Israel should seek to transform the present reality by taking advantage of the timing and the current window of opportunity vis-à-vis these Arab states

to initiate a broad regional process aimed at promoting common interests and bolstering its regional and international standing.

Notes

1   On the eve of Operation Protective Edge, however, Hamas was at the height of its military strength. During the entire period between the end of Operation Cast Lead in early 2009 and the beginning of Operation Protective Edge, Hamas intensively engaged in a military buildup, including the digging of a massive network of tunnels crisscrossing the entire Gaza Strip for the purpose of meeting the needs of launching rockets, stockpiling weapons, and transporting equipment and fighters; the digging of attack tunnels into Israeli territory; and the local production of thousands of rockets with different ranges.

2   Harel Chorev, "The Road to Operation Protective Edge: Gaps in Strategic Perception," *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs* 8, no. 3 (2014): 9-24. http://www.academia.edu/8785479/The_Road_to_Operation_Protective_Edge_the_Gaps_in_Strategic_Perceptions.

3   Udi Dekel, "Operation Protective Edge: Strategic and Tactical Asymmetry," in *The Lessons of Operation Protective Edge*, eds. Anat Kurz and Shlomo Brom (Tel Aviv: Institute for National Security Studies, 2014), pp. 13-20.

4   Ishaan Tharoor, "4 Reasons Hamas Has Not Lost the War in Gaza," *Washington Post,* August 6, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2014/08/06/4-reasons-hamas-has-not-lost-the-war-in-gaza.

5   "Egyptian Court Outlaws the Muslim Brotherhood," *Haaretz*, September 23, 2013, http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/world/middle-east/1.2125181.

6   Avi Issascharoff, "Despair in Gaza is Much Less Comfortable," *Walla*, June 12, 2014, http://news.walla.co.il/item/2754817.

7   Avi Issascharoff, "An Historic Palestinian Achievement: Reconciliation, Unity, and Elections," *Walla*, April 23, 2014, http://news.walla.co.il/item/2739752.

8   Hamas hoped that after signing the agreement and establishing the unity government, the Palestinian Authority would pay the salaries of tens of thousands of public employees. Ultimately, however, this never came to pass.

9   Chorev, "The Road to Operation Protective Edge."

10   Amir Tibon, "Reconciliation between Qatar and Egypt: Israel Considers the Implications for Hamas," *Walla*, December 24, 2014, http://news.walla.co.il/item/2813646.

11   "Hamas Keen to Bolster Iran Ties," *Tansim News*, December 12, 2014, http://www.tasnimnews.com/English/Home/Single/584122.

12   "Hamas Stresses Expansion of Ties with Iran," *Fars News Agency*, December 12, 2014, http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930921000206.

13 The official purpose of the delegation's visit was to take part in the twenty-eighth Islamic Unity Conference. At the end of the meeting, the Iranian deputy foreign minister said that "Iran's relations with the Hamas movement are strong." See Yoni Ben-Menachem, "Increasingly Close Relations between the Hamas Movement and Iran," *News 1*, January 8, 2015, http://www.news1.co.il/Archive/003-D-98872-00.html.

14 "Hamas Chief Likely to Visit Iran: Official," *Tansim News*, December 10, 2014, http://www.tasnimnews.com/english/Home/Single/584576.

15 Ahmad al-Amin, "Hamdan Yakad Tajawaz Khalafat Hamas wa-Iran," *Al Jazeera*, January 2, 2015, http://www.aljazeera.net/home/print/f6451603-4dff-4ca1-9c10-122741d17432/c0e6584b-0f91-438d-acd9-2ba1b69d5271.

16 Until now, few members of the Iranian leadership have made public statements regarding the renewal of relations with Hamas. Nasser al-Sudani, the head of the Palestine committee in the Iranian parliament, was quoted, however, in the Hamas journal *al-Risala* as saying that "even during the period of cooling in relations between Hamas and Tehran, Iran did not stop its military aid to Gaza. It now intends to strengthen relations and continue financial aid." Al-Sudani also was quoted as saying, "Iran considers Hamas as the front line in the struggle against Israel. The destruction of Israel will only be facilitated by arming the Palestinians, in the Occupied West Bank as well." See Amira Hass, "Iran Official Tells Hamas Daily: Willing to Arm West Bank Palestinians too," *Haaretz*, December 21, 2014, http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/.premium-1.632943.

17 Fatima Ahmad Alsmadi, "What is behind Hamas-Iran Rapprochement?" *Al Jazeera*, December 16, 2014, http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/12/hamas-iran-rapprochment-2014121694023735679.html.

18 Amir Bohbot, "After an Extended Rift: Iran Has Started Transferring Funds to Hamas," *Walla*, February 1, 2015, http://news.walla.co.il/item/2825109.

19 Abu Marzouk also stated that "what most saddens our brother Abu al-Walid [Khaled Mashal] in leaving Syria is the good relations that the Hamas movement has enjoyed with Bashar al-Assad and the Syrian regime for many years, which Hamas has not forgotten and on which Hamas has not turned its back. The movement is not leaving [its friend], but rather praises and thanks Syria." See "Abu Marzouk Raddan `ala al-Assad: Hamas Iltizamat al-Hiyad fi'l-Izmat al-Suriyya," *Palinfo*, December 21, 2014, http://www.palinfo.com/site/pic/newsdetails.aspx?itemid=168644.

20 According to the Israeli General Security Services, over the past two years, terrorist operatives from the Gaza Strip have expanded their activities aimed at carrying out attacks abroad, particularly in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. See "Terrorist Activity at the Inter-Regional Range," General Security Services, December 25, 2013, http://www.shabak.gov.il/publications/study/Pages/251213.aspx.

21 "Broad Hamas Military Infrastructure Thwarted in the West Bank," General Security Services, November 27, 2014, http://www.shabak.gov.il/publications/publications/pages/newitem271114.aspx.

22 Fatah spokesman Ahmed Assaf even referred to Hamas as "a contractor and mercenary of the Muslim Brotherhood." See Yoni Ben-Menachem, "Hamas Distancing Itself from Fatah and Thwarting Reconstruction in the Strip," *News 1*, November 23, 2014, http://www.news1.co.il/Archive/003-D-97641-00.html.

23 Although no organization claimed responsibility for the explosions and Hamas quickly distanced itself from the event, Fatah directed its accusations at Hamas, claiming that the attacks were meant to prevent a Fatah rally in memory of Yasser Arafat. See Avi Issascharoff, "To Prevent Rally for Arafat: Hamas Blows up Homes of Fatah Officials in Gaza," *Walla*, November 7, 2014, http://news.walla.co.il/item/2799740. On March 9, 2015, the Palestinian Authority arrested some fifty Hamas members in the West Bank. See Avi Issascharoff, "After the Calls to Halt Coordination as Well: PA Carries out Wave of Arrests among Hamas Activists," *Walla*, March 9, 2015, http://news.walla.co.il/item/2836426.

24 Yossi Melman, "Why Is Netanyahu Refusing to Reveal Documents from Government Meetings during the War?" *Maariv*, October 3, 2014, http://www.maariv.co.il/news/new.aspx?pn6Vq=11&0r9VQ=GGDEE. Saleh al-Arouri, a member of Hamas' political bureau, told the organization's journal *al-Risala* that, "the movement has no interest in starting a new campaign against Israel, but if one develops, the loss will be much greater than in Protective Edge." Al-Arouri also said that Hamas would not "create a war with the enemy, but if Israel forces war on us, we will fight and surprise them." See Jack Khoury, "Senior Hamas Official: We Have No Interest in Starting Another Clash with Israel," *Haaretz*, December 22, 2014, http://www.haaretz.co.il/misc/article-print-page/1.2518488.

25 Immediately following the end of the fighting on August 27, 2014, Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zahari said that, "Hamas' current priority is to rebuild the Strip, to rehabilitate the capabilities of 'resistance,' and to make political use of its military victory." See "News on Terrorism and the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict (August 26 – September 2, 2014)," Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, Israeli Intelligence Heritage and Commemoration Center, http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/he/articleprint.aspx?id=20709. At a Gaza conference of a research institute operating under the auspices of Hamas' security services, Marwan Issa, head of Hamas' military wing, said that, "the military wing has the ambition, the capability, and the belief to go all the way. We are not currently striving for a confrontation with Israel, but we are continuing to work to ensure that we are strong in every future confrontation." See Elior Levy, "Head of Hamas' Military Wing in Rare Public Statement: 'We Are Continuing

to Produce Rockets,'" *Ynet*, March 3, 2015, http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4632265,00.html.

26 Hamas continues to search for creative ways to smuggle weapons into the Gaza Strip and will do everything in its power to bring in diverse, high quality weaponry in order to replenish the stock of weapons at its disposal. At the same time, the measures taken by the Egyptian regime against the smuggling tunnels from the Sinai Peninsula into the Gaza Strip have posed significant difficulties to Hamas' "arms race." For example, on December 31, 2014, the governor of the northern Sinai Peninsula declared that Egypt would begin to expand its buffer zone with the Gaza Strip in the Rafah area, which extends a length of five kilometers to a depth of one kilometer. See Adnan Abu Amer, "Egypt's Buffer Zone Expansion Hurts Hamas' Arms Supplies," *Al-Monitor*, January 9, 2015, http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/01/egypt-buffer-zone-gaza-humanitarian-crisis-hamas.html#.

27 Jeremy Binnie, "IDF Detail the Damage Inflicted on Gaza Militants," *IHS Jane's Defense Weekly*, August 8, 2014, http://www.janes.com/article/41657/idf-detail-the-damage-inflicted-on-gaza-militants.

28 In four of the six infiltrations, Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigade fighters succeeded in engaging IDF forces, killing a total of eleven soldiers. The most successful tunnel attack took place on July 29, 2014, when a Hamas team successfully infiltrated an IDF post near Nahal Oz and killing five soldiers. In the course of these infiltrations, Hamas fighters did not succeed in abducting a live Israeli soldier or a soldier's body. See David Horovitz, "Israel Might Have Won; Hamas Certainly Lost," *Times of Israel*, August 6, 2014, http://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-might-have-won-hamas-certainly-lost/.

29 Gidi Weitz, "Hamas Has Three or Four More Still Unidentified Tunnels That Reach Kibbutzim in the Gaza Envelope," *Haaretz*, September 4, 2014, http://www.haaretz.co.il/misc/iphone-article/.premium-1.2424697.

30 "Tunnel Work in Gaza Resumes," *MEMRI*, October 26, 2014, http://www.memri.org.il/cgi-webaxy/sal/sal.pl?lang=he&ID=107345_memri&act=show&dbid=articles&dataid=3727. Palestinian sources in Gaza have said that the emergence of a black market for cement brought into Gaza via Israel enabled the organization to successfully acquire cement for military uses, such as casting concrete slabs used as siding for the attack tunnels. See Elior Levy, "Hamas Rebuilds Attack Tunnels with Cement from Israel," *Ynet*, December 19, 2014, http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4605402,00.html.

31 Residents also left as a result of the firing of rockets and the mortar shells throughout the war.

32 This statement was made during an assembly of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades held in Gaza in late November 2014. See Melman, "Why Is Netanyahu Refusing to Reveal Documents from the Government Meetings during the War?"

33 Jonathan D. Halevy, "The Attack Tunnels as a Strategic Weapon in the Hands of Hamas," The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, August 3, 2014, http://jcpa.org.il/חמ-בידי-אסטרטגי-כנשק-ההתקפיות-המנהרות/2014/08/.

34 According to data provided by the IDF spokesperson, 3,417 rockets landed in open areas inside Israel, 224 landed in built-up areas inside Israel, 188 landed inside the Gaza Strip, and 735 were intercepted by the Iron Dome system.

35 Sapir Peretz-Zilberman, "US and European Airlines Have Halted Flights to Israel," *Globes*, July 22, 2014, http://globes.co.il/news/article.aspx?did=1000957389.

36 Jeffrey White, "The Combat Performance of Hamas in the Gaza War of 2014," *CTC Sentinel*, September 29, 2014, https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/the-combat-performance-of-hamas-in-the-gaza-war-of-2014.

37 Ashraf Al-Hur, "Isra'il Takud Itlaq Nashata Hamas Saruhan Tajribiyyan min Ghaza tujaha al-Bahr," *al-Quds al-Arabi*, October 23, 2014; Yoav Zitun and Elior Levy, "Hamas is Picking up the Pace: Four Rockets Fired into the Sea in the Past Two Days," *Ynet*, November 20, 2014, http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4594119,00.html.

38 According to official Israeli sources, since September 16, 2014, Hamas has fired dozens of long-range rockets that landed at sea and detected by the Iron Dome radar system. See "Hamas is Rebuilding Attack Tunnels and Launching a New Generation of Rockets," *Ynet*, January 19, 2015, http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4616781,00.html.

39 "The Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades' Weapons and Units," *MEMRI*, September 2, 2014, http://www.memri.org/report/en/print8132.htm.

40 T.X. Hammes, "Israel and the Demise of 'Mowing the Grass,'" *War on the Rocks*, August 19, 2014, http://warontherocks.com/2014/08/israel-and-the-demise-of-mowing-the-grass.

