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# A Dysfunctional Triangle An analysis of America's relations with Israel and their impact on the current nuclear accord with Iran

Andrew Falacci  
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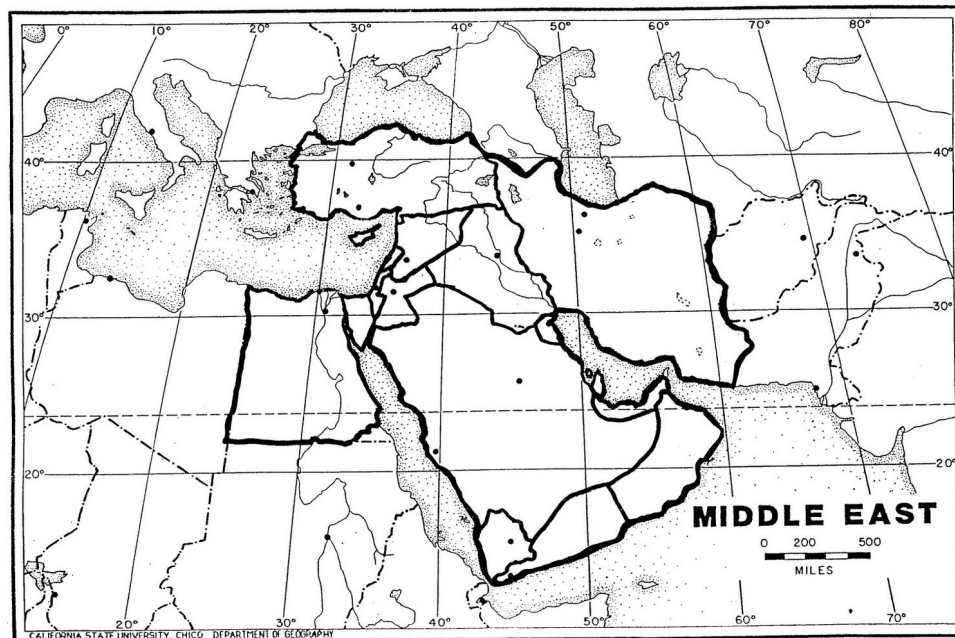
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# A Dysfunctional Triangle

An analysis of America's relations with Israel and their impact  
on the current nuclear accord with Iran



Andrew Falacci

Geneva, Spring 2015

School of International Training

-Sending School-

The George Washington University,

Washington D.C

### Acknowledgements:

Robert Frost talked about looking towards “the path less traveled”, where all the difference would be made. I have lived the young part of my life staying true to such advice, but I also hold dearly the realization that there are special people in my life who have, in some way or another, guided me towards that “path less traveled.” I want to take the time to thank my family for pushing me and raising me to be the person I am today. Their love and support is what motivates much of my work. I must also thank the teachers I have had throughout the years, who through their own way, instilled in me a desire to make a difference. I want to specifically thank a secondary school world history teacher I had while studying in Mexico who challenged me to think differently about world affairs — using different apertures to view history though. She taught me value of listening to other viewpoints, I owe her the courage that has led me to write this piece. Finally, I want to thank all of my academic advisors and interviewees for their input on my work and their patience with me.

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## Abstract-

This paper aims to analyze the current conflict over Iran's nuclear program from a series of unique apertures pertaining to the relationship between the United States and Israel. An initial historical analysis is offered to examine the lead up to a conflict a half century in the making. The analysis looks at the historical relationships between the United States and Israel and the United States and Iran. Bringing both timelines together at the culmination of the nuclear conflict in the early part of this century illustrates how the relationship between the United States and both countries has created a fog; obscuring the coming solution of the conflict. The relationship the United States has with Israel is further analyzed to demonstrate how the decades long interconnectedness between the two countries has lead to strong domestic support inside of the United States for Israel. It is this support, including the infamous "Israel Lobby", the paper cites as a key hurdle for the Obama administration to surpass on its way to a nuclear accord with Iran. The dilemma is further addressed from multiple positions (geo-strategic, geo-political, diplomatic) before the paper moves to a conclusion on the issues; suggesting the United States continue its current path towards diplomatic relations with Iran regarding the nuclear issue, moving away from the domestic pressures ignorantly over supporting Israel's position against such a deal.

## Preface-

Often lost in the symphonic sea, the musical triangle projects a perfectly clear and harmonious sound. With one precocious strike it chimes a crisply because of its imperfect design. The triangle is broken at one end, allowing the sound waves to move continuously along the alloy without colliding with one another. The musical triangle can be used in describing many instances where a break between three entities evocatively leads to a more harmonious peace. Tensions continue to grow amongst the United States, Iran, and Israel over Iran's nuclear program because there is not break between any of the three capitals. The United States has a clear commitment working with Tehran; while Israel - Iran geopolitical hatred continues to escalate, and the Israeli lobby meanwhile creates a more cohesive bond to Washington. There is too much pressure on the triangular relationship structure for peaceful negotiations to occur, signaling the time to ease a part of the correspondence for greater harmony overall.

I have chosen to write about the United State's current dilemma of shifting away from Israel because it is a topic too often turned away from in academia. Going to school in Washington I am continuously reminded how strong our nation's support for Israel is; whether it is through lectures, speeches, or even student events where Israel is portrayed in a positive light. Any views from the opposition are hushed under the fear of sounding anti-semitic. I find this dangerous, because it leads to ignorance, and throughout history nothing has been the cause of more conflict than ignorance. Robert Kennedy once explained how "there are those men who look at the way things are and ask why, and then there are those men who look at the way things are not and ask why not?" I hope to be one of those latter men, and I hope to pose certain questions in your mind, through my work here, about the overall political structure in the Middle East. I will leave it to yourself to find an answer, but I hope at least the questions will arise of whether the current structure is sound, and how it might be changed for the better?

-Andrew Falacci

## Methodology:

Such a complex topic requires a complex method of analysis. before moving ahead with any work I began with learning more about the general issues of the Middle East (Israel, Iran) and the United States. I read history books, both of the encyclopedia variety and personal accounts of history from such figures as former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. After gaining a valuable historical base I jumped to the current affairs, watching testimonies given by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry to the U.S. House Committee of Foreign Relations, reviewing other hearing transcripts, listening to political commentary, and reading the latest press articles on the Iran nuclear deal. Many of my colleagues, in working on their papers, were able to jump straight into a literature review of their subject. Before moving on to secondary opinion pieces I found it necessary to gain my own perspective understanding. Thankfully my topic occupied much of the current news ticker and there was a lot to analyze. I then conducted a full literature review on the topic — reading past and present viewpoints (a full digest of this review will be provided in the following section). Much of the literature review was made up of current pieces because of how recent the topic is. I actually found watching the Sunday morning political talk shows in the U.S. was much more helpful in understanding the issue than reading past journal articles because the expert guests of the program were using the most up to date information.

The topic is multifaceted and I took the initiative to understand as many of them as I could. This involved reaching out to experts across Europe. My first contact was Dr. Jubin Goodarzi of Webster University's Geneva campus, an expert on Middle East politics and an Iranian citizen, who helped me focus my project and gave me a better understanding of relations in the Middle East involving the United States. I then met with Pieter Cleppe, the president of the Brussels based think tank, Open Europe. Mr. Cleppe is an expert on sanction policy and he was very helpful in my understanding of the nature of sanctions and how it related to the conflict with Iran. I was then provided the opportunity to meet with a U.S. diplomat who works as an Iran Watcher at the United States Embassy in Paris. He has asked to remain anonymous due to the sensitivity of the topic, but his first hand insight on Iran relations with the U.S. was invaluable. I still needed, however, to learn more about the nature of arm negotiations; so I flew to London to meet with Rob van Reit, the leading disarmament associate for the World Future Council Foundation think tank. We talked about the overall environment of disarmament negotiations and the present challenges involving the Iran deal. This was insightful as it gave me a real perspective of the task, something different from the speculations I had read during my literature review. Finally, I met with Marc Finaud, a former French diplomat and an associate at the Geneva Center for Security Policy. He has published a lot of work on the U.S. — Israel relationship and its implications on Middle East security. He helped explain much of the current tensions and cleared up a lot of rhetoric being offered by more biased sources. I could have done more work, but with the limited time and budget allotted I do believe my research can be viewed as quite thorough. With that said, this topic continues to change day by day and it is imperative for one to keep up with the news.

## Literature Review:

As I have previously stated, my literature review most likely contrasts from that of my colleagues. I found primary source testimonies, transcripts, and speeches more useful than reading articles published in various journals around the globe. The primary reason for this was relevance as my topic is part of current affairs, but the other part was bias. As the paper will make clear, Israeli relations with the United States are surrounded in a sea of bias, where the Israeli perspective is more frequently projected in a fair light. John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walts are two of the notable scholars who have breaker away from this American trend, and even uncovered much of the reason behind it. Their 2006 piece, “The Israel Lobby and American Foreign Policy”, first published by the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, raised much controversy by pointing a finger at Israeli domestic forces in the United States for faulty American foreign policy. The piece was quite insightful and represented a strong contrast to the literature I had been reading about the historical build up to the conflict between Israel and Iran. What was even more interesting, though, was the fallout after the paper was published and the out cry from critics. These articles showed me the true nature of what Mearsheimer and Walts had been explaining and was a pivotal point in my research.

