

Asher Arian

**Israeli Public Opinion on
National Security 2001**

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Asher Arian

Israeli Public Opinion on National Security 2001

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About The National Security and Public Opinion Project

Initiated in 1984, the National Security and Public Opinion Project monitors Israeli public opinion on issues related to national security. Surveys undertaken and cited in this report were comprised of representative samplings of the adult Jewish population of Israel. Since 1998, these have included individuals from kibbutzim and from settlements in the Occupied Territories. The margin of error of the 2001 survey was ± 3.1 percent.

The survey presented here was carried out between April 12 and May 11, 2001. During that period, the El-Aqsa Intifada (the uprising of the Palestinians against Israel) was in its seventh month. Terrorist attacks had again begun to threaten Israeli cities.

The dates of the project's surveys were: (1) June 1985; (2) January 1986; (3) December 9, 1987-January 4, 1988; (4) October 1988; (5) March-October 1990; (6) March 16-31, 1991; (7) June 1-21, 1992; (8) January 1-15, 1993; (9) January 11-February 9, 1994; (10) January 4-February 7, 1995; (11) February 1996; (12) February-March 1997; (13) January 26-March 9, 1998; (14) January 25-March 7, 1999; (15) January-February, 2000; (16) April 12- May 11, 2001.

Sample sizes from the various surveys were 1,171 in 1985; 1,172 in 1986; 1,116 in 1987; 873 in 1988; 1,251 in 1990; 1,131 in 1991; 1,192 in 1992; 1,139 in 1993; and 1,239 in 1994; 1,220 in 1995, 1,201 in 1996; 1,126 in 1997; 1,207 in 1998; 1,203 in 1999; 1,201 in 2000; and 1,216 in 2001.

All surveys were prepared, conducted and analyzed by the author; fieldwork through 1995 was done by the Dahaf Research Institute, in 1996 by Modi'in Ezrachi, and since 1997 by the Almidan/Mahshov Research Institute.

Additional surveys discussed in this report were pre-election surveys, conducted in May 1996 and May 1999, supervised by Asher Arian and Michal Shamir. The 1996 survey was conducted by the Modi'in Ezrachi Research Institute, with a sample size of 1,168; the 1999 survey was conducted by the Almidan/Mahshov Research Institute and had a total sample size of 1,225; only the Jewish portion of the sample ($N = 1,075$) is reported here. Those surveys were funded by the Israel Democracy Institute and the Pinhas Sapir Center for Development at Tel Aviv University.

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Executive Summary

Israeli public opinion took a sharp turn to the right in the months after the beginning of violence in September 2000. The rise in violence led to increased gloom about the short-term prospects for peace and about the state of Israeli national security.

Despite high levels of suspicion and distrust of the Palestinians, support for negotiations and readiness for concessions remained largely in place. Even after several months of violence, 58 percent expressed their support for the Oslo process.

There seemed to be a reassessment regarding the legitimacy of certain policy alternatives. The establishment of a Palestinian state was no longer anathema to Israeli politics, and even the division of Jerusalem had become a legitimate policy option that could be debated.

Perceived threat and policy positions have traditionally been inversely related in the Israeli-Arab conflict. As perceived threat decreased, conciliatory policies were more likely to be adopted. However, in 2001, there was an unusual development: perceived threat was very high, but its increase was not associated with a shift toward less conciliatory policies. The preferred reaction to the Palestinians in 2001 seemed to be separation from them rather than trying to control them or to isolate them politically.

The Intifada seemed to be an immediate cause of the increase in perceived threats, and the changes in attitude engendered by them. It occasioned a souring of national and personal moods, and led to more negative assessments of Palestinians and Israeli Arabs. Large majorities opposed allowing Israeli Arabs to participate in decisions on matters related to determining the state's boundaries (which form the basis of the land-for-peace approach to the Oslo-Madrid process), or including Arab parties in the governing coalition. A majority also thought that Israeli

Arabs were not loyal to Israel.

The rate of support for returning land for peace was similar to past surveys. However, when asked how best to avoid war with Arab states, strengthening military capacity was preferred to pursuing peace talks. Israelis favored tough policies to fight terror as well as measures that might reduce friction with their Palestinian neighbors, including conceding the Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem in the framework of a peace agreement. A large majority supported separation between Israelis and Palestinians and thought that the idea was feasible (though not on a unilateral basis). Opinion regarding settlements was less conciliatory than in the past.

The peace plans with the Palestinians and the Syrians discussed by the Barak government were both rejected by a majority of respondents.

Israelis were worried about their personal security and pessimistic about the general state of Israel's national security. There was a dramatic drop in the percentage of respondents that thought that an end to the conflict would be achieved by signing treaties with the Palestinians and the Arab states. The perceived chances for peace were never lower than in the present surveys, and the perceived likelihood of war never higher. For the first time in this series, respondents assessed that, in the near future, the likelihood of war was greater than that of peace.

There was a perception that the armed forces were growing weaker, with a third of respondents saying the IDF had become weaker and only 14 percent saying that it had grown stronger. The IDF was seen as more efficient than other institutions in Israel. Many wanted the security budget expanded and a third were prepared to pay more taxes to finance it. As in the past, the notion of general conscription was strongly supported and the notion of a volunteer army rejected.

The gap in credibility regarding statements made by security leaders compared with those made by political leaders was smaller than in the recent past.

Pragmatism and Realism: Separating Threat from Positions Regarding a Palestinian State

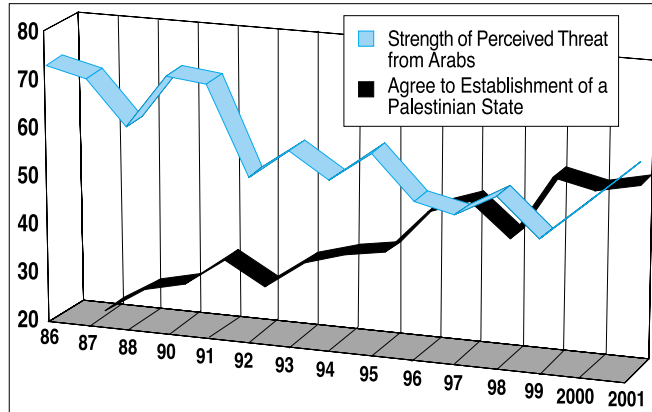
The continuous violence between Palestinians and Israelis, which began at the end of September 2000, seems to have induced Israelis to take a sharp turn to the right on security-related issues. Israelis were also increasingly gloomy about the short-term prospects for peace and about the state of their nation's security. At the same time, they continued to manifest support for efforts to bring peace and reconciliation to the Middle East. They also expressed support for measures that might result in reduced friction with Palestinian Arabs.