41 Daniel Cohen and Danielle Levin, "Operation Protective Edge: The Cyber Defense Perspective," in *Lessons of Operation Protective Edge*, eds. Kurz and Brom, pp. 59-64.

42 For example, in August 2014, the Israeli General Security Services revealed that it had detained a Hamas operative by the name of Majdi Mafarja who, during interrogation, admitted to having been recruited and trained in Malaysia for carrying out cyberattacks and encrypting letters. See Amir Bohbot, "Permitted for Publication: Hamas Terrorist Network Planning to Topple the PA Uncovered," *Walla*, August 19, 2014, http://news.walla.co.il/item/2776711.

43 Cohen and Levin, "Operation Protective Edge: The Cyber Defense Perspective"; Tal Pavel, "Past, Present, and Future: Hamas' Online Activity during Operation Protective Edge," *Calcalist*, August 17, 2014, http://m.calcalist.co.il/internet/articles/0.7340.L-3638550.00.html.

44 Cohen and Levin, "Operation Protective Edge: The Cyber Defense Perspective."

45 This doctrine is based on three lines of defense. The first line of defense is located approximately one kilometer from the border fence and is meant to serve as a "kill zone" for IDF ground forces, consisting of explosive devices, landmines, and mortar fire among other means. Its aim is to delay the IDF forces from entering the Gaza Strip and cause as many casualties as possible. Located on the outskirts of the major cities of Gaza City, Khan Younis, and Rafah, the second line of defense aims to prevent the IDF from entering these cities, with mortar fire, high-trajectory weapons fire, anti-tank missile fire, sniper fire, and other means. The third line of defense is located within the cities themselves, and relies upon the extensive network of tunnels dug by Hamas, from which fighters emerge to engage in ambushes, abduction attempts, sniper fire missions, and booby trapping of houses. See Yoram Cohen and Jeffrey White, "Hamas in Combat: The Military Performance of the Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement," *Policy Focus, Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, no. 97, October 2009, http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/hamas-in-combat-the-military-performance-of-the-palestinian-islamic-resista.

46 Yiftah Shapir, "Rocket Warfare in Operation Protective Edge," in *Lessons of Operation Protective Edge*, eds, Kurz and Brom, pp. 43-50.

47 The saturation point was not publicized by the manufacturer of the system.

48 At the time of writing, it has been publicized that there are nine Iron Dome batteries in Israel.

49 Shapir, "Rocket Warfare in Operation Protective Edge."

50 Yiftah Shapir, "Lessons from the Iron Dome," *Military and Strategic Affairs* 5 no.1 (May 2013): 81-94.

51 Such rocket fire could originate from Hizbollah in Lebanon and Syria, Palestinian organizations in southern Lebanon, or radical Islamic groups in the Sinai Peninsula. See "Operation Protective Edge: Update No. 7," Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, Israeli Intelligence Heritage and Commemoration Center, July 17, 2014, http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/he/articleprint.aspx?id=20678.

52 At the conclusion of Operation Protective Edge, Hamas reported having launched two rockets at an Israeli gas production facility located approximately nineteen miles off the coast of Gaza. The IDF spokesman neither confirmed nor denied this report. See Simon Henderson, "Rocket Fire on Israeli Gas Platforms Could Escalate Gaza Fighting," *Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, August 20, 2014, http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/rocket-fire-on-israeli-gas-platforms-could-escalate-gaza-fighting.

53 Two exceptions were senior brigade commanders from Hamas' military wing, Raed al-Attar, commander of the Rafah region, and Muhammad Abu Shamaleh, commander of the southern Gaza Strip, both who were killed on August 21, 2014, forty-six days after the beginning of the operation. An attempt was also made on the life of Muhammad Deif, the head of Hamas'

military wing, although at the time of writing his fate was still unclear. See Yoav Zitun and Ilana Curiel, "This is How Senior Hamas Officials Were Assassinated: Documentation of the Bombing," *Ynet*, August 21 2014, http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4561803,00.html.

54 Hamas organized its military force in a hierarchal manner and divided it into brigades and battalions, with each brigade possessing artillery (rockets and mortars), anti-tank, engineering, infantry, and air defense units, similar to the structure of Hizbollah's military force. Each unit possesses autonomous operative capability.

55 White, "The Combat Performance of Hamas"; Raphael Cohen and Gabriel Scheinmann, "The Grim Lessons of Protective Edge," *The American Interest,* August 31, 2014, http://www.the-american-interest.com/2014/08/31/the-grim-lessons-of-protective-edge/; Robert Beckhusen, "Hamas' Battle Tactics Are Getting Better," *War Is Boring*, October 9, 2014, https://medium.com/war-is-boring/hamas-battle-tactics-are-getting-better-940415d29b38.

56 Although the Iron Dome can intercept mortar shells in practice, the IDF chooses not to launch intercepting missiles at mortar shells and to direct them at rockets alone as a result of the extremely high cost of the system's intercepting missiles.

57 As of July 30, 2014, the Trench Coat system had intercepted anti-tank missiles fired against fifteen Merkava Mark IV tanks of the 401st Armored Brigade. See Amir Bohbot, "fifteen Tanks Saved: Iron Dome over the Tanks in Gaza," *Walla*, July 30, 2014, http://news.walla.co.il/item/2770561.

58 Noah Browning, "Hamas Guerrilla Tactics are Tailored to Israel's Ground War," *Reuters*, July 23, 2014 http://www.businessinsider.com/hamas-guerrilla-tactics-are-tailored-to-israels-ground-war-2014-7.

59 IDF forces thwarted the attempted infiltration of the Hamas naval commandos at Zikim Beach on the second day of Operation Protective Edge. See Shachar Ruppin, "Attack of the Hamas Naval Commandos Thwarted," IDF website, July 9, 2014, http://www.idf.il/1133-20887-he/Dover.aspx . See also Alex Fishman, "An Alternative to the Terror Tunnels from the Strip: Attacks from the Sea," *Yedioth Ahronoth*, March 12, 2015.

60 The exercise was conducted on the ruins of the former Jewish settlements of Nisanit and Dugit. See Amir Bohbot, "Hamas Conducts Its Largest Military Exercise since Operation Protective Edge," *Walla*, December 18, 2014, http://news.walla.co.il/item/2811759.

61 The National Security forces are one of the internal security services operating under the auspices of Hamas in the Gaza Strip. The exercise was conducted at a training facility of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades in the southern Gaza Strip. On December 27, 2014, Hamas' military wing also publicized a video of ten armed members simulating an attack on IDF positions near the border with Israel, the abduction of a soldier from one position, and of bodies of other soldiers from another position. See "Exercises Conducted by Hamas and the National Security Forces Simulated

the Conquest of an IDF Position near the Strip and a Soldier's Abduction," Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, Israeli Intelligence Heritage and Commemoration Center, December 29, 2014, http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/he/article/20750.

62 Preparations for establishing this force began less than one month after the conclusion of Operation Protective Edge, with a call by the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades to mobilize as many civilian volunteers as possible for the "Popular Army." Volunteers underwent a basic military course, which included primarily learning how to fire various types of weapons. See "Media elements associated with Hamas recently reported that the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades have started preparations to establish what is referred to as a 'popular army.'" Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, Israeli Intelligence Heritage and Commemoration Center, September 30, 2014, http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/he/articleprint.aspx?id=20716.

63 "Hamas: We Will Establish a Popular Army to Liberate the Al-Aqsa Mosque," *Maariv*, November 8, 2014, http://www.maariv.co.il/news/new.aspx?pn6Vq=E&0r9VQ=GIGHM.

64 "Hamas Presents the First Battalion of the Popular Army, which is Meant to Assist Members of the Military Wing during a Clash with Israel," Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, Israeli Intelligence Heritage and Commemoration Center, September 30, 2014, http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/he/article/20727.

65 Gabi Siboni, "Military Lessons for Hamas from Operation Protective Edge," *Israel Defense*, July 13, 2015, http://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/content/military-lessons-hamas-operation-protective-edge. Although this is not a new doctrine, and was already used during previous rounds of fighting, it was improved and expanded upon during Operation Protective Edge.

66 On July 8, 2014, in an interview with al-Aqsa TV, Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zahari called for civilians of the Gaza Strip to serve as human shields against attacks of the Israeli air force. Abu Zahari mentioned an attack that had taken place that day on the home of a Palestinian family during which civilians stood before Israeli fighter planes in order to "defend their homes and their rights with their blood and a bare chest." Abu Zahari maintained that "this method has already proven itself to be effective against the occupation," and, on behalf of the Hamas movement, called on the inhabitants to "adopt" it. See "Hamas Spokesman Encourages Gazans to Serve as Human Shields: It's Been Proven Effective," *MEMRI TV*, July 8, 2014, http://www.memritv.org/clip/en/4340.htm.

67 "During Operation Protective Edge, Hamas Again Used Civilians as Human Shields To Prevent an Attack on the Home of a Terrorist Activist by the Israeli Air Force," Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, Israeli Intelligence Heritage and Commemoration Center, July 7, 2014, http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/he/article/20669.

The Strategy for Integrating the Private Sector in National Cyber Defense in Israel

Shmuel Even

In February 2015, the Israeli government approved the establishment of the National Cyber Defense Authority, which will constitute the state's operational arm for the defense of the civilian sphere against cyber threats. One of the state's challenges is to integrate the private sector in this activity, both as the main consumer of defense and as a participant in the defense system. This article proposes a strategy for the state's handling of this problem. In general, it is proposed that the state will defend the national cyberspace up to the organizational entry point, through close involvement with the organizations that generate cyberspace (computer companies, Internet providers). This will reduce the risk of cyberattacks affecting organizations and private homes. It is also recommended that the state should expand its involvement in the individual protection of organizations critical to the functioning of the private sector, establish national priorities, and also increase supervision, guidance, and incentives for those dealing in cyber defense in this sector.

Keywords: cyber defense, national security, Israel, strategy, civilian sector

Background

Israel regards threats in cyberspace with the utmost seriousness. Commenting on this question, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in February 2015, "Cyber threats can paralyze nations. This is a strategic threat that can paralyze and hurt no less than other threats in various fields and we must be prepared for it on the national and international levels."[1] This statement was made in the context of the government decision to establish

Dr. Shmuel Even is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies.

the National Cyber Defense Authority, "which will have overall national responsibility for cyber defense and which will be gradually established over a three-year period."[2]

This decision, together with the rapid development of cyberspace in the past twenty years in every field of endeavor, raises the question of what the state's responsibility in cyber defense should be, and how the state should fulfill that responsibility. The point of departure for this discussion is that the interpretation of what happens in cyberspace and the government's responsibility for it is analogous to what has been done so far in the three-dimensional physical world and in the electromagnetic field on which cyberspace is based (hereafter, "physical space"), while making adjustments for the uniqueness of cyberspace, as we understand it.[3] As a rule, the state should bear responsibility for the defense of national interests, the needs of the population and the economy, and daily life in the country; the same is true in cyberspace. The problem is that the government currently exercises this responsibility in an extremely limited fashion in the private sector, which constitutes the vast majority of the population and the economy.[4] The private sector itself bears most of the burden for cyber defense, in contrast to other operational spheres on land, in the air, and on the sea, in which the security forces play a dominant role in the defense of the country. In an analogy to physical space, cyberspace resembles a situation in which every individual defends himself with locks and bars, but the state is not prepared to help him defend the roads that lead to his attack.

This article proposes a strategy to integrate the defense of Israel's national cyberspace with its private sector. Part A presents the basic data and a portrayal of the situation. Part B makes recommendations for a strategy to integrate the private sector and the defense of national cyberspace in Israel. Part C recommends that priorities be determined for government intervention in the private sector within the framework of this strategy.

Part A
Basic Data and Portrayal of the Situation

The Risks in Cyberspace for the State and the Private Sector

The greatest risks of the state in cyberspace are attacks against the defense establishment, government, civilian infrastructure, and the business sector by enemy countries, terrorist organizations, and nationalist organizations for the purpose of espionage, disruption, or destruction. The many threats

and actual damage have become an acute national problem and are liable to have a profound effect on the state and the economy, including damage to governability, infrastructure, the supply of goods and services, growth, employment, and so forth. Reports of an Iranian cyberattack against Aramco, the Saudi Arabian national oil company, using the Shamoon virus in August 2012, highlighted the fact that Israel's enemies also have powerful cyber weapons.[5]

In the private sector the most common risks are cyberattacks against economic targets in order to engage in business espionage, embezzlement, fraud, and so forth as perpetrated by criminal parties, competitors, hostile employees, and information thieves. Agencies, companies of foreign governments, and agents on their behalf also commonly steal information. Business espionage in cyberspace at the national level deprives the country of its own intellectual property; Israel is exposed to this risk because it has a great deal of knowledge and intellectual property, especially in the high-tech sector, upon which economic growth is based.[6] In both the governmental and private sectors, the malfunctioning of computer systems (for example, when software is being replaced) or infrastructure used by those systems (e.g., power blackouts, communications malfunctions) is a frequent risk. Another risk in both sectors is damage caused by natural disasters, fires, and floods.

The "Cyber Defense" Concept

In 2015, Israel shifted from the concept of "security," as reflected in the "National Information Security Agency" to the concept of "defense," as reflected in the "National Cyber Defense Authority," indicating a changing attitude in this field. The concept of defense reflects massive and effective actions, in contrast to "security," which is a lighter and more passive action. Organizations in the private sector, however, still customarily use the concept of security, such as in the title "information and cybersecurity."

