The Six-Day War and Its Impact on Arab and Israeli Conflict

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This article focuses on the Israel-Palestine conflict from the Six Day War perspective. The authors try to make a clarification of the Six Day War impact on Israel and its role in the regional and international scenes on the one hand, and the war's effect on the Arab states, including the Palestinian resistance against Israel, on the other hand. The war changed Israel's status from being a small state to becoming one of the most powerful regional powers. While the image of most Arab states was damaged and they lost their confidence among their peoples. The Six Day War changed the balance of power in the Middle East and intensified the Cold War following the end of the war. A climate of war was created and the individuals of both bearings, Israel and Arab countries, prepared for a new war.

Keywords: Israel, Palestine, Six Day War, regional conflict, international security

Introduction

In this paper, we will look at one of history's most important issues, namely the Israel-Palestine conflict. There is no doubt that Israel-Palestine conflict has affected much of the Middle East and a large part of the Arab world. The Palestinian people have had many problems since the creation of the state of Israel that came about with the help of the United Nations, primarily from the West.

Many Palestinians were forced to flee and left Palestine. They started a new life in refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, Europe, and the United States. Those who were inside Palestine were able to organise themselves to fight Israel. This organisation among Palestinians was particularly evident to the whole world after the 1967 war. The Palestinian community was in a deep crisis after the stunning victory of Israel over the Arabs, in particular, a victory over the Arab nationalist ideology.

The Palestinians were forced to take their cause into their own hands because they lost hope of an Arab Liberation of Palestine. In the mid-60s until the end of the 80s, it was the nationalist and Marxist-oriented movement that fought against Israel. However, when the Berlin Wall fell and the Soviet Union began disintegrating, Marxist organisations lost their influence, they then disappeared from the Palestinian struggle. From the beginning of the 90s, the Islamist movements grew in significance, and began to exacerbate the situation. The Islamic movements have been a major force in Palestinian society ever since and they have now reached the position that, without them, an agreement with the Israelis cannot be reached. Now after 60 years,

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the Palestinians remain without land and a viable state and appear to be making little progress.

On the other side of the conflict, however, Israel developed into a regional superpower after the 1967 war and the small state would destroy the Arab nationalist dream in a very short time-frame. Israeli society largely supported the occupation of Gaza and the West Bank at the beginning of the conflict and they would not see the consequences of this occupation until the mid-90s and up to early 2000. After Israel was hit by a series of suicide bombings perpetrated by Palestinians from the new generation who grew up under occupation, the Israelis began to demand their troops withdrawn from the occupied territories, and Israeli society was also willing to recognise a Palestinian State for the first time.

In six days during June 1967, the Israeli military devastated the air and ground forces of Egypt, Syria, and Jordan and occupied Sinai, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, and the West Bank (an area west of the Jordan River), including East Jerusalem. The Six-Day War established Israel as the premier military power in the Middle East.

This conflict also strengthened the US-Israeli relationship when America recognised Israel as imperative significant asset in its Cold War struggles. According to Sheldon L. Richman the Six-day war was also reason for the strengthening relation between U.S. and Israel:

> Israel's might was a product of American money and French armament, in addition to dedicated personnel. The war also established the idea of Israel as a U.S. strategic asset in the region.[1]

So the war was not only between the Arab armies and Israel, it was also a war between the pro-Soviet countries such as Egypt and Syria and pro-American countries such as Israel. Superpowers had a significant role in the conflict between Israel and Palestine and they had an interest in supplying both sides in order to be able to involve themselves in a conflict by proxy. The loss of the Palestinian-Marxist movements can be explained by the fact that these movements, after the Soviet Union's dissolution, lost their ideological and financial support and were replaced with the Islamic movements, with support from Iran and Saudi Arabia.

We will primarily focus on the consequences of the Six-Day War for both communities (Palestine and Israel) and how this war affects especially the Palestinian resistance movement.

