

American Jewish Policy Agenda
Resource Book No. 1

THE NEW JEWISH POLITICS

Edited by
Daniel J. Elazar

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THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE
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PREFACE

This is the first in a series of brief resource books for the critical examination of the issues on the American Jewish Policy Agenda to the Year 2000 and Beyond. Each resource book focuses on a different issue and provides background material for the intelligent discussion of that issue in the Jewish community.

The topic dealt with in this resource book is "The New Jewish Politics," an examination of the new role of political activism in American Jewish life -- how it developed, how it is expressed and what are its implications. All of the pieces in this book are products of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, either developed specifically for this project or drawn from the Center's continuing study of the subject. Each is the thoughtful work of a distinguished student of American Jewish life. Four of the authors are scholars who are also activists and two are activists who are also scholars. In their individual lives, they represent the range of accepted political and religious points of view on the Jewish spectrum. What all share in common is a commitment to developing a solid understanding of the issues in their context as a basis for drawing conclusions, even if each draws different ones from the same data. That is the essence of this project.

This resource book is the first product of the project. It is dedicated to exploring the outlines, character and content of the new Jewish politics and as such can serve as background material for the exploration of the issues associated with the new American Jewish political activism.

The first chapter by Daniel J. Elazar is an introduction to the subject, prepared especially for this project. It examines the historical roots of the new Jewish political activism and poses some of the central questions which must be considered in connection with that activism. Professor Elazar is President of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, Senator N.M. Paterson Professor of Intergovernmental Relations at Bar Ilan University, and Director of the Center for the Study of Federalism at Temple University. Through his explorations of the Jewish political tradition he has laid the foundations for the study of contemporary Jewish political life in light of the Jewish past. Moreover his explorations of contemporary Jewish political activism have offered the elements for understanding Jewish political behavior today.

The second chapter, "The Politics of Centrism," is by Irving Louis Horowitz, Hannah Arendt Distinguished Professor of Sociology and Political Science at Rutgers University. Professor Horowitz is a long-time observer of the Jewish scene in the United States and abroad. Here he turns his considerable talents to an analysis of why Jews respond politically as they do. His thesis of Jewish political centrism as part of the Jewish political tradition of universalism adds an important dimension to the continuing discussion of the Jewish

political orientations that shape contemporary Jewish activism. His piece was originally published by the JCPA in its Jerusalem Letter series.

The third chapter, by Jerusalem Center Fellow Jonathan S. Woocher, deals with the question, "Are American Jews Becoming Conservatives and Should They?" Originally written for the Jerusalem Letter series in the aftermath of the 1980 Presidential election, like the previous chapter it introduces the new Jewish politics of the 1980s. Dr. Woocher, formerly on the faculty of Brandeis University, is now Executive Director of the Jewish Education Service of North America.

In the fourth chapter, "The American Jews, the 1984 Elections, and Beyond," Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab examine the results of the 1984 presidential election and their meaning. In doing so they look beyond the election itself to examine the presumed emergence of Jewish neoconservatism. Dr. Lipset is perhaps the foremost political analyst in the United States. Mr. Raab, an Associate of the Jerusalem Center and former executive director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of San Francisco, is in the forefront of those who have conceptualized the American Jewish response to contemporary political issues.

The fifth chapter, by Dr. Michael J. Malbin of the University of Maryland, College Park, looks at "Jewish PACS: A New Force in Jewish Political Action." Written specifically for this project just prior to the 1986 Congressional elections, the chapter helps us focus in on one of the major new institutional vehicles for the expression of Jewish political activism. Dr. Malbin is one of the nation's premier experts on the United States Congress and is often called upon to testify before Congressional committees and to appear on television as a commentator on the Congressional scene. He is active in Jewish life in Washington, D.C.

In the sixth chapter, "For Ourselves and for Others: Defining Jewish Interests," Professor Marshall J. Breger, formerly President Reagan's Special Advisor on Jewish affairs and now Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States, sets down criteria for defining Jewish interests. Following on the arguments of Elazar, Horowitz and Woocher that liberalism is no longer the rote response of American Jews, Breger undertakes the task of setting out criteria which Jews can use to judge their responses to particular public issues, even if they do not all come to the same conclusions. His piece also was prepared especially for this project.

In the seventh chapter, "How New York Jews Vote: Myths and Realities" by David M. Pollock, assistant executive director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York, we get down to cases with regard to Jewish voting behavior in the mid-1980s. Mr. Pollock assembles a wide-ranging set of data on Jewish voting behavior and uses those data to test the conventional wisdom regarding Jewish voting behavior with some interesting results. This piece was originally prepared for the Jerusalem Letter series in the wake of the 1986 elections.

The final chapter, by Daniel J. Elazar, looks at the Jewish context of the New Jewish Politics. In it Dr. Elazar outlines Jewish polity-building efforts in our time and how the American Jewish community and its politics fit into those efforts.

We intend to prepare similar resource books for each of the issue areas identified in connection with this project in the interest of assisting in the development of more enlightened public discussion of these vital issues within the Jewish community.

* * *

THE AMERICAN JEWISH POLICY AGENDA PROJECT

The American Jewish Policy Agenda Project was initiated by the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs / Center for Jewish Community Studies in 1984. At that time panels of leading academic students of American Jewish life and voluntary and professional leaders in the American Jewish community identified 32 issues of concern to the organized Jewish community over the next two decades, chose 9 of them as especially vital and 5 as deserving immediate attention. The Center is taking each of those issues in turn, preparing background studies of the issue and conducting public forums in communities around the country to explore the issues and present the findings in order to stimulate public discussion. For further information, contact: Coordinator, American Jewish Policy Agenda Project, Center for Jewish Community Studies, c/o Temple University, 1017 Gladfelter Hall, Philadelphia, PA 19122, (215) 787-1459.

Chapter 1

THE NEW JEWISH POLITICS

Daniel J. Elazar

Summary: Jews have been active in politics throughout history and more so in recent generations. In the United States, Jewish political organization began with the efforts of Jewish notables and evolved with the advent of community-wide organizations. Changes after the Six-Day War in 1967 sharpened the focus of organized Jewish political activity, leading to the evolution of a substantial neo-conservative minority in addition to the dominant liberal majority. At the same time, a new spirit of activism was stimulating greater political participation in various ways. Indeed, political involvement became for some a new form of Jewish identity. Yet, Jews must avoid becoming intoxicated by their new-found political power.

