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**Title - Doctoral Research: Leadership under
siege, the impact of the 'Intifada trials' on IDF
chief field commanders, and officers in general.**

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Abstract

Preamble

The greatest leader of the Western World during the Second World War, the Prime Minister of Britain, Winston Churchill, speaking of the matter of the leader, said: “The price of greatness is responsibility”.¹ The dominant and most important attribute that turns the commander and captain of State into a leader is the ability to lead soldiers into battle. Walter Lipman: “The true test of a leader is his leaving behind, in the souls of the followers, the conviction and desire to carry on”.² A person can have many attributes and talents that characterize leaders, but the greatest and most important characteristic is the test of providing backing and support to his subordinates, encouragement of them and creating inspiration in the righteousness of the way. Homer Sarzon: “The main obligation of a leader is to acquire the trust of his subordinates. The leader himself must be the most becoming example of what he would like to see in his followers”.³ Son Tassu: “When leaders are weak and lack authority, orders are not clear, soldiers and commanders lack direction and continuity and they create battle lines in any possible manner, they are therefore generating bedlam”. “One must view soldiers as one views babies, and they will willingly follow their leaders to the very depths”.⁴

The theory of Dr. Uri Milstein “The Theory of the Principle of Survival” is the supreme theory from which I formulate my own theory, the “Bone Head” Theory. Milstein: “There is an immunization system in the universe that operates against threats and thus enables its very existence. The operational mechanism of this system is called: “The Principle of Survival”. This principle forces us in a deterministic manner to comprehend it. The essence of this comprehension is the sign of its

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<http://www.pitgam.net/data/%5B%D7%95%D7%99%D7%A0%D7%A1%D7%98%D7%95%D7%9F+%D7%A6%D7%A8%D7%A6%D7%99%D7%9C%5D/1/1/0/>

² <http://www.pitgam.net/cats/155/1/0/>

³ http://www.pitgam.net/cats/155/1/0

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http://www.pitgam.net/data/%5B%D7%A1%D7%95%D7%9F+%D7%98%D7%A1%D7%95%5D/1/1/0

existence. This basic principle acts to foil threats and the understanding thereof will assist us to foil them”.⁵

The Bone Head Theory

Insofar as the phenomenon of the “non provision of backing” to officers on the part of their commanders will be more prevalent, thus the phenomenon of the “Bone Head Syndrome” amongst them will be more widespread, because they will consider actions based on openmindedness and initiative as a threat to their military careers and will believe that the profile of a Bone Head will assist them to survive within a system that does not provide backing.

Explanation

The need for personal survival, and the apprehension of public criticism, causes the leaders of the State and the military to take a two faced approach. On one hand, they issue vague and ambiguous written orders to the operational ranks. This is the written doctrine. Thus they act with the objective of protecting themselves from failure, negligence and blatantly illegal orders. The true intension for execution they issue through personal discussions or informal, non compelling forums. This is the verbal doctrine. In the case of the embroilment of the operational ranks, the leaders will be amongst the first to shrug off responsibility and / or the last to admit failure and to provide cover for the operatives. They will not provide backing for the operational rankings. From here the phenomenon of the Bone Head Syndrome, amongst the operational rankings, is born. Those same operatives who identify the “non provision of backing” on the part of the ranks above them, will prefer to do the minimum necessary as opposed to the maximum possible, in spite of the reality and the circumstances in the field.

⁵ <http://www.global-report.com/um/?l=he&a=340817>

The Headings of the Research Study:

The name of the Study: Leadership under Siege – the Effect of the “Intifada Court Marshals”⁶ on the Field Unit Commanders in the IDF⁷

The Subject of the Study: The Phenomenon of the Bone Head Syndrome amongst Field Unit Commanders in the IDF as a result of the phenomenon of the “Non Provision of Backing” by the Administrative Ranks.

Background to the Study.

During the last decade of the 20th century and beginning of the first decade of the 21st century, a number of studies were carried out that indicated that, amongst the youth, there has been a decline in their motivation to serve in the IDF in general and in field units in particular. This is particularly noticeable amongst the elitist groups, whose sons volunteered for field units before the declaration of the State of Israel and during the first thirty years after independence. The trend was slightly offset by volunteering on the part of peripheral youth: Descendents of immigrants from the Islamic countries, Hesder Yeshiva students, the children of immigrants from the Soviet Union and from the Federation of Nations and the Druze. This offsetting eases the distress but does not alter the trend. Therefore, it can be assumed that if the trend does not change, when the peripheral youth amalgamate into the mainstream of Israeli society, their sons will dodge service in the IDF and in field units.⁸

In the wake of the increased influence of the media on the Security establishment and due to the dominance of the neo-pacifist groups on the media in Israel in particular, and in the West in general, Investigative Military Police investigations proliferated in those military units that acted against rioters during the first intifada (1987 – 1993) and many soldiers and officers were court marshaled under the claim that they acted in contravention of accepted norms. This was in spite of the fact that the norms were

⁶ See Appendix A of the Abstract.