Arab Nationalism and the War of 1967

> The defeat of 1967 unleashed a great soul-searching among Arab intellectuals and others who had lived the dream promoted by the Arab nationalist regimes. Everything was questioned-politics, ideology, culture, and religion-in order to understand the reasons behind the defeat. In particular, the Egyptian and Syrian regimes and the ideals that they stood for were the objects of critique and criticism.[2]

The above quotation from Nicola Pratt gives us a unique picture of the devastating war between Arabs and Israelis. The Six-Day War was one of the most important events that has taken place in the Middle East and was a turning point for the entire region. This war has given rise to many different changes in both the Arab and Israeli communities. For the Arabs, the war was not only a military failure but was also a loss to Arab nationalism and the dream of a great Arab nation. The whole community was affected by this war and both intellectual and religious leaders were in shock and could not find answers to the tragic losses of the war and the rapid failure of pan-Arabism. The Arabs were under a great deal of pressure and longed for revenge and a

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[1] Richman. 1991. Pp. 11-12.
[2] Pratt. 2007. P. 67.

further chance to attack the Israelis. Consequently, the Arabs began to reconsider Arab nationalism, and their hatred against the Jews and Zionism grew. Another important outcome of this war was that two major trends which occurred among Arab intellectuals; namely secular and Islamic intellectuals. The downfall of Arab nationalism and the rise of Islamist ideology in the Arab community made people see Islam as an alternative.

It was a brief overview of the results of the 1967 war for the Arab nationalism ideology but, in the following pages, I will, in particular, look at the consequences of the Six-Day war for Palestinians and Israelis. The conflicts between Palestinians and Israelis have not only affected them, but the entire Middle East. As mentioned earlier the Six-Day war was a turning point for both the Israelis and Arabs, and many of today's conflicts result from this short war.

We will first perform a brief review of the 1967 war's outcome. In the first part of the assignment, we look at the run-up to the war, the casualties of the war and the UN's role in the conflict. In the second part, we look at the consequences of the war for Israeli and Arab (Palestinian) relations.

Six-Day War Results

War broke out in the Middle East in June 1967 between the Israeli and Arab armies and it was not the first, or the last, confrontation in the region. The Israelis and Arabs had already been at war against each other in 1948 and 1956. A period of rising military power had taken place before the outbreak of the war in 1967. Egypt could, with Soviet help, build up a strong army while the Israelis had the Middle East's best-trained and most modern army. On the 16th May, Nasser ordered the UN peacekeeping forces to leave Sinai and on the 22nd May Nasser blocked the Aqaba Gulf. It was a very provocative act, which effectively prevented Israeli ships from entering through the Tiran Straits. Israel interpreted this as a clear declaration of war and began to prepare a counter attack.

On the 5th June 1967, early in the morning, a pre-emptive airstrike by Israel decimated Egypt's air capability. Most Egyptian aircrafts were destroyed on the ground before they got a chance to take off. Later in the day, the Israelis also destroyed the Jordanian, Syrian, and Iraqi air forces. Israel won a crushing victory over the Egyptian, Syrian, and Jordanian forces, changing its status from a small state to a regional superpower.

Over the six-day period, the Arab forces lost thousands soldiers and also the war. Israel had conquered areas of the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank, Gaza, and Golan Heights. Israel's borders were expanded to three and a half times their original size.

Table 1

The Casualties of War[3]

Country	No. of soldiers killed	No. of tanks destroyed	No. of aircraft destroyed
Israel	776	100	40
Egypt	15,000	600	500
Jordan	6,000	150	20

However, Israel did not withdraw from the occupied territories, despite recommendations from the UN. On the 22nd November 1967, the UN Security Council approved Resolution 242. The resolution expresses concern about the situation in the Middle East and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which all countries can live in safety. The fair and lasting peace should be based on three conditions[4]:

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[3] This table is based on the following books: Arab-Israeli Wars. Random House by Chaim Herzog. The Arab-Israeli Wars. The Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The State of Israel by Netanel Lorch.
[4] Lapidoth. 2011. Pp. 85-95.

