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**US Support to Israel: A case Study of Biden's Foreign Policy and the
2023 Israeli War on Gaza**

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of all the innocent Palestinian children, women, and men who paid the ultimate price for the dream of an independent Palestinian state. Their sacrifice will never be forgotten, and their courage will continue to inspire generations to come. May their memory be a source of strength and determination in the fight for justice and peace.

Abstract

Since the 1950s, the U.S. has maintained a unique and strategic relationship with Israel, providing significant support on the premise of shared interests. The Biden administration continues to acknowledge Israel as a vital partner. This study explores the complexities of U.S. support for Israel during the ongoing 2023 Israel's war on Gaza, examining, strategic, political, and ideological factors. It delves into the influence of the pro-Israel lobby, the role of Christian Zionism, and the repercussions for U.S. interests. The research also highlights domestic dissent, constraints on free speech, the split in the Democratic Party, and the U.S. credibility and isolation on the global stage.

ملخص

حافظت الولايات المتحدة منذ الخمسينات على علاقة فريدة واستراتيجية مع إسرائيل، مقدمة دعمًا كبيرًا على أساس المصالح المشتركة. وتواصل إدارة بايدن الاعتراف بإسرائيل كشريك حيوي. تستكشف هذه الدراسة تعقيدات الدعم الأمريكي لإسرائيل خلال الحرب الحالية على غزة في عام 2023، وفحص العوامل الاستراتيجية والسياسية والأيدولوجية. كما تتناول الدراسة تأثير اللوبي المؤيد لإسرائيل، ودور المسيحية الصهيونية، والانعكاسات على المصالح الأمريكية. يسلط البحث الضوء على المعارضة الداخلية، والقيود على حرية التعبير، والانقسام داخل الحزب الديمقراطي، ومصادقية الولايات المتحدة وعزلتها في الساحة العالمية.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AIPAC	American Israel Public Affairs Committee
AZEC	American Zionist Emergency Council
BDS	Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions
CIAC	Congressional Israel Allies Caucus
CUFI	Christians United for Israel
ESF	Economic Support Fund
FAZ	Federation of American Zionists
FMF	Foreign Military Financing
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICEJ	International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem
ICJ	International Court of Justice
IRGC	Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
QME	Qualitative Military Edge
SDI	Strategic Defense Initiative
UDP	United Democracy Project
UN	United Nations
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
U.S	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WWII	World War II

Table of Content

Introduction	1
Chapter One: An Overview on the United States Relationship with Israel	8
Introduction	8
1.1 Early Attitudes and Perceptions 1948 - 1967.....	9
1.2 Strengthening U.S.-Israel Ties	12
1.3 The Role of the Zionist Movement	16
1.4 United States Financial Aid and Diplomatic Support to Israel.....	23
Conclusion.....	27
Chapter Two: The Motives Behind the Unwavering Support of the U.S for Israel	29
Introduction	29
2.1 The Intersection between Theology and Politics.....	29
2.2 The Pro-Israel Lobby.....	34
2.3 Israel as a Strategic Asset	38
2.4 Ideological Ties.....	42
Conclusion.....	44
Chapter Three: United States Support to Israel after the October 7 Attacks	46
Introduction	46
3.1 An Overview on Operation Al-Aqsa Flood.....	47
3.2 The Costs of U.S. Support for Israel's War on Gaza.....	52
3.3 Pro-Palestinian Students' Protests.....	57

3.4 The Role of the Lobbies following October the 7th.....60

Conclusion.....64

Bibliography.....68

Introduction

The United States' foreign policy towards Israel has remained consistent over the decades, as its support to Israel is considered indispensable for both countries. The United States, which acts as a permanent ally ensuring Israel's security, alleges that Israel is a strategic asset in safeguarding American interests in the Middle East. Over time, this alliance has deepened through extensive military cooperation, economic assistance, and diplomatic support.

Under the Biden Administration, this loyalty has been notably reinforced, and the level of engagement with Israel, is surpassing the stances of previous administrations especially in response to the 7 October 2023 attacks perpetrated by Hamas against Israel in the occupied territories. In his speech following the attacks, President Joe Biden reaffirmed the longstanding support of the United States for Israel. He emphasized the historical significance of the relationship between the two nations by recalling that the United States was the first country to recognize Israel just eleven minutes after its founding seventy-five years before. President Biden reiterated his administration's unwavering commitment to Israel's security, declaring that the support for Israel is "rock solid and unwavering" ("Remarks by President Biden on ...").

The statements made by President Biden underscore the enduring alliance between the United States and Israel, rooted in a history of diplomatic recognition and mutual security interests. Since the 7th of October, the United States has been a key supporter of Israel, providing significant military aid in the form of advanced weaponry, technology, and defense systems. Additionally, the U.S. has used its veto power in the United Nations Security Council three times to block resolutions calling for a permanent ceasefire between Israel and Hamas. In December 2023, a piece of legislation was introduced in the U.S. Congress that included \$14 billion in emergency funding for Israel ("Israel Security Supplemental Appropriations").

Moreover, the Biden administration's justification of Israel's right to self-defense has led to the loss of thousands of Palestinian civilian lives, including a significant number of children. This provoked involvement from new hostile forces in the conflict, and created a geopolitical stalemate in the Middle East. Despite widespread international calls for a ceasefire, the United States escalated tensions by persistently deploying naval fleets in the Red Sea with the intention of deterring potential military interventions and threats against Israel. However, these actions resulted in retaliatory measures from pro-Iranian factions such as the Houthi and Iraqi militia, leading to attacks against American military bases in Iraq, Syria, and the Red Sea, thereby intensifying military confrontations.

U.S. interests are encountering significant challenges, as criticism and distrust towards the actual administration and its foreign policy increased, eliciting widespread condemnation and disapproval both domestically and internationally, leaving President Biden trapped in a dilemma over how to assure Israel's security without jeopardizing America's own interests and strategic objectives in the region. During a year marked by a competitive electoral race, president Biden faces a delicate situation both at home and in the Middle East as the stability of the region and the global and American economies are affected by the control of the Houthi military forces over the transit through one of the world's vital maritime trade routes by targeting commercial vessels heading towards Israel.

Recent developments, particularly the escalation of the Israel-Hamas conflict and the Biden administration's response, have brought renewed attention to the complexities of this relationship. The unprecedented backing of President Biden to Israel during its war on Gaza has sparked debate regarding its implications for American interests in the Middle East, prompting an examination of the underlying dynamics and motivations that shape this unique bond between the two nations, thereby emphasizing the need to understand the factors driving their relationship.

The complexity of the U.S-Israel relationship lies in the intertwined nature of strategic, political, and ideological factors. Israel's strategic importance as a regional ally cannot be understated, given its military prowess. However, balancing this alliance with broader American interests in the Middle East presents a delicate challenge for policymakers. Some argue that the robust support extended to Israel by the United States is justified on the grounds of Israel's strategic significance. Israel's role as a stronghold of security and prosperity in the region is believed to align with and safeguard American interests. Proponents of this view assert that bolstering Israel enhances stability in the Middle East, thereby serving as a vital asset for American geopolitical objectives. Conversely, critics contend that the unwavering support for Israel may come at the expense of American interests. They argue that prioritizing Israel's concerns over other regional actors could potentially undermine diplomatic efforts and exacerbate tensions in the region. Moreover, some perceive the United States as being entangled in conflicts not of its own making, risking its credibility and standing in the international community.

The Biden administration's support for Israel amid its war on Gaza underscores the intricate nature of the US-Israel relationship. While some argue that such backing is essential for safeguarding American interests, others caution against potential repercussions on broader regional dynamics. Understanding the complex relationship between the U.S. and Israel, as seen in the Biden administration's support for Israel during its war on Gaza, highlights the importance of comprehending and effectively managing the various factors that shape American foreign policy in the Middle East.

In light of these developments, this study readdresses the U.S. motives and causes of its support for Israel, focusing on the new events and specifically on Israel's ongoing war on Gaza. The research intends to analyze the responses and actions undertaken by the Biden administration in the aftermath of the October attacks, exploring factors such as strategic

interests, and domestic political considerations. By examining these elements, the study provides a nuanced understanding of the rationale behind the Biden administration's stance towards Israel during the war with Hamas. Additionally, the research identifies and evaluates the perceived benefits and costs associated with the United States' unwavering support for Israel, shedding light on the broader implications for U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. Through this examination, the research endeavors to offer a thorough comprehension of the intricate challenges and complexities encountered by the United States in its efforts to support Israel amidst the escalation of conflicts within the region.

The study aims to provide answers to the following questions: How has continued U.S support for Israel following the October 7th events affected its international reputation? How has international condemnation of U.S. foreign policy affected its global leadership role? How has public perception of President Biden's support for Israel during the war on Gaza evolved, and what factors have contributed to the increase in criticism and distrust towards his foreign policy? What are the key strategic objectives of the U.S. in the Middle East, and how do current challenges align or conflict with these goals?

One of the key sources on the contentious issue of the United States' support for Israel is Mearsheimer and Walt's book "*The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*" published in 2007. In their analysis, they critically examine the influence of pro-Israel interest groups on U.S. foreign policy decisions, arguing that unconditional support for Israel has led to negative consequences for American interests in the Middle East.

This perspective is further elaborated upon by M Shahid Alam in his book "*The Israeli Exceptionalism: The Destabilizing Logic of Zionism*", published in 2009. He delves into the concept of Israeli exceptionalism and its implications for U.S.-Israel relations. Alam contends that U.S. support for Israel is driven by a belief in Israeli exceptionalism, which has resulted in strategic disadvantages for the United States.

Another important source is Norman G. Finkelstein's controversial book "*The Holocaust Industry*", published in 2000. It provides additional insight on the exploitation of the Holocaust for political and financial gain. Finkelstein's critique extends to how U.S. support for Israel is influenced by Holocaust memory, leading to biased foreign policy decisions.

Moreover, Noam Chomsky's book "*The Fateful Triangle: The United States, Israel and The Palestinians*" published in 1983, offers a comprehensive analysis of the complex relationship between the United States, Israel, and Palestine. Chomsky highlights how U.S. support for Israel perpetuates conflict in the region, leading to significant costs for American diplomacy and security interests.

Another valuable source published in 1995, is Roger Garaudy's book "*The Founding Myths of Israeli Politics*", published in 1995. In his work Garaudy challenges the historical narratives surrounding Israel's creation and development as a state. Garaudy contends that these myths have shaped U.S. perceptions of Israel, influencing American policies that may not always serve long-term U.S. strategic goals.

Collectively, these sources and others offer a comprehensive framework for understanding the multifaceted challenges and implications of U.S. support for Israel. By critically examining the motivations, consequences, and ethical considerations surrounding this unique alliance, these sources provide a rich tapestry of perspectives that contribute to a nuanced understanding of U.S. support for Israel. They highlight the complex interplay of political, strategic, and moral factors shaping this relationship and underscore the need for careful consideration of its implications for American interests and global stability.

The research requires the use of historical and descriptive methods to explain U.S. support for Israel following the attacks on October 7, 2023. These are the two predominant approaches used to achieve this research work. The descriptive method involves a detailed examination of

the actions, statements, and policies of President Joe Biden and his administration regarding the war on Gaza. The historical approach is used to analyze past events, policies, and decisions to understand the evolution of the relationship between the two countries. Together, these methods provide a comprehensive understanding of both the historical context and the current dynamics of U.S. support for Israel.

In order to provide a deeper understanding of the topic, this dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first chapter serves as an introduction to the study, providing the historical relationship between the United States and Israel. Additionally, the chapter explores the historical trajectory of U.S. involvement in the conflict, examining the evolution of policies and diplomatic relations between the two nations under previous administrations. The significance of understanding the historical context is emphasized, as it provides a framework for analyzing the current state of affairs and the implications for U.S. foreign policy.

In the second chapter, the focus shifts to an exploration of the political motivations and considerations that influence the United States' support for Israel. Drawing on a combination of scholarly literature, policy documents, and diplomatic discourse, this chapter delves into the various factors that shape U.S. policy towards Israel, including strategic interests, domestic political considerations, theological and ideological ties.

The final chapter provides a nuanced analysis of the decision-making processes within the Biden administration, examining the responses and actions taken during Israel's war on Gaza. By examining the political dynamics that reveals the intricate interplay of interests and priorities shaping the relationship between the United States and Israel, the chapter elucidates the rationale behind the Biden administration's stance towards Israel and its implications for U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. The chapter focuses on evaluating the perceived benefits and costs associated with the United States' unwavering support for Israel and the broader implications for regional stability and conflict resolution efforts. The analysis explores the

complex interplay of strategic considerations involved in supporting Israel, considering how these policies align with broader U.S. strategic interests in the Middle East and globally.

