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# The Israel Defence Forces

by  
Irving Heymont

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# **The Israel Defence Forces**

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**Irving Heymont**

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## FOREWORD

This paper is an amplification of an address given at a Research Analysis Corporation Panel held on October 20th, 1965. This paper has benefited from the comments of Dr. Robert N. Grosse. The views expressed in the paper are the complete responsibility of the author.

The photographs were taken by the author.

## ABSTRACT

Among the unusual features of the State of Israel is the development of the Israel Defence Forces. The organization and policies of the Israel Defence Forces are products of the interrelations of history, politics, geography and demographic factors.

The strengths of the Israel Defence Forces are primarily in those aspects that make them unique among the armed forces of newly-emerged nations. The Israel Defence Forces is intimately involved in many aspects of nation-building but are completely apolitical and subordinate to the civil authority. This freedom from involvement in the internal politics of the nation permits concentration on carrying out its tasks. The citizen-militia concept that underlies the Israel Defence organization is based on ancient and recent history and extends the Zionist principle of "auto-emancipation" to self-reliance for defense of the nation.

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## The Israel Defence Forces

### Introduction

The rebirth of a Jewish nation--the State of Israel--has presented the world with many unique features in nation-building. One unusual aspect is the development of their armed forces known as the Israel Defence Forces. The purpose of this paper is to outline briefly the major factors influencing the organization and policies of the Israel Defence Forces. The political considerations governing the use of the Israel Defence Forces, military tactics and techniques, and comparative evaluation with armed forces of the Arab nations will not be covered.

Israel was initially created by the UN resolution of 1947 when the British decided voluntarily to relinquish the Mandate over Palestine given to them as an aftermath of World War I. However, the creation of Israel was made possible, in reality, by the then existing Jewish armed forces who threw back invasions by the six neighboring Arab nations and enlarged the area of Israel beyond the borders designated by the UN plan for the partition of Palestine. Since this conflict, called the War of Independence by the Israelis, the Israel Defence Forces has grown into a potent military force as demonstrated by their victory over Egypt in the four-day Sinai war of 1956. Yet, the Israel Defence Forces is not just a better than average military force. In many respects it is a marked variant from the general trend in nations that have arisen since World War II, or in older nations classified as underprivileged nations.

The development and rationale of the Israel Defence Forces are a product of the interactions of the past history of the Jewish people, developments within the Zionist movement, and the physical and political environment of the country.

## Past History--Until the Exile

The Jews first arrived in Palestine about 40 centuries ago, when Abraham and his nomadic entourage settled, according to the Bible, in the Beersheba area in the northern part of the Negev. After many vicissitudes, including a period of exile in Egypt, the first Jewish kingdom, or national state, was established under Saul about the 11th century B.C. The Jewish nation reached its zenith in power under King Solomon who succeeded to the throne about 50 years after the death of Saul. From the time of Solomon to 135 A.D., the power of the Jewish nation waxed and waned under various kings and intermittent domination by invading Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks and Romans. Throughout this period, including one marked by exile of a significant part of the population to Babylonia, the Jewish nation existed in Palestine in one form or another.

Two cataclysmic events in the first and second centuries A.D. led to the end of the Jewish nation. The first was the suppression by Vespasian and Titus of a widespread revolt against Roman domination. This suppression was marked by the final destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 A.D. The revolt ended, for all practical purposes, with the fall of the hilltop fortress of Masada that overlooks the Dead Sea. Here, after withstanding a siege of several years by a number of Roman Legions, the Jewish garrison of 960 committed mass suicide rather than surrender. As an aftermath of this revolt many thousands of Jews were taken into captivity or sent into exile by the Romans.

The last Jewish revolt, under Bar Kokhba, lasted about 3 years and ended in 135 A.D., when the Romans under Hadrian were victorious after a

particularly bloody campaign. With the defeat of Bar Kokhba, Jewish national military history came to an end for almost 2,000 years.

#### Past History--Exile until 1921

Banished from Jerusalem and many other parts of the country by the Romans, the greater part of the Jewish people drifted into exile. In the next 18 centuries the Jews spread throughout the world but concentrated primarily in Europe, the Mediterranean basin, and within the last century, in North America. During this period of exile the Jews existed as an oppressed minority, without their own state and armed forces to protect them. For long periods they were brutally persecuted and denied civil rights and free access to all occupations. Despite the lack of their own state or armed forces to protect them, they retained their identity and survived.

Although the Jews have a long military history, there is no discernible tradition of a professional military class. The major trend in Jewish military organization prior to the period of exile was defense by a citizen militia. Regular armies and professional military formations did appear at various times. The first regular army appeared during the reign of Solomon. Jewish mercenary groups were employed by Egypt from the sixth to the second centuries B.C. The last Jewish regular Army before the exile grew out of the partisan forces led by the Maccabees that waged a successful guerrilla war in the second century B.C. against the Seleucid Greeks. This war led to the reign of the Hasmonean dynasty under which a regular army was used to extend the national borders to the area approximating the kingdom of Solomon.

As a national tradition, Jews have thought of themselves in the image of a civilian David facing the professional military Goliath. The experiences

of hundreds of years of oppression in exile had left the Jews with a more recent tradition of communal non-resistance. Although Jews have served with distinction in the armed forces of their countries of residence, regular armed forces were considered by Jews in many countries, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe, to be the instruments of oppression and persecution. The break in this tradition and concept of regular military forces came with the rise of the Zionist movement.

During the period of the exile, small scattered communities of Jews remained in Palestine. Although there were sporadic attempts to resettle Jews from abroad in Palestine, none of these efforts achieved any significant success until the rise of the Zionist movement in the latter half of the nineteenth century. This movement had its major strength initially in Eastern Europe where persecution of Jews was most severe. The basic premise of the Zionist movement was that only by creating a national homeland could Jews find an environment of freedom. They violently opposed as a national dishonor and shame the principle of non-resistance to oppressors and pious endurance of exile until God in His own time willed to bring redemption through a Messiah. Their slogan was "auto-emancipation"--by their own efforts rather than by sympathetic non-Jews. This spirit of militancy, reinforced by the ruthless persecution of Jews in Palestine and Eastern Europe during World War I and by the Nazi massacre of 6,000,000 Jews in World War II, has persisted to the present day, and has influenced the nature and role of the Israel Defence Forces.

The first truly Zionist-motivated return to Palestine got off to a faltering start with the founding of agricultural settlements in 1878. The

defense of these settlements against raids, primarily thefts, by Arab neighbors was undertaken as a matter of principle by the Jews themselves. Defense walls were erected and selected settlers known as SHOMRIM (watchmen) were trained in the use of arms.

At the time of the second wave of Zionist settlement in Palestine in 1909-1914, it became apparent that an area guard force was required. This resulted in the voluntary HASHOMER organization, which was charged with protecting Jewish settlements in Galilee, Samaria and Judea. The presence of the HASHOMER also served as a deterrent to marauding Arabs. The HASHOMER organization was the first Jewish paramilitary organization since the defeat of the Bar Kokhba revolt.

During World War I, Zionist leaders, particularly Vladimir Jabotinsky and including David Ben-Gurion, secured British permission to organize a wartime Jewish army that came to be known as the Zion Mule Corps. It was hoped that in this way Jews could participate in the liberation of Palestine from Turkish occupation and also lend weight to the claims for establishment of a Jewish state. The Zion Mule Corps was composed primarily of Palestinian Jews and other volunteers from many other countries. The request of the Jews to organize combat units was denied by the British and the Zion Mule Corps was primarily a transportation unit. The Corps served with distinction in the Gallipoli campaign and with the British expeditionary force under General Allenby that conquered Palestine in a drive from Egypt.

The end of World War I changed the nature of the problem facing the Jewish paramilitary forces. The British assumed control of the country and the Balfour Declaration implied British recognition of an eventual Jewish

homeland in Palestine. Other British commitments to the Arabs implied the contrary. Before World War I, the security problem for the Jews was primarily protection from various forms of banditry. Now the problems were defense against coordinated and country-wide Arab attacks that were politically motivated and with Jewish survival at stake. The tighter internal security maintained by the British, as contrasted to the Turks, restricted the activities of extra-legal Jewish forces.

