

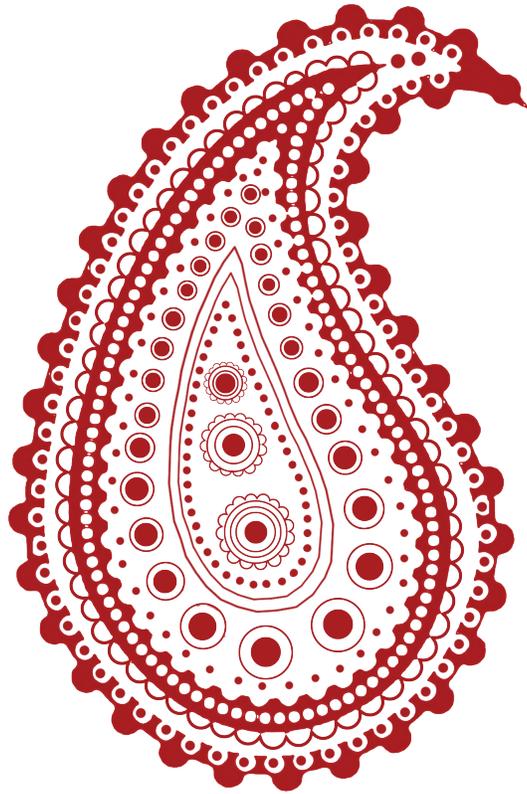
DĀNESH

THE OU UNDERGRADUATE
JOURNAL OF
IRANIAN STUDIES



The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA®
College of International Studies
Department of International and Area Studies

Volume 1 (2016)



Iranian Studies Program

*The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA®
College of International Studies*

DĀNESH: The OU Undergraduate Journal of Iranian Studies

Published under the auspices of the OU Iranian Studies Program, the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, the Department of International and Area Studies, and the College of International Studies at the University of Oklahoma.

Volume 1 (2016)

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From the Faculty Advisor

It is with great pleasure that I introduce this inaugural issue of *DĀNESH: The OU Undergraduate Journal of Iranian Studies*. The initiative for this journal grew from the hard work and dedication of undergraduate students in the University of Oklahoma's Iranian Studies Program. In particular, I would like to acknowledge **Andrew Akhlaghi** (MA 2016) and **Elena Gharipour** (BA 2016) for their tireless effort in leading this project from its inception, in the spring of 2015, to the publication of this inaugural issue.

Since the founding of the OU Iranian Studies Program in 2011, our goal has been to promote knowledge regarding all aspects of the history, culture, society, and politics of Iran and the Persianate world. As the program has grown over the past five years, the work of OU undergraduate students in the field of Iranian Studies has become truly outstanding. The publication of *DĀNESH*, a peer-reviewed journal published under the auspices of the OU Iranian Studies Program and the OU College of International Studies, is dedicated to highlighting the research of a growing undergraduate program in Iranian Studies at the University of Oklahoma. As we continue to mature, we are confident that the vitality of the program will be reflected in the pages of this journal.

The name of the journal, *DĀNESH*, comes from the Persian word meaning *knowledge*, *learning*, and *wisdom*. We believe this is a fitting name for a journal that seeks to foster deep and compassionate understanding of one of the world's most culturally rich and historically complex civilizations. It is with this goal in mind that we inaugurate the publication of *DĀNESH*.

Afshin Marashi
Farzaneh Family Chair in Iranian Studies
Director, OU Iranian Studies Program

From the Editors-in-Chief

We are extremely proud to have been a part of this project. We are proud of both the quality of research in the journal and to have been part of such a wonderful process. Each of these papers addresses an important aspect of U.S.-Iranian relations. We hope that these papers will provide much needed context and perspective to the ongoing debates on U.S.-Iranian relations.

We are also privileged to have had such a positive experience editing the journal. Our associate editors worked extremely hard on each of these papers and they were a joy to work with throughout the process. Ultimately, any journal is only as strong as the writers and in this regard we were very fortunate. All of the writers came into this process with the utmost professionalism. We are also indebted to the University of Oklahoma Libraries for helping us archive and host the journal through the SHAREOK system.

