CHAPTER ONE

Strategy, History, and Politics

Nuclear strategy—both in regard to proliferation and nonproliferation—must be studied within a political-historical context. Yet one of the original assumptions behind the nonproliferation campaign can be sought through deductive and apolitical thinking, as Robert Jervis argued about Western deterrence theories ten years ago.[1] An apolitical approach harbors many of its supporters' values and status quo biases, some of which characterize not only nonproliferation thinking in the West but also General Pierre Gallois' and Kenneth Waltz's "pro-proliferation" thinking.[2] These arguments neutralize each other, leaving only one direction for fruitful discussion, that of historical analysis.

Like many deductive theories of human behavior, non- and pro-proliferation thinking harbor contradictory assumptions about human nature. Thomas C. Schelling, otherwise a liberal thinker, is pessimistic about humankind's common sense and responsibility with regard to nuclear weapons, and he bases his opinion on the assumption (discussed in Chapter 2) that madmen and children cannot be deterred. In Schelling's view, the more people with access to nuclear weapons, the greater the likelihood that one of "them" will be prepared to use these weapons, even in the face of counternuclear threats. The rather conservative French General Gallois, on the other hand, as well as his American colleague Waltz, take the optimistic view that nuclear elites are forced to socialize with each other, because they realize that each has the power to destroy the other. Such generalizations, I believe, require examination in contemporary historical terms. But we must always be conscious of the way these theories have *already* influenced reality.

Let us start our argument with the contention that nonproliferation thinking is based, among other things, on deterrence-theoretical

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thinking, and on what we will call the "strategic" approach. This approach is highly technical and relies on a specific terminology. Furthermore, nonproliferation is anchored in a moral-political commitment against the bomb, whose historical roots should be studied from the vantage point of the 1990s. Finally, nonproliferation is, of course, an obvious tool used by the possessors of nuclear weapons for their own purposes; however, as a result of the open nuclear race and nuclear threats of the past, possessors have developed various kinds of responsibilities toward each other, as well as toward third parties.

As we have already stated, nuclear proliferation, including its opaque pattern, is politically motivated, and must be studied as a political-historical, culture-bound phenomenon.[3] The actual scholarly work in this regard requires a good knowledge of the cultures and histories of the nations involved. Such a very broad study could not be offered here; the political aspects are the main focus of this book. The reader can consult history books and other sources of such information to put my political science into the utterly necessary framework of historical analysis.

In the context of cultural-historical values and beliefs, "political" is understood here as the use of power to acquire and maintain control over people, over territory and natural resources, or to influence human behavior. "Political" can be divided into two categories: "high politics," referring to basic values, as one understands them and scholars may judge them to be; and "low politics," referring to personal, partisan, and prestige calculations (when we grossly simplify these matters for our purposes). Still, the question remains as to whether the nuclear age has not transformed this complex from that of a mere power game to a struggle whose results are more predictable. In other words, whereas a conventional power game could be efforts to attain and use power at all costs, because at least one party believed that the results were undeterminable in advance, the nuclear age may have transformed politics into an effort to acquire those things of value in an individual cultural-historical context with power, which must be used with care, as a major item among them. In this connection, we must ask ourselves which power has an opaque posture due to its peculiar character. But, before discussing this, let us return to our definition of politics, which, in our view, may include the well-known goal of "grand strategy": to influence the enemy's will to fight.[4] The values and the history, the psychology and the cultural aspects of the enemy's existence, are no less important to our understanding than the "means," the actual subject matter for many strategic-military thinkers.

"High politics" could mean, for great powers, a high degree of

influence over the international order, by spreading one's values in order to secure and develop an international economic order or to secure natural resources (both inside and outside of one's territory). All of these aspects may also become intertwined with domestic political variables that could be perceived by us as "low." The wasteful use of untaxed, imported oil in the United States could belong to such a category, as could the reelection of a congressman or even the election of a president who promises no tax increases. Yet these examples are related to "high political" ones too, such as preventing Saddam Hussein's Iraq from seizing control over Kuwait's oil to fuel its military-political ambitions. "High political" goals are therefore complex, when great powers and even regional powers are involved. And since they are always mixed with "low political" goals, the politicians involved in them sometimes have great difficulties in explaining them to their own people, especially in democracies.

