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FILE	06-06_THESIS_-_FINAL_VERSION_-_COEN_HERMENET.PDF (510.43K)		
TIME SUBMITTED	06-JUN-2017 10:42AM	WORD COUNT	13214
SUBMISSION ID	822546466	CHARACTER COUNT	71840



Universiteit
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U.S. Foreign Policy
Towards Israel
in the 1956 Suez Crisis
and the 1973 Yom Kippur War

A Comparison

Master Thesis – Project on Foreign Policy Analysis

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June 6, 2017

U.S. Foreign Policy Towards Israel in the 1956 Suez Crisis and the 1973 Yom Kippur War

A Comparison

Abstract

For a long time, the United States (U.S.) has been known for its support for Israel. Deviations from the outspokenly supportive approach of the U.S. receive a lot of attention, such as in December 2016, when the U.S. decided not to block a resolution condemning Israeli activities. The twentieth century had its own instances in which the U.S. took opposing positions towards Israel. This research focuses on the 1956 Suez Crisis in which the U.S. condemned the Israeli actions, and the 1973 Yom Kippur War during which the U.S. actively supported Israel. Based on Charles Hermann's model of foreign policy change, this study examines which factors explain the varying American positions in both conflicts. Controlled comparison and process-tracing are used to assess factors like leader driven change, bureaucratic advocacy, public opinion, party politics, external shocks and (Cold War) strategic considerations.

Keywords

Foreign policy decision-making; foreign policy change; international crisis; armed conflict; Suez Crisis; Yom Kippur War; United States (U.S.); Israel; Dwight Eisenhower; Richard Nixon; Henry Kissinger; leader driven change; bureaucratic advocacy; domestic restructuring; public opinion; Republican Party; external shocks; strategic considerations.

Word Count

9.995 (pages 7 – 42 only, footnotes not included)

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1. Introduction

On December 23, 2016, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) voted on resolution 2334, ‘on cessation of Israeli settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory’ (United Nations, 2016a). The resolution was adopted because the United States (U.S.) abstained and did not veto the resolution. All other permanent and non-permanent members supported the resolution (United Nations, 2016b). For some observers, such as the non-governmental organization (NGO) UN Watch, the American decision not to block the resolution came as a surprise (UN Watch, 2016). Moreover, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry explained the decision in a later speech, arguing that the U.S. ‘cannot – in good conscience – do nothing, and say nothing, when we see the hope of peace slipping away’ (Times of Israel, 2016).

Just like in this this contemporary case, the twentieth century saw instances in which the U.S. took varying positions towards Israel as well, opposite to other great powers and allies. In 1956, for instance, the U.S. condemned Israel, France, and the UK for their military actions against Egypt in the Suez Crisis. On the contrary, the U.S. actively supported Israel in the 1973 Yom Kippur War, causing irritation among its European allies. As the literature shows, various authors describe the strengthening and growth of American power and influence in the Middle East, which includes Israel, in the second half of the twentieth century. Therefore, a theory of foreign policy change is used in order to answer the following research question: **What factors can explain why the U.S. did not support Israel in the 1956 Suez Crisis but did so in the 1973 war?**

Starting with a literature review, this research first discusses the existing scholarly work on the U.S. positions in the events in 1956 and 1973. Most of the literature is concerned with historical and descriptive accounts. The next section provides the theoretical framework that will be used in this research, which builds on Charles Hermann’s approach of foreign policy

change. Based on this approach and the stages of decision-making as identified by Hermann, five hypotheses are derived in the next section. Next, in the operationalization section, the case selection, variables and operationalization, methodology, and data sources are discussed. This section is followed by the empirical section, which discusses and evaluates the hypotheses using the historical evidence. The empirical and theoretical conclusions are discussed in the final section.

2. Literature Review

What does the existing literature tell us about the key factors that influenced the positions that the U.S. took in 1956 and 1973? Or, more generally, what does the literature tell us about the factors that drive U.S. foreign policy towards Israel?

In 1956, Israel, the UK and France went to war over Egypt's decision to nationalize the Suez Canal and to block one of Israel's sea routes (Harms & Ferry, 2005, pp. 106-107; Thomas, 1999, p. 122). While the U.S. certainly played a role in the emergence of the crisis¹, it refused to take part in military actions and even condemned the three countries. For the U.S., one of the reasons mentioned was the 'distraction' caused by the upcoming presidential election of 1956 (Harms & Ferry, 2005, pp. 106-107; Thomas, 1999, pp. 121-123). Furthermore, President Dwight Eisenhower deemed that the blockade of Israeli ships was of little economic importance for Israel, and that the war was a disturbance of the U.S.' 'effort to (...) combat communism through anti-imperialist policies' (Thomas, 1999, p. 122).

In the context of the Yom Kippur (or October, or Ramadan) War of 1973 the U.S. actively supported Israel. During that crisis, Arab oil producers imposed an oil embargo against Western countries. West European countries were irritated, and blamed the U.S. for

¹ In the months before the Suez Crisis, the U.S. withdrew its support for the Aswan Dam, to which Egypt responded with the nationalization of the Suez Canal.

having provoked the embargo by assisting Israel in the war. The issues of disagreement were, among others, the consequences of the oil embargo, and access to air bases and air space of European allies (Hughes, 2008, pp. 3, 19; Sobel & Kosut, 1974, pp. 90, 104; Allen & Smith, 1984, p. 188). U.S. officials believed that a strong Israel was the best way to preserve stability in the Middle East and maintain American access to oil from Arab countries (Hughes, 2008, pp. 19, 10, 16, 39).

Beyond these explanations, more general factors that drove the U.S.' varying positions need to be addressed. First of all, the changing roles of the U.S. in the region across time are discussed, emphasizing historical factors and national interests. Hughes discusses the focus of scholars on the replacement of the UK by the U.S. as the main external power in the Middle East (Hughes, 2008, p.4). Regarding the U.S., it is argued that especially since the 1973 war the support for Israel became significant, and that the 'entry' of the U.S. into the region occurred around the end of the 1960s (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006, p. 30-31; Allen & Smith, 1984, p. 187).

A second general factor that has been written about is the role of the pro-Israel lobby in the U.S.. Mearsheimer and Walt argue that although Israel was certainly of strategic value to the U.S. during the Cold War, this value was rather limited during this period. They argue that the support for Israel was expensive for the U.S., not in the least because of the oil embargo of 1973 (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006, p. 32). Mearsheimer and Walt's focus is more on the recent decades when they argue that in the end 'neither strategic nor moral arguments can account for America's support for Israel'. They argue that in the absence of the pro-Israel lobby in the U.S., 'the relationship between Israel and the United States would be far less intimate than it is today' (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006, pp. 40).

However, an account of the development of this lobby is necessary to answer the research question. Already concerning the period 1945-1948, Reynolds discusses the 'particular

influence' of 'certain ethnic groups' regarding 'Jewish-American opinion [which] helped shape Truman's policy towards Palestine/Israel' (Reynolds, 1986, p. 3). With regard to the Suez Crisis, Almog argues that although American Jews were useful allies for Israel both before and after the crisis, the lobby activities were limited at the time (Almog, 2003, p. 23).

Thirdly, party politics, public opinion and leadership are addressed in various accounts. Almog argues that Jewish communities mainly voted for the Democrat presidential candidate around 1956, and that this gave Republican President Eisenhower leeway to more or less ignore the pro-Israel lobby (Almog, 2003, p. 24).