⁷ For notes regarding terms, acronyms and abbreviations – see Appendix C of the Abstract.

⁸ Spiegel Udi, The Motivation of the Youth to Serve in the I. D. F., submitted to the Knesset Education and Culture Committee – June 2001.

vague and they expressed pressure on the part of left wing public figures, such as M. K. Yossi Sarid, far more than norms accepted by the majority of the public in Israel.⁹

During the years 1997 – 1998, an amendment was made to the Military Justice Law (Article 539 a), the gist of which is: Changes in the policy of investigation and court marshaling. This means that the factual clarification of irregular incidents will be investigated by operational commanders. These will be submitted to the Chief Military Advocate for perusal and he will decide whether to involve the Investigative Military Police or not.¹⁰

In the wake of the failure of the IDF during the Second War in Lebanon, (summer 2006), an Commission of Inquiry was established to investigate the course of the war. Following is a quote from the Commission's Report:¹¹

“Frequently there is an apprehension that the dread of international justice (or the risk of criminal or military indictment) will paralyze soldiers from executing their missions and from actions that will enable the realization of the mission. This apprehension also exists in Israel, and it is crucial to examine ways to ensure that combatants and commanders will not be [emotionally and mentally] paralyzed in operational actions. This is not a matter of sanction to act in contradiction to the local law or international law, but a clarification that the principles of international law (and internal criminal law) were not aimed at throwing a wrench in the works of the ability to act in a military manner to defend the country and its citizens.”¹²

The research by Major General (Ret.) Yom Tov Samia from 2008: “From Individuals to the Military Unit”: The fraternity to the point of blindness from the truth. In cases of failures and moral deviations, the irregular incidents are concealed and the

⁹ The data are from the book by Amnon Strasnov, *Justice Under Fire* - 1994

¹⁰ Chief Military Advocate Menachem Finkelstein: Lecture on Advocate Day, February 28, 2002.

¹¹ Winograd Commission, Final Report, Volume 1 – 2006, Page 487

¹² The Members of the Commission did not provide an answer to the controversial question: How to define “Military Action to Defend the State and its Citizens”. In the “Cast Lead campaign against Hamas organization in the Gaza Strip, in winter 2008 – 2009, the IDF made a concerted effort to operate in accordance with the rule laid down by the Investigative Commission of the Second War in Lebanon. In spite of this, many in Israel and around the world claimed, during the course of the campaign, and thereafter, that the IDF acted in contradiction of norms. In this matter, see the article by Law Prof. Eyal Benbanishti, “It is Imperative to Investigate and Right Away” *Ha'aretz*, January 28, 2009.

perpetrators thereof are provided with backing. Those whose conduct deviated from the norm or concealed moral degradation from commanders, are not “squealed upon”. In eight field units (Paratroopers, Golani, Givati, Nachal, Armored Corps., Artillery Corps., Engineering Corps. and Anti Aircraft Corps.), if 100 is the ideal grade, that is, a situation in which a moral deviation is exposed, properly handled and is not provided with backing, then the average grade achieved for these units is 50.9%! In comparison, the response of Air Force aircrew personnel to this question averaged 68.1%! ¹³

“Since the Late Yitzchak Rabin issued instructions to break the bones of the Arabs, during the first intifada, and one of the officers carried out the order verbatim, but the action did not look good on TV film and outcries arose from the left side of the political spectrum, Rabin did not provide backing to the officer, who found himself drummed out of the military. **This incident marks, in my eyes, the beginning of the crisis in the military, the birth of the Bone Head syndrome**”. ¹⁴

The theory developed by Dr. Uri Milstein: ¹⁵ “The Theory of General Security, the Principle of Survival”, which deals with the foundation bricks of the conduct of man in accordance with combat models, constitutes a leading theory for this study.

The objective of the study: To examine whether the proliferation of cases of Investigative Military Police investigations and military court marshals during the course of the first intifada (1987 – 1993), was one of the causes of the increase in the Bone Head Syndrome in the IDF.

The innovation in this study is in the fact that never in Israel has the effects of Commissions of Inquiry, military court marshals and the critical media, been examined with respect to the military command level in field units, during the course of the war, or low intensity military conflict. The existing literature presents broad knowledge regarding leadership in general and military leadership in particular, but, there is a gap in the knowledge of the military leadership, which operates in a climate

¹³ Yom Tov Samia, From Individuals to the Military Unit, Published by the Ministry of Defense, 2008.

¹⁴ Nachumson Alex in the Security, Defense, Protection and Emergency Matters Magazine, Volume no. 18, April – May 2007.

¹⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uri_Milstein

of uncertainty, opacity and confusion, on the part of the supreme military ranks and the political ranks on the one hand, and the unconventional reality in the field on the other hand.