Chapter One: An Overview on the United States Relationship with Israel

Introduction

Today, one of the most robust alliances between two countries is the alliance between the United States and Israel. Since the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, this partnership has held considerable significance within U.S. foreign policy. Throughout history, the relationship has remained a key priority for American diplomacy, both in the Middle East and in broader international affairs. The commitment of the United States to Israel's security and prosperity has indeed transcended party lines, with both Democratic and Republican administrations consistently reaffirming their dedication to bolstering Israel's position in the Middle East. This allegiance has evolved and strengthened over the years, with various U.S. administrations playing a crucial role in shaping it. In fact, the nature of the relationship and the extent of the support have varied under different administrations. Each president has adopted a distinct approach towards Israel and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, shaping the dynamics of U.S.-Israel relations over time.

Following WWII, the United States implemented a foreign policy strategy aimed at containing the global influence of the Soviet Union. This policy, known as containment, sought to counter Soviet expansionism by deploying significant resources across various regions. The Middle East was regarded by the United States as a crucial strategic region and containing the Soviet Union's influence there emerging as a top priority. The primary objectives of the U.S. included halting Soviet expansionism, safeguarding access to the oil-rich area, and upholding regional stability. While the alliance between the U.S. and Israel was not initially as robust during the first decade following Israel's establishment, the United States swiftly extended support to Israel. This support underscored the strategic importance placed on maintaining a presence in the Middle East and ensuring the security of key allies in the region.

This chapter examines each of these objectives as it comprehends the history of the relationship between the United States and Israel. Additionally, it discusses the evolving relationship between the United States and Israel from the period of Israel's establishment in 1948 to 2022, emphasizing the restricted nature of the relationship with Israel and the initial limitation of support from the United States during the first decades after the war. later on, it explains the geopolitical shifts that influenced the relationship between the United States and Israel.

1.1 Early Attitudes and Perceptions 1948 - 1967

The period between 1948 and 1967 shows no significant strategic support from the U.S. to Israel. In 1948, the United States supported the establishment of Israel despite lacking belief in its usefulness for American strategic goals (Puschel 11). President Harry Truman's decision to recognize Israel on May 14, 1948, shortly after its establishment, was largely driven by domestic political considerations. Truman sought to secure support from American Jewish voters and forge relationships with influential Zionist groups, rather than making a purely strategic calculation. In fact, there were disagreements among Truman's advisors, including the Secretaries of State and of Defense, who expressed concerns about potential destabilization in the region and access to Arab oil (Alam 161-162). U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall and Secretary of Defense James Forrestal viewed the establishment of the Jewish state as a strategic liability. Marshall was concerned about pushing Arab nations towards the Soviet Union, while Forrestal worried that the United States would need to intervene militarily to rescue the Jews in Palestine if they were overwhelmed by invading Arab forces after the establishment of a Jewish state (Freedman 2).

President Truman faced significant pressure from various groups to support the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. Zionist organizations, Congressmen, the press, and

the Democratic National Committee all exerted tremendous influence on Truman. Despite this pressure, Truman was initially reluctant to endorse the creation of a Jewish state. Truman's decision to recognize the State of Israel was a strategic balancing act between the forces of Zionism and the State Department (Bickerton 173).

The evolving stance of the United States towards Israel is closely tied to its changing priorities in the region. As U.S. strategic interests shift over time, so does its relationship with Israel. This dynamic was evident in the early 1950s when tensions existed between the two countries, leading the U.S. to consider forging closer ties with Egypt under President Nasser (Chomsky 66). During Eisenhower's presidency, the Middle East was viewed primarily as part of the broader Soviet threat facing the United States. President Eisenhower focused on building an anti-Soviet alliance with other regional states, considering Israel more as a problem than an important ally (Puschel 11).

In order to protect American interests in the Middle East, the Eisenhower Administration carefully managed its support for both Israel and Arab nations, although it leaned more towards supporting the Arab nations (Finkelstein 24). During this period, there was no strategic rationale for improving relations with Israel, and there was little domestic pressure advocating for such an initiative. However, Israel was valued in the intelligence field, where it was seen as an asset in confronting the Soviet threat and U.S intelligence officials recognized Israel's potential access to and connections within the Eastern Bloc (Puschel 11-12).

In the early 1950s, under the Eisenhower administration, the relationship between Israel and the United States was "uneasy" as described by Chomsky (66). The U.S. refused to sell arms to Israel despite a Soviet-Egyptian arms deal in 1955. Feeling isolated, Israel joined Britain and France in attacking Egypt in 1956 (Suez War). Eisenhower condemned the actions and pressured Israel to return Sinai and Gaza to Egypt after the conflict (Freedman 2-3).

President Eisenhower believed that providing military aid to Israel could potentially provoke conflicts with American allies in the region, rather than serving the common purpose of opposing communism. Despite a distant stance on Israel, the U.S. failed to improve its position in the Arab world or halt Soviet influence (Puschel 11,13). During the late 1950s Eisenhower became increasingly troubled by Soviet influence in the region, leading him to see Israel as a potential ally in containing Soviet-backed Arab nationalism (Little 563). Israel was perceived as a crucial barrier against Arab nationalist threats that could potentially align with the USSR, prompting a shift in U.S. perception of Israel recognizing it as a strategic asset (Chomsky 66-67).

By the 1960s, growing Soviet arms support to the region raised concerns in Washington about tipping the regional balance in favor of Arab states. As a result, the U.S. sought to counterbalance Soviet influence by providing military aid to Israel. The U.S. abandoned its longstanding policy against supplying arms to Israel and began to provide substantial military support, reflecting a strategic reevaluation driven by geopolitical dynamics in the region (Puschel 13).

For a considerable period following Israel's establishment in 1948, the United States offered limited military or economic assistance to Israel. From 1949 to 1965, annual aid to Israel averaged \$63 million, primarily allocated for economic development and food assistance. In 1959, a limited military loan program commenced, increasing aid to approximately \$100 million annually, with military loans comprising nearly half of the total. Despite U.S. loans for economic aid, France remained Israel's primary source for advanced military equipment. Not until 1962 did Israel procure its first advanced weapons system from the United States, namely HAWK anti-aircraft missiles, marking the initiation of U.S. support for Israel's qualitative military edge (QME) over its neighboring states (Nathanson and Mandelbaum 124,126,128).

A significant departure from previous policy towards Israel occurred under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. Initially, Israel had faced reluctance from the U.S. to provide military aid. However, Kennedy's election, backed by significant Jewish support, signaled a more sympathetic stance towards Israel (Puschel12). Indeed, the United States initiated arms sales to Israel to counter the threat posed by Soviet-supplied long-range bombers to Egypt. However, tensions arose between the United States and Israel, mainly concerning Israel's nuclear program (Freedman3).

Amidst the intricate framework of Cold War geopolitics and the escalating tensions in the Middle East, Lyndon Johnson's strategic calculus saw Israel as a pivotal ally against Soviet expansionism, a stance that would shape a unique and enduring relationship between the United States and Israel. Lyndon Johnson's belief that a robust Israel could act as a pro-Western barrier against potential Soviet advances in the Middle East, coupled with concerns about the possibility of Israel acquiring nuclear weapons if it were weakened, had established the framework for a unique relationship (Little 563). Johnson further solidified this support by agreeing to sell advanced bombers to Israel. These changes were not solely due to political shifts but also driven by geopolitical concerns, notably the rise of Soviet influence and Arab nationalism in the Middle East (Puschel 12).

1.2 Strengthening U.S.-Israel Ties

The years from 1967 to 1973 witnessed a significant strengthening of ties between the United States and Israel, driven by mutual strategic interests, and geopolitical considerations. The United States demonstrated a heightened interest in establishing Israel as a strategic ally for several reasons. One of the primary factors influencing this shift in policy was the Six-Day War of June 1967, during which Israel decisively defeated its Arab neighbors and gained control of significant territories.

The influential linguist and political theorist Noam Chomsky explains that in the 1960s, American intelligence viewed Israel as a significant barrier to Nasserite influence on Gulf oil-producing states and Soviet involvement. But the perception was strengthened by Israel's decisive victory in the 1967 Six-Day War, during which it swiftly took control of the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza Strip, West Bank, and the Golan Heights (67).

Additionally, Israel's military capabilities were seen as a valuable asset that could help advance American interests in the Middle East and counter Soviet influence in the region. Following Israel's victory over the Arab armies in 1967, which had received substantial military support from the Soviet Union amounting to \$11.2 billion, the United States recognized the importance of Israel's Qualitative Military Edge (QME) as a deterrent against potential conflicts in the region (Nathanson and Mandelbaum 128).

In the 1970s, there was a complex interaction of geopolitical interests in the Middle East, marked by increasing tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union and their allies. According to Puschel, this era, referred to as the "golden age" of U.S-Israeli strategic relations, was sparked by Soviet involvement in the Middle East, as well as the collaboration between the U.S, Israel during the War of Attrition, and their joint efforts to safeguard the Jordanian monarchy (18-19).

During this period, collaboration and mutual recognition of shared interests between the United States and Israel intensified, resulting in a significant surge in U.S. assistance to Israel. As Nathanson and Mandelbaum highlight, American support for Israel skyrocketed from \$30 million in 1970 to a substantial \$545 million in 1971. This surge in aid was directed towards bolstering Israel's Qualitative Military Edge (QME) and cementing its pivotal role as a key ally in the Middle East (128).

During the period of 1973-1979, American aid to Israel increased as the United States strategically aimed to counter the influence of the Soviet Union in the Middle East. Nathanson and Mandelbaum highlight this shift, noting that American aid evolved from a reactive measure to an active tool following the Yom Kippur War, to achieve strategic objectives in the region. Nixon and Kissinger stressed the importance of preventing Soviet-backed forces armed with Soviet weapons from prevailing over U.S.-aligned allies equipped with American arms (129).

The 1980s witnessed a steadfast commitment from the United States towards Israel, spanning military, political, and economic realms. This support was underlined by substantial aid provided to Israel, with a notable emphasis on military assistance and loan guarantees. Specifically, during fiscal years 1978 to 1982, Israel received a significant share of U.S. aid, comprising 48% of military aid and 35% of economic aid worldwide. In Fiscal Year 1983, the Reagan administration further bolstered this assistance, requesting nearly \$2.5 billion for Israel, including substantial grants and low-interest loans (Chomsky 49).

Moreover, the political alliance between the United States and Israel remained robust throughout the decade. The Reagan administration solidified this relationship by signing a memorandum of understanding on strategic cooperation with Israel in November 1981. This agreement aimed to address the regional threats posed by the Soviet Union and its proxies, underscoring the strategic alignment between the two nations in safeguarding regional stability and security (Reich 354).

In addition to material assistance, the United States demonstrated unwavering political support for Israel in international forums, notably at the United Nations Security Council. On June 26, 1982, the United States stood alone in using its veto power to thwart a UN Security Council resolution calling for the simultaneous withdrawal of Israeli and Palestinian armed forces from Beirut. This veto action underscored the depth of U.S. commitment to shielding Israel from international condemnation and safeguarding its security interests (Chomsky 48).

During the presidency of George H.W. Bush, the U.S.-Israel relationship faced challenges due to differing perspectives on issues such as Israeli settlements in the West Bank. According to Freedman, “US-Israeli relations chilled somewhat during the presidency of George H. W. Bush (1989–1993).” However, the United States granted loan guarantees after Israel opted to halt the building of new settlements in the West Bank (6).

Under Clinton administration, the United States and Israel experienced a significant revitalization of their special relationship. This era saw the alignment of strategic and political interests between the two nations as they worked together towards common goals of promoting regional stability and advancing peace initiatives. The Clinton administration’s Middle East policy was significantly shaped by various geopolitical factors including the conclusion of the Cold War, the continuous Arab-Israeli peace negotiations, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, Iran proxies, and concerns regarding the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (Bar-Siman-Tov 257).

Both the Bush II and Obama administrations have demonstrated a commitment to Israel's security, with substantial financial assistance and support for Israel's defense systems. However, differences emerged over Israeli settlement building, where the Bush administration took a more indulgent stance, implicitly supporting continued construction, while the Obama administration strongly opposed settlements in both the West Bank and East Jerusalem leading to disagreement and tensions between Israel and the Obama administration (Freedman 70).

Under President Donald Trump, there was a shift towards even closer ties between the U.S. and Israel, including controversial decisions such as recognizing Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and moving the U.S. embassy there. Telhami a professor in Political Science at the University of Maryland, explains that Trump's announcement to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital and relocate the U.S. embassy marked a significant departure from decades of established U.S.

policy, ignoring the nuanced status of Jerusalem and dismissing post-1967 UN resolutions concerning East Jerusalem (360).