To conclude, most of the scholarship on the two events provides historical and descriptive accounts, often mentioning Cold War dynamics. On top of that, more general accounts of American foreign policy towards Israel pay attention to the Israeli lobby in the U.S., public opinion, growing American influence in the Middle East, perspectives on the national interest, and party politics as possible factors. To sum up, each dimension has been studied in isolation, but there is still need for complete and more comprehensive explanations for both historical cases.

3. Theoretical Framework

At the end of the Cold War, Charles Hermann contributed to the debate on the origins and conditions under which major foreign policy changes can occur. Hermann identified various magnitudes of change, four agents of change, and seven stages of decision-making in changing policy (Hermann, 1990). Hermann's discussion of foreign policy change offers an interesting starting point to answer the research question, because it explicitly takes into account domestic as well as external factors. Furthermore, several scholars discuss the beginning of the long-time American support for Israel, along with the growing American interests and power in the region (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006, pp. 30-31; Allen & Smith,

1984, pp. 187, 191). This scholarly attention to these significant and long-term changes helps justify the use of a theory of foreign policy change for this research, because the American position in both events can be framed in the context of a broader and longer-term change, instead of regarded as just two isolated foreign policy decisions.

In his essay, Hermann reviews four areas of scholarship that can contribute to an exploration of the conditions that promote changes in foreign policy: domestic political systems, bureaucratic decision-making, cybernetics, and learning. Hermann translates these sources of change into four categories: leader driven change, bureaucratic advocacy, domestic restructuring, and external shocks (Hermann, 1990, pp. 11-12).

An important assumption that Hermann makes is that foreign policy changes made by governments go through a decision-making process. All four primary agents of change play a role in this process (Hermann, 1990, p. 13). Therefore, it is important to understand the decision-making process, because this is where the success or failure of agents of change is determined. Hermann identifies seven stages in the process: 1) 'initial policy expectations'; 2) 'external actor/environmental stimuli'; 3) 'recognition of discrepant information'; 4) 'postulation of a connection between problem and policy'; 5) 'development of alternatives'; 6) 'building authoritative consensus for choice'; and 7) 'implementation of new policy' (Hermann, 1990, p. 14).

Based on the four primary change agents, a number of hypotheses are derived. Hermann's theoretical framework is useful, but at the same time quite open in several ways. First of all, Hermann mentions the possibility of 'tandem' or interaction between the various agents of change (Hermann, 1990, pp. 12-13). However, it remains unclear how this interaction is expected to work in practice. It is also not clear whether all four agents of change must be present in every case. Furthermore, Hermann does not specify the various agents of change in his discussion of the decision-making process. Regarding this, Gustavsson

argues that ‘in order to find out how the sources lead to a change in policy, the analyst has to trace how they enter and are dealt with inside the government machinery’, and views the seven stages that Hermann suggests as facilitating such a procedure (Gustavsson, 1999, p. 78). To overcome these challenges and make the approach applicable, it is necessary to specify expectations.

3.1. Hypotheses

Leader Driven Change

As Hermann suggests, it is important to assess the preferences of leaders. In the American political system, the president is the ultimate decision-maker. Therefore, it is necessary to look at the role and the personal preferences with regard to Israel of President Dwight Eisenhower (1953-1961) and President Richard Nixon (1969-1974), both Republicans (History.com, n.d.). Hermann’s framework suggests that the president’s authority and vision is most important at the stage of ‘building an authoritative consensus for new options’ (which is the sixth stage, as described in section 3). Hermann argues that policy change cannot proceed without the establishment of authoritative consensus (Hermann, 1990, p. 18). In the American system, where the president is the most powerful person, the president is indispensable for such a consensus. Furthermore, if the president is a key actor as late as at the stage of approval of the final decision, other factors potentially have a considerable amount of time to influence the president’s preferences. However, the starting point of this research is that all factors are examined on their own independent effect on the final outcome. The hypothesis derived to understand the role of the first agent of change, leader driven change, is as follows:

H1: Change in leadership in the U.S. led to a change in U.S. policy towards Israel.

Bureaucratic Advocacy

Regarding bureaucratic advocacy, Hermann argues that it is not an entire government, but rather a group or multiple groups within the government that push for a particular foreign policy decision. Furthermore, it is important that advocates are ‘sufficiently well placed to have some access to top officials’ (Hermann, 1990, pp. 11-12). In Mearsheimer and Walt’s (2007) approach, both internal and external advocacy can play an important role in influencing the decision-making process.

Successful advocacy requires the presence of at least two elements: opportunity and willingness to push for change, in the context of this research in a pro-Israel direction. Hermann’s approach seems to focus on internal advocacy. However, due to the fact that external advocacy might also be relevant in the case of Israel, as described in detail by Mearsheimer and Walt, this research combines both internal and external advocacy. Section 4.2 presents the indicators for this variable, bureaucratic advocacy, in more detail.

Finally, if the aggregate of individuals and groups within the bureaucracy and government is viewed as the policymakers, this agent of change is important at every stage of the decision-making process except for the second (external shocks). The hypothesis derived to understand the role of the second agent of change, bureaucratic advocacy, is as follows:

H2: Change in pro-Israel bureaucratic advocacy in the U.S. led to a change in U.S. policy towards Israel.

Domestic Restructuring

The third factor, domestic restructuring, involves multiple aspects. Hermann speaks about ‘the politically relevant segment of society whose support a regime needs to govern and the possibility that this segment of society can become an agent of change’ (Hermann, 1990, p.12). In essence, domestic restructuring can be about the realignment or changing

composition in the views of the public, particular groups in society, and (political) elites (Hermann, 1990, pp. 6-7, 12).

The first concrete potential aspect of restructuring that is examined is public opinion, based on the assumption that public opinion is important in democracies.

Secondly, U.S. presidents have to work closely together with the U.S. Congress, and at least need the support of their own party in the legislative branch. What is striking here is that in both 1956 and 1973 the Democratic opposition was in a majority position in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. As a result, both the governing party and the Democratic Party were politically relevant to the president. However, the research on this factor focuses on the Republican Party, since it is assumed that the president's own party has the greatest influence on and access to the president and the decision-making process. Therefore, a changing support for Israel within the Republican Party can contribute to policy change.

With regard to Hermann's approach, it remains unclear at which stage of his model the factors public opinion and intraparty support, come into play. However, it is assumed that these factors shape decision-making in the early stages, along with external stimuli. The two hypotheses derived to understand the role of the third agent of change, domestic restructuring, are as follows:

H3: Change in public support for Israel in the U.S. led to a change in U.S. policy towards Israel.

H4: Change in support for Israel within the Republican Party led to a change in U.S. policy towards Israel.

External Shocks

The fourth and final main factor that Hermann considers is external shocks (Hermann, 1990, p. 12). However, 'dramatic international events' and 'large events' (Hermann, 1990, p. 12) are not considered as obligatory conditions for foreign policy change to happen. Instead, it is assumed that a change in the balance of power in the Middle East, which could affect U.S. policies, is one of the most important external factors, especially in light of the ongoing Cold War. Furthermore, Israel's behavior, which could also affect U.S. interests, is considered a background condition, because it influences the views of individuals and groups involved in the decision-making process.

Hermann discusses external factors as early as in the second stage of the decision-making process, as described in the theoretical framework of this thesis (section 3) (Hermann, 1990, pp. 15-16). The hypothesis derived to understand the role of the fourth agent of change, external shocks, is as follows:

H5: Change in the balance of power in the Middle East, which affected the strategic position of the U.S. in the region, led to a change in U.S. policy towards Israel.

The next section presents the operationalization of the discussed hypotheses. First of all, the case selection is discussed, followed by discussions of the operationalization and variables and the methodology. The final subsection discusses the data sources that are used for this research.