Immediately after World War I, the units of the Zionist Mule Corps considered themselves to be forerunners of a Jewish Army. However, the British impeded their efforts and took severe action against those who joined in the defense of Jewish communities against the wave of Arab attacks in 1920-21. The British disbanded the Zion Mule Corps units and organized a Palestinian police force. This force was largely Arab and included, at the beginning, many Arab leaders about whom the British had reservations and whom they preferred to keep under observation.

The necessity of a nation-wide military organization was recognized by the Jewish community. In 1920-1921, major Jewish groupings such as the Jewish General Federation of Labor (Histadrut) set up the Haganah (defense). The members of this organization were to be responsible for the purchase of arms and for military training. From among the leadership of the Histadrut the first Central Defense Committee was organized. Arms were purchased in Vienna and clandestine training centers were set up in Tel Aviv and in the northern part of the country.

#### Past History--1921 to Establishment of the Israel Defence Forces

The growth of the Haganah was accelerated following a second wave of the country-wide Arab attacks in 1929. Because of the political nature of

the conflict, the paramilitary Haganah forces were directed by a National Headquarters created in 1929 by agreement among the major political groupings within the Jewish community. The differences within the Jewish community on the methods of achieving a Jewish national state, and the nature of the future state, were reflected in the existence of other Jewish paramilitary forces. The first such other force came into being shortly after the start of the widespread Arab uprising of 1936-39. This force, the Irgun Tzvai Leumi, represented the Revisionist political group that differed on methods of achieving statehood and with the Haganah tactics of self-restraint. The Revisionists believed in greater use of retaliatory action against the Arabs and in direct attacks on British forces, as differentiated from attacks on the execution of anti-Jewish measures by the British.

During World War II, the Irgun Tzvai Leumi and the Haganah pursued separate but parallel policies towards the British, but differed on tactics. The common strategic goals were to fight with the British in the war against Hitler but to oppose the British anti-Zionist policies. Both organizations campaigned for the creation of a Jewish Army. A third paramilitary organization arose during this war period. This organization, the Lohamei Herut Yisrael (Freedom Fighters of Israel), generally called the Stern group, declared war against the British Mandate with no regard for the British war against Hitler. Towards the end of World War II, the Irgun Tzvai Leumi joined the Stern group in direct war against the British. All three paramilitary forces operated separately. The strength of the Irgun Tzvai Leumi never exceeded about 3,000 and the Stern group not more than several hundred. Both were much smaller than the Haganah.

The significance of the existence of the Irgun and the Stern group is the focus they provided on the role of the military in the eventual Jewish state. From its very inception the Haganah was responsible and responsive to a civilian leadership representing the dominant political groupings of the Jewish community. The other two paramilitary organizations represented minor political groupings but were not responsible, or responsive, to civilian direction. In fact, it appears they attempted to influence the course of political direction by military action. The dissident military forces not only considered the British and the Arabs as their enemies but also the other political groupings within the Zionist movement.

The political threat posed by dissident forces was certainly present in the minds of the Jewish leaders of the provisional government established on May 14, 1948. The ordinance that followed two weeks later establishing the Israeli Defence Forces specifically prohibited the existence of other military forces. The absorption of the Irgun Tzvai Leumi and the FFI into the regular Israel Defence Forces did not proceed smoothly. The efforts of the dissident organizations to maintain their identity, particularly in the Jerusalem area, were met with patience but firmness by the Ben-Gurion government. The attempt by the Irgun Tzvai Leumi in June 1948 to bring ashore men and munitions from the ship "Altalena" was thwarted by government forces that resorted to artillery fire to disable the ship. The assassination of Count Folke Bernadotte, the UN mediator, on September 17, 1948 in the Jewish-held area of Jerusalem, precipitated the end of the dissident paramilitary forces. Although the assassins were never

identified, but believed to be members of the Stern group, the government took drastic action. The Irgun Tzvai Leumi units were ordered to disband and hand over their weapons to the Israel Defence Forces. Several hundred Stern group personnel, including their leaders, were arrested. These actions eliminated independent military formations. This harsh suppression was supported by the Jewish community at large.

Even within the Haganah there had been elements of a pluralistic organization. Before independence was achieved, the Jewish Agency was the unofficial government of the Jews of Palestine. Ben-Gurion, who was in charge of defense matters for the Jewish Agency, insisted that the Haganah be responsible to the Jewish Agency through him rather than to the representative council of groups participating in the secret militia. As Minister of Defense of the new government, this brought him into conflict with the incumbent commander, Israel Galili, who opposed this view. Ben-Gurion enforced his views by dismissing Galili despite the opposition of the political party to which Galili belonged.

The last step that consolidated civilian government control of the newly emerging regular military forces was the disbanding of the Palmach. This organization in Mandate times was the full time striking arm of the Haganah. Its members and leaders, although drawn from all elements of the Jewish population, were closely associated with an organization of collective farm settlements that set up a political party with its own domestic and foreign policies. The Palmach served as a symbolic expression, within the armed forces, of this political separatism. After independence was achieved, the Palmach continued to exist apart from the general military organization and controlled its own recruitment, training and indoctrination. Acting within his authority as Minister of Defence of the

provisional government, on October 7, 1948 Ben-Gurion ordered the Palmach disbanded. Opposition by the Palmach to its dissolution was peacefully overcome and the organization was disbanded by November 7, 1948. With the end of the Palmach, which was among the best combat elements of the armed forces at that time, the supremacy of the civilian government over the military forces was established. Within the Israel Defence Forces all politically oriented forces had been eliminated, and it was clearly established that the Israel Defence Forces was the closely controlled instrument of the government and was apolitical in nature. Unlike the situation in many other newly emerging nations, the armed forces of Israel helped create the nation but did not dominate it.

#### Haganah Characteristics and Influence

The development of the Haganah since its inception had certain characteristics that influenced the organization and mode of operations of the subsequent Israeli Defence Forces. These characteristics were close association and integration with the population, participation in nation-building efforts, deliberate restraint in operations, thorough training, and close connection with the national economy.

Except for a small cadre of professional leaders, the Haganah was primarily a citizen militia. A full time force, the Palmach, was not organized until 1941. The British acquiesced in this organization because of its potential importance in the event of a German break-through from Egypt. Needless to say, after 1945 the British unsuccessfully attempted to suppress the Palmach. The Palmach, like its parent, the Haganah, was never disassociated from the general population. For reasons of economy and security, units of the Palmach, when not employed in actual operation,

were dispersed and integrated into communal farm settlements, the kibbutzim. Here, they divided their time between training and working on agricultural tasks to support themselves and to build up the economy of the country. At its peak strength the Haganah had 3,000 Palmach soldiers, 9,500 in the Haganah Hish (specially trained field units) and 32,500 in the Haganah Him (trained personnel for local defense). Additionally, youngsters of 14-17 were trained for communications duties. All told, in 1947 about 45,000 of a population of about 650,000 Jews, or about 7%, were in the Haganah. Basically, the Haganah, except for the small Palmach formation, was an illegal citizen militia.

As to be expected, the operations of the Haganah were expensive. Although full details on its financing are not readily available, the major sources of income were the Jewish Agency, the unofficial government of the Palestinian Jewish community, and voluntary taxes. A full range of special taxes specifically for defense purposes was voluntarily undertaken by the Jewish community. These taxes, collected by a body called KOFER HAYISHUV (Ransom of the Community), gave the total Jewish population added identity with the Haganah.

A significant difference between the Haganah and paramilitary forces of other nations was the Haganah's extensive participation in nation-building activities. The settlement of Jewish-owned land and increased immigration were among the major nation-building activities prior to the creation of the national state. In both these activities the Haganah was intimately involved.

The establishment of new Jewish settlements was bitterly opposed by the Arabs who resorted to armed attacks. To overcome Arab opposition,

special tactics called "Tower and Stockade" were developed. Using prefabricated structures and massing large numbers of Haganah personnel and other volunteers, a settlement complete with fortifications and watch-tower would be established in the course of a day and night. The new settlement would be guarded by the Haganah until the settlers could take over the defense. During the period 1936-1939 over 50 settlements were established in this manner. Several settlements, such as Tirat Zivi and Hanita on the Lebanese border, were subjected to heavy Arab attacks and had to be defended by Haganah forces for extensive periods.

