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<td>Paper Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Name</td>
<td>DiRenzo, Joseph</td>
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## Capstone Approval Document

The thesis/capstone for the master’s degree submitted by the student listed (above) under this title:

**How Could Israel Have Efficaciously Used Targeted Killings During Operation Protective Edge to Their Military, Economic, and Political Advantage?**

has been read by the undersigned. It is hereby recommended for acceptance by the faculty with credit to the amount of 3 semester hours.

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<tr>
<td>Signed, 1st Reader</td>
<td>Dr Joseph DiRenzo III</td>
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<td>Recommendation accepted on behalf of the program director</td>
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Attachments must include:
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HOW COULD ISRAEL HAVE EFFICACIOUSLY USED TARGETED KILLINGS
DURING OPERATION PROTECTIVE EDGE TO THEIR MILITARY, ECONOMIC,
AND POLITICAL ADVANTAGE?

A Master Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty

of

American Military University

by

Kenneth Edward Webb

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirement for the Degree

of

Master of Arts

April, 2015

American Military University

Charles Town, WV
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my grandparents. The completion of this work would not have been possible without their patience, understanding, support, and, most of all, love.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank my friends for their support during the writing of this thesis and my readers for their solicited constructive criticism. There will definitely be people who gave support that I failed to give proper credit to and I ask for their forgiveness. This was a difficult pursuit being an older student and reluctant to return to the world of academia where I would once again face the scrutiny of professors. My friend (and one of my academic mentors) Major Titus Brown, will soon graduate from Texas State University in San Marcos Texas as “Doctor” Titus Brown (Ph.D.). Titus is a colleague and friend of mine from the US Army who spent a significant amount of time proofreading this thesis and other papers I wrote while working on my Master’s Degree from American Military University. During my time here at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Navy Chief Christie Jarrell, soon to be Dr. Jarrell, with a Ph.D. from Northwestern University helped immensely despite a heavy workload and full-time classes for her own degree completion. I could never have understood the economic conditions and bundling of currencies without the help of CPT Justin Pelletier, a Ph.D. candidate with Capella University. Major Darrin Husmann used various techniques to motivate me to finish my Master’s Degree in Intelligence these past three and one-half years. It was after a short jog with him while on a temporary duty at Fort Hood, Texas in the fall of 2011 that I decided to go back to school and pursue my Master’s Degree.

I would like to thank the employees of the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, especially Ora Meir and Svetlana Lena Amhobry, the Embassy of Israel in Washington DC for guiding me towards the correct research. The Israeli Defense Forces were polite and professional, albeit guarded, in assisting me in my research. Jeffrey Hochman assisted with the research by sending me unclassified data that basic online searches and the online library would never have located.
I have found my studies with American Military University to be both interesting and challenging at the same time. There were many excellent instructors who assisted me during my studies as well as the online librarians in particular with my research I received help from Elizabeth Cook, Linda Cranston, Maryelizabeth Gano, Judith Jablonski, Jeanette Moyer, and Coleen Neary. I would like to thank Dr. Joe Barton, in whose class I first became interested in the conflicts between Israel and Palestine and who gave a lot of assistance and advice in preparation for the thesis. Dr. Jose Mora, who taught me a lot about targeted killings in his class and in whose class I first became interested in the Israeli Intelligence Services. As a person prone to stress and second-guessing myself, it was no easy task. Dr. Joseph R. DiRenzo III made an opening for me in this thesis class (which I worked my schedule around to get in) after I was mistakenly placed in another class. Dr. Joseph DiRenzo III has also offered encouragement and guidance during the class.

I wish that I could have spent more time on the thesis, but “time is [not] on our side.” I actually learned many things during the thesis class that I should have learned previously to it in hindsight. I thank people for putting up with my technologically challenged questions, as I am more comfortable with a pen and paper than a computer. I find the subject matter to be very interesting and read about it for pleasure whenever my time permits. However, I do look forward to closing this chapter in my life with the pressures of achieving a grade, moving on to the next, getting some sleep, exercise, and time to myself instead of all work and study.
ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

HOW COULD ISRAEL HAVE EFFICACIously USED TARGETED KILLINGS DURING OPERATION PROTECTIVE EDGE TO THEIR MILITARY, ECONOMIC, AND POLITICAL ADVANTAGE?

by

Kenneth Edward Webb

American Military University, April 26, 2015

Charles Town, West Virginia

Professor Joseph DiRenzo III, Thesis Professor

When initiating Operation Protective Edge, a fifty-day military offensive operation, Israel stated that it was responding to Hamas that had attacked Israel with rocket fire. Protective Edge started July 8, 2014, with Israeli airstrikes targeting Hamas, then continued with Israeli ground troops entering Gaza on July 17, and ended August 26, 2014, when an open-ended cease fire mediated by Egypt was reached. The cumulative military and civilian deaths amounted to over two-thousand Palestinians and about seventy Israelis. The research analyzes how targeted killings could have been used efficaciously to Israel’s military, economic, and political advantage. Mixed methods are used with a concurrent embedded correlation approach for an explanatory quantitative case study based on qualitative sources. The thesis demonstrates that surgical preemptive strikes transitioning to a ground offensive operation to eliminate the tunnels used by
Hamas for terrorist operations would provide more definitive threat neutralization, while reducing costs and negative media repercussions to Israel.

“Efficacy Gives Rise to Victory.”
—Sun Tzu, The Art of War
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

This research focuses on Israel’s most current declared military operation, *Operation Protective Edge* (OPE), which the Israelis claim was a response to Hamas’s rocket fire into Israel. The Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, stated in the *Jerusalem Post* on July 9, 2014, that the objective\(^1\) of OPE was to “restore quiet and security to all of Israel’s citizens, especially the residents of the south.” (*Jerusalem Post* 2015; Kurz and Brom 2014, 14-16; Segell 2014, 20-22). This 50 day operation claimed the lives of over 2,000 Palestinians and about seventy Israelis\(^2\). *Operation Protective Edge* was conducted in three phases: 1. rocket attacks on Hamas target in Gaza, 2. ground offensive to destroy thirty-two Hamas tunnels, 3. withdrawal of Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and further rocket attacks.

*Operation Protective Edge* was initiated with airstrikes beginning July 8, 2014, followed by the tactical insertion of Israeli ground troops July 17, 2014, in order to destroy the 32 tunnels used by Hamas for terrorist operations. The majority of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) ground forces withdrew from the Gaza Strip on August 3, 2014, following the successful neutralization of the tunnel network and the initialization of a less-restrictive airstrike campaign. The operation phase of OPE officially culminated on August 26, 2014, at approximately seven forty-three in the evening (Israeli time) with an open-ended cease fire. This is the same cease fire agreement that Hamas would not agree to when it was originally proposed by the Egyptian government to Israel and Hamas on July 15, 2014. When the cease fire was signed and stability was restored to the southern portion of Israel, the Israelis and Hamas claimed victory for *Operation Protective Edge*.

---

\(^1\) As the operation progressed, the objective of destroying the offensive tunnels was added. For more information, read Glen Segell’s *Israel, Gaza, and Hamas*, 2014).

\(^2\) The number of Israelis killed in *Operation Protective Edge* varies from 71-74.
2

Background Information

Despite a tumultuous existence, Israel has persevered and proven resilient since it was established as a nation-state on May 14, 1948 (Guiora 2004, 3-10; Malka 2008, 15-16). Some consider Israel to be overly aggressive; resorting too quickly to violence, while Israel contends it has continued to exercise restraint (Malka 2008, 1; Stahl 2010; Statman 2003, 775-779). Some of the geopolitical considerations Israel must consider are: 1. enemies, 2. politics, domestic and international, 3. technology, 4. the changing social norms of Israelis (Stahl 2010, 114). Israel will target those who threaten the State, in some cases while enemies are still training for hostilities (Stahl 2010, 112, 119-123; Statman 2004, 776-778; Wijze 2009, 306-308). Israel has been in seven declared military operations from 2004 through 2014 (Akerman 2014).

International Pressure

The Israelis received significant negative global criticism for their conduct during Operation Protective Edge (Al-Haq 2014; Hanley 2014; Sprusansky 2014). The United States,

---

3 Hamas and Fatah, the political wing of the Palestinian Authority had previous power struggles.

4 Adam Stahl, in “The Evolution of Israeli Targeted Operations” addresses, Sikul Meh’mu’kad “preemptive, offensive counterterrorism tactic, surgical…SIKUM brought…necessity and philosophy of preemption and prevention, not killing and revenge” (112-113, 116). They target terrorists while they are still in training to conduct terrorist operations on Israel.

Canada, Arab States, other countries\textsuperscript{6} and supranational organizations such as the United Nations, the European Union, the Non-Aligned Movement, and the Arab League pressured Israel to stop airstrikes and withdraw forces from the Gaza Strip. Claims were made in news and social media forums that Palestinian civilians and infrastructure were indiscriminately targeted by Israeli Defense Forces that were using disproportionate force in violation of the international laws. The Palestinians, the United Nations (UN), and much of the news media used previous surgical strikes by the Israelis as proof that the IDF could have used greater discretion in their selection of targets. Some asserted that the Israeli Defense Forces could have used more accurate munitions to defeat Hamas during \textit{Operation Protective Edge}, as opposed to indirect fire from artillery or munitions with a blast radius that made civilian casualties highly probable (Kurz and Brom 2014, 68; Stahl 2009; Mansour 2014; Yonah 2014).

\textbf{PURPOSE STATEMENT AND THE RESEARCH QUESTION}

This explanatory case study presents an in-depth analysis of the counterfactual effects of Israeli preemptive surgical strikes during \textit{Operation Protective Edge} in order to determine how the efficacy of this operation could have increased militarily, economically, and politically. This analysis of effects evaluates what happened, and what could have been done to change the end state of the operation. The thesis answers the question, \textit{how could Israel have efficaciously used targeted killings during \textit{Operation Protective Edge} to their military, economic, and political advantage?}

\textsuperscript{6} There was criticism by many countries. Some in the US and Canada were supportive, but many were critical of Israel, and this increased as the conflict continued.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This literature review is on the existing scholarly studies, books, and other resources relevant to the specific research question, how could Israel have efficaciously used targeted killings during Operation Protective Edge? Israel’s offensive military operation in the Gaza Strip, Operation Protective Edge, lasted 50 days from July 8 through August 26, 2014. Israel fought Hamas and other Islamic militants like the “Palestinian Islamic Jihad” (PIJ). Other Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) operations that add to the body of knowledge are also in the review, primarily the two preceding Operations, Cast Lead (December 27, 2008-January 18, 2009) and Pillar of Defense (November 14-21, 2013). Due to the close political and financial ties of the two countries, and the probable effects that any animosity between them would have on Israel, the review also addresses the relationship between Israel and the United States. Moral and legal

7 Gaza is controlled by the Palestinian Authority, currently run by “Fatah,” a militant Islamic group voted into power in Palestine, with Mahmoud Abbas as president, a rival of Hamas (Glick 2014, Kindle Location 393-398, 517, 3745; Segell 2014, 76-85).