4. Operationalization

4.1. Case Selection

This research project examines two cases where the U.S. took opposing foreign policy decisions towards Israel: the 1956 Suez Crisis and the 1973 Yom Kippur War. The cases are selected on the dependent variable, with varying outcomes and in order to understand which

factors have changed U.S. foreign policy towards Israel. There are a number of reasons why these cases are considered to be useful in the context of this research. First of all, both decisions are opposite. On top of that, major U.S. allies, such as the UK and France, made different decisions in both instances. As a result, one can assume that both decisions were the result of careful and thoughtful deliberations, following Hermann's assumption (Hermann, 1990, p. 13).

At the same time, there is enough variation for potential explanations. Since these are two different time periods, there were different presidents, and the nature and role of public opinion potentially changed, as well as the role of pro-Israel groups and other power considerations. That being said, important aspects in both cases can be held constant. For example, the relevant institutions in the U.S. in 1956 and 1973, such as the presidency, the role of Congress, and their authorities, are similar. Therefore, this research is a small-N comparison and uses the most similar systems design, or the method of difference: important background conditions are identical, but the outcome on the dependent variable (DV) is different.

4.2. Operationalization and Variables

The central dependent variable of this research is U.S. foreign policy towards Israel. 'Foreign policy' needs to be specified: in this research, it refers to the specific foreign policy choice of the U.S. government to either support or not support Israel in an armed conflict. In 1956 the armed conflict had a clear international nature, whereas in 1973 the conflict had a more regional nature. At first glance, this dependent variable looks dichotomous: the U.S. government either supports Israel or not. However, although there are clearly two sides besides neutrality, support can take many forms. Likewise, the decision not to support can

also have many forms, such as an official condemnation or punishment. Nevertheless, the main focus of this research is on the dichotomy.

After the discussion of the hypotheses and interactions, the remaining variables are briefly discussed here. The first explaining factor is the role of the leader. The main indicator for this variable is the preference of the president. Variation is visible in for example in more positive or negative statements towards Israel in speeches and statements, and presidential communications.

The second factor is pro-Israel bureaucratic advocacy in the U.S. The two important aspects of bureaucratic advocacy to make it successful, opportunity and willingness (as identified in section 3.1), are assessed for three potentially important sources of bureaucratic advocacy, both in and outside the government. The main indicators for the element of willingness are the presence and attitude of pro-Israel lobby groups in the public space (external advocacy) and of outspokenly pro-Israel individuals in the U.S. bureaucracy and government (internal advocacy). For the aspect of opportunity, this research uses the role and power of the Secretary of State, who can have great influence in shaping the particular final policy decision (internal advocacy), as the main indicator. However, it can be argued that the three indicators all have both the element of willingness and of opportunity, which is taken into account in this research.² Here, variation can be seen in the activity of public lobby

² Although willingness is the most important element for the public pro-Israel lobby and for pro-Israel individuals in the bureaucracy and government, there is also an aspect of opportunity for these indicators. For the Secretary of State, the element of opportunity is most important due to the high and potentially influential position, but willingness to steer policy in a pro-Israel direction is also important. Essentially, both opportunity and willingness are necessary. However, one can still defend the division of the two indicators for willingness and the one indicator for the element of opportunity. The public pro-Israel lobby and pro-Israel bureaucratic advocates may have little opportunity, willingness alone can influence others to act in a certain way. On the other hand, when a Secretary of State has the opportunity to influence a particular decision, (s)he has to advocate a certain position, which makes the Secretary of State's influence a significant. In this case, advocacy by the Secretary of State is a significant factor regardless of whether (s)he has the willingness to influence the policy decision in a pro-Israel direction.

groups, through the number and activity of pro-Israel individuals in the bureaucracy. Concerning the Secretary of State, variation can be observed in more positive or negative statements towards Israel as well as in more or less opportunity to shape the final decision.

The third factor is public support. Indicators for public support are public opinion polls and surveys, as well as acts of support or protest such as, like demonstrations. Variation in this variable is observed by more or less supportive expressions towards Israel in opinion polls.

The fourth factor is support for Israel within the Republican Party. Indicators for this factor are voting records of resolutions regarding Israel, and the evaluation of and involvement in decisions of the U.S. government. Variation is observed in the number of Republican politicians supporting a particular resolution, and by more or less supportive expressions towards Israel in speeches, statements, and communications. Another issue of significance is whether Republicans in the legislative branch took an active or rather reactive role during the decision-making process.

The fifth factor is change in the balance of power in the Middle East. Because the study of this factor can be an extensive research project on its own, the main indicator is the evaluation of and developments in the balance of power in the Middle East in the communications of the president, the Secretary of State, and of other members of the government and bureaucracy. Variation can be observed through looking at more positive or negative judgements of developments in the balance of power in the Middle East.

4.3. Methodology

This research uses two main research methods: controlled comparison and process-tracing. Firstly, since this research includes two cases selected through the most similar systems design, the potentially explanatory factors can be compared in pairwise observations.

In this way, values on every factor can be compared for both cases. For example, if values on an explaining variable were higher in 1973 than in 1956, the value of the dependent variable should also be higher in this year (Van Evera, 1997, pp. 56-57).

Secondly, an important element of Hermann's framework is the decision-making process. After the discussion of the expected stages where the potential factors come into play (section 3), the best way to test these expectations is through process-tracing. Through process-tracing, every step and stage of the theoretical expectations can be either confirmed or rejected. The reason for this is that through process-tracing, the decision-making process and the 'chain of events' between the conditions and independent variables on the one and the outcome on the other hand are divided into multiple smaller steps, after which observable evidence is researched for every step, if available (Van Evera, 1997, p. 64).

However, these two methods also have disadvantages. With regard to controlled comparison and the most similar systems design, it is hard, if not impossible, to find two identical cases, and to account for all factors. Furthermore, controlled comparison as well as process-tracing do not allow for easy generalizations, because they focus on the detailed research of a limited number of cases. On the other hand, these two cases have clear, if not extreme outcomes on the DV, especially in terms of consequences. If these cases can be well explained and understood, this might also provide insights to understand other foreign policy decisions of the U.S. with regard to Israel.

4.4. Data Sources

The data sources of this research are both primary and secondary. To analyze leadership (H1), autobiographies, (released) communications, and historical-descriptive accounts are used.

For the analysis of bureaucratic advocacy, more specifically the opportunity and willingness of internal and external pro-Israel forces to influence the decision-making process (H2), the presence and activities of the public pro-Israel lobby and pro-Israel individuals in the U.S. bureaucracy and government are researched on the basis of historical-descriptive accounts. Furthermore, the influence of the Secretary of State is researched by looking at autobiographies, historical accounts, and available communications.

For public support (H3), public opinion polls and surveys are used. For support for Israel within the Republican Party (H4), resolutions and voting records are analyzed, as well as historical-descriptive accounts regarding the evaluation of and involvement in the decision-making process of Republican politicians.

For external stimuli, and in particular changes in the balance of power in the Middle East that affected the U.S. (H5), autobiographies and (released) communications of the president and the Secretary of State are used, as well as historical accounts.

After all, historical accounts are very important to analyze the various factors and are used as evidence for every factor. However, a number of relevant primary sources are also used. This combination of primary and secondary sources supports the reliability of the findings.

The next section presents the empirical findings. Each of the five hypotheses is discussed in a subsection, with first the findings for the Suez Crisis, followed by the findings for the Yom Kippur War.