The site of the settlement depended upon a number of factors. A major factor was the military defensibility of the settlement and its contribution to the overall defense of the area. The role of the Haganah in selection of settlement sites were considerable. This role is also carried out today by the Israel Defence Forces.

The Haganah was extremely active in combating the British restrictions on Jewish immigration into Palestine. Haganah personnel were active in Central and Eastern Europe in organizing the movement into Palestine of Jews who had survived the Nazi holocaust. The illegal immigrant ship service transporting Jews to Palestine through the the British blockade during 1945-48 was primarily a Haganah responsibility. Within Palestine, numerous raids were conducted against British detention camps to permit mass escapes.

Restraint in choice of targets was one of the major differences between the operations of the Haganah and those of the other paramilitary forces. Haganah tactics were characterized by self-restraint and conditioned by the basic policies of the parent political groups as expressed by the

Jewish Agency, the unofficial Jewish government. These policies, as expressed by Ben-Gurion, were, "that the return of the Jews to their Land was bound up with a lofty mission to make the Middle East bloom again and to establish friendly cooperation between two Semitic peoples, which in the Middle Ages, had together been the torchbearers of progress and science" (underlining added). In furtherance of this policy, the Haganah restricted its attacks to known supporters and bases of attacking Arab groups and British anti-Zionist activities. Unlike the other paramilitary forces, the Haganah carefully refrained from terroristic acts and indiscriminate retaliatory attacks against the Arab population and the British. The Haganah patterned its military objectives in accordance with the political objectives of the Jewish Agency. These policies of avoiding blind reprisals and conforming to political objectives still guide the actions of the Israel Defence Forces.

In addition to training of formally enrolled members, the Haganah emphasized local self-defense by inhabitants. Arms for local defense were cached and rudimentary training for self-defense was provided. In the Arab country-wide attacks on Jewish settlements in 1929, it became evident that where Jews were trained in self-defense, their settlement could be saved or held until the arrival of Haganah units. Where there were no self-defenses, massacres were more likely, as happened in the Arab attack on the Jewish community of Hebron. This type of training is now an important activity of the Israel Defence Forces.

Haganah training was as intensive as circumstances permitted. Ad-

vantage was taken of the few opportunities afforded by the British to participate in police and defense organizations. In the 1936-1939 Arab attacks against the Jews, which took on the character of a near-revolt, the British authorized the formation of locally recruited Jewish stationary and mobile guard forces known as NOTRIM. These formations, for all practical purposes, were Haganah units and were used as a means for securing overt training and weapons, as well as protection of Jewish settlements.

During the 1936-1939 period of disturbances, the Haganah passed from passive to active defense. Special mobile units were created and trained, some under the guise of NOTRIM formations, to ambush Arab terrorist groups and to execute counter-raids against Arab villages that were used as bases by these groups. In 1938-1939, when the British used Jewish help to suppress the Arab revolt, this type of training was intensified under the direction of then Captain Orde Wingate of the British Army, who later commanded the British Chindit forces in Burma during World War II. The "Special Night Squads" trained by Wingate in commando-type raids contributed significantly to the development of audacious, unorthodox tactics by Haganah forces.

During World War II the Haganah actively supported the British effort against Hitler. Although this support stemmed primarily from a desire to participate in the struggle against Hitler, the arch-enemy of the Jews, it was also a means for securing additional training and experience. More than 26,000 Jews, including 4,000 women, volunteered for services in Jewish Palestinian units of the British Army. Recruiting for these units was controlled primarily by the Haganah. As during World War I, the British

initially resisted the formation of Jewish combat units. Finally, in 1944 they allowed the formation of a Jewish Brigade that participated in the final combat operations of the war in Italy. The experience and training of the Jewish Brigade with the British forces is still reflected to a degree in the current organization of the Israel Defence Forces.

A major activity of the Haganah was the procurement and storage of weapons. Sole reliance was not placed on purchases abroad or capture or theft from the British, although these sources were exploited where possible. Secret factories were established for the manufacture of arms and ammunition. By the time of the Independence War, these underground factories were producing not only grenades but also copies of the Sten light machine gun and necessary ammunition. This tradition of manufacturing has been carried over from the Haganah days. Today, the Ministry of Defense plays a not-inconsiderable role in the development of defense-oriented industries and in building up the industrial sector of the Israeli economy.

#### Geography and Demographic Factors

In addition to these historical influences, the geography of Israel and the neighboring area, the Middle East political situation, and the economic and social status of the country have profoundly affected the missions and functions of the Israel Defence Forces. These will be discussed in turn.

Israel is an irregularly shaped, narrow country some 265 miles long stretching from the hills of Galilee in the North to the port of Eilat at the head of the Red Sea in the South with a total land border of 590 miles. It is bounded in the north by Lebanon and Syria, in the east by Syria and Jordan, and in the southwest by Egypt and the Gaza Strip. North of Tel Aviv, the country is only 12 miles wide. At its widest, south of Beersheba, it is 70 miles across. From this area the country tapers down to Eilat where it is only about six miles wide. The major cities of the country are not far from the borders. Haifa is about 25 miles and Tel Aviv only 12 miles from the nearest points of Jordan. Jerusalem, divided between Jordan and Israel, is at the apex of a relatively narrow corridor.



**Fig. 1—Israel**

Half the country is desert, primarily in the area of Beersheba and to the south. This area, generally known as the Negev, is more trafficable in the western part than in the eastern part. The eastern border of the country is mostly below sea level. Lake Kinneret (also called the Sea of Galilee and Lake Tiberias) is 665 feet below sea level. From here, the Jordan flows down into the Dead Sea which is 1,286 feet below sea level, the lowest spot on the earth's surface. From the Dead Sea, the Great Rift, also called the Wadi Arabah, slowly rises to sea level in the vicinity of Eilat. The area along this Great Rift is very harsh and inhibits the growth of the settlements except in the vicinity of isolated springs.

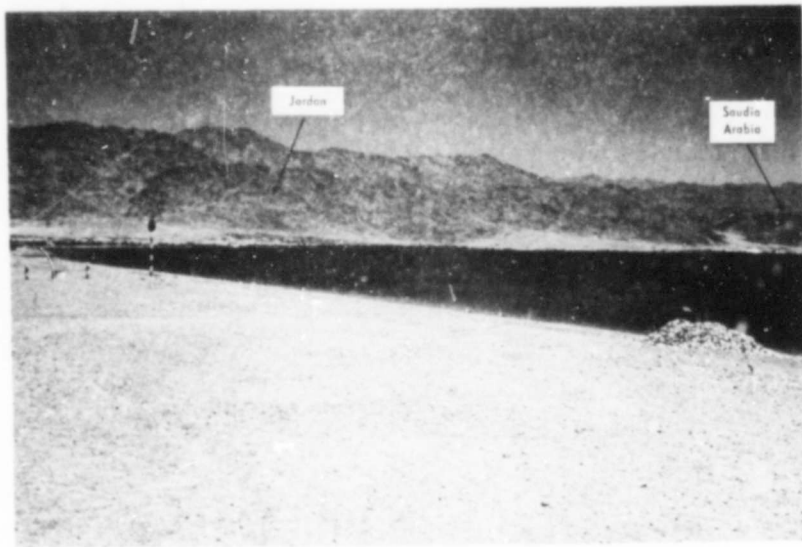


Fig. 2—Jordan and Saudi Arabia as Seen from the Beach At Eilat Looking to the East