The importance of the study, at this point in time, is the understanding of the phenomenon of leadership under siege, when they are bombarded by external threats on the part of enemies and also internal threats on the part of the media, public opinion and the judicial system. The study contributes to the understanding of the influence of military court marshals on the security establishment, in the development of awareness amongst the supreme military command, and the political echelon in Israel, of the importance of the formulation of clear policy in time of crisis. The study will also add to the existing knowledge in the field of the connection between the security establishment, the political establishment and the political sciences media. The study will assist in the understanding of phenomenon of the conduct of field unit commanders, in a state of taking the decisions required vis a vis the situation in the field. This study will develop insight with respect to leadership under a state of opacity, from the point of view of the orders relayed from above and the adaptation thereof to the changing reality in the field. The study will focus on the interim ranks – Colonels and Lt. Colonels, as this is the operative rank that takes decisions in the field.

The methodology of the study is qualitative: I carried out the analysis of the content by means of a leading theory developed by Dr. Uri Milstein and using a end theory regarding leadership that was developed by various theorists. **I did the field research by means of questionnaires, focus groups and in depth interviews.**

The Study Question: Did the proliferation of Investigative Military Police investigations, military court marshals and the **non provision of backing** to commanders and soldiers, who served in the Judea, Samaria and Gaza Strip areas during the course of the first intifada (1987 – 1993), constitute one of the most prominent causes of the increase in the **Bone Head Syndrome** in the IDF?

The Main Study Hypothesis: That the proliferation of Investigative Military Police investigations and military court marshals, undergone by officers and soldiers during

the first intifada, in the Judea, Samaria and Gaza Strip areas, with respect to operational actions, and the phenomenon of the **non provision of backing** on the part of IDF commanders, was one of the causes of the development of the **Bone Head Syndrome**. It appears that insofar as the phenomenon of the non provision of backing on the part of their officer is more prevalent, so the phenomenon of the **Bone Head Syndrome** amongst them, will be more widespread.

The Conclusions of the Research Study: ¹⁶

1. In violent events and in severe disturbances of the peace, during the first intifada, there were officers and soldiers who preferred to do the minimum required (boned their heads) and not the maximum possible, because they feared that they will not be given backing for their deeds, by their superior officers.
2. In violent events and in severe disturbances of the peace, during the first intifada, there were officers and soldiers who did not have motivation (boned their heads) to carry out complex and complicated missions, because they feared that their superior officers will not take responsibility (will not provide backing) in the event that they themselves will become embroiled.
3. In violent events and in severe disturbances of the peace, during the first intifada, there were officers and soldiers who preferred to deal with their personal survival and passive activities (boned their heads) at the expense of active activities , because they assumed that their commanders' orders were butt coverings, vague and not clear.
4. The proliferation of Investigative Military Police investigations and military court marshals during the first intifada, in the Judea, Samaria and Gaza Strip areas, undergone by officers and soldiers with respect to operational actions, and the phenomenon of the **non provision of backing** on the part of IDF commanders, developed a culture of **Bone Headedness**, and when the culture developed, it was very difficult to reverse the trend.

¹⁶ Yizraeli Eli– The Complete Guide to Academic Writing – www.ubank.co.il – Page 61 (page 18 in the abridged version in my possession).

Notes regarding the Concrete Terms of the Study.

- a. **Backing: The nominal definition:** Reinforcement / backing / protection / support.

Functional definition: A behavioral characteristic expressed by the shouldering of responsibility, relaying of clear and unambiguous orders, the provision of support and backing to subordinates in crisis situations.

- b. **Bone Head: Nominal Definition:** Does only what is told to do, disinterested, does not initiate, “Flash Light Head”.

Functional Definition: Behavioral characteristic expressed by the minimum necessary (and not the maximum possible), the demonstration of a lack of leadership, retreating from responsibility, lack of initiative, non volunteering, dealing with self preservation.

How Did I do the Research?

The initial plan of the study was to execute two phases. The first was to read literary material and only thereafter to interview informants. In actual fact, I executed the research process in parallel, with one aspect complementing the other. On the one hand, I gathered literature, studies, articles, and primary sources, I achieved insight and summarized it. On the other hand, I interviewed informants, I analyzed and studied their testimony. That is, I progressed in the broad pyramid method. In the beginning I dealt with a great deal of background material, and slowly, together with the progress of the research process, I began to close circles. This went on until I reached the summation of the understanding of the two leading terms: **The Non Provision of Backing** and the **Bone Head Syndrome**. An understanding that one of them, the **non provision of backing** is the independent variable, and the other, the **Bone Head Syndrome**.

From the Second Part: Theoretical Aspects – A review of the Literature

From the First Chapter: The General Security Theory – the Principle of Survival

The General Security Theory – the Principle of Survival developed by the Israeli security philosopher and anthropologist, Dr. Uri Milstein, I selected as the leading theory in my thesis. This theory interprets history as a process commencing with the simple and progressing to the complex, up to implosion, in order to develop means to neutralize threats which themselves are given a dual status of menacing and of being threatened. Therefore the process of neutralizing the threats continues thus the complexity increases until implosion.

Under this doctrine, the first intifada broke out in 1987, in order to neutralize the Israeli threat to prevent national independence for Palestinians as they interpreted the circumstances. The intifada threatened the domination of Israel in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip over the Israeli settlement enterprise that was established there, and over the security borders of Israel as rendered by its leaders and commanders.