Analyzing the different criticisms, or praises, of “The Israel Lobby and American Foreign Policy” gave me a better understanding of the political environment inside of the U.S pertaining to Israel and Iran, and it also lead my to Tony Judt, the late scholar from New York University. I truly appreciated Judt’s courage to publish pieces criticizing the American public of being fogged by the fear of anti-semitism. I found his work honest and insightful. Response interviews he gave showed me the dilemma of acting the way he did and outlined the struggle of battling the status quo of the Israeli perspective existing within the United States. This guided me to the core principle of my paper — illustrating the fog that is currently clouding the U.S view on Middle East politics.

However, as I have previously stated, I tried to stick to more historical based literature in an attempt to form my own subjective view of the situation before making any analysis. To accomplish this I read many historical accounts including: “To Support Any Friend”, “American Orientalist”, “Nixon, Kissinger, and the Shah”, all books telling the story of American relationships in the Middle East from the Eisenhower administration up until more modern events. I also enjoyed, “World Order”, Henry Kissinger’s historical account of world affairs, which gave me a good baseline for the historical construct of current global affairs involving the U.S, Israel, and Iran.

I also took to my own historical research as I reviewed past U.S presidential speeches and statements of the latter decade involving Israel and Iran. I want to analyze any patterns of rhetoric. My most notable focus was looking at the past State of the Union speeches by both President Bush and President Obama, as well as debate coverages from the 2008 and 2012 elections, where a nuclear Iran occupied much of the talking points. Other presidential literature proved useful, such as President



Clinton's account of the Camp Davis talks between Israel and Palestine in the 1990s. However, the most insightful presidential piece was President Obama's opinion piece, "Renewing American Leadership", published in Foreign Affairs Magazine in 2007 leading as part of his campaign. It outlines his view of a needed change in American policy towards the Middle East and represents a clear contrast between the ideals of the Bush administration. It was here, through Obama's will to change, where I found the true problem of the fog blinding U.S foreign initiative in the region, and it is here I realized the future president's true desire and courage to solve it. That work — courage — brings me to possibly the most important book present in my literature review.

I have used "Profiles in Courage" published by then Senator John F. Kennedy in 1956 throughout this work because I believe it perfectly describes the problem at hand and represents a historical analysis of the challenges in solving a problem where an American populous is in the way of an apparent solution. I found it compelling how Kennedy's advice in the book can be used by the current president to solve a conflict Kennedy himself had a hand in beginning. Overall, my literature review is not as traditional as one might suspect. I did not simply analyze both sides of the argument over the connection between the U.S and Israel before coming to a conclusion. The topic required more. It required a full historical understanding, in addition to primary sources, to avoid the bias of the topic. I have come out of such a review understanding much more than I did going into it, and I hope this paper will offer something to your understanding of the issue at hand.

## Introduction:

In 1956, a young and lamed up, United States Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts set out to write a book. The book was published and won the Pulitzer Prize; aiding the senator in his quest for the White House in 1960. President Kennedy, throughout his tenure, would navigate a cold diplomatic global environment where influence was the sought after and relationships were born. The relationship between the United States and Israel has been one of the lasting effects of President Kennedy's administration.

*"Profiles in Courage"*, eventually published in 1957, provides a unique political theme of difference, best presented by Kennedy himself, as a "faith that the people will not condemn those whose devotion to principle leads them to unpopular courses"<sup>1</sup>, because "a man does what he must - in spite of personal consequences, in spite of obstacles and dangers and pressures - and that is the basis of all human morality"<sup>2</sup>. It is humbling to see history make a full circle where one president's actions now meet his ideals a half century after his passing. Today, the strong, often viewed as symbiotic, relationship between the United States and Israel is threatened by a presidential administration looking to establish peace with Iran - searching for that differential morality.

Over the last fourteen months the United States has rediscovered a lost diplomatic relationship with Iran. Secretary of State, John Kerry, has made history by sitting down with Iranian leaders to negotiate a nuclear accord. This seemingly unprecedented diplomatic occurrence has been mirrored by an anxious and aggravated Israel, who has maintained one of the strongest post WWII relationships with the United States. As tensions build the United States will be forced to make a choice. Such a choice has been on the table before, but the ever so close relationship between Israel and United States has kept U.S foreign policy resolved to Israeli interests, often leading to greater conflicts in the Middle East.

Presidential administrations since Kennedy have been unable to move away from Israel for many different reasons, with the largest being the strong domestic Israel lobby existent in the United States. For decades, the United States has stood by Israel, supporting its defense, advocating on its behalf in the United Nations, and strategically establishing it as a regional power. Throughout American schools young scholars, asked of the importance of Israel, will immediately affirm, exactly portraying the country's politicians from all parties.

The general consensus, whether created by the Israel lobby or a host of other factors, is definitive — the United States must stand with Israel, and we must. Israel is a strong ally to have in the Middle East, and our linked culture and similar ideals demonstrate the necessity to stand by one another. With this said, in the words of Winston Churchill, "The history of any alliance is the history of mutual

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<sup>1</sup> Kennedy, John F. "Profiles in Courage" p.264

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 266

recrimination among the various people”<sup>3</sup>. Sometimes a relationship can fog the true aspirations of two connected actors. Such a fog is thick and often difficult to navigate for it is met with heavy opposition and can often lead to subversion.

This paper will analyze the paralleled histories of United States’ relations with both Israel and Iran to showcase the inceptions of quarrel, and to attempt to blow away some of the fog; which has blinded our perception of a conflicted region. Once a brief history is outlined, the paper will illustrate the current domestic challenges existing in American society prohibiting resolution over the Iran nuclear accord, mainly by identifying the Israel lobby and depicting how such a powerful machine has altered America’s view of the world and ability to act correctly. Finally, the paper will address the Obama administration’s apparent change of policy, regarding the current affairs of the nuclear deal — ultimately analyzing the diplomatic tack from Israel towards Iran.

It can be said that Israel and the United States are threatening their own security, and that of the greater globe, with their *over-adhered* relationship in the context of a nuclear Iran. The Obama administration is in a position to tack away from the hegemony the United States has built in Jerusalem, and focus on the geopolitical superpower rising in Iran. A fortified Israel lobby stands in its way; flexing its political power and projecting negative propaganda and portraying Iran in a harsh light during ever so sensitive negotiations. The relationship between the United States and Israel has clearly fogged the window of U.S foreign policy, but the winds are clocking back and forth and the change of the Obama administration may just be enough to blow the fog out, presenting a new outlook for the United States in the Middle East.

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<sup>3</sup> Kennedy, John F. “Public Papers on the Presidents of the United States” p. 65

## A History — The United States and Israel:

On today's world stage the United States and Israel are seen as having an almost symbiotic relationship<sup>4</sup>; however this has not always been the case. Many believe the United States has been a strong supporter of Israel since its inception in 1948, but in reality relations with the new state remained stagnant for more than a decade. While both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations had drawn out a plan to invest in the greater Middle East for under a "Monroe Doctrine" type foreign policy<sup>5</sup>; they did it through transnational oil companies investing in the region. It was not until a cold winter day in 1961 when thoughts of United State diplomatic support for Middle East states began to truly arise.

In his inaugural address, President Kennedy made the stance to "support any friend, and oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty"<sup>6</sup>. The initiative was heard throughout the Middle East, and leaders came eager to set up ties with the new American administration. Kennedy's goal was not simple friendship, it was strategic relationships to keep Middle Eastern states close to the United States and away from the 'Red Soviet Wave'. The U.S had economic, oil, and geopolitical interests in the region and wanted to work on creating a loyal block of states to spite the Soviet threat. The two most prominent leaders listening to Kennedy's speech were Israeli leader Ben-Gurion and Egyptian President Jamal Abd al-Nasser.

The Eisenhower administrations had attenuated relations with both Israel and Egypt following the Suez canal conflict. In addition, the American popular media, in the fallout from WWII, was portraying a kinder vision of Israel than it was of the Arab states, mostly due to sympathies over the Holocaust and a shared idea of democratic values. The Arab states were beginning to be aggravated by such inequality. Kennedy was set to change this, as made clear in his reception speech at the democratic national convention in 1960<sup>7</sup>. The Kennedy administration is not known for its work in the Middle East, but the young president made unaccustomed strides towards multilateral appeasement, mainly with both Israel and Egypt: the first Hawk weapon sales to Israel and an active rapprochement campaign with the Nasser government. Although the policies were viewed controversial by domestic authorities and condemned by the Arab states loyal to the United States, such as Saudi-Arabia, the new plan began to warm ties in the the Middle East, and gave the United States a newfound foothold in the region - something it desperately needed in the prow of the cold war.

