

American Foreign Policy Towards Israel National Interest or Burden

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Abstract

This study explores the evolution and logical basis behind US foreign policy towards Israel, examining it through a theoretical framework grounded in realist international relations theory. It investigates whether this relationship serves US national interests or constitutes a strategic burden in a region of significant importance to US interests. The study traces the trajectory of US foreign policy towards Israel from its establishment to the present, highlighting key shifts in this policy. Initially, the United States was not enthusiastic about Israel's founding. However, relations deepened after the 1967 war, which made Israel a strategic ally during the Cold War by defeating Soviet-aligned Arab nationalism. Israel subsequently received substantial support, including economic and military aid, which became a consistent feature across successive US administrations.

The study focuses on the exceptional position Israel holds in US foreign policy and questions the reason for this significant support, despite Israel's realist perspective being preoccupied with its crises with Arab neighbors. From this perspective, the US does not receive commensurate returns on its support; on the contrary, Israel may sometimes conflict with US national interests and pose a strategic risk in the region. The research concludes by balancing different perspectives, exploring the complex dynamics of US foreign policy, and raising questions about its motivations.

Keywords: US Foreign Policy, Israel, Strategic Burden, US Interests.

Introduction:

In a widely discussed speech by U.S. President Joe Biden, he stated, "If there were not an Israel, we'd have to invent one."¹ Joe Biden has repeated this phrase multiple times throughout his political career. It is worth noting that this perspective is not limited to the current administration or Joe Biden himself. Tracing the statements of American presidents and high-ranking officials regarding the nature of relations with Israel provides a clear impression of the distinctive nature of this relationship. In fact, it goes beyond mere distinction and can be described as exceptional. These indications are not only related to statements but can also be traced through American aid to Israel. Israel, despite being a relatively small country, is the largest recipient of American aid, even though it is economically and militarily advanced. This is in addition to the massive military support that the United States has provided and continues to provide to Israel.

¹ The Nation. (2024). Biden Tells Jews: Israel Should Be 'Safe Place.' The Nation. <https://www.thenation.com/article/politics/biden-jews-israel-safety/>

When discussing American interests in the Middle East, the topics of Russian and Chinese expansion (formerly Soviet expansion), oil supplies, combating terrorism, and finally, the security of Israel are often mentioned². All of this and more raises a fundamental question: why? Does Israel truly hold such importance for American interests? From a theoretical realist standpoint, this question can be framed as follows: What is the national interest of the United States in its exceptional support for Israel? Consequently, does Israel constitute an American national interest or a strategic burden? In this paper, U.S. foreign policy towards Israel will be analyzed in light of realist theory, examining these policies from the perspective of national interest, with a focus on American strategy towards Israel.

conceptual framework

Strategy: The term "strategy" can be traced back to ancient Greek civilization, where it exclusively referred to the military domain, indicating a military leader's skill in managing and achieving the objectives of a battle. This was closer to what we today call "tactics" in military language. Over time, the term evolved and is now widely used in various fields beyond the military, including political and marketing strategies, among others³.

During the Renaissance, the concept of strategy expanded beyond its narrow military confines to include political aspects. Niccolò Machiavelli is considered one of the prominent strategists of this era, linking war with politics by considering war as a tool to achieve political objectives. Strategic studies then took on a philosophical nature, especially through the writings of Carl von Clausewitz (1831-1870), who defined strategy as the art of using battles to achieve the goals of a war. André Beaufre further expanded the concept of strategy, defining it not only in terms of military power but as the art of using power to achieve political objectives. He emphasized the comprehensive strength of the state, which includes political, economic, diplomatic, and military aspects⁴.

Interest/Burden in Strategic Terms: In the international system, it is well-known that there are many political actors, each with their own interests that they strive to defend and enhance using available resources. To understand strategy, it is crucial to recognize that interests are linked to goals, and resources are connected to the mechanisms and means employed to achieve these goals. Resources are not limited to military power but can take various forms such as political, cultural, and economic relations. From this, we can derive a definition of strategy as the optimal employment of available resources to achieve the highest objectives⁵. Thus, the strategic interest/burden is related to the ultimate goals of a state or entity. In the political context, strategy can be linked to the supreme national interests, encompassing the various dimensions that a state considers vital for its survival and prosperity. This includes military strength, economic stability, political alliances, and cultural influence, all integrated into a coherent approach to achieve the overarching objectives of the state.