In order to neutralize this threat, the Israeli security apparatus was put into action. But because the Israeli security apparatus was surprised by the outbreak of the intifada, it did not prepare tools for the neutralization of the new threat. Not having suitable tools on hand, it used the tools in its possession, and failed. The failure brought about the creation of improvised means and one of them was the breaking of the arms and legs of rioters. The instructions to use this means was given by the Minister of Defense and former Chief of Staff, Yitzchak Rabin, who was considered “Mr. Security” and an exalted military strategist.

But the solution of breaking bones, which is humanistic and more moralistic than killing, threatened, in accordance with Milstein’s theory, the moral image of the State of Israel as perceived by the western media, and also some of the shapers of public opinion in Israel. The contention on the part of some of the Israeli elite, and in particular, M. K. Yossi Sarid, to neutralize the threat to the moral image of Israel, is what caused the heads of the political echelon and the senior commanders in the IDF

to have reservations regarding the steps taken in the wake of the instructions and orders that they themselves issued.

The result: The non provision of backing to the operational ranks. The lack of backing caused a proliferation of military court marshals of operational commanders and Military Police investigations. In order to neutralize this threat, the operational commanders adopted a Bone Head pattern of behavior, the negative expression of which was the lack of operational initiative. The result: The Security Apparatus of the State of Israel began to implode because all its sub systems contended with their own survival at the expense of the Security Apparatus. The result: The IDF functioned badly and did not achieve its objectives, neither during the first intifada, which ended with a victory for the Palestinians and the expression of this was the Oslo Accords (1993). Also during the second intifada, the expression of which was the Israeli retreat from Gush Katif [in the Gaza Strip] (The 2005 disengagement plan) and also a protracted war with the Hisbullah, the expression of which was the retreat from Lebanon (the unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000) and also the Second War in Lebanon (Summer of 2006) in which the IDF did not achieve its objectives, against a transient military organization.

These theoretical contexts suited the findings of my study and using them, I developed the theory that is the headline of my Doctoral Research.

The Second Chapter: What is a Leader?

In books and in articles, written by IDF officers, general outlines of the image of an IDF commander are traced. The prominent characteristics and the notable attributes are: Authority and independence, the reading of the situation and improvisation, trust in commanders, the responsibility of the commanders – shouldering responsibility under any situation, not exposing subordinates to unnecessary risks, military skill (professionalism) motivation, derived from the principle of leading and personal example, “Follow Me!”. The good commander implants a basic sense of trust and self-assurance in his soldiers, as the soldier naturally seeks out, and in particular in times of stress and immanent danger, a role model figure who can be trusted and can convince him to operate under conditions of danger during times of combat. The

utterance “Follow Me” comes as an expression of military leadership. In such a situation, the commander displays exemplary personal example. He must be able to roar out “follow me” and to charge at the head of his troops during an arduous mission that arises on the field of battle.

The literature indicates that the conduct of a commander must serve as a model for identification, a model that creates an aspiration on the part of the troops to desire to adopt the conduct of the commander. Thus, a mutual system of expectations is created. The commander must be able to awaken emotions, to impassion and to inspire his troops.

All agree that the commander standing before his men, convincing them to carry out military deeds, must himself be convinced that there is indeed no other alternative. A commander who lacks the passion of faith is not able to impassion his troops to carry out a mission in which they are required to offer personal sacrifice and reveal bravery.

Leadership must be authoritarian and clear. The true test is not “what you said” but rather “what you did”. The test of deed is the result. Personal example is one of the most difficult attributes required of the commander at all times, and the supreme test is the field of battle under fire.

From the Fourth Part: The Findings of Study A – The Analysis of the Contents.

From the First Chapter: Backing

We have seen that the IDF authorities have learned to significantly reduce external penetration, in the form of the Investigative Military Police and the Military Advocacy, into the field units. They learned the hard facts, caused as a result of the proliferation of military court marshals during the first intifada: **Military court marshals and Investigative Military Police investigations of outstanding operational commanders constitute internal threats to the military and weaken its ability to deal with external threats.** In light of this insight, they took corrective steps prior to the second intifada. The results were positive and the conclusions: **This**

policy of leaving the investigation of operational incidents to the framework of the unit, without any external involvement, must be continued.¹⁷

We saw the great importance and the significant contribution that there could be in the presence of a legal council, a military advocate, who functions as a staff officer at Task Force and Brigade Headquarters. His critical influence in situations of dilemmas of what is permitted and, more importantly, what is prohibited to do, within the framework of confrontations between our forces and those of the enemy. In accordance with the leading theory of this study, the duty of the legal council and the military advocate is the in-advance neutralization of threats to operational commanders, because the materialization of these threats damages not only them personally but mortally affects the ability of the military to function in an optimal manner.

I presented the question of one of the shapers of public opinion in Israel, who asked: “The question is whether it is advisable to oust an experienced field commander and combatant who has professional capabilities, only because of anomalous – but not criminal conduct; behavior that the motivation of which is anchored in that emotional structure that makes the tinged commander into a valuable leader on the field of battle.”