The defense of cyberspace or cybersecurity in organizations (hereafter, "cyber defense") can be defined as an array of operations designed to defend the organization and the state against the leaking of classified information through computer systems, damage to computer activity and equipment, and damage to embedded computer systems (power plants, control towers, and so forth) using computer systems. The computer system itself may not be damaged in an attack. Cyber defense refers to both the defense of

cyberspace and its contents, and the defense of cyberspace against attacks passing through that space.

Cyber defense includes logical and physical defense of all types of networks and computer systems, together with their contents: the tools, technologies, data, storage components, and the links between these; the identities of the users; maintaining the ability to function − "business continuity" − in a situation of a cyber event (attack, malfunction, natural disaster); and the ability to return to full functioning as rapidly as possible after a cyber event. Cyber defense is also needed against remote (Internet) or medium-range (connectivity to wireless networks in an organization) cyberattacks, and against attacks from close range (physical connectivity to an organizational network, use of a collaborator within the organization, and the theft of computer equipment).

Information and cybersecurity in an organization combines two fields: logical defense of the computer systems and their content using software; and physical defense of the information, hardware, work environment, printed computer output, authorized access to information systems, authorization to enter the work space, telecommunications closets, and the building. Defense includes checking the reliability of the employees, training, and controlling the access to the computer systems. Defense of cyberspace means from inside and out, and of embedded computer systems. Simultaneously, the traditional physical information security that is not in cyberspace should of course continue.

The definition of the cyber defense concept was designed to create the broadest possible common denominator of the activities and interests of the various players in the government and private sectors. The distinctions listed above are important for the division of responsibility between the state and organizations in the cyber defense sphere. Some of these distinctions are used for internal organizational work between the information security manager, the security officer, and the human resources manager.

The Attribution Problem: Who Did It?

Addressing any problem requires knowledge of its origin. Due to the nature of cyberspace, it is difficult to prove the identity of the party to which an event can be attributed, whether it is a criminal attacker, a hostile country, or a malfunction. The context is also important, as it determines the extent of the state's involvement in dealing with the event and compensating those injured, as can be deduced from the physical world (for example,

compensation for victims of terrorism and war damages). In more than a few cases, a comprehensive investigation can determine the cause of the event, the circumstances of the event, the attack signature, the method of operation, the way the operation was conducted, the tools used in the attack, the targets, and so forth. Even if this identification is not solid enough to meet a legal test, it can be enough to determine policy.

Right to Privacy in Cyberspace

The right to privacy in cyberspace, an extensive legal and ethical issue involving relations between government and individuals and between individuals and each other, has attracted a great deal of public attention.[7] For the sake of this discussion, it should be noted that state institutions are legally barred from operating freely in the IT systems of civilians and organizations, particularly in routine situations. This is one of the reasons why it is difficult to employ military cyber capabilities to battle in the local civilian cyberspace (in contrast, for example, to airspace). The agencies authorized to do so, such as the Israel Police and the Israel Security Agency, must do so in a limited fashion, and in accordance with the law. At the same time, the development of technologies, such as the ability to spot anomalies in cyberspace, make it easier to identify abnormal cyber events, even without using the particulars of personal information.

Characteristics of the Private Sector in Cyberspace

The private sector is the largest group in the country, and includes corporations and private business owners, public corporations not under government control, and civilians using cyberspace for their various needs. The private sector generates the state's income from taxes and foreign currency, and also is the principal supplier of goods, services, employment, social activity, and so on. Without correctly managing the opportunities and risks in cyberspace, many companies will have difficulty in achieving their goals; some will lose their ability to compete, and will vanish from the market. It is therefore important to reduce the private sector's exposure to the risks of cyber events, such as attacks, espionage, malfunctions; and disasters.

Private sector organizations whose activity relies almost completely on cyberspace are prominent. These include the financial sector, such as banks, insurance companies, investment houses, and credit card companies, and organizations that generate cyberspace, namely companies that provide

computer services, communications, Internet services, and information security, as well as knowledge-intensive industries. Cyberspace has rendered the banks a strategic target for attack because the "production floor" and its products have become digital, with the world no longer operating on the basis of paper money. In these organizations, which are based completely on digital information, reconstruction of databases (including the backup systems) following damage is difficult, and sometimes totally impossible.

One example of a cyberattack on a financial system is the cyber break-in and theft of credit card particulars of about 40 percent of the residents of South Korea in January 2014. Thirty senior officials in various financial companies resigned following this event.[8] Another example is a cyberattack that was attributed to Iran and was carried out in late 2012 against dozens of American banks, but without long-lasting damage.[9] At this stage, there has been no known case of a bank collapsing as a result of a cyberattack (other than financial fraud committed by people on the inside using the organizational cyberspace). At the same time, it should be kept in mind that organizations do not have any interest in exposing damage from cyberattacks, due to fear that their reputations will be affected.

Together with this, the cyber threat to strategic organizations with physical infrastructure and production facilities prone to attacks using kinetic warfare has also increased. These include power plants; cement, food, pharmaceutical, and chemical factories; transportation and energy organizations, and so on. For example, following the cyberattack using the Shamoon virus, the Saudi Arabian oil company Aramco had to replace its computer systems (30,000 work stations and 2,000 servers).[10] The damage caused was heavy, but the company was able to return to full operation.

The private sector organizations defend themselves at the unit level, and not at the system level. Their organizational cyber defense strategy includes: designing the organizational cyberspace for defense, such as creating a secured inter-organizational network; preventing penetration into the organizational cyberspace from outside (the Internet) and from inside (workstations, connection points, employee loyalty); in the event of penetration, locating and neutralizing the penetrator, and restricting the penetrator's movement using tools in the defense system; managing cyberattacks; implementing a plan for business continuity in crisis events, restoration, and return to full functioning, learning lessons from the event, and strengthening defense.

The private sector has a number of roles in the national defense system. Its first role is as a consumer of cyber defense. Its second role is as a passive participant in the defense system by defending itself, monitoring traffic in its sphere (subject to regulatory provisions and privacy restrictions), and reporting attacks against it. Its third role is participating actively in defense through the industries and services sector in the information and cybersecurity realm.

Factors that Expedite and Delay Cyber Defense in the Private Sector

The general trend in the private sector is towards an increased awareness of cybersecurity; however, this sector is not uniform. The progress of cyber defense in an organization is dictated by delaying and expediting factors. It is important for the government to recognize these factors if it wishes to lessen the effect of the delaying factors and enhance that of the expediting factors.

The factors that expedite cyber defense in the private sector are numerous, and there is a need to protect the company's business activity and profits against the growing cyber risks (the primary interest). Direct exposure to cyber events, media coverage of the subject, and marketing efforts by cybersecurity companies also expedite cyber defense. Regulation, including existing regulatory instructions for information and cybersecurity in the financial sector and "guided concerns," as well as the establishment of functions for information and cybersecurity in organizations, all generate systematic activity and increased awareness. The overlap between the responses to a cyberattack and to traditional risks, such as averting computer malfunctions, preventing fraud and embezzlement, and ensuring data security, makes it possible to respond to several risks for the same cost. The development of risk management in organizations also contributes to the management of information and cybersecurity risks.

Many factors delay cyber defense in the private sector. Cyber defense incurs major financial costs that detract from the organization's profit and/ or compete with other items in the organizational budget. Defense systems are sometimes perceived as a burden on the operational business activity: they slow down operational systems, introduce bothersome complex passwords, make it difficult to retrieve information, and are also not very user-friendly. The prevention is passive, and when it is successful, it does not necessarily win recognition even when organizations have software

programs that detect and thwart attacks. The threat of damage in cyberspace is just another risk that an organization must manage, like the danger of losing market share, financial risks, risks of failing to comply with regulation, operational risks, and so forth. Regulation is burdensome − in certain cases, an organization is liable to act not out of belief in the regulation, but rather out of fulfilling a duty, and this is sometimes at the expense of more important defense measures. Organizations also express concern about damaging their reputations as a result of reporting cyberattacks.

Government Organizations Dealing with Civilian Cyber Defense

Israel's defense concept is based primarily on the IDF, with other security forces operating alongside it. Like other armies in democratic countries, the IDF is limited in its ability to operate in the cybersphere of the civilian sector. At the same time, analogous to physical space, it can be assumed that the IDF, and also the Mossad, have roles in defending the nation's cyberspace against enemies outside the country in the following ways: deterring enemies and rivals against cyberattacks by maintaining an ability to respond;[11] providing intelligence alerts to the local defense system about external cyberattacks; engaging in counter-operations against attacks originating outside the country; engaging in counter-attacks against the sources of the attack, or as a result of the attack.

The Security Forces

The intelligence organizations operating within the country, such as the Israel Security Agency (ISA), play a key role in the defense system against cyberattacks, including counter-actions and active operations. According to the ISA cyber defense department, "The struggle to defend Israel's critical infrastructure entities against cyberattacks is accompanied by a war of minds . . . the walls are definitely inadequate. Stratagems are also needed, as well as the use of double agents and other creative Internet inventions."[12]

The National Information Security Agency

The National Information Security Agency, which the government decided to establish in December 2002, operates within the framework of the ISA. Its job is defined as "being responsible for professional instruction for the guided agencies under its responsibility in the field of critical computer infrastructure security against threats of terrorism and sabotage in the area of classified information, and against threats of espionage and exposure."[13] The

National Information Security Agency instructs at least thirty-seven civilian entities in the government and private sectors, which are liable to attacks that could cause severe damage to the country. These include, among others, Israel Railways, Mekorot Water Company, the cellular companies, Israel Electric Corporation, Bezeq – the Israeli telecommunications corporation, El Al Israel Airlines, and Zim Integrated Shipping Services. Bezeq, El Al, and Zim are former government companies that were privatized.

The National Cyber Bureau
The National Cyber Bureau was founded in January 2012 in the Prime Minister's Office. Its main task is to be "a bureau for the prime minister, the government and its committees that recommends national policy in the cyber realm and promotes its implementation, subject to all law and decisions by the cabinet." The Bureau in effect bears overall responsibility for the cyber realm, including cyber defense. In this framework, the Bureau is responsible for carrying out situational assessments of civilian cyber defense; formulating policy; constituting a regulatory agency in cyber defense fields; and composing and publishing alerts, information, and instructions to the public on this subject.[14]

The National Cyber Defense Authority
As noted, the cabinet approved the establishment of the National Cyber Defense Authority on February 15, 2015. According to the cabinet press release, "The authority will oversee cyber defense actions so as to provide a comprehensive response against cyber-attacks including dealing with threats and events in real time. The authority will also operate an assistance center – a Cyber Event Readiness Team – for dealing with cyber threats to strengthen the resilience of organizations and sectors in the economy . . . The authority and the bureau will constitute a single national cyber directorate in the Prime Minister's Office, led by head of the National Cyber Bureau Dr. Eviatar Matania."[15] On the same occasion, the cabinet approved a number of policy measures to be carried out by the National Cyber Defense Authority in the future, including a plan to organize the cyber defense services market, including relevant professionals, products, and services; regulation of the evaluation of cyber defense within economic organizations, to be based on existing regulators; and a plan to assist economic organizations and provide incentive mechanisms designed to bolster their readiness for cyberattacks.

The Unit for Government Cyber Defense
On February 15, 2015, it was also decided to establish a unit for government cyber defense to offer professional guidance and directives for the government as a whole. The unit will also establish a government security operations center to operate in the event of cyber threats.[16]

The Bank of Israel and the Ministry of Finance
The Bank of Israel and the Ministry of Finance issue regulations to the financial sector, including in the cyber realm. The banks are regulated by the supervisor of banks. The insurance companies and other financial concerns are regulated by the Ministry of Finance.[17] In 2012, the Bank of Israel set up a unit responsible for the banks' operational risks, headed by technology and information security risks.[18] In early 2014, the Bank of Israel approved the founding of a joint center for cyber defense in the banks, to be coordinated under Shva (Automated Banking Services), a company controlled by the banks. At the same time, the Bank of Israel issued a draft circular to the banks on the subject of cyber risk management, requiring the banks to explain in detail how they were dealing with cyber threats, including formulating a strategy; establishment of a cyber defense system; restriction of access to information systems; development of a cyberwar room; reporting of cyberattacks to the Bank of Israel; and so forth.[19]

Israel Law, Information, and Technology Authority
The Ministry of Justice established the Israel Law, Information, and Technology Authority (ILITA) in September 2006. ILITA's goals are to strengthen the protection of personal information, regulate and supervise the use of the electronic signatures, and enhance enforcement of the laws against invasions of privacy. ILITA also serves as a knowledge center for legislation, and for projects with technological aspects, such as E-Government.[20]

The Israel Police
In November 2012, the police commissioner declared the establishment of a new cyber warfare unit. The declaration came on the heels of growing attempts by hostile parties to conduct online attacks on computer infrastructure in Israel and the spread of cybercrime.[21]

The Common Interests in Cyber Defense of the Government and the Private Sector

In general, the government and the private sector have a common interest in reducing cyber risks and dealing successfully with various types of cyber events. At the same time, each of the parties emphasizes different aspects of cyber defense. The government bears general responsibility for state security. Although it wishes to maximize defense, it is subject to a given budget, which dictates priorities, with a preference for national security above personal security. This includes the effect of a cyber event on the public interest, as government intervention will be greater when a larger number of people is affected by the cyber event.