Moreover, Trump's action preceded the introduction of his peace plan for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which proved ineffective due to the exclusion of Jerusalem. Trump's key advisers on the issue of recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital, including Kushner, Greenblatt, and Ambassador to Israel David Friedman, underestimated the significance of the Jerusalem issue to Palestinians and believed that removing it from negotiations would facilitate Arab support for their proposed peace deal (360).

1.3 The Role of the Zionist Movement

The term Zionism has been subject to diverse interpretations, sparking debates and misunderstandings regarding its essence and implications. Some view Zionism as a Western political ideology with colonial attributes, emphasizing power dynamics and territorial expansion. In contrast, others advocate for an alternative perspective that underscores Jewish national identity and historical imperatives.

Zionism emerged in the late 19th century with the aim of establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Its origins can be traced back to the growing anti-Semitism in Europe, particularly in Eastern and central Europe, where Jews faced discrimination and violence. Theodor Herzl, an Austrian journalist and writer, is considered the founder of modern Zionism. In his seminal work "The Jewish State" published in 1896, Herzl argued for the establishment of a Jewish state as a solution to the "Jewish Question" and as a means of ensuring the safety and security of the Jewish people.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Zionist leaders drew inspiration from the nationalist movements across Europe, which emphasized the idea of self-determination and statehood for distinct ethnic or cultural groups. Zionist leaders believed that the Jewish people should unite

as a nation and establish their own sovereign state. The idea originated from a strong desire to establish a safe haven where Jews could live without facing persecution or bias, ultimately strengthening Jewish identity and independence by creating an independent Jewish nation (Best et al. 108).

Alam states that Zionists argue that their movement arose in response to anti-Semitism, presenting this as a justification for their establishment of a Jewish state. By portraying Jews as historical victims of persecution, they assert an inherent right to self-determination. In reality, this narrative serves to legitimize the Zionist colonial project by framing the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine as a response to anti-Semitic persecution, thereby obscuring the colonialist aspects of Zionism's implementation (117).

The First Zionist Congress held in Basel, Switzerland in 1897 marked the official beginning of the Zionist movement. Delegates from various Jewish communities around the world gathered to discuss and promote the idea of establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Zionism gained momentum in the early 20th century with waves of Jewish immigration to Palestine, facilitated by organizations such as the Jewish National Fund (Alam79) and the World Zionist Organization (Waxman 85). The Balfour Declaration issued by the British government in 1917 expressed support for the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine, further fueling Zionist aspirations (Britanica).

In his book "Tarikh Al-Fikr Al-Sahyouni: Juthuruh Wa Masaruhu Wa Azmatuhu (History of Zionist Thought: Its Roots, Path and Crisis)", the renowned scholar of Arab culture and history, Abdelwaheb Elmessiri posits that the transition of the Zionist movement mechanisms and outcomes were driven by legal frameworks and ideological justifications rather than direct violence or Western colonization. He explains how factors like the Balfour Declaration and divine promises were used to legitimize Jewish settlement in Palestine, leading to the displacement of Palestinians from their homeland and turning them into refugees (35).

In essence, the Balfour Declaration of 1917 failed to acknowledge the Arab majority population in Palestine, referring to them only as “existing non-Jewish communities.” The declaration did not recognize them as a distinct nation or people, nor did it grant them political or national rights. In stark contrast, the declaration granted national rights to the Jewish people, who constituted a mere 6 percent of the population at that time (Khalidi28).

The American author and political activist Richard Becker explains that the Zionist project, spearheaded by Herzl, emerged as a response to European anti-Semitism but paradoxically adopted thoroughly European ideologies, with its leaders embracing colonialist and racist perspectives akin to those prevalent among European ruling classes (33).

The colonial nature of Zionism is further accentuated by the method of land acquisition employed by Zionists, which often involved displacing native Palestinians from their homes and lands. This process bears resemblance to the tactics historically used in traditional colonial endeavors, where indigenous populations were marginalized or forcibly removed to make way for settlers. The complex interplay between Zionism, colonialism, and the displacement of indigenous peoples underscores the contentious nature of the establishment and expansion of a Jewish state in Palestine.

Zionism, as analyzed by Said, is a multifaceted movement that requires examination through both historical and practical lenses. Historically, its roots in 19th-century Europe must be understood in relation to the ideologies and political structures of the time. This context helps illuminate the evolution of Zionism and its interactions with other societal forces. On a practical level, it is essential to consider the real-world impacts of Zionism, particularly on non-Jewish populations like the Palestinians. Said highlights the displacement and suffering endured by these groups due to Zionist practices, noting how the movement often glosses over its historical origins and perpetuates discriminatory actions (57).

Furthermore, the imposition of control by Zionist settlers over the indigenous population is another colonial characteristic. It was manifested through various means such as military occupation, discriminatory laws, and restrictions on movement and access to resources. The power dynamics inherent in these actions reflect a colonial mentality that prioritizes the interests of the settler population over those of the indigenous inhabitants.

The historian of the Middle East at Columbia University, Rashid Khalidi states that the eminent Revisionist' Zionist leader Jabotinsky and his followers were one of the few groups who openly acknowledged the harsh realities that would come with establishing a colonial settler society amidst an existing population. They recognized that maintaining control over the Arab majority would require a constant readiness to use significant force, which they referred to as building an "iron wall" of bayonets to ensure the success of the Zionist program (17).

Critics of Zionism not only highlight its colonialist aspect but also scrutinize the movement's invocation of Judaism to assert historical ties to the land of Palestine. Proponents of Zionism sought to justify the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine by framing it as a religious obligation rooted in biblical narratives and prophetic visions. Becker argues that resorting to the Bible or delving into millennia-old history to assert territorial claims is unfeasible (34). In alignment with Becker's perspective, the Jewish author Erich Fromm states, "If all nations would suddenly claim territory in which their forefathers had lived two thousand years ago, this world would be a madhouse" (qtd. in Becker 34).

In his book "Tarikh Al-Fikr Al-Sahyouni: Juthuruh Wa Masaruhu Wa Azmatuhu (History of Zionist Thought: Its Roots, Path and Crisis)", Elmessiri asserts that the Jewish national identity is closely linked with religious elements, often perceiving Judaism as a dual identity encompassing both nationality and religion. He further demonstrates that throughout history, Jewish communities have not coalesced into a homogeneous national entity but have instead been scattered across different civilizations and societies, embracing varied cultural and

linguistic characteristics. This diversity challenges simplistic views of a unified Jewish nation (18).

The incorporation of religious heritage into the political agenda not only served to legitimize colonization but also to mobilize Jews in support of the Zionist project. Elmessiri in his book “*The Land of Promise*” asserts that:

Such an amoral outlook, replacing deep religious commitment while making full use of it has always proved to be a more or less sure way for recruiting masses. This was particularly so in the case of Zionism, in view of the fact that a large sector of Eastern European Jewish communities was deeply religious (even in a mystical sense). The fusion of the nationalist outlook with religious fervor was achieved by turning authentic religious doctrine into a national myth (3).

In his book “*The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*,” Ilan Pappé a historian known for his controversial and influential work on the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, provides a critical analysis of the historical context surrounding Israel and the emergence of Zionism. According to Pappé: “Eretz” Israel, the name for Palestine in the Jewish religion, had been revered throughout the centuries by generations of Jews as a place for holy pilgrimage, never as a future secular state. Jewish tradition and religion clearly instruct Jews to await the coming of the promised Messiah at ‘the end of times’ before they can return to Eretz Israel as a sovereign people in a Jewish theocracy, that is, as the obedient servants of God (this is why today several streams of Ultra-Orthodox Jews are either non or anti-Zionist). In other words, Zionism secularised and nationalised Judaism” (10-11).

Pappé further delves into how Zionism secularized and nationalized Judaism, transforming the biblical territory into the focal point of a new nationalist movement. The Zionist thinkers, as portrayed by Pappé, laid claim to Palestine as the ancestral land of the Jewish people,

disregarding the presence of non-Jewish inhabitants who had resided there since ancient times. This reinterpretation led to the notion that Palestine was occupied by ‘strangers’ who needed to be displaced for the Zionist project to materialize (11).

The emergence and evolution of Zionism in the United States was shaped by historical events and the responses of American Jews. Initially, during the early years of Zionism, there was uncertainty among American Jews about supporting the movement. However, the landscape shifted dramatically with the onset of World War II and the Holocaust (Mearsheimer and Walt 116). The first organization of American Jews, advocating for the Zionist movement and known as the Federation of American Zionists (FAZ), was established in July 1898, following the inaugural Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland (Waxman 82).

The American Zionist movement gained significant strength, particularly during World War I and following the Balfour Declaration. During the late 1930s and 1940s, a significant transformation occurred within the American Jewish community that propelled it into a position of considerable influence (Segev 275). The dire circumstances faced by European Jews under Nazi occupation spurred action, leading to the formation of the American Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs, later renamed the American Zionist Emergency Council, (AZEC). This coalition, comprising major American Zionist organizations actively lobbied Congress to advocate for increased Jewish immigration to Palestine (Waxman 83-84).

In the aftermath of the Holocaust, a profound attachment to Israel swiftly became a defining aspect of identity for many American Jews galvanizing widespread support for the Zionist cause (Mearsheimer and Walt 116). As a response to Israel's overwhelming need for financial and political support, new institutions emerged. These civic organizations, driven by a commitment to benefit Israel, played a crucial role in shaping the relationship between American Jews and Israel. Their agendas often revolved around influencing U.S. foreign policy to align with Israel's

interests, reflecting a new era of engagement and activism within the American Jewish community (119).

AZEC's lobbying office in Washington mobilized Jewish activists nationwide to engage with their representatives and senators, creating a grassroots network that supported the Zionist lobby's goals. During the 1944 election, both political parties in the United States incorporated backing for Jewish statehood into their platforms. The activists engaged with a wide range of entities that extended beyond Congress to governors, state legislatures, mayors, churches, and trade unions, to build support. They even established front groups to appeal to non-Jewish allies, ultimately elevating the issue of Jewish statehood as a crucial domestic political concern (Waxman 84).

During the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, there was a notable increase in Zionist influence attributed to the growing affluence and prominence of Jews in American society, as well as the close relationships these presidents had with Jewish advisers, donors, and friends. The Six-Day War in 1967 sparked a strong sense of solidarity and support among American Jews for Israel, which persisted through later conflicts and led to a heightened emphasis on advocating for Israel within the American Jewish community (Mearsheimer and Walt 118).

The establishment of Israel in 1948 signaled the end of the first stage of American Jewish efforts in support of Zionism and Israel. Over fifty years, from 1898 to 1948, Zionism grew within the American Jewish community, leading to the formation of several pro-Zionist organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League in 1913 and the American Jewish Congress in 1918. This period also witnessed the integration of support for Zionism and the notion of a Jewish state into American domestic politics, influencing American foreign policy, especially during the administrations of Presidents Wilson and Truman (Waxman 85).

1.4 United States Financial Aid and Diplomatic Support to Israel

The United States provides extensive support to Israel in various aspects, including diplomatic, financial, and military aid. This support, aimed at bolstering Israel's interests and security on a global scale. The assistance encompasses a range of initiatives, from advocating for Israel's concerns in international forums to providing substantial financial aid to strengthening Israel's economy. Additionally, the U.S. supplies advanced weaponry and technology to ensure Israel's military superiority and safeguard its national security.

The United States has been a significant provider of financial aid to Israel since its establishment in 1948. The data from fiscal year 1946-2020 reveals a substantial amount of aid provided by the U.S. to Israel, totalling \$146,265.110 billion. This aid is categorized into military, economic, and missile defense aid. The military assistance accounts for the largest portion at \$104,506.200 billion, indicating the U.S. commitment to supporting Israel's defense capabilities. Economic aid follows with \$34,347.500 billion, demonstrating U.S. assistance in promoting Israel's economic development and stability. Additionally, missile defense aid amounts to \$7,411.409 billion, highlighting the importance of safeguarding Israel against potential security threats (Sharp1).

According to the Congressional Research Service, for decades, consecutive Administrations, working with Congress, have implemented strategies to uphold Israel's Qualitative Military Edge (QME) through various means. One such approach involves the longstanding U.S. arms sales policy, which historically prioritizes Israel's access to cutting-edge U.S. defense technology within the region. This precedence is exemplified by Israel's procurement of the F-15 aircraft in 1976, a full six years ahead of Saudi Arabia, and the delivery of the F-16 fighter in 1980, three years before Egypt received theirs (5).

Additionally, the diplomatic support of the United States to Israel from 1948 until 2020 has been a significant aspect of American foreign policy in the Middle East. This longstanding partnership has been characterized by various forms of support, including the use of vetoes in the United Nations Security Council and the implementation of foreign policies that have benefited Israel.