In the case of Israel, as in the case of other small powers, the main "high political" issue can be that of the survival of old and new societies. Sheer survival seems relatively easy to define, yet even this simple concept is subject to various interpretations, including one relating specifically to the nuclear age. We, the scholars, must study the "low political" aspects hidden behind arguments coined in terms of survival, and discern the cultural-historical, possibly the psychological, reasons that lend them "high political" significance in the eyes of their consumers (and maybe in the eyes of the politicians who use them).

At this early stage, we must address one of the most difficult problems tackled in this book: the issue of Israeli and Palestinian statehood. Viewed in terms of survival, the problem can only be fully understood if we add to it historical-cultural and a variety of psychological aspects. Jews perceive themselves to be not just a nation but a civilization connected to a certain territory that gave it its significance and was later taken over by other civilizations. This civilization adopted a variety of interpretations, including a modern secular one that stresses the role of emancipation and independence in terms of survival, as well as offering a refuge for Jews and a political base for the future development of that civilization. Palestinians, on the other hand, belong to a larger civilization and a larger nation, divided into separate political entities. Their quest for independence may be perceived by them as an issue of survival, i.e., of emancipation and independence among other Arab nations. Another basic difference is that although many Jews in the Diaspora support Israel, they will not move to Israel and live there—in fact, they would even defend their right to be citizens of the world or of their respective countries. Palestinians, on the other hand, usually have

the support of other Arabs. And yet under some circumstances Arab Palestine might be claimed by other Arab entities (such as Syria and its Arab inhabitants, declared to be "Southern Syrians"). History plays an important role here when the past—sometimes the very remote past—is invoked to define boundaries and to serve claims for territory, such as in the case of Iraq's claim to Kuwait or militant Israelis' claims to the West Bank. This process can assume a variety of "low political" motives when someone such as Saddam Hussein needs Kuwait's money or when the Likud Party in Israel must defend its ideological essence in the polls.

Historically, Israel is a given fact in the nuclear age, and its destruction would require the use of force. Therefore, the nuclear factor must be studied as a variable that is independent of and yet related to all of the other factors (historical, cultural aspirations, and so on) mentioned above.

The strategic aspect of nuclear proliferation, that is, its deterrent value, and the counterstruggle to defeat the bomb's role as a deterrent in the hands of proliferators, were both shaped to a considerable extent by nuclear strategic theory, which was born in the original, open nuclear nations. Nonproliferation policies were accompanied by a variety of "political" features, such as the use of carrot-and-stick measures to prevent proliferation, an array of secret diplomatic moves and leaks, and possibly—especially in the case of the United States—the "opaque" pattern itself. This "opaque" pattern was thus a mixture of political measures combined with strategic-theoretical elements. "Political" should be understood here in terms of secret diplomacy, of avoiding open confrontations, of offering conventional weapons and economic aid and the like; and "strategic" understood in terms of avoiding military dangers related to the bomb in principle and in particular when the superpowers could have drawn to a regional conflict. "Strategic" can also mean here the denial of political-strategic advantages from the bomb for the proliferator.

But proliferation always carries with it the connotation of being expansionary, even if it is used as a deterrent only and its role can actually be aimed at preserving the status quo, which could hardly be maintained by invoking conventional deterrence alone. Further proliferation, by anti-status quo powers, might serve as a tool to regain the freedom of, at least, conventional action. And yet, the nonproliferation "regime" may transform all these activities to less visible, half-hidden—i.e., "opaque"—ones, at least as far as the general public is concerned. The questions remain, then: Did this opacity influence military decisions and political processes in the Middle East? Did it obscure facts that

otherwise would have contributed to stability and peace? Or did it conceal developments that may soon lead to instability and war? Has opacity given the politicians involved better tools to handle Middle East crises? Apparently, President Bush's initiative in May 1991 expresses dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs (even if the initiative itself was expressed in rather opaque terms).