I brought a prominent positive example of the provision of backing on the part of a commander to his troops: Major General Dan Halutz, in a meeting held with aircrew personnel who were connected with operations against a high ranking terrorist, said: “It is important to me that you know that I am behind you and in front of you one hundred percent. The criticism leveled in Israel and throughout the world does not relate to you. I am the barrier that stands between you and criticism. Anyone who criticizes, all those lily livered individuals who will criticize me, are not your problem. Sleep well at night. I too, by the way, sleep well at night. It is not you who select the targets and it is not you who selected the target in this particular case. You are not responsible for the content of the target. Your execution was perfect. Excellent.

¹⁷ The Second War in Lebanon in 2006, in which many operational commanders adopted a Bone Head pattern of behavior, indicated that the court marshals of the first intifada 15 years before caused irreparable damage to the security apparatus of the State of Israel, and to the ability of the functioning of the IDF. This war was as sort of experiment that reinforced my theory.

And I again state that no problem will be laid at your doorstep in this matter. You did exactly what you were instructed to do. You did not deviate one millimeter to the left or to the right. Anyone who has a problem with this, should present himself to me.

From the Second Chapter: The Bone Head Syndrome.

During the period of the first intifada, the political echelon and the supreme military echelon acted dishonestly and in a manner where their expressions were “one verbal, one written”, when they issued order to the troops with respect to the manner of their actions against Palestinian rioters. They acted in such a manner to ensure their survival mainly in light of the criticism by the neo-pacifist press.¹⁸

They behaved as Bone Heads and caused their subordinates to also behave as Bone Heads. They did the minimum necessary and not the maximum possible. A broad range of maneuvering in the orders, in contrast to clear orders, constituted a broad cushion for embroilment on the part of the troops, who did not know how to correctly interpret the generalized orders and did not understand what was permitted and what was prohibited to do.

The media has a decisive influential capability on the local and global audience. This has created a great deal of confusion amongst the troops. The printed word in the press and the spoken word in the electronic media matched, fairly accurately, the instructions they received verbally from their commanders. That is, the press expressed and reflected, in a very good manner, what the commanders thought needs to be done, within the framework of actions to be taken to contend with Palestinian rioters, but, so it seems, were not able, and possibly were apprehensive, to write down executive orders for the troops in the field. In other words, the soldiers who had to function and provide solutions in the field, within the framework of the confrontation with the Palestinians, were very apprehensive and did not know, in an accurate

¹⁸ The source of pacifism is in Christianity. The most outstanding proponent of this during the modern era was the great Russian writer, Leo Tolstoy, in his monumental epic, War and Peace, in which claimed, inter alia, that war is a game played by leaders at the expense of their citizens. The West adopted a Pacifism Lite after the First World War and mainly under the influence of the Frankfurt neo-Marxist school. These ideas were imported into the land of Israel even before the establishment of the State of Israel, by A. D. Gordon, who was influenced by Tolstoy and Martin Buber who were close to the Frankfurt school.

manner, what is permissible and what is prohibited to do. This was because the instructions that were funneled to them were not sufficiently clear. On one hand, the written instructions were there to cover the butts [of those who issued them] and the verbal orders were relatively clear, but without written reference. A combat doctrine cannot be based on what was stated in the press. The soldiers, who were most certainly confused and frustrated, viewed it as being prudent to Bone their Heads and to prefer to not do, as opposed to doing.

On the subject of the motivation of the youth vis a vis the military, and against the backdrop of the fact that the parents are the most influential voices when it comes to the youth, in all matters related to enlistment in the army, the question is asked: What happened in the late 80's and through the 90's and up to the early 2000's that set off a significant reduction in the motivation of the youth to enlist in the IDF in general, and in field units in particular. It appears to me that the citizens of the State of Israel and this includes the parents of those young men destined for enlistment, when recommending to their children to enlist in the army, recommended that their children enlist, but not to field units that are expected to serve in the territories, or even recommended that they not enlist at all.

This they did against a backdrop of their exposure to the conduct of the Minister of Defense Yitzhak Rabin during the first intifada, (1987 – 1993) and mainly regarding his shrugging off responsibility for the specific, open instructions to break the bones of the Palestinian rioters. As is well known, in the wake of the denial by the Minister to his subordinates, a large number of soldiers and commanders were court marshaled in military tribunals. Many parents, so it seems, decided that it would be better for their children to Bone their Heads.

From the Fifth Part: The Findings of Study 2, the Field Research.

1. The feeling of the lack of backing amongst field unit officers, is higher, significantly, that amongst staff officers.