5. Findings

5.1. Leader Driven Change

President Eisenhower

Both the personal papers and diaries of President Eisenhower show that the president himself was quite concerned about the clash in the Middle East over the Suez Canal, even before the attack took place. When it was clear that Israel prepared an attack on either Egypt or Jordan, Eisenhower personally warned Israeli Prime-Minister David Ben Gurion ‘to do nothing which would endanger the peace’, and that the ‘growing friendship’ between Israel and the U.S. could be endangered (Galambos & Van Ee, 1996, pp. 2336, 2338).

When the war had started, Eisenhower instructed Secretary of State John Foster Dulles on the attitude that the U.S. had to take: achieving a cease-fire via the United Nations (UN), and a leading role for the U.S. in solving the crisis, instead of the Soviet Union or the UN. Eisenhower also personally explained this decision in a letter to British Prime Minister Eden on October 30 (Galambos & Van Ee, 1996, pp. 2341, 2346-2347). On November 2, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution that largely reflected Eisenhower’s wishes, which essentially meant a condemnation of Israel’s actions (UN, 1956).

After all, the upcoming presidential elections of a few days later did not withhold Eisenhower from active involvement in the U.S. response to the crisis, as his personal diaries and communications with a close friend show³ (Kingseed, 1995, p. 91; Ferrell, 1981, p. 332; Galambos & Van Ee, 1996, pp. 2353-2354).

³ On October 15, Eisenhower noted: ‘Ben Gurion should not make any grave mistakes based upon his belief that winning a domestic election is as important to us as preserving and protecting the interests of the United Nations and other nations of the free world in that region’ (Ferrell, 1981, p. 332). In addition, on November 2, a few days before the election, he wrote to a close friend: ‘I have finished my campaigning. It became too difficult for me to keep in touch with the various items of information that pour constantly into Washington from Europe and the Mid East and at the same time carry on the hectic activities of actual campaigning’ (Galambos & Van Ee, 1996, pp. 2353-2354).

In a detailed account, Cole Kingseed (1995) describes the president's role in the time prior to and during the crisis. Although the leading-up to the actual attack was a matter of months, Eisenhower handled the situation as a crisis (Kingseed, 1995, pp. 45-47, 55, 57). A series of meetings on the issue revealed Eisenhower's decision-making strategy on important issues: ad hoc meetings with a small group of trusted advisers and experts. At the same time, he was the one in charge, making the final decisions and giving instructions (Kingseed, 1995, pp. 5-6, 25, 45-47, 55, 58-61, 90-91).

According to Kingseed, Eisenhower was furious over Ben Gurion's actions, a man he 'personally distrusted and whom he believed was at the root of most of the problems in the Middle East' (Kingseed 1995, pp. 89, 90). In general, Eisenhower supported the young Jewish state. Eisenhower was well aware of the presence of the pro-Israel lobby, and liked to express his independence from it, which he explicitly did in personal communication at the height of the crisis (Brands, n.d.; Alteras, 1993, p. 287; Galambos & Van Ee, 1996, p. 2354). In the end, Eisenhower's decision once the Suez Crisis became a military conflict was quick, decisive, and personal (Kingseed, 1995, pp. 89-91).

President Nixon

What was the role of President Nixon in the American decision to actively support Israel by sending significant amounts of arms, a few days into the war? Around October 1973, Nixon was obviously quite busy with several domestic issues, if not crises. The most important issue was the Watergate crisis, which required more and more attention of the president by this time, and eventually led to Nixon's resignation in 1974 (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975, pp. 844, 887, 891, 897-900). Apart from the Watergate crisis, President Nixon was also busy with the individual problems of Vice President (VP) Spiro Agnew, who resigned only four days into the Yom Kippur War. Consequently, the president had also to

nominate a new VP in a timely fashion (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975, pp. 822, 860, 867).

With these domestic concerns in mind, it is not surprising that Secretary of State Henry Kissinger played an important role in the American decision, as discussed in more detail in section 5.2. This observation is supported by several remarks that the president made during the October War, in which he repeatedly referred to his conversations with Kissinger about the American response to the crisis in the Middle East (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975, pp. 848, 882, 896).

On the other hand, others ascribe a rather dominant role to Nixon in the crisis. According to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, it was President Nixon who broke a deadlock within his administration with regard to arms supplies to Israel, which was very important to Israel (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 1994).

However, Nixon was also known for his anti-Semitic remarks. A series of leaked tapes from the Oval Office revealed Nixon's private views on Jews and U.S. Jewry, which were nothing less than anti-Semitic. The consequences of these views for the presence of Jewish or pro-Israel individuals in the U.S. bureaucracy and government is discussed in more detail in section 5.2.

To sum up, although Nixon was occupied with domestic crises, he was the one who was in charge, also over foreign policy. At the same time, Kissinger had significant leeway in shaping foreign policy, but the president still made the final decisions.⁴ Klinger confirms the notion that Nixon broke a deadlock, but it was not surprising that it was in favor of

⁴ In his memoirs, Kissinger confirms this observation: President Nixon gave him much leeway, but the president still made the final decisions, and was the one in charge. However, the result was that the president was not at the forefront in the early stages of the decision-making process (Kissinger, 1982, pp. 468-470).

Kissinger's position.⁵ Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger opposed the idea of significant arms supplies to Israel, but Kissinger's status as Nixon's primary adviser on foreign policy was unmatched (Klinger, 2012). Although it may be paradoxical, Nixon made anti-Semitic remarks, but was clearly not anti-Israel (Klinger, 2012; Stone, 2014).

5.2. Bureaucratic Advocacy

1956 Suez Crisis

With regard to the attempts of pro-Israel bureaucratic advocacy to influence the U.S. government, both from inside and outside, the evidence seems to suggest that there was quite little opportunity and willingness to do so prior to and around the time of decision-making by the U.S. Several authors explicitly discuss the fact that Israel only started its public relations campaign in the U.S. at the stage of U.S. threats to Israel if it would not withdraw unconditionally (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007, p. 25; Alteras, 1993, p. 256). The fact that a public lobby campaign did not start earlier is understandable for two subsequent reasons. First, the U.S. had already expressed its opposition to military action against Egypt for quite some time.⁶ Furthermore, the fact that the military action was prepared in secret made a public lobby of course impossible. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the pro-Israel lobby in the U.S. only settled in the years before and around 1956 (Alteras, 1993, p. 288).

With regard to the presence of individuals in the foreign policy bureaucracy who were outspokenly pro-Israel, it is not incidentally that there were no such persons in that bureaucracy who had much influence or were close to the president (Alteras, 1993, pp. 36,

⁵ Based on the memoirs of Chief of Staff Alexander Haig, Klinger argues that President Nixon even ordered to double the amount of military equipment that Kissinger said Israel needed. This was on October 12, almost one week into the war (Klinger, 2012).

⁶ For example, President Eisenhower expressed his opposition to military action in a conversation with British Prime Minister Eden in September 1956 (Galambos & Van Ee, 1996, p. 2264).

101). President Eisenhower had a clear aversion against 'ethnic pressures' as he called it; foreign policy should serve the national interest (Alteras, 1993, pp. 101, 287, 302).

According to one of Eisenhower's aides, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles just carried out Eisenhower's wishes (Alteras, 1993, p. 21). Although Dulles' visibility and the fact that Eisenhower delegated responsibility could suggest otherwise, in fact Dulles was always communicating with and listening to Eisenhower's wishes and authority (Alteras, 1993, p. 54). With regard to external pressures (section 5.5), the president and Dulles agreed that facing the Soviet threat was of primary concern, which shaped the policies towards Israel and the Middle East in general (Alteras, 1993, p. 55). Moreover, backed by Eisenhower, Dulles presented the administration's policy of 'friendly impartiality' for the Arab-Israeli conflict (Alteras, 1993, pp. 76-77, 85). However, the 'impartiality' turned out to be something more of style rather than substance after a tour to the Middle East (Alteras, 1993, p. 80).