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<sup>4</sup> Ian J. Bickerton, "America's Special Relationships", p. 174

<sup>5</sup> Little, Douglas. "American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East Since 1945" p. 3-7.

<sup>6</sup> JFK Library. "1961 Presidential Inaugural Address"

<sup>7</sup> Bass, Warren. "Support Any Friend: Kennedy's Middle East and the making of the U.s - Israel Relationship". p. 1-20

The new friendships would not last as a regional Arab conflict in Yemen forced Nasser to retreat from the initiative with the United States<sup>8</sup>. This can be viewed as arguably one of the most pivotal moments in the United States' diplomatic relations in the Middle East. It is often lost in traditional history books, but the events of the Yemen conflicts in the 1960's drew Egypt away and transformed the United States' multilateral rapprochement strategy in the region into a unilateral one<sup>9</sup>; with Israel benefiting immensely and other Arab states looking on with anguish.

It is important to acknowledge this historical juncture to defy the general consensus of America's whole-head support for Israel since 1948. Kennedy wanted to grow the United State's stance in the Middle East through a multilateral initiative involving both Israel and Arab states. That vision was interrupted with Nasser's pivot over Yemen, and then lost on a Dallas boulevard in November of 1963. The next presidential administrations, by keeping to the Israeli support, and never fully rekindling the multilateral initiative, would pave the way for a strong US-Israeli relationship to be born - aggravating geopolitics in the Middle East.

Under the Johnson administration the true disparity between Israel and its Arab neighbors was realized in June of 1967 in the "6 Days War" on the Sinai Peninsula between Israel and Egypt. In an attempt to aid the struggle and find a diplomatic solution the United States imposed an arms embargo on the region, including Israel<sup>10</sup>. However, the ban was lifted by the end of the year and Israel regained its military support from the United States, giving wind to Israel domestic support in the United States.

The Kennedy and Johnson administrations had been working on a "Twin Pillar" plan involving the build up of Iran and Saudi Arabia as "proxies" against the Soviet wave<sup>11</sup>, but events, most notably the 1979 revolution forced the U.S to refocus their approach away from the renewed multilateral approach envisioned by Kennedy<sup>12</sup>. Following Israel's success in the "Six Days War", and the changing political environment in the Arab States in the 1970's, the Carter administration began to solidify the unilateral support approach to build Israel up as a strategic military power in the Middle East. Israel's build up and newfound nuclear arms capability was successful in deterring the Soviets, but it made for turbulent political sea amongst the Arab states against the United States and Israel<sup>13</sup>.

The United States was now supporting a country which was aggravating the entire Middle East by flexing its military power and advancing its territory further into Palestine. Finally, in the 1990's the Clinton administration made the attempt to settle the Israel — Palestine dispute so to resolve greater

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<sup>8</sup> Bass, Warren. "Support Any Friend: Kennedy's Middle East and the making of the U.S- Israel Alliance". p. 1-20

<sup>9</sup> Ibid p. 1-20

<sup>10</sup> Oren, "Playing for the Brink" 309-312

<sup>11</sup> Little, Douglas. "American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East Since 1945" p. 3-7.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p. 3-7

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. p. 3-7

tension and animosity rising from Arab players against the United States, which were hurting U.S economic and oil interests. Both efforts, the 1993 Oslo peace talks and the various meetings at Camp David between the leaders of all three countries. The deals all fell through because The U.S and Israel were unwilling to move within the Palestinian ZOPA (request for the return of refugees)<sup>14</sup>.

Tensions continued to rise against the United States from Arab activists because of their close relationship with Israel. The attack on Manhattan, Washington, and Pennsylvania in September of 2001 greatly escalated the conflict. President Bush went ahead with a justified war against terror and then a war in Iraq, which led to more civil unrest in the region and ultimately destroyed America's position as a peace maker. At this time, Iran's military nuclear program was uncovered, which would end up becoming an even larger deterrence to finding a peace between Israel and Palestine. Before moving on and discussing the nuclear conflict, it is imperative to tell the other side of the story.

### A History — The United States and Iran:

It is of foremost importance to recognize Iran's long history as a sovereign — geopolitical force in the Middle East. After WWII, Iran was viewed as an asset in the United State's Cold War strategy, as evident by the "Twin Pillar" plan first implemented during the Eisenhower administration and then further carried out under the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations<sup>15</sup> in an attempt to fill the void being left by the British withdrawal in the region<sup>16</sup>. The plan invested in both Saudi Arabia and Iran in to foster relationships and block Soviet encroachment. Dr. Jubin Goodarzi, of Webster University's Geneva location, explains how Iran was a vital chattel to the United States because of its immense natural resources and geo-strategical position on the border of the Soviet blockade. Widely unrecognized, Israel too viewed Iran, under the Shah's leadership, as a partner in the region for security and natural resources<sup>17</sup>.

The relationship with Iran fortified through the Johnson and Nixon years to the point where the Shah leader of Iran publicly referred to the U.S and Iran as "natural allies"<sup>18</sup>. Most scholars view this time as Iran being set up as a proxy state for the United States, but in reality, under Nixon's leadership, the

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<sup>14</sup> Rochelle-Leigh (Shelley) Rosenberg. "Why Camp David II Failed: a Negotiation Theory Perspective".

<sup>15</sup> Little, Douglas. "American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East Since 1945" p. 3-7.

<sup>16</sup> Dr. Jubin Goodarzi, Personal Interview. May 1, 2015

<sup>17</sup> Haley, Edward P. "The future of US — Israel relations". p. 241

<sup>18</sup> Majid Behestani & Mehdi Hedayati Shahidani. "Twin Pillars Policy: Engagement of US-Iran Foreign Affairs during the Last Two Decades of Pahlavi Dynasty" p. 1

Shah experienced “political influence in Washington”<sup>19</sup>. Remembering Churchill’s vulgar words about alliances, this is where problems begin to arise. The Iranian clerical leadership and populous was unhappy with the Shah’s close relationship with the United States because they viewed his leading principles too close to the Americans’<sup>20</sup>. There is much speculation over the true cause of the Iranian revolution of 1979, but the point remains true that it was the end to friendly ties with the U.S. America’s friend, the Shah, was exiled, American hostages were taken, and the Carter administration was forced to retaliate diplomatically.

It is important to remember at this point the initial Kennedy approach of multilateral rapprochement throughout the Middle East — in 1979, both Egypt and Iran have been lost, and it is this juncture Dr. Goodarzi points to as the pivot point where the United States begins to grow a unilateral alliance with Israel<sup>21</sup>. With Iran out of the picture, Israel was the strongest asset the United States had left and ensuing U.S presidential administrations greatly strengthened the relationship via weapon sales and direct aid<sup>22</sup>. The Persian Gulf War, where the U.S backed Iraq against Iran, further escalated conflict with Iran.

It is here public propaganda, from Israeli and American forces begin projecting Iran in a bad light. Iran attempts to counter the propaganda efforts in the U.S with its FAIR (Foundation for American Iranian Relations), but it does not gain any traction. Israel continues to be the sole benefactor of U.S support under the Clinton years<sup>23</sup>; when Israeli Prime Minister Rabin “joined American supporters of Israel in persuading the Clinton Administration and the US Congress to isolate and punish Iran economically and diplomatically”<sup>24</sup>. At this point, Iran is subject to U.S imposed sanctions dating back to the American retaliation of the 1979 revolution and the United States is clearly a strong partner with Israel, a nation Iran views with animosity because of its actions against Palestine. The result is an absence of diplomatic relations between the United States and Iran, something as dangerous as a nuclear weapon itself.

At this time, Iran was building a covert military nuclear program to match a similar program being developed by Saddam Hussain’s government in Iraq. The lack of diplomatic relations between the United States and Iran inevitably leads to ignorance and then stirs fears, which is what happened in 2002 when the world learned of the covert Iranian nuclear program; and this is where both historical stories come together.

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<sup>19</sup> Alvandi, Roham. “Nixon, Kissinger, and the Shah” p. 7

<sup>20</sup> Alvandi, Roham. “Nixon, Kissinger, and the Shah” p. 28

<sup>21</sup> Dr. Jubin Goodarzi, Personal Interview. Webster University, Geneva Campus. May 1, 2015.

<sup>22</sup>Dr. Jubin Goodarzi, Personal Interview. Webster University, Geneva Campus. February 24, 2015.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Haley, Edward P. “The future of US — Israel relations”. p. 241. Inbar, op. cit., pp. 137-43.