Organizations in the private sector have an interest in reducing cyber risks to a level acceptable to their management and shareholders, taking into account the cost-benefit ratio while also complying with the regulatory requirements (existing in the financial sector, for example). Private companies in compliance with the law bear limited liability, if any, for damage that a country might suffer as a result of a cyber event, especially when it is an enemy attack. The private sector is concerned first and foremost with criminal actions, such as business espionage, outside crime, embezzlement and fraud by employees and suppliers, and cyber malfunctions that affect companies' functioning. Major fraud or a serious malfunction in a company is a greater risk than that of a cyberattack by the country's enemies, which is a collective problem of the entire business sector, and for which the government bears responsibility.

As mentioned, the situation for the government is the reverse. The government is more worried about a cyberattack by enemies, for which its responsibility is regarded as greater in comparison to a malfunction in a specific company causing damage on a similar scale. Nevertheless, the government and the private sector share a range of risks in the cyber field as well as many defense solutions unrelated to the type of attack and identity of the attacker, so that cooperation between the parties is necessary in any case. Each party has relative advantages in support of cooperation. For example, the government has an advantage in intelligence; broad connections with local organizations and foreign countries;[22] overall perspective; and organizational and regulatory capability to coordinate between all the players for the purpose of setting up and operating an optimal defense system. Organizations in the private sector, on the other hand, have numerous computer resources (in which sensors and defense systems can be placed,

within the legal restrictions); the ability to provide the government with information and indications about attacks; technological capabilities needed to create means of defense; broad access to communications systems in the country; and an "army" of civilian cyber personnel who can be harnessed for the common goals.

One obstacle to full cooperation between the government and the private sector is that private organizations do not want to expose their cyberspace to government agencies ("Big Brother"), among other things, because of the need to maintain the privacy of their customers, suppliers, and employees, and due to the concern that their reputation will be damaged by reporting a cyber event. This is particularly true when the state does not offer them significant assistance in exchange. It can be assumed that the private sector expects the state to improve the level of nationwide cybersecurity without imposing any additional costs.

Part B
A Strategy to Integrate the Private Sector in National Cyber Defense

Deep structural change in the Internet and government regulation of internet traffic for the purpose of protecting society might dramatically change cyber defense; in the meanwhile, the state must find cyber defense solutions that can be implemented in the Internet. The goal of the strategy proposed here is to integrate the private sector in national cyber defense, both as a consumer of cyber defense and as a participant in the cyber defense system, in order to create optimal protection for the national cyberspace, while efficiently utilizing national resources.

Principles of the Strategy

Perimeter and Regional Defense in Cyberspace

The objective is for the state to create an optimally protected national cyberspace,[23] up until the "organizational point of entry," just as the state ensures, for example, a stable supply of electricity, clean water, well-paved roads, transportation, and so forth. This approach requires the state to give priority to entry points and nodes of Israeli cyber infrastructure; this includes instructing and closely supervising communications companies and Internet access providers in order to reduce the likelihood of remote attacks on cyber systems in organizations and people's homes. The objective

is that cyber generators in the country will not merely defend themselves, but also will thwart attacks. The state will also augment its supervision of computer companies, information security services, and more in order to improve cybersecurity in general, including within the organizational cyberspace.

The State's involvement in Cyber Defense of Private Sector Organizations
The state will seek to improve the organizational cyber defense in private sector organizations, which exert a great influence on national security (in the civilian and defense spheres), in accordance with the priorities established. The state's involvement in instructing and aiding private organizations for the purpose of defense against extraordinary security and civilian threats will form another layer in their regular defense system currently used to cope with high-priority civilian threats (criminal activities, malfunctions).

A General Effort to Strengthen Defense in the Private Sector
The state will seek to strengthen the expediting factors and weaken the delaying factors in the development of cyber defense in the private sector. The state will employ regulation sparingly, after prior consultation with this sector. At the same time, it will provide special services and information based on economies of scale, an overall perspective, acquired expertise, and access to intelligence information and sensitive technologies (within the restrictions of information security). The state will recommend defense systems and methods to the private sector, provide warnings, advise, and even intervene in a crisis, all according to the priorities to be established. To complete the picture, the state will continue its national passive and active cyber defense operations.

Directions for Action

The directions for action in the proposed strategy are as follows:

1. *Mapping the national cyberspace and conducting a comprehensive risk survey of the private sector in cyberspace.* The various economic sectors and the connection between them should be researched in this framework. The risk factors should be analyzed, and the critical routes and points typical of each sector, and those shared by all should be identified. The survey will include the use of penetration checks, so that high priority can also be assigned to defend small companies at nodes that are critical

for national defense. In addition, lessons should be learned from the experience of other countries.

2. *Setting priorities for the State's involvement in cyber defense in the private sector*. The priorities will be set according to criteria formulated by the state in cooperation with the private sector. The priorities will be reflected in the level of the state's involvement in organizations in the private sector under various scenarios.

3. *Preparation of a work plan to reduce cyber risks*. This work plan will maximize the total planned national spending on cyber defense and the budgets allocated by the state for this purpose. The plan will include the private sector.

4. *Arranging responsibility, authority, and coordination between the government institutions and organizations dealing in cyber defense*. Given the list of governmental agencies relevant to civilian cyber defense and their tasks, it is proposed to determine or refresh the definition of the fields of responsibility of these agencies, the substance of the connections between them, and their connection to the private sector from a system-wide perspective. For example, the division of work and synergy between the ISA, National Cyber Bureau, and the National Cyber Defense Authority should be determined, as well as the role of the Ministry of Communications, under which the cyberspace generators operate, and the mechanism for clarifying disputes between the agencies.

5. *Arranging the responsibility, authority, and coordination between the organizations for external security dealing in cyber warfare.* It needs to be determined the agency responsible for the alert chain in cyberspace, which includes collection, research, generating of warnings, and their dissemination.

6. *The force of regulation.* Regulation should be simple, easy to enforce, and should have clear cost-benefit value. Excessive regulation in the private sector is liable to create additional costs that will detract from profit and jeopardize the survival of companies. The levels of damage that the state and the economy will suffer as a result of an attack on a specific organization will affect the force of regulation according to the priorities set. It is best to make cyber defense an exception in the antitrust field, so that business companies from the same sector can share information among themselves and cooperate in the area of cyber defense.

7. *Responsibility of private sector towards government.* The responsibility of the private sector towards the government needs to be established, for example, by reporting penetration of the organizational cyberspace to the authorities, suppliers, customers, and consumers under relevant circumstances.

8. *Providing incentives to companies and organizations for cyber defense.* Among other things, this includes subsidizing the monitoring of penetrations of the defense systems in organizations; consultation on policy and defense methods; acquisition of defense products recommended by the state; and support for companies developing special products and services for cyber defense.

9. *Setting standards for improved cyber defense.* Supervision, guidance, and incentives concerning cyber defense for businesses in the private sector should be stepped up. Companies providing cyber defense consultation, services, and tools should be checked and authorized.[24]

10. *Easing of bureaucratic restrictions.* The bureaucratic restrictions delaying cyber defense operations should be eased. The establishment of a national computer emergency response team (CERT) is a basic need that has been recognized for years, but the setup process reached the bidding stage only in 2015.

11. *Positioning the status of CERT.* Action should be taken so that the computer emergency response team becomes the link between the state and the private sector for the two-way transfer of information in the cyber field. CERT should provide a high added value to the private sector, and should be available in crisis conditions, so that it is perceived as a useful agency.

12. *Improved capability of organizations and the state in cyber defense in the private sector.* This should be subject to democratic values by means of legislative amendments; guidance for the private sector, such as having the employees sign a consent form concerning the company's intention to monitor their work stations; and increased use of technologies for spotting anomalies without exposing private content.

Part C
Setting Priorities for Government Involvement in the Private Sector

The need to set basic priorities for government involvement in cyber defense is important, due to the constraints of the state's resources. The concrete priorities will also be affected by situational assessments based on regular risk surveys, intelligence information, and other factors. The general principle is that the state has a special interest in cyber defense within the private sector in two situations: when there is a risk of a system-wide event that could negatively affect the entire country (economy, population, and so forth), and when there is a risk of an attack by an enemy. The government will give great attention to a risk involving both of these situations, and the most effective way of handling this risk will be the government's top priority.

The three main criteria for priority in government involvement in cyber defense in the private sector are the estimated expected damage,[25] the cause of the risk (an attack by an enemy or criminal enterprise, malfunction, disaster), and the cost of reducing the risk (in terms of time and money), compared with the expected damage. The basic priorities for cyber defense are examined below according to each of the criteria. The details presented (i.e., which type of organization should receive top priority in defense, and so forth) are designed solely in order to illustrate the method.

First Criterion: Expected Damage

The government has an interest in the private organizations – from both a prior regulatory perspective and in dealing with a crisis – whose damage will have a broad system-wide effect, regardless of the cause of the event (even a malfunction). The systems and organizations rated by the government as having a high priority in state involvement are likely to be in Priority A, large organizations and/or those with a very strong system-wide effect such as the following:[26]

1. *The cyber generators – Computer infrastructure and large computer organizations.* These organizations create the national cyberspace and link the country with the world. The state will give high priority in preventing attacks that pass through them. The high degree of concentration in the communications sector exposes Israel to major cyber risks, but also provides an advantage in defense.

2. *The financial system.* This includes banks and investment houses. In addition to their importance to the economy and society, high priority should be given to their defense as their primary activity takes place at the digital level; they are natural candidates for a cyberattack, because it is very difficult to attack them using kinetic means; and it is extremely difficult to reconstruct them following destruction of their databases and backup systems.

3. *Energy infrastructure.* Israel Electric Corporation (IEC), as a direct source of energy for the entire economy, is state-owned, but there are also privately-owned power stations. IEC is supplied with natural gas by the gas companies in the private sector. The oil refineries should also be included in this category.

4. *Air, land, and marine transport infrastructure.* Damage to the functioning of command and control systems in this infrastructure is liable to lead to disasters with many casualties. El Al and Zim are considered national carriers, even though they are not government companies.

5. *Water infrastructure.* In addition to the government company Mekorot, there are also private water suppliers. This category should also include Tahal Water Planning for Israel, which performs engineering work in the water sector.

6. *Food, agriculture, and pharmaceutical industries.* This private sector group plays a key role in the security of food and drug supplies during ordinary times and in emergencies.

7. *Hazardous materials.* This includes organizations that supply hazardous materials to Israeli industry, such as ammonia for cooling uses.

8. *Israel's intellectual property.* This criterion applies to high-tech industries, university research institutes, hospitals, and so forth.

9. *Leading companies in Israel* in national output, human capital, and exports.

10. *Critical suppliers.* This includes organizations that act as suppliers to critical government systems (sensitive databases of the defense establishment, the Ministries of the Interior and Justice, Israel Police, and so forth) and organizations to which the highest priority is assigned. This list should also include foreign suppliers.

11. *A specific sector or enterprise* for which information exists that it will be targeted for a concrete attack, or that it is actually attacked with extraordinary force.

Priority B should be assigned to large organizations and/or organizations with major system-wide influence:

1. These include organizations from the sectors listed above (financial, communications, infrastructure, transportation, industry) whose influence on the nation and the economy is more limited than those with top priority;

2. Public or governmental services, with the exception of life-saving systems, which should be given top priority; private suppliers to the defense establishment, which do not have top priority, government organizations, and private organizations which are assigned top priority;[27]

3. The leading companies in Israel in national output, exports, and employment, which do not have top priority;

4. Important public databases (universities, research institutes); databases in advanced technology companies;

5. Systems and databases of hazardous materials, all which also do not have top priority.

Priority C includes medium-sized organizations of all types with a more limited influence on the country and the economy than those with the second highest priority. This includes non-governmental databases and public services, such as colleges. Priority D includes small businesses and ordinary citizens; this is the largest group of cyberspace users. An attack on personal security of exceptional scope is liable to become a national security problem, and a higher priority will therefore be assigned to negative events in cyberspace affecting large groups.

Second Criterion: The Cause of the Cyber Damage

In this criterion, the state assigns top priority to hostile parties operating out of security motives.[28] The state will give highest priority to an enemy cyberattack, due to its colossal responsibility for such a situation, in contrast to a malfunction, for example. The state's involvement is necessary because an enemy attack against a specific concern is likely to indicate a broader offensive, while organizations in the private sector are usually unable to cope with an attack by a sophisticated foreign group. Priority A will be assigned to attacks by criminal organizations specializing in cyberspace ("organized cybercrime"), and powerful earthquakes, as a result of the system-wide effect that such an event is liable to have. Priority B will be given to criminal elements, such as criminal groups, competitors breaking

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                                                          Motive/Factor

  Priority A                    │  Priority C
  Protection of sensitive organiza-│  Protection of organizations
  tions against cyberattacks with │  against cyberattacks with limited
  large-scale damage expected by │  damage anticipated by hostile
  hostile security groups.        │  security groups.

  ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─    Security motive

  Priority B                    │  Priority D
  Protection of sensitive organiza-│  Protection of organizations and
  tions against cyberattacks with │  civilians against cyberattacks
  large-scale damage foreseen    │  with limited damage foreseen
  by groups bearing little relation│  by groups bearing little relation
  to security.                    │  to security.

  National Damage        Casualties or damage of
  Expectancy             X% of Output or More
```
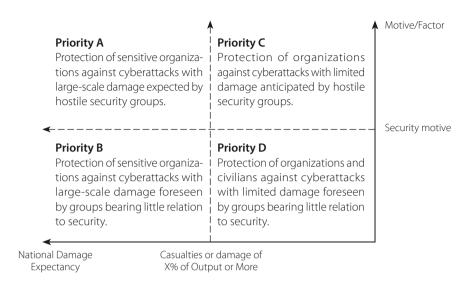
Figure 1: The Effect of the Security Motive on the Priority for State Involvement in Cyber Defense

the law, and attackers with other motives. Priority C will be assigned to natural disasters (although, as noted, a powerful earthquake will be assigned top priority) and other disasters (fires, for example). Priority D will be assigned to cyber malfunctions.

In more than a few cases, the question of attribution (who caused the event) is likely to arise. An uncompromising stand should be taken in such cases, taking cost-benefit into account.

Third Criterion: Cost-Benefit

The assumption is that it is right to invest the "extra shekel" in defense in order to reduce the damage. For example, if there are two industrial plants in which the expected damage of an attack on each one is equal, priority will be assigned to a plant in which risk reduction is quicker and cheaper. Another example is whether the provision of cyber defense in a communications company also reduces the cost of defense in organizations linked to the company, then it will be seen as cost effective. It is sometimes best to reduce certain risks that are not at the top of the list according to the above criteria, if these risks can be mitigated quickly and at low cost before they increase and spread.

Implementing the Priorities

The model presented above shows that in order to determine priorities for state involvement in the protection of a specific organization or groups of organizations, weighted priorities should be set, based on the three criteria. The state's priorities for organizations and the situation entitled to protection under Priority A and Priority B[29] means that the state will be deeply and directly involved in their cyber defense. This involvement, insofar as it is possible, will include the collection of intelligence, installation of means for identifying attacks, maintaining close connections with computer personnel in the organization, setting a rigorous policy and rules, enforcing the duty to immediately report all suspected cyber events, supervision, assistance in recovery, and so forth. Priority A will be reflected in greater state involvement in prevention, defense, and recovery in the context of an enemy attack. The state will require each organization assigned Priority C to adopt reasonable policy and rules, with occasional supervision of their implementation. These organizations will be in contact with the war room from which they will receive warning information with a low security classification. They will also be required to report suspected cyber events. Regarding organizations and situations in Priority D, the state will assist in public relations, in regulating and supervising the communications providers, and in protecting the public's information and so forth. These organizations will enjoy an improvement in the level of security in the national cyberspace as a whole.

Conclusion

National cyber defense in Israel is still far from crystallization and consolidation. The recommendation set forth in this article is to formulate a strategy for cyber defense in the private sector, based on a general principle that the state will supervise national cyberspace up until the organizational entry point. The state will implement this strategy by being involved in organizations that generate cyberspace in the country (computer and communications companies, Internet providers, and so forth), so that the chances of cyberattacks passing through them to organizations and private homes will be diminished. In addition, the state will impose supervision and regulation on "guided organizations" and others whose defense is critical for protecting the public and the interests of the state. The scope of this activity will be much greater than it is at present, with respect to the types of sectors in which the state is active, the number of

guided organizations, and the range of solutions that the state can provide. In this framework, the state will assist these organizations and the public by providing information and referral to new technologies and up-to-date expertise. This shall be done according to the considerations of the public interest, and subject to security restrictions and protection of privacy.

Notes

1   "Israel Establishes National Cyber Authority," *Bridges for Peace,* February 15, 2015, http://www.bridgesforpeace.com/il/news/article/israel-establishes-national-cyber-authority.

2   "Cabinet Approves Establishment of National Cyber Authority," February 15, 2015, http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2015/Pages/Cabinet-approves-establishment-of-National-Cyber-Authority-15-Feb-2015.aspx.

3   Shmuel Even and David Siman-Tov, *Cyber Warfare: Concepts, Trends, and Implications for Israel,* Memorandum, No. 109 (Tel Aviv: Institute for National Security Studies, June 2011), p. 15.

4   The private sector includes all the entities in the country that are not under government control: Israeli citizens as individuals, non-government companies (both private and those listed on the stock exchange), non-profit corporations, and so forth. The government sector includes the government ministries and their institutions, the local authorities, government companies (the Israel Electric Corporation, Israel Aerospace Industries, and so forth), and other corporations.

5   Amos Harel, "Assessment: Iran behind the Cyber Attack on Oil Companies in the Persian Gulf," *Haaretz,* September 11, 2012, http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/world/1.1821619.

6   Shahar Argaman and Gabi Siboni, "Commercial and Industrial Cyber Espionage in Israel," *Military and Strategic Affairs* 6, no. 1 (March 2014): 43 – 58.

7   "Cybersecurity Privacy Practical Implications," *epic.org*, May 31, 2015, https://epic.org/privacy/cybersecurity.

8   Irit Avissar, "Senior Bank of Israel Official: We're Considering the Establishment of a Banking Cyber Center," *Globes*, January 24, 2014, http://www.globes.co.il/news/article.aspx?did=1000911843.

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13 ISA website, http://www.shabak.gov.il/Pages/homepage.aspx.

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15 "Cabinet Approves Establishment of National Cyber Authority."

16 Ibid.

17 Instruction for Management of Information Security Risks of Financial Institutions," Ministry of Finance – Capital Market, Insurance, and Savings Department, October 16, 2006.

18 Avissar, "Senior Bank of Israel Officials: We're Considering the Establishment of a Banking Cyber Center."

19 Irit Avissar, "Bank of Israel to Banks: Appoint Manager for Defense against Cyber Attacks," *Globes,* July 21, 2014, http://www.tbk.co.il/article/3120778.

20 ILITA website, http://index.justice.gov.il/Units/ilita/Odot/Pages/Odot.aspx.

21 "Police Setting up New Cyber Warfare Unit, *Channel 2 News*, November 12, 2012, http://www.mako.co.il/news-israel/local/Article-a65e89befe3fa31004.htm.

22 Eviatar Matania and Tal Goldstein, "The Goal: Global Cooperation against Cyber Threats," *Israel Defense*, June 2013.

23 The national cyberspace is defined as an area in the global cyberspace in which the state has the ability to exert sovereign influence on the way communications, computer, and Internet infrastructure are set up, managed, and operated, while emphasizing access to this infrastructure and freedom to transmit information on it.

24 When the market in this matter is unscreened, and the consumer is unable to assess the quality of the service, the consumer and related parties are liable to be exposed to cyber risks, including damage when checking a penetration.

25 The expected damage is the estimated damage to the country in the event of an attack, multiplied by the estimated (subjective) likelihood of an attack at the current level of defense. The estimated likelihood is also based on intelligence obtained. The estimated expected damage is therefore dynamic.

26 Several of these organizations are already included in the list of critical infrastructure organizations, as instructed by the National Information Security Agency. At the same time, many organizations and certain economic sectors are not included in this list.

27 A cyberattack can be made against an organization through its suppliers, and even through its customers (if they are hooked up to the organizational network), but the organization is able to defend itself against such attacks. An organization can therefore be rated as top priority, while its suppliers may be rated only the second highest priority.

28 It can be assumed that countries have highly developed and repeat capabilities in cyberspace, compared to unorganized attackers, although exceptions are certainly possible.

29 A given organization can be assigned Priority A under one security scenario and Priority B under a different scenario.

Israeli Black Flags: Salafist Jihadi Representations in Israel and the Rise of the Islamic State Organization

Ariel Koch

Over the last two years, the Islamic State organization has become one of the most dangerous elements in the Middle East. Its very existence, essence, and actions affect many nations throughout the world; its effect is most striking in the Middle East. This terrorist organization, flying the black flag as its official banner, represents an extreme branch of orthodox Sunni Islam, challenging all existing orders of governance and seeking to replace them with an Islamic regime that imitates the conduct and way of life typical of the seventh century. This branch of Islam is called Salafist jihadism, and is currently considered the most radical manifestation of Islamic fundamentalism. It is also thought to be the fastest-growing group within Islam, gathering supporters from all over the world. This essay seeks to shed light on Salafist jihadism in general and on its Israeli adherents in particular, and to examine the reverberations felt in Israel as a result of the rise of this new power in Iraq and Syria.

Keywords: Salafi, Salafist jihadism, Islamic State, Israeli, Sheikh Nazem Abu Salim, Christians, Jews, global jihad, al-Qaeda, terrorism, Sharia

Introduction

A survey conducted by the General Security Service (GSS) on the spread of al-Qaeda's ideology in Israel, indicated that in recent years the number of organizations identified with al-Qaeda and global jihad in the West Bank as well as within Israel had grown.[1] According to another document published by the GSS in 2012, the "growing identification with Salafist

Ariel Koch is a researcher of jihadi propaganda in cyberspace and a doctoral student in the Department of Middle Eastern Studies at Bar Ilan University, under the supervision of Professor Michael M. Laskier.

ideas, especially Salafist jihadism . . . increases the potential of the threat aimed at Israel."[2] While the phenomenon "does not have the consensus of the Arabs of Israel," the document nonetheless noted that, "there is a risk that young people, affected by charismatic religious figures championing al-Qaeda's belligerent ideology[3] . . . will see the ideas of Salafist jihadism as a religious, ideological justification for transitioning from theory to practice, including undertaking military and terrorist action."[4]

It should be noted that the Salafist jihadism is considered extremist within the Islamist camp, and especially within Israel. Among Arabs in Israel, the Islamist camp is closer to the Muslim Brothers than to the Salafi groups and radical organizations, although as we will see, the Islamization trend, which is attracted to the idea of Salafist jihadism and its support for an Islamic state, has become a fact. The concern that Muslim citizens of Israel might deepen their identification with Salafist jihadism touches on the conclusions drawn by Professor Sammy Smooha from Haifa University. Smooha claims that since the start of the millennium, members of the Arab minority in Israel has become more radicalized in its attitude toward the Jewish majority, manifested by their refusal to accept Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people, their desire to establish a Palestinian state in place of the State of Israel, and interpersonal relationships between Jews and Arabs.[5]

Smooha asserts that, although "the years 2003-2012 were a wasted decade regarding Arab-Jewish relations,"[6] living with Jews has encouraged a process of Israelization, and balances out and reduces the processes of Palestinization (identification based on the ethnic/political component) and Islamization (based on the religious component) of the Israeli Arab minority.[7] By contrast, Professor Raphael Israeli of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem claims that "the Israelization of Israel's Arabs is breaking apart right in front of our eyes" and that "there is clear Islamization, supported by the fact that every time we clash with the Palestinians, they side with them whether as rioters or as the silent majority retaining the right to silence."[8]

During the month of Ramadan in 2015, Israel's Channel 10 television investigated whether Muslims in Israel have incited against Jews and have expressed support for the Islamic State organization (formerly ISIS).[9] The investigative report examined sermons given in fifteen mosques in Israel and areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority,[10] and revealed two main facts: first, there is a process of radicalization in which mosques and preachers that were previously not known to be backers of Hamas

now engage in violent, military discourse that resembles or is identical to the discourse of Hamas concerning al-Aqsa; second, mosques and preachers that previously identified with Hamas have further radicalized their positions, and increasingly identify with Salafist jihadism and the Islamic State organization.

This essay will examine and analyze not only the source of the black flags, but also the religious ideology behind them,[11] their representatives in Israel, and the extent of the threat posed by this ideology and its proponents in Israel. This essay raises the question whether Israel's Arabs are undergoing a process of radicalization and if they are influenced by the rise of the Islamic State. In other words, do Israel's Muslim citizens increasingly identify with Salafist jihadism? If so, how is this process manifested, and what does it mean? These questions are of utmost importance, because this branch of Islam directly affects non-Muslims (such as Jews, Christians, and Druze) by preaching for the implementation of Sharia law and calling for jihad, in addition to viewing Israeli citizens as targets for attacks.[12] To answer these questions, the essay will analyze expressions and representations of Salafist jihadism in Israel in primary and secondary texts, with emphasis on news items in the Arabic and Hebrew media, as well as the online activity of Israeli supporters of Salafist jihadism in social media.

There is a dearth of documentation about the Salafist jihadi current in Israel; in particular, first-hand testimony is lacking, as its proponents operate covertly to avoid arrest. The lack of information makes it difficult to understand the psychological, social, family, religious, and technological motivations affecting a person's decision to leave Israel to join the Islamic State. Future research based on interviews with detainees, personal testimonies, and/or wills left by jihadists who have been killed will enable us to study these motives in depth. Another problematic factor is that radical Salafist preachers among Israel's Arabs have a very limited sphere of activity, whether in the mosque or in cyberspace. They cannot express their opinions freely and openly as they are concerned that the Israeli security services are listening to their sermons, which could lead to their arrest; they also cannot operate freely in cyberspace. Proof of the validity and seriousness of this concern lies in the media-covered arrest of Sheikh Nazem Abu Salim Skafa of Nazareth, as the prosecution against him was based on his sermons at the Shihab al-Din mosque where he served as imam, and on his activity in cyberspace.