Israel can be perceived as having invoked opaque nuclear deterrence either to maintain the status quo or to try to resolve its conflict with the Arabs and make peace. Israel can also be viewed as having used conventional means to change the status quo because it did not believe in nuclear deterrence. Therefore, Israeli policymakers felt that they needed strategic depth and territorial trump cards for peace. This, however, was not the whole picture. Other considerations—both domestic and foreign, related to Israeli-American relations and to ideological and conventional-military priorities—intervened with the "pure" strategic-political calculations in regard to the nuclear option. Arabs, on the other hand, have tried (some may still be trying) to change the status quo by neutralizing Israel's nuclear option—if not physically, then through deterrence-theoretical terminology and other political and military tools. Several Arab states might have used Israel's nuclear threat, opaque though it might be, to justify their own nuclear ambitions beyond the Arab-Israeli dispute. In the nuclear age, nuclear weapons can be perceived by some Arab leaders as the key to their own, to their state's, and to the Arab nation's power and glory.

The "opacity" of some of the Arab parties involved in nuclear proliferation has been motivated by many considerations. Some of them seem to have been drawn into playing Israel's own game of opacity. A few members of the Arab camp have been quite open on the subject, however; others have adopted interchangeable positions, acting directly or discreetly as they see fit. Nuclear strategy, as it was born in the West, is also a historical-cultural way of thinking, but it has a life of its own as a sort of autonomous paradigm.[5] Yet autonomy doesn't produce concurrence. An important question to resolve is whether the Soviets, and later the Chinese, refused to adopt the Western view of nuclear weapons and nuclear strategy, at first at least, and whether they influenced other nations in their own initial efforts to maintain high-level conflicts in the nuclear age. Yet another question is how nuclear weapons were regarded by others in the world who wanted to use power to achieve value-bound goals, enhance their interests, and give vent to their drives—the contents of politics, in the nuclear age and before. These value-bound goals, these interests and drives, must be studied historically in order to compare what nuclear weapons and

their actual workings mean to "undeclared nations" and to those already declared. These factors must be studied across the spectrum of the foreign and domestic politics of the countries involved in undeclared proliferation in a specific region, with some comparisons to other regions, such as the Subcontinent.

Nuclear proliferation could be taken as being the first development of bombs beyond the original party in possession of one, as no real consensus had been reached worldwide on a distinction between those nations "entitled" to bombs and those not entitled. And yet, the rise of Soviet Russia during World War II to its seemingly ever-growing status as a world power, had de facto given it the "right" to pursue the bomb, once the Baruch Plan and other ideas regarding the possible sharing of the new energy among nations proved to be futile.

The original nuclear nations, while providing an example of how and why nuclearization could be achieved, objected to further nuclearization by other nations in their nonproliferation policies, which reflected both domestic and foreign considerations. With the export of these opposing ideas—active nonproliferation and nuclearization by example—the ideas and policies of the original nuclear nations (and their behavior vis-à-vis each other) all became part of the study of proliferation itself. As we have already argued, proliferation and its effects must not be separated either from the nations, cultures, and people involved in it—whether successfully or not—or from the strategic and political thinking of the nuclear powers themselves.

Our question, however, concerns "undeclared bombs," which seem to be a new form of proliferation. Has their development been inspired by the same considerations that have led to the acquisition of nuclear weapons in the past, or are they a response to something else? Could they be a response to the changed international environment created by the nuclear stalemate between the superpowers themselves, and to the resulting insecurity? Or are they the result of smaller nations' growing power of bargaining? In other words, did undeclared bombs emerge as a result of the agreement between the great powers among themselves to curb proliferation? Did this agreement, a byproduct of the superpowers' own nuclear stalemate, leave various clients of one of them frustrated in their own regional conflicts, or even in their drive to use superpower rivalry for their own goals? Did that stalemate, and the ensuing decline of Soviet power, give some Arabs the feeling that they must develop their own, independent nuclear power? Did some radical Arab leaders feel "naked" because Soviet power had declined, or did they feel encouraged to pursue their own way? Did they start their nuclear effort under conditions, now changed, of superpower rivalry,

which some of them had hoped would give them enough leeway to "go nuclear," at least in opaque terms, in spite of the declared nonproliferation policy of the superpowers?