## The Nuclear Factor:

In the midst of the terrorist attacks on September 11th, 2001, the global community was anxious about security. The information uncovering a covert nuclear program in Iran was taken as an immediate threat to global security, and much of the story behind the development of such a program was lost in a fog of anxiety. A released U.S National Intelligence Estimate<sup>25</sup> report furthers this truth and states how Iran lost its motivation to construct a nuclear weapons program in 2003, the same year Saddam's government quickly fell during the U.S — U.K invasion of Iraq.

The information in the National Intelligence Estimate was not released to the public, and Iran's nuclear developments were further used as a propaganda tool by individuals concerned with Israeli security, including primarily Benjamin Netanyahu.

In 2002, President Bush was putting pressure on Israel to find a two state solution with the Palestinians<sup>26</sup>, something many past U.S presidents had tried and failed to accomplish. Bush saw peace on the Sinai Peninsula as a method of an overall peace in the Middle East and an end to the terrorist violence witnessed only a year ago. The president gave a speech outlining the “road map of peace” between Israel and Palestine with a two state solution in 2002<sup>27</sup>. Since that sunny afternoon in the Rose Garden, the plan has never been spoken of again to the American people on a large stage, and was particularly absent in all of the President's future State of the Union Addresses<sup>28</sup>. Iran, however, and its nuclear threat, was prominent in every State of the Union Address Bush delivered during his time in office.

The president classified Iran as part of the “Axis of Evil”, and linked it to terror operations similar al-qaeda. Iran was guilty of its association with terror, but it is a fallacy associate the organizations Iran was associated with to al-qaeda and similar groups. The latter had the intentions to completely over throw liberalism in the Middle-East, while Hezbollah and other like groups were concentrated on the Israel Palestine conflict. It is imperative to break here and condemn all types of terrorist action and support the United State's mission to wage a fight against it, but it is critical to look beyond the violence to the root of the conflict in an attempt to find a sustainable diplomatic solution.

Bush was on track with his “road map of peace”, but he changed course. Why the tack away from a Palestine accord? Evidence exists to show the same approach taken by Israeli leaders since the

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<sup>25</sup> Albright, David and Brannan, Paul. “The New National Intelligence Estimate on Iran: A Step in the Right Direction”

<sup>26</sup> Gilboa, Eytan and Inbar, Efraim. “US — Israeli Relations in a New Era: Issues and challenges after 9/11”.

<sup>27</sup> “President Discusses Roadmap for Peace in the Middle East”. White House

<sup>28</sup> “State of the Union Addresses” U.S National Archives



early 1990s<sup>29</sup>. Netanyahu has made a two decade long campaign “crying wolf”<sup>30</sup> about Iran developing a nuclear weapon in a matter of months to use against Israel. Marc Finaud, an associate for the Geneva Center for Security Policy, explains how this tactic is an attempt to display a threatened Israel so to transfer focus away from the necessary work towards an accord with Palestine. His numerous interviews on American national networks and speeches on Capitol hill always focus on the Iran threat and exemplify his attempt to alter the the global focus away from Palestine. Mr. Finaud attributes this to Israeli domestic politics and sees it as Netanyahu avoiding the Palestine issue for his own political ora<sup>31</sup>.

So, why then are the ideologies of an Israeli Prime Minister taking preference over the will of an American President on such the critical issues as peace with Palestine and a nuclear Iran? The evidence from 2002 to the end of his term, despite the now public National Intelligence Estimate showing a stop to Iranian nuclear ambitions in 2003, of President Bush leaving the Palestine issue behind only to make Iran the larger issue, perfectly mirroring Netanyahu, shows how the ever so close relationship between the U.S and Israel construes American foreign policy. The aforementioned United States history with both Israel and Iran illustrates the root causes for Israel becoming more closely aligned with the U.S than Iran, but the implications of such a history has lead to a song U.S domestic support for Israel, which is making it exponentially more difficult for the United States to properly work with Iran over the current nuclear issue. Those implications have lead to the construction of what many scholars define as the “Israel lobby”, and it is the work of this group which must be analyzed to find a way through to a secure accord with Iran today.

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<sup>29</sup> Cohen, Robert, “Netanyahu’s Iran Blunders”, The New York Times

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Finaud, Marc. Personal Interview. Geneva Center for Security Policy, Geneva, Ch. April 2015

## The Lobby:

During the Kennedy administration the Israel lobby within the United States was nonexistent<sup>32</sup>; however the Israeli ‘supposed’ victory in June of 1967 led to a Zionist revival in American politics<sup>33</sup> and the start of a wave of domestic support for the Jewish state. Israel had triumphed over their Arab neighbors and evidence showed growing support coming from the United States. This allowed “American Jews to flex their political muscles”<sup>34</sup>, and ultimately became the inception of the “Israel lobby” within the United States.

Most political lobbies are easily identifiable. Individual ‘lobbyists’ represent the organization and campaign finance statistics can be used to depict the true political power the group has over Congress and the greater American political system. This can not be said for the Israel lobby in the United States. The wave first witnessed in 1967 has mounted a large and multifaceted domestic support for the Jewish state. While some large firms, such as the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), appear to be the full lobby, they only represent a small portion of the overwhelming political clout backing Israeli interests within the United States.

In university halls across the country stances of overwhelming support for Israel by the United States can be widely heard. The same is said for community churches, town halls, and most importantly the United States Congress. The lobby has effectively created what this paper will come to define as the ‘wheel of influence’. American advocates for Israel, through many different methods, have been able to alter the country’s foreign policy towards the Jewish state like no other lobby has been able to do. Last year AIPAC spent an estimated three million dollars in total<sup>35</sup> for lobbying efforts, but by no means does this number encapsulate the power of the lobby, as the petroleum lobby’s annual expenditures add up to 142 million USD<sup>36</sup>. Direct expenditures only represent a small way by which the lobby has constructed the ‘wheel of influence’. The lobby pursues two main strategies of influence with the first being the persuasion of Congress and the executive branch, and the second being how the lobby “strives to ensure public discourse about Israel portrays it in a positive light”<sup>37</sup>. The latter is most effective and is what makes the lobby unique.

The overarching goal of the lobby is to build a positive public stance for Israel. The lobby has waged war on Americans’ ideologies to protect Israel and to ensure there is not an “open debate on issues

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<sup>32</sup> Bass, Warren. “Support Any Friend” 4

<sup>33</sup> Oren, “Playing for the Brink” 309-312

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. 309-312

<sup>35</sup> Open Secrets - AIPAC

<sup>36</sup> Open Secrets - Oil

<sup>37</sup> Mearshiemer, John and Walts, Stephen. “The Israel Lobby and American Foreign Policy” p. 14-26.

involving Israel, because an open debate might cause Americans to question their level of support that they currently provide”<sup>38</sup>. Their dynamic strategy has been to target sources of influence, mainly the media, academia, and religion.

By targeting all sources simultaneously the lobby has been able to develop a favorable American consensus of the Jewish State. The largest piece of the Israel lobby is actually the large Christian Zionist movement — “rooted in America’s Puritan beginnings , standing even today upon the general public’s belief that the State of Israel came into the world in fulfillment of biblical prophecy and that the wellbeing of America requires her leaders to display a preference for Israel’s cause in all the challenges that she faces”<sup>39</sup>. Leaders of the Israel lobby have made large strides to unite with the American Christian following, and large numbers of ministers and faith leaders across the country have made it a priority to speak about the importance of standing with, and protecting Israel. The large Christian family in the United States has the greatest influence over Congress because of its many million followers<sup>40</sup>. Tapping into the large Christian following in America has also greatly helped the lobby swing popular support and aided it in forcing its views on the American media.

The lobby has been able to flex its persuasive power utilizing mainstream media outlets, such as national papers and broadcasting networks. Whether the peoples’ general political beliefs, already influenced by the lobby in other ways, shape the editor’s choice of what to put up on the ticker, or the lobby itself directly influencing the media high offices around the country is a question of the chicken or the egg? The point remains, however, that the American media portrays Israel in a favorable light. News editors, such as Robert Bartley, the former editor for the Wall Street Journal, have claimed, “Shamir, Sharon, Bibi — whatever those guys want is pretty much fine by me”<sup>41</sup>. Another example of the influence the lobby has over the media came in April of 2006 when scholar and NYU professor, Tony Judt, was asked explicitly by an editor at the New York Times to include his Jewish heritage within the opinion piece he was asked to produce in response to the Mearsheimer, Walts 2006 Harvard article<sup>42</sup>, “The Israel Lobby And American Foreign Policy”; which was receiving large attention because of its controversial views. The mainstream paper wanted to use the attention the piece was getting, but it was not ready to openly stand with it. Having Judt, a member of the Jewish community, write the opinion piece provided a barrier of protection. The media serves as a vital part of the ‘wheel of influence’ and helps protect Israel in the American public interest.