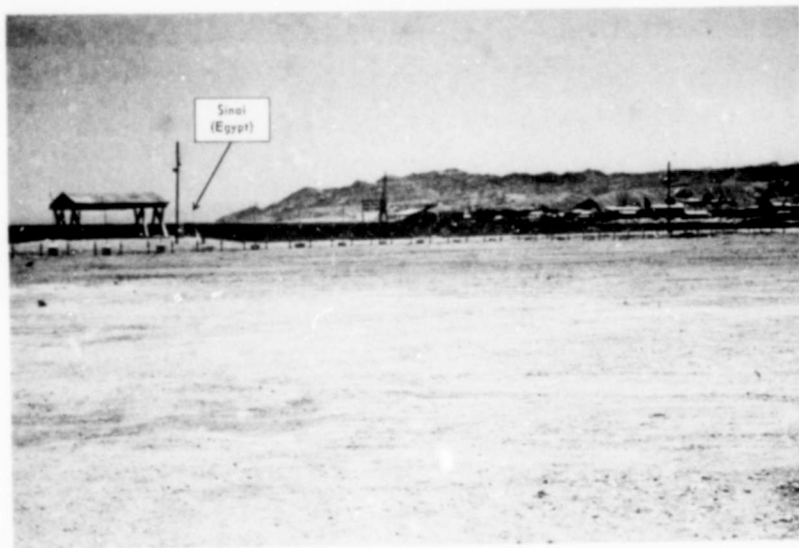
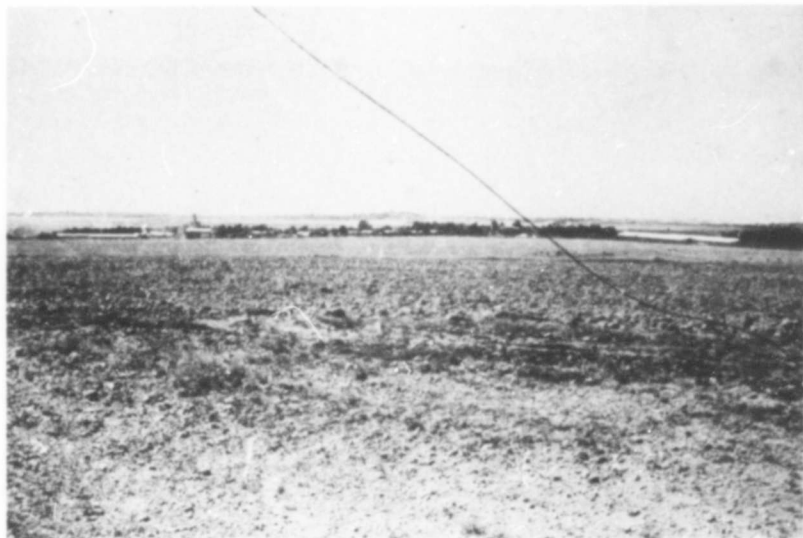


Fig. 3—Sinai (Egypt) as Seen from the Same Point on the Beach at Eilat but Looking to the West



**Fig. 4—Kibbutz Nahal Oz Adjacent to the Gaza Strip in the Western Negev**  
The Hillcrest in the center is in the Gaza Strip.



**Fig. 5—Judean Desert in the Eastern Negev**



Fig. 6—View of the Great Rift along the Israel-Jordan Border



Fig. 7—Another View of the Great Rift along the Israel-Jordan Border

Much of Israel is arid. Average annual rainfall varies from about 33-39 inches in the wettest part of the country to about 1 inch in Eilat, the driest part. Tel Aviv and Haifa have an average annual rainfall of about 20 inches. In contrast, Washington, D. C. has an average annual rainfall of about 40 inches.

Because of these and other factors, much of the population and industry of Israel are concentrated along the coast. Table 1 shows the geographic distribution of these concentrations by percent of the total population and industry.

Table 1  
Distribution of Population and Industry

Area	Population %	Industry %
Haifa	12.5	35
Tel Aviv	33.0	45
Jerusalem	7.5	--
Beersheba	2.5	5

This concentration of population and industry in close proximity to the borders creates severe military problems that affect the organization and operations of the Israel Defence Forces. The lack of depth inhibits any static defensive policy. No such defense can succeed unless there is adequate depth to absorb and blunt an enemy attack without sacrificing crucial areas. The time-distance factors dictate a large and efficient ready force to prevent loss of crucial areas. Such a force, if

not in being, must be made available in a matter of hours. These same time-distance factors make possible, and even necessary, centralized direction and control of certain military activities. Above all, the geography of Israel and the concentration of its population and industry make the country particularly vulnerable to attack by air and mass-destruction weapons.

Surrounded by nations that have vowed its destruction, Israel is at a disadvantage in terms of population and manpower. Table 2 shows the total population of Israel as contrasted to that of its hostile neighbors.

Table 2  
Population of Israel and Neighboring Countries

Country	Population
<b>Israel</b>	
Jews	2,100,000
Non-Jews	400,000
<b>Total Israel</b>	<b>2,500,000</b>
<b>Neighboring Countries</b>	
Egypt	27,963,000
Syria	5,536,000
Lebanon	2,200,000
Jordan	1,827,000
<b>Total Neighboring Countries</b>	<b>37,526,000</b>

Future population trends as shown in Table 3, accentuate the Israel disadvantage.

Table 3  
Population Trends

Country	1952	1962	1970
Israel	1,600,000	2,300,000	3,000,000
Egypt	22,000,000	27,400,000	34,000,000
All Arab Countries	37,000,000	43,000,000	53,600,000

Significantly, the Israeli Jewish population is not homogeneous and presents many social problems. Within the Jewish population are many different origins and cultures. Although united by a common religious heritage, there are many obstacles to be overcome before Israel will be truly a nation with a common culture, tradition, and social outlook. However, great strides in integrating these various elements have been taken, particularly among the younger generation. The common use of Hebrew and the education program of the Armed Forces (see below) are breaking down many cultural barriers. Table 4 shows the national origins of immigrants to Israel during 1948-1961.

Table 4  
National Origins of Immigrants to Israel 1948-1961

Eastern Europe	399,485
(Including Rumania, Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Lithuania)	
Western Europe	31,246
(Including Germany, France, Austria, Greece Britain, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland)	

Table 4 (continued)

Western Hemisphere	12,925
(Including USA, Canada, Argentina, Brazil and other South American countries)	
Asia	269,852
(Including Iraq, Turkey, Iran, Aden, Yemen, India, China and Cyprus)	
Africa	237,443
(Including Morocco, Tunis, Algeria, Libya, Tangiers, South Africa, Ethiopia, Egypt)	
Others	34,036
	985,487
TOTAL	

The nations that border on or near Israel maintain large standing armed forces that can launch a surprise attack. Table 5 shows the approximate strength of the active armed forces of these countries as estimated by "Aviation Studies (International) Ltd," England.

Table 5  
Arab Nations Active Armed Forces

Country	Total	Army	Navy	Air Force
Egypt	97,500	67,300	11,200	19,000
Jordan	30,400	30,000	100	300
Syria	47,300	45,000	300	2,000
Saudi Arabia	13,630	13,000	50	580
Lebanon	10,350	9,700	200	450
Iraq	72,700	70,000	300	2,400
TOTAL	271,880	235,000	12,150	24,730

The total strength of the active armed forces of the nations physically bordering Israel is about 185,000.

These figures are unclassified estimates and probably do not consider the additional armed forces mobilized by Egypt because of involvement in Yemen. Although the combat efficiency of these forces may be questionable, they represent a significant threat in light of Israel's geographic vulnerabilities.

Economically, Israel can no longer be classified as an underdeveloped nation. However, it does face severe economic problems because of limited natural resources, including lack of adequate water, oil, and the requirement to absorb a large immigration within a short period. The economic problems are aggravated by the adverse economic measures and boycotts instituted by the neighboring Arab countries.

#### National Goals and Military Tasks

The generally accepted national goals of Israel are (1) defense of the nation against attack, (2) development of a viable economy and (3) integration of all the elements of the population and creation of a socially unified nation.

As a result of their experiences with the enforcement of UN resolutions in the 1947-56 period, the Israelis claim that their existence as a state depends upon their own efforts and not on UN resolutions or on guarantees of distant powers. In light of the national goals, geography, and the external political situation, the Israel Defence Forces consider their major tasks to be (1) to deter war, (2) to achieve a quick victory with minimum losses if war should come and

(3) to assist in the development of the state. These three factors are interrelated in the organization and operation of the Israel Defence Forces and each one cannot be readily isolated by itself.

Faced with a limited manpower pool and competing demands on it for building up the country and the problem of lack of geographical depth, the Israelis have resorted to their traditional citizen-militia concept. Within this concept, the defense of the country is based on three elements, the standing forces, the reserve forces, and the area defenses. The standing forces and the reserve forces constitute the Israel Defence Forces. The area defenses, as will be discussed later, are based on civilian settlements that come under the control of the Defence Forces in time of war or attack.