Theoretical framework

Realists believe that anarchy is the prevailing condition in the international system. This is due to the

² Byman, D., & Moller, S. B. (2016). The United States and the Middle East: interests, risks, and costs. *J. Suri, & B. Valentino, Sustainable Security: Rethinking American National Security Strategy*, 263-309.

³ Biddle, T. D. (2015). *STRATEGY AND GRAND STRATEGY: WHAT STUDENTS AND PRACTITIONERS NEED TO KNOW*. Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep11726>. Pp. 1-2.

⁴ Potter, A. B. (2018). BH Liddell Hart, Strategy (1954). *The Classics of Strategy and Diplomacy*. Pp. 398-400.

⁵ Biddle, T. D. (2015). Pp10-12.

absence of a supreme authority regulating relations between actors, resulting in competition and conflict being natural states in such a system. Consequently, politics is seen as a struggle or competition for survival, which forces states to seek power and strive to maximize it. This pursuit makes other actors potential enemies at best, as a state cannot guarantee the intentions of other states. Realists also view the state as the primary actor in this system, minimizing the role of international organizations. This applies to the Israeli case, as dozens of international resolutions have been issued against Israeli practices, most of which, if not all, Israel has not adhered to, prolonging the conflict and preventing international organizations from bringing peace to the region.

The selfish nature of humans, from which realists start, is reflected in states, making them selfish in pursuing their national interests, with their ultimate goal being to achieve national interest represented by survival and maximizing benefit. States act in their environment to achieve their interests, and conflicts are explained as arising from the continuous pursuit of states to enhance their power, maintain it, or give the appearance of possessing it.

Methodology

The Historical Approach: Tracing the historical trajectory of U.S. foreign policy towards Israel and analyzing the American strategy in its relationship with Israel is crucial. To study the nature of these relations, it is necessary to go back to past events and facts, presenting, analyzing, and interpreting them. This helps in explaining current events and problems and understanding various developments.

National Interest: Since the goal of every state is to achieve its national interests, interactions between states can be analyzed through the lens of their national interests. This study focuses on U.S. foreign policy towards Israel, assuming that the United States acts as a rational actor seeking to achieve its national interest. Therefore, its relationship with Israel must be based on this assumption—that America has a national interest in the region, particularly with Israel.

Evolution of U.S. Foreign Policy Toward Israel

The historical roots of U.S.-Israel relations can be traced back to the early days of the Zionist movement, with the United States hosting several Zionist conferences, the most notable being the Biltmore⁶ Conference. However, despite the immediate recognition of Israel upon its declaration of independence in 1948 by President Truman and his earlier support for the 1947 UN partition plan, political relations were initially fraught. At that time, the State Department, the Pentagon, and the CIA sought to temper Truman's enthusiasm for supporting Israel, arguing that it could harm American interests in the Middle East. This cautious stance persisted into the Eisenhower administration, where relations with Israel reached a nadir, particularly following the conflicts of 1953 and 1956. The U.S. even imposed sanctions on Israel, threatening to expel it from the United Nations and withdraw recognition⁷.

Initially, the United States did not view its security and strategic interests as aligned with those of Israel. American interests were primarily focused on countering Soviet influence and securing energy resources in the region, which necessitated cooperation with Arab states. Moreover, the U.S. aimed to fill the vacuum left by the declining British and French influence in the Middle East, with Israel being seen as an ally of

⁶ See: Barda, K. (2024). From the American Jewish Conference to the Establishment of Israel: The First Jewish Zionist Grassroots Movement and President Truman. *Modern Judaism: A Journal Of Jewish Ideas And Experience*, 44(1), 23-39.

⁷ BAR-SIMAN-TOV, Y. (1998). The United States and Israel since 1948: A "Special Relationship"? *Diplomatic History*, 22(2), 231–262. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24913659>. p. 233.

these European powers. In its early years, Israel primarily relied on Britain and later on strategic cooperation with France. France was Israel's main arms supplier, which shifted the regional balance of power in Israel's favor, and also collaborated on Israel's nuclear program, leading to the establishment of the Dimona reactor⁸. During this period, Israel's strategic interests aligned with those of France and Britain, particularly in efforts to undermine Gamal Abdel Nasser, who posed a threat to their interests in the region and was perceived as a significant threat to Israel's existence.

The beginning of the special relationship between Israel and the United States cannot be separated from the context of the Cold War. The alignment of Arab states, particularly Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, with the Soviet Union and their receipt of Soviet arms prompted the Kennedy administration to shift U.S. policy toward Israel. This change included supplying Israel with Hawk missiles to counterbalance the Soviet-supplied missiles received by Egypt and Iraq. Additionally, the U.S. aimed to equip Israel with conventional arms to dissuade it from pursuing nuclear weapons, aligning with the nuclear non-proliferation policy adopted by the Kennedy administration⁹.