The quality and overall process of making the journal are a reflection of the kind of academic environment in the Iranian Studies program and the University of Oklahoma. Finally, we would like to acknowledge the crucial role of Dr. Afshin Marashi. Without his guidance and dedication to the Iranian Studies program, none of this would have been possible.

Andrew Akhlaghi
Elena T. Gharipour
Editors-In-Chief

Painful Desires: The Creation of the Iran-Contra Affair

Heath Rosenberger

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The Iran-Contra affair was one of the most significant scandals in 20th century U.S. history. Although the name, Iran-Contra, appears to mainly involve the Islamic Republic and the Nicaraguan rebels, the affair heavily involved the U.S. and Israel. The U.S. provided arms to Iran through Israel and South Korea long before Hezbollah took U.S. citizens hostage.¹ Through Israel, the U.S. illegally sold weapons to Iran in the 1980s in order to free U.S. citizens held hostage in Lebanon by Hezbollah. Before the affair even began, all three countries were involved in spawning the event. Israeli and U.S. presence in Lebanon birthed Hezbollah.²

From the administration of President Eisenhower to administration of President Nixon, the U.S., Iran, and Israel all cooperated unofficially to halt the Soviet Union's progression to the Middle East and to weaken the Soviets' Arab friends.³ All three states greatly feared the Soviet Union.⁴ Working together for a common goal was not a new phenomenon that began in the affair. After the Islamic Revolution, Iran publicly sneered at the "Great Satan" and the "Little Satan," the U.S. and Israel, respectively. However, they were able to look past this when they needed to.

The events of the Iran-Iraq war played a vital role in leading to the Iran-Contra affair. The U.S. enforced Operation Staunch, which stopped third party allies of the U.S., like Israel, from supplying weapons to Iran during the war. This outraged the Israelis.⁵ As the

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¹ Alan A. Block, "The Origins of Iran-Contra: Lessons From the Durrani Affair," *Crime, Law, and Social Change* 33 (2000), 6.

² Malcolm Byrne, *Iran-Contra: Reagan's Scandal and the Unchecked Abuse of Presidential Power* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2014), 37.

³ Samuel Segev, *The Iranian Triangle: The Untold Story of Israel's Role in the Iran-Contra Affair* (New York: The Free Press, 1988), 29.

⁴ Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran, and the United States* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 118-119.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 113.

Iran-Iraq war raged on, U.S. citizens were held hostage for longer, and Israel longed for stronger relations with a non-Arab neighbor. Thus, the Iran-Contra affair was born. This triangle played an integral role in beginning the scandal.⁶ Israel desired stronger relations with Iran, while Iran desperately needed more arms to fight Iraq in their long war. Meanwhile, the Reagan administration obsessed over freeing the hostages in Lebanon.

Envoys from both the U.S. and Iran independently approached Israel, each hoping to establish stronger connections with the other.⁷ The hostages entered the conversation here. The hostages were a valuable negotiating piece for the Iranians and gave the Israelis an opportunity to sway the U.S. to strike a deal with Iran.⁸ This triangle greatly influenced the entire affair and relations between countries for years after.

Each country had a specific goal they were trying to reach that involved one or both of the other two countries. Each country's dependency on the other ultimately resulted in one of the largest scandals a U.S. administration has faced. The desperation of each state created the perfect environment for an affair to birth the Iran-Contra scandal.