2. The absolute majority of the sample responded that the court marshals had a decisive influence on the officers at the interim ranks. When they came to carry out operational missions, they **boned their heads**.
3. The most prominent characteristic: amongst the field unit officers, it was that the majority of high ranking officers believe that there is no connection between the court marshals and the flawed manner of conduct in which the Second War in Lebanon was directed. In contrast, the lower ranking officers do find a connection between the two phenomena.
4. The apprehension of the **non provision of backing** on the part of the commanding ranks, those who issued the orders, and the apprehension of being court marshaled in a military tribunal or stood up before a Commission of Inquiry, caused the Bone Head Syndrome phenomenon.
5. The mass media affects the entire chain of command and, inter alia, constitutes the most prominent factor for the appearance of the **Bone Head Syndrome**.
6. The field research reinforced my hypothesis that, insofar as the phenomenon of the **non provision of backing** on the part of commanders to their subordinate officers will be more prevalent, so the Bone Head Syndrome phenomenon will be more widespread.
7. The proliferation of Investigative Military Police investigations and court marshals, during the first intifada, in Judea, Samaria and in the Gaza Strip, which were imposed on officers and soldiers, with respect to their operational activities, and the phenomenon of the **non provision of backing** by commanders in the IDF, was amongst the major causes of the phenomenon of the **Bone Head Syndrome**.
8. **The theoretic conclusion that I reached:** Insofar as the phenomenon of the **non provision of backing** on the part of commanders to their subordinate officers will be more prevalent, by those officers being forsaken to Investigative Military Police investigations and court marshals, so the Bone Head Syndrome phenomenon amongst officers will be more widespread.

The Research Study: Added Knowledge and Insight.

The study dealt with the two phenomena of the **non provision of backing** and the **Bone Head Syndrome**. I examined the reason for the formulation of the **Bone Head**

Syndrome phenomenon in the IDF. I assumed that the lack of backing for the officers who followed orders issued by their superior ranking commanders and the forsaking of these officers to Investigative Military Police investigations and in the wake of this to court marshals, was amongst the most prominent causes of the **Bone Head Syndrome** phenomenon that infected the chain of command in the IDF, in the wake of the court marshals of the first intifada. This subject, insofar as I am aware, was first investigated by me in this study.

Studies were conducted on closely related subjects, such as the reasons for the decline in motivation of the youth to enlist in the army in general and in field units in particular. And a study on the subject of the culture of silence of the soldiers and keeping whatever happened to them in the unit, without revealing the truth to the commanders, and of course, the findings of the Winograd Commission that examined the conduct of the IDF during the Second War in Lebanon. As stated, in all the written materials upon which I based my research, there were traces of the two phenomena, and they are indeed widely described in various contexts and at different places. But, as stated, here, I showed, in a prominent manner, the causative connection between the phenomenon of **not providing backing** and the forsaking of the underlings to military court marshals and the phenomenon of the **Bone Head Syndrome**.

The army must carry out the missions imposed on it by the political echelon and mainly to protect the homeland, and, as required, to win wars. The leaders must do everything required to reduce the Bone Head Syndrome phenomenon to a minimum. This they are able and can do. All ranks of the military, from the top commander down to the last soldier, must know that, at any given time and under any situation, they will be given total and absolute backing by their commanders. (Of course, this does not refer to criminal acts or illegal acts carried out maliciously and with intent).

Recommendation for Additional Research Studies

I referred broadly to the influence of the critical and investigative mass media, on the command echelon in the military and, in this context, also on the political echelon of the decision makers. The media is a power which must be taken into account, and its presence and great influence be related to. Its existence, at this point in time, is a fact. Journalists, television cameramen, Internet, cellular and satellite telephones, there will always be someone who will leak the information and expose it to the masses. We need to find ways to contend with this phenomenon. In my opinion, this subject, and all the various aspects thereof, needs to be researched, and ways found to contend with the phenomenon.

The conduct of some of the IDF commanders during the Second War in Lebanon, in the summer of 2006, was deficient. The members of the Winograd Commission went into this in depth. This Commission noted several reasons for the failures detected during the course of the war. In my opinion, there is a need to investigate the basic causes of the deficient functioning of those same commanders.

Appendix A: The First Intifada ¹⁹

The first intifada, that broke out in December 1987, smote Israel and its security apparatus, with shock! There was not even one intelligence organization or any other entity in the political - military establishment, that foresaw the outbreak of the Intifada. The Palestinians rose up in parallel in every village and town and, in actual fact, everything became chaotic. All the main arterial roads were blocked by burning tires, rocks, garbage bins, nails and angle iron poles. PLO flags were flying everywhere, Israeli vehicles that traveled on the roads of Judea and Samaria were bombarded with anything the attackers could lay their hands on. Injuries amongst the Jewish population increased constantly. As a result of the soldier's reactions, there were also many wounded amongst the Palestinians. The Minister of Defense, Yitzchak Rabin, was visiting the USA when the intifada broke out. He, as well as the rest of the Government Ministers, and the military apex, did not understand the

¹⁹ Schiff Ze'av and Ehud Ya'ari, "Intifada" Shocken Publishers 1990

significance of the events and the terrible inherent potential. They did not foresee what was about to occur on their own doorstep, and so they did not neutralize, well in time, the local developments in the Gaza Strip which turned into a drawn out mini war