One key aspect of U.S. diplomatic support for Israel has been its consistent use of veto power in the United Nations Security Council to shield Israel from resolutions critical of its actions. Since 1972, until 2018 the United States has used its veto power at least 44 times to block resolutions perceived as detrimental to Israeli interests (“U.N. Security Council”). These vetoes have covered a range of issues, including settlements in occupied territories, Palestinian rights, and Israeli military actions. The U.S. justification for these vetoes often revolves around maintaining Israel’s security.

The United States began using its Security Council veto to support Israel in 1972, blocking a resolution condemning Israel’s action in Lebanon. This marked the start of a trend where the U.S. frequently vetoed resolutions criticizing Israel, particularly between 1982 and 1990. During this period, the U.S. vetoed 21 resolutions in favor of Israel, comprising nearly half of its total pro-Israel vetoes. These resolutions primarily targeted Israel's aggression in Lebanon and its occupation of Palestinian territories (O’Dell).

In addition to using its veto power in the UN, the United States has implemented foreign policies and legislations that have directly benefited Israel. The most notable laws providing ongoing authorization for foreign aid are the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, which has been modified over time, and it encompasses a wide range of bilateral economic and security assistance initiatives. The act authorizes the provision of military assistance to bolster the defense capabilities of allied nations like Israel, including the supply of weaponry, training programs, and logistical support (Morgenstern and Brown 28).

Economic Support Fund (ESF) programs are specifically implemented in countries deemed strategically important to the United States. These initiatives aim to foster political and economic stability among U.S. allies. In Fiscal Year 2019, approximately \$4.1 billion, constituting nearly 9% of total foreign assistance, was allocated through the (ESF) account. For a considerable period after the Camp David accords of 1979, the majority of (ESF) funds were allocated to bolster the Middle East Peace Process. For instance, in Fiscal Year 1999, approximately 85% of (ESF) funds were directed towards Israel, Egypt, the West Bank, and Jordan (8).

Another crucial piece of legislation was the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 which designated Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and mandated the relocation of the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, reaffirming American recognition of Jerusalem's status. Despite initial delays due to national security considerations, this legislation underscored the enduring U.S. commitment to Israel (“Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995”).

Enacted in 1995, signed into law by President Bill Clinton, it marked a significant legislative development in U.S.-Israeli relations, passed by the United States Congress on October 23, 1995. However, despite the statutory requirement, President Clinton exercised a waiver provision, delaying the implementation of the law for six-month intervals. Citing national security concerns and the imperative to preserve ongoing peace efforts in the Middle East, this waiver prolonged the embassy's relocation (Halberstam 1379 -1381).

It was not until May 14, 2018, when President Donald Trump announced the official opening of the U.S. embassy in Jerusalem, finally fulfilling the mandate of the Jerusalem Embassy Act after years of postponement (“President Donald J. Trump”). Until the United States' relocation of its embassy in 2018, no country had enacted such a move, making the Jerusalem Embassy Act a landmark legislation in international diplomatic relations.

The U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014 is a significant legislative achievement that strengthens the long-standing alliance between the United States and Israel across multiple strategic domains. This act, signed into law by President Barack Obama on December 19, 2014 focuses on enhancing cooperation in various areas, including defense and security, energy, and technology

The Act's key provisions encompass a wide spectrum of cooperative measures, notably reaffirming the United States' unwavering commitment to Israel's security through enhanced collaboration in missile defense, intelligence sharing, and cybersecurity initiatives. Moreover, it fosters cooperation in energy research and development, facilitates economic integration through trade promotion. Academic exchanges are also encouraged to nurture educational partnerships and research initiatives, underscoring the multifaceted nature of the bilateral relationship (United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014 2-3).

Additionally, the Act reinforces the U.S.'s pledge to uphold Israel's qualitative military edge in the region and mandates regular congressional assessments to ensure accountability and transparency in its implementation. By formalizing Israel's status as a major strategic partner of the United States and emphasizing shared interests, the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014 exemplifies a concerted effort to deepen and diversify the alliance between these two nations (United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014 4).

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Security Assistance signed in 2016 represents a landmark agreement that further solidified the enduring security partnership between the United States and Israel. This significant accord outlined a historic \$38 billion military aid package to Israel over a ten-year period, reflecting the deepening ties and steadfast commitment to Israel's security (“Fact Sheet: Memorandum”).

This funding, included \$33 billion in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and \$5 billion in missile defense assistance, enabled Israel to enhance its security capabilities and acquire advanced military technology. Additionally, President Obama provided unprecedented levels of Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and missile defense funding, totalling over \$23.5 billion and \$3 billion respectively during his tenure. This support encompassed the acquisition of advanced military equipment such as F-35 aircraft and the Iron Dome missile defense system (“Fact Sheet: Memorandum”).

This agreement represents a historic milestone in U.S.-Israel relations, reinforcing the longstanding alliance and contributing to strengthening Israel's ability to address common threats. Thus, the Memorandum of Understanding on Security Assistance signed in 2016 stands as a pivotal testament to the deepening security partnership between the United States and Israel, solidifying their alliance through unprecedented military aid commitments over the next decade.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the dynamic relationship between the United States and Israel has undergone significant transformations since Israel's establishment in 1948. Initially characterized by cautious diplomatic engagements and limited strategic support, the alliance gradually evolved to recognize Israel's pivotal role in countering Soviet influence in the Middle East. This evolution culminated in a robust strategic partnership, marked by increased military aid and cooperation, underscoring the enduring alliance between the two nations.

Moreover, the multifaceted approach employed by the United States in its relationship with Israel, spanning diplomatic initiatives, legislative actions, and substantial financial aid packages, underscores the depth of the alliance. Through decades of cooperation, the U.S. has played a pivotal role in bolstering Israel's security, fostering economic development, and

strengthening bilateral ties. Key legislative milestones and landmark agreements reflect the unwavering commitment and strategic partnership between the two nations.

Chapter Two: The Motives Behind the Unwavering Support of the U.S for Israel

Introduction

The special relationship between the United States and Israel has been a topic of significant scholarly debate, with various perspectives on the factors contributing to this close alliance. One prominent argument suggests that the strong bond between the two nations can be largely attributed to the influence of the “Israel lobby” within the American political system. The pro-Israel lobby in the United States stands as a significant force, comprised of diverse organizations that employ a range of strategies, from political lobbying to substantial financial contributions. The lobby exert considerable sway over policymakers and public opinion regarding Israel, effectively advancing the country’s interests within American politics. Additionally, the theological ties and prophetic interpretations linking many American Christians to Jews serve as an important motivating factor for policies that benefit the Jewish state. Another argument posits that Israel is a vital ally serving key U.S. interests in the Middle East. Others argue that the alliance is driven by ideological motives, particularly the shared commitment to liberal democratic values.

The aim of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive exploration of the different factors driving the enduring alliance between the United States and Israel. Through an in-depth analysis of theological, political, strategic, and ideological dimensions, the chapter seeks to shed light on the complexities of this relationship.

2.1 The Intersection between Theology and Politics

Religion has played a significant role in international relations throughout history. From early times to the present day, religious beliefs have supported warfare, colonialism and influenced diplomacy. The profound impact of religious beliefs on international relations is a

complex phenomenon that highlights the intricate relationship between theology and politics. Religious doctrines and narratives frequently function as powerful motivators, shaping political ideologies and actions. Christian Zionism is one of these movements that converts religious beliefs and interpretations into political actions.

Christian Zionism, as articulated by Rev. Malcolm Hedding, the former executive director-emeritus of the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem (ICEJ), can be defined as the belief in the Jewish people's right to return to their homeland. According to Hedding, a Christian Zionist is a Christian who supports this right of the Jewish people based on their historical and biblical connection to the land. This perspective asserts that Jews are God's chosen people and are entitled to all the lands promised to them in the Old Testament. They interpret Old Testament practices and prophecies as relevant and applicable in the contemporary world, overlooking criticisms of these practices by Christ and early Christian leaders (Dale).

In the early 21st century, the term "Christian Zionism" is used to describe Christians who possess both theological and political commitments concerning the modern state of Israel (Durbin). However, the movement is primarily driven by religious beliefs rather than political ideology. While it has significant political implications, the core motivation of its followers lies in their religious convictions and their engagement in politics is a means to express and uphold their religious beliefs (Shapiro 45).

Historian Robert O. Smith, in his work "More Desired than Our Own Salvation: The Roots of Christian Zionism," posits that the Anglo-American Judeo-centric prophecy tradition has played a pivotal role in shaping political Christian Zionism. This tradition, deeply rooted in Anglo-American religious thought, places significant emphasis on the centrality of Jewish beliefs within biblical prophecy. According to Smith, this ideology advocates for the preservation and promotion of Jewish sovereignty over the territories of modern Israel and Palestine (qtd. in Trollinger 1).

The modern-day restoration of Israel is viewed as a manifestation of God's faithfulness to his eternal covenant with Abraham. This covenant, as outlined in Genesis 12 and Genesis 15, includes promises of making Abraham into a great nation and granting his descendants the land of Canaan (Bühler). The doctrine is grounded in the belief that nations supporting Israel will receive divine blessings (Smith qtd. in Trollinger 1-2). Many born-again Christians perceive the divine promise, "bless those who bless Abraham and curse those who curse him" as a directive to support and stand in solidarity with the Jewish people. The covenant made to Abraham, as recorded in Genesis 12:3, stands as a fundamental pillar of Judeo-Christian theology (Spector 42).

The philosophical foundations of Christian Zionism are rooted in ancient beliefs about a heroic struggle between good and evil and the expectation of an imminent end of the world. These ideas can be traced back to early Hebrew prophets who spoke of God's decisive intervention and to Jesus Christ, who anticipated the Kingdom of God would be established within the lifetime of his disciples (Dale).

Many scholars attribute the roots of Christian Zionism to the theological framework of premillennial dispensationalism, conceived by John Nelson Darby in the mid-19th century. Premillennial dispensationalism interprets history as progressing through phases that culminate in Christ's return and a thousand-year reign. This belief system is unique in its detailed forecast of end-times, involving the Jewish return to Israel, the Rapture, and a series of escalating global crises that lead to the Battle of Armageddon (Goldman 4). Darby's teachings maintain distinct roles for Israel and the Church in God's plan. While emphasizing the exclusive role of Jesus Christ for salvation, he also recognizes the continued significance of the Jewish people within God's redemptive plan (Sizer 42).

The doctrine divides salvation history into distinct periods or "dispensations," Darby argues that believing Christians will be taken up in the Rapture, while those left behind will endure the Antichrist's seven-year rule, marked by severe tribulations. The Antichrist will initially bring peace to Israel, leading to the rebuilding of the temple, but will later demand worship and wage war against Israel. One-third of Jews will convert to Christianity, and Christ, along with his raptured followers, will defeat the Antichrist at Armageddon. Jesus will then reign over a Jewish kingdom from Jerusalem for 1,000 years, after which Satan will launch another rebellion that God will ultimately suppress (Spector 13-14).

In the United States, dispensationalist theology rose to prominence in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, through Protestant theologians such as Dwight Moody, C. I. Scofield, and William E. Blackstone. This theological perspective was further popularized through contemporary cultural works like Hal Lindsey's best-selling book "The Late Great Planet Earth" and Timothy LaHaye's "Left Behind" series. The "Left Behind" series, a fictional depiction of Armageddon, has sold over fifty million copies, underscoring the widespread influence and appeal of dispensationalist theology and Christian Zionism in modern times (Mearsheimer and Walt 133). This influence is particularly significant, not only because Christian Zionism has captivated a broad audience, but also because it has played a crucial role in shaping foreign policy decisions (Yunan).

This uncompromising stance on good and evil has endured for 2000 years and continues to influence today's Christian Zionists, who believe that the roles of Jews and Christians are part of a divine plan signaling God's ultimate victory over evil. The establishment of Israel in 1948 and its victory in the Six-Day War of 1967 are perceived as Biblical prophecies and triumphs of good over evil, (Dale) reflecting the nearing end of the Church Age and the imminent arrival of the Kingdom Age or End Times (Spector 14). These events have fostered a strong political

alliance between far-right conservatives, Christian Zionists, and Jewish Zionists, reinforcing the conviction in Israel's pivotal role and aspirations for Jerusalem's restoration as outlined in the Old Testament (Dale).

Interpreting global events through their religious beliefs, many evangelicals view Muslims as a significant threat, especially those fighting for their independence from colonization, like Palestinians, or resisting dominance, such as Iranians and other Muslim nations. Christian Zionist leaders, influenced by theological perspectives, often imagine that Muslims have expansionist goals, seeing them as the successors to the Soviets. This perception leads them to falsely believe that Muslims are radicals seeking global control over both Christians and Jews (Spector 58).