Israeli Relations

Since the creation of the Jewish State, Israel has made it her priority to have strong international alliances. After Israel's war for independence in 1948 against the surrounding Arab states, the Israelis became aware of the necessity of having non-Arab friends who could help them. David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister, developed Israel's Periphery Doctrine.⁹ The idea behind this doctrine was that Israel must develop strong alliances with its non-Arab neighbors - Iran, Ethiopia, and Turkey - in order to survive.¹⁰ This was an understandable desire, as even the Shah of Iran once said "neither Israel nor Iran want to be alone in a sea of Arabs."^{11 12}

However, after the Islamic Revolution, Israel lost a key member of her Periphery Doctrine. Ayatollah Khomeini publicly lambasted the Jewish State. It was out of the desire of Shimon Peres, Israel's Prime Minister at the time, to rebuild the Periphery Doctrine with Iran that the Iran-Contra affair was spawned.¹³ Peres was said to have been willing to try out "crazy ideas" in order to attain better relations with Iran.¹⁴

The Iran-Iraq war provided the perfect opportunity for Israel to recreate her alliance. Israel did not really desire either side to win the war. Iraq was already very hostile to Israel, and Israelis feared that with an Iranian success more Islamic fundamentalism would spread throughout the Middle East.¹⁵ Israel certainly did not want an Iraqi win in

⁶ Ibid., 116.

⁷ Jon Kimche, "Iran: The True Scandal," *Midstream* 33, no. 2 (February 1987), 4.

⁸ Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, 112.

⁹ Ibid., 21.

¹⁰ Donald Neff, "The U.S., Iraq, Israel, and Iran: Backdrop to War," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 20, no. 4 (Summer 1991): 24.

¹¹ Byrne, *Iran-Contra*, 34.

¹² Neff, "Backdrop to War," 24.

¹³ Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, 109.

¹⁴ Byrne, *Iran-Contra*, 65.

¹⁵ Hillel Schenker, "The Iranian Connection," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 16, no. 3 (Spring 1987): 201-202.

the war. An Iraqi success would strengthen the “Arab hand” which would undoubtedly be turned against Israel after the war.¹⁶ The Israelis wanted to sustain the war as long as possible so that Iraq and Iran would be focused on each other rather than on Israel.¹⁷

Israel had to decide between the lesser of two evils. Ultimately, Israel decided that Iraq was the greater threat in the war because it was closer to Israel, heavily armed with military experience, and belligerent in every Arab attack against Israel.¹⁸ As a result, Israel elected to support Iran. The Israelis hoped that if they could drag the war out longer by supporting Iran, Iranians would grow weary and no longer desire the Khomeini regime and put in place a more moderate government.¹⁹ This put a rift between the U.S. and Israel as the U.S. supported Iraq in the war.²⁰ Israel was going to have to sway the U.S. administration in order to best carry out their plans.

Peres and his administration felt strongly that Khomeini and his extremists were simply a fad that would pass. Peres and Reagan both felt it was their duty to ensure a more moderate government would follow that would be pro-West.²¹ The Israelis could not easily forget the previous good relations with the Shah.²²

Peres and the Iranian arms dealer, Ghorbanifar, argued extensively to the Reagan administration that the arms to be shipped would go towards strengthening moderates within Iran that wanted relations with the West.²³ It was apparent that whichever faction within Iran succeeded in lifting the U.S. embargo and supplied the army and Revolutionary Guard with arms would be the one to come into power after the death of Khomeini.²⁴ This pushed the Israelis even harder to ensure that they could sway the U.S. to their advantage.

Israel used its ability to export arms as a diplomatic tool to establish international relations.²⁵ Cooperative agreements on intelligence and nuclear issues, a weaker Iraqi state, permission for Iranian Jews to immigrate to Israel, and the money from the sales were just some of the strategic benefits Israelis accounted for with an arms deal with Iran.²⁶ If Israel could strike a deal with Iran, Peres truly felt that a new tide would turn between Israel and Iran.

Since Israel was boycotted by all the oil-rich Arab states around it, the price of oil in Israel was very high. Israel hoped to regain oil exports from Iran by securing an arms

¹⁶ Byrne, *Iran-Contra*, 34.

¹⁷ Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, 112.

¹⁸ Marie Syrkin, “The Higher Authority and Israel,” *Midstream* 33, no. 2 (February 1987): 15.