1. The withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from the occupied territories.

2. Respect for and recognition of any sovereignty.

3. A solution to the Palestinian refugee problem.

The Arabs were willing to make peace with Israel and recognise Israel's right to exist, but only after the Israelis had withdrawn from the conquered Arab territories. The Israelis, in turn, declared their readiness to withdraw from the occupied territories, but insisted that the Arabs should first recognize Israel's existence and make peace so that withdrawals and the refugee issue could be negotiated. Israel would use the occupied territories as a guarantee for peace, that is to say, as a bargaining chip: land for peace—step by step[5].

The war changed the power balance in the Middle East. It was now clear that Israel was militarily stronger than any of the Arab countries, and it changed the Arab countries' diplomatic and economic relations with the outside world.

According to Steven Spiegel, the relationship between the USA and Israel has gone through two phases: before and after the Six-day War:

Phase 1 (1948-1967): Israel as a burden: "In the period from the emergence of the State of Israel to the Six-Day War, American leaders generally saw the fledgling Jewish state as a burden cast upon the United States by dint of circumstance."[6]

Phase 2 (1967-1992): Israel as an attractive ally: "The Six-Day War, in any case, had a profound impact on American-Israeli relations and would, in time, transform them. To American leaders, the war had demonstrated that Israel was indeed the prime military power in the area, providing a new dimension to the perspective of Israel as a potential benefit to American interests".

Beyond the military achievements, Israel's victory created a lasting sense of shame, with much of the Arab population and Arabs being in shock over Israel's success. The disappointment was so great, the Egyptian president, Gamal Abdul Nasser, would resign the presidency.

The defeat in the June war also affected the Arab countries' military and economy, leading to the collapse in the common front of Arab armies, which had existed up to the war in 1973, and, finally, the pan-Arabism ideology was weakened.

As one of the most significant results of the June war, the Arab countries were divided into two sections. The first being Egypt, which was more open to the West and the United States. The second section consisted of Iraq, Syria, and South Yemen who received military and financial support from the USSR[7].

For the Palestinians, the defeat meant that they had to take their problems into their own hands. Palestinians were now a political force, who fought their own battles. After 1969, the Palestine Liberation Organization PLO, which was as an umbrella for a host of new groups—the People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Black September, emerged. They tried to conduct guerrilla warfare in the occupied territories, but the Israelis put an effective end to this. Then some Palestinian groups began to use other means such as hijacking, and the purpose behind those actions was that they wanted to make the Palestinian problem visible to the western world[8].

1967-war consequences for Israeli-Palestinian relations

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[5] Troper. 2010. Pp. 173-175.
[6] Spiegel. 2008. Pp. 15-17.
[7] Hourani. 2005. P. 456.
[8] Segev. 2008. Pp. 419-562.

The Palestinians after the June war:

In many ways, the Six Day War resulted in Israel's ongoing occupation of Gaza, West Bank, Sinai Peninsula, and Golan Heights, which helped keep the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians continuing until today.

The Six-Day War was a tragedy for the Palestinians. They had hoped that the Arab armies would be able to provide them with the lost territory which the Jews had occupied after the Second World War. Instead, the Israelis conquered new areas such as Gaza and the West Bank and thousands of the Palestinians were forced to flee.

It reinforced Palestinian national sentiment and strengthened the sense of Palestinian identity and the belief that they could only rely on themselves. This created problems for the Israelis, the Arab states, and major powers[9].

At the end of the 1950s, Yasser Arafat, and Abu Iyad, at this time living in Kuwait, established the organisation Al-Fatah. This organisation, in the beginning, consisted of a network of underground cells and they began to publish the magazine called Filastinuna (our Palestine) from Beirut in autumn 1959[10].

This magazine showcased the group's political ideas. It was revolutionary at that time and they stressed that the liberation of Palestine was a Palestinian affair. Al-Fatah carried out its first military operation—against Israeli water supplies—in January 1965 and, at a summit in 1964, the Palestine Liberation Organization PLO[11] was formed.

According to Birgitte Rahbek, the PLO was created by the Arab intellectuals, and its goal was not so much to liberate Palestine as to keep the popular Palestinian forces limited, i.e. to simultaneously appease the Palestinians and validate them. The PLO was a tool in Nasser's various conflicts in relation to both Jordan and Syria.