8 The State Department officially named both Hamas and PIJ terrorist organizations on October 8, 1997. For more information go to the State Department website: http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm

9 Separate ceasefires declared on 18 January 2009, the last IDF Soldier left on 21 January 2009.

10 Background Information. Israel has been involved in 9 major military operations against Islamic militants in Gaza since 2000, starting with the Second Intifada, per IDF official statistics taken from the Institute for National Security Studies. OPE was the third major operation between IDF and Hamas. (Kurz and Brom 2014, 29-36; Segell 2014) Israel is currently facing threats to security from state and non-state actors in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Iran, regional and international theaters. (Glick 2014, Kindle Location 77, 348-354, 731, 2387, 4287; INSS 2015; Malka 2008; Segell 2014, 26-33, 40-43, 50-51, 63-75, 80-82, 90-100) DOD Joint Publication 3-0 (2011) defines “Major Operation,” as “a series of tactical actions, such as battles, engagements, and strikes, and is the primary building block of a campaign” (xix).
concerns of targeted killing, and positional literature on the IDF’s conduct during Operation Protective Edge, fall outside of the purview of this review, except inasmuch as they concern the public’s perception and international policies towards the Israelis (Adas 2014, 44-45, 47; Al-Haq 2014, 11-12; Cook 2014, 16-17; Glenn 2014; Jabr 2014, 16-17; Kurz and Brom 2014, 131; Marshall 2014 8-10; Marshall 2015, 8-10; Sprusansky 2014, 57; Twair 2014, 2014).

Organization of the Literature Review

The body of the review is thematically divided into six areas: 1. moral and legal issues of targeted killing during Operation Protective Edge, 2. sources supporting the hypothesis, 3. sources opposing the hypothesis, 4. sources which neither support nor oppose the hypothesis, and those sources which offer an alternative hypothesis, 5. media reporting on Operation Protective Edge, and 6. the relationship between Israel and the United States. Some of the sources both support and refute the hypothesis and are used as sources in both. The hypothesis is: Surgical preemptive strikes during Operation Protective Edge would have provided a more definitive threat neutralization, while reducing costs and negative media repercussions to Israel.

Summary of the Literature

The majority of sources give political opinions justifying or condemning its morality and/or legality. The two previous operations Cast Lead and Pillar of Defense are compared to Operation Protective Edge. There are sources showing the impact of the media on the populous, where it can be used as an outlet to criticize the government or a tool of the government to control or at least influence the public.

Morality and Legality of Operation Protective Edge

The literature resources show that the autonomy for open criticism of the government is greater in democratic societies versus closed societies where the government attempts to frame
public opinion through exploitation of the media resources, emplacing censorship and punishments for rebellious behavior (Bruns and Himmler 2011, 484-86; Green-Pedersen and Stubager 2010, 663-77; Gross 2010, 24-25, 100-109; Kurz and Brom 2014, 115-135; Shanahan et al 2011, 376-80; Thomas 2001, 147-56; Thompson 2011, 167-90).

There are a plethora of sources giving opinions and arguing the morality and legality of Operation Protective Edge and other Israeli operations (Chenoweth and Laura Dugan 2012, 597-624; De Wijze 2009, 305-320; Guiora 2004, 2-3; Hafez 2006, 359-382; Jabr 2014, 16-17; Sprusansky 2014, 24-25). Scholarly sources, although more objective than others, are still prone to the biases of the author(s) and all sources in this review showed bias either supporting or opposing Israel’s conduct during Operation Protective Edge. Social norms influence first political, then military, operations. The analysis of the literature indicates that news sources will attempt to elicit an emotional reaction by either supporting, opposing, placating, radicalizing or simply attempting to silence their viewers (Segell 2014, 103-109; Hudson 2010, 25; Thompson 2011, 167-190). The concept of “groupthink” has been studied previously as a belief in inherent morality in which members believe in their cause and therefore ignore the ethical or moral consequences of their decisions. The members take comfort in decisions that are come to as a result of group decisions believing that those decisions must be morally right due to group concensus (David 2002; Janis 1982).

There is a delineation between targeted killings, seen mostly as a military action, and assassination, viewed primarily as a political tool and often considered perfidy (Gross 2010, 100-06; Thomas 2001, 73-74). Research shows an unfavorable view of assassination in the past one-hundred years, but targeted killing is accepted when it can be justified, especially when viewed as necessary for the survival of the populous and tolerance increases with prolonged conflicts.
(Guiora 2004; Hunter 2009; Thomas 2001, 73-75). There is documentation that the Israeli High Court decided that targeted killing is legal, but it is highly criticized internationally (Gross 2003, 351-354, 359-363; De Wijze 2009; Marshall 2014, 8-10; Marshall 2015, 8-10; Meisels 2004, 318-320; Stahl 2010; Sprusansky 2014, 59-60; Statman 2004; Twain and Twain 2014, 46-49).

Sources that Support the Hypothesis

The analysis of the literature indicates that success in conflicts between Israel and militants in Gaza is dependent not only on military superiority, which clearly has been in Israel’s favor for well over two-decades, but also on political pressures, which demand the restraint or limitations on the rules of engagement and use of force, and acumen at the adaptation of tactics, techniques, and procedures from previous operations. Resources show previous IDF preemptive strikes conducted with precision in Gaza and forcing Hamas into a treaty previously proposed by Egypt which Israel agreed to, but to which Hamas refused to sign in the first week of OPE.

Sources reviewed on Operations Cast Lead, Pillar of Defense and Protective Edge all claim significant advantages to seizing the initiative, these advantages are not quantified in OPE to show the amount of munitions spared, lives saved, reduced costs, and less negative media on the operation globally (Kurz and Brom 2014, 16; Segell 2014, 27-29). All sources indicate heavy damage inflicted early in the execution of Operations Cast Lead (to Hamas forces and long-range missiles), and in Pillar of Defense (by the targeted killing of Hamas’s Chief of Staff, Ahmad Jabari, and the neutralization of Hamas’s long-range missile capabilities), asserting a weakening of Hamas’s power, while crediting Hamas with the element of surprise in Operation Protective Edge (Glick 2014, Kindle Location 77, 144, 169, 743-753, 1118, 1121, 3930-4100, 493; Kurz and Brom 2014, 16; Segell 2014, 26-34, 52-55, 72-75). Hamas initiated rocket strikes on Israel, which is presented as evidence of Hamas’s flexibility and resourcefulness, and used as proof of
Israel lacking the same in OPE (Kurz and Brom 2014, 114-115). Table 1 on page 9 graphically depicts 14 scholarly sources found in the review to be the most applicable to targeted killings through surgical preemptive strikes used as purported in the hypothesis. The review demonstrates that of the 15 sources, 7 of them support the use of targeted killings to achieve efficacy, while 3 of them do not. Four of the reviewed resources neither support nor oppose targeted killings as efficacious.

The “indirect” nature of Israel’s strikes are alleged in sources due to the prolonged strikes conducted without the precision of previous Israeli strikes in other operations. The indirect weapons used, such as artillery, are used as evidence of the intentional targeting of Palestinian civilians and infrastructure by the Israelis (Al Haq 2014; Adas 2014; Cook 2014; Hanley 2014; Jaber 2014; Marshall 2014; The Middle East Journal 2014; Omer 2014; Pasquin 2014; Sprusansky 2014; Twain 2014). Sprusansky (2014) asserts that Hamas was losing support prior to Operation Protective Edge, but that Hamas had more support from the Palestinian people than the Palestinian Authority did at the conclusion of OPE. Hamas’s rise in support during Operation Protective Edge is attributed to the perceived success of Hamas against the IDF. The difference between Israeli versus Palestinian casualties and injuries is noted. Sources record 66-74 on the Israeli side died while over 2,000 on the Palestinian side died (Kurz and Brom 2014; Segell 2014, 34) Segell (2014) and Stahl (2010) state that Operation Protective Edge was counterproductive due to poor operational execution. Sources assert that Hamas was weak prior to OPE and may have initiated rocket attacks to create political instability in Gaza and wrest political control from the Palestinian Authority, just as it had done in the West Bank. (Kurz and Brom 2014; Marshall 2014 8-1013-21; Segell 2014).
Resources show rising costs and political pressures during *Operation Protective Edge* with costs per Israeli soldier doubling during the ground invasion on 17 July, 2014. Tourism is shown to be reduced by nearly one-third. Conservative estimates of the costs of OPE exceed 1.3 billion US dollars from July 8 through August 26, 2014, and the shekel (ILS) contracted for the first time in five years in the third quarter of 2014. A comparison of the financial impact, in

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<td>Chronological account of the events leading up to OPE giving specific mention. Difference between TE and political assassinations, TE is to eliminate terrorist activities against Israelis who typically target civilians. Political assassinations are to punish enemies, TE is openly condemned by the government. TE remains morally wrong, but it is easier in some instances. It is harder to judge when it is not proportionate.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Gutman, Amos and Joseph M. Hafid</td>
<td>Targeted Killing as Active Self-Defense. Political and Legal factors of targeted killings of Palestinians by Israelis. It can be used if there are not other means available to combat terrorism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Hunter, Thomas</td>
<td>Targeted Killing: Self-Defense, Preemption, and the War on Terrorism. Attempt to distinguish between TE and assassination. Assassination as a political act dates back to March of 149 BC with the death of Julius Caesar. Assassination has been looked down on in the 20th Century.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Kurz, Anat and Schimo Brom</td>
<td>The Lessons of Operation Protective Edge. Detailed and scholarly description of events leading up to Operation Protective Edge, the impact, and lessons to learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Malka, Amos</td>
<td>Israel and asymmetrical deterrence. Points out that military might does not mandate success in termination of terror. US before and after 9/11 failed to neutralize terrorism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Shabi, Adam</td>
<td>The Evolution of Israeli Targeted Operations: Consequences of the Thabet Thabet Operation. The evolution of TE, new TE, and targeting the terrorists while still in society is good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Statman, Daniel</td>
<td>The Morality of Assassination: A Response to Gross. Shows measures of importance for targets of TE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Statman, Daniel</td>
<td>Targeted Killing: Theoretical Inquiries in Law. Both the war model and the non-war model support targeted killing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1.** 15 Scholarly sources divided by 1. those that favor preemptive strikes, 2. those that oppose preemptive strikes, 3. neutral towards preemptive strikes respect to the change in the shekel against the international market, is not discussed. Sources report the credit default swap spread increased slightly in 2014, showing a lack of confidence in
Israel’s economy. The literature estimates total expenses due to OPE range between 7-9 billion ILS impacting travel and tourism (Kurz and Brom 2014, 145-47; Segell 2014, 108-118).