Did standing and prestige, the quest for regional hegemony, the maintenance of a regional conflict on its own merits, or in order to serve purposes of nation-building and modernization, play a decisive role here? How could this be achieved in an "undeclared" fashion? This is even more of a problem when, in the Arab-Israeli context, Arab states pursued changes in the status quo by invoking military means—e.g., in 1973—in a region that already contained "undeclared" bombs. Have the specific uses of military means in such cases, such as the Yom Kippur War of 1973 and even the Gulf War of 1991, emerged as a result of the inputs of the superpowers? Or was Arab behavior in these cases constrained or enhanced by any strategic thinking and behavior originated in the superpowers' approach to limited wars in the nuclear age, or in other nations such as China and Vietnam? What role was played here by Israel's "undeclared" nuclear option?

This brings us back to the problem of defining "undeclared bombs" and opaque nuclear proliferation within the context of Western strategic thinking and actual behavior. First, opaque proliferation is technically a process of nuclear research and development that is believed by foreign governments and by most of the scholarly community to be comparable to full-fledged nuclear status, including delivery means. Yet, such governments and proliferation scholars may refuse to acknowledge the process as such, and declare the deterrent and/or the political value of nuclear weapons in this case to be almost nil.[6]

Second, because opacity is an undeclared nuclear status, it cannot have visible means of demonstrating technical perfection, such as open testing or missile launching. This undeclared state does not allow clearcut nuclear threats by the possessor government. As such, opaque proliferation can leave totally contradictory impressions: either that it is a status that is more manageable than an open one because the lack of clarity allows maneuverability, or that it is even less manageable because it is a lie, a breach of an international norm, or a desperate effort of a pariah state to maintain its untenable existence. Thus, it is an advance warning of the likelihood of unconstrained behavior by such a nation. It could also be perceived, especially in the Israeli case, as being highly impractical, because no final borders are defined and the territory to be protected by nuclear threats is disputed by many members of the international community. And yet Israel may think that this is the only way to make that border secure. Still, it would only be able to do this in opaque terms.

Third, opaque proliferation is an opportunity for the enemies of a possessor nation to forgo a policy of complete hostility toward the traditional, but now nuclear, enemy; it is even possible to accept it, while retaining the freedom to find the political rationale for this shift in policy. These enemies are able to justify making peace without mentioning the bomb—even though it is the main reason for pursuing peace. But even partially admitting that the bomb was the reason can be suffered without too much humiliation, if other reasons, such as winning back occupied territory, are used as the main reasons for peacemaking. A conflict can be maintained on a level beneath one of possible nuclear devastation by capitalizing on several aspects of the opaque posture: its deviation from the nonproliferation norm, which could imply superpower support of the proliferator's enemy; greater maneuverability due to its less clear meaning in terms of "red lines"; and the consequent ability to assume protection only of specific territory by the possessor nation. And because of this opaqueness, there is often the real possibility of working in accord with the domestic disagreement among the decision makers of the possessor nation. In such cases nuclear weapons might not even be regarded as a real political-strategic tool in the eyes of their possessors; but if they are construed as such a tool, their range could be from full to minimal to "last resort" only.

Fourth, opaque proliferation may indeed entail considerable confusion within the states who have adopted such a posture. It certainly allows for division about nuclear weapons as political tools and as strategic deterrents, although a unified backing to an opaque front is equally possible. In Israel's case, Shimon Peres, the Labor leader, argued that in the nuclear age, the reasons for the previous Middle East wars and the quest for territory have become obsolete. He dismissed the old doctrine that assumed that Israel should prepare for a conventional war, preempt and occupy territory to use as a trump card for peace. He said that "no economy can sustain the cost of modern weaponry. Thus the modernization of the army endangers the economy. And of course, the price of war should not be forgotten, beyond the maintenance of the army: *no territory justifies the losses that the preempting party will have to sustain in order to occupy it, in a world of nuclear weapons. The conclusion is that we should depart from military confrontations . . . in the Middle East* [italics added] . . ."[7]