Israel consistently sought to build strong relations with the United States since its founding. However, the U.S. only began to recognize the strategic importance of Israel for American interests in the 1960s, a period marked by deteriorating U.S.-Arab relations. The pivotal moment came after the 1967 Six-Day War, during which Israel demonstrated its military prowess by defeating the Arab nationalist forces allied with the Soviets. This period coincided with American losses in Vietnam, where it appeared that the Soviet Union was gaining the upper hand in the global conflict. Consequently, the Johnson administration realized that Israel was a crucial element in countering Soviet influence and their Arab nationalist allies led by Egypt¹⁰.

American diplomat George Ball described the shift in American perception towards Israel after the 1967 war: "America had responded with admiration to Israel's brilliant sweep across the desert and its victories on its northern front. It was not merely that we like a winner, but that Israel, a tiny country, had retained its image as the underdog, and Americans have always preferred David to Goliath. Particularly among Israel's friends there was a feeling of euphoria, while support for Israel manifested itself not only in effusive praise but in greatly increased private sector contributions"¹¹ During this period, U.S. support for Israel surged, reaching \$400 million in military and economic aid. It appears that Israel successfully convinced the United States that it was a reliable ally in the region. In the 1970s, the U.S. had two main allies in the Middle East: the Shah's Iran and Israel, with American perception increasingly favoring Israel. After the October 1973 War and with the progress of U.S.-brokered Egyptian-Israeli negotiations, successive American administrations committed to financially, militarily, and politically supporting Israel. Financial and military aid continued to flow into Israel, and the United States played a crucial role in bringing Israel closer to its Arab neighbors. The U.S. acted as a mediator in peace processes with the

⁸ Ziv, G. (2010). Shimon Peres and the French-Israeli Alliance, 1954-9. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 45(2), 406–429. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20753593>. P. 407.

⁹ BAR-SIMAN-TOV, Y. (1998). P. 236.

¹⁰ Ibid. P. 238.

¹¹ Ball, G. W. (1979). The Coming Crisis in Israeli-American Relations. *Foreign Affairs*, 58(2), 231–256. <https://doi.org/10.2307/20040413> . p.237.

Arabs and Palestinians and consistently provided political support to Israel on the international stage. Consequently, U.S.-Israeli relations became a cornerstone of American strategy in the region¹².

The "War on Terror" strategy adopted by George W. Bush's administration further strengthened U.S.-Israeli relations, aligning closely with Israeli interests. Israel portrayed the late Palestinian President Yasser Arafat as "Israel's Bin Laden," a comparison echoed by Israeli officials during the recent war who referred to Hamas as "Israel's ISIS." Additionally, the U.S. did not pressure Israel to halt or even stop the construction of the separation barrier between the West Bank and the territories occupied in 1948. Instead, the U.S. went further by using its veto power to block a resolution against the wall¹³.

The Obama administration attempted to adopt a more balanced approach towards Israel, pressuring the latter to freeze settlement construction in Palestinian territories (settlements that are illegal under international law). However, it maintained the overall special relationship with Israel, preserving the status quo without implementing any significant changes. In contrast, Donald Trump's tenure can be seen as the final nail in the coffin for the two-state solution. His administration recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and moved the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, marking a significant shift in U.S. policy towards Israel¹⁴.

Exceptional support

There are numerous indications that highlight Israel's exceptional status in U.S. policy through the scale, type, and conditions of American aid. Israel receives comprehensive assistance from the United States, including economic and military aid, in addition to nearly constant political support. This aid extends to various forms of cooperation such as trade, scientific research, academic collaboration, and many other fields, suggesting a unity of American and Israeli interests as if Israel's interests were America's and vice versa. This sentiment is echoed in George W. Bush's speech to the Israeli Knesset, where he said, "The alliance between our governments is unbreakable, yet the source of our friendship runs deeper than any treaty. It is grounded in the shared spirit of our people, the bonds of the Book, the ties of the soul." He continued, "When William Bradford stepped off the Mayflower in 1620, he quoted the words of Jeremiah: "Come, let us declare in Zion the word of God"¹⁵.