Sources show a heavy political toll on Israel due to OPE. The stated end-state in Operation Protective Edge was to create more stability for all people in the southern parts of Israel. Palestinian sources claim OPE was a response to Operation Brother’s Keeper in the West Bank and the death of three Israeli boys believed to be kidnapped by Palestinian terrorists outside of Hebron, Israel on June 12, 2014. The Palestinians claimed that excessive force was exercised by the IDF to restore order in the West Bank (Kurz and Brom 2014, 44-46).

Sources that Oppose the Hypothesis

The literature indicates that Hamas’s senior leadership literally went underground during Operation Protective Edge and that Hamas has no military bases or significant strategic weapon systems to target. The literature shows opposing viewpoints as to the ability of the IDF to conduct precision strikes against Hamas leadership underground at locations determined and dependent on accurate and actionable intelligence. There is also reference to how Hamas adapted their strategies since Operations Cast Lead and Pillar of Defense, while the Israeli Defense Forces seem to have been more complacent with a sense of hubris (Kurz and Brom 2014, 68-69; Segell 2014, 55).

All resources recognize Israel as the greatest military power in the Middle East, but they differ in their definition of “success.” Both Israel and Hamas claimed victory following the cease-fire, Israel because of military dominance, and Hamas for “fighting off” the most powerful

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11 For information on Operation Brother’s Keeper, go to: http://unitedwithisrael.org/operation-brothers-keeper-exposes-hundreds-of-palestinian-weapons/, and read ITIC 11-17 June 2014.

Middle East military force and making them leave Gaza (Kurz and Brom 2014, 13-20; Segell 2014, 5, 19-22).

Sources that neither Support nor Oppose the Hypothesis, or offer an Alternative View

Kurz and Brom and Segell indicate that Hamas’s reaction to an escalation of force would have been effectively dealt with by the Israelis and with granting some of the concessions that Hamas wanted from Israel. They believe that freedom of movement and measures towards a “two-state” solution would have brought a cessation to hostilities. Previous research purports that Hamas could have been dealt with more diplomatically, even after Hamas’s rocket attacks had commenced (Kurz and Brom 2014; Segell 2014).

Israel’s strength is used as an indicator of its ability to have exercised greater restraint in Operation Protective Edge. Sources indicate a hardened force protection posture in Israel through defensive systems such as the “Iron Dome”13. The literature asserts that Israel’s policy of targeted killings and neutralization of the threat is tantamount to the survival of Israel as a State (Kurz and Brom 2014, 13-15, 45; Segell 2014, 40-41) Carolyn Glick (2014), Kurz and Brom (2014), and Segell (2014).

Operation Protective Edge

The media’s influence is noted in scholarly studies within the review, to include statistical data calculating the influence of the media on political parties and the general populace. This same analysis of the news media on Operation Protective Edge has not been conducted (Bruns and Himmler 2011, 470-92; Green-Pedersen and Stubager 2010, 663-77; Shanahan et al 2011, 376-95; Thompson 2011, 167-90) Sources show through previous studies

that every major Israeli operation from 2000 through 2014 received increasingly negative media coverage as it progressed. (Kurz and Brom 2014; 10, 37, 67-71; Segell 2014, 20-23, 26).

**Political Relations between Israel and the United States**

The close ties between the United States and Israel are purported in literature showing both the United States’ support and criticism of Israel during Operation Protective Edge. The literature shows that the United States was supportive of Israel during Operation Protective Edge until the ground offensive began (Kurz and Brom 2014; 95-100; Segell 2014, 101-108). Both US President Obama and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu are quoted in the literature supporting the “two-state” solution for Israel/Palestine relations, asserting advantages of Palestinian independence from Israel. Glick (2014) supports a “one-state” solution where the Palestinians are assimilated into Israel with the same rights as all other Israeli citizens (Glick 2014, Kindle Location 121, 296, 516, 633-634, 649, 1589, 3550, 3737). Carolyn Glick in her book *The One-State Solution* purports that the one-state solution would afford the Palestinians the same rights as Israeli citizens under Israeli law, including the ability to hold public office, and that the majority of the Palestinians do not want to separate from Israel, but would prefer a one-state solution (Glick 2014). Hanley (2014) has an opposing view and supports the “two-state” solution and asserts that Palestinians in Israel face over 50 discriminatory laws and compares the current policies with ethnic cleansing and apartheid and claiming previous atrocities performed by IDF soldiers in Gaza on women and children.

Some sources such as Glick (2014) and Zanotti (2014) profess that Israeli and US political relations are becoming increasingly strained, additionally, Glick (2014) claims that US Presidents after Ronald Reagan have had varying degrees of affinity for Israel, but in practice
their policies have been almost identical (Glick 2014, Kindle Location 182, 300, 341, 404, 443, 483; Zanotti 2014).

**Literature Review Conclusions**

The literature indicates that *Operation Protective Edge* was costly and politically damaging for Israel, with negative media coverage increasing while global support decreased as the operation persisted. There is literature showing quicker and more definitive neutralization of the threat in other Israeli operations against militants in Gaza, especially in *Operation Pillar of Defense*, and the literature purports that preemptive strikes would have worked in this case also but does not assess the benefit in quantifiable terms. The literature shows costs to Israel, including the shrinking Shekel, which lost value on the US dollar ($) but gained on the euro (€). The rise and fall of the Shekel against other currencies is tantamount to an understanding of the financial problems of Israel. The existing literature provides a thorough, quantified representation of the costs of *Operation Protective Edge* outside of the fourth quarter financial reports which have not been published14 but does not analyze the strength of the shekel compared against other currencies and then assess the impact of *Operation Protective Edge* on that strength, nor does it counterfactually assess the probable strength of the shekel in the light of a quicker and more definitive neutralization of Hamas. The impact of the media which had been researched in previous studies has not been analyzed for *Operation Protective Edge*. The consequence of *Operation Protective Edge* on Israel’s relationship with the United States has not been assessed as it affects the financial strength and global standing of Israel.

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14 As part of the literature review and extensive search was conducted online. The AMU librarians were also asked for help in finding those reports and they were not able to locate the fourth quarter financial reports. These will most likely be released in the near future.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The thesis research uses the mixed methods approach for a concurrent embedded strategy to devise an explanatory quantitative case study derived from qualitative secondary sources. The research question is, how could Israel have efficaciously used targeted killings during Operation Protective Edge to its military, economic, and political advantage? Efficacious is defined as “having the power to produce a desired effect” (Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary, 2015).

The desired effect may be either an increase or decrease in the unit of analysis defined as “the persons, things, or events under study—the entities that we want to say something about.” (Chelimsky 1992, 18) Increased threat neutralization is efficacious, but so is a decrease in casualties, costs, and negative media repercussions. Creswell (2009) defines mixed methods research as combining qualitative or quantitative research to answer the research problem (3-4, 230). Concurrent embedded strategy has a primary approach guiding the research strategy with the second approach embedded within it. This is similar to concurrent triangulation strategy, as qualitative and quantitative data are simultaneously collected, but different because the main approach guides the secondary one (Creswell 2009, 213-15). The primary approach is quantitative discriminant analysis, which statistically calculates the qualitative data.

Illustration 1. Embedded Correlation Model
The quantitative data is used to answer the research question in a correlational design, showing relationships between the independent and dependent variables and measuring the effects between them (Creswell 2006, 68). The qualitative data consists of the influence of the news media on the populace and the government used to measure the news’ effects, subjective reports presented by government organizations such as the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), and pattern analysis of previous operations conducted by the Israelis to establish valid assumptions, such as the capabilities of the Israeli Special Operations Forces.

**Case Study is appropriate**

Case study research uses multiple sources to facilitate the understanding of a phenomena specific to a time and place (Flyvbjerg 2006, 219-245; Ragin & Becker 1992, 2; Yin, 2009). The research focuses on the 50 days of the execution of Operation Protective Edge beginning 8 July 2014 and culminating 26 August 2014. Prior events pertaining to OPE, and residual effects of Operation Protective Edge, are relevant for comprehensive, accurate analysis.

**Explanatory Research is appropriate**

There are different ways to conduct research for case studies depending on what the research problem is. Explanatory case study research answers the “how” and “why” questions as opposed to “what” questions. (Creswell 2009, 13; Yin 2013, 10-11). Explanatory research analyzes how things could have happened differently, defining the catalyst(s) that would change them (Yin 2013, 4). Many social scientists believe explanatory research can only be pursued through surveys, but some famous case studies have been explanatory (Yin 2013, 7). There are no firsthand interviews or observations conducted like a history, but, unlike a history, there are

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15 For information on types of research, look at Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (2013).
second-hand interviews and observations from other researchers. It is not possible to manipulate anything about *Operation Protective Edge*, so an experiment is not appropriate (Yin 2013, 12).