In his book "Jerusalem Countdown," John Hagee, president of Christians United for Israel (CUFI), the most influential Christian Zionist organization, warned of an impending major conflict. He claims that Islam's ultimate war is a holy war against the U.S., labeled the "Great Satan," and Israel, the "Little Satan" (68). Pastor Reza Safa extends his critique of Islam, suggesting that the underlying spirit of the religion aims to challenge Christ, impede the end-time revival, and oppose the Jewish people by seizing their promised land. Similarly, Franklin Graham describes Islam as "evil". These perspectives align with a broader narrative among Christian leaders who view Islam as a direct adversary to their apocalyptic and eschatological beliefs about the future (80).

Theologian Timothy P. Weber suggests that dispensationalist beliefs often make their adherents skeptical or even opposed to efforts aimed at achieving peace in the Middle East. This skepticism stems from their interpretation of biblical prophecy, which predicts escalating conflict in the region leading up to the end times and the return of Jesus Christ. Dispensationalists believe that attempting to bring peace may be futile or contrary to God's

divine plan, as they expect worsening tribulations to precede Christ's return (qtd. in Goldman 6).

This belief system can result in behaviors and attitudes that contribute to the instability and conflict they anticipate. By opposing peace initiatives, dispensationalists might inadvertently help create the turbulent conditions that their prophecies predict. Essentially, they may be contributing to a self-fulfilling prophecy, fostering a world where conflict persists because they believe they will not have to endure its long-term consequences, as they expect to be raptured to heaven before the worst tribulations occur.

2.2 The Pro-Israel Lobby

The pro-Israel lobby in the United States is a powerful and influential coalition of various organizations that work to promote and support Israel's interests in American politics, foreign policy, and public opinion. The majority of members in these organizations are American Jews, but there is also significant participation from evangelical Christian Zionists in pro-Israel efforts (Waxman 80).

The pro-Israel lobby is not a homogeneous entity but rather consists of three distinct factions, a centrist, a left-wing, and a right-wing lobby. The centrist lobby; which includes influential organizations such as AIPAC, the Conference of Presidents, and the Anti-Defamation League, operates based on the concept of consensus politics. Its primary goal is to present a unified stance to both Congress and the White House, reflecting the consensus viewpoint of the organized American Jewish community (92).

Furthermore, Evangelical Christians have emerged as a powerful entity, with the potential to match or even surpass the impact of established organizations such as AIPAC. This influential lobbying group is committed to presenting and promoting their viewpoints before governmental institutions, reflecting the strategies employed by the American Jewish community. By actively

engaging in advocacy campaigns, Evangelical Christians are playing a crucial role in shaping policies related to Israel (Rubin 236).

In recent times, Christians United for Israel (CUFI) has experienced significant growth both in size and impact. The organization has been actively involved in advocating for crucial legislation aimed at strengthening the relationship between the United States and Israel. This includes efforts to address Iran's nuclear aspirations and oppose the BDS movement (“CUFI in Action”).

In their highly controversial book “*The Israel Lobby*”, John J. Mearsheimer of the University of Chicago and Stephen M. Walt of Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government assert that the effectiveness of a lobby is influenced by various factors such as the strong tradition of freedom of speech in the United States, the costly electoral system, active participation in electoral campaigns, influence over legislative members and elected officials, shaping public opinion through media coverage, and garnering public support for significant causes (Mearsheimer and Walt 140).

American Jews have historically played a significant role in shaping the political landscape of the United States through their substantial financial contributions to political campaigns, particularly within the Democratic Party. Estimates indicate that American Jews contribute a considerable portion, ranging from 20% to 50%, of donations to Democratic candidates (163).

This financial support often translates into considerable sway within the Democratic Party, influencing policy decisions and candidate priorities. Moreover, lobbying, especially within the executive branch, significantly influences decisions regarding law implementation, diplomacy, and military actions. The American Jewish lobby, among various lobbying groups, has gained notable influence over major decisions of the United States government.

In 2018, the lobby saw a significant policy victory with the Trump administration's relocation of the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, a move they had long supported. Despite these successes under a Republican president, the pro-Israel lobby remained strong supporters of the Democratic Party, contributing over \$14.8 million to the 2018 midterm elections, marking their third-largest funding cycle and their largest for a non-presidential election (Arke).

AIPAC the most influential Jewish organization utilizes diverse strategies to promote its goals, such as identifying and supporting pro-Israel leaders, offering essential resources to candidates for electoral success, and actively opposing candidates who challenge U.S. support for Israel. In 2022, AIPAC endorsed 365 Democratic and Republican candidates by contributing over \$17 million towards this cause. A key focus of AIPAC's mission is fostering bipartisan support for the enduring U.S.-Israel alliance ("The AIPAC PAC").

In the 2022 election cycle, the United Democracy Project (UDP), a super PAC affiliated with the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), raised a total of \$31 million, with AIPAC itself contributing \$8.5 million. UDP spent \$26 million primarily on Democratic primaries, including significant expenditures such as \$4 million opposing Donna Edwards in Maryland's 4th Congressional District, \$1.7 million supporting Glenn Ivey in the same district, \$2.1 million supporting Valerie Foushee in North Carolina's 4th Congressional District, \$3.9 million supporting Haley Stevens and \$341,000 attacking Andy Levin in Michigan's 11th Congressional District, and \$588,767 supporting Kevin Mullin in California's 15th Congressional District. The outcomes of the elections saw candidates like Ivey, Foushee, Stevens, and Mullin winning their general elections, bolstering AIPAC's influence in Congress (Cohen).

Another way of pressure is the "Jewish vote" which is considered significant due to the sizable Jewish population. This demographic group has the potential to influence electoral

outcomes, particularly in situations where victory margins are narrow, typically around 3% to 4%. The impact of the Jewish vote is amplified by factors such as voter turnout rates and the relative lack of substantial policy differences between major political parties (Cotta qtd. in Garaudy 94).

Moreover, the lobby has wielded significant influence in government circles, largely due to the substantial representation of Jewish individuals in key positions. Renowned figures such as Henry Kissinger, Cyrus Vance, and Madeleine Albright have occupied influential roles in various administrations, shaping policies and decisions. Moreover, Jewish representation in Congress is notable, with around 10% of senators and 15% of representatives being of Jewish descent (Milbrath qtd. in Aleskerova 118).

The evolution of U.S. support for Israel to a bipartisan consensus about Middle East foreign policy is significant. A 2010 Gallup poll revealed that 63 percent of Americans sympathized more with Israelis than Palestinians. This bipartisan support is robust in Congress, where cooperation with Israel is deeply institutionalized. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's warm reception during his 2011 speech to a joint session of Congress showcased this strong congressional affinity and close relationship with Israel (Malka 41).

Established in 2006 by founding Co-Chairs Rep. Eliot Engel and Rep. Dave Weldon, the Congressional Israel Allies Caucus (CIAC) is a bipartisan, pro-Israel working group in the U.S. House of Representatives. Members of the CIAC have led efforts to pass legislation aimed at ensuring an indivisible Jerusalem, combating the BDS Movement and supporting Israel's right to safe and secure borders. The CIAC plays a pivotal role in fostering bipartisan support for the Jewish state ("Israel Allies Caucus").

The strength of the lobby is evident, with even the president facing criticism from Israel and expected to prioritize Israeli interests over other considerations. An example of this influence

was seen when House Speaker Boehner collaborated with Israel's ambassador to arrange a speech by Netanyahu before Congress, despite objections from President Obama (Baroud).

The Jewish lobby's effectiveness is strengthened by factors like high levels of education and income among its members, active political engagement, a skilled professional staff, specialized groups focusing on specific issues, extensive communication networks, and a multitude of organizations at local and national levels. This positive image is further reinforced by the lack of significant opposition, particularly from the Arab lobby which struggles with challenges in electoral politics and organization. The Arab lobby often operates with limited resources and support compared to the Jewish lobby (Mearsheimer and Walt 140).

2.3 Israel as a Strategic Asset

The unwavering support of the United States towards Israel has been a subject of debate among scholars. While some question the extent of support of the U.S. to its ally, others praise this alliance as crucial for maintaining stability in the Middle East and serving the United States' interests.

Those in favor argue that the alliance between the U.S. and Israel has greatly bolstered American security through expanding cooperation on both military and nonmilitary issues. Since 1949, the U.S. has given Israel substantial aid totaling billions of dollars, yet the partnership remains mutually advantageous. Despite the imbalance in support, this relationship has delivered significant economic, military, and political benefits to the United States (Eisenstadt and Pollock).

In the 1970s, Israel strategically shifted its approach to ensure continued robust support from the United States. Initially dependent on America's moral commitment, it began to emphasize its strategic importance to U.S. interests. This rebranding aimed to justify the substantial military and economic aid it received by highlighting its value to the U.S. as a vital partner. The

Israelis continually sought to establish a publicly recognized strategic status (Veliotis 66-67). Yigal Allon, Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister, stressed Israel's role in stabilizing the region (Puschel 24).

The strategic realignment set the groundwork for a comprehensive understanding of the U.S.-Israel relationship, emphasizing shared values and tangible benefits to America's national interests. In addition to moral commitment, the alliance serves as a vital asset to America's interests (Blackwill and Slocombe 1-3), showcasing practical benefits and collaborative efforts in intelligence and defense technologies, significantly bolstering American security and enhancing its global influence (9).

Building on this evolving partnership, the strategic importance of Israel to the U.S. has been a cornerstone of American foreign policy for decades. Initially, American leaders like Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson viewed Israel as a critical ally in preventing Soviet influence in the Middle East and limiting nuclear proliferation. Israel's support in regional conflicts and its strategic position made it a valuable partner against wars of “national liberation” (Little 580).

In the late 1960s, American views towards Israel changed as conservatives and military leaders grew more supportive of Israel because they believed it positively impacted U.S. security, especially through its combat expertise and intelligence cooperation during the Vietnam War. Consequently, President Lyndon Johnson authorized enhanced intelligence sharing with Israel in secret (Spiegel qtd. in Cobban 6).

It is evident that through its consistent role as a silent partner in regional security and intelligence operations, Israel has mobilized to defend U.S. allies, such as protecting Jordanian monarchy from Syrian intervention in 1970 and providing critical intelligence to Egypt and

Saudi Arabia. Israel's military actions, including driving Soviet proxies from Beirut and destroying Iraq's nuclear reactor, have served to deter U.S. adversaries (Spiegel).

This approach of leveraging Israeli cooperation to achieve American geopolitical objectives was not new. The U.S. supported military regimes in Black Africa and Central America during the early 1980s by using Israel as a proxy to provide military aid and training, avoiding direct involvement due to domestic and international opposition and congressional human rights restrictions. This strategy allowed the U.S. to maintain its influence and support authoritarian regimes indirectly (Chomsky 72-73).

During Nixon's administration, the United States, under the guidance of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, pursued diplomatic efforts to improve relations with Egypt. This initiative was part of a larger strategy to reduce the expenses linked to American involvement in the Middle East, specifically concerning the Arab-Israeli conflicts (Hadar 94).

Since the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the importance of achieving peace between Arabs and Israelis has been widely recognized by every American administration, with the exceptions of Reagan's and George W. Bush's administrations. The United States has consistently viewed the resolution of the Israeli-Arab conflict as crucial for promoting stability and advancing American interests in the region (Kurtzer et al. 3). Israel's strategic value transitioned from being primarily based on its strength and influence to being measured by its willingness to compromise and align with U.S. objectives, especially in strengthening ties with Arab nations (Puschel 23). As a result, Carter considered collaborating on small military operations as a gesture of appreciation for Israel's constructive engagement in peace negotiations with Egypt (Bard).

During Reagan's tenure, the view of Israel as a strategic U.S. asset in the Middle East sparked considerable debate. Some of Reagan's advisers pushed for Israel to be recognized as America's

primary military ally in the region, especially during the heightened tensions of the Cold War. They depicted the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as a Soviet proxy, positioning Israel as a crucial player in countering Soviet influence (Hadar 95).

In the first seven years, there was a notable shift in the foundation of the U.S.-Israeli relationship from moral justifications to strategic considerations. This change was demonstrated through concrete policy actions such as the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on strategic cooperation in 1981, Israel's participation in the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) research program in 1986, and its designation as a "major non-NATO ally" in 1987. During this period, Israel aimed to underscore its value as a strategic asset to the U.S. by highlighting its intelligence capabilities, technological advancements (Cobban 5). The 1980s saw formalization of the U.S.-Israel strategic partnership. The Reagan administration through the establishment of strategic cooperation agreements.

During the Bush I and Clinton administrations, Israel was encouraged to cooperate in the establishment of a weak Palestinian state, aligning with both U.S. interests and its own strategic goals. This shift in tactics aimed to potentially stop Palestinian resistance and lessen anti-U.S. sentiments in the Middle East. President Obama continued this approach initiated by Clinton (Becker 128).