Peres further stated that the nuclear stalemate between the superpowers had rendered Soviet aid to Arabs in their bid to destroy Israel impossible. But he did not go beyond a certain formulation, which made his language appear general and "opaque." Since most Israelis had only a vague idea of what Peres was talking about, his approach

could be ignored by Yitzhak Shamir, the leader of the nationalist Likud bloc, whose ideological quest for territory remains supreme. This did not mean that Shamir had no opaque nuclear concept of his own; he most likely had one supporting his political-ideological refusal to give up territory in the West Bank, Gaza, or the Golan Heights. However, his approach remained half-hidden as well, relying on popular sentiment in favor of Israel's presence in that territory to give it weight. However, both Labor and Likud might have invoked opaque nuclear threats vis-à-vis Syria's, Libya's, or Iraq's chemical weapon threats, even before the Gulf War in which such threats became almost fully open. They could even have agreed, in the past, on common efforts vis-à-vis implied Soviet nuclear threats, when Soviet-Arab relations gave such threats a certain role to play. This, however, requires a detailed investigation. Other elements, especially several groups of Israeli radicals, may abhor the very idea of relying on nuclear weapons at all, whether Israel has them or not.

The approach of such groups is a different kind of opacity: the deliberate denial of nuclear options as if they never existed, until peace—or even nuclear disarmament agreements without peace—either solves the conflict or allows the region to become nuclear-free. A milder version of such opacity acknowledges the existence of nuclear options in Israeli hands, but denies them any or much deterrent value by invoking academic deterrence theories and other practical-historical arguments.

Thus, we return to the presumed effect of "opaque" nuclear postures on an enemy or several enemies. In cases where nuclear weapons are regarded as "last resorts" or as hardly applicable political-strategic tools, the assumed low credibility of nuclear threats could allow major wars to occur. Undertaken by conventional nations against nuclear ones, such wars could trigger the actual use of the bomb. Another possibility is the assumption by the enemies of an "opaque" nuclear nation of an "opaque" counterthreat, which would allow the same results: a high-level conflict and major wars that could deteriorate into an exchange of nuclear blows. Yet another possibility, though not likely to lead to the use of the bomb, is a conventional guerrilla war, or low-density war, as the answer to nuclear threats in the post-Hiroshima age. These might be waged even more successfully against an opaque nuclear nation than against an open one. When several of these possibilities combine, the final outcome could be the maintenance of a high-level conflict, which indeed may deteriorate to the actual use of nuclear weapons by one party when challenged by several hostile and uncoordinated conventional—and one day nuclear—enemies.

Thus, undeclared bombs—whose credibility seems to be in doubt

because of domestic disagreement, the lack of clearly stated threats, and other reasons — may be perceived as a new danger to the world. Making them "declared," however, can be seen as an unmitigated disaster. "Declaring" would lead to the unavoidable collapse of the nonproliferation regime, resulting in the complete loss of control over nuclear weapons.

This might have been the idea behind President Bush's May 1991 initiative. The possible open introduction of the bomb may complicate the Middle East peace process, because it can add to it various and complementary issues. Israel itself, or important outside powers, may wish to prevent open nuclear threats in that complex and sensitive region. On the other hand, it may be seen that just such threats are necessary to make peace acceptable, including territorial and political concessions that must accompany a peace process—or that may in fact be the very substance of such a process. As a result of the desire to avoid open threats, however, the domestic and foreign political processes related to peace negotiations may assume a different, largely distorted character, due to the "hidden" or "opaque" nature of the nuclear options involved. In Israel, a political faction that hates to make concessions—such as giving up the occupied territories—or to lose American conventional and financial aid, and so forth, may believe, or at least argue, that such goals are related to nuclear strategy, to its limitations, and to the "opaque" nature of its own nuclear options. In any case, the outcome of this situation could still be an "undeclared bomb," only fully dealt with by those among the scholarly community who study proliferation—and whose attitude toward such a phenomenon is mostly negative. We shall deal separately with governments and intelligence agencies that are very much interested in these phenomena. They are certainly politically motivated.