#### Standing Forces

The bulk of the Israel Defence Forces consists of reserve forces except for the Air Force and Navy. These two components are almost completely professional standing forces because of the high technical skills and instant readiness required. The vulnerability of the concentrated Israeli population and industry in close proximity to the borders does not permit even hours for mobilization of air and naval defense units. It is only minutes in flying time by jet aircraft between Cairo and Tel Aviv.

The functions of the standing forces are to train personnel, develop doctrine and test battle methods, maintain security of the borders, act as a buffer force in the event of a surprise attack, and provide the organizational and logistical framework for the reserve forces.

The standing forces are composed of two elements, the regular forces and those serving under universal service. Israel, Turkey and Switzerland are the only countries in the world practicing universal conscription. All males between the ages of 18 and 26 are subject by law to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  years active service. Currently, only 26 months service is required. Normally, induction takes place at age 18. About 85 to 90% of all men reaching conscription age are inducted. By contrast, it is estimated that Egypt inducts about 18% and Syria 34% of all eligible males. In World War II, the United States inducted about 79% of those eligible. The Israelis exempt only the physically and mentally incapable, and religious students. A few students of medicine, engineering, and other specialized subjects are deferred until their studies are completed.

Unmarried women in Israel, unlike women in any other country of the world, are subject to conscription. The women are conscripted at age 18 and serve for 20 months. Eligible women are exempt from service only on religious grounds or failure to meet physical and mental standards. Recently, these standards have been raised because of inability to employ usefully all those eligible for service.

The conscription of women has several unique facets. It reflects the Israeli determination to make maximum use of all personnel resources, as well as the equal status and responsibility that women had in the Zionist movement. As far back as the HASHOMER period, women have been participants in Jewish defense activities. Service in the Defence Forces, Israelis believe, also helps educate the recent girl immigrants from the backward countries of Asia and Africa to independence, self-reliance and civic consciousness. At the same time, the participation of girls in military

units serves to change conceptions about the general role of women with which many new immigrant soldiers have grown up. Female soldiers are usually assigned to headquarters and large installations but also serve in the headquarters companies of battalions. In addition to the usual duties performed by female personnel in other armed forces, the Israeli CHEN, as female personnel are called, are used extensively as teachers. This role will be discussed later.

The regular element of the standing forces consists of a small core of professional officers and career noncommissioned officers. The professional officers serve on 3-5 year renewable contracts. Mobility within the corps of professional officers is quite high. Selection out is very rigorous and promotion is very selective, particularly to the grades of colonel (Aluf Mishne) and higher. The officer-grade structure in comparison to that of Western armies is apt to be misleading. The official policy has been to keep officer ranks low, particularly in the high positions. The highest rank is major general (Rav Aluf) and that is held only by the Chief of Staff of the entire Israel Defence Forces. The commanders of the Navy and Air Force hold the rank of brigadier general (Aluf). An Israeli colonel normally holds a position which in the United States armed forces would call for a brigadier general or major general.

The pay and allowances of professional officers and career noncommissioned officers are much higher than those performing required service. In dollar equivalents, the pay of the professional military is low compared to United States standards. However, the fringe benefits granted to Israeli professional military are substantial and enable them to maintain an adequate standard of living. These fringe benefits vary from

military vehicles for off-duty use to substantial subsidies for the purchase of dwellings.

Except for specialists, such as doctors, professional officers are obtained exclusively from the ranks. From those who successfully complete noncommissioned officer training, volunteers are selected for further training leading to commissions as reserve officers. The professional officers are selected from these reserve officers. Officer status, either professional or reserve, particularly a commission in the combat arms, carries with it high prestige. However, with the recent growth of the civilian economy, there has been a noticeable difficulty in obtaining high-caliber personnel for professional military careers. There has been no difficulty in obtaining volunteers for reserve commissions.

Education of professional officers is stressed because few have more than a secondary school education when inducted. Special provisions are made to enable them to obtain university education either in Israel or abroad. Advantage is also taken of opportunities to send officers to military schools abroad. By this means, as well as through their high-caliber professional military journals, the Israel Defence Forces attempts to avoid insularity of views by the officers corps.

So far there is little evidence of development of a military caste or differentiation of status between reserve and professional military officers. A military career, by and large, is not considered a profession per se, but a necessity that must be carried out competently. Retirement before age 50 is the rule. Retired officers, particularly in the higher ranks, are eagerly sought after for responsible positions. In theory and practice, the personnel practices of the Israel Defence Forces mitigate

against the development of a military caste that is a separatist element from the population at large.

### The Reserves

Upon completion of required active service, both male and female conscripts pass into the reserve, where they are required to serve on active duty for the periods shown in Table 6.

Table 6  
Active Duty Obligation of Reservists

Age	Service Obligation
21-39	31 Days *
40-44	14 Days
45-49	14 Days **

\* Officers and certain non-commissioned officers usually serve 38 days.

\*\* Service performed with civil defense units.

It is interesting to note that the one-month annual service required of the younger reservists is also the same length of service that was required of the militia during the reign of King David. Israeli reservists, in addition to the active duty periods indicated, are also liable for call to active duty for one day a month or three consecutive days every three months. These periods, which are without pay, are usually devoted to special training or security duties.

All reservists are assigned to reserve units that are organized on an area basis to facilitate mobilization. The reserve units have a small,

full-time cadre of professional personnel. This cadre may consist of the commanding officer, some military and civilian clerks, and maintenance personnel. This system of reserve units being commanded by professional personnel was also a feature of the militia system in the reign of King David.

Complete stocks of equipment are maintained for each reserve unit in such a state of readiness that the unit can perform its wartime mission immediately upon assembly of the personnel. The Israelis consider reserve units as active units on furlough. Unit mobilization exercises are held frequently and mobilization techniques are so highly developed that all units can be assembled, equipped, and moved to initial positions ready for combat in less than 48 hours. These same mobilization techniques permit mobilization of all or selected units either by coded radio announcements or by personal notification through the chain of command. Needless to say, mobilization of any significant number of units is soon public knowledge.

Although the pay and maintenance costs of conscript military personnel are very low by Western standards, the cost of maintaining reserve units at such a high state of readiness and training is very great. Reservists cannot be expected to forego one month's civilian income each year without some form of augmentation of their military pay. Reservists called to active duty receive 80% of their civilian pay. This money is derived from a fund to which both the government and civilian employers contribute. Although not charged to the Army budget, this fund represents a significant drain on the national economy. It has been estimated that, in Israeli terminology, about 80% of their Army units are on furlough eleven months a year.

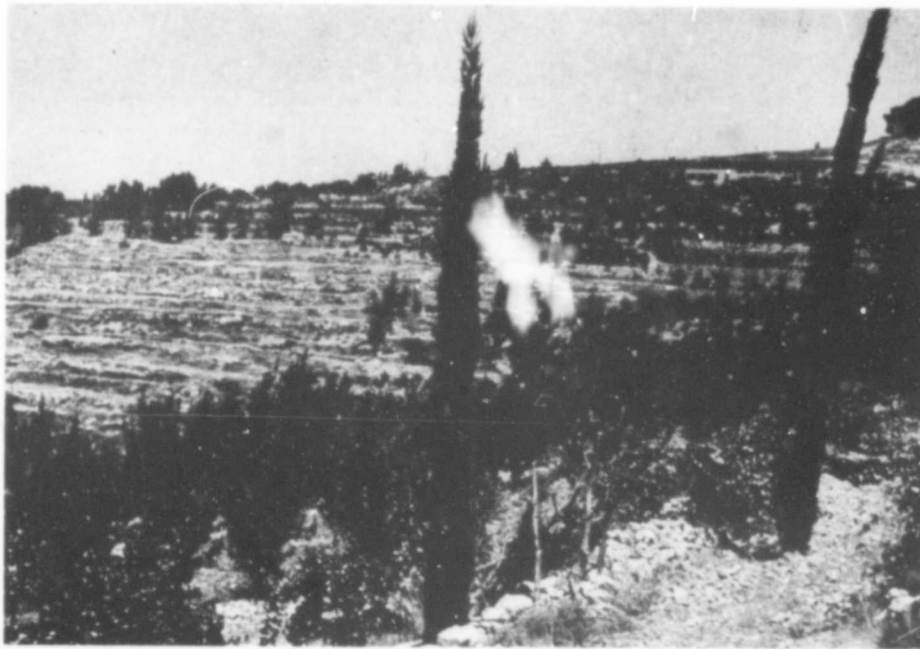
The Israeli reserve system, although costly, is considered the most feasible. A large standing army might be more efficient from purely military considerations. However, such a force could only be maintained at the expense of manpower required to build up the economy of the nation and would not be in consonance with the historical tradition. Further, the economic drain of a large standing army would be too great for the nation. The internal political danger of a large standing army in a country without a sound economy is undoubtedly not lost on the Israelis who are aware of the use of such forces against minorities.