This unique amalgam resulted from the breakdown of talks between Ehud Barak's government and the Palestinian Authority, which was followed by the onset of the El-Aqsa Intifada last year. These events affected Israeli public opinion, and resulted in the election of Ariel Sharon in the special elections for the Prime Minister held in February 2001.

Despite the altering of views since the beginning of the uprising, with levels of suspicion and distrust of the Palestinians reminiscent of the period before the signing of the Oslo Accords, support for negotiations and readiness for concessions remained largely in place.

Israelis did not lose their faith in efforts to achieve peace and reconciliation in the Middle East, although they supported these efforts at lower rates. Despite the eight months of violence, 58 percent expressed their support for the Oslo process compared to 70 percent in 1999 and 2000. While 90 percent of Barak supporters

Figure 1: Perceived Threat from Arabs and Support for a Palestinian State



avored the continuation of the Oslo process, only a third of Sharon's voters did so.

Israeli public opinion in Spring 2001 was characterized by two patterns – a harsher assessment of the Palestinians and the future, and at the same time, the persistence of positions that would allow compromise and conciliation. What had changed in the situation were expectations of the citizenry and a reassessment as to which policy alternatives were legitimate. The establishment of a Palestinian state was no longer anathema to Israeli politics, and, as we shall see, even the division of Jerusalem had become a legitimate option and something that could be debated.

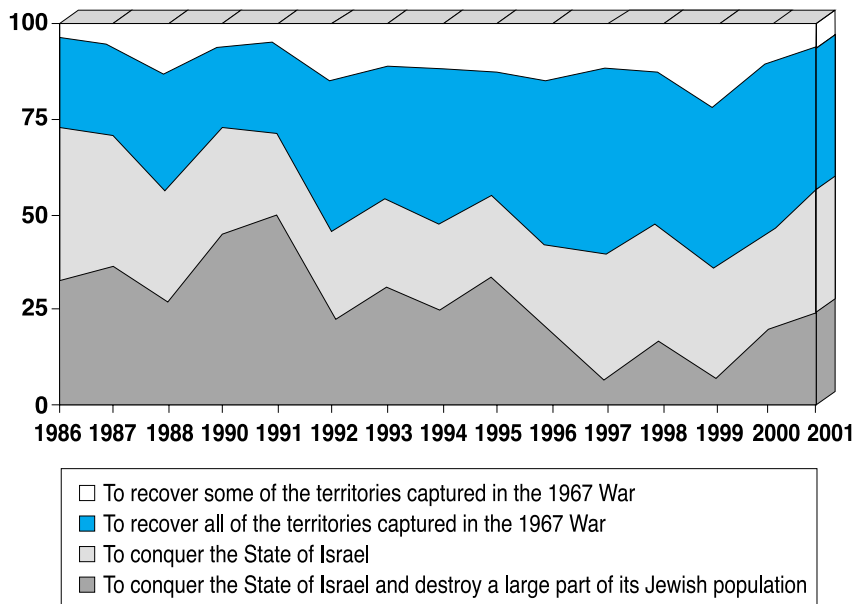
Perceived threat and policy position have been inversely related in the Israeli-Arab conflict. As threat decreased, conciliatory policies were more likely to be adopted. Perceived threat was very high in 2001 but in an unusual development, its increase was not associated with a shift in policy position. The preferred reaction to the Palestinians in 2001 seemed to be separation from them rather than trying to control them or to isolate them politically.

Figure 1 displays the rates of those reporting high levels of threat and rates of those agreeing with the establishment of a Palestinian state. Threat and policy were inversely related until

1996; as threat decreased, support for conciliatory positions grew. This pattern seems to have changed in the mid-1990s, after which perceived threat and support for a Palestinian state both increased or remained stable. No longer did threat drive policy position. A majority seemed to have accepted the eventual establishment of a Palestinian state regardless of level of perceived threat.

Threat was measured by a question regarding the aspirations of the Arabs. These aspirations were assessed in a very pessimistic manner in 2001, reminiscent of the rates recorded when the question was first asked in these surveys in the late 1980s (see Figure 2). In 2001, 62 percent of the respondents thought that the Arabs wanted either to conquer the State of Israel (31%) or to kill much of the Jewish population of Israel (31%), compared with 47 percent in 1999. The two other possible responses were either that the Arabs aspired to regain all the territories lost in 1967 (i.e.,

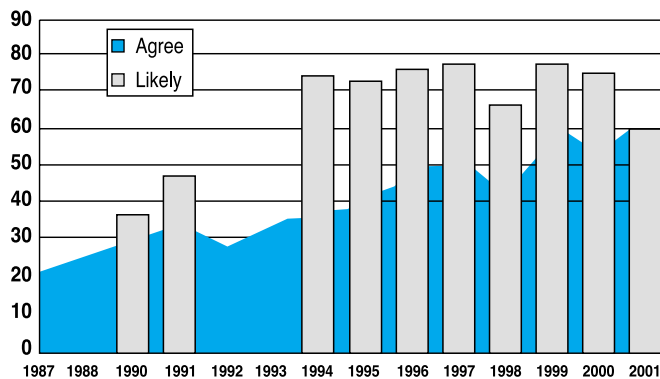
Figure 2: Question: What do you Think are the Arabs' Ultimate Aspirations Regarding Israel?



without conquering the State of Israel itself – 31% in 2001), or to regain only some of those territories (7% in 2001).

Fifty seven percent expressed agreement with the establishment of a Palestinian State. The percentage of those expressing support for such a state had grown over the years, and the 2001 number was the same as the previous high recorded in 1999 (see Figure 3). On the other hand, only 60 percent thought it likely that a Palestinian State would be established in the next five years, compared with 74 percent in 2000.

Figure 3: A Palestinian State: Levels of Agreement and Perceived Likelihood

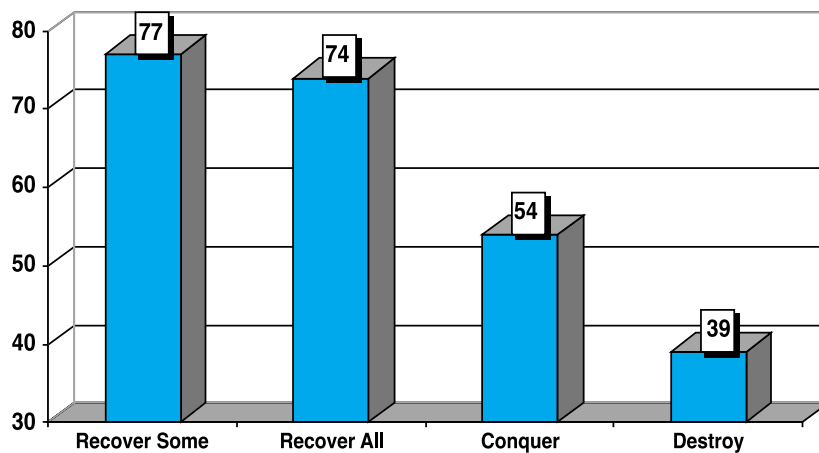


While there was a relationship between the level of perceived hostility toward Israel on the part of the Arabs on the one hand and the level of support for a Palestinian state on the other, the levels of support for a Palestinian state were surprisingly high. More than seven in ten of the respondents who felt *least* threatened by the Arabs (i.e., those who stated in their responses that Arab aspirations were limited to a return of some or all of the territories lost in 1967) supported the idea of a Palestinian state.