At the first stage of the intifada, orders were given to show maximum restraint, to not open fire, neither on those throwing Molotov cocktails – this order was later altered – the Arabs went berserk, cursed, urinated on the soldiers, burned Israeli flags, attacked and destroyed everything in sight, because they perceived the lack of response on the part of Israel as weakness. The commanders and the soldiers sensed a terrible distress, were humiliated, insulted, hurt, and did not know how to contend with it. The deterrence declined, everyone was at sixes and sevens: the Shin Bet, the Civil Administration, the military, everyone. The army was facing a new, unknown situation, without guidance from the political leadership, or from the supreme military command. The rioters were everywhere, they ran the soldiers from one corner to the next, and they were at it day and night. Fairly rapidly, control over the goings on was lost. The field dictated the events and the army was not prepared to accept the reality into which it has been thrown during those days of the crystallizing intifada. Many dozens of masked rioters carrying PLO flags acted against small military units, and built up a chain of barriers, to the extent that all the stone walls surrounding the local houses were dismantled and put to use blocking the roads. Tires were set alight at every crossroad and in every public square, while nationalistic songs were being chanted, curses shouted out and contempt heaped. During the course of the demonstrations, before and after them, stones, rocks, empty bottles, and Molotov cocktails were thrown. The soldiers were under great duress with the Palestinian women shielding the rioters, screaming out Allah Akbar [Allah is great]. It was impossible to contend with women screaming out earsplitting shrieks and tearing out their hair. The soldiers went ballistic, and as a result, squeezing their triggers and opening fire was found to be the solution of choice. Generally the soldiers would catch those who possibly rioted and, if so, these were at the weak part of the demonstration. When they came to carry out their mission, and used their batons and rifle butts, major disorder ensued, in the wake of which shots were fired, resulting in deaths. In such situations, it would have been possible to explain it all away as a life threatening situation. The soldiers were attacked, defended themselves, executed a

suspect arrest procedure, the rioters were wounded in their legs, and then back to square one. The soldiers did not have any means of contending with the new situation. They requested instructions, what to do, how to defend themselves, what is permitted and what is prohibited. The commanders stammered. There were no contingency plans. This was not a regular contending with a conventional enemy – our forces here, the enemy opposite, covering firing from the right, loop around to the left, charge with the assistance of low trajectory fire, and conquer the target objective. This was contention of a new kind, unknown to the army, **and the army was not trained to deal with it.**

In all the confusion, on every corner and in every place, journalists were out and about. Always, a photo in which a soldier with a helmet and a weapon, and a wretched Palestinian with a rock, created for everyone, in Israel and around the world, the impression that the IDF soldiers were brutes crushing the weak. The fact that just prior to this, that same Palestinian threw a rock which hit a Jewish boy on the head, interested no one, and was not photographed or published. The weaponry that was available did not suit this type of confrontation. In actual fact, there was an operative response to a rock or Molotov cocktail thrown from a range of 30 to 40 meters. The means at the disposal of the soldier was his personal firearm, with live bullets. Tear gas grenades, rubber bullets and batons were possibly suitable for contending with demonstrations by the religious sects in Jerusalem, but not for handling rioters in the territories. In an attempt to refrain as far as possible from harming Palestinians, as many rioters as possible were arrested. Until the point that the jails were filling to the bursting point. The IDF judicial system in the territories, which handled the locals, imploded. In spite of the attempt and the great effort to refrain, insofar as possible, from firing at stone and Molotov cocktail throwers, the soldiers, in those cases where they did not have an alternative, fired, and caused quite a few wounds amongst the Palestinians.

The frustration amongst the soldiers was intense. “They both eat rotten fish and were thrown out of the city”. They were powerless against the Palestinian uprising and it was impossible to ensure the security of traffic in Israel, neither on main arterial roads.

Against the backdrop of these events, the Minister of Defense, Rabin, decided to change the IDF battle doctrine, and to move away from live fire response to a response of beatings and broken bones. Here the policy of beatings and the exertion of dry force against the Palestinians was born. The army supplied rigid batons, hoe handles etc., (the “standard” batons broke as a result of the intensive use thereof), and the soldiers were required to beat the rioters with full force. In spite of the fact that the new method, which also seemed to be problematic from many aspects, it was accepted on fertile ground, because the thinking amongst the soldiers was, that maybe, by exerting force through beatings and breaking the bones of the rioters, it will be possible to restore order.