¹⁹ Mark Tessler, “Israel, Arms Exports, and Iran: Some Aspects of Israeli Strategic Thinking,” *Arab Studies Quarterly* 11, no. 1 (Winter 1986): 121.

²⁰ Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, 104.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 117.

²² Syrkin, “The Higher Authority,” 15.

²³ Byrne, *Iran-Contra*, 64.

²⁴ Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, 130.

²⁵ Tessler, “Israel, Arms Exports, and Iran,” 113.

²⁶ Byrne, *Iran-Contra*, 34-35.

deal.²⁷ Furthermore, Peres felt that by supporting Iran in the war, he split the focus of the Arabs, therefore contributing to Israel's security.²⁸

U.S.-Israeli relations would be affected as well by reaching an arms deal. Israel attempted to appeal to U.S. interests by arguing that if the U.S. removed its ban on Israeli arms sold to Iran, then a stronger Iranian military could help bolster the Soviets to the North.²⁹ By developing stronger ties with Iran, Israel hoped to display to the U.S. that it was a very strategic ally.³⁰ This was especially important to Israelis at the time because many Arab states were having warmer relations with the U.S., which threatened their influence on Capitol Hill.³¹ If Israel could get the U.S. to support Iran, the Arab states would dislike the U.S. more. This would also elevate Israel's position in the Middle East.³²

Israel's desperation for greater long-term relations with Iran was an essential driving force for the Iran-Contra affair. Their desire not only involved themselves, but Israel pushed both Iran and the U.S. to become greatly involved in the affair as well. The unique desire to return to the Peripheral Doctrine helped create the Iran-Contra affair.

Iran's Arms

The Iran-Iraq war arguably played the most essential role in bringing about the Iran-Contra affair. These two great powers of the Middle East viciously fought throughout the 1980s. The demographic, military, and economic consequences of the battles placed Iran in a desperate position for more arms to continue her fight against the Iraqi regime. Financially, to adequately reconstruct and resupply the Iraqi and Iranian militaries, it would cost more than \$200 billion.³³ The Iranians realized that they would be unable to win this war alone. The Iraqis were growing stronger, and Khomeini's regime feared that the longer the war dragged on, the more the Iranian people would be upset with their government.

Iran was in a peculiar place because of their weapons needs. Because the Shah had good relations with the West, Iranian military arms and supplies were U.S.-based. Operation Staunch was quite successful according to its purpose. The law exhausted all of Iran's arms.³⁴ Khomeini was so desperate for more arms that he chose arms purchases over food purchases.³⁵ Iran was also in a tight position because all of her key allies, Syria and Libya, required Soviet weapons which were easily accessible, but Iran needed U.S.-made weapons, which were unavailable due to Operation Staunch.³⁶ Iran needed to

²⁷ Tessler, "Israel, Arms Exports, and Iran," 114-115.

²⁸ Trita Parsi, "Israel-Iranian Relations Assessed: Strategic Competition from the Power Cycle Perspective," *Iranian Studies* 38, no. 2 (June 2005): 255.

²⁹ Byrne, *Iran-Contra*, 36.

³⁰ Tessler, "Israel, Arms Exports, and Iran," 122.

³¹ Parsi, "Israel-Iranian Relations," 255.

³² Mansour Farhang, "The Iran-Israel Connection," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 11, no. 1 (Winter 1989): 94.

³³ Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, 12.

³⁴ Byrne, *Iran-Contra*, 34.