Black Flags in Israel

During Operation Protective Edge in the Gaza Strip, black flags were seen flying at protests in Israel. The public, the media, and decision makers are familiar with these flags because of their use by terrorist organizations such as al-Qaeda and especially the Islamic State. As a result of their appearance and given the knowledge about massacres of Iraqi minorities committed by the Islamic State, Knesset member Ayelet Shaked asked Minister of Defense Moshe Ya'alon to declare the Islamic State illegal.[13] On September 3, 2014, the minister of defense declared the Islamic State to be "an illegal organization" and banned all contact with it. The following day, the media issued reports indicating that law enforcement agencies had been instructed to remove the flags identified with Hamas, the Islamic State, and Hizbollah.[14]

On September 10, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called a debate to discuss the threat posed by the Islamic State. The debate, held in the presence of senior personnel, including ministers, heads of the security establishment, and the attorney general, dealt with strengthening enforcement against showing support or identifying with the organization, locating activists and supporters, and foiling attempts to set up terrorist cells.[15] The anti-Islamic State legislation was a response to the growing support for the organization seen in the previous months in Israel, including on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.[16] For example, a picture posted and shared by the Twitter account @*DefenderISIS* on March 28, 2014, displayed a man holding a sign that read, "Greetings of affection and love from Jerusalem to the glory of the [Islamic] nation, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi al-Quraishi [the leader of the Islamic State]."[17] Black flags were flown in the city of Acre in July 2014 as a show of solidarity with Gaza Strip residents and in protest of the IDF's bombing there.[18]

The Israeli website *0404 News* twice reported that black flags had been spotted in the city of Nazareth since the start of Operation Protective Edge.[19] According to *0404 News*, a black flag had been hung from the patio of a Nazareth apartment, and vehicles with black flag stickers on them had been sighted in town. According to other reports, black flags had been spotted "in Acre, Nazareth, Umm el-Fahm, Kafr Qana, Sakhnin, and East Jerusalem."[20] At the end of July 2014, the Christian Arab portal *Star2000* reported that a sign featuring the black flag had been erected across the entrance from the Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth, one of the most sacred sites in Christianity.[21] According to this report, members of the

Christian community in the north and pilgrims have encountered hostility and even threats from radical Muslims, challenging their Christian faith. If Christians had become used to the contempt expressed in the flying of the green flags,[22] they are now encountering the black flags.[23] In October, the slogan "The Islamic State is coming" appeared as graffiti near the Christian village of Bana in the Galilee,[24] accompanied by propaganda clips disseminated on the Internet showing what happens with the arrival of the Islamic State.

Jews, Christians, and the Islamic State

The inherent threat of the Islamic State – an organization that declared itself a "caliphate" and its leader as "caliph" (the leader of all Muslims in the Sunni world)[25] – has direct implications for Christians in the Middle East. For example, in the city of Mosul in Northern Iraq, which was conquered by Islamic State fighters, Christians were presented with three choices: to convert to Islam; to remain where they are and submit to Muslim law under the definition of "protected people"(*ahl al-dhimma*), and be required to pay a head tax called *jizya*; or to die. Masses of Christians fled and became refugees, joining other minorities facing the threat of annihilation.[26]

Compared to Christians, the status of Jews is even more inferior. The Prophet Muhammad fought, vanquished, and humiliated the Jews of the Arabian Peninsula. Therefore, his adherents must now continue to defeat and humble the Jews. The establishment of the State of Israel is seen as a direct challenge to the authority of Allah, and hence the use of religious terminology to justify violent struggle and reject Israel's existence.[27] "Given that Muhammad himself engaged in jihad . . . his commandment is valid forever,"[28] causing Salafists to be eager to fulfill Muhammad's commandment. Indeed, the Islamic State in particular and adherents of Salafist jihadism in general use both Sharia and jihad against non-Muslims. Examples may be found in Iraq and Syria, and elsewhere in the Arab world.

The threat posed by the supporters of the Islamic State to Christians in Israel led to the opening of a Facebook page called "Exposing the Islamic State in Israel." As its name indicates, the page is dedicated to exposing Israeli Arabs who identify with the so-called caliphate.[29] In a telephone interview with the late-night show *Tzinor Layla* conducted on August 13, 2014, the page administrator, using the handle Yuhana, claimed he had exposed more than 300 Israeli Arab supporters of the Islamic State and that they had threatened his life and his friends' lives because of their

Facebook activity.[30] One of the Israeli Arabs exposed as an Islamic State supporter called for bringing the black flag back to where it had been flown in Nazareth, issuing the threat that "it was time for a [terrorist] attack" in the city. Another threatened to behead Yuhana, who said that he feared for his life. Shadi Halul, a member of the Forum for Enlistment of Christians into the IDF,[31] said that the rise of the Islamic State had a direct effect on Israeli Arabs, whether Muslim or Christian: "Very extensive circles within the Muslim population in Israel identify with the Islamic State . . . Only some of them are currently giving expression to this identification by external means." He claimed that "the flying of the Islamic State flag is accompanied by a widespread discourse on the elimination of the 'crusader' Christians and Jews in Israel."[32] As a member of the Christian Arab minority, Halul is worried that "if, at some point, unrest breaks out, they will take advantage of the momentum for more extensive organizing – first against Christians, and later on against Israel in general."[33]

Based on an article that appeared in *Ynet* on September 6, 2014, increasing numbers of Israeli Arabs are identifying with the Islamic State, a factor heightening tensions among more moderate members of Israel's Muslim Arab sector. For example, after the imam in the north expressed his support for the organization, dozens of people who prayed in his mosque attacked his sermon on the spot and demanded his ouster.[34] Elsewhere, one man attending prayers said that, in his opinion, "The Islamic State is the only one capable of establishing an Islamic nation, and it is good they're punishing people. I hope they come to Israel too." According to the article, his sentiments led to the outbreak of a brawl.[35] Sheikh Hamad Abu Daabis, the head of the Southern Branch of the Islamic Movement, said that, "The Islamic State makes reasonable demands, such as the establishment of a state for Islam, but its methods for attaining the goals cause fear among many nations around the world." The cleric, however, did not condemn those methods. A sheikh from the Galilee, said that, he personally supported the Islamic State, while a resident of Tira in the Triangle said that he knows people who expressed support for the Islamic State and that in Tira alone there are at least a thousand supporters.[36]

The Black Flag: Between Salafism and Salafist Jihadism

To understand the Islamic State phenomenon, it is first necessary to understand Salafism (سلفية).[37] The Salafist movement is "the ur-movement of the Islamic revival of the twentieth century." The meaning of the word

al-salaf (السلف) is "forefather," and the word Salafiya describes "walking in the footsteps of the fathers of Islam."[38] Salafism stems from the intention, need, and desire to purify "Islam from the flaws it acquired and return to the Golden Age of Islam – [the era of the lifetime of the Prophet] Muhammad and the first caliphs."[39] The call for Salafiya signaled the start of a race among zealots who competed among themselves to most resemble the generation of the Prophet Muhammad, both in speech and in conduct, while distancing themselves "from anything that was not yet known to the Prophet's generation (*bida'*)."[40] Moreover, the quest for Salafiya means "violent resistance to democracy and the liberty of citizens."[41]

The term "forefathers of Islam" refers to *al-salaf al-salah*, a phrase translated as "righteous forebears" (or "the first straightforward ones") and provides inspiration to the adherents of Salafist jihadism who want to recreate the victories of Islam from the era of the Prophet Muhammad and the caliphs.[42] That time period was replete with extensive conquests and remains "a symbol and source of inspiration for radical [Salafist] Muslims."[43] In the context of our own time and discussion, one can see how the attacks carried out by the Islamic State are justified by imitating the acts of "the righteous forebears."[44] A Salafist sheikh living in the Palestinian Authority claimed that the Salafiya movement is not violent, but merely promulgates Islam (*dawa*). According to this sheikh, the Salafiya movement split into two branches: intellectual Salafism (*salafiya dawa*) and Salafi jihadism.[45] While the former focuses on spreading the faith and calls for adherence to Islam throughout the world, much like the Tablighi Jamaat society,[46] the latter champions violence in order to establish God's kingdom on earth here and now. Salafist jihadism gave rise to terrorist organizations identified with global jihad, and all strive for the same objective.

The Salafist idea and Islamic radicalism emerged from both a direct and indirect connection with Israel and the West, with roots in the British Mandate in the Middle East, especially Egypt and Israel (Mandatory Palestine).[47] Hajj Amin al-Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem, studied in Egypt at al-Azhar University with Muhammad Rashid Rida, one of the most important Muslim theoreticians of the twentieth century, who laid the foundations for the current growth of the Salafiya movement.[48] Another one of Rida's students and a friend of the Mufti was Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood.[49] The Mufti himself, a believer in the pan-Islamic idea,[50] might have identified as a Salafist today, perhaps even as a Salafist jihadist; he was opposed to Western dress, incited the murder

of Jews and "traitors" (Arabs who sold land to Jews), called for a global holy war against the Jews in Mandatory Palestine, and in the world, and against the West, and worked assiduously to realize his ideas and plans.[51]

During the British Mandate, several armed groups in Mandatory Palestine were active against the Jewish Yishuv. The most idealistic, active, and important one was *al-Kaf al-Aswad* (The Black Hand) of Sheikh Izz ad-Din al-Qassam (1883-1935). Al-Qassam, originally from Syria, gathered around him a small group of devotees committed to violent struggle against both the Jews and the British. Similar to the Mufti and al-Banna, he too studied at al-Azhar University and was influenced by Salafist thinkers. More so than the Mufti, his attitude toward the Yishuv eventually became a symbol, and a "model to emulate."[52] The military wing of Hamas – as well as the missiles it fires at Israel – is named for him.

In 1953, *Hizb al-Tahrir* (The Liberation Party) was formed in Jerusalem by the preacher Taqi al-Din al-Nabhani. His organization challenged the regimes in Arab lands and the political ideas prevalent at the time (nationalism, pan-Arabism, the political ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood) while it sought to revive the caliphate.[53] According to al-Nabhani's understanding, jihad was a tool that would enable the future Islamic state to expand its territories to the area of *Dar al-Harb*.[54] The Six-Day War became a kind of fault line.[55] After the war, the theories developed by thinkers such as al-Nabhani, Sayyid Qutb,[56] and Sheikh Dr. Abdullah Azzam[57] started to crystallize into a cohesive program for a holy global war to establish the new caliphate. Those three, along with Osama bin Laden, paved the way for the formation of the Salafist jihadist faction we know today. Despite the differences between them, it seems that their notions were melded together and that their writings can explain what is known today as the Islamic State.

In November 2013, a video was published on the Internet showing a member of Hizb al-Tahrir preaching for war against the Jews and against conceding Islamic land such as Jaffa or Haifa.[58] According to this preacher, "The land of Palestine is Islamic and waqf land[59] and we have no permission to give it up." The message to the Jews is clear: "For them, we have nothing but the sword until the [judgment] day comes when even the rocks and the trees will call out, 'oh servant of God, oh, Muslim, there's a Jew behind me, go kill him.'"[60] Hizb al-Tahrir is considered throughout the world to be a non-violent organization whose political activities are legitimate and legal, but its ideology largely overlaps that of other Salafist organizations

that use extreme violence to promote their goals.[61] Officially speaking, Hizb al-Tahrir rejects violence, but, as various researchers have noted, it accepts the right of (Sunni) Muslims to engage in self-defense using violent means.[62]

Although the belief that Israel is waqf land is associated mostly with the discourse of Hamas, the above quotation of the Hizb al-Tahrir member also expresses the absolute rejection of any concession of land that was previously under Islamic ownership, i.e., land that belonged to the various Islamic caliphates. Either way, the organization incites not only against Jews and the West, but also against any type of government that is not pure Salafist, and does not implement the Sharia. This is the point of congruence of Hizb al-Tahrir with the Salafist jihadist ideology.

The social and outreach activities that adherents of Salafist jihadism engage in at the mosques, in the streets, and in cyberspace increase their influence on the public at large, leading to radicalization.[63] William Lawrence and Haim Malka examined the development of the new generation of Salafist jihadism in North Africa, a phenomenon they call "the new radicalism." This generation uses social activism and outreach in order to entrench itself within the population. While the adherents of this ideology have not been successful in reaching the masses, they do represent a dangerous and subversive element with the ability to destabilize fragile regimes.[64]

What is the significance of the black flag that arouses many responses, even panic, in many parts of the world? According to the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, the black flag previously represented the Prophet Muhammad and the subsequent caliphs, and served as their battle flag.[65] For the contemporary Islamic movement, the black flag represents belligerent jihad as well as the establishment of a renewed Islamic caliphate.[66] This flag, inscribed with the *shahada*,[67] is highly significant for the Islamic State, which grew out of Iraq.[68] Similarly, this flag was first flown in Iraq as the flag of the Abbasid dynasty,[69] whose capital was Baghdad – currently a target for conquest by the Islamic State.