More surprising, and an indication of how widespread the acceptance of a Palestinian state had become in Israel public opinion, could be seen among those who felt *most* threatened by Arab aspirations regarding Israel. Among those who thought the

Arabs wanted to conquer the state of Israel, 54% supported the proposal of a Palestinian state. Even more amazingly, among those who believed that the aspirations of the Arabs were to kill much of the Jewish population of Israel, nearly four in ten accepted the idea of establishing a Palestinian state (see Figure 4). These numbers may be associated with the belief that a Palestinian state would be demilitarized, and hence unlikely to pose a threat. An alternative explanation is that, as troubling as a Palestinian state may be, the demographic threat of the Arabs outnumbering the Jews in Israel is even more worrisome. The severity attributed to this perceived threat could make possible the support of a

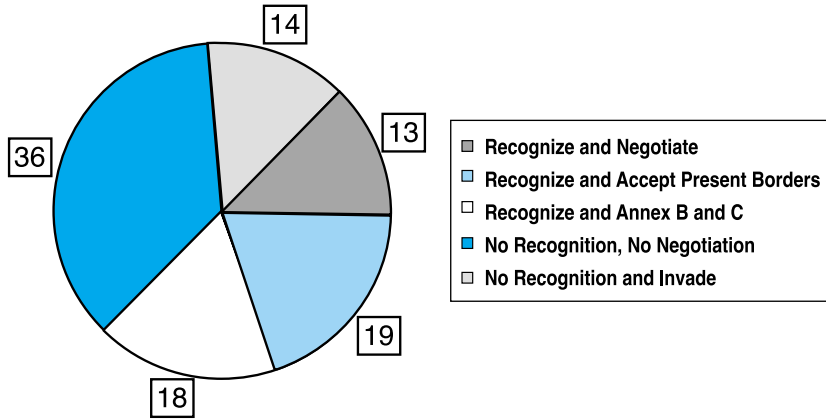
Figure 4: Support for the Establishment of a Palestinian State (in %; according to perceived Arab aspirations regarding Israel)



Palestinian state, which may be seen to increase the likelihood that Israel would maintain a solid Jewish majority.

Respondents were asked what Israel should do if a Palestinian state were to be declared unilaterally; they were evenly split about whether or not to recognize such a state (see Figure 5). A plurality favored neither recognition nor negotiation with such a state.

Figure 5: What should Israel do if a Palestinian State is Declared Unilaterally?



A series of questions was asked regarding the extent to which certain situations were threatening to the respondents. Respondents were asked to react based on a 7-point scale, ranging from “very threatening” to “not threatening at all.” The following numbers related to the sum of those giving answers from the three “threatening” categories:

- The development of nuclear weapons by Iran and Iraq ... 86%
- Continuation of the Intifada 71%
- A non-democratic government in Israel 71%
- War with Syria 70%
- The establishment of a Palestinian state 46%
- Returning territories for peace 39%

II

The Intifada's Effect on the Israeli Electorate

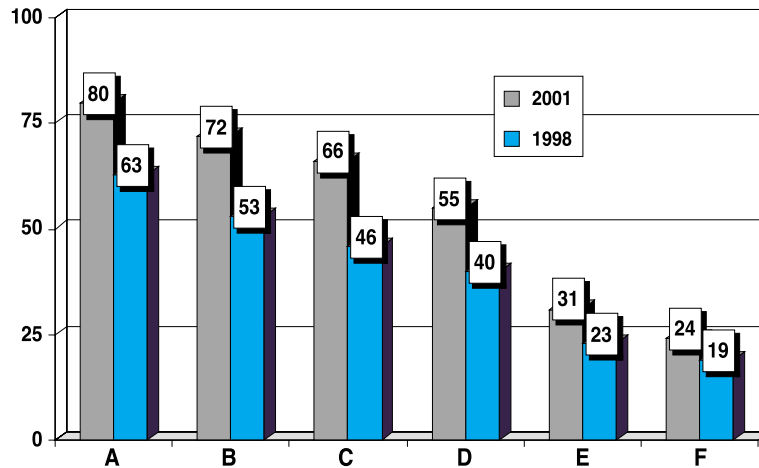
The El-Aqsa Intifada has had an impact on public opinion, with more respondents turning to the right than to the left after eight months of Palestinian violence. Thirty eight percent of the respondents said that the violence decreased their willingness to make concessions, while only 9 percent said they were now more ready for additional concessions. The remainder reported no change in readiness to make concessions.

The propensity to move to the right was characterized by all groups (see Table 4), but was especially marked among those respondents who defined themselves as observant of Jewish law. While two thirds of these respondents reported no change in their positions, among those whose positions had changed, the vast majority (by a ratio of 11:1) said that their opinions had become more militant. For those reporting no observance of religious ritual, a third said they had moved to the right as a result of the Intifada, 13 percent to the left.

Among Sharon voters in 2001, 42 percent reported a move to a more militant position compared with 6 percent to a more conciliatory one; the parallel numbers for Barak voters in 2001 were 33 percent and 14 percent.

The Intifada, coupled with the uprisings that took place among Arab-Israelis, has soured national and personal moods and has led to more negative assessments of both Palestinians and Israeli Arabs. It has bolstered the electoral prospects of parties on the right, and has encouraged some to reconsider their desire to live in Israel (see Figure 6). These same issues were raised a year after the beginning of the first Intifada. Asking about these issues in

Figure 6: Shifts in Attitude in Reaction to Intifada, 2001 and 1988



Key: A: National Mood Worse; B: Assessment of Palestinians more Negative; C: Personal Mood Worse; D: Assessment of Israeli Arabs more Negative; E: Intention to Change Vote to Parties of the Right; F: Lower Desire to Live in Israel.

1988 generated the same order of impact as in 2001. However, in 2001 the rates were uniformly higher.

Beyond that, 31 percent said that the Intifada would induce them to change their vote and cast ballots for parties on the right, compared with only 8 percent that said they would change their vote to parties of the left. An additional 4 percent said they would vote for religious parties as a result of the Intifada.

Seventy two percent said that their views of Palestinians had become more negative as a result of the violence, and 70 percent reported that the prospects for peace had diminished. The attitudes toward Israel's Arab citizens have also turned sour: 55 percent said that their views of Israeli Arabs had become more negative.