**Three Effects are Assessed: military, economic, and media reporting**

The hypothesis is that *surgical preemptive strikes during Operation Protective Edge would have provided more definitive threat neutralization, while reducing costs and negative media repercussions to Israel.* There are three effects assessed to test the hypothesis which counterfactually determines efficacy of surgical preemptive strikes during OPE: 1. military, 2. costs, and 3. media reporting. In *Operation Protective Edge*, the initial military objective of Israel was to restore stability in the southern portion of Israel for all people. This was to be accomplished first by reducing the ability of Hamas to conduct rocket attacks, and then by the destruction of the tunnels used by Hamas to insert combatants and execute logistical operations between Israel and the Gaza Strip. These tunnels went as far as 2 kilometers from the border of Israel into Gaza (Kurz and Brom 2014, 26, 207-209; Segell 2014, 44-49). Economic effects to Israel cannot exceed the fiscal capabilities of Israel without negating any military success by the creation of a failed state. A failed state is defined as, “*a state whose political or economic system has become so weak that the government is no longer in control*” (Oxford Dictionary 2015). The third effect, media repercussions, can influence Israel’s military, economic, and political acumen by persuasion of Israel’s allies, chiefly the United States. The reduction of negative media repercussions requires a perceived justification of the operation or less reporting, both of which are impossible to control, but feasibly influenced by a thoughtful information operations.

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16 *Joint Publication 3-13 Information Operations* “IO coordinates and synchronizes the employment of the five core capabilities in support of the combatant commander’s objectives or to prevent the adversary from achieving his desired objectives.” (2006, II-1) “Information Operations” grew out of “information warfare” and “command and control warfare” (C2W) in the 1990s. The term was new, but the 5 core capabilities (electronic warfare, computer network
campaign. If Israel is globally ostracized it will suffer in the long-term\textsuperscript{17}. Additionally, the length of the operation is directly tied to the amount of news coverage available to the media, making a reduction in the length of the operation desirable. A state considered to be persecuted may obtain international support as the Palestinians did through public perception. The media plays a large part in shaping international perceptions\textsuperscript{18}. However, the research analyzes media reporting, not the degree of this reporting. Therefore it is difficult to ascertain the precise response by the end-users, the viewers.

operations, PSYOPS, military deception, operations security) have long histories. 5 February 2013, JP 3-12 (R) “Cyberspace Operations,” was created to allow CNO to stand on its own.

\textsuperscript{17}This is sometimes termed a “Pyrrhic victory”. The \textit{Urban Dictionary} defines a Pyrrhic victory as, “a victory which is only achieved with heavy losses on one's own side. This alludes to the Battle of Ausculum (Ascoli Satriano, in Apulia). in 279 BCE, when the Epirote King Pyrrhus, aiding the Tarentines, defeated the Romans but with severe casualties of his own. After the battle, Pyrrhus is recorded to have commented: "If we win another such battle against the Romans, we will be completely lost" (Plutarch, Pyrrhus 21,14). The best example of a pyrrhic victory is in the anglo-zulu war, in which Ntshingwayo Khoza set 22,000 zulu warriors, about 55\% of the male population of zululands to attack 1,400 British soldiers in a surprise attack at the Battle of Isandlwana” (2013).

\textsuperscript{18}Lieutenant General Metz has coined the term, “IO Threshold,” He defines it as, “the boundary below, which the media is not interested and above which they are” (Lowery 2010, xiii; Matthews 2006, 2, 9; Lowery 2010, xviii).
Assessing Efficacy

Efficacy of the three assessed effects is determined by using independent variables, the “cause,” and dependent variables, “effect” (Field 2009, 7). The independent variables 1. days in Operation Protective Edge, 2. kinetic operations during OPE are relevant to all of the dependent variables 1. military- casualties, military costs, 2. economic- currency movement, 3. media repercussions- media portrayal of Operation Protective Edge.

Levels of Measurement for Military, Economic, and Media Effects

Effects are divided into 1. nominal variables, having no “weighting,” named simply to separate them like numbers or names on a uniform, 2. ordinal variables, distinguished by

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19 Andy Field defines independent variable in his book Discovering Statistics Using SPSS as “another name for a predictor variable…is usually associated with experimental methodology…and is so called because it is the variable that is manipulated by the experimenter and so its value does not depend on any other variables” (2009, 787-788).

20 Ibid defines dependent variable as “another name for outcome variable. This name is usually associated with experimental methodology…and is so called because it is the variable that is not manipulated by the experimenter and so its values depends on the variables that have been manipulated” (2009, 784).

21 Andy Field defines a nominal variable in “Discovering Statistics Using SPCC” as “where numbers merely represent names. For example, the numbers on sports player’s shirts…have no meaning other than denoting the type of player.” (2009, 790) UCLA defines nominal variables, “has two or more categories, but…no intrinsic ordering to the categories…gender is a categorical
chronology, and 3. interval variables, for a unit like currency, measurable on a fixed scale (Field 2009, 8-9). Military effects are assessed by munitions used and subsequent consequences, assessed counterfactually against variations in the selection, timeliness, and proportionality of finding, fixing, and finishing targets. Munitions are nominal, while strike effects are ordinal. Movement of the New Israeli Shekel (ILS) is an interval variable, and an indicator of Israel’s economic strength as it assesses economic effects. A graph depicts the rise and fall of the ILS throughout OPE, displaying market value against the US dollar and euro. Data which has been compiled in other studies is used when available, but all data is verified by the researcher when possible. Existing graphs depict the rise and fall of the shekel, US dollar, and Euro, but do not specifically examine *Operation Protective Edge* with the level of detail necessary for research in this thesis. This necessitates the creation of graphs in Microsoft Excel databases from data published by the Foreign Exchange (FOREX). Sources such as the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, which keeps meticulous statistical data on information releasable to the general public, is used to assess change and determine causality. Media repercussions are calculated

variable having 2 categories (male and female) and there is no intrinsic ordering…” (2015) http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/mult_pkg/whatstat/nominal_ordinal_interval.htm.

22 Ibid ordinal variable “data that tell us not only that things have occurred, but also the order in which they occurred.” (2009, 791) UCLA defines ordinal variables, “there is a clear ordering of the variables…suppose you have a variable, economic status, with three categories (low, medium and high). In addition to being able to classify people into these three categories, you can order the categories as low, medium and high” (2015) http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/mult_pkg/whatstat/nominal_ordinal_interval.htm.

23 Ibid interval variables “data measured on a scale along the whole of which intervals are equal.” (2009, 788) ‘UCLA defines interval variables, “An interval variable is similar to an ordinal variable, except that the intervals between the values of the interval variable are equally spaced. For example, suppose you have a variable such as annual income that is measured in dollars, and we have three people who make $10,000, $15,000 and $20,000.” (2015) http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/mult_pkg/whatstat/nominal_ordinal_interval.htm.

24 The US dollar and EURO are the primary currencies the NIS is compared to in the literature.
quantitatively by assessing their influence on the populace. A sampling of the international online newspapers also available in print and written in English is taken on the media’s perception of *Operation Protective Edge*. Media reporting sources are nominal while quantified media reporting (like “pro” or “anti”) is ordinal.

To calculate the statistical data, Excel spreadsheets are used in the research. The Excel data is made into a table and placed into the thesis. Multiple sources are used for data, with the most current information available to the research being preferred. The research uses lower bounds of ranged estimates when it supports the hypothesis and upper bounds of ranged estimates when the estimates refute the hypothesis. Using the least supportive estimates of the hypothesis creates a conservative analysis, reducing exaggeration in the research and in the efficacy of the use of surgical preemptive strikes during *Operation Protective Edge*.

**Data collection sources**

**Searches**


\(^{25}\) Open-source geopolitical analysis based out of Austin Texas. The CEO is George Friedrich, for CIA analyst and author of several geopolitical books. For more on STRATFOR go to this website: http://www.stratfor.com.

\(^{26}\) INSS in Tel Aviv is similar to STRATFOR, well-researched & unclassified. Yehuda Ben Meir, a senior INSS research fellow has been helpful in research. For more, go to http://www.inss.org.il/index.aspx?id=4302.

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searches include multi-search engines, cluster-analysis engines, and specialty deep web engines.\textsuperscript{28}

**Organization and Safeguarding of Research**

Sources separated by effect are kept digitally and on hard copy. Digital media is kept in a folder marked “\textit{Capstone Sources}.” Hard copies are in separate boxes with hanging folders and marked by highlighters, tabs, and notes written on the sources. Research is backed-up by thumb drive. Notebooks with thorough notes of progress are kept next to the researcher's computer.

**Limitations and Gaps in the Research**

Analysis depends on second-hand data with a margin of error dependent on accurate reporting. Media reports do not necessarily reflect popular sentiment. The quantity of statistics and limitations of single case studies prohibits the originally proposed research method of Analysis of Variance\textsuperscript{29} (ANOVA) or Multiple Analysis of Variance\textsuperscript{30} (MANOVA), as results would not weather a statistician’s scrutiny of reliability (Field 2009, 349-355, 584-605). A

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\textsuperscript{27} \textit{The Long War Journal} is open source information and is a good reference with daily articles.

\textsuperscript{28} Access to “opensource.gov” was obtained specifically for access to \textit{Jane’s Defense Weekly Online}, which the researcher finally obtained through his employment by Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM). \textit{Jane’s Defense Weekly Online} is an excellent source for unclassified analysis, giving quantified data that is up to date. Most of the information used from \textit{Jane’s Defense Weekly Online} is from 18 March 2015 through 30 March 2015, during the actual research period.

\textsuperscript{29} Andy Field in \textit{Discovering Statistics Using SPSS} defines ANOVA “a statistical procedure that uses the F-ratio to test the overall fit of a linear model.” (2009, 781) \textit{Merriam Webster’s Dictionary} defines ANOVA “analysis of variation in an experimental outcome and especially of a statistical variance in order to determine the contributions of given factors or variables to the variance.” (2015) If done correctly it tells a researcher “whether any combination of groups differs on the continuous variable from any other combination of groups” (Carlberg 2013, 126).

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid defines MANOVA as a “family of tests that extend the basic analysis of variance to situations in which more than one outcome variable has been measured” (2013, 790).
methodical search for research on kinetic strikes using MANOVA or any algorithm to apply to this research was unproductive, necessitating the current course of action. A multiple case study is better suited for MANOVA or Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The researcher was able to gain access to the complete unclassified *Jane’s Defense Weekly* database through his affiliation with Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM) and Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), but there may be other closed networks undiscovered in research.