After all, it seems that none of the three assessed indicators had the opportunity, willingness, or both, to influence the U.S. decision-making process in the Suez Crisis in a pro-Israel direction.

1973 Yom Kippur War

With regard to the public lobby, the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, which met on October 10, urged Nixon to provide Israel with weapons (Sobel & Kosut, 1974, p. 102). Chairman Jack Stein and the prominent Jewish Republican Max Fisher also met with Nixon.⁷ According to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency (1994), Nixon overruled disagreement on the issue among his top advisers, and authorized the arms supplies. However, Ghareeb notes that small, secret supplies were sent already by October 9, or maybe

⁷ According to one source, The Jewish News of Northern California (2006), Max Fisher can be seen as the one who 'saved' Israel. However, although he may have had a positive influence on the Nixon's decision, it seems to have been largely an influence in terms of the speed of the first significant arms deliveries.

even by October 7 (Ghareeb, 1974, p. 116). Furthermore, the well-known pro-Israel lobbyist I.L. Kenen is only mentioned with regard to the question whether the 2.2 billion request of military equipment, introduced almost two weeks into the war, should have taken the form of a grant rather than a commercial deal (Ghareeb, 1974, p. 115).

J.J. Goldberg, a Jewish editor, argues that the pro-Israeli influence ‘increased exponentially during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations’ (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007, p. 118). Furthermore, the 1967 War was an important turning point for the lobby, because the war showed the public that support for Israel was urgent (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007, pp. 118-119).⁸

Section 5.1 already touched upon the issue of the presence and activity of pro-Israel individuals in the U.S. government and bureaucracy. Nixon was known for his anti-Semitic remarks, based on leaked tapes from the Oval Office. Some of the underlying reasons could be the strong Jewish support in the U.S. for the Democratic Party (Klinger, 2012) or the fact that Nixon linked Jews to communist plots (Molotsky, 1999). One of the consequences was that Nixon denied anyone being Jewish from participating in discussions on Israel, including Kissinger. ‘No Jew can handle the Israeli thing’, adding that they were against his administration, he once said (Chait, 2010; Radnofsky, 2010; Stone, 2014). However, this was at the time when Kissinger was not yet in his role of Secretary of State. However, it is unlikely that other Jewish or pro-Israel individuals were also offered such positions later on, and there is no evidence that Nixon took his words back afterwards.

Henry Kissinger had a dominating role in the American response in 1973, due to the fact that Nixon was quite busy with the domestic crises, as discussed in more detail in section 5.1

⁸ However, the marginal role of the lobby in the 1973 decision is not necessarily contradictory to Mearsheimer and Walt’s findings of an increasingly influential lobby. Both the 1956 and 1973 crises were clearly White House issues, at least at the first stages. The lobby however, as several authors note, is strongest on Capitol Hill (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007, pp. 10-11, 152-154).

(Condrón, 2015, pp. 203-204). At the early stages of the war, top-level U.S. security officials opposed arms supplies, most importantly because Israel was expected to win quite easily. In fact, Israel faced serious difficulties, but various accounts disagree over whether Kissinger was the driving force behind arms supplies at this stage, or if he had been overruled by Nixon (Condrón, 2015, pp. 207, 216-217). Kissinger himself describes his continued support for arms deliveries, a position in which he found himself at times quite isolated (Kissinger, 1979, pp. 558-559, 563, 566, 570-572).

To sum up, it appears that for the influence of bureaucratic advocacy on the final policy decision, only the opportunity that Secretary Kissinger had to influence the final outcome was a significant indicator. His role and power came close to that of the president under normal circumstances.

5.3. Domestic Restructuring: Public Support

John Mueller argues that there are only a few historical instances in which the American public significantly diverted its attention from domestic to international matters (Mueller, 1999, p. 52). Such diversions, such as in the Second World War and the Vietnam War, have some similar characteristics: these instances concern major international conflicts, with direct American involvement. One of Mueller's propositions is that the question of whether American lives are at stake is key in the cost-benefit calculation of the American public (Mueller, 1999, pp. 52-53).

These considerations suggest that public opinion did not play an important role in the final foreign policy decision in either 1956 or 1973. In contrast, Mueller argues that foreign policy often did play an important role in presidential elections during the Cold War (Mueller, 1999, p. 56). Therefore, with the 1956 presidential elections only a few days away, this proposition suggests that public opinion could have had an effect on the American response in

the Suez Crisis. For the U.S. decision in the Yom Kippur War, one can assume that, especially due to the Watergate scandal, President Nixon was not willing to act against the public opinion.

1956 Suez Crisis

Since Israel's military operation against Egypt, as part of a secret agreement with the UK and France, came as a surprise to the U.S., opinion polls before the military campaign are obviously not available. An early November 1956 Roper survey asked 598 Americans the following: 'Do you think Israel was justified in sending troops to Egypt?'. Almost half of the respondents had no opinion on this question, while 31 percent answered that Israel was not justified to send troops, and 18.5 percent answered positively. Another poll, released by Gallup in mid-November, showed similar results (Alteras, 1993, p. 294). With regard to the general attitude towards Israel, the number of respondents critical of Israel increased from 7 to 19 percent between April and November 1956 (Kamen, 1967, p. 46).

It is striking that although American military action against Egypt was not considered after the summer of 1956 anymore⁹, President Eisenhower himself used American public opinion repeatedly as an argument against American action. For example, on September 2, 1956, Eisenhower wrote to British Prime Minister Eden that 'American public opinion flatly rejects the thought of using force' (Galambos & Van Ee, 1996, p. 2264).

Both the results of opinion polls and the finding that Eisenhower focused on public opinion regarding American military participation are in line with the discussed propositions of Mueller (1999). In this sense public opinion on American participation potentially had much more importance for the presidential elections than public opinion on the American

⁹ Military intervention, possibly together with the British, was among the considerations at the early stages after the nationalization of the Canal by Nasser. However, by the end of the summer of 1956, President Eisenhower was fully committed to solving the crisis peacefully (Kingseed, 1995, pp. 48, 50, 58).

position towards Israel. After all, there is no evidence that public opinion played a serious role in the decision-making process of the U.S. to condemn the Israeli actions in 1956.

However, on a later stage, public opinion became more important, with protests against the possibility of American sanctions on Israel if it would not withdraw unconditionally. Eisenhower's insistence on an unconditional Israeli withdrawal not only faced criticism from the pro-Israel lobby, but also from an increasing share of the American public, legislators, and also from editorials in prestigious newspapers (Alteras, 1993, pp. 256-257, 260-261, 294-295, 302). Caught between a competing regional strategy, the fact that sanctions were 'highly unpopular' among the public, and with potential consequences for future cooperation with Congress, the administration decided to partially concede to the Israeli conditions (Alteras, 1993, pp. 261, 302).

1973 Yom Kippur War

Although the American public was 'never' directly concerned with foreign wars, Rita Simon and Mohamed Moneim argue that the Yom Kippur War attracted attention and raised concerns among the American public. Simon and Moneim argue that, 'American casualties or moral concerns' were not the reason for this, but rather concerns about (the consequences of) the oil embargo. Furthermore, they argue that American dependence on oil from the Middle East became 'an important issue of contention in American presidential elections ever since' (Simon & Moneim, 2009, p. 111). However, these authors do not provide evidence for the public's attention.