Jews have been active as citizens in the politics of the countries in which they live since Emancipation made it possible for them to enter the political arena. In most countries they have been active as individuals, either because their numbers were too small to be an effective political bloc, or as is more often the case, the country's politics did not permit active interest groups in the political process. The United States was the first and greatest exception to this. American federal democracy assumed that groups would legitimately pursue their interests in the political arena and the Constitution of the United States provides for that pursuit through the right of petition as traditionally understood by Americans.

Nevertheless, the Jewish community as an active and powerful bloc in American politics is a relatively recent phenomenon. It is quite true that Jews as individuals began to participate in American political life even before the American revolution, often before their very citizenship was clarified. But until the end of the 19th century, the Jewish population was too small for a serious Jewish ethnic politics to find expression. Even so, Jews as individuals tended to espouse what came to be considered "Jewish" issues, that is to say they were on the liberal side of the political fence, active on behalf of whatever the progressive agenda happened to be in any particular generation. Jews as individuals had notable success in American politics, given their small numbers.

Much has been written about Jews and liberalism. This is not the place to either review or rehash that literature, but what does seem to be clear is that whether or not Jewish tradition is more liberal or more conservative, in the modern epoch, as Jews struggled for emancipation and then full political rights in their respective

countries of citizenship, what we would today call liberalism came to be the regnant Jewish ideology. Given additional force by the breakdown of traditional Judaism, newly secularized Jews, many exposed to education and culture for the first time and therefore no longer able to accept traditional Judaism at face value, found a substitute in the liberal agenda. This new secular faith was given religious embodiment in the prophetic Judaism of the Reform movement, but it was not confined to Reform Jews by any means.

The first sustained appeal to Jews as a voting bloc came when Jewish neighborhoods emerged in the major cities. While Jews soon claimed their share of local offices, even then Jewish political inclinations were more ideological. In an era of "coal basket" ethnic politics, the Jewish immigrants stood out as people concerned with the larger issues, still on the progressive side of the agenda.

As each wave of immigrants became more settled in, more of them became active in politics. Nevertheless, it was not until after World War II that Jews began to feel self-confident enough to actively lobby for Jewish interests above and beyond their civil rights. A subsequent generation would raise serious questions about the failure of American Jews to lobby hard for American efforts to limit the Holocaust. Again it is not the task of this article to deal with that question, but it is merely describing an empirical reality to suggest that neither the old-line "German" Jewish leadership as represented by the American Jewish Committee, nor the newer Eastern European Jewish leadership felt confident enough to challenge Franklin Delano Roosevelt's reluctance to act on the issue and the inaction of the American government or worse, until American troops began to liberate the concentration camps in the last few months of the war.

In part it was the shock of what they found when the camps were liberated which opened the doors of American politics to more vigorous Jewish lobbying and at the same time shocked the Jewish community into more vigorous activity. After discovering Auschwitz, Buchenwald and Dachau and all the other camps, only the most self-hating Jews were unprepared to forge ahead and press for Western assistance at reconstruction, most specifically the reopening of the doors of Palestine and the establishment of a Jewish state. By the same token, only those non-Jews who strongly viewed American national interests as requiring conciliation of the Arabs were prepared to deny the justice of the Jewish demand. Relatively few politicians fell in that latter category and so the seeds of the contemporary Jewish lobby were planted.

In the meantime, the Jewish liberal consensus began to break down. In the generation following the establishment of the State of Israel, the first of the post-modern epoch, American Jews achieved their goals of full integration, helped the blacks and other minorities in the United States on their way to achieving the same goals, and then watched while the spokesmen for liberalism moved on to a whole new agenda which in many respects challenged the very fabric of traditional Jewish values. While most Jews were prepared to move along with the liberal tide, with whatever caveats they chose to

insert, something more than a third broke away to found the neo-conservative movement or to join the ranks of conservatives of various persuasions, including libertarians.

What remained was the Jewish consensus supporting Israel and the struggle of the Jews in lands of oppression such as the Soviet Union, Syria and Ethiopia. These became the new touchstones for Jewish political solidarity, uniting all but the far left. These new concerns not only stimulated unity but also greater political activity, generating far more intensive forms of collective political involvement than Jews had known in the past.

The Evolution of Jewish Organization for Politics

Prior to World War II, the Jewish way of representing its group interests in politics was essentially through shtadlanim or organizations of shtadlanim. Perhaps the first great shtadlan in American Jewish history was Simon Wolf, a leader of B'nai B'rith who first became friendly with Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War and continued to represent American Jewish interests in Washington for the next forty years. The organization of the American Jewish Committee in 1906 was in part a response to the by-then-aged Wolf's inability to continue to play that role effectively. The Committee was deliberately established as an organization of shtadlanim, the leading Jewish notables of the time, with one or two exceptions, organized to deal with the problems of Jewish group interests on a more systematic basis.

The Committee remained the preeminent shtadlanic organization for nearly half a century although it was challenged during and after World War I by the Zionists and their allies, principally from the Eastern European immigration, through the American Jewish Congress. They mounted their challenge with a call to democratize the governance of the American Jewish community. They failed, but some of their leaders, notably Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, became major shtadlanim in their own right after Franklin Delano Roosevelt won the presidency in 1932. Most of the leaders of the American Jewish Committee were Republicans who were powerful when the Republicans were the majority party in the country but who lost influence when the Democrats rose to power. Still Wise and his colleagues were no less shtadlanim than their counterparts from the Committee.