Seventy five percent now oppose allowing Israeli Arabs to participate in decisions on vital matters related to determining the state's boundaries, compared to 65 percent in the survey of 2000. 67 percent oppose the inclusion of Arab parties in the

governing coalition, compared with 46 percent in last year's survey (see Table 1).

Table 1. Support/Opposition to Arab Parties Joining Ruling Coalition

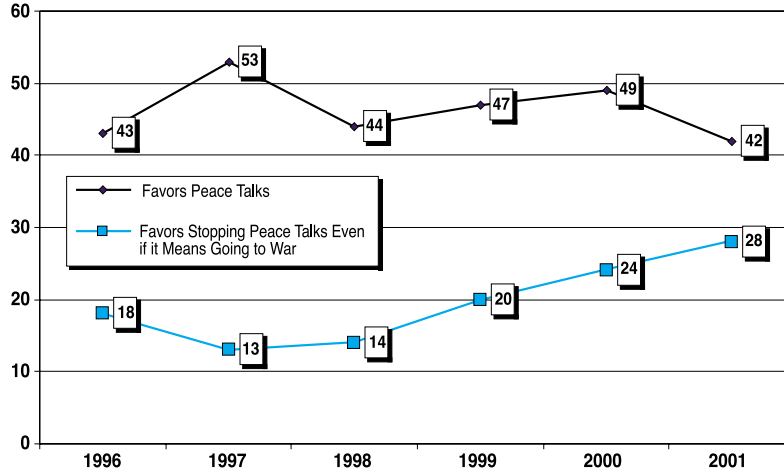
	1993	1994	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Strongly support	10%	12%	10%	13%	9%	17%	15%	8%
Support	23	27	35	26	29	33	31	25
Oppose	21	21	28	24	23	29	24	35
Strongly oppose	47	41	28	37	40	21	30	32

Almost three out of four respondents did not think that Israeli Arabs were loyal to Israel, while 60 percent thought Israeli Arabs were disadvantaged compared with Israeli Jews. A slight majority (53%) would favor autonomy for Israel's Arabs, and almost half (49%) would agree to have the government encourage Arabs to leave the country.

As seen above, when asked about the effect of the Intifada on them, a larger percentage reported that they had adopted more militant positions. However, the rate of support for conciliatory attitudes was relatively stable – 42 percent agreed to the principle of returning land for peace, very similar to the rates of 1996 and 1998, but 11 points lower than the 53 percent recorded in 1997. There has been steady growth in support of stopping the peace talks – even if it doing so were to result in a higher probability of war – but from a low base. From a low of 13 percent that supported such a move in 1997, the 2001 percentage rose to 28 (see Figure 7).

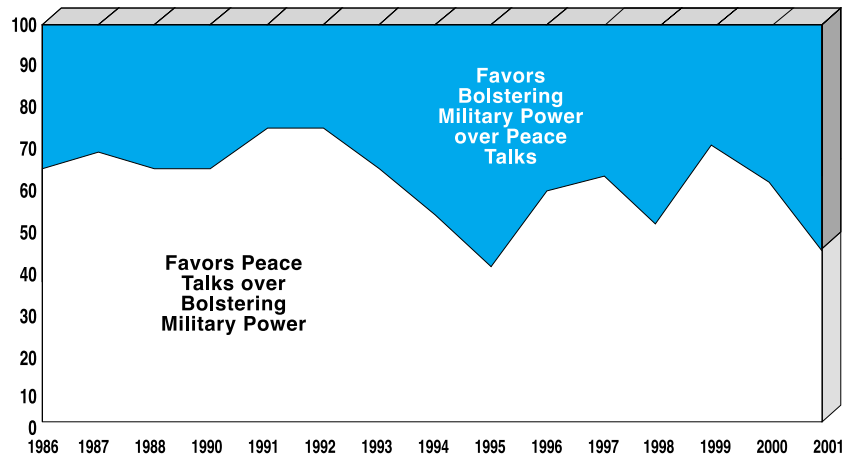
On the other hand, a plurality (47 percent disagree, 41 percent agree) disagreed with the statement that there was no *military* (as opposed to diplomatic) solution to the conflict. This assessment was clearly affected by education, place of birth, and extent of religious observance (see Table 5). Lower educational levels, being born in Asia or Africa, and being religiously observant were related to the belief that there was a military solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Figure 7: Support of Peace Talks vs. Risk of Deterioration into War



A related matter was tapped by forcing respondents to choose – as a means of preventing war – between peace talks and strengthening military capacity (see Figure 8). The preference for choosing military capacity over peace talks was expressed by 53 percent, much higher than the 39 percent who selected that in 2000, and the 31 percent of 1999. This was only the second time

Figure 8: Military Power or Peace Talks, 1986-2001



since 1986 that a majority of respondents preferred bolstering military capacity over peace talks (the first time was in 1995).

By a margin of 52:34, respondents favored unleashing the IDF to fight terror and terrorists. A policy of sharp and immediate response to provocation (75%) was preferred in general to a policy of restraint (25%). Respondents expressed agreement for a host of Israeli measures against the Palestinians, until such time as talks were renewed. These measures, and the rates of support they garnered among the respondents, were as follows:

- ‘Elimination’ of those active in terror 89%
- Use of tanks and fighter aircraft 71%
- Use of closures and economic sanctions 68%
- Invasion of areas under Palestinian sovereignty
(‘A’ Areas) 57%
- Signing of an interim agreement that would be
valid for the next few years 50%
- Agreement to stationing an international force between
Israel and the Palestinians 48%
- Unilateral withdrawal from settlements to make
defending the border easier 33%
- Relinquishing territory as part of the third withdrawal .. 33%

Israelis also expressed support for measures that might reduce friction with their Palestinian neighbors. Support for conceding the Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem in the framework of a peace agreement has reached an all-time high – 51 percent. Fifty five percent expressed consent for abandoning all settlements except those included in large settlement blocs. As we have seen, 57 percent now approve of the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza in the framework of a peace agreement.

The general mood seemed to embrace the idea of separation between Israelis and Palestinians and 74 percent supported that idea. While some claim that separation is not a feasible policy option, 62 percent thought that such separation was a feasible idea.

However, if separation was a widely shared goal, most Israelis did not think that the way to achieve it was by unilateral action. A majority (63%) rejected the proposal that Israel ought to declare what its borders are unilaterally and then withdraw to those borders and defend them.

The incidence of agreement for returning specific territories to the Palestinians resembled past patterns. The rates of agreement for returning Western Samaria (39%), Gush Etzion (31%), and the Jordan Valley (18%) were similar to those of the late 1990s but lower than 2000 (see Table 2).