**Summary**

The research answers, *how could Israel have efficaciously used targeted killings during Operation Protective Edge to their military, economic, and political advantage*? Assessed effects answer the hypothesis: *Surgical preemptive strikes during Operation Protective Edge would have provided a more definitive threat neutralization, while reducing costs and negative media repercussions to Israel.*

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31 A statistician suggested that MANOVA on EXCEL or SPSS software could be used if a study existed, and data from research could be analyzed and compared to research already available.
CHAPTER FOUR
FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

Introduction

The three effects that comprise the hypothesis, military, economic, and media repercussions, are analyzed both as an individual effect on *Operation Protective Edge*, and collectively. This analysis uses lower bounds of ranged estimates with tables displaying quantified data, to avoid an overestimation of the efficacy of surgical preemptive strikes as opposed to the actual 50-day conventional operation. Effects which are impossible to tangibly quantify exactly due to subjective interpretation or inseparability from other effects are noted as such, and considered when mentioned by a reputable source, but are not a part of the calculations of tables.

In order to establish validity and fidelity in research, a standard, or unit of measure must be established as a base. This is the starting point, a type of a control, from which a deviation is measured to determine correlations of variables to either support or refute the hypothesis. The
efficacy of using surgical preemptive strikes is best posited if there is something from which to measure it against. It is difficult and sometimes impossible to pinpoint the exact catalyst for change. It is tantamount to seek causality through indicators while attempting to distinguish the three effects assessed, military, economic, and media from other variables causing change. Operation Protective Edge has culminated and its study must be through counterfactual means.

Military Effects

It is appropriate to study the military effects of Operation Protective Edge prior to economic or media effects as the other effects of this thesis depend on the military execution of the operational phase of OPE. The military actions of Operation Protective Edge directly shape the economic and media effects through the military’s use of resources, and owing to the length of the operation itself. A prolonged operation drains resources. The duration of kinetic operations is a critical component since costs and media coverage increase with time. The ground campaign was initiated in Gaza to destroy Hamas’s tunnel network. Surgical preemptive strikes would create a more definitive threat neutralization if conducted correctly in coordination with the collective Israeli intelligence network and the appropriate Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) to conduct the mission. The finding, fixing, and finishing (capturing or killing) of senior Hamas leadership would decrease the threat to the Israeli Defense Forces’ ground troops and increase the IDF’s force protection during movement. The reduction of rocket attacks and resistance from Hamas would facilitate a quicker and less constrained movement permitting the IDF engineers and other maneuver forces to give a more concentrated effort on the destruction of Hamas’s tunnel network and further threat neutralization. An increased threat leads to greater kinetic operations directed against the IDF by the threat and more time and resources to defeat the threat and safeguard Israeli Defense Forces troops from enemy combatants.
In order to examine the military effects of *Operation Protective Edge*, and the impact that surgical preemptive strikes would have on those military effects, it is first necessary to establish an understanding of the Israeli Defense Forces. This thesis is on the efficacy of surgical preemptive strikes, not the military capabilities of the Israelis. However, the thesis first establishes that surgical preemptive strikes were an achievable course of action for the Israelis, given their intelligence collection capabilities, and military resources, in terms of lethality, and accuracy. A premise which is not feasible does not support research whose central theme is a counterfactual approach to an historical event.

So, assessing the known capabilities of the Israeli Defense Forces and historical events as an indication of capabilities, were surgical preemptive strikes an option for the Israelis? To execute these surgical preemptive strikes Israel needs the capabilities and discretion to execute these operations against Hamas with precision and thereby attempt to divorce themselves from a perception of thoughtless or genocidal attacks on Palestinian civilians. There is controversy over the discretion and restraint that the IDF exercised in *Operation Protective Edge*. The technological capabilities the Israelis used as evidence that they could have exercised greater discretion, especially with the Iron Dome and other such defensive systems at their disposal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Israeli Defense Forces Size Estimates (Created from Jane’s, Business Insider, and Global Firepower (2015))</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Defense Budget (in Billions USD)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jane's</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Frontline Personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve Personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armored Fighting Vehicles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple-Launch Rocket Systems</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The combined command and control systems of the Israeli army, navy, and air force were merged into one network in 2014. Prior to the merging of the command and control systems, if
the army needed assistance from the navy or air force, it was necessary to channel the request through each respective branch of the military. The centralized command and control during *Operation Protective Edge* proved beneficial to the Israelis by decreasing discord between the branches of the Israeli military and their corresponding response time (*Israel: Armed Forces Jane’s 2015; Israel: Army Jane’s 2015; Israel: Executive Summary Jane’s 2015)*.

Israel is assessed as having the most powerful military capabilities in the Middle East due to its military assets and technology, and it has been in more conflicts than any other democratic state in the post-1945 era (Bar-Joseph 2013, 354-35; *Business Insider* 2015; *Global Firepower* 2015; *Israel: Defense Budget 2015; Israel: Executive Summary 2015*). The table above shows reporting from three different sources. The *Business Insider* and *Jane’s Defense Weekly* both show the active personnel as 176,500 but *Jane’s Defense Weekly* divides this number into 133,000 army, 34,000 air force, and 9,500 navy. *Operation Protective Edge* was a conventional ground war that began with airstrikes in the Gaza Strip. The airstrikes were the result of increased kinetic activity between Israel and Hamas in both Gaza and the West Bank. The targeting of individuals for precision strikes is a specialized task.

Hamas can be described as a hybrid of political and terrorist organization (*Hamas: Jane’s World Insurgency* 2013). They have previously obtained political control of Gaza through legal channels, albeit they are accused as having used perfidious methods to obtain this control32. The challenging part is that Israel was not fighting the Palestinian Authority (PA) or Palestine itself, but an organization which has taken violent control of the situation and exploited the populous and the media. There were not Hamas aircraft carriers or battleships to

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32 After OPE, Hamas agreed in September 2014 to allow the Palestinian Authority to resume control of Gaza.
destroy, and Hamas does not typically wear uniforms, allowing them to blend into the general population very easily and making the calculation of combatants versus civilians a subjective discovery. These types of operations are best conducted through targeting by intelligence organizations followed by precision strikes of those targets through munitions, ground and air forces, and special operations forces.

The size of the Israeli Defense Forces is not officially released by their government. There are however, various sources who analyze global geopolitical and economic aspects, who publish unclassified data for public use. This information has been collected for some time, but enlistments and attrition occur constantly, so the most current data should be used. The CIA World Factbook states that the military aged manpower (16-49) in 2010 was 1,797,960 for males and 1,713,230 for females. Jane’s Defense Weekly gives the most unclassified data on militaries of the world, and they assess the size of the active duty Israeli Defense Force manning to be between 160,000 to 176,500 members, with another 630,000 in reserve forces capacity (Israel: Armed Forces Jane’s 2015; Israel: Army Jane’s 2015). The Israeli Special Forces fall under the Intelligence Branch, “Aman,” although they are interspersed within the conventional forces (Israel Special Forces (Land) 2014).

This is compared to active Hamas membership figures range from 8,000 to 20,000, not including people who support them monetarily or other terrorist organizations who assist them in their operations. Hamas does not have an organized military (or government) like the IDF with official statistics, such as Israel’s Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) which gives annual, monthly, and weekly updates to statistical data compiled about Israel.

Israel had the capability during Operation Protective Edge to defend against the vast majority of rockets fired by Hamas and PIJ. The Iron Dome shot down between 470-735
projectiles according to estimates (Binnie 2014; Kurz and Brom 38-40, 2014; Segell 2014, 44-70). The United States provided more aid to Israel than to any other country. According to the Congressional Research Service, the United States has continued to give more foreign aid to Israel than it has given to any other country and Israel received more aid from the United States than it does from any other country since World War II. Israel received 23-25% of its overall annual defense budget (Israel Defense Budget Jane’s 2015; Sharp, 2014, 5)

The Israelis are respected for their conventional and unconventional military capabilities and are recognized as the most effective fighting force in the Middle East (Israel: Air Force Jane’s 2015; Israel: Armed Forces Jane’s 2015; Israel: Army Jane’s 2015; Israel: Navy Jane’s 2015; Kurz and Brom 2014; Segell 2014; Zanotti 2014; Zanotti 2015). The size of the Israeli special operations forces is even more closely guarded than Israel’s conventional forces.

Israel has the collection capabilities of tracking individuals through technology, including satellites delivering state-of-the-art imagery, measures and signals intelligence, signals intelligence to intercept transmission, cyber intelligence and human intelligence. The Israelis have Special Operations Forces like most militaries, and there is some debate over what qualifies a unit as a “Special Force.” In addition to a reconnaissance mission to find and fix the targets, the special operations forces may also be tasked with capturing or killing the targets, known as “finishing” them. There are specialized units within the IDF capable of performing these missions with the assistance of actionable intelligence collected by Israeli intelligence platforms.

There are six special operations forces that would be the best suited for the surgical preemptive strikes and then destruction of Hamas tunnel network preceding the conventional ground troop insertion according to the information analyzed from Jane’s Defense Weekly.
These units are 1. General Headquarters Reconnaissance Unit, known as “Sayeret Matkal,” which is the major counterterrorism and intelligence gathering unit, 2. The Sayeret Golani (Special Reconnaissance Battalion) 3. Sayeret Shaldog, Unit 5101, known as the “Special Air Ground Designating Team,” which falls under the Israeli Air Force and is used to acquire targets, for destruction by air strikes, 4. Unit 869 for deep reconnaissance and intelligence gathering, 5. Combat Engineering Special Forces, 6. Sayeret Maglan, Unit 212, long-range missiles warfare unit (Israel: Special Forces (Land) 2014; Leslau 2010, 515). Although their special forces have had much success in the conduct of small operations, they have had some difficulties with the larger ones, as they are not trained to conduct operations on a large scale, necessitating conventional forces for sustained conflicts (Israel: Special Forces (Land) 2014; Leslau 2010, 512-514).