During the Second Intifada, under the influence of the Saudi Prince Abdullah, President George W. Bush implemented measures to tackle the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As a crucial U.S. ally, Abdullah emphasized the necessity of peace, prompting Bush to exert pressure on Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon who agreed to withdraw Israeli forces from Ramallah and dismantle certain settlements. Bush's decisions were motivated by the strategic importance of maintaining strong ties with Saudi Arabia (Kurtzer et al. 170 -171).

Following 9/11, neoconservatives in Bush II's administration advocated for a strategic U.S.-Israel alliance against Islamo-extremism. This alliance positioned the U.S. as the leader and Israel as a key military supporter in the Middle East, sidelining peace efforts in favor of aggressive tactics against what America called regional terrorists. This strategy contributed to the Iraq War, strengthening Iran and its allies (Hadar 96).

The neoconservative vision for Israel portrays it as a contemporary “crusader” state, serving as an “outpost” for a distant global power. In this framework, Israel's political, economic, and military decisions are influenced by forces located far from its borders. This portrayal underscores the complex dynamics of power and influence shaping Israel's role in the world, suggesting a relationship where Israel's actions are perceived as extensions of broader geopolitical strategies. Such a perspective challenges traditional notions of sovereignty and autonomy, positioning Israel within a network of global interests and agendas (Hadar 96).

2.4 Ideological Ties

In international relations, liberal internationalism suggests a vision of a peaceful world order where countries work together based on democratic values. It argues that democracies tend to follow rules, leading to cooperation, peace, and equality among nations. This view is based on the belief that strong countries will show self-control and keep their promises to maintain stability (Ikenberry 72). Building upon this concept, the Democratic Peace Theory provides further insight into the peaceful relations observed among democracies. Immanuel Kant's "Toward Perpetual Peace" supports the idea that global peace can be achieved if nations adopt democratic governments, form alliances, and follow international laws. According to Kant, democracies are more peaceful because their leaders are accountable to citizens who prefer peace over war, implying that spreading democracy could promote a more peaceful world.

Democratic peace research primarily examines Kant's idea that democracies avoid war due to high political costs like public opposition and legislative barriers. Additionally, some studies consider Kant's other mechanisms: economic interdependence and international organization membership. Together, these factors, democratic institutions, economic ties, and participation in international organizations are believed to promote peaceful relations between countries (Mello 2).

The democratic peace theory suggests that countries with liberal beliefs will encounter significant opposition from their citizens if they engage in war with another country that is also a liberal democracy. However, there are exceptions to this idea of democratic peace, which may occur when the conflicting parties do not perceive each other as liberal democracies. In such cases, the absence of shared liberal values can undermine the deterrent effect of public opposition to war, potentially leading to conflict (Owen 89).

Liberal democracies, characterized by their commitment to democracy, human rights, freedom, and equality, often engage in wars that align with these core values. They prioritize the protection of individual rights and the promotion of democratic governance both at home and abroad. When liberal democracies enter into conflicts, they typically do so with the aim of upholding these fundamental principles. While it may not mean that democracies participate in fewer wars than other types of states, it does suggest that they have fewer justifications for initiating conflicts (Doyle qtd.in Rosato 588).

If this theory holds true, it challenges the realist perspective, which emphasizes competition for security and the structure of the international system. Proponents of democratic peace theory argue that spreading democracy globally could enhance American national security and promote world peace (Rosato 585). However, critics, particularly realists, contend that the absence of war between democracies is not solely attributed to their democratic nature. Instead,

they argue that shared strategic interests are more significant. During the Cold War, democratic countries formed alliances based on mutual security concerns, suggesting that strategic alignment, rather than democracy itself, plays a crucial role in preventing conflicts between nations (Placek 2).

Additionally, the United States frequently intervened in other countries to contain the spread of communism, often disregarding the democratic status of these nations. This led to the overthrow of democratically elected governments and the establishment of autocratic regimes that aligned with U.S. interests. Despite minor conflicts that could have been resolved through diplomacy, the U.S. prioritized its national security goals over democratic principles. Economic interests also played a significant role in these interventions, as seen in cases like Iran's nationalization of its oil industry, which threatened American business interests (Rosato 591).

In an address before the Annual Policy Conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee in April 1985, Secretary of State George Shultz argued that Israel's successful democracy serves as a powerful example for the world, inspiring the global trend towards democracy. He suggested that both Israel and the United States have played a role in this positive development. This shared commitment to democracy has strengthened the bond between the American and Israeli people, making them not only moral partners but also vital strategic allies in the pursuit of freedom and democracy (123). He further, emphasizes that the shared goals of freedom and peace between the United States and Israel depend on the strength of both nations. To achieve these objectives, the U.S. is steadfastly committed to helping Israel protect itself from potential threats (124).

Conclusion

Diverse motives shape U.S. foreign policy, particularly concerning its relationship with Israel. The intertwining of theological, political, strategic, and ideological dimensions

underscores the complexity of this enduring alliance. From the theological convictions driving Christian Zionism to the significant influence of the pro-Israel lobby, and from the strategic importance of Israel in the Middle East to the ideological ties between the two nations, these factors collectively contribute to the trajectory of U.S. engagement in the region. As such, U.S. foreign policy towards Israel is not merely a product of diplomatic maneuvers but is deeply rooted in religious beliefs, political interests, strategic calculations, and ideological affinities.

Chapter Three: United States Support to Israel after the October 7 Attacks

Introduction

The highly coordinated attacks launched by Hamas against Israel on October, 7, 2023 marked a significant turning point in the regional and international scene. The operation dubbed Operation Al-Aqsa Flood and characterized by its strategic and well-planned nature, demonstrated Hamas's determination to alter the regional power dynamics. By employing sophisticated tactics such as penetrating Israeli defenses, launching a massive rocket barrage, and taking a number of hostages, Hamas showcased a level of coordination and planning that had not been seen before.

Operation Al-Aqsa Flood revealed Hamas's enhanced military capabilities, challenging the established power dynamics and reshaping the course of history. The operation elicited varied international responses and highlighted the broader geopolitical ramifications intertwining regional conflicts with global interests. For decades, especially since the 1967 war, Israel has been perceived as the most powerful military force in the region, convincing the world, particularly the United States, of its strategic importance and military prowess. However, Operation Al-Aqsa Flood demonstrated Hamas's ability to inflict significant damage on Israel's military machine, challenging the traditional notions of military superiority in the region.

While Israel and Hamas are central to the conflict, other significant players also play crucial roles in addressing the events. Several key actors were involved in responding to and managing the aftermath of the situation. One of the main actors involved after the attacks is the United States. As a key player in international affairs and a close ally of Israel, the U.S. played a pivotal role in destabilizing the region and provoking further escalation of violence.

In the light of these new events, this chapter explores the U.S. foreign policy decisions and actions undertaken after October 7, focusing on the motivations behind the Biden administration's unwavering support for Israel. It provides a comprehensive analysis of the events, actions, and policies implemented by the U.S. government following the crisis, examining the strategic, political, and ideological factors driving this steadfast support. Additionally, the chapter evaluates the costs and benefits for the United States, considering the alignment of these policies with broader U.S. strategic interests in the Middle East and globally.

3.1 An Overview on Operation Al-Aqsa Flood

The attack launched by fighters from the Gaza Strip, led by the Palestinian group Hamas, against Israel on October 7, 2023, was a significant event that involved unexpected series of operations by land, sea, and air targeting both Israeli military bases and civilian areas (Zanotti and Sharp 1). *Eljazeera News* reported that the surprise attack which involved gunmen breaching security barriers and a barrage of rockets fired from Gaza during the Jewish holiday of Simchat Torah, bears historical significance. This attack occurred on a Saturday October 7, precisely 50 years and one day after Egyptian and Syrian forces initiated an assault during the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur (“What happened in”). Because the attacks are the most significant in the 16 years that Hamas has governed Gaza, the apparent shortcomings in intelligence and operations that led to the inability to stop the impact of the assault are subject to examination by Israeli and U.S. authorities (Zanotti et al 1).

The attacks were meticulously planned over a span of years by Hamas leaders Mohammed Deif and Yehya Sinwar, who aimed to disrupt the existing state of affairs and oppose Israel’s conduct in the enduring conflict. The operation was driven by grievances over Israeli actions, including the 2021 raid on the Al Aqsa mosque and ongoing raids, land confiscations, and the Gaza siege (Nakhoul and Bassam). Additionally, the increasing peace agreements between

Arab states and Israel, such as the 2020 Abraham Accords and potential agreements with Saudi Arabia motivated the attacks (Parmeter).

Supported by a relentless onslaught of rockets, Hamas fighters surged from the besieged Gaza Strip into neighboring occupied Israeli towns, infiltrating up to 22 locations, some as distant as 15 miles (24 kilometers) from the Gaza border. Violent confrontations erupted, between commandos and Israeli army, seizing hostages in two towns and controlling a police station in another. Prior to dawn on Sunday, additional rocket fire from Gaza struck a hospital in the Israeli coastal city of Ashkelon, resulting in damage, though no casualties were reported (Federman and Adwan).

On the same day as the attacks, the Israeli government initiated a fierce propaganda campaign with the objective of overwhelming public discourse with false and unverifiable claims. This calculated effort aimed to manipulate public opinion not only in the U.S. but also in other Western countries (Scahill). A false rumor emerged and rapidly spread, the claim that 40 babies had been decapitated in the Kfar Aza kibbutz. Despite being unfounded, this story was widely circulated, even mentioned by the White House. Investigations revealed that Israel did not actively combat the misinformation, it deliberately used it for propaganda and media manipulation (Maad et al.).

The core of this strategy involved the dehumanization of Palestinians, with the Israel defense minister going so far as to label them as “human animals”. The campaign sought to legitimize the killing of innocent civilian Palestinians in Gaza by portraying it as necessary for Israel's security. The propaganda machine branded opposition to their aggressive war as antisemitic, equated questioning its narrative with Holocaust denial, and framed protests against civilian casualties as support for Hamas (Scahill).

Israel's response to the attacks was harsh and disproportionate. The government declared a state of war, mobilized its military forces, and launched airstrikes targeting innocent civilians. Israeli leaders, imposed a complete blockade to stop the delivery of essential supplies like food and fuel to Gaza, where 2.3 million people live (Nichols). According to Palestinian health authorities, Israel's ground and air campaign in Gaza has resulted in the deaths of over 35,000 people, mostly women and children, and has displaced the majority of the enclave's residents from their homes as of May 14 ("Gaza death Toll..").

The war on Gaza has inflicted profound suffering on the civilian population, as indiscriminate airstrikes and ground offensives have forced hundreds of thousands of Gazans to flee their homes repeatedly. The targeting of medical facilities has exacerbated an already dire humanitarian crisis, leaving the whole population without access to essential healthcare services. Amidst the chaos, attempts to negotiate temporary truces proved futile, with the exception of a breakthrough agreement reached in November. The accord permitted the exchange of 105 hostages for 240 Palestinian prisoners most of them teenagers and women incarcerated in Israeli jails, marking a rare moment of respite during a one-week ceasefire ("Major Events..").

Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor reports that since October 7, Israel has used starvation as a weapon of war against Palestinian civilians in Gaza. The Israeli military enforced a comprehensive siege, closing crossings and blocking aid. They targeted essential resources, including mills, bakeries, markets, crops, and water supplies, depriving 2.3 million Gazans of food and water. This resulted in multiple displacements and widespread famine, causing fatalities from starvation and dehydration, especially among children. Israel also attacked aid convoys and distribution centers, severely restricting humanitarian relief and worsening the crisis ("New Report: Killing Starving..").

The indiscriminate bombings of civilians and the deliberate use of starvation as a weapon of war in Gaza have prompted various factions in the region to align themselves with the Palestinian militant groups in solidarity against Israel. This has led to the involvement of groups such as Hezbollah from Lebanon, the Houthis from Yemen, Iraqi militants and later on Iran.

On October 8, Hezbollah engaged in a series of clashes with Israel along the Lebanese border in support of Hamas and in response to Israeli massacres (Zanotti and Sharp 3). Hezbollah targeted Israel's northern region with rockets, anti-tank missiles and drones, which led to the evacuation of Israeli border populations. Despite severe Israeli bombardment of Gaza, Hezbollah's response remained confined to the Galilee region (Baram). Apart from Hezbollah, other significant forces involved in the attacks against Israel include the Lebanese al-Fajr Forces and Amal Movement, as well as Hamas's Qassam Brigades and Islamic Jihad's al-Quds Brigades, both armed wings of Palestinian groups present in Lebanon (Dhaybi and Hussein).

In November, the Houthis began targeting Israel and commercial vessels associated with Israel in the Bab al-Mandab Strait, disrupting Red Sea traffic and increasing costs for shipping firms. In December, the U.S. launched Operation Prosperity Guardian, a coalition of 24 nations led by U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, to patrol the Red Sea. Bahrain was the only Arab member of this coalition (Blanchard 3). After U.N. Security Council Resolution 2722 was approved on January, U.S. and allied forces carried out military operations against Houthi targets in Yemen. The strikes on Houthi military installations have persisted, alongside ongoing attacks by Houthi forces on vessels belonging to the United States and its allies (Blanchard and Martin 2).