³⁵ Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, 18.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 130.

quickly rebuild, and the U.S. was the only country with the means to assist them in doing that, because the Soviets could not.³⁷

Tehran did not want any attachments to the West, but they accepted the fact that they needed help if they were going to survive this war.³⁸ Iran had no option but to go to Israel. Israel not only had the arms Iran needed, but was also willing to violate the U.S. moratorium of arms sales to Iran.³⁹ Iran studied the Israelis and hit them at their most valuable point: better relations with Iran. Iran confronted the Israelis, promising better relations if the Israelis could secure an arms deal for U.S. military supplies with Iran.⁴⁰ In 1985, Iraq acquired new tanks. If Iran was to stop these tanks, they needed the U.S.-made anti-tank TOW missiles. Israel had a supply of these, but Prime Minister Peres would only sell these with U.S. approval, since they were U.S.-made. The Israelis were assured that these arms would go to the moderates in Iran to strengthen their position. In order to best sway the U.S. officials, Iranian arms dealer, Manucher Ghorbanifar, the main representative of Iran in the negotiations, offered to release the CIA agent held hostage in Lebanon, William Buckley.⁴¹ Once again, the Iranians hit their negotiating partners in a place they could not resist. William Buckley had knowledge of extensive U.S. secrets that, in the wrong hands, could deal a devastating blow to the U.S.. Reagan was desperate to free Buckley because he was being tortured.⁴² Ghorbanifar knew that the U.S. was too eager to pass on any opportunity to free Buckley.

The arms transactions between Israel and Iran involving TOW missiles and other arms, like artillery shells, continued with the approval of the U.S., with a few occasional mishaps.⁴³ However, the sales took a turn for the worse once the U.S. was solely in control of the sales and sold the arms at an inflated price of 370% in order to use the profits to fund the Nicaraguan Contras. When Tehran found out that the price of TOW missiles was being marked up significantly, they were outraged.⁴⁴ This led to the eventual breakdown in negotiations. Iran's desperation to win this long war was an integral part of creating the Iran-Contra affair.

Iran was not truly interested in having better relations with Israel, but Iran needed the U.S.-made arms Israel possessed. Iran put its desire for arms at the highest level on its list of priorities. This directly involved both the Israelis and the U.S., therefore creating the Iran-Contra affair. The toll of the Iran-Iraq war put Iran in a desperate position that could only be aided by outside help. Iran's need for arms forced them to reach out to the West to secure the U.S.-made military supplies from Israel.

Reagan's Dilemma

³⁷ Kimche, "Iran: The True Scandal," 5.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Farhang, "The Iran-Israel Connection," 88.

⁴⁰ Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, 115.

⁴¹ Byrne, *Iran-Contra*, 63.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Block, "The Origins of Iran-Contra," 56-57.

⁴⁴ Lawrence E. Walsh, "Political Oversight, the Rule of Law, and Iran-Contra," *Cleveland State Law Review* 42 (1987): 590.

The U.S. Government's involvement in the Iran-Contra affair can be traced back to well before 1985, even before the Reagan administration. President Carter's failures during the Iranian hostage crisis were the key motivators for President Reagan while U.S. citizens were held hostage in Lebanon. Reagan learned from Carter's blunders that he must do whatever necessary in order to keep the crisis from dragging out.⁴⁵ Furthermore, Reagan felt he owed his landslide election to Carter's plight handling the hostages held in Tehran.⁴⁶ As a result, Reagan made it his mission to not become another Jimmy Carter.

The Israelis were equally aware of Reagan's position following Carter. They realized that this would be the most opportune time to strike a deal with Iran because the Iranian hostages were freed on Reagan's inauguration day.⁴⁷ To say Reagan and his administration were obsessed with freeing the hostages would be an understatement. William Casey, the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency under the Reagan administration, said before the affair that he expected Reagan to be willing to risk much in order to secure the hostages' freedom.⁴⁸ It was clear that Reagan was willing to take charges of illegality rather than pass on a chance to free the hostages.⁴⁹

But the President did not act alone. Robert McFarlane, one of the National Security Advisors to Reagan, felt deep conviction that the U.S. should have been more aggressive in affecting the return of hostages.⁵⁰ Oliver North, a member of the National Security Council, constantly pushed for the U.S. to make more arm sales to the Iranians because he felt that the hostages could be executed at any moment.⁵¹ The U.S. public was also on the President's side. In 1985, two-thirds of the U.S. public felt that the U.S. ought to negotiate with hostage takers as a practical matter. And later in the decade, three-quarters of the U.S. public strongly approved of being in communication with the hostage-takers.⁵² As a result, the President strongly felt that it was his duty to bring back the hostages.⁵³ As much as the administration and the population wanted the hostages freed, the U.S. Government had a clear policy against negotiating with terrorists and hostage takers.⁵⁴ So if this administration was going to free the hostages, it had to take a different route and keep quiet about it. Here entered Iran.