One aspect of the Israel Defence Forces capability to mobilize rapidly trained and well-equipped forces is the contribution to deterrence against a surprise attack. Surprise loses value when the victim can complete mobilization and put into the field combat ready forces within hours.

#### Area Defenses

The area defenses consist of armed civilian farm settlements along the exposed borders. The concept is based on the Zionist experience in the Mandate period which demonstrated that determined settlers with minimum training and some weapons could defend themselves against Arab attack for considerable periods. This experience was repeated during the War of Independence. For example, less than 100 settlers at the collective farm settlement, Yad Mordechai, on the Gaza Strip border, held off an Egyptian force of several thousand for several days. A Syrian attack, reinforced with some armor, was contained by the settlers of the Deganya collective farm in the Galilee area.

As in the Haganah period, the Israel Defence Forces play a large role in the selection of sites for border settlements. At times military considerations prevail at the consequent cost of government subsidies to make the settlement economically viable. These decisions are undoubtedly complex. With the high development of Israeli agriculture, new methods of farming are evolved at times to reduce and even eliminate the special subsidies. For example, the defense of the exposed Jerusalem corridor has been bolstered by the establishment of farm communities on the hill tops of the Judean hills. These communities depend on terrace farming. New developments in such types of farming have enabled these communities to become more self-sustaining.



**Fig. 8—Terrace Farming in the Jerusalem Corridor**

The cost of area defenses is low. The Defence Forces furnishes weapons, ammunition and training. The weapons are primarily small caliber, individual, and light crew-served weapons. The settlements are organized for defense with reserves of food, fuel, fortification materials, medical supplies, prepared trenches, weapons positions, and personnel shelters. Their mission is to defend in place, to slow and contain a ground attack. Their efforts are coordinated and reinforced by the Area Commander, as will be discussed later.

The area defenses can be considered as economy of force units. They provide an adequate degree of security in secondary areas and free military units for offensive action. They also provide an excellent source of intelligence for the area. The key to the success of these area defenses is a combination of the will of the settlers to fight, and adequate training and weapons.

The organization of the Israel Defence Forces is shown in fig. 9.

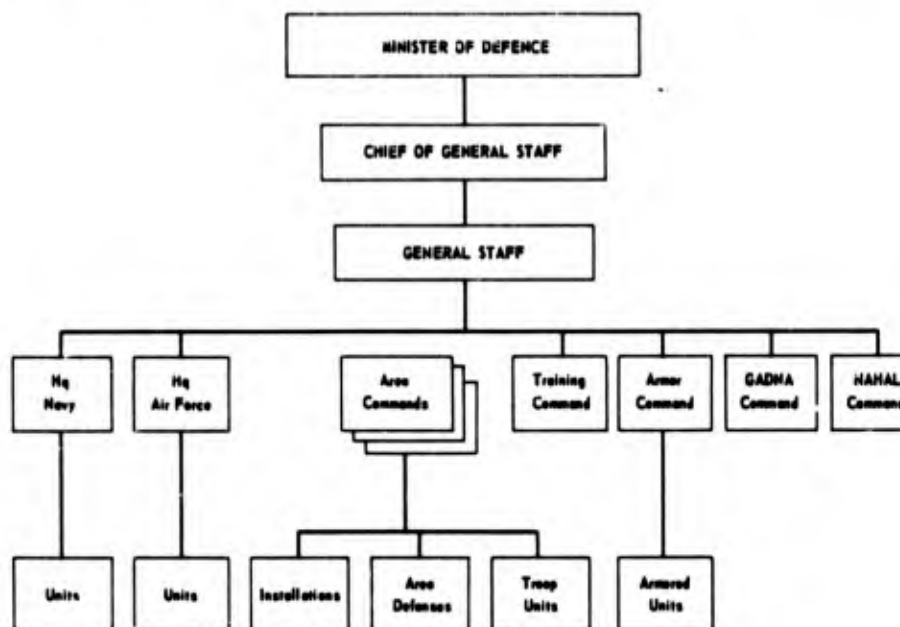


Fig. 9--Organization of the Israel Defence Forces

## Military Organization

There is only one general staff. Like the Soviet, but unlike the United States armed forces, there are no separate chiefs of staff, or general staffs, for the Army, Navy, and Air Force. The Navy and Air Force headquarters are concerned only with internal matters. Overall operational and force-structure planning, and similar matters, are the responsibilities of the one general staff under the one chief of staff.

The three area commands, North, Central, and Southern, encompass the entire country. Jerusalem is in the Central Command and probably has a subcommand of some type to assume command if temporarily cut off in wartime from the remainder of the country. The area commands are comparable to the United States field army. The area commander commands all the forces within his area, except Air Force, and is responsible for all operations within, or originating from, his area, and has administrative and logistical responsibilities. For example, the area commander coordinates and controls the area defenses of the border settlements in his area. He has reserve units composed of older age-groups and artillery and other units with older models of equipment for reinforcement of area defenses.

The Armored Command is responsible only for training of both individuals and newly formed armored units. Operational armored units are assigned to the area commands. Recently, a chief of paratroops has been designated with a comparable mission. This special emphasis on armor and paratroop units will be discussed later.

The Training Command is concerned only with military training to include the military school system. The non-military educational system,

which is very extensive within the Israel Defence Forces, is not the responsibility of the Training Command. The Gadna and Nahal commands will be discussed later.

The largest formation with fixed organization and equipment (TOE) in the Israeli Army is the brigade. This similarity to British army organization reflects, in part, the close association with British forces during the Mandate period, and the experiences of the Jewish Brigade during World War II. The brigade is composed of specialized maneuver battalions and supporting arms and services such as artillery, engineer, and signal units. The brigade has operational and logistical responsibilities and most closely resembles the United States Army division in functions and general organization. There are infantry, armor, mechanized infantry, and paratroop brigades. Under current plans, the Israeli Army plans to activate in wartime a headquarters intermediate between the brigades and the area command. This headquarters, called an Ugdag, would have operational but no direct logistical responsibilities. Functionally, the Ugdag is comparable to the United States Army Corps headquarters. One Ugdag headquarters is maintained in peacetime on a skeletal standby basis.

#### The General Staff

The highest military echelon is the general staff, commonly known by the acronym Matkal. The organization of the general staff is shown in fig. 10.