PLO was totally affected by Jamal Abdel Nasser's nationalistic ideology and Nasser could get the benefits of the PLO, and use it as a tool in various conflicts in relation to both Jordan and Syria[12].

In May 1964, the text of the National Charter was drafted; it became the PLO's constitution. Those texts were, however, still dominated idea of an Arab entity. There were no references to the Palestinian people or the PLO's sovereignty. On the other hand, in the first article it was stressed that Palestine is an Arab country, and by nationalism's tape is attached to the other Arab countries. Only Article 3 specifies that the Palestinian Arab people have legitimate right to their homeland:

Article 3:

> The Palestinian Arab people possess the legal right to their homeland and have the right to determine their destiny after achieving the liberation of their country in accordance with their wishes and entirely of their own accord and will.

The Arab defeat in June 1967 crushed the Palestinians' hope of getting a Palestine with the Arab leaders' help, but it was their chance to finally take over the Palestinian cause. It resulted in the creation of new political parties for example; members of the Palestinian nationalist parties formed their own organisations.

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[9] Hourani. 2005. P. 433.
[10] Miller. 2004. "Yasir Arafat, Father and Leader of Palestinian Nationalism, Dies at 75." The New York Times—nytimes.com.
[11] Maksoud. 1997. P: 99-115.
[12] Rahbek. 2000. P. 156.

George Habash, one of the most famous politicians, formed his own communist party, but a few years later, the organisation fractured. Finally, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) was created.

In February 1969, Fatah joined the PLO, and the PLO could, with the help of Nasser, now control the whole organisation—since the Palestinian National Council conference in Cairo received 33 of the 57 seats which went to opposition organisations. Fatah would thus ensure the choice of Arafat as a president.

Arafat would change the PLO from a talking shop to a battle movement and this change led to a series of guerrilla operations against Israel. The Israelis, in turn, launched revenge operations against areas where Palestinians had to act independently. The Palestinians also got significant help from Jordan and Lebanon. In 1969, the Lebanese government and the PLO came to an agreement that the PLO could use southern Lebanon to attack Israel. However, this agreement between Arafat and the Lebanese government was the cause of the civil war, which started from the middle of 1970[13].

In July 1968, the first hijacking by three PFLP members took place and the most comprehensive hijacking was in September 1970, when the PFLP hijacked four airliners. In the first hijack attempt on El Al airline Company, the well-known activist Leila Khaled participated. The attempt failed, she and the PFLP group were captured by Israeli soldiers. Another Pam Am jumbo jet with 170 passengers was flown to Cairo, and after all of the passengers had left the plane, it was blown up. The last two aircraft were also blown up after the passengers had left the plane. The action put the Palestinian issue on the agenda and also generated more publicity than the previous 30 years had managed to get them[14].

After the Palestinian defeat in Jordan in 1970 and 1971, the so called (Black September), the PLO was forced to relocate to Lebanon. Beirut became PLO's main base of operations, and then they started to attack Israel from southern Lebanon with support from the large Palestinian refugee population. The PLO also began to exert influence over the people in the Lebanon. They created small enclaves in and around Beirut and southern Lebanon where the Lebanese would find themselves being stopped and checked by the Palestinians. Their activities in southern Lebanon against Israel led to strong Israeli retaliation, which threatened Lebanese independence and their activities provoked many of the Christian groups in Lebanon who felt threatened by the PLO[15].

Consequently, serious fighting broke out in 1975 between the PLO and the Kataeb (Lebanese Christian party) and continued to the end of 1976 when Syria came as a mediator between the parties. That followed five years of erratic cease fire. The Israelis had to stop the PLO and they had not as many opportunities to attack PLO training camp, therefore, they were forced to occupy southern Lebanon. Consequently, Israel came under sustained confrontation with both the Palestinian and Lebanese resistance movements. Israel could not see the consequences of its occupation of southern Lebanon and consequently paid a significant price for it—with the loss of many soldiers, a strong reaction from the Arab world and increased anti-Semitism.