The combination of the reestablishment of the State of Israel and the emergence of a more fully articulated set of institutions to govern the Jewish community brought an end to the days of the shtadlanim in the 1950s. The Israel lobby emerged as a separate entity, organized through the American Israel Public Affairs Committee and supported by the entire range of Jewish community relations organizations. AIPAC almost immediately established itself as the Jewish voice in Congress on Israel issues. The White House was a different matter. There the various community relations organizations competed with one another for access. Presidents fended the Jews off

by designating a Jewish aide as the White House liaison with the Jewish community, in essence, another form of shtadlanut. The Jews in the meantime, at the initiative of Nahum Goldmann, no doubt with Israeli government backing, organized the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations through which the organizations could coordinate their positions and make their representations with a united front. As it turned out, it was not until after the Six Day War that the Presidents' Conference became an effective force, then because Israeli Ambassador Yitzhak Rabin determined to rely upon it in order to reduce the role of the presidential gatekeeper.

Meanwhile, on the domestic front, intensified competition among the Jewish community relations agencies in the late 1930s led the Council of Jewish Federations, the countrywide spokesman for the ever more powerful Jewish community federations, to commission a major study by Columbia University sociologist Robert MacIver, to try to bring some order out into the situation. The famous MacIver Report which resulted led to the establishment of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council which became a coordinating council for the countrywide and local community relations bodies. While it failed in its primary mission, it did bring the six countrywide community relations organizations (the three majors and the three minors) to more or less divide up the turf among themselves so as to obviate the necessity for others to do it for them. So, for example, most of the lobbying for social programs and civil rights in Washington fell to the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League took the lead in the fight against anti-Semitism, and the American Jewish Congress took primary responsibility for lobbying the courts on church-state relations. The Jewish War Veterans continued their work with the "patriotic" groups and the Jewish Labor Committee with the labor movement. In the 1950s, the last of the dominant voluntary leaders of these organizations passed from the scene and their work became more the work of the professionals.

By and large, the major concern of these organizations in the 1950s and 1960s was to fight against the last barriers to a fully open society for American Jews and to participate in a broad alliance to improve the civil rights and liberties of all previously excluded minorities. The first was achieved through legal challenges brought before the U.S. Supreme Court and the second through pressure on discriminating institutions. The second required a whole civil rights revolution. By 1968, both had brought about fundamental changes in American society and in the status of those previously excluded minorities, especially the Jews who became part of a newly dominant liberal "establishment."

Locally, meanwhile, the Jewish community councils that had been organized in the 1930s to serve similar purposes in the local community as well as to unite local communities through leaguering their major religious and ideological organizations and institutions, were transformed into Jewish community relations councils, pure and simple under the aegis of the newly-powerful Jewish community federations. The latter became the framing institutions of the local

Jewish communities and the former their "external relations" arms, dependent on the federations for funding. Their agendas became increasingly subject to federation control.

Sea-Change After the Six Day War

By the beginning of the 1970s the Israeli commitment to the Presidents' Conference placed it in a pre-eminent position with regard to Israel-related issues in Washington. Meanwhile, the "national" Jewish organizations that had staked their all on the continuation of the human relations alliance that directed the civil rights revolution were in the midst of a reassessment. Beginning in the late 1960s, the Black power movement effectively expelled Whites from the civil rights struggle and, indeed, seemed to display a special animosity toward Jews, in part responding to constituency attitudes towards Jewish storekeepers and real estate owners in Black ghettos and in part simply in reaction to the pre-eminent role Jews had played in the civil rights movement, even in the NAACP.

On top of this, the Six Day War brought an end to American Jewry's comfortable feeling that all people of goodwill were united in a common struggle against bigotry, racism, discrimination and genocide. In those three weeks in which Israel stood alone, confronted by what seemed to be an overwhelming Arab threat, Jews rediscovered that they had political interests of their own as a people that did not always coincide with the interests of others, even those who had been their allies in the great struggles for human rights after World War II. The Blacks had pushed the Jews away and the Jews felt that their Christian religious allies had deserted them on this crucial issue, failing to understand the importance of the Jewish state to Jews everywhere.

Commentary Magazine was the first to give voice to this new feeling through the writings of its editor Norman Podhoretz who was not afraid to ask, "Is it good for the Jews?" and advocate that as the principal criterion for collective Jewish political involvement. It was at that point that the new Jewish politics began to emerge. To show how far Jews have come since then, today the Podhoretz dictum is accepted as the mainstream position with the issue only being how what is good for the Jews is defined.

In the interim, the countrywide Jewish community relations organizations had to undergo a substantial adjustment. The Jewish War Veterans and the Jewish Labor Committee ran into serious difficulties. The impact of Vietnam on American attitudes toward war and war veterans weakened what had already been the JWV's limited purpose community relations role. The end of the era of Jewish predominance even in those few blue-collar fields such as the garment industry where there had been a Jewish presence, coupled with a general decline in the power of labor unions, seriously weakened the Jewish Labor Committee.

The American Jewish Congress was caught in the conservative backlash and also lost influence. Its situation was further compounded by the fact that most of the great church-state issues around which Jews had coalesced had been settled and new issues began to divide the Jews themselves into those who took a less militant separationist position, primarily Orthodox and right-wing conservative Jews, as against those who followed the conventional separationist position to its logical conclusion. The American Jewish Congress was also hurt by the rupturing of Jewish-Black ties, though it continued to fight a valiant battle to keep the lines of communication open with the Black leadership.

The leadership of the American Jewish Committee, stimulated by its brilliant Executive Vice President, John Slawson, had already begun to see the need for greater Jewish self-definition in the public arena in the mid-1960s and the necessity to forge new alliances with White ethnics and Catholics. Hence the Committee adjusted more easily to the changed situation of the 1970s, becoming somewhat more conservative in the process, but still retaining its basic commitment to modern liberalism. Indeed, at the end of the decade a quiet struggle between neo-conservatives and liberals occurred within the Committee and early in the 1980s, the liberals won.

Perhaps the biggest transformation occurred in the Anti-Defamation League which in the course of a decade shifted to a distinctly conservative position, in response to its perception that anti-Semitism was becoming more a matter of the Left while the Right was becoming more sympathetic with Jewish concerns. This shift came at a time when the ADL began to prosper financially, outpacing the American Jewish Committee to become the best financed of the Jewish community relations organizations.

While the studies showed that the majority of American Jews were still on the liberal side of the political ledger, there was no question that a substantial neo-conservative or conservative minority had begun to emerge, comprising at least a third of American Jewry, probably a good part of the wealthier third at that. Jews may not simply vote their pocketbooks, but at a certain point, a much higher threshold than that in the general population, wealth does influence even the political attitudes of Jews.