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Merkley, C. Paul, “American Christian Support for Israel”

<sup>40</sup> Finaud, Marc. Personal Interview. Geneva Center for Security Policy, Geneva, Ch. April 2015

<sup>41</sup> Stephen, Bret. "Eye on the Media by Bret Stephens: Bartley's Journal," The Jerusalem Post

<sup>42</sup> Meerman, Marij. “AIPAC: The Israel Lobby”. Produced by Judith van der Burg. VPRO. 2007. Documentary.

The media can be viewed so much however as an intermediary for the lobby. Influencing the public helps then influence the media and so on. The lobby's ties with the Christian following helps in this mission, but perhaps a more clear substation is the lobby's efforts in "policing academia"<sup>43</sup>. As astonishing as it is to think free thought is being challenged inside the very country that is its largest advocate the lobby has been able to manipulate how Israel is viewed in academic institutions across the country. The lobby has set up a "watch dog" system on college campuses and academic forums to ensure Israel is protected from critical scholars or academic contrarians. In the last decade AIPAC has tripled its funding for campus initiatives in an attempt to add to Jewish student involvement on campuses<sup>44</sup>. One shocking example was when Colonel L. Wilkerson, professor at The George Washington University and former strategist for Colin Powell, was emailed sent an email after a lecture he gave at a U.S university where he had mentioned the very article published by Mearshiemer and Walts, citing it as an example of contrary scholarship. Allen Dershowitz, professor at Harvard University, sent the email explaining his concern for Colonel Wilkerson using the article in his lecture because of its flaws, and even attached his own critique<sup>45</sup>. Wilkerson can only draw the conclusion that Dershowitz's actions are the works of the Israel lobby "watch dog" initiative<sup>46</sup>. Clearly the lobby has been able to influence many sources of public opinion within America, giving it large amounts of leverage over the country's politicians.

The 'wheel of influence' is completed once the sprouted ideologies from the public reach politicians. Campaign finance is one way by which the lobby has been able to influence congress, but even more effectively, it has created a political stance immune from party. Both sides of the aisle call for support for Israel, and debate over the topic is viewed as "sensitive" and "politically dangerous". No politician wants to be viewed anti-semitic, or against helping a friend in the Middle East.

Through its many facets the lobby has deployed tactics to put Israel in a favorable light. Whether through its media power, lobbying efforts on Capitol Hill, or celebrity filled annual galas the lobby has charted a course for both public and political opinion; which fuel each other in the 'wheel of influence'. Using such ploys as Israel's strategic location as an ally, the mutual interest against terror, and the desire to promote liberty and freedom following the suffering of the Jewish people, has made Israel politically untouchable and has altered American foreign policy<sup>47</sup>. Whether the lobby has directly affects foreign policy is subject for the reader's judgment, but there is indisputable evidence the lobby has created an "Atomic Bomb of Fear", a term given by Jeremy Rabinovitz, former chief of staff to Rep. Lois Capps (D-

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<sup>43</sup>Mearshiemer, John and Walts, Stephen. "The Israel Lobby and American Foreign Policy" p. 14-26.

<sup>44</sup> Mearshiemer, John and Walts, Stephen. "The Israel Lobby and American Foreign Policy" p. 14-26.

<sup>45</sup> Meerman, Marij. "AIPAC: The Israel Lobby". Produced by Judith van der Burg. VPRO. 2007. Documentary.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Mearshiemer, John and Walts, Stephen. "The Israel Lobby and American Foreign Policy" p. 14-26.

California), a weapon used to deter public and political stances against Israel out of fear of retaliation<sup>48</sup>. To put it simply, the lobby has created an environment where Israel exists in a positive light, because anything else would be viewed as “anti-semitic. It is important to acknowledge the innate ties between Israel and the United States common from a dynamic history of cooperation and a shared set of common ideals. Dr. Goodarzi points to this being a stronger factor in connecting the two countries than simply the lobby. Similar scholars choose to point to the strategic and historical constructs between both states to explain their “special relationship”<sup>49</sup>, but the fact remains — the strong support of Israel has shaped American foreign policy and is impacting the outcome of a nuclear deal with Iran.

### The Effect:

Never before than in the last century have more conflicts risen because of alliances. From Sarajevo to Belgium the world has witnessed the inception escalated conflict steaming from tethered relationships amongst nations. Thomas Jefferson, in his inaugural address echoed the farewell remarks of Washington by laying his foreign policy agenda as, “peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations - alliances with none.”<sup>50</sup> Alliances make for turbulent conditions in the sea of foreign policy. Kennedy, despite his intention to “support any friend”, was not in a position to construct an alliance with any power in the Middle East.

In the last four decades the United States has not given more aid, nor sold more military assets to any other country than it has to Israel. In addition to the estimated three billion dollars given to Israel via direct foreign assistance each year<sup>51</sup> and the over 140 billion dollars given as direct aid since the end of WWII<sup>52</sup>, the United States has vetoed 33 UN security council in order to protect Israel<sup>53</sup>, including resolutions which would have restricted Israel’s nuclear weapons program . Why does Israel, a developed power receive so much support? It is because of domestic pressures inside of the United States and the greater Israel lobby, this paper has not intention of further demonstrating the clear relationship between the United States and Israel, but it must acknowledge the the resulting geopolitical in regard to Iran.

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<sup>48</sup> Flesher, Dan. “Transforming America’s Israel Lobby: The Limits of Its Power and the Potential for Change”. p. 44

<sup>49</sup> Bard, Mitchell G. and Pipes, Daniel. “How Special is the U.S - Israel Relationship?” p. 2

<sup>50</sup> Fromkin, David, ‘Entangling Alliances’ p. 1

“U.S Aid to Israel: Figures, Facts, and Impacts”. Washington Report on Middle East Affairs

“U.S Aid to Israel: Figures, Facts, and Impacts”. Washington Report on Middle East Affairs

<sup>53</sup> Report of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council”. p. 53.

## The Tehran Aperture:

As the relationship between Israel and the United States has grown, the relationship between Iran and the United States has dissipated. Are the two connected? Most defiantly. Iran's diplomatic "intensions" of destroying Israel are construed in harsh public light and taken out of context to portray Iran as an irrational actor. This has primarily been done by the Israel lobby, but the truth, explained in an interview with an Iran watcher working with the U.S Department of State who has asked to remain anonymous, is that the Iranian central authority, throughout the course of its history, has transformed its policies to gain domestic support and sovereignty over its populous<sup>54</sup>. This most relevant stride of Iran's overt condemning of Israeli geopolitical actions with the Palestinians is only an attempt to gain internal support for the regime. According to Marc Finaud, the Iranian government has taken harsh stances against Israel in an attempt to gain Muslim support within Iran. Mr. Finaud points to domestic intensions rather than international intentions for the reasons behind the widely publicized threats to "wipe Israel off of the planet"<sup>55</sup>. Israeli leaders, such as Benjamin Netanyahu, have used such negative Iranian propaganda of their own positive propaganda; which has trickled inside of the United States by way of the lobby.

Whether it was President George W. Bush's mention of Iran as part of the 'Axis of Evil' or one of Netanyahu's many warning speeches to the United States Congress Americans have been primed to believe Iran is a rouge and dangerous state with the intentions of combatting both Israel and the United States, especially pertaining to the country's nuclear program. The truth could not be more far from this folly.

Professor Jubin Goodarzi of Webster University based in Geneva Switzerland, an Iranian citizen, points to the misconceptions over Iran's nuclear program and explains their devastating consequences. Iran began building a covert nuclear military program, along side their public civil nuclear energy program, in the 1980's in response to a similar program being built up by the Saddam Hussain regime in neighboring Iraq<sup>56</sup>. The push for a military nuclear program was purely defensive. The problem was the way and the time the information was made public to the global community. Does Iran deserve a bomb? Most certainly not. Allowing Iran to develop a nuclear weapon is clearly off the table because of the UN Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty<sup>57</sup>. Although Iran legally cannot produce a nuclear weapon, making it more of a participating player in nuclear diplomacy, through similar policy to the (JPOA), would enable the emergence of a safer nuclear environment in the Middle East<sup>58</sup>. The election of now

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<sup>54</sup>United States Diplomat. Personal Interview. Paris, Fr. March 11, 2015

<sup>55</sup> Finaud, Marc. Personal Interview. Geneva Center for Security Policy, Geneva, Ch. April 2015.

<sup>56</sup> Dr. Jubin Goodarzi, Personal Interview. Webster University, Geneva Campus. February 24, 2015.

<sup>57</sup> "Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons", The United Nations.

<sup>58</sup> <sup>58</sup> Kayhan, Barzegar, "Nuclear Terrorism: Iran and the NPR"

Irani President Hassan Rouhani, a reform candidate, has been viewed as evidence showing Iran's desire to find diplomatic peace.