On the 6th June 1982, Israeli troops and tanks crossed the border into Lebanon. The main objective of the invasion was to destroy the PLO's military and political power in Lebanon. Israel would through this invasion of Lebanon, foster a strong government, which could make peace with Israel. After a siege lasting 67 days, there was finally a ceasefire agreement. PLO leadership and 700 PLO soldiers were evacuated under UN

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[13] Hourani. 2005. P. 446.
[14] Khaled & Hajjar. 1975. Pp. 97-179.
[15] Hourani. 2005. P. 459.

supervision. The Lebanese war weakened PLO and the PLO's military camps in southern Lebanon had been destroyed.[16]

However, it was not all plain sailing for Israel. Israel could remove the PLO from Lebanon and could also stop PLO attacks, but had occupied another country and was involved in the Lebanese civil war against its willing. In addition, they faced a new enemy, namely the Shiite military movement. The Shiite military display of strength "Amal" took control of West Beirut in 1984 and, under pressure from them, Israeli forces withdrew from Lebanon except for a buffer zone along the southern border[17].

A New Generation of Palestinians

All Palestinian attempts to revolt had been defeated, and the Arab countries appeared to be resigned to the situation—especially after Egypt had chosen its own solution at Camp David withdrew from the Arab world. Israel had not wasted time but had expropriated some 52% of the West Bank and 42% of Gaza in addition to the formal annexation of East Jerusalem and the Golan[18]. There was no development in the Palestinian areas, and Palestinian lives were destroyed and undermined by Israel, who syphoned more than half of the West Bank's water into Israel.

By the end of 1987, repression as well as resistance increased and therefore the Palestinian problem went into a new phase. After 20 years of occupation, a widespread popular rebellion among Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza was triggered in 1987. This rebellion was later known as Intifada. Brynen provides evidence of this in his book *Echoes of the Intifada: Regional Repercussions of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict*:

> In addition to the constant presence of the Israeli Defence Forces, some 67,500 settlers now made their homes in more than one hundred and thirty settlements.[19]

This "intifada" continued throughout 1988 and changed both the Palestinians' relationship between themselves and their relationship to the world outside the occupied territories.

Intifada also affected the Arab countries, and on the 31st June 1988, Jordan's King Hussein sent a statement that he no longer had a claim to the West Bank and this was a start of a new phase in the Palestinian revolt. It meant that the two resistance groups of Hamas and Islamic Jihad came to play a crucial role and began leading the intifada.

According to British author Nicola Pratt, the Islamists' progress coincided with a general interest within the population to return to Islam: no other ideology had proved to be capable of winning back Palestine, neither socialism or nationalism, not to mention Pan-Arabism[20].

During the 90s, dramatic changes in international politics and the international community took place. The Soviet Union collapsed and the Eastern Bloc was disrupted, but in the Middle East things were going backwards; Iraq occupied Kuwait in 1990, and Arafat, chairman of the PLO, showed solidarity with Iraq in the conflict against the United States in particular. For this reason, Arafat lost short-term support in Europe and among Arab governments. Nevertheless, in the wake of the Gulf War negotiations between Israel and Palestine conflict parties opened up.

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[16] Rahbek. 2000. P. 222.
[17] Peretz.1994. Pp. 361-400.
[18] Institute for Middle East Understanding. 45 Years of Occupation. http://imeu.org/article/45-years-of-occupation.
[19] Brynen. 1991. Pp. 1-10.
[20] Pratt. 2005. P. 68.

From January 1993, peace talks were held in Oslo. They led to the Oslo agreement. On the13th September, an agreement was officially signed in Washington by Rabin, Arafat, and President Clinton[21].

The Oslo Agreement and the historic handshake between Rabin and Arafat in front of the White House seemed to offer a new hope for peace in the Middle East. However, there were still obstacles in their path. Angry reactions from extremists in both Israel and Palestine meant that the Oslo negotiations took place against a backdrop of violence. The implementation of the Oslo Agreement in 1993 led to more violence, as extremists on both sides sought to put pressure on their leaders[22].

However, the interesting question is why was Israel willing to conclude a peace agreement with the Palestinians?