In part the change was brought by the change in the liberal agenda. Liberalism became a kind of underdoggism, with any group defined as an underdog automatically assured of liberal support. This came at a time when, in the wake of the Six Day War, Jews were being redefined as topdogs, part of the "establishment" and, if anything, their Palestinian Arab foes were gaining underdog status. As the new underdoggism turned to lifestyle issues, traditional Jews were increasingly alienated from it across a whole range of subjects, from abortion to homosexuality. Finally, as the new liberalism merged with the peace movement, not only to get America out of Vietnam -- a broad consensus issue after a certain point -- but to denigrate the Soviet threat to the free world and oppose America's self-defense efforts of almost any kind, more Jews were alienated from it.

Meanwhile the NJCRAC was holding fast to the mainstream conventional liberalism wherever the stream was flowing. This was not necessarily true of the local community relations councils (CRCs), however. Increasingly, their positions were determined by the general interests of the Jewish community leadership as reflected by the leadership of the Jewish community federations to which they were subsidiary.

The federations themselves still were not directly involved in this new Jewish politics. While they had, by 1967, become the framing institutions of American Jewry, they still saw themselves as institutions concerned with the internal issues of the community, not with external relations. For that there were the other bodies described above. Their umbrella organization, the CJF, had observer status in the Presidents' Conference, but was not a member, nor did it seek to play much of a role. It is true that many of the pre-eminent federation leaders played political roles as individuals. Thus, Max Fisher, in addition to being at one time president of the Council of Jewish Federations and another national chairman of the United Jewish Appeal, was also the most influential Jew in Republican political circles. Philip Klutznick, the dynamic president of International B'nai B'rith and a powerful influence in his local federation (Chicago) and other major organizations in the American Jewish community, had an almost equivalent status among the Democrats. (There was more competition in the Democratic Party so he could not have the same unrivaled pre-eminence that Max Fisher had.)

The situation changed dramatically when Jimmy Carter became President. In an effort to outflank the Presidents' Conference and AIPAC, whose solid lobbying on behalf of Israel had built them into powerhouses in their respective domains and given them great success, Carter began to invite groups of federation presidents and their executive directors to the White House. Apparently somebody had informed him of the new power of the federations and he thought to capitalize on it.

The federation leadership accepted the invitations to the White House, but before going they consulted with the appropriate spokesmen for the Jewish lobby and so came in with the same united front that had characterized the others. The President did not succeed in dividing the Jewish community, as he sought, but he did succeed in awakening the political appetite of the federation leadership. Since the federations themselves are philanthropic bodies, non-profit and tax-exempt, and none of their leaders wished to endanger that status, the leadership moved into AIPAC as individuals, greatly increasing its strength and in the process transforming AIPAC into what became, for all intents and purposes, the Israel lobbying arm of the federation movement. In the early 1980s, AIPAC grew from a small rather exclusive organization to one of the largest Jewish mass organizations in the United States, with a budget approaching that of the three community relations organizations.

Meanwhile, the new spirit of activism in the United States spilled over into politics with more people wanting to get involved in political affairs. Coming at the same time as the breakdown of the traditional party organizations, it became easier for amateurs to get involved in national as well as state and local political affairs. Individual candidates ran their own campaigns, political organizations did not control them, nor did they even provide them with the troops they needed to conduct those campaigns. New federal and state campaign spending laws, particularly the former, further restricted large contributions and made relatively small contributors far more attractive to candidates, who reached out to them. All of this led to a massive new involvement of upper middle class Americans in political activity.

Jews, who had always been in the forefront of such activity, whatever its form, found their metier. Previously, politics had been so tightly controlled by political organizations where most Jews lived that only those Jews who went into politics professionally could be involved. Now Jews jumped in with both feet.

Much of this new broad-based political involvement organized itself around a new vehicle called political action committees (PACs). This new vehicle for raising money to support individual candidates was also a reflection of the new nationalization of American politics, whereby candidates for federal office would appeal for funds beyond their state and local constituencies to those with similar views or interests. Jews have been pioneers in this effort. Well before it became public knowledge, small groups of politically savvy Jews saw to it that senatorial and congressional candidates from states where there were no significant Jewish communities would receive out-of-state Jewish funding in return for taking the right positions on Israel and occasionally on other Jewish issues such as Soviet Jewry. In the late 1970s, this kind of out-of-state support went public. Legal requirements for full disclosure brought the media people around. Publicity, even often negative publicity, made out-of-state involvement acceptable and Jewish activists took up the challenge.

Along with the phenomenal growth of AIPAC (which is not a PAC, despite its name) and the development of individual PACs, other organizations were organized by Jews to get involved in the political arena. The Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs became the Jewish lobby at the Pentagon, supporting a strong American military posture out of conviction that it was good for the United States, Israel and the free world. It forged contacts with the defense establishment in pursuit of that common interest which would also be useful in strengthening Pentagon support for Israeli interests.

The Orthodox community, hitherto politically quiescent, was stimulated by the federal Great Society programs, particularly the War on Poverty, which made many Orthodox institutions eligible to receive public funds for the first time, to enter the political arena and to make themselves felt on behalf of their interests. Hassidic communities were particularly good at this, since their Rebbes were the last leaders on the American scene who could truly deliver blocks of

votes, which could be traded for funding their education and welfare programs or for favorable legislation. Members of the Orthodox community founded COLPA as a counterfoil to the conventional liberalism of the mainstream Jewish community relations groups.

The local federations got into the act, first by mobilizing their CRCs to work with locally elected public officials on behalf of Israel, Soviet Jewry and other Jewish interests and then by opening a CJF Washington office and, in some cases, individual federation offices in the state capitals and Washington to get in on the new set of federal grants to public nongovernmental institutions and programs. For those Jews who aspired to be active in the Jewish community, politics became a participant sport.

Last, but hardly least, there was a great increase in the number of Jewish candidates for public office, particularly for the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives. Not only the number but the backgrounds of the candidates were revealing. Successful Jewish businessmen, having built successful enterprises and earned all the money they seemed to want, turned to politics as a new field to conquer.