Some scholars believe an increased build up of power in Iran would ultimately lead to a more peaceful bipolar system in the Middle East. Kenneth Waltz most notably suggested how Iran building a nuclear weapon would not be a disaster, rather, "the best possible result: the one most likely to restore stability to the Middle East"<sup>59</sup>. This comes from a bipolar realist theory: having two equal powers in a region creates a standoff allowing for peace by way of mutual deterrence <sup>60</sup>. Israel's historic success in maintaining its security position over other regional powers is viewed by Waltz as "unsustainable", and "Israel's proven ability to strike potential nuclear rivals with impunity has inevitably made its enemies anxious to develop the means to prevent Israel from doing so again"<sup>61</sup>. Considering how analysts "have guarded optimism that the consequences a nuclear-armed Iran are manageable",<sup>62</sup> a policy giving Iran a larger stake in the regional nuclear security milieu could help stabilize power struggles and disputes.

The challenge to such an end is the fog which has formed from the United States' history in the Middle East and its relationship with Israel. Such a fog is blinding American foreign policy towards working with Tehran leadership. The United States clearly has an interest to work with Iran to solve the nuclear dispute, but in a liberal society domestic support against such an initiative because of ties with Israel has made it exceptionally difficult to find such a peace. Kennedy, in his book, "Profiles in Courage", explains how in times where a populous is against a new approach for a greater peace it takes a courageous leader who is willing to risk his own political ora for that of the greater good<sup>63</sup>.

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<sup>59</sup> Kenneth Waltz. "Why Iran Should Get the Bomb"

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 3

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 3

<sup>62</sup> Edelman, Eric S.; Krepinevich, Andrew F.; Montgomery, Evan Braden, "Dangers of a Nuclear Iran - The Limits of Containment"  
90 Foreign Aff. 66, 2011. Web. March 2, 2015.

<sup>63</sup> Kennedy. "Profiles in Courage" p. 14.

## The Winds Clock:

Barack Obama, the young senator from Illinois, threw himself into a race for the White House based on a mission of change. The American people, exhausted by two wars, were eager for new leadership and Obama ran to deliver. He proposed a new mission where “the United States is to provide global leadership grounded in the understanding that the world shares a common security and a common humanity”<sup>64</sup>. He had a clear commitment to disarmament<sup>65</sup> and a greater peace in the world led once again by a cooperative American diplomatic effort.

The young politician saw a moment for the American movement to be “seized anew”<sup>66</sup>, where the military heavy foreign policy of the last decade could be replaced with an America aimed at diplomacy and open dialogue with the rest of the world. Obama knew the war in Iraq had upset many a thousand Americans and had cast a shadow over the array of freedom and liberty established by past American generations throughout the world. Begun in an opinion piece in *Foreign Affairs* he built his campaign in direct contrast to the Iraq war and similar policies to separate himself from his political rivals and propose a new outlook for orchestrating peace, starting with a renewed effort in the conflict between Israel and Palestine.

Most of his 2008 run for the White House revolved around ending the war in Iraq. One of the most prevalent factors was his belief that the war was serving as a distraction to peace work in the region. He claimed how the leaders of Israel and Palestine have looked to America in the past to “build the road to a lasting peace”, but after the Bush administration neglected such a task the leaders “in recent years have too often looked in vain”<sup>67</sup>. The presidential hopeful cited former leaders, such as Kennedy and Roosevelt, for their commitments of using diverse strategies to work with foreign leaders to resolve conflict and foster an American idea of peace. Throughout his campaign he made clear and poignant statements towards ending the conflict on the Sinai Peninsula and beginning a new dialogue with Iran to prevent them from developing nuclear weapons, while showing the Iranian people “what could be gained from fundamental change: economic engagement, security assurances, and diplomatic relations”<sup>68</sup>. This seems promising, but would the plan fall to the folly of the Israel lobby as past presidential initiatives had?

Was Obama supposed to win? In the eyes of the lobby - no. Hilary Clinton had received an immense amount of Jewish support throughout her career as senator from New York up until her 2008 bid

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<sup>64</sup> Obama, Barack. *Renewing American Leadership*” p. 4.

<sup>65</sup> Rob van Reit. Personal Interview. 100 Pall Mall St. Westminster, U.K. April 2015.

<sup>66</sup> Obama, Barack. *Renewing American Leadership*” p. 4.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* p. 4.

<sup>68</sup> Obama, Barack. *Renewing American Leadership*” p. 6.



for the White House<sup>69</sup>. On the other side of the aisle, Republicans, especially the likes of John McCain were receiving support from AIPAC and other large Israeli machines, especially American Christian society, which was very much against Obama's candidacy. The field seemed to be stacked against him, but Obama prevailed. The young candidate truly represented change, especially the way he ran his campaign, which was a new breed of American political strategy grounded on individualism<sup>70</sup>. Looking specifically at his foreign policy ideals, Obama would have been met with much more confrontation had he been proposing a renewed strategy of appeasement and dialogue in the Middle East by its self, but he was not. All of his rhetoric about his diplomatic vision of foreign policy was surrounded by the desire to bring the war in Iraq to an end, something the American people so greatly wanted. His opponents were too tied to the war, and he was able to triumph.

Whether it was his decision to form a new foreign policy mentality by itself, or the goal of ending the Iraq war that led him to such a stance is not worth analyzing because when President Barack Obama delivered his inaugural address on a chilly Washington after noon in January of 2009 the world listened, primed with that idea of change, to hear the new president's outlined methodologies for solving the conflicts around the globe - the same way it listened to a young Jack Kennedy a half century ago.

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<sup>69</sup> Open secrets — AIPAC

<sup>70</sup> Leibovich, Mark. "This Town". p. 97.

## Current Affairs:

Last month, New York Times columnist, Thomas Friedman, met with president Obama in the Oval Office to discuss his “Obama Doctrine”—a foreign policy of engagement, while maintaining all capabilities<sup>71</sup>. Not since 1979 has any United States presidential administration had more interaction with Iran. President Obama has stayed true to his campaign commitment to find new grounds for foreign policy in the Middle East. In January of 2013 Secretary of State, John Kerry, and his negotiating team made history by reaching a temporary accord with Iranian officials and the (P5+1)<sup>72</sup> to work towards reducing UN sanctions against Iran in return for the Iranians to stop all progress on their nuclear military program. The Joint Plan of Action (JPOA), designed by the (P5+1) and signed in Geneva, was a comprehensive agreement enabling “Iran to fully enjoy its right to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes under the relevant articles of the NPT in conformity with its obligations therein”<sup>73</sup>. These obligations being that Iran would have to “dilute the remaining 20% UF6 to no more than 5%. No reconversion line”<sup>74</sup>, restrict development in certain nuclear facilities, and allow for daily inspections of its nuclear program by the International Atomic Energy Administration (IAEA).

In compliance with these requests, the P5+1 would “pause efforts to further reduce Iran's crude oil sales, enabling Iran's current customers to purchase their current average amounts of crude oil”<sup>75</sup>. The nature of the crude oil sanctions allows China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Taiwan, and Turkey to maintain their current average level of imports from Iran”<sup>76</sup>. Since its implementation, Iranian oil exports have risen this year by 28 %, according to a report filed by the International Energy Agency in Paris <sup>77</sup>, while Iran’s nuclear program has remained stagnant. The accord, and the agreements that have occurred since, exemplify the Obama administration’s pivot away from Bush era diplomacy, influenced by the Israel lobby, and into a new era of more communicative dialogue with Iran.

It is necessary to take yet another pause to analyze the full relationship between the United States and Israel. There is strictly no dispute. Israel is the strongest partner the United States currently has in the Middle East. President Obama has recognized how they are the only functioning democracy in the area

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<sup>71</sup> Friedman, Thomas. “Iran and the Obama Doctrine: with accompanying video interview”.

<sup>72</sup> Refers to the five veto powers in the UN Security Council (U.S, U.K, Russia, China, France) and China

<sup>73</sup> “Joint Plan of Action”, EEAS, The European Union

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. p. 2.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid. p. 2.

<sup>76</sup> “Iran Sanction Guideline”, U.S Department of the Treasury,

<sup>77</sup> Lakshmanan, Indira and Dipaola, Anthony, “Growing Iran Oil Exports Challenge U.S Sanctions”Comment: It is important that the specified report by the IEA cannot be publicly accessed

and how an attack on Israel would be a fundamental failure of his administration<sup>78</sup>. The president has made his mission clear how he intends to maintain the highest level of security for Israel while pursuing a diverging foreign policy with leaders in Iran in an attempt to reach a more sustainable peace for all actors, especially Israel.

It is also imperative to acknowledge how the current nuclear deal with Iran has been influenced by the tough sanction program placed on the country by the (P5+1) during the Bush administration, which has made the Iranian people eager for change. The U.S Department of State and President Obama highlight fundamental changes occurring in Iran, which have led them to chose a new approach aimed at overarching peace. The election of Iranian president Rouhani, a reformist candidate who ran on the promise to work towards ending the sanctions, and the Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, allowing his negotiating team to make certain concessions during the talks in Geneva, showed the Obama administration Iran was ready to work towards rejoining the international community<sup>79</sup>.