Iran conducted its first direct military action against Israel from Iranian territory on April 13, launching aerial attacks in response to an Israeli strike on April 1 that resulted in the deaths of high-ranking members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). Iran and its allies deployed around 350 drones and missiles from various locations towards Israel. This event

represents a notable escalation in the ongoing conflict between Iran and Israel, with Iranian authorities warning of potential retaliation from Iran in response to any future attacks on Iranian interests or citizens (Thomas et al. 1-2).

Israel's strategic approach to engaging with Iran involves a series of provocations and actions aimed at highlighting the threats it faces and bringing support from the United States. By engaging on multiple fronts, Israel seeks to draw attention to the existential threat posed by Iran and its proxies in the region. However, Iran has been careful not to be drawn into a full-scale war with Israel, instead strategically using the conflict to its advantage.

Iran's approach involves leveraging its influence in the region through various proxies and allies while avoiding direct confrontation with Israel. By maintaining a level of ambiguity and deniability in its actions, Iran aims to achieve its strategic objectives without escalating tensions to the point of all-out war. This delicate balancing act allows Iran to exert pressure on Israel and its allies while avoiding the risks associated with a full-scale military conflict.

Israel's strategy of highlighting the threats it faces from Iran serves to rally international support, particularly from the United States. By framing the conflict as an existential threat not only to Israel but also to U.S. interests in the region, Israel hopes to persuade the U.S. to take a more active stance against Iran and provide military support if necessary. This tactic is designed to increase pressure on Iran and its proxies while positioning Israel as a key ally in countering Iranian influence in the Middle East.

Both Israel and Iran are engaged in a complex strategic maneuver aimed at furthering their respective interests without tipping the balance into all-out war. While Israel seeks to draw international support by highlighting the threats it faces from Iran, Iran strategically navigates the conflict to advance its regional influence without risking direct confrontation with Israel.

3.2 The Costs of U.S. Support for Israel's War on Gaza

The Biden administration's approach to Israel has been marked by a consistent alignment between actions and rhetoric, emphasizing unwavering support for Israel through various means such as official visits, meetings with Israeli leaders, and requests for financial and military aid. However, this stance appears contradictory when it comes to addressing the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Despite expressing concerns for the well-being of Palestinian civilians, the continued provision of arms and financial assistance to Israel has been criticized for contributing to the suffering, displacement, and casualties among Palestinians. This discrepancy between U.S. rhetoric regarding humanitarian concerns in Gaza and its practical support for Israel has raised questions about the Biden administration's true commitment to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict ("Remarks by President Biden..").

The ongoing conflict reveals the United States' true position, which appears to contradict its stated values. Despite promoting human rights, freedom and nations' self-determination, the U.S. has consistently opposed collective efforts at the UN Security Council, vetoing three resolutions aimed at stopping hostilities in Gaza since October 7 and a draft against granting Palestine full membership in the Security Council ("Veto List"). The vetoes have been criticized by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for hindering the council's ability to address the situation in Gaza, leading to Palestinian casualties as noted by Palestine's UN ambassador ("Is the United States Misusing..").

The significant support of the four resolutions which received 12 to 13 votes in favor underscores the U.S. growing isolation on the international scene ("Security Council Fails.."). This overwhelming backing for Palestine emphasizes the divergence of the U.S. position from the broader international consensus. The "ironclad" support for its ally as claimed by Biden, despite increasing evidence of genocide, demonstrates a shift away from principles of justice, impartiality and political pragmatism.

Al Jazeera's senior political analyst Marwan Bishara criticized the U.S. veto, saying it exemplifies a "my way or the highway" approach. He argued that the U.S. dictates the terms under which Palestine could be recognized as a country, prioritizing its own geopolitical interests and those of Israel. Bishara accused the U.S. of sacrificing Palestinian freedom for its own and Israel's narrow interests ("US Showing it's..").

Jeffrey D. Sachs, a University Professor at Columbia University highlights in his article: "*U.S. Foreign Policy Is a Scam Built on Corruption*" that the U.S. has faced global isolation due to its support of Israel's actions against the Palestinians. This was evident when the U.S. voted against a UN General Assembly resolution for a Gaza ceasefire that was supported by 153 countries representing 89% of the world population. The resolution was opposed by only the U.S. and nine small countries with less than 1% of the world population.

Biden's foreign policy has faced criticism for being perceived as a failure. The United States' involvement in conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East has raised significant concerns about global stability and human rights implications. The \$95 billion aid package passed by the Senate with wide bipartisan support, aimed at providing assistance to Ukraine, Israel, Taiwan, and the Indo-Pacific region, reflects the U.S. willingness to fuel conflicts around the world rather than promoting peace (Rimmer and Barrett).

In Ukraine, Biden's approach to the conflict with Russia has faced criticism from Jeffrey D. Sachs. In his article "*Why Joe Biden Is a Foreign Policy Failure*" he argues that despite the opportunity for a peace agreement in 2022 that could have ended the conflict by ensuring Ukrainian neutrality and halting Ukraine's NATO aspirations, Biden chose to continue supporting the war effort. As a result, the conflict persists with severe consequences such as substantial loss of life and widespread destruction. Sachs suggests that the U.S. Military-Industrial Complex benefits economically from the ongoing war, with highly profitable arms contracts, manufacturing opportunities, and the chance to test new weapons systems.

Similarly, in the Middle East, particularly in relation to Israel, the U.S. government's provision of military aid has been a contentious issue. While the U.S. asserts that its support for Israel is crucial for maintaining stability in the region, critics argue that this aid perpetuates violence. Biden's stance has significantly legitimized Israeli actions, leading to considerable human suffering. The administration's public endorsement of actions, resulting in thousands of Palestinian deaths, injuries, and displacements, has contributed to the dehumanization of Palestinians (Telhami).

In an interview, Glenn Dieser, a professor at the southeastern Norway University argues that the United States current stance in the global arena reflects a misguided belief in the restoration of unipolarity, reminiscent of the 1990s when American dominance seemed unquestionable. In his article: "*Ending America's War of Choice in the Middle East*" Sachs explains that the consequences of the United States' unilateral mindset are clearly evident in its imperial actions, particularly in the Middle East, where it has frequently disregarded international law and United Nations mandates. Historically, the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq were justified under the pretext of promoting democracy and freedom, resulting in significant civilian casualties and widespread destabilization. More recently, its involvement in the war of Israel on Gaza has perpetuated this trend, leading to further civilian suffering and instability. Despite instances where diplomacy has proven successful, such as with the Iran nuclear agreement, which saw collaboration between Russia, China, and the United States, as well as the adoption of the Paris Climate Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals, the U.S. continues to favor military interventions over multilateral solutions (Sachs). These diplomatic successes highlight the feasibility and effectiveness of multilateral cooperation, suggesting that prioritizing such an approach over unilateral actions can lead to more sustainable and mutually beneficial results. Whereas preference for unilateralism underscores a dangerous adherence to an outdated belief

in American unipolar dominance, neglecting the evolving nature of international relations and the necessity for adaptability in pursuing national interests (Dieser).

Immediate action is essential to reinstate global diplomacy within the UN Security Council, (Sachs), especially given recent instances of the United States abusing its veto power against draft resolutions aimed at ending genocide in Gaza and addressing humanitarian crises. U.S. support, not only undermines the principles of justice and equality enshrined in international law but also perpetuates the cycle of oppression and dispossession experienced by the Palestinian people

Moreover, the United States must swiftly withdraw from ongoing conflicts in the Middle East and transition towards UN mediated diplomacy to pursue enduring solutions and ensure regional security. Empowering local stakeholders to tackle their own challenges with UN support is paramount. This strategy, which includes strong efforts in peacekeeping and peace-building, is essential for preventing further increase in tensions and promoting lasting stability in the area (Sachs).

In another article: “*Will Netanyahu Bring Down Biden*” Sachs explains that President Biden attempted to improve relations between Saudi Arabia and Israel by offering advanced military equipment and a commitment to a future two-state solution. However, Saudi Arabia declined this offer, stressing the importance of addressing the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and recognizing an independent Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital (Sachs). This response from Saudi Arabia reflects the need for the U.S. to reevaluate its role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well as its involvement in the war on Gaza.

The administration's prioritization of escalating conflicts over pursuing peaceful resolutions raises significant concerns. By continuing to provide munitions to Israel despite facing credible genocide charges in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the potential for war crimes and

crimes against humanity charges against Israeli officials by the International Criminal Court (ICC), the administration demonstrates a disregard for established international legal institutions and human rights principles. These actions not only risk undermining adherence to international norms but also compromise the United States diplomatic standing and credibility on the global stage (Kottasová and Araujo).

In an interview on Al Jazeera, John Mearsheimer highlighted that the United States perceived complicity in actions seen as genocidal has significantly damaged its global influence. This complicity contradicts the principles of a rules-based order that the U.S. often advocates, thereby undermining its international credibility. The rules-based order stresses adherence to international laws, human rights, and peaceful conflict resolution. However, the U.S.'s unwavering support for Israel, despite controversial actions, represents a clear departure from these principles. This inconsistency between the United States' stated ideals and its actual foreign policy decisions raises doubts about its dedication to the values it promotes.

In his speech to Congress, Democrat Senator Bernie Sanders emphasized the crucial role of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in maintaining global standards of justice. Sanders explains that the United States, as a self-proclaimed leader of the free world, has historically mobilized international efforts to uphold laws against war crimes and crimes against humanity. He contended that this leadership is jeopardized when the U.S. ignores the current atrocities in Gaza. Sanders asserted that failing to address these crimes undermines America's credibility and moral authority to criticize other nations' human rights abuses. He warned that such hypocrisy would erode the United States' ability to lead and uphold international norms effectively.

The U.S. Congress's approval of a foreign aid bill demonstrates a clear alignment with Israel's interests, coupled with a disregard for Palestinian lives and humanitarian needs. This bill allocates more than \$26 billion for Israel's military (Rimmer and Barrett), eases restrictions

on weapons transfers to Israel, and explicitly prohibits any U.S. funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), which provides essential services to millions of Palestinian refugees (“US Approves \$14 Billion..”).

By supporting Israel’s military actions in Gaza without effectively monitoring the use of U.S. military aid, the U.S. is undermining important legal frameworks like the Foreign Assistance Act, the Arms Export Control Act, and the Leahy Laws. These laws require that countries receiving U.S. military assistance uphold human rights standards. Ignoring these laws can have significant consequences for U.S. foreign relations as it sets a precedent that may discourage other recipients from complying with U.S. legal standards (Saab).

Israel's relationship with the United States has undergone a profound evolution, transcending the conventional roles of ally or strategic partner. Following the “loss of its deterrence power” after the October 7 attacks, Israel has increasingly leaned on direct military support and guidance from the United States. This reliance has led to a transformation where Israel is now considered as an American protectorate (Hadar). This deep integration and dependency suggest a significant shift in the dynamics of their relationship, prompting comparisons that liken Israel to an outpost or even figuratively the 51st state of the U.S.

3.3 Pro-Palestinian Students’ Protests

Pro-Palestine student protests in the United States against Israel’s military actions in Gaza have been a significant aspect of the ongoing Israel war on Gaza. These protests are organized by student groups on college campuses and aim to raise awareness about the situation in Gaza and call for an end to the violence. According to the BBC, over 130 colleges and universities across the United States have experienced protests or encampments in recent weeks. These demonstrations have taken place in 45 states and Washington, D.C (Cabral and Faguy).

One of the main reasons behind these protests is the high number of civilian casualties in Gaza resulting from Israeli airstrikes and ground operations. Students participating in these protests often highlight the disproportionate use of force by Israel, which has led to the loss of innocent lives, including women and children. They also condemn the blockade imposed on Gaza, which severely restricts the movement of people and goods, leading to a humanitarian crisis in the region. Students are demanding that their universities divest from corporations involved in the military-industrial complex, weapons, surveillance, and support for Israeli institutions. They seek full disclosure of these investments and research grants, challenging the established system and condemning university complicity in the war on Gaza (Flounders).

In response to student activism regarding the conflict in Gaza, some universities have issued formal statements in support of a cease-fire, committed to transparency in their investments, and agreed to consider divestment. Conversely, other university administrators have taken measures such as restricting students' rights to assemble and express dissenting views, penalizing those critical of Israel, and involving law enforcement to disband protests. These actions have resulted in an escalation of expulsions and the arrest of numerous students across multiple campuses (Hartung).