The two most previous military operations conducted by the Israelis against Gaza, Cast Lead and Pillar of Defense, lasted 25 days and 8 days respectively from the beginning of kinetic operations through culmination and removal of the last IDF Soldier removed from Gaza. The preemptive strikes and accompanying ground war could be executed in 21 days or less according to historical precedents set by previous Israeli conflicts in Gaza. In order to have conservative analysis and simplicity of calculations, an assessment will be made on the basis of a 25 day operation dividing the time exactly in half as
pro-rating become increasingly inaccurate with greater partition of time. *Operation Protective Edge* will simply be cut in half. The ground operation for OPE took 16 days, and it will be assumed that after the preemptive strikes, 40,000 ground troops would use 16 days to tactically execute an offensive ground campaign into Gaza to destroy Hamas’s tunnels, remaining within 2 kilometers of the border again. Twenty-five days is a very conservative number, allowing 9 days for the surgical preemptive strikes conducted through intelligence networks to definitively find fix and finish Hamas leadership and combatants. This assumption can be made based on the rapidity with which Israel forced Hamas into peace negotiations after the targeted killings of three high ranking members of the council of Hamas’s military wing, the Qassam Brigades, were killed 1. Mohammed Abu Shamaleh, 2. Mohammed Barboum and 3. Raed al-Attar and unrestrained rocket attacks on August 21, 2014. The deaths of these three teenagers were discussed on news networks such as *Aljazeera* and the *Cable News Network* (CNN), with their pictures televised.

*Operation Cast Lead* was marked by disproportionate IDF rocket attacks for 22 days in response to the rocket attacks and other hostilities of Hamas, resulting in a lot of global criticism. *Operation Pillar of Defense*, executed in 2012, which lasted only 8 days, began with the targeted killing through aerial assassination of Hamas Chief of Staff Ahmed Jabari and other senior commanders and the additional bombing of 1,500 targets including the bombing of tunnels, underground rocket launchers, and the majority of the long-range and medium-range rockets of Hamas and PIJ. *Operation Pillar of Defense* left Hamas with only short-range rockets to launch at the southern cities (Kurz and Brom 2014, 16-18; Kurz and Brom 2015, 29-30; Segell 2014, 26-28). This preemptive strike essentially took away Hamas and PIJ’s ability to
execute successful rocket attacks against Israel except in the southern cities, and left them without a command and control element\textsuperscript{33}.

Preemptive strikes permit greater discretion of targeting adding not only the element of surprise, but by forcing the threat into a defensive posture that requires them to protect their personnel and equipment inhibiting their ability to perform offensive operations. The superior intelligence collection and weapons systems of the IDF permitted them to track targets and eliminate them quickly given they initiate the attack and in doing so control the operational execution to capture or kill Hamas’s leadership. The last 23 days of Operation Protective Edge, from 04 August 2014 through 26 August 2014, would not be a necessary element of the operation if it were conducted with surgical preemptive strikes as the same strikes that forced Hamas into a cease fire on 26 August 2014 will be executed prior to the ground invasion. Target selection will be identified by Signals and Imagery Intelligence and verified by Human Intelligence. Special Operations Forces will capture or kill Hamas targets which cannot be neutralized through precision airstrikes.

**Economic Effects**

A consideration of available sources suggests that *Operation Protective Edge* was the cause of the economic slowdown. OPE is considered to have cost Israel 1.3 billion US Dollars. While this may be true, and will certainly be considered, it cannot be definitively proven. Research can, though, tangibly quantify with hard numbers from open-source data, direct costs from expenditures and wages lost. The study of the economic effects of *Operation Protective Edge* requires an economic baseline to test the hypothesis that this operation had a measurable

\textsuperscript{33} Iron Dome intercepted 84% of the rockets fired by Hamas during *Operation Cast Lead*. See *Jane’s Defense Weekly Israel Army Summary* 30 March 2015.
impact on Israel’s economy. Follow-on analysis considers comparative costs using surgical preemptive strikes.

The most ubiquitous measure of the economic strength of Israel’s economy is its currency when the currency is measured against other currencies, termed “bundling.” The bundling of currency is measured against two other currencies in this study, the United States dollar and the euro. The United States Dollar is the closest thing to a global currency in existence. The United States and Israel have strong trade agreements, making the US dollar the best choice of currency against which to measure the shekel. The second currency selected for analysis against the shekel (ILS) is the European Union’s (EU) EURO, currently the second most-traded currency in the world and another strong trade partner with Israel (Eichengreen and Flandreau 2009, 378-380). Once a baseline is established for what happened, the economic effects of Operation Protective Edge are isolated with available unclassified data. The quantitative assessments of the research always use the numbers reflecting the lowest efficacy of the hypothesis on the economy, or a range, to reduce the likelihood of exaggeration of the benefits of surgical preemptive strikes. It is impossible for any statistical analysis to determine a purely causative relationship. It can be said with absolute certainty that Israel’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate rose at this time, while the value of the Shekel dropped as the operation endured. However, Israel’s Central Bureau of Statistics changed the way that they calculated the GDP to account for Operation Protective Edge. The budget deficit for 2014 registered a deficit of 29.9 billion ILS, 2.8% of the GDP estimated at 1,087.9 billion ILS. The original deficit was 3.0% (31.1 billion ILS) of the GDP, with a predicted GDP of 1,037.8 billion ILS. This deviation of 0.2% of the GDP is due to 1. lower expenditures than predicted by the original budget (deficit decline of 0.2% of GDP, 2. lower revenues than predicted (deficit
increase of 0.1% of GDP). 3. GDP adjustments due to a new measurement system by the CBS resulting from Operation Protective Edge.

Although the GDP rose, it rose at a slower rate than it has in five years. Fixed assets were estimated to be 10% in 2014, but were only 6.5%. The value of the Shekel rose quickly when OPE came to an end and doing the same thing with the EURO with greater fluctuation in the last two days, showing a correlation between Operation Protective Edge, the shekel, the GDP, and Israel’s economy overall (Central Bureau of Statistics 2015).

The graphs on the following two pages depict the strengths of the US dollar when it is measured against the shekel and the euro (Illustration 5) and the shekel relative to the US dollar and the euro (Illustration 6) during the same months and days that Operation Protective Edge occurred during the same months and years in 2010 through 2014. When the data is compared to historical trends, the research indicates that the shekel had an unsteady drop during OPE and then rose during the culmination of the operation. This data and the accompanying charts establish a baseline, but do not explain the strengthening or weakening of the Shekel in relation to the US Dollar and the EURO. Israel has been in many conflicts and is continuously preparing for conventional and unconventional conflicts making their economy unpredictable. It is requisite to look at other indicators for a better indication of the economic impact of Operation
Protective Edge on Israel’s economy (Guiora 2004; Hunter 2009; Kurz and Brom 2014, 9, 45, 74, 83; Thomas 2001, 73-75).
Illustrations 5 and 6 (Graphs created with information from the Foreign Exchange entered into EXCEL)
Table 4. (Created with information from the Israeli National Insurance Institute 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8 July through 26 August 2014</th>
<th>Minimum Wages of Israeli Citizens during Operation Protective Edge in Shekels (ILS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wage Worker, 5 days per week Hourly/Daily Wages</td>
<td>Wage Worker, 6 days per week Hourly Wages Earned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>198.46/2,312.00</td>
<td>172.00/4,300.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Israel’s deficit was raised from a target of 3.4% to 2.5% of the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) due to the costs of *Operation Protective Edge* and the slowed economy that was commensurate with that operation. Yael Mevorach, the deputy budget director with the Finance Ministry testified that 0.6% of Israel’s economic growth was cut off due to OPE while the Bank of Israel reported in December 2014 that the cost to the economy was only 0.3%. (Elis 2014) The Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics reveals the GDP as 1,088,216.93 million shekels. The Office of the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT), and the International Institute for Counterterrorism, stated that a total of 82, 201 reservists were called up during the war (International Institute for Counterterrorism 2015; Office of the Coordinator of Government Activities 2015).

The minimum wage in Israel during *Operation Protective Edge* was 198.46 ILS per day for a 5-day per week worker and 172.00 ILS per day for a 6-day a week worker. There were either 36 or 43 working days during *Operation Protective Edge*, depending on if a worker reservists called up with an additional 20% removed from that number to reduce the likelihood of an overestimation of the impact of the loss of revenue. Forty-thousand reservists working 5 days per week at minimum wage would have earned 7,144.56 each during the time period for a total of 285,782.40 ILS in revenue that was not generated into Israel’s economy. Although they received an income from the IDF, again, the Israeli military and government as a whole made
no profit from the conflict and the pay given to the Israeli Defense Forces increases the costs to Israel and does not strengthen their economy.

Currency bundling is an indicator of the economic strength of a State when that analysis is coupled with other things such as the Gross Domestic Product and the trade deficit. Pattern analysis of economic conditions prior to Operation Protective Edge and afterwards show causality, indicating that OPE had an adverse effect on the economy. A strong indicator of Israel’s recognition of the economic effects of Operation Protective Edge is that the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics changed both the way that they calculate the GDP, and revenue/loss adjusted because of Operation Protective Edge.

The sustainment of IDF troops mobilized against hostilities in Gaza increases the financial burden of Israel, doubling the costs of the conflict with the onset of ground operations reported to be raised from 1 million shekels per day to 2 million shekels per day. This indicates that the 17 days from the insertion of ground troops on 17 July 2014 through 02 August 2014 (IDF ground troops were pulled out 03 August 2014), that life support for sustaining IDF troops in combat cost Israel an additional 17 million shekels. These are the direct costs expended for Operation Protective Edge, but the greatest financial loss resulting from this operation is the loss of revenue into the businesses of Israel, stimulating the economy and providing tax revenue to Israel. One large indicator of the loss of revenue experienced by Israel is in the impact experienced by the tourism industry.

Tourism is a huge industry in Israel, and the most quantifiable tourism income for Israel is the hotel industry. Table 5 shows that hotel tourism went down considerably at the time of
A large-scale operation was conducted to protect the residents of Israel, known as Operation Protective Edge. The annual net profit from tourist hotels\textsuperscript{34} was lower in 2014 than it has been since 2010 (8, 542 million shekels), and for the time period of July through August, it went down from 2013 by 12.70\% and 6.19\% respectively.

The final analysis of the economic effects necessitates a quantifying of the accumulated data. Conservative figures reflect the costs to Israel to be over 1.3 billion U.S. dollars during the time of Operation Protective Edge alone, which includes not only the direct costs to perform kinetic operations, but loss of per-capita economic output, trade agreements and embargoes, and damage to tourism, just to name a few (Business Insider 2015; Central Bureau of Statistics 2015). The foreign trade balance of Israel is determined by the imports versus the exports for the time period of Operation Protective Edge. This is also an indicator of the financial strength of Israel. The annual trade deficit was 76.7\% in 2014 as opposed to 76.3\% in 2013, however, a closer look at the time period of OPE reveals that August 2014 had a deficit that was 26.1\% (1,915.8 million Shekels) greater than July of the same year and 28.4\% higher than August of 2013. In September 2014, when Operation Protective Edge was complete, Israel’s national deficit was 215.1\% lower than in August.