Proliferation experts have not been totally apolitical. There has been a predominant notion that proliferation in the form of an undeclared nuclear posture took root, or threatened to take root, specifically among "pariah states," such as Israel, South Africa, Taiwan, and South Korea.[8] At the time this terminology was first promulgated, Egypt, which could not quite be called a pariah, had already been toying with unconventional capabilities, not necessarily because of the Israeli challenge, but in the interests of its long-held aspirations to lead a new, Arab world power. Iraq was actually in the process of acquiring nuclear weapons production capabilities for quite some time without some proliferation experts taking much notice. It escaped notice among other reasons because the focus was concentrated on pariah states, and its motives were clearly not pariah, but rather, deeply embedded in Arab politics.

India, meanwhile, had even exploded a nuclear device in 1974. But the explosion was claimed to be for peaceful use, so the users of the pariah terminology—and some members of the nonproliferation lobby as well—could ignore this case. Pakistan's nuclearization has also been well under way. And Israel's options could have been seen as the precedent that halfway legitimized Pakistan's "Islamic bomb," although the real reason was more likely to have been the Indian challenge.

Thus the very use of the term "pariah state" by scholars in regard to Israel could have been enough to justify both Pakistan's and Iraq's efforts in the eyes of some scholars and officials whose attention was focused rather myopically on Israel. Whereas others tended to keep Israel—without having any serious remaining doubts about the nature of its nuclear efforts—outside as a sui generis case. Still, most scholars of both schools tended, until recently, to treat Israel's nuclear arsenal and its nuclear strategic and political options in several ways: i.e., by questioning facts or at least leaving them open to various interpretations; by arguing against the strategic-political value of nuclear weapons in Israel's case; or by limiting it to the "last resort" formula, which by itself is rather unclear. This was the picture during the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s, when Iraq embarked upon the first serious effort in the Arab world to acquire the bomb within the rules of NPT. Israel, alone, had to tackle the potential Iraqi threat by introducing a novel method of dealing with proliferation: i.e., knocking out the enemy's reactors, even though they were under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) control and built within the framework of NPT. Iraq then continued its effort by invoking other means. That effort became a major factor, in conjunction with oil, considered by the United States in responding to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. While the results of the American-led effort remain uncertain, the Bush Administration tried to make the whole region free of nuclear weapons, and thus focused attention on Israel again. This brings us back to the earlier discussion of the Israeli case.

The pariah thesis used a deductive method for political analysis, assuming that Israel was a pariah state at that stage in its history, and arguing that countries like South Africa and Taiwan should be categorized as similar phenomena. The argument went on to question the value of nuclear solutions for pariah states by using strategic-technical arguments. This was part of the work of Robert Harkavy (cited above), and he used his strategic-technical assumptions in a typically deductive fashion. He calculated the possibility that the Soviets would administer a nuclear blow to Israel, and even considered whether Israel, having absorbed a Soviet "first strike," should consider hardening nuclear silos

in order to deliver a "triangular second strike capability" against Arab
cities. At the same time, Harkavy could seriously ask whether

> Israel would ever have embarked on such a [presumably] expensive
> and [with regard to the United States] politically dangerous nuclear
> weapons program if it had not felt reasonably optimistic about the
> *technical possibilities for effective deterrence, despite the Soviet counterthreat*
> [italics added].[9]

Is this emphasis on "technical possibilities for effective deterrence"
enough to explain Israeli or Soviet behavior? We have argued that the
issue is primarily political, not technical. Therefore, while nuclear
weapons and delivery means are, of course, "technical" by their very
nature, the main key to understanding their possible role in Israel's
case is the origin, the nature, and the development of Arab politics and
behavior vis-à-vis Israel, and vice versa, in the context of Soviet-Arab,
Soviet-Israeli, Soviet-American, and Arab-Arab relations. Other nations,
such as China, North Korea, and especially Vietnam, must not be for-
gotten in the Arab context. The political dimensions of this complex go
far beyond the technical ones when the subject matter is nuclear
weapons and their means of delivery. This would make Israel's case
perforce different from any other cases of proliferation. Of course, other
proliferating nations' behavior is also the result of their specific political
circumstances, and each one of them must be evaluated as a case in
itself. But Israel's situation with regard to the Soviet Union must be
further studied in terms of Soviet ideology, history, and domestic pol-
icy, and in terms of the relations between the Soviet Union and nations
such as China and the West—as well as in terms of Israel's own behav-
ior.