### The Challenge:

The change in policy, while it is working, has been met with heavy confrontation from Israeli leaders. Prime Minister Netanyahu is voicing concerns that the current (JPOA) agreement is only beneficial to Iran and threatens the security outlook in the Middle East. While answering questions during his testimony to congress, Kerry explained how Prime Minister Netanyahu “is wrong”, and how Iran’s current compliance with the (JPOA) has made Israel and the rest of the global community safer today than it was before the signing of the agreement. At the time of this statement however, Iran’s nuclear development remains intact, it has been continuously caught hiding pieces of its nuclear program<sup>80</sup>. Sanction easing by the (JPOA) has increased Irani prosperity and decreased incentives of other countries, such as China, to be strict with Iran because of regenerated oil trade<sup>81</sup>. The Israeli camp is convinced rapport diplomatic relations with Iran is dangerous. While peaceful talks between Iran and the (P5+1) signal a possible status quo trajectory, they claim there is unsurmountable evidence showing the currently designed system cannot function as a sustainable solution.

The greatest evidence showing the push back has been a letter signed by 50 Republican senators addressed to the Supreme Leader of Iran outlining their intent of overriding any of the president’s current

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<sup>78</sup> Friedman, Thomas. “Iran and the Obama Doctrine: with accompanying video interview”.

<sup>79</sup> Friedman, Thomas. “Iran and the Obama Doctrine: with accompanying video interview”.

<sup>80</sup> “State Department Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Request”. U.S House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs, C-Span,

<sup>81</sup> Haiter, Ziad, “Oil Fuels Beijing's New Power Game”,

negotiations regarding the nuclear accord through their parliamentary power over the executive branch<sup>82</sup>. When interviewed, the U.S diplomat Iran Watcher cited the letter as an ignorant ploy, which puts the negotiations in danger<sup>83</sup>. The letter was then followed by Prime Minister Netanyahu's visit to the U.S House of Representatives to deliver a speech against the President's current diplomacy efforts. The Prime Minister was greeted like a rock star and America's mission was immediately questioned.

It is hard to directly connect the Israel lobby's role in influencing the 50 senators to draft their letter or in the invitation of the Israeli Prime Minister to deliver a speech on Capitol Hill without the invitation from the Commander in Chief. Academic papers have no place for speculation, so speculation must not be drawn to show how the lobby has influenced the current affairs. However, patterns can be realized and trends can be analyzed. The Republican party has traditionally been heavily connected to a favorable Israeli stance and even more so connected to America's Christian following; which as aforementioned makes up the most powerful piece of the Israel lobby. It can be said that the power of the 'wheel of influence' has become so engrained in the American political system that it is difficult to distinguish it acting as an individual player. Instead it is correct to assert how the American politic has grown more supportive of Israeli favoring policy as a result of the various parts of the lobby's work. With this acknowledged, however, this stance is being challenged by the wills of the Obama administration.

### The President's Task:

The "Obama Doctrine", as recently named by Thomas Friedman, has created a new profile for American foreign policy — one might say a *'profile in courage'*. The shift of strategy to a more open relationship with Iran exhibits the President's desire to focus on the larger picture in the Middle East. Upon taking office he proclaimed how the world was discouraged at the United States following the war in Iraq, and how he hoped to change that discouragement into engagement<sup>84</sup>. Iran is, as some have referred to it lately, a "regional superpower" in the Middle East<sup>85</sup>. Its geopolitical location and immense natural resources make Iran a strategic player, but even more important is its diaspora — the same diaspora that has been ruthlessly targeted by Israel advocates for the last two decades.

The Iranian people have been portrayed as an evil and irrational group with the sole intent of eliminating Israel. While there are members of a high clerical group who have projected these threats, the greater population is held together by common ideologies of unity and a shared commitment to prosperity. They are a strong people who have managed to grow an oil industry, auto industry, and an overall middle

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<sup>82</sup> "An Open Letter to the Leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran". The United States Senate.

<sup>83</sup> United States Diplomat. Personal Interview. Paris, Fr. March 11, 2015

<sup>84</sup> Obama, Barack. "Renewing American Leadership". p. 6.

<sup>85</sup> Baer, Robert. "The Devil We Know: Dealing with the New Iranian Superpower" p. 1-12.

class under heavy international sanctions<sup>86</sup>. They want peace and liberty, and the Obama administration has acknowledged their plea. Iran has been a prevalent topic in the latter half of Obama's State of the Union Addresses, but not the same way as it was part of George W. Bush's addresses. Iran's nuclear threat still remains the most prominent issue by far. Both administrations accept the task of ensuring Iran does not get a nuclear weapon and strongly emphasize Israeli security. However, while Bush advocated for stricter international pressures<sup>87</sup>, Obama has chosen a strategy of more engagement, something the Israel lobby has warned against, but nevertheless, something that is working more effectively than previous measures.

The nature of sanction regimes is playing against the Israel lobby. Despite Netanyahu's request on Capitol Hill for stricter sanctions, and AIPAC's outline for heftier<sup>88</sup> policies, Obama has stayed committed to his cause for a diplomatic approach, and for good reason.

The sanction policies were simply not working. According to Pietre Cleppe, an associate at the Brussels based think tank Open Europe, sanction policies hurt the middle class, which inevitably increases the power authority of the country's leaders because working people are forced to rely on them more<sup>89</sup>. In the case of Iran the sanctions had demoralized the economy, but were not stopping progress to a nuclear war. The U.S diplomat, who will remain anonymous, explained how the diplomatic approach with Iran is working much more effectively than the sanction policy had, and that an appeasement approach would be "symbolic, to show that sanctions have been lifted" and a prospective relationship between the two sides would be suggested. Iran's return to the negotiating table is "attributable less to sanctions and more to Iran's perceptions of U.S. flexibility"<sup>90</sup> and "there is no demonstrable causal relationship between the existence or level of sanctions against Iran and Iran's willingness to negotiate"<sup>91</sup>.

The U.S sanction initiative has long been established, and, "expecting a recalculation of this nature by Iran simply on the basis of reiterated international "demands" or weak targeted sanctions—particularly without a credible threat of consequent military action for defiance—could appear to verge on quixotic"<sup>92</sup>. In a testimony given to the U.S House Foreign Relations Committee Secretary of State, John Kerry, affirmed these reliefs as he explained how before the Joint Plan of Action diplomatic deal, Iran was

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<sup>86</sup> United States Diplomat. Personal Interview. Paris, Fr. March 11, 2015

<sup>87</sup> "State of the Union Addresses". The United States National Archives.

<sup>88</sup> Meerman, Marij. "AIPAC: The Israel Lobby". Produced by Judith van der Burg. VPRO. 2007. Documentary.

<sup>89</sup> Pieter Cleppe. Personal Interview. Brussels Belgium, March 9, 2015.

<sup>90</sup> Katzman, Kenneth. "Achievement of an Outlook for Sanctions on Iran"

<sup>91</sup> Hess, Sarah. "What you need to know about the Geneva Nuclear Deal" p. 1

<sup>92</sup> Blackstock, Dr. Jason J. P.Phys. and Milkoreit, Manjana, J.D. "Understanding the Iranian Nuclear Equation" p. 22

only a few months from breakout<sup>93</sup>, but after the deal, breakout has been pushed back to a year. Kerry affirmed how Israel is safer under the (JPOA) than it was before. Despite this information, the domestic Israel lobby in the United States has continued to mobilize in opposition. It was after Kerry's protest the 50 senators drafted the letter to the Supreme Leader, a letter the U.S diplomat interviewed cited as dangerous<sup>94</sup>.

Part of the answer resides with fear, something the President acknowledged in his interview with Thomas Friedman, explaining how "Israel has the right to be concerned" for Iran is a country who has openly threatened Israel's existence. The other, and more interesting part of the answer resides in ignorance. Marc Finaud explains how Iran's propaganda is not as aggressive as it is read, and how the core issue Iran has with Israel is their settlement in Palestinian territory<sup>95</sup>. Mr. Finaud explains how Iran would "recognize" Israel should a two state resolution be drawn, and acknowledges slight progress towards such an end, as the Supreme Leader now referring to Israel by its name and not by the "Zionist Regime" term<sup>96</sup>. He points to similar destructive propaganda on Israel's side, where talk against Iran has become a distraction away from efforts towards peace with Palestine. Both instances of propaganda are directed at the populous in an attempt to gain political support. They are not outlines of foreign policy. President Obama understands this and knows the United States will not be in a position to negotiate if it is held to either one of the relics. The task is avoiding the domestic pressure.