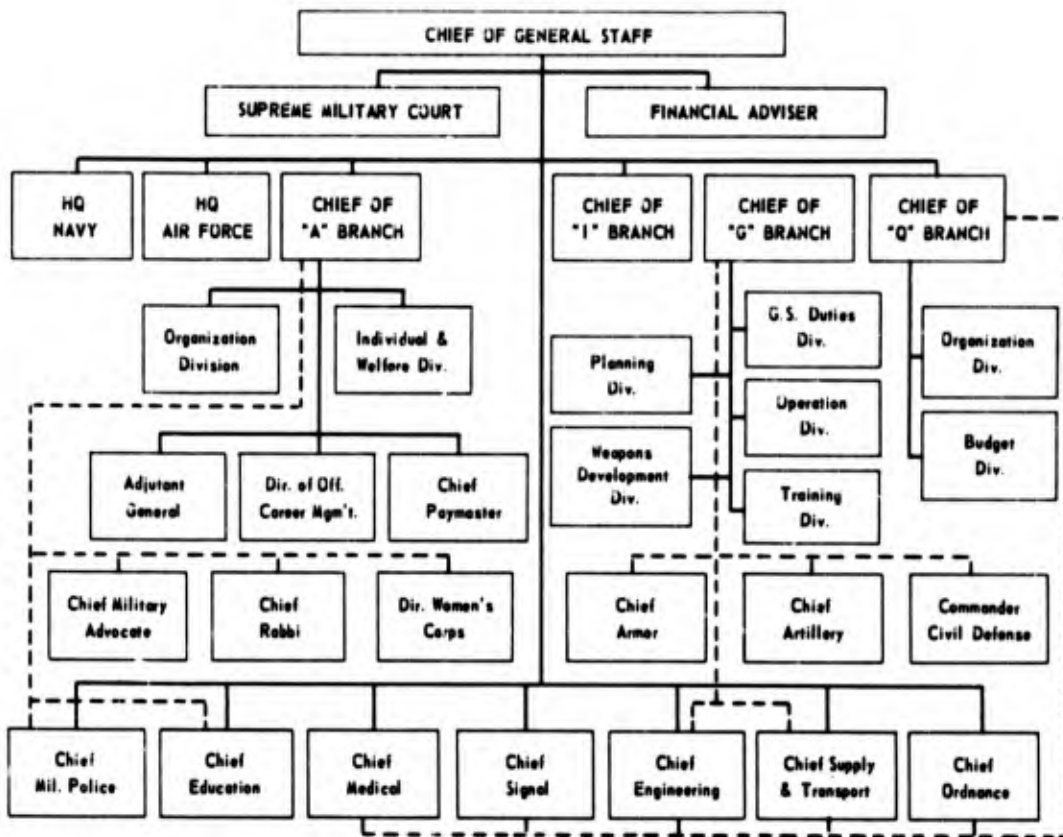


Fig. 10—Organization of the General Staff

The "A," "I," "G" and "Q" branches correspond respectively to personnel, intelligence, operations and planning, and logistics. Outwardly, this staff organization corresponds to the United States Army staff organization of a general staff and a special staff. In practice, it more closely follows British staff organization with the predominance of the "G" Branch.

There are several interesting aspects to this staff organization. The special staff organization reflects a division of technical and logistical responsibilities by service, such as medical, signal, engineer, ordnance, and transportation. This system was copied from the then current US Army system shortly after the establishment of the Israel Defence Forces.

Israeli experience has indicated that this system has many disadvantages. A possible development in the near future may be adoption of a functional kind of logistical system such as recently adopted by the US Army.

The Weapons Development Division combines the activities of the Department of the Army Research and Development Office (OCRD) and the materiel research activities of the US Army Combat Development and Army Materiel Commands.

The Individual and Welfare Division of the "A" branch reflects the military counterpart of the social welfare aspects of Israel. It also helps explain, in part, why Israel can maintain universal service and still enjoy the support of the population. While some family allowances are fixed by law there are many welfare cases requiring special consideration. This is particularly true in the cases of soldiers from recent immigrant families. The Defence Forces provides funds for supplementary welfare loans or grants. The authority to use these funds is delegated, as far as possible, to unit commanders. Private and semi-private relief organizations, such as the US Army Relief Fund or the Red Cross, serving military personnel have no counterpart in Israel.

The Chief Education Officer guides the extensive non-military education program within the armed forces. This program is a major component of the Israel Defence Forces' contribution to integrating the population. Many young immigrants have had inadequate schooling in their country of origin and in any case must adjust to a new language culture and environment. Compulsory courses in Hebrew, the Bible, Israeli and general history, geography, mathematics and civics are used to achieve minimum standards of education and fluency in Hebrew. Much of this instruction is carried out

by women soldiers. Additionally, women soldier-teachers are used extensively to work with new immigrants and new settlements.

Weekly lectures are given by unit commanders on the fundamental aims of the nation and state, foreign policy, domestic problems, and developments of security interest in Israel and in the international arena. The armed forces also operate their own broadcasting station. The programs include both education and entertainment and serve both the standing forces and the reserves. The success of the Defence Forces' educational program has been considerable. The Defence Forces are considered by the Israelis to be one of the major forces in integrating the diverse elements in the population.

#### Israel Defence Force Goals

The Israel Defence Forces take a very pragmatic view of their situation. Being a relatively new force, they are not tied down by traditions that arose out of situations that have since lost their significance. Faced with severe economic and manpower restraints, they attempt to get the most of what is available even if the method may seem unorthodox. Above all, they recognize that their contribution to the defense and development of the nation cannot be divorced from non-military nation-building activities. The announced share of the national budget for defense purposes during recent years has been about 30%. Actual expenditures are probably greater.

The Israel Defence Forces consider that their primary mission is to deter war. Deterrence requires creating in the mind of the enemy the belief that he cannot win a war of his making. The Israeli Defence Forces attempt to contribute to the creation of such a belief by demonstrating qualitative superiority over their probable enemies in training, armament, and skill in operations. Manpower and economic restraints do not permit achieving

quantitative superiority over the main threat, Egypt, or over a combination of other bordering countries.

Training is intensive and is based upon detailed intelligence of the organization, equipment, tactics and vulnerabilities of the neighboring countries. Night operations and offensive operations are stressed. Most of the training is conducted in the field under simulated battle conditions. Troops are kept in the field for longer periods than in most armies. The availability of the sparsely populated Negev keeps training-area problems low.

The emphasis on offensive operations is dictated by the geography of the country. There is no depth for large scale defensive operations and the key areas of the country are almost within artillery range from the borders. In the case of Israel it can be said that the best defense is the offense, until by some means it is possible to conduct land operations on the surface of the Mediterranean.

Every effort is made to secure weapons equal or superior to those of the Arab countries. The choice of weapon systems is limited by political considerations that affect availability from abroad. Great ingenuity is also used to make the most of available weapons by modernization. For example, their Sherman tank had been virtually rebuilt with wider treads, a diesel engine, and greatly improved main armament. In fact, it was almost a new tank that retained only the hull of the original Sherman. Development and fabrication of new weapon systems are within Israeli technical capabilities, but beyond their economic resources. However, they do manufacture some relatively small items and components. The decision on local manufacture and development versus procurement from abroad is based

on the interrelation of many complex factors, such as economy in investment cost, desirability of self-sufficiency, and potential growth of local industry. The armament--related industries sponsored by the Ministry of Defense, an outgrowth of the Haganah underground workshops, have helped in nation-building by furthering development of Israeli industry, particularly in the electronics field. In some areas, such as small arms, the Israelis are now exporters of military equipment.

Deterrence is also served by successful retaliatory actions against aggravated border violations. These actions are based on detailed intelligence, and are carefully planned and rehearsed to ensure success and minimum friendly casualties. Failure in a retaliatory action may have far-reaching significance beyond the local action. Concern for friendly casualties is a reflection of the limited manpower. A loss of 50 Israeli casualties is comparable, in terms of population loss, to United States casualties of about 4,000 in one single engagement. However, this concern over casualties is not paramount once engaged with the enemy. In fact, an Israeli rule of thumb is that a commander cannot justify failure when he still has more than 50% of his unit strength.

If deterrence should fail and war erupt, the Israel Defence Forces is organized and equipped to seek a quick and decisive victory. This belief in a short war is realistic. Any long war in the Middle East of more than very low intensity is highly unlikely. None of the Middle East countries have all the necessary resources for a protracted war even if aided by other major powers. In view of the sensitivity of Europe to Middle East oil resources, the Israelis probably believe that any conflict they initiate

must be pursued to a successful conclusion quickly before there is intervention by outside powers. The lessons of the British and French attack on the Suez Canal are certainly not lost upon them. British and French failure to secure the Canal rapidly permitted the Soviets and the United States to exert such pressure that Nasser was able to remain in control of the Canal thus defeating the goal of the attack.

Many Israel Defence Force policies and organizations reflect the short-war concept and its use to achieve certain economies that border on the unorthodox. For example, the reserve system not only provides for mobilization of personnel, but also for civilian equipment, required only for full wartime operations, primarily motor vehicles and selected engineer items. By control of licensing and import authorizations it is made advantageous for civilian firms to purchase and operate vehicles and equipment that meet Defence Force standards. The operating personnel are given mobilization assignments with their equipment. It can be assumed that sufficient vehicles to care for the minimum needs of the economy are not included in this mobilization system. Obviously, this system is feasible only if the mobilization period is of relatively short duration.