The black flag entered global consciousness as a result of its use by Osama bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaeda, and other violent organizations, whether in action or rhetoric.[70] The use of the black flag stems from the Salafists' desire to imitate the Prophet Muhammad. Thus, Hizb al-Tahrir is an example of a non-violent (in action), Salafist movement that seeks to revive the caliphate and uses the black and white flags as its symbol. In fact, Hizb al-Tahrir's use of black flags preceded that of other Salafist jihadist organizations. Nonetheless, there is no doubt that since the appearance

of al-Qaeda and of the Islamic State, the flag has become identified first and foremost with Salafist jihadist terrorism. Through the use of violence, the jihadists have appropriated the "copyright" for the use of this flag and turned it into their symbol. The increasing strength of the jihadists, accompanied by adopting the black flag, points to a powerful force that is gaining momentum.

From Arab Spring to Islamic Winter

When the events called the Arab Spring broke out and the black flag was flown in many nations, at times accompanied by cries of "Osama, Osama, we're all Osama,"[71] concerns were raised that a radical Islamic force would spread and reveal itself as a "jihadi winter."[72] William McCants, an expert on the study of radical Islam at the Brookdale Institute, tried to calm the fears in a published essay called "Black Flag." He claims that before we push the panic button, we should remember that the appearance of black flags in protests throughout the Arab world does not necessarily mean the presence of jihad supporters or jihadist terrorist organizations.[73] McCants asserted that the black flags expressed various phenomena: the possibility that young people used their newfound freedom to frighten their parents; Salafists flew the flags to publicly express their anger, using a familiar, fear-inducing symbol; and an expression of hope, in the style of "wish you were here," reflecting an aspiration more than a reality. Is McCants' claim valid regarding Israel? Is his claim valid more than four years after the events that rocked the Middle East? Moreover, it is impossible to ignore the fact that flying the black flag by Salafist activists currently occurs against the backdrop of the rise of the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq, which has become a center of global attention.

Israeli security experts, interviewed anonymously by Channel 2 television's news program, said that some twenty Israeli Arabs have joined global jihad organizations fighting in Syria and Iraq.[74] It appears that the process has only developed in recent years, especially since the war in Syria has been appropriated by jihadists. According to one individual interviewed, "in the last year, there has been great radicalization in several Bedouin settlements in the Negev Desert, and Arab settlements in the north when it comes to the application of Sharia. Even people who used to be secular have been swept up and influenced by radical ideas."[75]

In other words, the Islamic State has inspired, influenced, and attracted a growing number of people in Israel. This is not a phenomenon unique

to Israel; it is happening all over the world, but with a direct connection to our region. After a special GSS and IDF force killed three Salafist jihadists near Hebron,[76] the Israeli daily *Haaretz* noted that the activity of jihadists in the Middle East, "in Sinai, and especially . . . in Syria strengthens the support for them in the West Bank."[77] If the Salafists are indeed a rising power in the West Bank, could they also be a rising power among Israeli Arab citizens?

Global Jihad: Manifestations and Representations in Israel

According to the GSS, Salafist jihadist organizations in Israel have planned attacks and have tried to reach jihadist frontlines in Chechnya or Afghanistan. A 2012 GSS document stated that, "in the Arab sector, there has recently been pronounced identification with the ideas of Salafist jihadism. Although it is a limited phenomenon, it is clear that it is gaining a foothold and appeals to young radicals in this population sector."[78] Terrorist cells that were inspired by al-Qaeda and identified with the organization's philosophy were discovered in the Jerusalem area and in the Triangle (Jaljuliya).[79] In 2008, security services arrested two Bedouins from Rahat who were motivated by global jihad and had planned to carry out attacks in Israel.[80] In all of these cases, the Internet played a central role at every stage, from induction, through planning, to carrying out the attack, or attempting to do so.[81]

In 2010 and 2011, the GSS stopped the development of a terrorist cell associated with al-Qaeda and led by Sheikh Nazem Abu Salim Skafa, the imam of the Shihab al-Din mosque in Nazareth and the founder of Jama'at Ansar Allah Bayt al-Maqdis al-Nasra (Nazareth Supporters of the Holy House Group). This terrorist cell, some of whose members had tried to reach Somalia to realize their ideology,[82] was responsible for the murder of taxi driver Yefim Weinstein (November 2009); attacks on Jews and Christians; and planned attacks and abductions of civilians and soldiers.[83] As far as we know, Abu Salim Skafa's group was the first manifestation of organized Salafist jihadism to appear within the Green Line. The group posed a clear threat to anyone that they viewed as enemies of Islam: non-Muslim citizens of Israel, IDF soldiers, and even the pope.[84] The judge presiding in Abu Salim Skafa's trial said that, "One cannot view the accused's published statements as innocent; they lay down the path for his philosophy − identified with al-Qaeda and global jihad − to seize control by force and terrorism." She added that, "Had his activity not been shut down, the terrorist activities

of his acolytes would have increased."[85] According to the verdict, some thousand people were exposed to Abu Salim Skafa's propaganda in the mosque, behind closed doors, and in the social media. "When such a large number of people is exposed to this type of content, the chance increases, that at least one or a few will decide to operate on the basis of that content, and will engage in some act of violence or terrorism."[86] The threat inherent in Abu Salim Skafa's faithful, Israeli Salafist jihadists still exists and is still relevant in the presence of a terrorist organization like the Islamic State that has grown strong enough to become a threat to many nations around the world, including Israel.

Searching for Black Flags on Facebook

How can we know if someone supports or identifies with Salafist jihadism in general or with terrorist organizations such as al-Qaeda or the Islamic State in particular? What clues expose an Islamic State supporter in a Facebook profile or Twitter account? The social media profiles of adherents of Salafist jihadism share some characteristics. The appearance of the black flag is usually one of them. Other features include expressions of admiration for prominent leaders in the global jihad movements (such as bin Laden or Abu Musab al-Zarqawi[87]); the posting of propaganda videos and photographs; following certain preachers or groups identified as Salafist jihadist; writing and sharing messages supporting jihad (as both an idea and action) and its representatives (the Mujahidin); or threatening the enemies of Islam.

According to a study done by the Pew Research Center, Facebook is the preferred social media by Internet users compared to other social media platforms (Twitter, Instagram, and others).[88] According to data supplied by Alexa, a company that ranks websites, the five most popular sites in Israel are the search engine Google (ranked both one and two: the international and the Hebrew versions), Facebook, YouTube, and Ynet. Twitter placed seventeenth.[89] These data are in all likelihood correct also for Israel's Arab sector.[90] If Facebook is the preferred social media of the Israeli Arab sector, one can assume that most activity of Salafist jihadi adherents in Israel would also occur on this social media site. Given that that is the case, one Facebook friend can reach dozens or even hundreds of other people, and examine the information posted on their pages. According to Yuhana, the administrator of the Facebook page "Exposing the Islamic State in Israel," he found some 300 Facebook profiles of Islamic State supporters in Israel. One such individual is Abu Musab al-Saffuri, whose real name is Rabia

Shahada.[91]Al-Saffuri's page says that he lives in Upper Nazareth and that he studied engineering at ORT Singalovski in Tel Aviv.[92] He is currently in Syria. The handle Abu Musab al-Saffuri may indicate a connection to the village of Saffuriyya,[93] and identification with Abu Musab al Zarqawi.

Al-Saffuri is seen in a video disseminated on the Internet in May 2014, in which he addresses Christians and Alawites, and tells them that he and his comrades "love death for the sake of Allah more than you love life." He also threatened that he and his comrades have come to drink the Alawites' "tasty" blood.[94] In an interview with the Internet edition of the newspaper *Kul al-Arab*, al-Saffuri made it clear that he was not fighting for the downfall of the Assad regime in Syria, but rather for the purpose of establishing an Islamic state. The next target, he said, is the liberation of Palestine and the al-Aqsa mosque. To "beloved Palestine," he promised, he would "return as a conqueror."[95]

The identification of Israeli Salafist jihadists with the Islamic State can be seen in declarations, as in the case of Adnan Ala a-Din,[96] a Nazareth attorney, who published on Facebook the hadith about the Jew hiding behind the rock on judgment day.[97] On September 8, 2014, Ala a-Din uploaded to his Facebook page a still photograph from a video showing the execution of Steven Sotloff, a Jewish journalist with dual Israeli-US citizenship who was kidnapped by Syrian rebels, sold to the Islamic State, and beheaded by a British national known as Jihadi John. Ala al-Din posted the picture with a caption reading "A victim who speaks fluent English threatens heretics . . . Will we see a Hebrew-speaking victim?!"[98] Adnan Ala al-Din was not content to stay at the level of theory, and in January 2015, it was reported that he and six of his friends had been arrested. It emerged that he headed a cell identified with the Islamic State,[99] which had participated in meetings with a "well-known and senior" Salafist jihadist preacher from the north. The cell was in touch with Islamic State activists in Syria and Iraq, including other Israelis, and the members taught themselves to slaughter sheep, apparently in preparation for slaughtering humans.[100] This seems to indicate that Israeli Muslim citizens not only have a spiritual leader and authority to follow (the well known, senior sheikh from the north), but also those seeking to join the Islamic State and those who have already done so, are aware of each other.

A growing number of Arab Israelis is attracted to the Islamic State, "the wonder that everyone is talking about and wants to be part of."[101] More than a few have tried to go to Syria to join the caliphate and have been caught.[102]

Other have been stopped from leaving Israel, such as a young Israeli named Karim Mursal Khaled Abu Salah, who, according to his Facebook page, lives in Sakhnin. On August 1, 2014, Abu Salah posted a photograph of an injunction preventing him from leaving Israel, which was issued on the basis of "a real concern that his leaving . . . might damage state security."[103] The injunction was valid until August 30, 2014. Abu Salah was a Facebook friend of Adnan Ala al-Din and a member of the above-mentioned cell.

Abu Yusuf Abu Hussein notes that he lives in Baqa al-Gharbiya and that he attended the science and technology high school in the city.[104] His profile picture is that of Adnan Ismail al-Bilawi, one of the Islamic State's prominent field commanders.[105] He also uploaded photos of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi – as the "Caliph Ibrahim"[106] – to his page. As his account is public, one can see not only his pictures and posts, but also his 446 friends as of September 2014, many of whom are Israeli Arabs (including those noted here) who do not bother to hide their identity and support for the Islamic State and its leader. Another Arab Israeli who does not hide his support for the Islamic State is Thaer Saleem, who notes that he lives in the village of Muqeible in Northern Israel.[107] Saleem dedicated his Ramadan blessing of 2014 to the "Caliph Ibrahim" and Mullah Mustafa Omar, the head of the Afghani Taliban. On July 4, 2014, Saleem posted a picture of the leader of the Islamic State.[108] Ten people "liked" the picture, including Adnan Ala a-Din and other Israeli Arabs.

As we can see, there are supporters of global jihad in Israel who have stated outright where they live, making it easy to identify them as Israeli Arabs. Although some have hidden their personal information, it is possible to extract data about them and their friends. An excellent example is the Facebook account of Jabarin Jabarin, whose residence is not mentioned, but because the page is made public, it is possible to see many expressions of admiration for the Islamic State and its past and present leaders.[109] This account has 373 friends, many of whom are Israelis, among them Ala al-Din and al-Saffuri.

How can one know that a profile belongs to an Israeli if he does not explicitly say so? First, the name he chooses can indicate his background or place of residence (as in the case of al-Saffuri). A prominent feature among the friends of Jabarin Jabarin is that some share a similar surname, which appears in several variations: Jabarin, Gbareen, and Gbren. The Facebook page of one Mosa Gbren, whose profile picture is that of the "Caliph Ibrahim," in particular stands out.[110] Some of Jabarin Jabarin's

friends also note Umm al-Fahm as their city of residence. A simple Google search will show that one of the large clans in Umm al-Fahm is the Jabarin clan, which explains the presence of some of them among the Facebook friends of Jabarin Jabarin, and strengthens the claim that he is Israeli.

The fifth and last chapter in the series of shows called "The Islamic State Threat" by Zvi Yehezkeli focused on Islamic State activists and supporters in Israel. Most of the people interviewed by the investigation rejected the Islamic State and its methods. Some agreed with the general idea, but rejected the violent means employed. Two others interviewed expressed support for the caliphate and its methods. The show's conclusion was clear: the Islamic State is already here.[111]

Sheikh Abu Salim, "al-Saffuri," Adnan Ala al-Din, Abu Salah, and many others who have not been mentioned here for lack of space, are all "friends" on Facebook. They are the Israeli manifestation of an international, militant community that exists and is growing both in reality and in cyberspace. This community poses a dilemma for the security services. If the Israeli Salafists are arrested, their reputation locally and internationally will only be enhanced, not to mention that they will be able to disseminate their ideology in prison. On the other hand, if they remain at large, they are liable to radicalize others or realize their doctrine themselves by going to a jihadist front or by carrying out terrorist attacks.

The concern that the GSS has about Israeli Arab citizens going to Syria is that "they will be exploited by terrorists both for information about targets in Israel and for military activity against Israel."[112] Efraim Halevy, a former head of the Mossad, also warned against Israelis joining jihadist organizations in Syria.[113] In addition to this danger, which is discernible (i.e., it is clear who leaves Israel and it is fairly easy to estimate who will continue on to Syria or Iraq), one must factor in the unknown danger coming from those who would like to see an Israeli who speaks fluent Hebrew as one of their victims.

Conclusion

The mass demonstrations that broke out in the Arab world at the end of 2010, during which the black flag was raised, shook the Middle East and provided a clear boost to the Salafist jihadist movement. Researchers claimed at the time that the waving of the black flags did not necessarily indicate a terrorist presence. Nonetheless, given what we know about developments in the Middle East and the rapid growth of the Salafist presence in the area,