For the first time, people whose only earlier participation in public life had been in Jewish affairs, ran and won American public offices. Frank Lautenberg, a former chairman of the United Jewish Appeal and a successful businessman in New Jersey, was elected U.S. Senator from that state. Rudi Boschwitz, an entrepreneur from Minnesota, not only became the first Jew to be elected to statewide office in that state, but was elected as a Republican in a bastion of liberalism. When he addresses Jewish meetings on behalf of the UJA campaign, he has been known to call cards. Howard Metzenbaum of Ohio, who had more prior experience in party affairs than the others, was active in the American Jewish Congress, as was Stephen Solarz, the highly visible Congressman from Brooklyn, whose constituency includes Syrian and Russian Jews who do much to define his agenda. Not so very long ago Jews were satisfied if a Jewish candidate would mouth obligatory slogans about how proud he was to be a Jew. Today, Jewish candidates who have not been involved in Jewish issues have to make active efforts to get involved to be considered credible, not only by Jews but also by non-Jews.

A New Form of Jewish Identity

The immediate results of all this are an increase in effective Jewish influence on the Congress and the Presidency and a far clearer Jewish voice in American political affairs than in the past, but the implications go beyond those immediate results. For many Jews, politics has become a new basis for Jewish identity. Aside from the sheer excitement of the political game, there are two factors at work here. One is that in contemporary American society, Jewish identification is increasingly manifested through "happenings" rather than through sustained activity and politics is one of the greatest

happenings of all. While the top Jewish leadership is intensely involved in Jewish activity constantly, there are many Jews who at one time might have been active in some kind of Jewish associational activity -- a congregation, a B'nai B'rith lodge, an organization -- who have succumbed to the combination of individualism and privatism rampant today, who do not seek sustained public activity, but who do want to get involved from time to time. Politics with its two- and four-year rhythms is just made for them.

In addition, Jewish identification is increasingly a matter of identification around Jewish issues because most American Jews are not sufficiently rooted in Jewish culture, nor sufficiently involved in Jewish religion to be able to identify in any other way. As I have commented elsewhere, a century ago the great poet of the Eastern European Jewish Enlightenment -- the Haskalah --, J.L. Gordon, could set forth as the axiom of the Haskalah, "Be a Jew in your tent and a human when you go out." Today Jews who have no idea how to be Jews in their tents, but are like all other Americans at home, go out to become Jews in the streets, to proclaim their Jewishness through some kind of Jewish public, principally political, activity on behalf of some acceptable Jewish cause.

Politics as Moralism

To a great extent, the Jewish approach to this new political involvement is highly moralistic. This is not surprising since there is a strong tendency for Jews, or at least those in the United States, to take a highly moralistic stance on issues which affect them or which they perceive to be important. For most American Jews this is defined as continuing politics "in the prophetic tradition" and it is the prophetic tradition which stands as a beacon and a guide for so many Jewish political activists.

Support for Israel is certainly considered a moral imperative and politicians who deviate from such support are found by many Jewish activists to be morally wanting. Other clearly Jewish issues, most particularly those connected with the rescue of Soviet Jewry and other Jewries in distress are viewed at least as much as questions of moral choice if not more, since even those Jewish activists who will criticize the policies of the Israeli government for one thing or another will form a solid phalanx with regard to the rescue of Jews in distress. Moreover the Jews' fear of anti-Semitism heightens their moralistic approach to Jewish issues of any kind.

The matter becomes more clouded when dealing with general issues that have been determined by one or another group of Jews, sometimes a majority and sometimes a minority of the Jewish activists, not to mention American Jewry, to be of Jewish import. This has been especially true with regard to the separation of church and state, an issue which often has direct implications for the Jewish community, but is not a Jewish issue per se. American Jewry has raised church-state separation to the level of a moral imperative,

even though traditional Judaism would at the very least have doubts about the wisdom of the kind of absolute separation that these Jews demand, if not reject it altogether, at least for a Jewish polity.

As Orthodox Jews have grown in strength in the United States and have become more active in politics, they have defined relations between religion and state differently than the Jewish mainstream, supporting the idea of state neutrality among religious groups but seeing a very real government role for the support of religious values and norms and assisting in the maintenance of certain kinds of religious institutions.

Even more problematic are such currently important issues as abortion and women's rights generally, since most Jewish women, indeed most Jews, are on the liberal side of the fence on these issues and support women's rights to abortion and equality for women across the board. There are those who have tried to make these issues moral touchstones of Jewish loyalty.

The point here is not the issue itself but the moralistic tone which American Jews bring to political matters. In this they are like other Americans who come from a moralistic political cultural background and who are their allies in most of the "cause" movements of our time. While there is much to commend about this moralistic approach to politics, and it even has a certain aesthetic beauty of its own in a democratic republic, at times Jews have to be reminded that the world is not divided morally into black and white and that in politics it is necessary to live with various shades of grey.

The Dangers of Power

Finally, the new Jewish involvement in politics has contributed to a certain intoxication with power on the part of some Jews, activists and spectators alike. In part this is attributable to Israel's success in defending itself. The special reputation of the Israel Defense Forces and security services has in the space of a generation changed the world's image of the Jew from one of being little short of a conniving coward to one of being a feisty defender of his interests. This view has become the Jewish self-image, even more so.

In part it is because of Jewish successes in the American political arena. There a combination of sophisticated Jewish community organization, intense activism, higher voting turnout than that of virtually any other group in American society, and extensive financial support of political candidates has brought Jewish leaders and activists into contact with politicians from the courthouse to the White House. For some Jews, being feisty and influential, rubbing shoulders with the "great" while insisting on their support for perceived Jewish interests, has its intoxications.

This is especially true so soon after Jews were not even admitted to the antechambers of the corridors of power throughout the world and were powerless to save their brethren or themselves. Because of the Jewish experience of powerlessness at the time of the

Holocaust, most Jews recognize that being without power can bring death or worse and few would wish to see such power as Jews now have in any way diminished -- not in Israel, not in the United States, not anywhere.

On the other hand, Jews must avoid being intoxicated by power trips of any kind. Having power brings with it the responsibility to use it wisely and well. Power is like fire, a neutral but terribly destructive force which, when harnessed, can be used to achieve the best of ends but when uncontrolled or misused can lead to the worst destruction.