The financial costs of OPE cannot be delineated perfectly when there are variables of unknown influence. The direct costs, such as the cost to maintain soldiers and equipment and the (minimum) lack of input into Israel’s economy by Israeli reservists called onto active duty, are easier to measure than the indirect costs, such as the lack of input into the economy by

\textsuperscript{34}According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics in 2015, there are hotels that are the most frequented by travelers as opposed to Israeli citizens. These hotels are called “tourist hotels.”
Israeli reservists called to active duty and the trade deficit. The movement of the shekel bundled against other currencies is an indicator of the strength of the economy, only serves to support the financial strengthening or weakening of Israel.

When analyzing the estimated costs of using Human Intelligence or Special Operations Forces to identify and/or engage Hamas leadership as a preemptive strike similar to what was conducted in Operations Cast Lead and Pillar of Defense, it is not necessary to assess the costs of training the Special Forces, as Israel already has strong Special Forces soldiers previously trained for these types of missions regardless of their use in Operation Protective Edge (Kurz and Brom2014, 16-19). The true cost of munitions during OPE is unknown, so the analysis will take out that variable for three reasons 1. to simplify something that cannot be accurately quantified and make it equal, 2. to make allowances for unknown munitions that were unused by Hamas due to decisions by their leadership and err on the side of caution by assuming that the cost for munitions for surgical preemptive strikes would be the same as for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% change on same period 1 year earlier</th>
<th>Millions ILS at current Prices</th>
<th>% Change from the previous Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Israelis</td>
<td>Tourists</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.** Tourist Numbers and Hotel Occupancy (Created with Information from The Israel Central Bureau of Statistics 2015)
the 50-day operation\textsuperscript{35}, to allow a more definitive neutralization of the threat through concentrated “precise” strikes on targets.

The quantifiable economic impact of \textit{Operation Protective Edge} that this research can prove is the released (through media coverage) cost of sustaining Israeli Defense Forces during the conflict. It is estimated that 50 days of conflict equated to 50 million shekels. The ground invasion was 16 days and double the cost equaling 66 million shekels. The loss to Israeli wages, using the minimum wage and reducing the number by 20\% to account for non-workers, is 565,070,395 shekels. A 9 day preemptive strike campaign followed by a 16 day ground invasion by conventional forces is conservative and realistic given the military capabilities and overwhelming firepower of the Israelis over Hamas. The figure of 319,000,000 shekels is what the research can prove beyond a doubt with figures derived from multiple sources. The Israelis concede a serious economic impact to their economy due to \textit{Operation Protective Edge}. There is debate in the government as to the extent of that impact on the Israeli economy, varying from .3 percent to .6 percent of the Annual Gross Domestic Product. A strong indicator is the change in the method to derive the GDP in 2014 specifically resulting from OPE and a listing of two figures by the Central Bureau of Statistics, one for the actual profits or losses and one for “corrected” figures due to \textit{Operation Protective Edge}.

\textbf{Media Effects}

The media uses books, newspapers, magazines, radio, television, internet, and even texting to influence the domestic and international populace and broadcast political and ethical beliefs, affirmations, and dissentions. There was a time when the media’s primary venue was books, newspapers, and magazines, then it was a radio, the television, and eventually the

\textsuperscript{35} Hamas has exercised restraint at times in the past when dealing with the IDF, possibly for political reasons and to avoid retaliatory strikes.
Internet, the using of social media and even texting. The study of media effects is by no means a new concept. Philosophers, politicians, military strategists, and entrepreneurs sought to understand the mindset of the people. There were studies done in the twentieth century showing the impact of the media (Dewey 1927, 143-84; Herman 2000, 62; Hutchby 2006, 5; Lasswell 1937a, 214-22; Lasswell 1937b, 521-27; Lee 1937; Mead 1934, 317-28).

Official news agencies are referred to as “The Media,” but Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and the like can be more influential depending on the audience, the amount of time spent on the media site, the trust placed in any media source, or the naïveté of the user(s). The lack of connectivity to some form of media is becoming an anomaly rather than a luxury. Newspapers printed and delivered manually that once took days to spread to the general public can now reach people in minutes electronically. There is more information than the general public will ever be able to read or hear at their fingertips or voice prompts in multiple languages constantly given they have connectivity.

Social media has intensified the effects of groupthink connecting like-minded people. The role of a leader for uprisings and protests can be replaced to an extent by social media (Thompson 2011, 175). The use of the Internet is becoming globally ubiquitous. The table below shows Internet user percentages in the world by country and by population, the top ten languages used on the Internet, and “penetration rates,” meaning the percentage of the population in that country that uses the Internet.

A sampling of news articles from 41 newspapers available in both electronic and paper copy was conducted during the research to assess the media’s portrayal of Operation Protective

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36 Those who grew up without internet most of their lives may be more comfortable using newspapers, radio, and television and consider them more reliable than internet, except for online newspapers.
The online newspapers in the research were selected because they are the most widely read by the largest audiences to allow the most inclusive sampling and on their global penetration. Articles on Operation Protective Edge were scanned for opinionated content concerning OPE and 847 of them were originally selected, of these, 748 of them were found to be suitable for the study.

There is a great diversity of beliefs and bias in the news media. Consumers of the news can matriculate to those sources that they feel have the greatest accuracy or at least portray the news with the biases that conform to their personal beliefs. There is no need to read anything counter to one’s ideological beliefs, as there is a surfeit of reporting to meet one’s personal beliefs without challenging them.

The reporting of Operation Protective Edge casualties in the sampling is consistent with scholarly and peer-reviewed articles, with reports ranging from 66 to 74 Israelis, while the Palestinians had over 2,000. However, the numbers on legitimate combatants versus collateral

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37 Some news articles were not available in an English version, which unfortunately prevented them from being a part of the Study.
damage to civilians differs throughout the articles with a range of anywhere from 500 to 1500 of Palestinians killed being reported as civilians. The sampling results were 382 (51%) that Israel’s operational execution of OPE was either an unjustified response to Hamas’s rocket attacks or was executed inappropriately, whether that be disproportionate force, indiscriminate rocket attacks, or other actions considered unnecessary or excessive. The only Israeli newspaper selected for the study The Jerusalem Post, had 100 articles, if that newspaper is removed from the sampling, only 245 (33%) reflect positively on Israel during Operation Protective Edge.

Three separate surveys conducted during and immediately after Operation Protective Edge show that Israeli citizens lost confidence in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s handling of the conflict; and that the Israeli public’s perception of success in OPE declined as the war progressed. Israel’s Channel 2, the Institute for National Security Studies, and Haaretz conducted independent surveys to assess the general feeling, also known as “atmospherics,” of the Jewish populace in Israel.

Channel 2’s first survey was conducted on July 17, 2014, ten days after Operation Protective Edge began and the same day as the ground war was initiated. Initially the Jewish public has faith in their Prime Minister according to Channel 2’s study that indicated 57% of Israeli Jewish people believed that Prime Minister Netanyahu was doing a good job while 35% of the Jewish people in Israel felt he was not performing well. Netanyahu’s public support increased initially with the ground invasion and one week later on July 24, 2014 with 82% reporting he was doing well and only 10% saying that he was not. However, just three days later on July 27, 2014 the public sentiment had dropped and only 38% showed a positive account of his performance in Operation Protective Edge. The next day on July 28, 2014 the poll showed

Some articles are blocked like The People’s Republic of China and unfortunately cannot be a part of the study.
a drop by 6% positive feedback from the previous day with 32% of the respondents feeling that their Prime Minister was conducting this operation well and 59% saying that he was not performing well.

Similar results came from the surveys conducted by The Institute for National Security Studies on the Israeli Jewish public’s opinion on whether or not Israel was winning *Operation Protective Edge*. The first poll was conducted on 27-28 July 2014 with 71% of the respondents expressing their belief that Israel was winning *Operation Protective Edge*, 6% feeling that Hamas was winning OPE and 23% stating that neither Israel nor Hamas were winning *Operation Protective Edge*. Another poll was taken by the Institute for National Security Studies on August 6, 2014, just three days after the Israeli Defense Forces conventional ground troops withdrew from Gaza for the ground campaign. The results of this survey revealed a 51% public opinion that Israel was winning Gaza, while 40% felt that Hamas was winning and 45% felt that neither side was winning. The Jewish newspaper *Haaretz* conducted a survey posing the question “*How would you define the outcome of the war?***” on 28 July, 2014 with similar results to other surveys showing 26% that Israel had won, 16% of the respondents believed that Hamas had won, and 54% of the respondents stated that neither side was victorious. The polls
show increasing dissatisfaction with *Operation Protective Edge* which could possibly be attributed to the lack of a more definitive defeat of Hamas (INSS 2015, 147-151).

**CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION**

*Operation Protective Edge* was a well-executed military offensive conducted by the Israeli Defense Forces when taking into consideration that it was a reactionary operation to the preemptive strikes initiated by Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and other Islamic militants in the Gaza Strip. However, the speed with which the Israeli Defense Forces were able to execute the operation indicates that the operational plans were previously created and troops were primed for insertion in the ground war. There was an escalation in kinetic activity between Israel and Palestinian militants in both the West Bank and in Gaza.

The collection of research for this thesis was extremely challenging as the Israelis do not release most of the information about their military. Israel does not publish statistics on the size of their forces, their munitions, or their capabilities. The one thing that is releasable to the public is their defense budget. Statistical data is derived from estimates from organizations who quantify military information such as *Jane’s Defense Weekly* and *The Institute for National Security Studies*.

Although there are conflicting reports of the motives of the rocket attacks by Hamas prior to *Operation Protective Edge*, it is undeniable that the Israeli Defense Forces lost the element of surprise, allowing Hamas to place them on the defensive initially protecting themselves with the Iron Dome, while the leadership of Hamas literally went underground. The objectives of OPE were to restore quiet and security for Israel through the defeat of Hamas and the destruction of their 32 tunnel systems from the Gaza Strip into Israel. Prior to *Operation
Protective Edge, Hamas was struggling to survive as an organization, and some believe that OPE was initiated as a tool to steal popular support away from the Palestinian Authority and the political faction Fatah, the legal ruling party in the Gaza Strip.