Between 1967 and 1982, Gallup asked Americans 20 times the question of whether their sympathies were more with Israel, or more with the Arab nations. The results showed an

increase in support for Israel from 47 to 54 percent between October and December 1973¹⁰ (De Boer, 1983, p. 123).

The American public was also asked multiple times how they evaluated the decision of their government to provide Israel with arms supplies. Three weeks into the war, a Harris poll asked: 'Do you think the U.S. was right in sending planes and other military supplies to Israel or do you think we should have taken a different course?' 46 percent of the respondents replied that the U.S. was right, 34 percent answered negatively.¹¹ In early 1975, Americans evaluated the decision by their government significantly more positively, with 65 percent against 18 percent, respectively¹² (De Boer, 1983, p. 128).

David Morse describes Nixon's obsession with public opinion in his own work. Secretary Kissinger referred to it as a 'monomaniacal preoccupation with public relations' (Morse, 2015, p. 16). Furthermore, the U.S. Democratic Congress pushing for more aid to Israel in the 1972 presidential campaign resulted in a promise of the Nixon campaign that Nixon would be a better candidate in terms of strong support for Israel than his opponent, George McGovern (Morse, 2015, p. 16).

¹⁰ The exact question was: 'Have you heard about the situation in the Middle East? [If yes] In the Middle East situation are your sympathies more with Israel or more with the Arab nations?' (De Boer, 1983, p. 123). Besides the public's sympathies with Israel, sympathies with the Arab nations increased from 6 to 8 percent between October and December 1973 (De Boer, 1983, p. 123).

¹¹ It is striking to see that, in contrast to this Harris poll, a more open question, asked a few days earlier, was answered quite differently. Here, Gallup asked: 'Do you think the U.S. should supply arms and material to Israel/the Arabs?' 37 percent supported arms supplies to Israel, 49 percent opposed it. With regard to the Arabs, 15 percent supported arms supplies, and 68 percent opposed it. However, these respondents were labeled 'aware', meaning that the question was submitted to the respondents in the sample who said that they were aware of the situation in the Middle East (De Boer, 1983, pp. 122, 128), which is a potential explanation of the different outcomes.

¹² In this research, also by Harris, the question was: 'As you know, the U.S. has sent planes, tanks, artillery and other weapons to arm Israel. The Russians have sent similar military supplies to Egypt and Syria. In general, with the Russians arming Egypt and Syria, do you think the U.S. is right or wrong to send Israel the military supplies it needs?' In May 1975, this same question was answered somewhat more negatively (De Boer, 1983, p. 128).

After all, there is no credible evidence that public opinion played a serious role in the foreign policy decision towards Israel of the U.S. government in October 1973. However, as was also the case in 1956, the decision seemed to be in line with existing views on Israel among the American public.

5.4. Domestic Restructuring: Support for Israel in the Republican Party

1956 Suez Crisis

Due to the U.S.' quick response once Israel had started the military campaign against Egypt, one would expect a particularly limited role for the U.S. Congress, and more specifically of the Republican Party, in the initial response to the matter.

However, Congressional leaders were invited repeatedly to discuss the issue of the Suez Crisis in the months after the nationalization of the Canal by Nasser, an act marking the start of the Suez Crisis. Kingseed describes this as a 'vital component' of President Eisenhower's strategy. Particularly with the upcoming presidential elections and the nation's response in an international crisis in mind, it was of vital interest to ensure Congressional support for his policies. Eisenhower did so by bringing the legislature into the decision-making process. (Kingseed, 1995, pp. 24-25, 62-64). The logic is simple: by giving congressional leaders the impression that they had a say in the government's policy-making, Eisenhower gained their support for the final policy decision (Kingseed, 1995, pp. 64-65).

However, the legislative branch also had a real say at the earliest stages of the crisis. Congress was increasingly critical of the American financial support for the Aswan Dam project. Eisenhower himself remained a supporter until the summer of 1956, but Congress' criticism and Nasser's attitude finally convinced the president that American support was no longer appropriate. Consequently, Nasser used this decision as a justification for the

nationalization of the Suez Canal (Kingseed, 1995, pp. 36-37, 39-41; Brands, n.d.; Alteras, 1993, pp. 163, 187-188).

Congress was also important in the follow-up response of the Eisenhower administration, as it opposed the administration's attempts to force Israel to withdraw unconditionally in terms of security guarantees (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007, p. 25, 37; Alteras, 1993, pp. 260, 270, 287, 295).

All in all, Eisenhower pursued a good relationship with both parties in Congress, mostly for strategic reasons. Eisenhower's successes were reflected in his reelection, and in the loyalty of the overwhelming majority of Congressional Republicans (McDermott, 1998, p. 143). However, the president's personal decision-making style (section 6.1) and the fact that the 1956 elections resulted in a personal rather than a Republican victory, convincingly suggest that it was President Eisenhower who was in charge of key foreign policy decisions, not the Republican Party (Dueck, 2010, p. 107).

1973 Yom Kippur War

In contrast with the 1956 Suez Crisis, the U.S. government did not respond immediately to the crisis in the Middle East in October 1973. Initially, the U.S. played a little bit of a waiting game, as described in more detail in section 5.5, although there is no consensus on the exact date on which the arms deliveries started (as discussed in section 5.2). The time between the start of the crisis and the first (significant amount of) arms deliveries to Israel, can be seen as the potential time for members of Congress and others to influence the administration's response.

However, the president had the authority to sell unlimited amounts of military equipment to any friendly nation for a maximum of 120 days¹³ (Sobel & Kosut, 1974, p. 103). On the other hand, presidential authority obviously does not withhold anyone from trying to influence the government's position.

It seems that Congress, and more specifically Republicans, took a responsive rather than pro-active attitude in the first days of the conflict. For example, only in the second week of the war, a resolution urging the administration to continue the military support of Israel, was introduced in the Senate. Although the resolution gained the bipartisan support of 70 Senators, only 27 of them were Republicans (U.S. Congress, 1973).¹⁴ On the same day, a comparable resolution was introduced in the House of Representatives, also led by the Democratic majority, with 220 cosponsors (Sobel & Kosut, 1974, p. 102).

The next day, on October 19, President Nixon requested Congress 2.2 billion dollars of security assistance to Israel, in addition to the 825 million dollars in military equipment that the U.S. already had authorized in the previous days (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975, pp. 884-885). The legislation passed through Congress in December, with a 66-9 vote at the Senate and a 364-52 vote at the House (CQ Press, 1973; GovTrack(a), n.d.; GovTrack(b), n.d.). There was only minor opposition against the unconditional nature of the military aid, in the sense that Israel was not forced to come to the negotiating table as part of the deal. In both the House and the Senate, Democratic support for the request was significantly higher than

¹³ This presidential authority was laid down in the Military Sales Act of 1968 (Sobel & Kosut, 1974, p. 103).

¹⁴ The U.S. Congress' website presents the resolution as sponsored (introduced) by Democratic senator Hubert Humphrey, and cosponsored by 69 colleagues (U.S. Congress, 1973). On the other hand, Sobel and Kosut present the resolution as introduced by three Democratic senators and Republican senator Jacob Javits, and supported by 63 colleagues (Sobel & Kosut, 1974, p. 102). The primary data is considered to be most reliable.

Republican support. In the Senate, only half of the 42 Republican senators supported the request (CQ Press, 1973; GovTrack(a), n.d.; GovTrack(b), n.d.).