There have been times in Jewish history when Jews have been intoxicated with their apparent power and overassessed their strength. Each time led to national catastrophe. We are still a small people, destined to live as a minority in the world around us. To do so, we must acquire the power we need but we must exercise it with prudence.

From the very beginning, Jewish tradition has recognized both the vital importance of having power and the vital necessity to control it. It assigns the Jewish people major tasks in the political arena, but also keeps the importance of that arena in proportion. In the Jewish political tradition, Jews are to build their commonwealth and do everything possible to defend it in order to be able to one day make it truly holy, but only God is sovereign. For the rest of us, power is delegated and shared and thereby kept under control. Let us by all means preserve and even enhance our power position, but let us always do so soberly and responsibly so that the new Jewish politics will be, first and foremost, a politics of prudence.

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Daniel J. Elazar is President of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, Senator N.M. Paterson Professor of Political Studies at Bar Ilan University, and Director of the Center for the Study of Federalism at Temple University. He is presently a member of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations by Presidential appointment and has served on various state and local boards and commissions as well as serving as an officer and board member of numerous Jewish organizations.

Chapter 2

THE POLITICS OF CENTRISM: JEWS AND THE 1980 ELECTIONS

Irving Louis Horowitz

Summary: In recent generations there has been a continuing Jewish commitment to Democratic party voting patterns as a matter of intellectual disposition and social commitment. What in fact exists is a fundamental centrist tendency which has remained constant in the face of shifting definitions of liberalism. A close look at the personalities and issues of the 1980 presidential campaign substantiates this tendency, which manifested itself in a new Jewish pragmatism. Seen from this broad perspective, Jewish positions have changed little, whereas objective circumstances in American life have changed a great deal.

Because 1988 is a presidential election year in the United States, interest in Jewish voting patterns, ideological preferences and interest orientations is once again high. A simple profile of the 5,778,753 American Jews itself indicates why curiosity quickly turns to analysis.(1) Jews as a group graduate 58 percent of their number from college, are highly concentrated in metropolitan centers, are clustered, at 65 percent, in professional or business activities; and consider themselves either Democrats (56 percent) or independents (36 percent).(2) Melvin Urofsky's appraisal of America as the land of the goldenah medinah seems indisputable.(3)

Here a culture and society developed through intermingling and mutual accommodation of numerous religious and ethnic groups, without the blight of a crippling medieval heritage of Jew-hatred. In no other country had Jews ever achieved the social, economic and political acceptance they found in the United States, a land which, in the words of the Puritans, was a new Zion. Certainly, when the halutzim of the First and Second Aliyot left Russia to settle in Palestine, thousands of other Jews voted with their feet for a different Zion, and migrated to the United States.

A Traditional Commitment to the Democratic Party

In Israeli Ecstasies/Jewish Agonies, I took note of continuing Jewish commitment to Democratic party voting patterns as a matter of intellectual disposition and social commitment.

The Jewish community of the United States has traditionally voted for the Democratic party not as an act of contrition or faith but rather in the belief that that party expressed the best interests of the American political commonweal in its search for universal justice and complete equity. The Jews have proven to be a unique force in American politics in that, despite their class backgrounds or interests, they have exhibited the capacity to vote and act beyond their class and interest group constraints. The critical decision then in the current decade, and perhaps beyond, is whether this historic sense of equity, built up by strong and powerful identification from the New Deal to the New Frontier, will yield to a sense of fear and a sentiment of loathing for the newer minority groups, particularly the blacks and Spanish-speaking groups who have gone beyond philanthropy in their dealings with Jews, and for the large deviant marginals who clearly represent a threat to traditional Jewish ethical and cultural credos.(4)

A summary of data compiled by Seymour Martin Lipset confirms my earlier judgment.

Studies of Jewish attitudes and political behavior continue to find that Jews remain the most liberal white ethnic or religious group in the nation. A late November (1979) Gallup release reports that Edward Kennedy, accurately perceived by the populace as the most Left or liberal of the candidates, has a larger lead over Carter among Jews (64-16) than among any other group of Democrats, including blacks and Kennedy's fellow Catholics. Analyses of voting behavior find that American Jews remain more committed to the Democratic party than any other ethnic or religious group, except for blacks. Within the party, as their current presidential nomination preferences indicate, Jews are the segment most disposed to back the more liberal, New Politics wing. In 1972, when McGovern's dovish views were supposedly alienating pro-Israel Jews, he secured about two-thirds of the Jewish vote, more than he received from any other white group. In June 1978, a small majority of California's Jewish voters opposed Proposition 13, while 65 percent of the electorate favored it, according to a Los Angeles Times survey. In November 1978, 60 percent of the Jews voted for Jerry Brown for governor, a far higher percentage than Brown received from Catholics and Protestants. In the 1978 congressional elections, 72 percent of the Jews queried as they were leaving polling places told New York Times/CBS interviewers that they had voted for Democrats, in contrast to 60 percent of the Catholics and 45 percent of the Protestants. Only 16 percent of the Jewish voters described their political views as conservative,

compared with 27 percent of Catholics and 37 percent of Protestants.(5)

A Fundamental Centrist Tendency

A review of international events in the last decade confirms long-standing tendencies, primary of which is that the Jews cannot find a permanent home in either left-totalitarian or right-totalitarian contexts. In contrast to demographic trends elsewhere, the number of self-declared Jews in the Soviet Union have diminished from roughly three million to two million during the past ten years. Outward migration, cultural absorption, and just plain fear to express manifest identification have accounted for as massive a decline in Jewish population as one can find since World War Two and the Hitler Holocaust.