Appendix B: Notes Regarding Acronyms, Abbreviations and Terms

Ranks and Duties in the IDF	
S. C. = Squad Commander	Lt. = Lieutenant = P. C. = Platoon Commander
Lieutenant, Captain = C. C. = Company Commander	Captain, Major = 2IC Battalion = 2 nd in Command Battalion Commander
Major, Lt. Col. = Lieutenant Colonel = B. C. = Battalion Commander	Col. = Colonel = B. C. = Brigade Commander
Brig. Gen. = Brigadier General = Task Force Commander	Major General = Regional Command Commanding General
Lt. Gen. = Lieutenant General = C. G. S. = Chief of General Staff	Ops. Off. = Operations Officer
G. S. = General Staff = IDF Command = Israel Defense Force	
Abbreviations and Acronyms	T. C. 1 = Training Camp 1
G. S. Gaza Strip	M. C. = Molotov Cocktail
H. C. J. = High Court of Justice	
Backing = Reinforcement / cover / protection / support	Art Cor. = Artillery Corps
M. J. L. = Military Justice Law	J. S. G. = Judea, Samaria & the Gaza Strip
J. & S. = Judea and Samaria	B. P. = Border Police
A. C. = Ass Covering	Res. = Reserve Military Duty
Negs. = Negotiations	I. M. P. = Investigative Military Police
B. S. D. = Behavioral Sciences Dept. in the IDF	F. P. Y = Fighting Pioneering Youth (Nachal)
N. C. O. = Non Commissioned Officer	C. M. A. = Chief Military Advocate
A. A. = Anti Aircraft	R. C. = Red Cross
C. R. C. = Central Region Command	O. D. O. Operations Division Officer
	Shin Bet = G. S. S. = General Security Service

O. O. = Operations Officer	
Territories = Judea, Samaria & the Gaza Strip and the Jordan Valley	

Terms

Order: An instruction in a hierarchal organization, such as the military or the police, by a person qualified to this end, the violation thereof is generally associated with sanctions.²⁰

A Blatantly Illegal Order: Is a military order that it is clear to any person that the execution thereof will constitute a criminal act. The deed that a person is ordered to carry out is illegal. A soldier who is a recipient of such an order, should refuse to obey it.²¹

Battle Morality: IDF Soldiers will operate in accordance with IDF values and orders, whilst upholding the laws of the State and human dignity, and respecting the values of the State of Israel as a Jewish and Democratic State.²²

Purity of Arms: The soldier will use his weapon and its power only to execute his mission, only in the case that he is required to do so, and will maintain human dignity even during combat. The soldier will not use his weapon and its power to harm human beings who are not combatants and prisoners of war, and will do all in his power to prevent harm to their lives, person, dignity and property.²³

Norms: Norms constitute a social principle, formal or informal, that determine the conduct and appropriate and accepted ways of thinking, and those which are

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[http://he.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special:Search?ns0=1&search=%D7%A4%D7%A7%D7%95%D7%93%D7%94_\(%D7%94%D7%95%D7%A8%D7%90%D7%94&fulltext=Search](http://he.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special:Search?ns0=1&search=%D7%A4%D7%A7%D7%95%D7%93%D7%94_(%D7%94%D7%95%D7%A8%D7%90%D7%94&fulltext=Search)

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http://he.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D7%A4%D7%A7%D7%95%D7%93%D7%94_%D7%91%D7%9C%D7%AA%D7%99_%D7%97%D7%95%D7%A7%D7%99%D7%AA_%D7%91%D7%A2%D7%9C%D7%99%D7%9C.

²² The IDF Code of Ethics: http://dover.idf.il/IDF/About/Purpose/Code_Of_Ethics.htm

²³ Ibid

proscribed in certain societies. A social norm expresses consensus, (full or partial). The social norms are the infrastructure for the normal continued activities of social order.²⁴

The Spirit of the Commander (The IDF Spirit): “The IDF Spirit” is the value identity document of the IDF, which is a mirror entrenched at the base of the actions of every soldier serving in compulsory service and reserve duty. “The IDF Spirit” and the rules of action derived from it constitute the IDF Code of Ethics. “The IDF Spirit” will serve the IDF and all its soldiers, commanders, units and corps., in the forming of their patterns of conduct. Soldiers will behave, educate and scrutinize themselves and those around them in accordance with the “IDF Spirit”.²⁵

Grey Area: This is the expression that stipulates an obscure border between two (or more) fields. The border is likely to be clearly not defined, difficult to define or the definition thereof tends to change. The expression “Grey Area” is used in various fields: The grey area of definition indicates difficulty in the classification of reality into categories. For example: What is the border between erotica and pornography? A grey area in the law stipulates an area in which no law or precedent exist, or in which the law is not applicable, thus there is doubt as to whether and how it can be implemented. The grey area in ethics indicates a moral dilemma in which the border between good and bad is vague. For example: Is euthanasia considered murder?²⁶

Four Mothers: Four Mothers is a protest movement that was established in 1997, in the wake of the Helicopter Disaster, by four women, residents of the north of the country, and mothers of soldiers who served in Lebanon, with the objective of bringing about the exit of the IDF from the security strip in southern Lebanon.²⁷

²⁴ <http://he.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D7%A0%D7%95%D7%A8%D7%9E%D7%94>

²⁵ he IDF Code of Ethics: http://dover.idf.il/IDF/About/Purpose/Code_Of_Ethics.htm

²⁶ http://he.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D7%A9%D7%98%D7%97_%D7%90%D7%A4%D7%95%D7%A

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http://he.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D7%90%D7%A8%D7%91%D7%A2_%D7%90%D7%9E%D7%94%D7%95%D7%A

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