The catalyst which ignited this conflict is not as relative to this thesis as are the elements of the conflict, specifically of preemption and of other aspects of time. The most successful operations conducted by the Israelis in Gaza have had the element of preemptive strikes conducted decisively to neutralize and bring the greatest damage to the operational capabilities of the threat. Surgical preemptive strikes would facilitate a shorter operation, which is pivotal to the hypothesis of this thesis: Surgical preemptive strikes during Operation Protective Edge would have provided a more definitive threat neutralization, while reducing costs and negative media repercussions to Israel.

The research has demonstrated that the Israeli Defense Forces have overwhelming military superiority to Hamas, both offensively in their ability to conduct air and ground strikes and defensively with systems such as the Iron Dome, reducing the already inaccurate rocket attack capabilities of Hamas. The Israelis have intelligence collection capabilities that are better than any other country in the Middle East. There can be no doubt that Israel knew the locations of most of the senior members of Hamas through their intelligence networks long before the execution of Operation Protective Edge and that the Israeli Defense Forces exercised restraint in an effort to avoid civilian casualties, possibly to avoid the same criticism that Israel has received in past operations for collateral damage.
Ironically, it was the same restraint exercised by Israel in *Operation Protective Edge* that indirectly prolonged the operation, caused greater civilian casualties to the Palestinians, damaged Israel’s economy much more than it needed to be, and gave the media greater opportunity to exploit airtime and vilify the Israeli Defense Forces. When Hamas forced Israel into kinetic operations during *Operation Protective Edge*, Hamas also used civilians as “shields” to their strongholds to dissuade attacks and simultaneously conduct information operations against the Israelis, claiming that they were targeting innocent civilians. The lack of preemptive strikes and the restraint with which the Israelis conducted themselves in the beginning of the conflict may have helped appease those outraged by the collateral damage to Palestinian civilians, but this restraint did not lead to a more definitive neutralization of Hamas. On the contrary, Hamas had lost popular support prior to *Operation Protective Edge* but some Palestinians supportive of Hamas considered them to be heroes who defeated the most powerful military in the Middle East, the Israeli Defense Forces, and then chased the IDF out of Gaza. Preemptive strikes neutralizing Hamas’s leadership pursuant to the offensive executed by IDF forces in *Operation Cast Lead* is a better course of action for *Operation Protective Edge*.

The hesitancy of the Israeli Defense Forces to attack Hamas ultimately hurt the Israelis and the Palestinians by prolonging the conflict. Eventually, Hamas was forced into an agreement after 50 days of conflict. Throughout the conflict Hamas abused the Palestinian people by using civilians as human shields to deter strikes, sent rocket attacks into Israel that killed and injured Israelis and damaged their infrastructure, and severely damaged the tourism industry. These events provided the media 50 days of live news coverage and an opportunity to

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39 The researcher was in a hummus restaurant in the Muslim Quarter of Jerusalem on 26 August 2014 when Hamas broadcast their “victory” over Israel. Everyone in the restaurant was chanting and clapping. The researcher asked questions, and customers and staff indicated that Hamas was the hero of Palestinian people and that Hamas defeated the IDF and chased them out of Gaza.
criticize Israel during an active confrontation, as opposed to an operation conducted with precision and speed jointly exercising the capabilities and strengths of the Israeli intelligence assets, their special operations forces, and superior munitions, while denying Hamas the opportunity to gain the tactical advantage of preemption. Confirmation of the strikes can be obtained by satellite, UAVs, such as the Skylark I LE (Long Endurance) (Israel: Elbit Systems Skylark II 2014). There is no real competition of military might between the IDF and Hamas. Hamas is a terrorist organization, and not a recognized legitimate military force of a sovereign country. There is not a state but a territory, albeit this is a source of contempt between Israelis and Palestinians arguing over the “right” of the Palestinians to their own state or a one-state solution. (Glick 2014) Both Gaza and the West Bank are a part of Israel. There is not a viable reason for Hamas to exist as they are a recognized terrorist organization which does not recognize the right of the Israelis to even exist.

Any conflict which does not generate revenue for the State (currency, precious gems and metals, resources, land, etc.), only consumes finances, resources, and manpower and has a negative impact on the economy. Operation Protective Edge was more costly than it needed to be because it was a reactive response to Hamas, despite all indicators that the Israeli Defense Forces had actionable intelligence in the form of rising hostilities and that decisive force would be necessary to bring a cessation to the hostilities. This drain on the economy creates debt due to both the obvious direct logistical costs of carrying out the conflict and the indirect costs of possible revenue that could have been obtained. The proposed 25-day operation would be less damaging to the Israeli economy due to reduced consumption of military resources, both manpower and logistical concerns, and reduced impact on tourism.
The research shows the tremendous impact which the media has on the perceptions of the populace. Social media has multiplied this effect and created a medium of easy interactive access 24 hours a day, where opinions can be portrayed without substantiating evidence and with no repercussions for erroneous reporting. Israel cannot block all media coverage or interaction, but global interest in subject matter decreases when the story “ends.” The strong bonds between the United States and Israel will withstand the negative media from OPE.

*Operation Protective Edge* conducted via surgical preemptive strikes on targets identified by intelligence assets and special operations forces prior to the increased rocket attacks conducted by Hamas in late June and early July 2014, is a more efficacious procedure for the Israeli Defense Forces to follow. Preemptive strikes transitioning into ground operation to eliminate the 32 tunnels used by Hamas for terrorist operations provides more definitive threat neutralization, while reducing costs and negative media repercussions to Israel. Future research of the efficacy of kinetic strikes and predictive analysis can use this thesis and the research which supports the hypothesis, and reference it for scholarly writings. The researcher will share all of the research with other researchers upon request via email in an effort to make their research easier to compile and expand on research that is related to this thesis.

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40 Email webbinator@yahoo.com. Be specific, the research for this thesis is not “edited,” and can be confusing without some explanation of its contents and organization.
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### Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Analysis of Variance is a statistical procedure measuring the variance between two things (Field 2009, 790).

### Benjamin Netanyahu:

Prime Minister of Israel 1996-1999, 2009- Present. He was born 21 October, 1949 in Tel Aviv, Israel. He grew up in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His father was a Jewish historian, Benzion Netanyahu. In 1967 he returned to Israel to serve in the IDF elite "Sayeret Matkal," and was involved in several operations. He holds degrees in architecture and business administration from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He was Israeli ambassador to the United Nations 1984-88 (Biography.com, 2015; Zanotti 2015, 54).

### Case Study:

An in-depth study of a contemporary phenomenon, looking at the phenomenon's real-world context (Cresswell 2009, 237).

### Concurrent Triangulation:

A mixed methods approach. The researcher collects both quantitative and qualitative data concurrently and then compares the two databases to determine if there is convergence, differences, or some combination (Cresswell 2009, 228).

### Dependent Variable:

A variable that "depends" on independent variables for change. Defined as "another name for outcome variable. This name is usually associated with experimental methodology…and is so called because it is the variable that is not manipulated by the experimenter and so its values depends on the variables that have been manipulated" (Field 2009, 784).

### Effects:

A change that is caused by another thing. The thesis analyzes military, economic, and media effects.

### Efficacious:

In this thesis, it is the most desirable effect, whether that be an increase or a decrease in the unit of measure. It is defined as "having the power to produce a desired effect" (Merriam-Webster 2015).

### Explanatory Research:

Answers the "how" and "why" questions in research.

### Excel:

A spreadsheet application that can calculate data and plot the same...
data to make graphs and charts. Used in the thesis for analysis and to create most of the graphs and charts.

**Foreign Exchange (FOREX):** The published conversion of one country's currency into another. It is used in this research for data to analyze the US dollar, the euro, and the shekel.

**Gaza:** Also referred to as "The Gaza Strip." This is defined as "Palestinian-administered city near the Mediterranean; with surrounding coastal district (Gaza Strip, adjoining Sinai Peninsula), administered 1949–67 by Egypt, subsequently by Israel, and since 2005 by the Palestinian Authority district pop 1,400,000" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary 2015).

**Gross Domestic Product (GDP):** An annual calculation of all of the goods and services within a country's borders. It is a key factor in determining the economic strength. The thesis analyzes causality of changes in the Gross Domestic Product of Israel.


**Independent Variable:** A variable that changes one or more dependent variables. Time and kinetic operations are independent variables in OPE. Defined as "Another name for a predictor variable…is usually associated with experimental methodology…and is so called because it is the variable that is manipulated by the experimenter and so its value does not depend on any other variables" (Field 2009, 787-788).

**Israeli Defense Forces (IDF):** The military forces of Israel. This includes all Army, Air Force, and Navy members. It also includes all of the Special Operations Forces of Israel.

**Multiple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA)** A series of tests extending basic analysis of variance to situations with more than one outcome variable (Field 2009, 790).

**Nominal Variable:** Used simply to denote something or separate it, such as men and women.
**Operation Cast Lead:** 27 December 2008-18 January 2009. The name of the offensive military operation conducted by the Israeli Defense Forces against Hamas and militants assisting Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

**Operation Pillar of Defense:** 14-21 November 2012. An offensive military operation conducted by the Israeli Defense Forces against Hamas in the Gaza. The IDF used preemptive strikes to kill Hamas's Chief of Staff and their long and mid-range rocket capabilities.

**Operation Protective Edge (OPE):** Operation Protective Edge - The conflict between the Israeli Defense Forces against Hamas and other Islamic Militants in the Gaza Strip of Israel taking place from 8 July 2014 through 26 August 2014.

**Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ):** Terrorist Organization in Palestine. Unlike Hamas and Fatah, the PIJ does not participate in the political process. The PIJ was officially named a terrorist organization by the US State Department in 1997 along with Hamas and Fatah.

**State:** Synonymous with nation-state. Israel is a state, Gaza is a territory. Hamas is a terrorist organization that operates in Gaza and the West Bank (among other places). State defined "a form of political organization in which a group of people who share the same history, traditions, or language live in a particular area under one government" (Merriam-Webster 2015).

**Threat:** The adversary. In the thesis, it is Hamas and whoever participated militarily against IDF.