There are several answers to this question but the most interesting answer is that Israel would stop the intifada, which started from 1987-1988, and proved almost impossible for Israel to defeat. Israel, therefore, chose to offer Arafat a deal. The agreement was that he could go back to Palestine with the condition that he would stand for a Palestinian state and Israel could then withdraw from the Gaza Strip and West Bank[23].

In the 1996 elections, Natanyahu won in Israel and promised to improve security in the country and take a tough stance against the Palestinians. He soon made his position clear. There were further developments in the Jewish settlements, and he refused to meet with Arafat. In September 1996, Hamas began its violent acts, when Natanyahu authorised an archeological excavation of an ancient tunnel near the mosque in Jerusalem. Edward Said wrote in one of his articles on the Oslo Agreement in 2000 that the Oslo Agreement brought nothing but more violence and killings of both Palestinians and Israelis and this agreement resulted in the emergence of more extremist groups from both sides[24].

In July 1999, Ehud Barak was elected, and in July 2000, Barak met with Arafat at Camp David. It was soon clear that neither side would give enough to enable it to reach a compromise. In late September 2000 violence in Gaza and the West Bank broke out again after Israel's right-wing opposition leader, Ariel Sharon, led a delegation from his party to Temple Mount, home of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the third holiest site in Islam. His provocative visit was the cause of the resulting strong feeling among all parties in the conflict.

This conflict continued until Hamas came to power through a democratic election and a new phase of Palestine-Israel conflict began, because Hamas was known as a terrorist group by both the West and the United States.

The Israelis After the Six-Day War

The Six Day War made Israel an occupying power and strengthened the national religious movement and the idea that they could restore the biblical Israel. The predominantly secular Jewish state had added a messianic blessing after its miraculous conquest of the Holy Land. Nevertheless, the victory also gave Israel control over more than a million Palestinians and it is a situation that has created, and continues to create, major problems for Israel[25]. Israel is still paying the price for the state's inability to reverse the territorial gains of the victory in 1967 with a peace agreement with Arab countries, including the Palestinians.

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[21] http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/9/13/oslo-accords-explained.html.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Beinin & Stein. 2006. Pp. 1-94.
[24] Tirado Chase. 1997. Volume 4, number 1.
[25] http://www.kristeligt-dagblad.dk/artikel/183045:Kirke---tro--Besaettelsens-forbandelse.

For Israel, the victory in 1967 had instead been used to invest huge sums in controlling the Palestinian people and create an extensive network of Jewish settlements in Gaza and the West Bank. After the war in 1967, Israel carried out the Jewish settlement policy in the occupied territories.

In Israel, the Labor Party, who sat in government at that time, decided what to do with the occupied territories. It was the Israeli immigration and Deputy Prime Minister Yigal Allon, who drew up a plan for them. The plan was given his name and stated that Israel should retain control over the Jordan valley and the range of ridges to the west. He proposed to build settlements and early warning systems on the Golan.

The purpose of the settlement policy, according to culture sociologist Birgitte Rahbek, was that Israel would acquire as much land as possible with as few Palestinians as possible in order to achieve the Israelis' acceptable demographic balance between Jews and Palestinians[26].

Israel would use the occupied areas to pressure the Arab states. When Israelis and Arabs would negotiate peace again in the future, the occupied areas could then be used as a trump card. In this way, the Labor Party would exchange land for peace. The Arabs could get the West Bank, Gaza, Sinai, and the Golan. In return, Israel would have a peace agreement. However, there were also some in the Labor Party who wanted to return the occupied areas, because they did not want to rule over around a million Palestinians.

The mood in Israel was euphoric and this led Israeli leaders to misinterpret the Palestinian people's reaction. Israel's use of the 1967 victory as a springboard for a comprehensive development of settlements in the occupied territories had greatly contributed to creating a very high political awareness among the Palestinian population. Israel has put itself in a bind because of its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and its various governments have not yet had enough support among the people to liberate themselves from it.