So, although President Nixon once complained that 'Israel's lobby is so strong that Congress is not reasonable' (Benhorin, 2012), and although the pro-Israel lobby indeed is mostly influential on Capitol Hill (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007, pp. 10-11, 152-154), the influence of (Republican) legislators on the initial U.S. decision in 1973 to provide Israel with arms supplies was clearly not decisive.

5.5. External Shocks: Strategic Considerations with regard to the Middle East¹⁵

1956 Suez Crisis

President Eisenhower, who played an important role in the final decision in the Suez Crisis (section 5.1), was very much concerned with external forces when he made the decision to condemn the Israeli actions. Especially with regard to the Soviet Union, the president was concerned with the balance of power in the Middle East (Ferrell, 1981, p. 323; Kingseed, 1995, p. 45; Alteras, 1993, p. 21, 184)¹⁶.

¹⁵ Not all considerations discussed in this section qualify as 'external shocks'. Rather, many of them seem to be much more structural in nature. However, there are two caveats here. First, as exemplified in the end of section 3.1, Hermann's formulation of this factor is considered too extreme. Not all 'outside' aspects that are taken into account in the decision-making process are necessarily 'shocks'. Therefore, it is argued that 'external events', 'strategic considerations', or 'external forces' are better terms to cover the nature of this factor. Secondly, although the bigger picture of both 1956 and 1973 clearly show the structural nature of this factor due to the Cold War, both instances also show that beyond the bigger picture, specific actions clearly mattered. In this way, the Cold War circumstances had a lot of variation, rather than constants. Especially in the 1973, the evidence shows that step-by-step developments (shocks) in the balance of power during the conflict dominated the decision-making process. U.S. policymakers, not least the presidents and secretaries of State, were constantly concerned with the appropriateness and consequences of their actions in strategic terms.

¹⁶ Other notes in the president's diaries also show his concerns about Soviet influence and dominance in the Middle East, particularly reflected in terms such as 'Sovietize the whole region' and 'exclude from the area Soviet influence (Ferrell, 1981, pp. 331, 333).

On November 1, 1956, Eisenhower clearly expressed his strategic considerations in the U.S. response to the Suez Crisis. Eisenhower explained why the U.S. had to take the lead, and why in the way of going to the UN: 'At all costs the Soviets must be prevented from seizing a mantle of world leadership' (Galambos & Van Ee, 1996, p. 2346). The concerns about the Soviets not only influenced the timing and speed of the U.S. response, but also the content. In the words of Colin Dueck: 'In the Middle East, Eisenhower acted to oppose any trends that he thought might ultimately play into the hands of the Soviet Union. Sometimes this meant siding with local nationalist regimes, as he did with Egypt over the Suez in the fall of 1956; sometimes it meant acting against them' (Dueck, 2010, p. 103).

Especially the U.S.' relationship with Egyptian president Nasser was a difficult one. Getting him to join an anti-Communist coalition was a complex challenge, also because many issues with Egypt had also to do with Israel, its direct opponent at the time. For example, the U.S.' denial to provide Egypt with arms, because of Nasser's anti-Israel attitude, resulted in an Egyptian turn to the Soviets. This essentially meant more Soviet influence in the region and a change in the balance of power (Kingseed, 1995, pp. 32-33).

In the end, Eisenhower's dilemma was that he did not want to alienate Western allies in condemning them, but he was also concerned about the influence that the Soviets might gain after Western military action. However, condemning Nasser would also severely damage the American relationship with Arab states (Kingseed, 1995, pp. 44-45). All these considerations resulted in the American determination to solve the Suez Crisis without using force by any party. Only at a later stage, after the U.S. administration unsuccessfully had tried to force Israel to withdraw unconditionally, the relationship with Israel improved, finally resulting in a place for Israel in the U.S.' strategic narrative (Mearsheimer, 2007, pp. 24-25, 37; Alteras,

1993, p. 302). In short, Soviet influence was at the heart of the external forces that played into the U.S. decision-making process.¹⁷

1973 Yom Kippur War

External circumstances, and especially the behavior of the Soviets, seem to have been a central element of every American consideration in the October 1973 war. Although there is no consensus about the exact date on which the first arms deliveries to Israel were authorized (section 6.2), it is clear that the U.S. government had not anticipated that large-scale arms supplies would be necessary. Kissinger writes in his memoirs: ‘If Israel won overwhelmingly – as we first expected – (...). We had to keep the Soviet Union from emerging as the Arab’s savior (...). If the unexpected happened and Israel was in difficulty, we would have to do whatever was necessary to save it. We could not permit Soviet clients to defeat a traditional friend. (...) In sum, we had the opportunity to dominate events; but we ran the risk of becoming the butt of every controversy’ (Kissinger, 1982, p. 468).

Kissinger’s description is in line with the comments of other commentators and academics. For example, Dueck argues that it was soon realized that ‘American interests and long-term regional peace prospects were best served in the Yom Kippur War by the prevention of an overwhelming victory or defeat on either side’ (Dueck, 2010, p. 174). In addition, Mearsheimer and Walt argue: ‘America’s postwar leverage would be maximized if its support for Israel was not too overt and Israel did not win too decisively’ (Mearsheimer &

¹⁷Although the Soviet influence was certainly the primary concern, these considerations were not the only external forces. For example, the energy reserves of the region and the energy interests of the U.S. in the region also played a role. The U.S. government hoped and expected that neither side would win overwhelmingly, so that the U.S. could remain more or less impartial (Alteras, 1993, p. 85). The continuation of the international rule of law at the relatively new UN also played a role. Secretary Dulles called the end, ‘that Nasser has been beaten’, ‘a good end’, but could not accept its achievement by ‘means that violate the Charter of the UN (Alteras, 1993, p. 234).

Walt, 2007, p. 43). These considerations and expectations can be used as an explanation for the relatively slow response to Israel's initial requests (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007, p. 43). Even when military supplies had started, the U.S. tried to give it a low profile, in order not to alienate the Arab states too much (Kissinger, 1982, p. 496; Benhorin, 2012).

Furthermore, in his detailed account, Kissinger describes how the American decision to provide Israel with significant amounts of military equipment came about. The decision was the result of a combination of heavy Israeli losses, significantly heavier than anticipated, a slower victory than expected, and significant Soviet arms supplies to Arab states (Kissinger, 1982, pp. 476-503).¹⁸ With regard to American interests and the future of the balance of power in the region, there were two concerns: 'A prolonged military stalemate or a sudden proposal for a ceasefire in place while Israel still had not regained the prewar lines' (Kissinger, 1982, p. 496).

In short, U.S. policy was largely determined by the strategy of balancing against any unwanted imbalance in the conflict, with the aim of gaining as much influence as possible in the region for the future.

6. Conclusions

6.1. Empirical Conclusions

What factors can explain why the U.S. did not support Israel in the 1956 Suez Crisis but did so in the 1973 war? Five hypotheses, based on the four factors in Charles Hermann's model (1990), are applied to these two cases. Furthermore, this research focuses on the initial

¹⁸ Kissinger's account is shared by a wide number of scholars and other writers, among them: Sobel & Kosut (1974, pp. 100-103); Stone (2014), *The Jewish News of Northern California* (2006), Mearsheimer & Walt (2007, p. 43), Klinger (2012), and the Jewish Telegraphic Agency (1994). On the other hand, Mearsheimer and Walt also express their skepticism about the strategic rationale behind the military support of Israel as a response to the development of the war (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007, pp. 52, 53, 54).

response of the U.S. towards Israel in the particular crises in the Middle East. With initial response, the first official response is meant, usually resulting from at least a small-group meeting of authorized individuals. Consequently, any response results in (a set of) action(s), or inaction. At the same time, each factor is discussed in a broader time frame, especially with regard to the preexisting relationship between the U.S. and Israel and the follow-up response(s).