even within the State of Israel, and given the rise of the Islamic State, it would not be outrageous to say that the flying of black flags at this point – even if done only out of defiance – indicates the presence of a subversive, hostile force that should be monitored and controlled. This force is on the fast track to radicalization, and we do not know when it will be ripe for action and realize the Salafist theories by using violent jihadist means.

As noted in the GSS document presented earlier in this essay, the Salafist movement in Israel is "gaining a foothold and is a draw for young radicals," but it is failing to pull in the masses. Just as there are people attracted to power, many people reject horror and brutality. Black flags have been seen only in a handful of locations, even though violent demonstrations and riots have occurred throughout Israel. While the appearance of black flags in Israel points to the presence of Salafist jihadist adherents, this does not necessarily mean they will engage in violence. Nonetheless, violent action depends more on the means (or their lack thereof) available to radical Salafists, and less so on their wishes.

The success of the Islamic State in the battlefield in Iraq and Syria has been accompanied by ethnic and religious cleansing, brutality towards POWs and civilians, and terrifying, effective psychological warfare reaching every population segment in Israel and the world, including anti-Jewish incitement. All of this has an effect on Israel's Arab population in general and the proponents of the Salafist approach in particular. Identification with the jihadist force rising in the north leads to radicalization, which could turn outwards – by going to jihadist fronts – or turn inwards, by engaging in lone wolf terrorism within Israel or by creating local infrastructures inspired by global jihad.

The rise of the Islamic State has implications for Israeli society. The radicalization of individuals in the Israeli Muslim Arab sector affects their immediate surroundings; their uncompromising approach, which enjoys a tailwind blowing from Iraq and Syria, has a tendency to attract others. They also have an influence on their more distant surroundings, as their attitude towards Jews, Christians, and other minorities changes and becomes violently aggressive and militant. As we have seen, this is expressed both in words and in action, and as experience has shown, words can lead to action.

Those who fly the black flag today – and this is unfortunate for the people of Hizb al-Tahrir – cannot claim that it is the flag of all Muslims, because it is not. It is the flag of a fundamentalist, militant movement coming into

being, one whose rhetoric and actions outdo even non-Salafist terrorist groups such as Hamas. It is the battle flag flown together by non-violent Salafists who "only" call for jihad during protests or in their sermons, and violent Salafists (Salafiya jihadiya), who support the notion of jihad as a violent struggle in reality.

Given the actions carried out publicly by the Islamic State, the one who flies this flag – be it in the United Kingdom, Israel, or Iraq, in the street or at home, across from the Church of the Annunciation, or as a sticker on the car – knows exactly with what he identifies and what the flag represents in the Israeli context: Muhammad's war against the Jews. Therefore it may behoove the State of Israel to consider legislation against organizations, groups, or individuals using this flag as their symbol, because by flying it today they engage in incitement to persecute and harm the Jews and Christians, as well as other non-Muslim minorities (like the Druze and Bahai).

Notes

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3   Gilles Kepel and Jean Pierre Milelli, *Al-Qaeda in its Own Words* (London: Harvard Press University, 2008); Asaf Maliah and Shaul Shay, *From Kabul to Jerusalem: Al-Qaeda, Islamic Global Jihad and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Tel Aviv: Matar Publishers, 2009); Yoram Schweitzer and Aviv Oreg, *Al-Qaeda's Odyssey to Global Jihad,* Memorandum, No. 132 (Tel Aviv: the Institute for National Security Studies, January 2014).

4   For more on the transition from theory to practice ("from pen to sword"), see the General Security Service, "Salafist Jihadism"; Manuel R. Torres-Soriano, "The Hidden Face of Jihadist Internet Forum Management: the Case of Ansar al Mujahideen," *Terrorism and Political Violence* (September 2014), p. 20.

5   For more on the negative image of Israel and Jews in the Arab world and the Arab sector in Israel, see Yehoshafat Harkabi, *Arab Attitudes to Israel* (Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1968), pp. 361 – 406; Israel TV Channel One, "The Iranian Film Weapon," *Mabat Sheni,* July 10, 2013.

6   Sammy Smooha, *Still Playing by the Rules: Index of Arab-Jewish Relations in Israel 2012* (Jerusalem: The Israel Democracy Institute and the University of Haifa, 2013), p. 16.

7   Ibid, pp. 159-160.

8 See Nadav Shragai, "Who Is Behind the Rioting by Israel's Arabs," *Israel Hayom*, July 11, 2014, http://www.israelhayom.co.il/article/198407.

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12 The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, "Volunteers Joining the Ranks of the Syrian Rebels from Arabs in Israel and the Areas of the Palestinian Authority," January 5, 2014, pp. 1-4, http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/articles/Art_20613/E_014_14_1416348306.pdf.

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20 Pazit Rabina, "Genocide Live," *Makor Rishon*, August 15, 2014, p. 14; black flags appeared in Israel as early as 2010, as can be seen in photographs on the *Views from the Occident* website. See "'Al-Qa'ida' in Palestine? Black Flags Used by Transnational Jihadi-Takfiri Groups in the Occupied Palestinian Territories," *Views from the Occident*, September 28, 2010, http://occident.blogspot.co.il/2010/09/in-pictures-al-qaida-in-palestine-black.html.

21 "ISIS Representatives in Nazareth Flying Their Flag near the Church of the Annunciation," *Star2000*, July 26, 2014.

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Movement in Israel (headed by Sheikh Raed Salah Abu Shakra), and Hamas. See Meir Litwak, "Hamas: The Muslim Brotherhood with Palestinian Markers," in *The Muslim Brotherhood: Religious Vision in a Changing Reality* eds. Meir Hatina and Uri. M. Kupfershmidt (Tel Aviv: Kibbutz HaMeuhad, 2012), p. 215; about Wahabism, see Ephraim Herrera and Gideon M. Kressel, *Jihad: Fundamentals and Fundamentalism* (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Defense – La'or and Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan, Dvir Publishers Ltd., 2009), pp. 284-290.

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28 Herrera and Kressel, *Jihad*, p. 301.

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More on Blood and Treasure

Saul Bronfeld

My paper, "Blood and Treasure – On Military and Economic Thinking," published in the March 2014 issue of *Military and Strategic Affairs*, presented the following theses:

a. The two types of thinking – military and economic – are very similar, if the thinkers involved are **true** commanders and **true** economists. The resemblance is due to the fact that both the commander and the economist seek to achieve a goal by selecting the optimal way of operating, based on cost-benefit considerations, in a very uncertain environment.

b. Most commanders do not distinguish between true economists, who operate according to cost-benefit considerations, and accountants, whose considerations can be narrow and therefore also erroneous.

c. The unfruitful agitation accompanying the discussions of the defense budget stems mainly from the absence of an orderly procedure for setting national security policy. The political echelon does not properly define the goals and priorities and lacks adequate professional staffs and systems to formulate its own concepts, and thereby is left to the mercy of the IDF's planners.

d. A negative consequence of this situation is that the interests of a branch of the IDF or a commander's ego (or just lack of thought and indolence) may play a role in determining the allocation of resources for defense.

e. The lesson from the above is two-fold: (1) The national security planning and budgeting processes need to be improved – a reform recommended by many, but which the Israeli governments have not been willing to undertake; (2) There is a need to bolster the economic understanding

Saul Bronfeld served as CEO and chairman of the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange from 1991-2013. He holds an MA in Security Studies (2005, summa cum laude) from Tel Aviv University and is an adjunct lecturer in the Faculty of Management at Tel Aviv University.

of the commanders from the IDF Command and General Staff College to the training and education of generals.

Recent statements by a number of IDF retired generals underline the ambivalent attitude of commanders towards economic thinking. Standing on the right side is Ministry of Defense Director General and former IDF Deputy Chief of the General Staff Major General (ret.) Dan Harel, who stated that, "My criticism of the economic logic of the Iron Dome system was wrong . . . The cost of intercepting a rocket must be compared to the damage caused by that rocket to property and people in populated areas (and not against the cost of the Katyusha rocket)." Of this, there is an old Jewish saying, "He who admits his sins and abandons them, shall find mercy." On the same side is outgoing IDF Deputy Chief of the General Staff Major General (ret.) Yair Naveh, who said, "I would recommend to every deputy chief of staff to be a graduate of a business administration school, and to come to this job after a period in the private sector."[1] Indeed, experience is the best teacher.

But Major General (ret.) Gershon Hacohen thinks otherwise. A book of his lectures on national security topics was recently published; one of the lectures (Chapter 8) discusses defense appropriations. Hacohen, who was recently retired, stands out as a profound thinker − a warrior and a scholar. He asserts that profit and loss considerations should not stop Israel from going ahead with projects of national security importance. In his words, "Is the goal of Israel's redemption and the ingathering of the exiles meant to meet the test of economic rationality? Must building Israel be justified according to economic criteria and the cold cost-benefit analysis?"[2] Hacohen gives examples of some important and useful investments that should be made, even though they incur a financial loss: the "Raful (late IDF Chief of Staff Rafael Eitan) boys" educational project for disadvantaged youth, agriculture, communities on borders, and the IDF personnel policy, based on general compulsory service and reserve duty. Hacohen's arguments and examples portray the economists as a bunch of narrow-minded spoilers who decide issues according to narrow financial considerations. In "Blood and Treasure," I tried to explain why this portrayal is incorrect. I will merely say here that a true economist considers the cost-benefit of alternative actions in broad terms, not merely according to their narrow budgetary consequences. It is like a true commander, not looking at a mission solely through the sights of an M-16 and an F-16.

Let it be said that in recent decades, the economists have become skeptical, and are no longer willing to accept the statements of commanders without evaluating them first. More than once, it has emerged that behind what was portrayed as relevant national security considerations were various undisclosed interests, or just indolence and lack of thought. One such case was the Lavi project, an advanced jetfighter designed by Israel Aircraft Industries, which almost ruined the Israeli economy, the IDF, and the Israel Air Force. The Lavi mishap had many partners in the ranks of the government, the IAI, and the IDF, but this is not the place to list them. It is sufficient to say that the economists in the US administration and the Israeli Ministry of Finance succeeded, with great difficulty, in "shooting down" the project.[3] These economists deserve credit for Israel's advanced air force based on American warplanes, and on leading global high-tech industries created by scientists, engineers, and technicians who had been let go when the Lavi project was grounded. They also deserve credit for preventing an economic catastrophe. Another example is that intelligence facilities, the general staff, Israel Air Force headquarters, and the Ministry of Defense, in which huge sums were invested, are located in the heart of a residential area of Tel Aviv, close to high-rise office buildings, a major hospital, schools, museums, and an old age home. The operational and economic considerations indicate that the location of the Israeli "Pentagon" is questionable, not to mention what will happen in war to civilians whose homes and workplaces are located around it.

Hacohen points woefully and rightly to the diminishing feeling of mission among the current generation of Israelis. He asserts that economic considerations have an important role in diminishing the devotion to the cause among reservists and their employers. What he says is true, of course, but a different conclusion can be made from his observation; the reduced willingness to report for reserve duty can be attributed not only to egoistic materialism, but also to Israel's improved strategic situation, which makes it possible to lessen the defense burden nowadays. It is more difficult to generate motivation based only on values; therefore, the right economic incentives should also be used, as it is not enough to hold annual celebrations in honor of the reservists.[4]

Hacohen has underlined an important point: the government must have professional staff groups that can examine in-depth strategic and operational issues pertaining to national security. Reliance on external consulting companies, including foreigners, such as McKinsey & Co., is a

serious fault, because they lack the knowledge, experience, and judgment needed to deal with defense appropriations, as well as the moral authority required for making decisions with fateful consequences. Professional staff groups are needed in the government and the Knesset. Prominent is the lack of an experienced and professional team specializing in national security issues within the Ministry of Finance. It is interesting to note that the Office of the State Comptroller has managed to assemble such a team, headed by retired senior IDF officers, while in the Ministry of Finance, the young economists may be eager and bright, but usually lack a sufficiently broad national-security background.

In conclusion, this note reflects the feeling that the discourse between commanders and economists runs in parallel channels that do not intersect. For this reason and due to the importance of the subject, it would be fitting to devote time and energy to training commanders in economic thinking and its potential contribution to improving the processes of force-building. In recent years, the IDF's land and air forces implemented successful joint operations and so did the Military Intelligence Directorate and the Israel Security Agency. It is about time to devote attention to joining the commanders and economists.

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Call for Papers

The Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) at Tel Aviv University invites submission of articles for publication in *Military and Strategic Affairs*, a refereed journal published three times a year in English and Hebrew and edited by Gabi Siboni, Director of the Military and Strategic Affairs Program and Cyber Security Program at INSS.

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For further information, please contact:
Daniel Cohen
Coordinator, *Military & Strategic Affairs*
Cyber Security Program
Tel: +972-3-6400400/ext. 488
Cell: +972-50-5772338
danielc@inss.org.il