An interesting parallel is that the Jewish community in Cuba has declined from an active, vibrant group of more than 10,000 prior to Castro (roughly 1960), to a remnant population of under 1,500 in 1980 whose expression of Judaism is strictly confined to temple worship. No country outside the satellite Soviet orbit has been as consistently anti-Semitic as has Fidel's Cuba. Granma is even more exaggerated than Pravda as it repeats the slogans of its Soviet masters. At the other end of the political spectrum, Argentina had a Jewish population of roughly 500,000 in 1960. By more recent accounts, its Jewish population in 1980 was roughly 300,000 people. This 40 percent reduction has been highlighted by the house arrest, harassment and expulsion of important Jewish figures for aiding and abetting Communist subversion.(6) The classic model -- fascists blaming Jews for being vanguard communists, and communists blaming Jews for their racist-Zionist forms of racism -- persists with a grim vigor, the continuation of a hoax that has plagued the century.

One can readily appreciate the centrist tendencies in Jewish life as an international phenomenon: its support for the open society, for democratic processes, human rights and a free economy; rather than with any single political slogan or trend. In the United States, extreme left factions have taken anti-Semitic postures and allied with anti-Israel causes. At the same time, as the Skokie crisis indicated, rightist extremists or nativistic Nazis have continued unabated their assaults on the Jews as the central evil -- along with the blacks -- of American society. No wonder that Jews have shown a pronounced inclination to avoid organized Left politics. In the McCarthy hysteria of the 1950s only 13 percent of white Gentiles favored equal rights for Communists, while 38 percent of the Jews did. Equal rights remains a cardinal touchstone of Jewish attitudes, but there has been a noticeable hardening of Jewish resistance to Soviet anti-Semitism. Equally important has been growing resistance to and resentment of absolutist civil libertarian support for Nazi and fascist harassment of Jewish communal life. In short, Jewish centrism has intensified as

both political extremes have coalesced around the theory and practice of anti-Semitism.

Shifting Definitions of Liberalism

Identification of a rightward swing on the part of Jews is inaccurate. In fact Jews have held a constant course in a shifting sea. Jews have always been committed to a fair race, where all contestants can participate on an equal footing. They notoriously avoid any notion of special favors; they do not curry special favors; they remain convinced (as were their adversaries) that given equal opportunity the race would go to the swift and the Jewish community would end up with its reasonable share of victories. Jews do not desire a favored position in the economic marketplace, only an equal status in that marketplace. In this sense, the Jew remains the steady devotee of classical liberalism.

What in fact has occurred is a shift of liberalism to affirmation of the active participation of the State as a handicapper in the race and the concomitant shift of conservative elements to a pure theory of the political marketplace in which all participate. The Jewish community, especially its intelligentsia, has been pictured as shifting to the Right.(7) In point of fact, Jews have retained their uniquely centrist role, attached to the idea that everyone starts the race for social goods at roughly the same place and ends at far different points on the tracks when the race is completed (in this case, when the plan is declared subscribed or overfulfilled).

The velocity of change in Jewish life in America is so great that when we turn to a 1974 essay by Lucy S. Dawidowicz and Leon S. Goldstein(8) we can see how the situation has become more complex. They write:

Political traditions brought from Europe (particularly Eastern Europe), economic experiences among the urban proletariat, and insecurities about anti-Semitism have combined to shape a middle class American Jewish liberalism that has usually expressed itself at the polls in Democratic voting. This liberalism has become so pervasive that many descendants of German-Jewish immigrants, whose fathers and grandfathers were Republicans, have come to vote Democratic in the last two or three decades. By now liberal voting may have become part of a family group tradition -- a habit and custom difficult to shed, particularly at that final moment in the voting booth when what Paul Lazarsfeld once called "terminal horror" assails the voter, preventing him from pulling the unaccustomed lever.

Liberalism had been "a family voting tradition"; it has now become a habit and a custom quite readily shed, albeit selectively. This is indicative of the rapidity of political shifts, generational

transformations, and erosion of the Democratic party organization itself more than of shifts in the Jewish voting bloc. The disintegration of party identification in general cannot be overlooked in any evaluation of Jewish party preferences. Beyond that, family and group traditions may be seen as themselves at home in conservative as well as liberal garb. In short, the movement of the Democratic party away from classical liberalism and toward state liberalism does more to explain new patterns of Jewish political identification than any particularly noticeable shift over the past decade in Jewish ideology.

Perhaps the best way to make sense out of the subject of Jews and the Right is to examine the general panorama of American political shifts. If I may be permitted the horse racing metaphor, what we find is the following: The classical liberal model holds that all horses shall commence the race from the same precise starting position and the test of talent shall be where one finishes in the race, with rewards commensurate with the finishing position. The classical conservative model holds that the race shall have a common starting gate, but not every horse shall be allowed to run. A pug has no place in a race against a thoroughbred. Over time, certainly over the twentieth century, the grid of expectations has shifted dramatically: The state liberal has become a devotee of the handicap race, viewing the real object of a good race to have all the contestants end at the finish line in a dead heat. Horses are handicapped with weights -- the better horses carry more weight -- so that they will compete with no "advantage" over slower horses. The modern conservative, for his part, has taken up the classical liberal persuasion, believing that the starting gate should be open to all but that the results should be different, since talent is unequally distributed. The conservative has thus effectively filled the gap in the mainline culture, leaving to the undiluted reactionaries its earlier posture that nags and pugs have no place in the same track as thoroughbreds. Admittedly such metaphorical analogs are imperfect and intellectually porous, yet it does help show us, in broad brush strokes, the evolution of the American ideology over the course of the century. We must now address how Jewish identification fits into this shifting grid, this changing mosaic of beliefs.

The relationship between Judaism and liberalism or Judaism and conservatism has been argued by many -- long and forcefully but somehow inconclusively. Howe has emphasized the highly disproportionate number of Jews in radical and protest politics.⁽⁹⁾ Isaacs has argued that Jewish liberalism is largely a myth, a function of distrust and insecurity rather than a specific ideology.⁽¹⁰⁾ Elazar properly asserts that Jewish liberalism is tangential to Christian denominationalism, so that the organizational starting points are dissimilar but the ideological end results are similar.⁽¹¹⁾ But several serious weaknesses exist in these classical viewpoints: They fail to distinguish radicalism from liberalism; they tend to underemphasize religious and/or ethical dimensions of Judaism in favor of its organizational aspects, discounting the public inactivity and apathy of most Jews,

their tendency toward privatization and their socialization away from political participation of any kind. Indeed, the views recently expressed by William Berlin probably come closest to the truth: The "conscious concern with the past and its meaning indicate in contemporary Jewry an orientation which their forebears felt with similar intensity: The desire for a unique and continuous identity in a world where Jews can live like everybody else." (12) Acceptance of the prototypes of pluralism, local government and community control, all built around questions of belief, may well be viewed as within the parameters of contemporary conservatism. But whether conservative or liberal labels are attached, the profound attachment of Jews to American ideals as a whole remains inescapable. Judaism is threatened less by any overidentification or separation from any political ideology than by the total identification of Judaism with Americanism.