The notion of returning “Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem” was supported by 51 percent of the respondents, a major shift compared to less than half that rate in the past for “areas of East Jerusalem.” The change of wording reflected the introduction of the topic into the Israeli political agenda as a result of the negotiations between Barak and Arafat at the beginning of 2001. No longer was it a single Jerusalem to be divided; now the issue was framed as reaching accommodation for a city in which certain neighborhoods were predominantly Jewish and others mostly Arab.

It is also important to note that the percentage prepared to make concessions on Jerusalem was much *higher* than support for returning Western Samaria or the Jordan Valley. These areas have small Arab-Palestinian populations compared with the large population of Jerusalem. Returning neighborhoods of Jerusalem offsets some of the perceived danger regarding the shifting demographic issue, while Western Samaria and the Jordan Valley are conceived of in terms of geographic and military terms.

Table 2. Support for the Return of Specific Territories, by Area

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Western Samaria	30%	30%	38%	44%	39%	41%	51%	39%
Gush Etzion	14%	18%	20%	26%	26%	32%	33%	31%
Jordan Valley	18%	19%	20%	20%	23%	23%	32%	18%
East Jerusalem	10%	9%	12%	20%	17%	21%	24%	51% ^a

^a In 2001, “Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem.”

A separate question was asked about returning the Temple Mount without returning the Western Wall; 69 percent were opposed.

Regarding the settlers and the settlements, responses in 2001 were more militant than in 2000. In 2001, 36 percent answered that no Jewish settlements should be removed, compared with the 2000 survey in which 32 percent said none should be removed from the West Bank and 26 percent from the Golan Heights. Half agreed in 2001 to remove some settlements in general; in 2000, the comparable numbers were 59 percent in the West Bank and 50 percent in the Golan. 14 percent favored removing all settlements in 2001, compared to 15 percent for West Bank settlements and 18 percent for Golan settlements in 2000.

When asked specifically about returning Gush Katif in Gaza, 55 percent were in favor. The idea of exchanging territories within Israel proper for territories annexed from Judea and Samaria was rejected by 62 percent.

Security opinion in Israel has undergone a loss of innocence, a shift from a mild optimism to a pragmatic realism. Public opinion is sensitive to political developments and to terror attacks and assesses the situation accordingly. While it has lost its innocence and naive optimism, public opinion on policy issues has not reverted to the more militant positions prevalent before the signing of the Oslo Accords.

III

Plans for Peace

The period under study was filled with diplomatic initiatives and discussions of major concessions for peace. It is important to note that the retrospective support for government policies was generally high. Eighty five percent of the sample supported the signing of the peace treaty with Egypt in 1979, including the extensive concessions involved. Seventy four percent registered their approval of Israel's unilateral withdrawal in May 2000 from Lebanon.

In January 2001 the government of Ehud Barak, with the active encouragement and participation of US President Bill Clinton, negotiated with Yasser Arafat regarding details of a final Israeli-Palestinian settlement. Elements of the negotiations as reported in the press and rates of opposition (strongly oppose and oppose, combined) are reported below:

Question: *“Do you support or oppose each of the following Israeli concessions to the Palestinians, as part of a peace agreement?”*

	% Opposed
• Exchanging territories	56
• Establishment of a Palestinian state on 95% of the West Bank and Gaza, with Israel retaining clusters of settlements	57
• Transferring the Arab neighborhoods in Jerusalem to Palestinian control	59
• The Temple Mount to be held by the Palestinians; the Western Wall retained by Israel	67
• A limited return of Palestinian refugees to Israel	78
• Israel would give up control of the Jordan Valley in a number of years	82

Respondents were then asked whether they supported or rejected the plan as a whole:

Question: *“Do you support or oppose a peace agreement with the Palestinians whereby the Palestinians would declare an end to the conflict, and that would entail the establishment of a Palestinian state on 95 percent of the territories with Israel retaining clusters of settlements; transferring to the Palestinians Arab neighborhoods in Jerusalem; giving up sovereignty over the Temple Mount but retaining the Western Wall; and allowing the return of a limited number of Palestinian refugees to Israel?”*

Sixty one percent opposed the plan; 39 percent expressed support for it. The fact that the rate of acceptance for the plan as a whole is higher than the rate for some of the elements in it in the point-by-point description can be explained by the addition of the caveat *“whereby the Palestinians would declare an end to the conflict.”* In this type of multi-dimensional assessment, the positive valence of ending of the conflict may outweigh the negatives in the point-by-point analysis.

Males opposed the plan more than females, the young more than the old, and the less educated more than the more educated. Sixty nine percent of those born in Asia and Africa rejected the plan, compared to 57 percent of Israel-born whose father was born in Europe and America. Among those who had served in the army but not in the Occupied Territories, 58 percent opposed, compared with 60 percent who had served in the territories and 70 percent of those who had reported no army service.

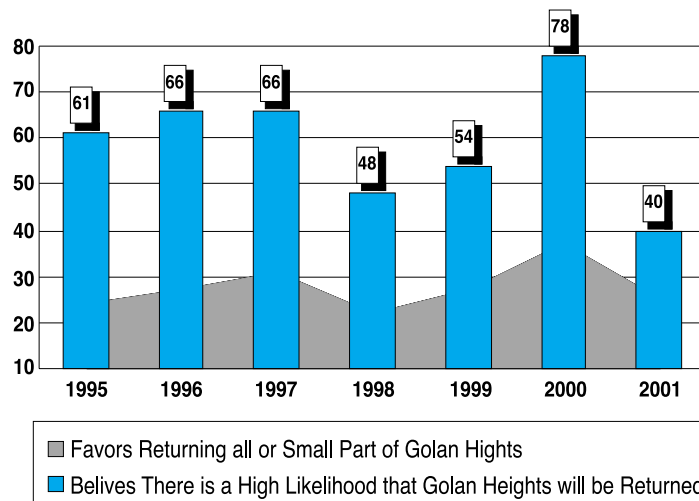
Among those respondents who reported no army service at all, it is likely that most were either religious men exempted because of yeshiva study, or religious women. As before, the extent of reported religious observance is highly related to support or opposition *vis-à-vis* the peace plan noted above, with 90 percent of those who reported that they observe all traditions opposing, compared with only 42 percent opposing among those who reported that they observe none of the traditions.

Among those who voted for Sharon in 2001, 85 percent opposed the proposal, compared with 26 percent opposition among Barak voters.

Respondents expressed even greater opposition to concessions that were discussed in early 2000 concerning a peace treaty with Syria (see Figure 9). Seventy five percent opposed and 25 percent supported a significant withdrawal in the Golan Heights, compared to 37 percent in 2000. Only 40 percent thought that the Golan would be returned to Syria within the next five years, compared to 78 percent in 2000.