Israel is the largest recipient of U.S. foreign aid, having received unprecedented assistance and support from the United States since its establishment. The aid is justified by shared strategic goals in the Middle East, a mutual commitment to democratic values, and historical ties dating back to the U.S. Israel has received approximately \$150 billion in U.S. aid from 1946 to 2021, which adjusts to around \$250 billion when accounting for inflation, in the form of economic and military assistance. Currently, the United States is committed under a 2016 Memorandum of Understanding to provide Israel with \$38 billion over

¹² STEIN, K. (2011). US–Israeli Relations 1947-2010: The View from Washington. *The World Facing Israel–Israel Facing the World Images and Politics*, Berlin: Frank and Timme. Pp. 6-7.

¹³ UN Security Council, 2003. <https://press.un.org/en/2003/sc7896.doc.htm> .

¹⁴ Kirabo Petersson, S. (2022). The US-Israeli Relationship During the Bush, Obama, and Trump Administrations.: A Qualitative Case Study of the US-Israeli Relationship Using Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism Theories.

¹⁵ STEIN, K. (2011). US–Israeli Relations 1947-2010: The View from Washington. *The World Facing Israel–Israel Facing the World Images and Politics*, Berlin: Frank and Timme. P.11.

ten years, covering the period from 2019 to 2028¹⁶. Israel became the first country to acquire the F-35 fighter jet, considered the world's most advanced, purchasing 50 of them with U.S. assistance¹⁷.

Since the beginning of U.S.-Israeli relations, the United States has sought to ensure Israeli military superiority in the region. This is evident through measures adopted by the United States, including: ensuring that Israel is the first recipient of U.S. defense technology, and if another country in the region acquires the same type of technology, the United States ensures Israel receives either a more advanced version or the ability to customize the American system. The United States also puts conditions and regulations on the use and transfer of American weapons before and after the sale if the recipient is another country other than¹⁸.

In a study presented by the Congressional Research Service in 2003, titled "Special Benefits for Israel," several points summarize the exceptional treatment of Israel. The study suggested that Israel benefits from the use of cash flow financing, which only requires it to pay obligations for the current year, thus relieving Israel from the need to commit to prepayment for future costs. Israel receives funds from the U.S. Economic Support Fund under flexible conditions not available to others, such as the absence of monitoring on how the funds are used, with the United States transferring the money directly to the Israeli government instead of allocating it to specific projects. Additionally, Israel benefits from early transfers and "unusual" compensation for military purchases, direct ties with American companies for military procurement, while other countries are required to deal with the Department of Defense. All of these are compounded by exemptions on loans and outright grants.¹⁹

Historically, American political and diplomatic support for Israel has been one of the most significant forms of support. The United States promptly recognized Israel on the same day it declared its establishment in 1948. After the 1967 war and international demands for Israel to withdraw from the territories it occupied, the United States did not exert any real pressure for withdrawal. Moreover, it vetoed a Security Council resolution that called for the inclusion of pre-war borders in a ceasefire agreement.²⁰ The United States has obstructed dozens of resolutions against Israel, including many that were in favor of the Palestinians. The latest of these was a draft resolution recognizing the State of Palestine, presented by Algeria in April 2024²¹.

There is no doubt that the unprecedented scale of American aid and support for Israel imposes significant burdens on the United States. From a realistic perspective, the returns on this investment must be substantial for the United States. Therefore, we expect a significant role for Israel in protecting American interests in the region, commensurate with the extensive support it receives on all levels from the United States. Many thinkers have described Israel as a functional state²², arguing that its guaranteed American

¹⁶ Sharp, J. M. (2006, January). US foreign aid to Israel. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. P.2.

¹⁷ Shklarsky, I. The F-35 and Israel's Security Concept.

¹⁸ Sharp, J. M. (2006, January). p.5.

¹⁹ Mark, C. R. (2003, August). Israel: US foreign assistance. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. pp. 9-10.

²⁰ Hahn, P. L. (2007). The Cold War and the Six Day War: US Policy towards the Arab-Israeli Crisis of June 1967. In *The Cold War in the Middle East* (pp. 26-44). Routledge.p.31.

²¹ United Nations. (2024, February 7). US vetoes Algerian resolution demanding immediate ceasefire in Gaza. UN News. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/02/1146697>

²² Benoit, W. L., & Sheafer, T. (2006). Functional theory and political discourse: Televised debates in Israel and the United States. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 83(2), 281-297.

support is tied to its role as the vanguard of Western civilization in confronting the East in its broadest sense, which includes the Islamic world, Russia, and even Asia.