This system has many advantages if the war does not last longer than anticipated. There is no burden on the economy for purchase and maintenance of vehicles and equipment required only in the event of war. Mobilization of the operating personnel with the vehicles and equipment automatically ensures trained operators who are motivated to perform proper maintenance. This rather unorthodox system proved effective during the Sinai war of 1956.

Similar economies are achieved in the area of medical care. The Israel Defence Forces do not operate any military hospitals. All hospitalization is in civilian hospitals where military doctors are assigned. The time-distance factors reduce the need for field hospitals and under the short war concept it is not expected that the number of casualties will exceed the hospital bed capacity under emergency conditions.

Over the past few years the force structure of the Israel Defence Forces has been modified to increase and strengthen those elements that can contribute most to decisive and rapid action. These modifications have taken the form of greater emphasis on airpower, and armored, mechanized and paratroop units at the expense of foot infantry units. Mobility has been increased by more self-propelled artillery and more extensive employment of helicopters for assault troop transport. In training, the coordination and use of close air support are stressed.

#### Nation-Building Activities

Although the major emphasis is on maintaining high levels of combat proficiency, nation-building activities have continued in the tradition of the Haganah. Defence Force units "adopt" new immigrant settlements and work with the new immigrants in construction, education, and other activities. This method maintains the close ties of the military with the civilian population, and contributes to the national goal of integrating the diverse elements of the population.

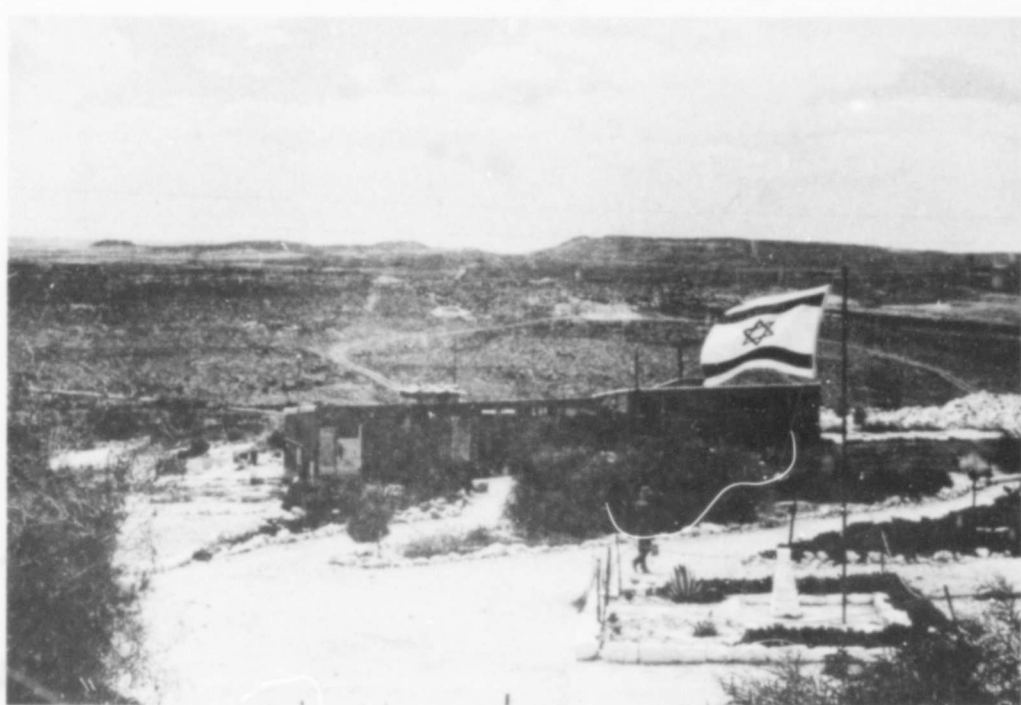
Two unusual features of the Israel Defence Forces nation-building activities are the Gadna and Nahal programs. Gadna is sponsored jointly with the Ministry of Education and Culture. It is a volunteer organization

for boys and girls from 14 to 18 years. The membership of about 35,000 is drawn primarily from secondary schools, youth organizations and immigrant villages.

Gadna provides training along Scout lines but with heavier emphasis on pioneering, agriculture, and participation in public service projects. There are specialized branches such as for air, naval, and communications activities. Gadna has its own training farms including one near the Red Sea port of Eilat. Although Gadna does contribute to the Defense Forces by preparatory paramilitary training its major contribution is in assimilating youth from diverse backgrounds and in inculcating a pioneering and national service spirit.

Nahal (Pioneering Fighting Youth) is the vehicle for combining military service with preparation for agricultural life in a kibbutz that is the goal of many Israeli youth movements. Conscription of individual members tended to break up these movements. Nahal helps to preserve them by enabling such groups to enter the service in a body and remain together during most of this period. Nahal groups first take basic military training for 4 months. This is followed by agricultural service for 12 months, still under military discipline, either in a kibbutz or in a Nahal frontier settlement in an area too exposed or difficult for normal settlement. In either case, the year is spent learning the operation of a collective farm. At Nahal frontier settlements, the agricultural instruction is given by civilian instructors made available by associations of kibbutzim. The year of agricultural training is followed by 5 months of advanced military training. The final 5 months of service is spent by most of the group in unpaid agricultural service. A few remain with the Defence Forces for officer or

NCO training or service with specialized branches. At the end of the period of service, the Nahal program is designed to produce a highly-trained and well-integrated social group ready to join an existing kibbutz or to establish a new one of their own--at times on the site of a previous Nahal post.



**Fig. 11—Nahal Post on Sinai Border**  
The Hillcrests are in Sinai (Egypt).

The Nahal program is designed primarily to reinforce the kibbutzim. However, the numbers of Nahal graduates who do enter Kibbutzim is highly questionable. There has been some criticism that the Nahal program is not efficient because better use, from the viewpoint of military considerations, could be made of such relatively high-caliber personnel. Although numerically

the kibbutzim are only about 4% of the total population, their political influence and economic importance are great. Consequently, it is unlikely that there will be any change in the Nahal system in the near future.

Another form of nation-building activity in which the Defence Forces participates is the national technical assistance program to other nations. Israel is one of the very few technically competent countries that underdeveloped nations can turn to for aid without fear of becoming embroiled in the cold war. For Israel, technical aid to other nations represents trade opportunities and a means of overcoming the economic and political blockade of the Arab countries. The Defence Forces actively participates in this extensive program, which is carried out primarily in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The Defence Forces train foreign military personnel and units within Israel and send training missions abroad. Training and assistance in setting up organizations similar to Gadna and Nahal have been in particularly heavy demand.

### Conclusions

In summary, it can be said that in carrying out the missions derived from their national goals, the Israel Defence Forces has used the following principles in their organization and policies:

- a. Deterrent forces in being.
- b. Capability to secure a quick and decisive victory in case of war.
- c. Stubborn defense of borders.
- d. Minimum economic demand on the state.
- e. Participation in nation-building.

The strengths of the Israel Defence Forces are primarily in those aspects that make them unique among the armed forces of newly-emerged nations.

The Israel Defence Forces is intimately involved in many aspects of nation-building but is non-political and subordinate to the civil authority. This freedom from involvement in the internal politics of the nation permits concentration on carrying out its tasks. This is far from the case with the armed forces of the Arab nations and many other nations where much of the time and energy of the top military leadership are devoted to struggles over governmental power.

The citizen-militia concept that underlies the Israel Defence organization is based on ancient and recent history and carries forward the Zionist principle of "auto-emancipation" to reliance on their own efforts to defend the nation. In practice, it makes all of Israel and its armed forces one corporate body. In contrast, in many other nations the armed forces are isolated to a significant degree from the population in order to build and retain loyalty to the military leadership. The unity of the population and the armed forces in Israel is even more unique in light of the bitter political divisions within the nation. These political cleavages do not extend to policies involving national defense. Mr. Ben-Gurion has stated, for example, that before ordering the Sinai attack in 1956, he consulted all the political parties except the Communists, and secured unanimous approval.

The most unique feature of the Israel Defence Forces is the comprehensive reserve system of combat-ready forces available on hours notice. As the Israelis put it, most of their Defence Forces are on furlough eleven months a year.

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