When asked about the details of the proposed treaty with Syria, the rejection rates for proposed elements were as follows:

Figure 9: Attitudes toward Returning the Golan Heights, 1995-2001



	% Opposed
• The Golan Heights would be demilitarized and neither Israel nor Syria would have armies near the boundary	58
• Mt. Hermon would be returned to Syria, but Israel would have an early-warning system there	68
• Golan settlers could remain there for a limited period of time	74
• The Golan Heights would be under Syrian sovereignty ...	78
• The international boundary would be the waterline of the Sea of Galilee	86

Respondents were then asked if they supported the plan as a whole:

Question: "And finally, do you support or oppose a peace agreement with Syria whereby the Golan heights would be transferred to Syrian sovereignty; the Golan settlers would be able to remain there for a limited period of time only; the international boundary would be the waterline of the Sea of Galilee; the Golan would be demilitarized with neither Israel nor Syria maintaining an army along the boundary; and Mt. Hermon would be returned to Syria, but Israel would retain an early-warning system there?"

As noted above, 75 percent opposed such a plan; 25 percent supported it. The issue of the placement of the international border proved to be a significant factor in the decision to support or oppose the plan. Proposing that the border be moved east of the Sea of Galilee increased support of the plan by 11 percent, to 36 percent (see below).

"And what if the same conditions apply as before, with the international boundary east of the Sea of Galilee, would you then support the agreement?"

With this alteration to the international boundary, 64 percent opposed and 36 percent supported.

IV

The Public Mood

Israelis became more worried about their personal security and pessimistic about the general state of Israel's national security. Eighty five percent expressed concern that they or a member of their family would become victim of a terrorist attack, as opposed to 68 percent in 1999 (see Table 3).

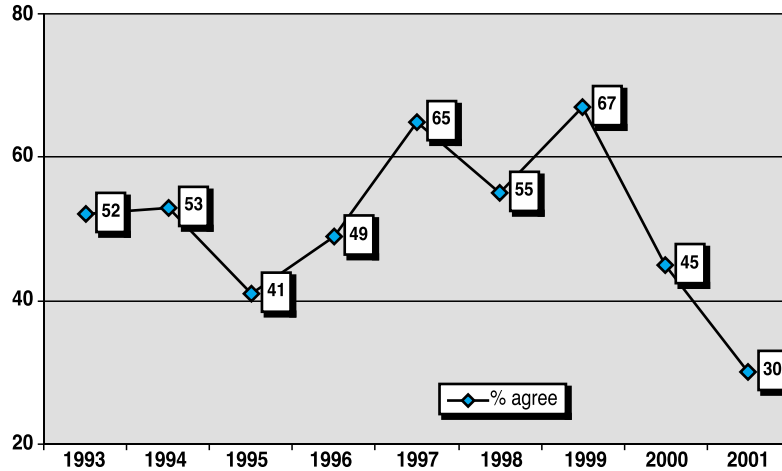
Table 3. Levels of Concern over Personal Safety, 1993-2001

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Very worried	48%	37%	46%	35%	31%	22%	13%	30%	40%
Worried	36	39	39	43	46	44	45	49	45
Not worried	13	18	13	17	18	26	34	18	12
Not worried at all	2	6	2	5	5	8	8	3	3

Sixty six percent said that Israeli citizens' personal security had become worse since the peace process began. Eighty five percent predicted that the violent struggle with the Palestinians would escalate.

The explanation for much of this shift is changed expectations. There was a dramatic drop in the percentage that thought that an end to the conflict would be achieved by signing treaties with the Palestinians and the Arab states. In spite of widespread support for the treaties with Egypt and Jordan, and continued acceptance of the Oslo peace process, there was a loss of faith in agreements reached with Arafat and the Palestinians. In 2001, only 30 percent thought that signing treaties of peace would actually mean an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict, compared to 67 percent in 1999 (see Figure 10).

Figure 10: Levels of Confidence in the Effectiveness of Treaties, 1993-2001

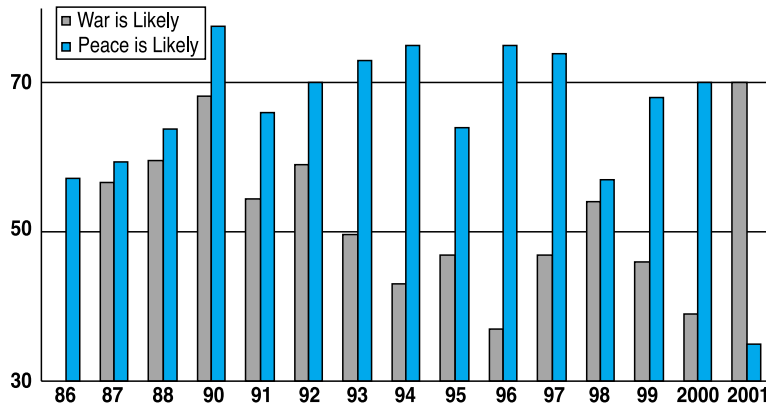


Note: Figures reflect levels of agreement to statement that signed peace treaties indicate a true end of conflict.

In separate questions, respondents were asked to assess the probability of peace and the probability of war over the next three years. The possible answers were "high," "moderate," "low" and "very low." Seventy percent assessed the likelihood of war between Israel and an Arab state with the next three years as either "high" or "moderate," compared with 39 percent who did so in 2000. For the first time since the introduction of these questions, the likelihood of war was assessed to be greater than the chances of peace in the near future. In the public mind, the chances of peace have never been lower, nor has the likelihood of war ever been higher (see Figure 11).

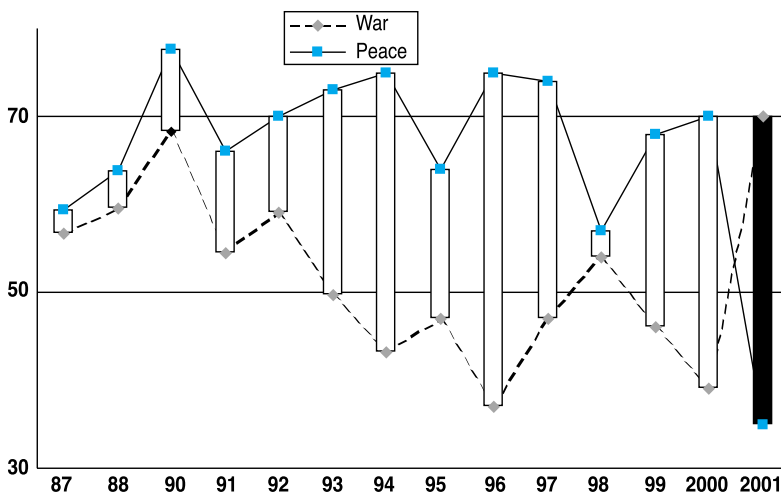
In 2001, only 35 percent thought that peace would last for the next three years, while 70 percent thought there were high or very high chances for the outbreak of war. This is seen in Figure 12, which displays the differences between the two sets of probabilities.