American Strategic Interests and the Israeli Role

The great importance that the Middle East represents for American foreign policy lies in its role as a primary source of American energy and as a key arena in the strategic competition between the United States and Russia and China (previously the Soviet Union). Paradoxically, adding to this significance is the presence of Israel, the United States' strategic ally in the region, considering that the protection of Israel's security is an American national strategic interest.

John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt refute all the claims regarding the strategic importance of Israel to American interests in the region. They explain that the widely accepted notion that Israel provides significant benefits to the United States is baseless. While Israel may have been useful during the Cold War by containing Soviet influence and supporting American allies in the region, they emphasize that this role should not be exaggerated. Moreover, America has paid a price for these services, providing Israel with \$2.2 billion in emergency military aid during 1967 War, along with the economic damages caused by the oil embargo during that period. Additionally, the United States had to establish the Rapid Deployment Forces following the Iranian Revolution instead of relying on Israel to protect its interests.²³ The United States could not depend on Israel or use its military bases, at least, during the First and Second Gulf Wars due to the sensitive situation among Arab nations. Israel has also been a burden in the U.S. war on terror by conflating American enemies with Israel's enemies (Hamas and Hezbollah). Moreover, American support for Israel fuels animosity against the U.S. in the region. Regarding adversarial regimes in the region, such as Iran and Syria, the American-Israeli relationship complicates dealing with these regimes, which, in any case, do not pose a direct strategic threat to the United States²⁴.” treating Israel as America's most important ally in the campaign against terrorism and assorted Middle East dictatorships both exaggerates Israel's ability to help on these issues and ignores the ways that Israel's policies make U.S. efforts more difficult²⁵ “

Mearsheimer and Walt add that Israel is not a loyal ally to the United States. Israel frequently fails to honor its commitments to the U.S., especially regarding the Palestinian issue. Additionally, Israel has been involved in leaking sensitive military technology to potential American adversaries and has been implicated in espionage activities, such as the Jonathan Pollard case²⁶ and the Larry Franklin case, in which Franklin provided classified American information to an Israeli diplomat²⁷

The United States adopted what can be considered the second project of liberalism, considering the first project as what happened with the Peace of Westphalia, with the emergence of the idea that states are the main players in the international arena and that all states are equal and have the freedom to choose their political, economic, and social systems, and the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of states. The American project declares that it adopts the promotion of universal ethical values based on democracy, human rights, and the free market, and promotes democracy as a fundamental element in US

²³ Mearsheimer, J. J., & Walt, S. M. (2007). *The Israel lobby and US foreign policy*. Macmillan. Pp. 32-33.

²⁴ Mearsheimer, J. J., & Walt, S. M. (2007). Pp. 33-34.

²⁵ Ibid. p.34.

²⁶ Kumaraswamy, P. R. (1996). The politics of pardon: Israel and Jonathan Pollard. *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 17-35.

²⁷ Mearsheimer, J. J., & Walt, S. M. (2007). p. 34.

foreign policies, where these values have become a moral commitment embraced by the international community²⁸.

This ethical commitment imposes on states that adopt liberal values to promote them regardless of the fact that liberalism, in its general concept, involves a stark contradiction between being a distributor of modernity or "the end of history," as it is a call to raise ethical values, human rights, and freedoms. However, some argue that behind its slogans, it hides an evil logic leading to relativism of ethics and domination of financial capital²⁹. Some argue that American support for Israel is based on a moral foundation, considering it a "democratic island in a sea of despotism"³⁰. The problem is that this democratic island is today accused of committing genocide and violating international law in various ways. Its Prime Minister and Defense Minister have had arrest warrants issued against them for war crimes and are being prosecuted for charges of genocide, in addition to Israel's continuous violations of international law.³¹

A legal study published in 2009, coordinated with the "Human Sciences Research Council of South Africa," comprising more than 300 pages, concluded the extent of Israeli violations of international and humanitarian law, refuting all claims about the democratic and liberal values that Israel represents. The study found that "Israel's laws in the OPT manifest prima facie as violations of international humanitarian law, both in violating specific prohibitions not to alter the laws in force, and by enforcing a dual and discriminatory legal regime on Jewish and Palestinian residents of the OPT"³². It also adds, "Both colonialism and apartheid are prohibited by international law. This Report has found strong evidence to indicate that Israel has violated, and continues to violate, both prohibitions in the occupied Palestinian territories"³³.