Thus let us examine a more recent strategic-technical scenario, pub-
lished in the United States in 1988 by Kurt Gottfried and Bruce Blair.
This scenario argues that a rather large Israeli nuclear arsenal exists
(based on Mordechai Vanunu's revelations to the London *Times* two
years before). It also calculates Syrian chemical weapons, and a possible
conventional Syrian advantage that might, under certain circumstances,
allow President Assad a surprise conventional attack, covered by chem-
ical missiles. The scenario then describes the ensuing threats to vital
Israeli centers such as Haifa, a possible Israeli nuclear counterthreat, a
Soviet nuclear "surgical" strike against Israeli nuclear facilities, Ameri-
can intervention to save the Israelis and restore the status quo, the
Soviet refusal to do so, and so forth.[10] This scenario is based solely on
capabilities, or "means," and is totally innocent of any political-histori-

cal argument, except for the often-used Cuban Missile Crisis. In his 1989 book, British physicist and antinuclear activist Frank Barnaby also argues against the Israeli nuclear program by invoking all conceivable anti-bomb arguments, including Soviet guarantees to the Arabs, and technical arguments against the neutron bombs that Israel had supposedly developed for battlefield use.[11] In contrast to these arguments, my contention is that the political-historical framework must be added to the above-mentioned technical- and capabilities-based argument in order to create the proper context.

Here, it should not be forgotten that Israel was born as a result of World War II, when the Jewish claim for at least a part of Palestine was finally legitimized by many members of the international community. Even Soviet Russia supported this claim for the creation of a Jewish state in a part of Palestine, and contributed to its survival. But this in itself is not the only reason to make a "Soviet nuclear counterthreat" in the service of an Arab war of destruction against Israel— at the time of the "pariah" argument's proposition—a rather questionable endeavor. When combined with American commitments to Israel (which may have been in turn related to the undeclared Israeli bomb that had been described abroad), with the "rules of the game" that emerged between the superpowers themselves regarding nuclear threats and nuclear sharing with third parties, and finally with Soviet foreign policy preferences and war fighting doctrines in the nuclear age, a "Soviet nuclear counterthreat" became rather difficult to prove. Indeed, highly qualified American analysts evaluated the possibility and rejected it as early as 1963. As far as further developments in this area are concerned, we must study them historically the best we can, because even such "counterthreats," if they were made at all, could have been "opaque" as well.

The more recent scenario (as described by Barnaby) disregards the major changes in Moscow's international behavior that have occurred since Gorbachev's takeover, including rather visible changes in the Kremlin's attitude toward Israel. This may be partially explained by the foreign news about the launching of Israeli missiles allegedly capable of striking at Moscow, and by a variety of domestic-foreign political developments in the Soviet Union itself. These political developments are nuclear-weapons-related in that they resulted, among other reasons, from the Soviet refusal to maintain a high-level worldwide conflict with the West in the nuclear age, because no victory proved possible in this race. Here, the "means," i.e., the related technologies, might have played a very important role. One may even speculate that the Soviets acknowledged that an enormously expensive nuclear race with a power

whose GNP was double that of its own was leading nowhere, and that nuclear weapons at the hands of smaller powers could endanger it seriously, if it maintained a high-level international and even regional tension. Other reasons, of course, were general economic, domestic-political, and psychological, such as the emergence of a more liberal elite or elites in the Soviet Union.