Conclusion

Michael Oren writes in his book *Six Days of War* about the contradictory image that Israel has given itself after the war, as both a strong and helpless country. It was as uperpower in the region and supported by the United States; however, it was surrounded by enemies on all sides and, at its narrowest just a few kilometers wide[27]. Israel won a crushing victory but with the victory came a new refugee problem, in addition to the existing issue from 1947-48 with regard to government's creation and possession of large land areas, which have never been exchanged for lasting peace. The Six-Day War was very short, it lasted only six days, but it changed both the geographical and psychological conditions in Israel and in the neighbouring Arab countries and rarely has such a short war had so much influence on the regional situation.

Israel won the war in 1967, and its victory passed into the country's mythology. The myth was first told by the first Prime Minister of Israel Ben Gurion who said that once the Arabs had been properly beaten and not just thrown back as 1948 and not only briefly pierced as in 1956—but once beaten extremely painfully and totally and confronted with their cultural and technological vulnerability—then, and only then, would the Arabs abandon their dream of destroying Israel's existence and instead build peace[28].

The American journalist I. F. Stone accurately predicted in 1967, that "the consequences of defeat will have a new generation of Arabs to modernize and mobilize to get revenge, inspired (as Jews) of recalling the

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[26] Rahbek. 2000. Pp. 200-210.
[27] Oren. 2002. Pp. 300-325.
[28] Rahbek. 2000. P. 150.

past glory"[29]. It is a fact that a new Palestinian generation has grown up under the Israeli military administration with repression and daily humiliation. The new generation's view of Israel is characterised by hatred and mistrust. The Al-Aqsaintifada is like the first intifada—namely largely a reflection of Palestinians' anger over the continued Israeli occupation.

Today, the situation is unfortunately no better for the Palestinians after nearly 60 years of struggling for a state. Hamas won a democratic referendum held a few years ago and had formed a government with Fatah, but both the US and the EU refused to recognize a government, which was formed by Hamas because they regarded Hamas as a terrorist organisation.

Hamas has made it clear that they do not aim to form an Islamic state because they see themselves as an organisation which will liberate Palestine, but the United States and the EU do not believe it.

Another significant point is that the recent fighting between Hamas and Fatah has actually had a negative effect on Hamas and its supporters. Hamas has virtually been isolated from the world and it has cost them heavily, both economically and politically. Some of the best-known Arab journalists such as Abdul Rahman Al Rashid and Tariq Hamid, who write daily for the Arab newspaper *Alsharq Al-Awsat*, criticize Hamas and their policies, while accusing Hamas of being Syrian and Iranian influence and has no independent political agenda.

There is no doubt that there is good cooperation between both Iran, Syria, Hamas, and Hezbollah but they also have ideological and political differences between them. Iran, which is still a theocracy, is also under the (Shi'a) Islamic influence while Syria is a secular state and small numbers of (Alawites) have dominated the top of the Syrian government. Hamas and Hezbollah are two Islamic organisations, but they also have different views on Islam, e.g. Hamas is Sunni while Hezbollah is a Shia organisation. On the other hand, both of these organisations have terrorism as a common ground and are both fighting against Israel, although there are ideological differences.

If we look at the other side of the conflict, namely Israel, the situation has not improved for them, especially after the war against Hezbollah in the summer of 2006. Lately, Israel has been showing another image of itself, namely that Israel is no longer a strong and unbeaten military power in the Middle East. In principle, Hezbollah primarily benefitted from the war in 2006 and was hailed by the Arab populations as the only Arab military force that could defeat Israel while Israeli society was almost in shock over the fact that they could not win the war against a terrorist organisation with all of the military resources they hold.

Finally, I will finish my assignment by quoting Olmert in a speech to mark the 13th anniversary of the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin that "only people who suffer from Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder" still believe that it is possible to maintain Greater Israel—the areas which Israel occupied during the Six Day War in 1967.

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* And Israel's existence was never in the slightest doubt, as both Israeli and American leaders knew that Israel could easily win any conflict, even against a coalition of Arab states. Finkelstein insists we cannot understand the Six-Day War without going back 11 years, to the 1956 Suez Crisis. That year, the Egyptian leader, Nasser, nationalized the Suez Canal — and Israel, Britain and France launched an unprovoked joint invasion of Egypt to seize the waterway back. But the United States, under President Dwight Eisenhower, opposed the attack, and pressured the tripartite invasion force to wit