This fact refutes the claims regarding the American moral stance on Israel, considering that supporting Israel is part of a broader American strategy to promote liberal and democratic values, not to mention that supporting a regime that violates the law is, in itself, an illegal act. "If a State aids or assists another State in maintaining that unlawful situation, knowing it to be unlawful, then it becomes complicit in its commission and itself commits an internationally wrongful act"³⁴

In a 2015 survey, it was found that over seventy percent of the American public views Israel positively. This is justified by the close relationship between the two countries, which stems from an inherently close relationship between the two people³⁵. However, the numbers in the Arab world would undoubtedly be completely different. If we examine the Arab perspective on America, we can expect it to be mostly negative. Here, we can ask why Arabs have a negative view of the United States. Possible reasons include

²⁸ Dams, T., & van der Putten, F. P. (2015). Liberal Values and International Relations. In *China and Liberal Values in International Relations: Opposing the Promotion of Democracy, Human Rights and Liberal Market Economy*. Clingendael Institute. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep05401.5> . Pp. 8-9.

²⁹ Bell, D. (2014). What Is Liberalism? *Political Theory*, 42(6), 682–715. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24571524> p. 683.

³⁰ Quandt, W. B. (2001). America and the Middle East: a fifty-year overview. *Diplomacy in the Middle East-the international relations of regional and outside powers*, 59-73. P. 16.

³¹ Arab Center Washington DC. (2024). Is International Law Still Relevant After the Carnage in Gaza? Arab Center Washington DC. <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/is-international-law-still-relevant-after-the-carnage-in-gaza/>

³² Tilley, V. (2009). Occupation, colonialism, apartheid: a re-assessment of Israel's practices in the occupied Palestinian territories under international law. p. 118.

³³ Ibid. p. 277.

³⁴ Ibid. 291.

³⁵ Quandt, W. B. (2001). P. 17.

the support of extremist Islamic groups when needed and the subsequent loss of control over them, as happened with Al-Qaeda, the support of authoritarian regimes against the will and aspirations of the people in the region, or the thwarting of democratic experiments for self-serving reasons. The list goes on if we enumerate the reasons for the Arab public's resentment towards America, the most significant being its relationship with Israel. After the events of September 11, the declared American strategy in the region was the war on terrorism (Israel's role). A study titled "Does U.S. Support for Israel Lead to Anti-American Terrorism" found among its results that the U.S. political stance favoring Israel has indeed contributed to an increase in terrorism "we did find some (preliminary) evidence that for the MENA region a favorable U.S. policy stance towards Israel may have indeed contributed to anti-American terrorism"³⁶.

Conclusion:

Based on the previous analysis from a realist perspective and relying on national interest as a criterion for American foreign policy, it appears that the substantial investment America places in its exceptional ally, Israel, does not yield significant benefits for American national interests. If we consider that Israel played an important role during the Cold War in countering the Soviet-aligned Arab nationalist regimes, it can be argued that this threat diminished after the defeat of those regimes in the 1967 war and the subsequent Egyptian-American rapprochement, where Egypt shifted to the American side. Following the end of the Cold War, Israel did not play a significant role in American conflicts in the region, having virtually no involvement in the first and second Gulf Wars. Moreover, it is difficult for the United States to leverage Israeli services in a region that is, at least on a popular level, hostile to Israel. Any Israeli involvement in Arab countries is highly sensitive, and perhaps this is one reason that drives the United States to foster the normalization of Israeli relations with its Arab neighbors. Regarding the fight against terrorism, American support for Israel is one of the factors inciting terrorists against the United States.

Finally, It should be noted that during the Gaza war, when America moved its fleet towards the Mediterranean and provided an overwhelming bridge of aid to Israel, it still had to intervene directly with its allies in the region to counter the Iranian attack on Israel. This operation demonstrated Israel's reliance on the United States at a time when America needs to focus all its efforts on addressing the troubling rise of China and the Russian war on Ukraine. Additionally, following current events within American society, especially the university movements and their potential impact on the upcoming elections, all signal that America does not gain much from this relationship. Added to this is the stark contradiction between the values the United States claims to uphold and its support for Israel in all international forums, including the recent issues with the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice. It seems that the determinants of American foreign policy towards Israel are not primarily based on American national interest in the realist sense. Therefore, there must be deeper reasons, possibly related to the social composition of American society, the influence of lobby groups, cultural factors, and others, which warrant further research into the essence of this exceptional relationship that has persisted since Israel's founding.

³⁶ Meierrieks, D., & Gries, T. (2020). 'Pay for it heavily': Does US support for Israel lead to anti-American terrorism?. *Defence and Peace Economics*, 31(2), 160-176. p. 174.

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