Figure 11: Perceived Likelihood of War and Peace, 1986-2001



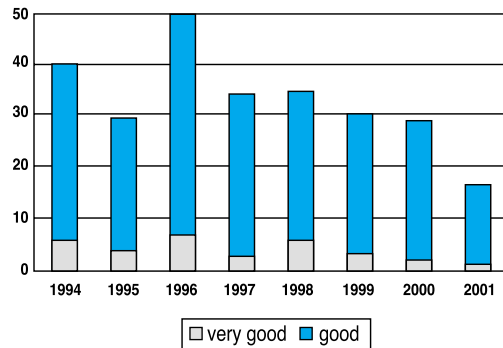
Trust and optimism declined dramatically. Eighty five percent of the sample thought that the confrontation with the Palestinians would escalate further; 44 percent thought it possible to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians. Forty six percent of the sample thought that most Palestinians want peace, down from 52 percent in 2000 and 64 percent in 1999.

Figure 12: Difference in Likelihood of War and of Peace, 1987-2001



The assessment of the condition of the country has never been lower than in these surveys (see Figure 13). Only 16 percent of the sample reported that the condition of the country was good or very good.

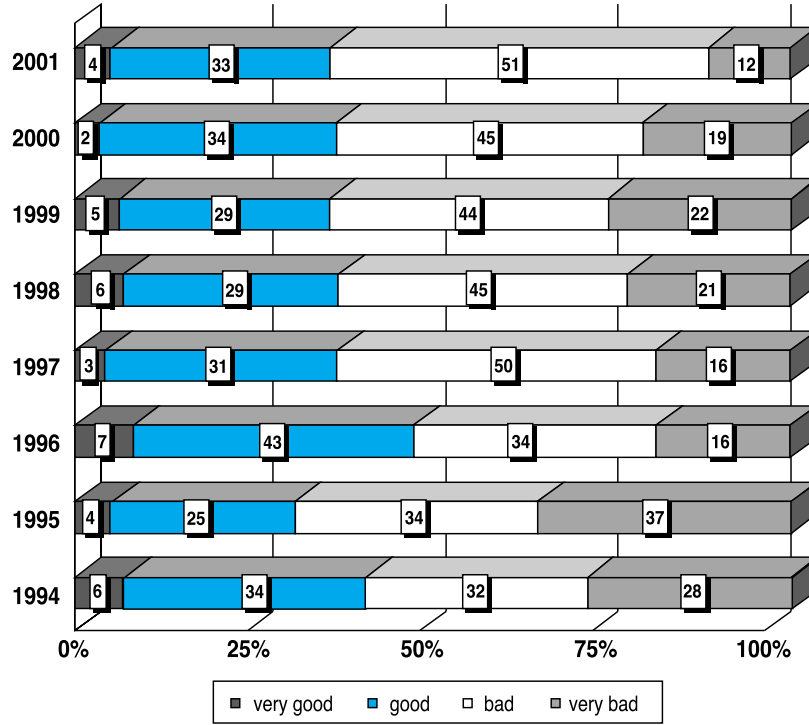
Figure 13: Condition of the Country, 1994-2001



The evaluation of the government was not much better. The Sharon-led National Unity Government was considered by almost two thirds of the sample as doing a bad or very bad job (see Figure 14).

When asked whether one wanted to live in Israel in the long run, 85 percent answered in the affirmative. This very high level of desire to remain in Israel has been consistent over the years. This number provides the context for interpreting the 24 percent that said that the Intifada had lowered their desire to live in Israel. While the percentage is still high, an event such as the Intifada obviously has an impact on that attitude.

Figure 14: Evaluation of the Government's Performance, 1994-2001



The Israel Defense Forces

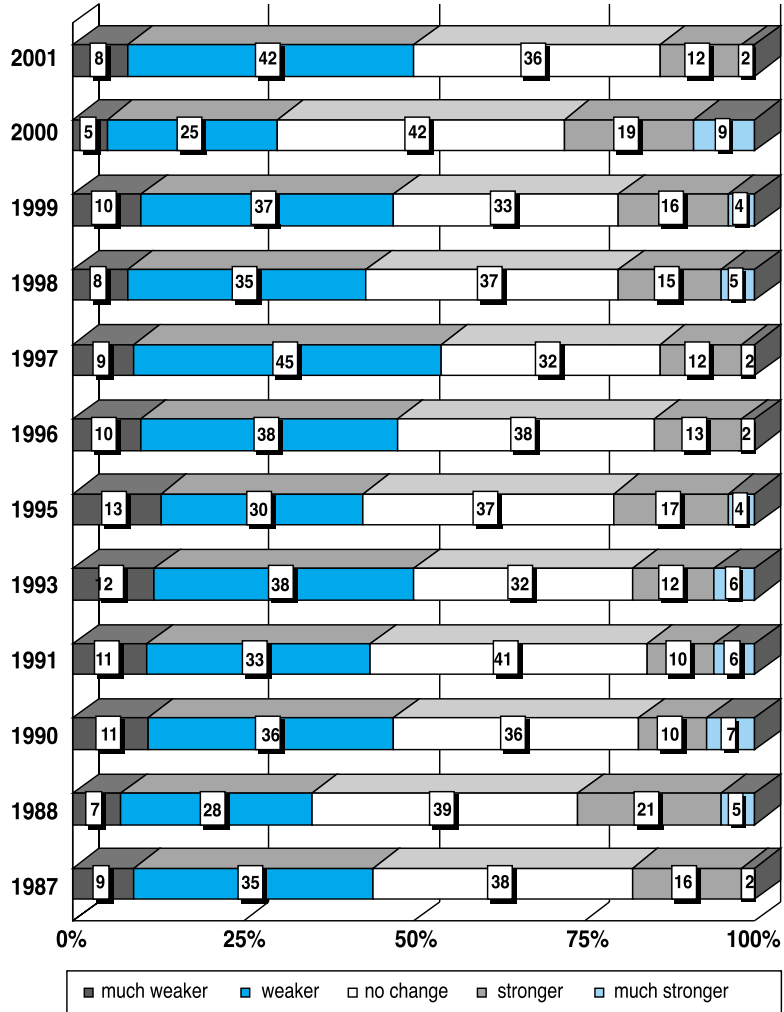
The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) have always been associated with Israeli might, pride, and independence. The army is often described as a major agency of integration and socialization for immigrants to the country.

Change, however, has questioned many of the old assumptions. The introduction of technological advances to warfare questions the need for a large standing army. The army has been assigned many police functions in the territories and plays a key role regarding terror and the Intifada. In addition, it has been faced with static situations as in Lebanon, tasks that do not lend themselves to daring, initiative, and swift victories. Although army service is compulsory for Jews, many yeshiva students do not serve, thus raising questions of universality, equality and motivation.