Every arm sale to Iran was essentially centered on the hope that it would free more hostages in Lebanon. In the perspective of the Reagan administration, the more arms sold to Iran, the more hostages that would be released. Iran assured the administration that it could free the hostages as long as its need for arms was met. But the truth was, Iran was misrepresenting its capabilities. Freeing the hostages was more of a talking point in the

⁴⁵ Dominic Tierney, "Prisoner Dilemmas: The American Obsession with POWs and Hostages," *Orbis* 54, no. 1 (Winter 2010): 142.

⁴⁶ Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, 130.

⁴⁷ Byrne, *Iran-Contra*, 351.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 106-107.

⁵⁰ Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, 168.

⁵¹ Byrne, *Iran-Contra*, 146-147.

⁵² Ronald H. Hinckley, "American Opinion Towards Terrorism: The Reagan Years," *Terrorism* 12, no. 6 (1989): 389.

⁵³ Tierney, "Prisoner Dilemmas," 139.

⁵⁴ Walsh, "Political Oversight," 589.

negotiations than a reality for the Iranians. Iran knew that without being able to secure the freedom of Shi'i prisoners held in Kuwait and Israel, they would not be able to do much.⁵⁵ As a result, the U.S. greatly miscalculated Tehran's influence and control of Hezbollah, the hostage takers.⁵⁶ As the administration realized this, the morale went from hopeful to quite unhappy. The first U.S.-approved Israeli delivery of TOW missiles to Iran provided no free hostages. The administration was not pleased.⁵⁷ After two shipments, only one hostage was freed. This time, both the U.S. and Iran were upset at the Israelis for sending the wrong shipment, weapons marked with the Israeli insignia of the Star of David.⁵⁸

The administration wanted the hostages freed, but was very cautious to make sure that publicly there could be no direct connection between the sale of arms to Iran and the release of hostages in Lebanon.⁵⁹ When news broke of the scandal, the administration was forced to take a stance on its role in the affair. Reagan first assured the population that he would never make concessions to terrorists because that would just feed them and give them what they desire.⁶⁰ Attempting to clarify further, Reagan stated that there was no way the U.S. traded arms for hostages because his administration traded with Iran, not Hezbollah, and that Iran had no hostages.⁶¹

Reagan defended himself throughout the affair by emphasizing his role in embarking towards noble foreign policy goals.⁶² Oliver North especially tried to show that the purpose in selling the arms were for geopolitical reasons and to ultimately end Shi'i terrorism.⁶³ However, the public could see through this and knew that separating the sale of arms and the freedom of the hostages was impossible. Still Reagan, did not regret the scandal because, in truth, it freed some hostages.⁶⁴ That was all that mattered to his administration. The hostages were always at the forefront of the decision-making, and Iran was the one the administration turned to. Without the administration's desperation to free the hostages in Lebanon, the Iran-Contra affair certainly would never have taken place.

The U.S. trust in the Israelis to carry out the arms deal was integral in order to free the hostages. Reagan's belief that Iran possessed the power to free the Hezbollah-taken hostages helped push the U.S. to be an actor in the Iran-Contra affair.

The Aftermath

⁵⁵ Farhang, "The Iran-Israel Connection," 90.

⁵⁶ Byrne, *Iran-Contra*, 205.

⁵⁷ Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, 174-175.

⁵⁸ Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, 120.

⁵⁹ Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, 169.

⁶⁰ William L. Benoit, Paul Gullifor, and Daniel A. Panici, "President Reagan's Defensive Discourse on the Iran-Contra Affair," *Communication Studies* 42, no. 3 (1991): 279.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 282.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 289.