Police have been forcefully breaking up pro-Palestinian demonstrations at various universities in the U.S. after Columbia University's president asked the New York Police Department to end a student encampment in April. This came after she promised Congress to stop unauthorized protests and address antisemitism among students (Fayyad).

Similar to previous protesters, the students who are currently facing arrests and suspensions for establishing camps on their college grounds in support of Palestinians in Gaza have been criticized harshly by politicians (Narea). Republicans have capitalized on the campus protests against the war by criticizing Democrats for their perceived tolerance of the "violent far left." During the clearing of Columbia University's encampment on April 30, Fox News extensively

covered the event, portraying protesters as “anti-Israel.” Stephen Miller, an adviser to Donald Trump, accused Joe Biden of promoting anti-Semitism, while Trump himself insinuated the involvement of paid agitators. House Speaker Mike Johnson went as far as calling for Columbia’s president to resign if order was not restored. In response to these events, Congress passed a bill aimed at combating anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial on campuses, with a decisive vote of 320 to 91(Smolar).

Senator Bernie Sanders in a speech to Congress criticized his colleagues' reaction to the campus protests by emphasizing their disregard for the constitutional right to free speech and assembly. He reminded them of the First Amendment, which protects these rights, and highlighted the historical significance of protests in driving social change. Sanders condemned the violence on campuses and the portrayal of pro-Palestinian protesters as supporters of terrorism, stressing that standing up for Palestinian rights does not equate to supporting Hamas. He argued that instead of attacking protesters, Congress should focus on the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and rethink their support for Netanyahu’s policies.

The reaction of policymakers to these protests, including the passing of laws aimed at silencing students, endangers the fundamental rights enshrined in the American Constitution, particularly the First Amendment. This amendment guarantees the freedom of speech, assembly, and the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances. By suppressing student protests and equating dissent with terrorism or antisemitism, lawmakers are undermining these constitutional protections and stifling democratic expression. The protests pose a challenge to the government's policies and to the traditional pro-Israel groups, particularly the older conservative political elite. This explains why Congress and Biden responded so swiftly to the student protests, attempting to discredit them through the media by labeling them as anti-Semitic (Khouri).

The unwavering support for Israel's military actions in Gaza has significant political repercussions for the United States. This support frequently places the U.S. at odds with international human rights organizations and many of its own citizens who are concerned about the humanitarian impact of the conflict. Recent polling data highlights this disconnect between governmental actions and public opinion, revealing substantial opposition among Americans to continued U.S. military support for Israel and a strong desire for a ceasefire.

Senator Benny Sanders explains to Congress members that an April 14 Politico/Morning Consult poll shows that 67% of respondents support the United States calling for a ceasefire, aligning with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's threats to expand the war into Rafah. Similarly, an April 12 CBS poll indicates that 60% of Americans believe the U.S. should not send weapons and supplies to Israel, a sentiment that is particularly strong among Democratic voters. Furthermore, an April 10 Economist/YouGov poll reveals that 37% of Americans support decreasing military aid to Israel, while only 18% favor an increase. Additionally, 63% of respondents support a ceasefire, with just 15% opposing it.

3.4 The Role of the Lobbies Following October the 7th

The contradiction between the U.S. government's stated goals of promoting stability, peace, and its actions of supplying military aid to Israel raises concerns about the credibility of U.S. policymakers and the effectiveness of U.S. foreign policy efforts. In his article: "*U.S. Foreign Policy Is a Scam Built on Corruption*" Sachs claims that this discrepancy is explained by the heavy influence of various interest groups, which leads to decisions that prioritize private gains over public interest and shape U.S. foreign policy. Key among these groups is the military-industrial complex, with major firms benefiting from continuous wars and military operations, driving \$1.5 trillion in military-linked spending for 2024. Corporate campaign contributions and lobbying by these firms ensure that policymakers advocate for their interests. Additionally,

the privatization of military functions to contractors aligns foreign policy with corporate profit motives. Influential advocates and think tanks funded by military contractors promote militaristic policies, reinforcing continuous warfare. Congress is subordinated to military industry interests, particularly through the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, which receive substantial campaign funding from the military sector.

The Israel lobby also significantly shapes U.S. foreign policy by securing congressional support for policies that align with Israeli interests through substantial financial contributions. In his Al Jazeera interview, John Mearsheimer highlights the Israel lobby's substantial influence on shaping U.S. support for Israel, despite encountering strategic and ethical challenges. He contends that the lobby's power guarantees unwavering support for Israel, irrespective of any disparity between public interests and policy decisions influenced by lobbying efforts. Mearsheimer underscores how influential interest groups can impact foreign policy in ways that may not always align with national interests or ethical standards. By prioritizing the objectives of a well-funded and powerful lobby over broader public and ethical considerations, U.S. foreign policy risks tilting towards narrow interests, potentially compromising its credibility and effectiveness on the global stage.

In his article: "*Will Netanyahu Bring Down Biden?*", Jeffrey D Sachs explains that Joe Biden faces pressure from the powerful Israel Lobby, led by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee AIPAC, which converts millions in campaign contributions into billions of dollars in U.S. aid to Israel. AIPAC currently aims to turn \$100 million in campaign funding into billions aid package. He highlights that despite facing a decline in support from younger voters, President Biden continues to maintain a close relationship with the American Israel Public Affairs Committee AIPAC. A recent poll conducted by The Economist/YouGov from January 21-24 revealed that 49% aged 19-29 perceive Israel's actions towards Palestinian civilians as genocidal, suggesting a growing disconnect between Israel and younger Americans.

Both Blinken and Biden have vehemently condemned the ICC's decision to seek arrest warrants for Israeli officials and Hamas leaders. They have characterized the move as "outrageous," emphasizing that it creates a false equivalence between Israel and Hamas. Blinken specifically referred to the decision as "wrongheaded" and "shameful," highlighting the potential negative impact on ongoing negotiations and the complexities of peace efforts in the region. Additionally, there is indication of coordination between the executive branch and Congress on potential responses to the ICC's actions. Blinken expressed openness to working with senators on legislation, suggesting that sanctions against the ICC could be on the table as a response (Boccia).

U.S. policymakers' steadfast support for and defense of Israel within the United Nations, along with their opposition to International Criminal Court decisions, align closely with the agenda of AIPAC. The organization consistently highlights what it views as a disproportionate focus on Israel within the U.N., contending that Israel faces unfair targeting by resolutions and bodies like the Human Rights Council. Furthermore, AIPAC strongly opposes the International Criminal Court's jurisdiction over both Israel and the United States, citing concerns of international discrimination ("International Discrimination").

AIPAC has been actively working to convince U.S. lawmakers to increase security assistance to Israel after the attack by Hamas on October 7. AIPAC is focusing its efforts on defense, budgeting, and foreign affairs issues, including supporting bills that aim to impose sanctions on Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. In addition to lobbying, AIPAC has also made significant political contributions to various senators who support Israel, such as Senator Jacky Rosen who received nearly \$80,000 from AIPAC. Other senators who have received contributions from AIPAC include Kristen Gillibrand, Kyrsten Sinema, Richard Blumenthal, Mark Kelly, and Tammy Baldwin. Furthermore, a resolution reaffirming America's support for Israel was introduced by Rep. Michael McCaul and received strong backing. McCaul himself

has received substantial contributions from AIPAC totaling almost \$120,000 this year. (Schumer).

Rashida Tlaib was criticized by the House of Representatives, with support from politicians who are backed by AIPAC. AIPAC provided financial support to Rich McCormick's campaign, who led the effort to censure Tlaib. McCormick received \$10,000 from AIPAC for his campaign. Furthermore, AIPAC also supported most of the Republican lawmakers who cosponsored the resolution against Tlaib. This incident is the second time this year that a Muslim-American woman in Congress has faced criticism, with Ilhan Omar experiencing a similar situation earlier, supported by Max Miller who also received significant funding from AIPAC (Schumer).

Conclusion

Over the years, the relationship between the United States and Israel has evolved into a robust and enduring bond, rooted in strategic necessity, political calculations, and theological affinity. U.S. support for Israel has become a cornerstone of its Middle Eastern policy, maintaining its pivotal role despite shifting regional dynamics and new challenges, particularly following the events of October 7.

Since Israel's founding in 1948, the relationship between the United States and Israel has undergone significant evolution. Initially marked by cautious diplomatic engagement and limited strategic support, U.S. backing for Israel was motivated by domestic political considerations and concerns over regional stability, particularly regarding access to Arab oil. President Truman's recognition of Israel exemplified this early phase, influenced by the need to secure backing from American Jewish voters amidst the complexities of the Cold War and the imperative to maintain relations with oil-rich Arab nations.

The Six-Day War in 1967 proved pivotal in transforming the relationship between the United States and Israel. Israel's military success during this conflict positioned it as a vital ally against Soviet influence in the Middle East. In response, the United States significantly increased military and financial aid to Israel, cementing their strategic alliance. Successive administrations further bolstered this partnership through strategic cooperation agreements, legislative measures, extensive diplomatic and military assistance that underscored unparalleled levels of U.S. support.

U.S. support for Israel is rooted in a complex interplay of theological, political, and strategic factors. The theological affinity between American Christians and Jews, rooted in interpretations of biblical prophecy, profoundly shapes American policies favoring Israel and influences high-level political decisions. This perspective, advocating for Israel's security and existence as a fulfillment of religious prophecy, resonates deeply in U.S. political discourse. Furthermore, The pro-Israel lobby, particularly the American Israel Public Affairs Committee AIPAC, exerts substantial influence over policymakers, advancing Israel's interests within American politics through lobbying and financial contributions.

Strategically, Israel has been pivotal since the Cold War, serving as a bulwark against Soviet influence and contributing advanced military capabilities and intelligence crucial for regional stability. In the post-Cold War era, Israel's strategic importance persists, particularly in countering “terrorism” and addressing security threats in the Middle East. Its advanced military technology and intelligence-sharing capabilities remain vital assets in cooperation with U.S. efforts. Moreover, shared values of democracy and ideological alignment further strengthen the bilateral relationship, fostering a profound sense of solidarity and mutual respect between the two nations on the global stage.

The 7 October 2023 attacks, were unprecedented in their scale and coordination, marking a significant escalation in the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas. The sophistication and scale of these operations highlighted a notable enhancement in Hamas's tactical and operational capabilities, challenging the long-held perception of Israel's overwhelming military superiority in the region and questioning Israel's capability as a deterrence power, impacting Israel's and the United States' interests in the region.

Following the attacks, the United States swiftly demonstrated the robustness of its strategic alliance with Israel through a decisive response. Emphasizing Israel's right to self-defense,

Washington promptly mobilized significant military and diplomatic support. This included expedited delivery of financial and military aid aimed at bolstering Israel's defensive capabilities. Diplomatically, the U.S. actively leveraged its global influence to garner international backing for Israel's military actions, particularly in forums like the United Nations where resolutions critical of Israel's responses were countered.

The Biden administration's actions underscore the enduring nature of the U.S.-Israel strategic partnership amid evolving geopolitical dynamics. They reaffirm that support for Israel remains central to U.S. strategy in the Middle East, driven by bipartisan consensus and influenced by historical ties, lobbying efforts from groups like AIPAC, and shared national interests in the region.

Moreover, the U.S. response carries significant geopolitical implications, highlighting Israel's pivotal role as a key ally in countering regional threats, notably from Iran and its proxies such as Hezbollah. By bolstering Israel's security, the United States aims to counter Iran's influence and maintain stability in the Middle East, aligning with broader U.S. strategic interests in the region.

However, the unconditional support for Israel from the Biden administration faced significant domestic challenges. Increasingly, younger populations and students questioned the ethical implications of this steadfast backing, advocating instead for a foreign policy rooted in human rights and international humanitarian law. Across university campuses and among influential figures, vocal dissent highlighted a growing division in American public opinion regarding both the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and broader U.S. strategies in the Middle East. This dissent signaled a shifting landscape where traditional alliances and policies were being scrutinized against evolving moral and ethical considerations, presenting a complex dynamic for U.S. leadership to navigate amidst ongoing geopolitical tensions.

The U.S. perceived endorsement of Israel's retaliatory actions has had broader repercussions for its global credibility. Despite its self-proclaimed role as a defender of human rights and international law, this stance has been viewed as hypocritical, undercutting the U.S. moral authority and its effectiveness in influencing international norms and policies. This inconsistency has revealed significant contradictions in its commitment to a rule-based international order, where the emphasis on humanitarian principles clashes with the practical support for actions seen as disregarding humanitarian consequences.

Additionally, the U.S. strong, one-sided support for Israel compromises its role as a neutral mediator in the conflict. This bias has strained relationships with key regional partners involved in peace efforts and impeded the U.S. ability to facilitate meaningful negotiations between Israel and Hamas. The perception of favoritism towards Israel has further hindered trust-building and sustainable conflict resolution efforts in the region.

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