Since 1987, respondents have been asked whether the army was getting stronger or whether its strength was eroding. Figure 15 displays the array of responses over the years. In 2001, half of the samples stated that the IDF has become weaker or much weaker; 36 percent thought things were staying about the same; and 14 percent said that the IDF was getting stronger.

On the whole, the IDF was seen as more efficient than other institutions in Israel. A third thought it was more efficient than other institutions, while 22 percent thought it was less efficient. Forty five percent felt it was about as efficient as other institutions in the country.

Figure 15: Perceptions Regarding the IDF's Power, 1987-2001

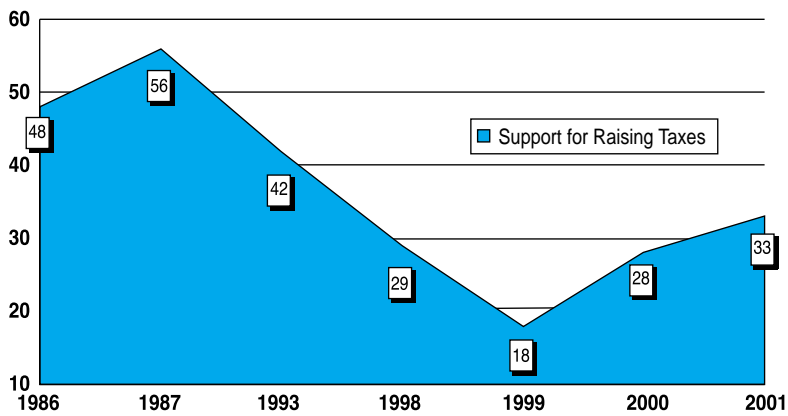


Defense budget and taxes. The majority of respondents in past surveys have consistently thought that the size of the defense budget was appropriate. The size of the group that wanted it increased has been between three to six times the size of the group that wanted it reduced. This was true in 2000 as well: 37 percent wanted the security budget expanded, 5 percent wanted it cut, and 58 percent wanted it to remain the same.

When asked if willing to pay more taxes to have greater security, 33 percent of respondents said yes in 2001, continuing the upward trend of the answer to that question after the low of 1999 (see Figure 16).

Conscription service or a volunteer army? Although most respondents were not ready to increase taxes for defense, they were very firm in their support for the form of mandatory conscription that exists today. The notion of a volunteer army was very unpopular, with 89 percent supporting conscription service.

Figure 16: Support for Raising Taxes to Fund Increased Defense Budget



Credibility of Leadership. The credibility of the leadership is a crucial factor in any political system, and certainly in a democracy. The heads of the security organizations continue to enjoy levels of credibility higher than the political leaders of the country, but the gap is shrinking. In 2001, they had a 10-point lead, compared with a 15-point lead in 2000 and a 23-point lead in 1999. Seventy six percent of the respondents felt they could rely on the statements of security leaders, compared with 66 percent for political leaders.

Table 4. Security Opinions and the Intifada by Background Variables (in %)

Question: "Have your opinions on politics and security issues changed or not changed in light of the present Intifada?"

Group	More Militant	No Change	More Conciliatory
Total	38%	53	9
Gender			
Female	36%	53	11
Male	39%	53	8
Age			
18-29	38%	51	11
30-59	39%	53	8
+60	32%	57	11
Education			
thru 8 years	27%	58	15
9-12 years	38%	52	10
+12 years	39%	53	8
Place of birth			
Israel, father Israel	43%	49	8
Israel, father Asia or Africa	43%	49	8
Israel, father Europe or America	32%	57	11
Asia or Africa	37%	52	11
Europe or America	35%	56	9
Extent of religious observance			
Observe all	33%	64	3
Observe most	38%	55	7
Observe some	40%	51	9
Observe none	33%	54	13
Army service in Occupied Territories			
Yes	42%	50	8
No	37%	53	10
No army service	34%	55	11
Choice for Prime Minister 2001			
Sharon	42%	52	6
Barak	33%	53	14

Table 5. Military Solution to the Conflict by Background Variables (in %)

Question: "There is no military solution to the conflict."

Group	Disagree	Middle	Agree
Total	47%	12	41
Gender			
Female	46%	14	40
Male	47%	12	41
Age			
18-29	51%	15	34
30-59	43%	12	45
+60	42%	10	48
Education			
thru 8 years	57%	10	33
9-12 years	49%	14	37
+12 years	41%	10	49
Place of birth			
Israel, father Israel	49%	9	42
Israel, father Asia or Africa	43%	14	43
Israel, father Europe or America	42%	10	48
Asia or Africa	56%	16	28
Europe or America	42%	13	45
Extent of religious observance			
Observe all	59%	12	29
Observe most	54%	13	33
Observe some	49%	13	38
Observe none	37%	12	51
Army service in Occupied Territories			
Yes	46%	13	41
No	44%	12	44
No army service	53%	14	33
Choice for Prime Minister 2001			
Sharon	59%	12	29
Barak	27%	12	61

Table 6. Support or Opposition to the Barak Proposal (in %)

Group	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
Total	24%	37	33	6
Gender				
Female	22%	35	37	6
Male	26%	39	28	7
Age				
18-29	25%	39	30	6
30-59	24%	35	35	6
60+	22%	35	34	9
Education				
thru 8 years	25%	48	24	3
9-12 years	22%	41	31	6
+12 years	27%	28	37	8
Place of birth				
Israel, father Israel	26%	40	30	4
Israel, father Asia or Africa	21%	32	39	8
Israel, father Europe or America	22%	35	34	9
Asia or Africa	27%	42	27	4
Europe or America	25%	34	34	7
Extent of religious observance				
Observe all	52%	38	8	2
Observe most	34%	45	20	1
Observe some	25%	39	32	4
Observe none	15%	27	45	13
Army service in Occupied Territories				
Yes	27%	33	32	8
No	19%	39	36	6
No army service	32%	38	25	5
Choice for Prime Minister 2001				
Sharon	37%	48	14	1
Barak	6%	20	58	16

* The distribution of demographic characteristics is found in Table 7.

Table 7. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

	%	<i>N</i>
Gender		
Female	49	599
Male	51	617
Age		
18-29	42	513
30-59	44	539
60+	13	160
Education		
thru 8 years	5	60
9-12 years	61	738
+12 years	34	410
Place of birth		
Israel, father Israel	15	184
Israel, father Asia or Africa	18	213
Israel, father Europe or America	13	160
Asia or Africa	25	299
Europe or America	29	356
Extent of religious observance		
Observe all	6	67
Observe most	13	153
Observe some	50	584
Observe none	31	360
Army service in Occupied Territories		
Yes	32	376
No	47	567
No army service	21	248
Choice for Prime Minister 2001		
Sharon	61	596
Barak	39	385

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