⁶³ Byrne, *Iran-Contra*, 147-148.

⁶⁴ Tierney, "Prisoner Dilemmas," 142.

Fallout from the scandal had many detrimental effects on international relations between these countries and others. Reagan essentially allowed Israel to shape U.S. foreign policy towards the Middle East. It was his conviction that Israel possessed superior knowledge of the governments of the Middle East.

Israel truly had nothing to lose by selling the arms, but the U.S. had little to gain.⁶⁵ Reagan announced later in the scandal that there would be no more sales to Iran, but Israel continued to sell, claiming it was their right.⁶⁶ Israel's role in the whole affair was also overlooked by the trial of Oliver North and the Tower Commission.⁶⁷ Relations between the U.S. and Israel were not pleasant following the affair. Immediately, the Iranians denied any negotiations at all with Israel.⁶⁸ The Iranians knew they had to protect their image with the Arab countries to attain their support. Iranians felt that the Arab states would surely join up against Iran if they knew that it had made concessions with Israel.

The U.S. was betrayed by Iran as well. The chief moderate the U.S. had supplied in hopes that he would take power after Khomeini and foster better ties with the West publicly mocked the U.S. and Israel after the affair was made public.⁶⁹ This dealt a devastating blow to the hopes of the administration on having Iran back as an ally.

The scandal's consequences on the Arab states may have been the most severe. In 1986, when Jordan's King Hussein became aware of the affair, he was the first Arab leader to publicly condemn the behavior of the U.S.⁷⁰ The Iraqis also felt they had been lied to after the scandal. They felt that U.S. government support in the war was really intended to harm Iraq and overthrow its government.⁷¹ Ultimately, the Arab States were upset with the U.S. for secretly helping Iran during the war, and the Arab States were also upset with Iran that they would consider entering relations with Israel.

The Iran-Contra affair backfired for all the state actors involved. Each country's desire for a different goal blinded them in the long run. The U.S., Iran, and Israel were each so desperate to attain their respective goals that they failed to foresee the consequences of their actions, thus creating the Iran-Contra affair.

Conclusion

The U.S., Iran, and Israel all had individual goals that when combined created the Iran-Contra affair. These countries together created a triangle that changed international relations in the Middle East. Israel hoped to rebuild its Periphery Doctrine and have greater ties with Iran. The Israelis hoped that with an ally of Iran, the Arab states surrounding Israel would think twice before attacking. Israel greatly pushed the U.S. to become involved in this affair hoping that Iran would take Israel more seriously with the

⁶⁵ Farhang, "The Iran-Israel Connection," 89.

⁶⁶ Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, 125.

⁶⁷ Jonathan Marshall, "Israel, the Contras, and the North Trial," *Middle East Report* 160 (Sep.-Oct. 1989): 35.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Syrkin, "The Higher Authority," 15.

⁷⁰ Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, 28.

⁷¹ Neff, "Backdrop to War," 31.

U.S. officials present. Iran was in a desperate position in the Iran-Iraq war. The Iranians knew that their position of superiority was in jeopardy if they lost the war with Iraq. They needed more arms- and fast. While Iran's military primarily used equipment made in the U.S., the U.S. had an embargo on Iran. Iran then went to the only other country that could help them: Israel. Israel's surplus of U.S.-made arms and willingness to supply them to Iran created a perfect trade, as long as the U.S. administration would sign off.

Although the U.S. government had an embargo on Iran, Reagan was desperate to free the hostages, and was willing to violate the embargo. The Iranians assured him that they if they received U.S. arms, U.S. citizens held hostage in Lebanon by the Shi'i militant group Hezbollah would be released. Reagan, out of eagerness to become the hero that returned the hostages home swiftly, unlike Carter before him, who dragged his hostage crisis out, agreed to this. This short period of time of cooperation between enemies was a peculiar point in history. It had serious, negative consequences for each country afterwards, but this affair has always left a memory of the Great Satan, the Little Satan, and the Islamic Republic working together.