President Obama is at a juncture between doing what his administration finds to be the best solution for Iran and doing what domestic forces are pressuring him to do; a very similar juncture to what then Senator John Quincy Adams found himself in when dealing with the British trade embargo in 1807, or the juncture Senator Daniel Webster was in the midst of over the Compromise of 1850 between the Northern and Southern States involving slavery. The latter of the three statesmen found their political end at these junctures. They went against their constituents and never recovered. Adams was regarded as a traitor when he sided with President Thomas Jefferson on the trade embargo. He ended up resigning his seat after Massachusetts in the wake of protests from Massachusetts voters. Daniel Webster, after giving a speech in favor of concessions to the South saw his presidential aspirations fade as northern voters threatened his political life in protest. Both men could be accused of treason of liberty, for they went against their constituents — the people who they were supposed to be representing. Then Senator John Kennedy highlights these men's actions of extreme patriotism in "Profiles in Courage" to show how it is sometimes necessary for statesmen to look beyond the populous and focus on the greater good, to steer

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<sup>93</sup> Breakout is defined as the time it would take for the development of a nuclear weapon, including the acquisition of enough fissile material.

<sup>94</sup> United States Diplomat. Personal Interview. Paris, Fr. March 11, 2015.

<sup>95</sup> Finaud, Marc. Personal Interview. Geneva Center for Security Policy, Geneva, Ch. April 2015.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

clear of ignorance and work towards resolving problems to great for society to comprehend. In both instances, the constituents were concerned with their personal affairs — not those of the United States.

Today, the Obama administration is dealing with an affair that transcends national borders, transcends religious confrontation, and evermore transcends political belief. The Middle East is a penetrated political system, “one that is neither effectively absorbed by outside powers, nor released from the outsider’s tight hold”<sup>97</sup>. Such a system obscured diplomatic negotiation because inside and outside factors are constantly working against each other. All three actors must realize their own serenity in the conflict and must recognize their individual obligations to move forward towards a common peace. For the United States, and the Obama administration, it is recognizing the dangerous domestic ties to Israel and the fogged view of Iranian diplomacy.

Members of the U.S Congress, such as U.S House Foreign Relations Chair, Ed Royce, has called for congressional review of Obama’s deal with Iran, but the President is not backing down, claiming he will veto any legislation enforcing a congressional review of the deal. For too long domestic efforts in the United States have been working to create a bad image of Iran. The initial part of this paper outlined the vast ‘wheel of influence’ the Israel lobby has over the U.S politic. This is not a place to speculate a direct tie between congressional pressure on the president and the Israel lobby, however a historical review of previous political events dealing with Iran and Israel exhibit a pattern taking effect, most notably in 2002-2003 when President Bush was moved away from his “Road Map of Peace” between Israel and Palestine and towards a punishment campaign against Iran<sup>98</sup>. Last decade the political environment was different, but the pattern remains.

In this decade events have occurred making the political contrast even more visible. The election of Rouhani, a change from the hardline politics of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and a growing reformist movement in a young Iranian population signal a desire to work towards rejoining the international community. Dr. Jubin Goodarzi, in an interview, offered an interesting relic, when he explained how while dinning in an Iranian restaurant in Tehran, where a large congregation of Chinese business men were meeting for lunch, a waiter came over to his table and, with his eyes on the Chinese group, joked, “when are the Americans coming back?”<sup>99</sup>. The U.S diplomat interviewed found this to be a perfect anecdote to explain the Iranian diaspora’s desire to work towards progress. They do not hate Americans, and they are not an irrational population with a desire to destroy liberty or start a religious war like much of the media portrays. There are a few clerical leaders who have made stances against the West and against Israel, and these must be taken cautiously, however the intent of such stances is purely political. Islam, Christianity, Judaism — it is all the same story. Mecca is believed to be the house of Adam and Eve, while Ala is simply the arabic tongue for God; in fact, the whole region of the Middle East is

<sup>97</sup> Brown, L. Carl. “International Politics and The Middle East: Old Rules, Dangerous Game”. 32

<sup>98</sup> Gilboa, Eytan and Inbar, Efraim. “US — Israeli Relations in a New Era: Issues and challenges after 9/11”.

<sup>99</sup> Dr. Jubin Goodarzi, Personal Interview. Webster University, Geneva Campus. February 24, 2015.

outlined in a shape of an angel (as shown on the cover photo of this paper). The conflict is not rooted in beliefs it is rooted in anger over Israel's actions of occupation on the Sinai Peninsula. Fear has changed the nature of the conflict, but fear is a liar and ignorance is so sure of itself. Fear is also what is in the way of America from solving the problem.

The late Tony Judt of New York University also fell victim to a similar occurrence to the ones which brought down Quincy Adams and Webster. His readers objected to his claims about Israel domestic pressures on Washington. While he left the direct link between the Israel lobby and American foreign policy up for judgment, as this paper does, hesitated true to the notion that America has remained stagnant in the conflicts of the Middle East because of fears of anti-semitism; a fear that can be witnessed in all levels from political leadership to the average citizen talking politics over a cup of coffee. Just claims this fear has , “corroded American domestic debate”<sup>100</sup> and caused the public to “censoriously rebuke any public figure at home who tries to break from the consensus”<sup>101</sup>— leading to a blind support of Israeli policy in the Middle East. It bears repeating how dangerous such blind support has become, and how:

“Israel is the only Middle Eastern state known to possess genuine and lethal weapons of mass destruction. By turning a blind eye, the US has effectively scuttled its own increasingly frantic efforts to prevent such weapons from falling into the hands of other small and potentially belligerent states. Washington's unconditional support for Israel even in spite of (silent) misgivings is the main reason why most of the rest of the world no longer credits our good faith”<sup>102</sup>.

Whether it is the Israel lobby directly, or its second hand effects, America has clearly been fogged from looking at the overall picture in the Middle East. This dangerous fog has led to becoming a “fog of war” in not to distant U.S history<sup>103</sup>. It is clear how Iran must be viewed as an asset rather than a liability. Robert Baer, a former C.I.A operative, has claimed Iran to be so important to Middle East geopolitics that it should be viewed as a stronger potential ally than Israel<sup>104</sup>. This paper will not go as far to dismiss Israel's role as the strongest U.S ally in the Middle East, but it is imperative to view the broader outlook currently taking shape in the region. Judt claims the power Israel has in the domestic United States could become their folly because a peace indicative, lead by the United States, appears to be the only way for real stability in the conflicts with Iran and other actors in the region, and the only way towards full Arab

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<sup>100</sup> Judt, Tony. “Israel: The Alternative”. The New York Times

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> A term used by former Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamera, to explain certain mistakes in the Vietnam War initiative.

<sup>104</sup> Baer, Robert. “The Devil We Know: Dealing with the New Iranian Superpower” p. 1-12.



recognition of Israel, as outlined by Oslo agreement<sup>105</sup>. The U.S, currently cannot play such a role because it has been “blinded” by whichever Israeli forces one judges adequate. This is not, in the words of Dr. Goodarzi, “not a zero sum game” — as offered by Carl Brown<sup>106</sup> because it does not require either state to give something up for the other’s gain. A peaceful deal between Iran and the United States will lead to a more secure Israel. It is then in Israel’s best interest for the United States to continue the diplomatic approach it is on with Iran because without the United States Israel has no other friends in the world<sup>107</sup>. President Obama has been voicing, in the Friedman interview and elsewhere, that his approach keeps Israeli interest in the highest priority. The challenge, however, remains of being able to go through with it.

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<sup>105</sup> Judt, Tony. “Israel: The Alternative”. The New York Times

<sup>106</sup> Brown, L. Carl. “International Politics and The Middle East: Old Rules, Dangerous Game”. p. 32.

<sup>107</sup> Meerman, Marij. “AIPAC: The Israel Lobby”. Produced by Judith van der Burg. VPRO. 2007. Documentary.

## Conclusion:

Kennedy set out to write “Profiles in Courage” to display the resilient acts of few American statesman who, in our history, had the courage to stand the threat of treason in the face and make the critical decisions to tack away from the populous and towards an unpopular resolution for the greater interest of the country. The young Senator from Massachusetts was unaware of how his future relations with Israel would bring about yet another instance requiring the same breed of courage. This paper has covered a dense topic and has required a dense analysis, but it deserves a concise conclusion: There are clearly factors in play which have led the United States to have a overly strong alliance with Israel. Whether a specific Israel domestic lobby is at fault or whether it has strictly been ties with Israeli throughout a dynamic history the reader is left to judge. The fact of the matter stays true, however, the relationship is dangerous to the outcome of the nuclear accord with Iran, as well as the greater peace outlook in the Middle East. Such a danger requires unparalleled bravery in leadership to break through the status quo. Whether Barack Obama has enough force behind him to blow away the fog blinding the interests of the United States is still to be determined. The final remark must be clear. The work of this paper is in no way to suggest a lack of support, for Israel, a country that will remain one of the United State’s strongest allies in the Middle East. The tack in policy offered here is not a tack away from Israel, it is a tack out of a fog towards Israeli sustainable security and towards a greater peace in the Middle East — let us all pray the wind is favorable on the other side.

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