The first factor, leader driven change, is evaluated through the analysis of the role and preferences of President Eisenhower and President Nixon. It is clear that both presidents had the highest authority and the final say in foreign policy decisions, which made this factor's influence significant in both cases. However, Eisenhower had a more prominent authority than Nixon. The method of process-tracing revealed that Eisenhower was involved in the decision-making process from the earliest stages. On the contrary, Nixon was involved on a much less intensive scale and at a later stage. Nixon's involvement comes closest to Hermann's decision-making process (as described in section 3), where the leader is a key actor at the later rather than at the earlier stages.

The second factor, bureaucratic advocacy, is examined through the analysis of change in opportunity and willingness of pro-Israel bureaucratic advocacy. Three potentially important sources of (both internal and external) advocacy are assessed.¹⁹ For the element of willingness, the public pro-Israel lobby (external advocacy) and pro-Israel individuals in the U.S. bureaucracy and government (internal advocacy) are examined. For the aspect of opportunity, the role and power of the Secretary of State in shaping the particular policy decision (internal advocacy) is assessed. In both cases, the influence of all three sources on

¹⁹ This research only looks into the pro-Israel aspect of bureaucratic advocacy. However, there are suggestions that other lobbies also played into the decision-making process, such as the 'general' Arab lobby (Bard, 2010), the Arab oil lobby (Condon, 2015, pp. 228-229) and the domestic oil lobby (Bailey, 1966). Future studies should consider examining these alternative factors.

the initial response of the U.S. was very limited, with one exception. In 1973, Secretary of State Kissinger did play an important role, since he had significant opportunity to influence the policy decision, especially due to the Watergate crisis. Therefore, for the Yom Kippur War, the factor leader driven change could be broadened to the president and the Secretary of State. In Hermann's model, this factor is not written in stone in the sense that it is only about the president. Furthermore, the method of process-tracing revealed that, at a later stage, pro-Israel voices certainly did have willingness and also opportunity (see also footnote 2) in the follow-up decisions of the U.S. in the Suez Crisis. There is no evidence that this was also the case in 1973, but it was also not urgent given the already supportive attitude of the U.S. government.

The third factor, 'domestic restructuring', is assessed through the analysis of two different aspects. The first is public support for Israel in the U.S., both in general terms and with regard to the particular U.S. foreign policy decision. Both primary and secondary sources show no evidence that public opinion was a salient factor in either of the two decision-making processes. Instead, public opinion on the specific foreign policy decisions is only discussed as evaluations of the policy decisions by the public. Furthermore, this factor has exactly the same caveat regarding the follow-up decisions as bureaucratic advocacy.

The second aspect is the support for Israel in the Republican Party. The attempts of Congress, and more specifically of the Republican Party, to influence the White House's initial response were limited in both cases, and certainly not decisive. Instead, the White House clearly took the lead in both instances. However, especially in 1956, Congress and the Republican Party were important in the follow-up response, specifically in steering the American position in a more pro-Israeli direction.

The fourth factor, 'external factors', is examined through the analysis of developments in the balance of power in the Middle East. In both 1956 and 1973, strategic considerations and

concerns about U.S. influence in the region, especially vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, were at the heart of the decision-making process, especially for President Eisenhower, President Nixon, and Secretary Kissinger.

In short, strategic and external factors, interpreted by the top leadership, form the main body of explanation for both initial foreign policy responses by the U.S. in 1956 and 1973. As the evidence shows, leader driven change and external factors have immediate salience, but other factors only come into play at a later stage, at least in these crisis situations. Especially in 1956, factors with little or no explanatory value for the initial response were able to influence U.S. foreign policy in favor of Israel at a later stage. The distinction between immediate (H1 and H5) and longer-term salience (H2, H3 and H4) seems to correspond to the nature of the variables, independent and intervening, respectively.²⁰

6.2. Theoretical Conclusions

What do these findings mean for Charles Hermann's theoretical model of foreign policy change? Before turning to general propositions, it is important to emphasize two important aspects of the U.S. context. Firstly, the U.S. has a presidential system, in which all executive decisions fall under the direct authority of the president. Secondly, the U.S. is a major world power, which probably affects the intensity of strategic and external considerations in foreign policy decisions.²¹

²⁰ However, this distinction does not seem to be entirely clear-cut. For example, the stage at which the president gets involved in the decision-making process also determines the time and opportunity of other factors to influence the president's position. Furthermore, bureaucratic advocacy seems to have more 'independence' as domestic restructuring aspects, as its significance in the follow-up response in 1956 shows.

²¹ This is supported by Brecher and James, who argue that geostrategic salience and the connectedness to the international system of involved actors in crises influence the effects of their actions in a crisis. More specifically, they argue that especially more connectedness to the international system of actors in a crisis (economically or otherwise) leads to more pronounced effects of their interactions (Brecher & James, 1986, pp. 90-92).

That being said, there are at least three theoretical lessons, also for the broader discipline of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA). First of all, Hermann's relatively broad, and sometimes open-ended, approach needs more specificity on the issue of international crises. This research suggests that there is a clear correlation between the nature of the foreign policy event, and the nature of the decision-making process, at least for the initial response. In more concrete terms, the authority is largely in the hands of the leaders of the executive branch during crises, which is discussed by Oneal in more detail (Oneal, 1988, pp. 605, 606, 608-611). Consequently, the time and opportunities of other players to influence the final policy decision are limited. It is striking that in Michael Brecher and Patrick James' research project on crises, both the Suez Crisis and the Yom Kippur War are in the top three of 'most severe and most important cases in the Middle East' (Brecher & James, 1986, p. 74).

In short, the question of what the nature of foreign policy events means for Hermann's model and decision-making process needs to be addressed. If future research can generalize the findings of this research, Hermann's model needs certain scope conditions, for example that his model and decision-making process are focused on foreign policy decision-making in non-crisis situations. By contrast, for the analysis of the initial response in crisis situations, one would need an alternative version of the model, one in which some factors have more immediate salience and others have a more long-term relevance.

Secondly, this research focuses on the initial foreign policy decision. However, it is useful and probably necessary to zoom a little bit out and look at the broader picture to get a more comprehensive understanding of the particular decision. For example, the preexisting bilateral relationship of states can limit the number of policy options under consideration, especially since both policy decisions in this research were largely consistent with the existing bilateral relationships. Isolated analyses of specific foreign policy decisions may not accurately reveal the longer-term salience that some factors may have, in contrast with the

immediate salience of other factors. Therefore, the empirical section of this research tries to carefully address preexisting conditions for most hypotheses.

Thirdly, on the other hand it is also important to look at the 'follow-up response'. Again, isolated analyses of specific foreign policy decisions might not render justice to the true salience of all factors. This is shown by the little explanatory value of some factors (H2, H3 and H4) for the initial U.S. response in 1956, in contrast with the follow-up response. Although it is unlikely that initial foreign policy decisions are reversed, adaptations in the time after the implementation of the initial response can be significant. In both cases, the follow-up responses were more supportive towards Israel than the initial responses.

For all three theoretical conclusions, both the method of controlled comparison and the method of process-tracing, which is helpful to examine the exact sequence of events, were very useful to test both Hermann's model and decision-making process.

In short, this research provides two main insights, also for future research. First of all, the empirical analysis of these historical cases has the potential to help understand other and more contemporary foreign policy decisions of the U.S. towards Israel. Secondly, this research provides a basis for the refinement of Charles Hermann's model and decision-making process of foreign policy change.

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