In other words, deductive, technically inspired, deterrence-strategic-dominated thinking (such as the scenarios described above) seems to miss the political background involved in the emergence of Israel's nuclear development. Ironically enough, however, it was just this sort of technical, deductive thinking that was adopted by a number of Israeli politicians and even scholars later on. A group of them used it to produce the "ambiguous" Israeli posture of the 1960s and 1970s, a posture that was kept alive in the 1980s and early 1990s.[12] And this kind of thinking was even used to formulate the antithesis to the "ambiguous" posture—to wit, as suggested by me and later by Shai Feldman,[13] an Israeli student of Kenneth Waltz's—that an open Israeli nuclear posture would decisively guarantee its security, if Israel only withdrew to the pre-1967 lines and—as Feldman recommended—adopted a "launch upon warning" posture. Both approaches, when they remain deductive, abstract, and primarily based on logic and technical means, obviously only contradict each other and lead to no fruitful conclusion.

It is the purpose of this book to first explore the politics of Israel's nuclear behavior as perceived by others and as it became known within the rules of official opacity; second, to explore Arab behavior in this regard; and third, to study extra-regional inputs.

At the same time, the argument is put forward that "opaque" proliferation is not just an "ambiguous" nuclear posture, even if both terms are semiotically identical. "Ambiguity" is understood here as a historical phase in developing a nuclear-based, or -supported, foreign policy and strategy. In the ambiguous stage, capabilities are not yet ready—or are only partially ready—but efforts to achieve them are underway and there is a political need to hide them, but not always completely. That is, one uses them even at this stage for strategic and political purposes, and to meet domestic needs, even if in an ambiguous form. The ambiguous language could serve its users by avoiding foreign complications and staying within the rules of NPT, if necessary. Such was the case with Iraq; whereas, in Israel's case, the ambiguous stage preceded NPT itself. However, ambiguity may also represent a genuine desire—in practical terms, not just as the result of foreign pressure—to minimize the role of nuclear weapons in a nation's foreign policy and strategy for fear of the consequences in its foreign pol-

icy. Or else, an ambiguous nation could even be rejecting any serious role for its own nuclear potential on technical-practical and deterrence-theoretical grounds.[14]

"Opacity," on the other hand, is a deliberate decision not to assume an open nuclear posture when the capability to do so is fully developed, or regarded as such by foreign powers. This posture may be adopted for any of several reasons, among them foreign pressure to stay "undeclared," the enemy's perception of open threats as blackmail and humiliation, and possibly moral-cultural motives. Domestic political motives may also play an important role in presenting one's nuclear options to the general public in an opaque fashion, and thus they have little to do with foreign policy and with security considerations. Yet an opaque nation could, in fact, be seen as a full-fledged nuclear nation—with a peculiar status. And while a country's elites disagree on the exact role nuclear weapons play in that country's foreign and security policy, the general public has difficulty in following its own government's behavior. The enemy or enemies of such a·nation may use the opaque posture for their own purposes.

The packaging of opacity for foreign consumption may be done by using opaque language, such as making nuclearlike threats disguised on the surface, or by demonstrating capabilities but calling them by other names—for example, by launching research satellites by means of nuclear-capable missiles. Opacity assumes a higher degree of credibility for nuclear options, in spite of theoretical and practical arguments to the contrary. But people who give opacity higher credibility have various political goals in mind and are motivated by various drives and interests while assuming such a posture. These motives, however (though not fully spelled out), might or might not have been chosen by them but were imposed on them by outside powers. Still, the ways and means toward opaque nuclear postures require a historical study, a comparison with the behavior of open nuclear nations, and a consideration of the countermeasures that have been used to prevent opaque nations from "going nuclear" at all, or at least openly.

Nations can be both ambiguous and opaque in today's world; whereas in the past they were simply covert until they became open. It may well be that only France and Israel, who happened to cooperate,[15] had a purely ambiguous phase in their nuclear history, whereas India intended from the beginning to be opaque.

We will, however, concentrate on only one region at the outset of this book, and will deal with India, Pakistan, Iran, North Korea, and some other would-be proliferators only at the end, in order to see to

what extent their behavior can be compared with—or had any influence on—Middle Eastern actors.

An understanding of open behavior, as it influenced other nations, will illuminate our discussion. Therefore, we will begin with a short look at the open nuclear model, which was, historically, the first to emerge.