In this sense, Jewish criticism of affirmative action programs, hardening of attitudes toward racial, ethnic and language minorities, and general movement away from the politicization of government and education may be seen less as a shift to the Right than as a transformation of Jewish acceptance of establishment liberalism for a more activist and critical posture in the policy arena. As the price of new programs has proven burdensome for many American taxpayers, and as the costs have come to be perceived as outweighing the benefits, Jewish suspicion of state liberalism has come closer to mainline American concerns. For example, the near uncritical support of John Fitzgerald Kennedy in 1960 and of Robert Kennedy in 1968 gave way to strong criticism of Edward Kennedy. (13) Even before his announcement for office, the strongest criticism of Kennedy's candidacy came in Commentary. Thus, once again Jewish mass support for traditional liberalism is counterbalanced by elite opposition to state liberalism.

The foreign policy imperatives in particular have become a concern for Jews. The erosion of American political and military strength, the extension of OPEC energy power, and the expansion of Soviet geopolitical and military activity all stirred Jewish concern in part because they directly affect Israel's survival. Edward Kennedy's failure to articulate a response to such threats, not any presumed vigor on the part of former President Carter, helped to explain why support was withheld from Kennedy by the Center and the Right wing of the Democratic party. (In part, a degree of Jewish support for Anderson reflected his willingness to grapple with some of these issues.) When foreign policy concerns are coupled with fears that vigorous promotion of black, Chicano, and other minority causes can so politicize domestic policy that Jews will be forced to behave as a self-seeking interest group, then the erosion of strict party loyalty can be better understood. The dissolution of solid bloc voting for the Democratic party at the national level less reflects Right tendencies than fear that the party has become too responsive to its own power blocs and interest groups and hence less universalistic in its commitments to fundamental American political pluralism.

Even more than the size of the Jewish vote, its geographic concentration has been of concern to national political managers for many years. Some candidates may simply disregard ethnic and religious preference as a factor. For most, there is renewed interest in Jewish voting patterns in part as a result of several elements: Jewish disaffection and alienation from the Democratic party; declining significance in party identification on the part of voters as a whole; and the general relationship of party preference to preferences for state liberalism.

Jews are less concerned with liberalism as a general ideology than with the specific issues: Israeli security and survival internationally, and equity concerns and quota demands nationally. In the past, even if Democratic candidates took positions critical of Israel or declared in favor of affirmative action, Jewish support for the Democratic party remained consistently high. Jewish support for George McGovern was 65 percent, while he could claim only 31 percent of the rest of the white vote in his campaign against Richard Nixon.

The 1980 Presidential Campaign

In the 1980 presidential campaign, the Republican Ronald Reagan was the most consistently "pro-Israel" of all candidates; he was also perceived as the most conservative on domestic issues. Alternate choices such as George Bush or John Anderson were considerably more liberal on domestic issues than Reagan, but far less candid or committed on the issue of Israeli survival as a Middle East power or even as a United States ally. On the Democratic side, Jimmy Carter was relatively more conservative on domestic issues than Jewish attitudinal preferences, but acceptable. However his developing adversarial relationship to Israel was manifested in a series of United Nations negative votes and abstentions which made him a barely tolerable candidate for Jews. The cancellation effect, in which foreign and domestic issues work at cross purposes, served to freeze Jewish voting preferences at a two-thirds Democratic and one-third Republican ratio.

The Camp David Agreement between Egypt and Israel restored much Jewish support for Carter, but it was thin support, easily moved away from him. The primary alternatives, Edward Kennedy and Jerry Brown, offered a choice between a basically isolationist (Kennedy) posture toward foreign policy and a capitulationist (Brown) policy. Neither was perceived as remotely consonant with the needs of Israeli survival in a hostile Middle East geopolitical-military environment.

Hence the wide fluctuations in Jewish voting patterns in the 1980 primaries could be seen as a disaffection from Carter more than any strong identification with Kennedy. For example, in Florida the Jewish voters who are primarily of New York origin voted for Kennedy over Carter by 53 to 37 percent. In New York, this same margin held, despite Mayor Edward Koch's manifest support for

Carter. On the other hand, in the Illinois primaries, specifically the vote in Chicago, Jewish support went to Carter over Kennedy by an almost two-to-one margin.(14)

In the past, Democratic party candidates combined strong support for United States-Israeli cooperation in foreign policy with undeviating liberal positions in domestic policy. Candidates like Hubert Humphrey, Henry Jackson and Morris Udall gained overwhelming Jewish voter support. Only in a non-election year, when the choice was between Carter as the Democratic candidate and Ford as the Republican entrant did Carter's support among Jewish voters soar to roughly 90 percent.(15) Jews tend to make liberal choices over and against the conservative options that usually exist in the Republican party, but no such distinctive option seemed to offer itself for the 1980 elections.

Jewish disaffection from the Democratic party is significant precisely to the extent that their voting preferences are representative of existing party loyalties and the intensity of such loyalties. Since it was unlikely that the Democratic party in 1980 would nominate a candidate for president who was perceived as anti-Israel or opposed to civil equality, equal opportunity, aid to the poor and to education, the erosion of Jewish electoral support was also unlikely. The more meaningful problem was the disintegration of the party system through the substitution of personality for ideology, financial moguls in place of grass roots activity, and continuing exposure of legislative and executive corruption on the part of those sworn to moral probity. Under such conditions, exceedingly unlikely to develop all at once in a single electoral campaign, one could not expect continuing broad-based Jewish support for the Democratic party.

How support for the Democratic party translates into support for liberalism has been a constant problem in data analysis. There is an all-too-ready presupposition that the Democratic party is the more liberal party. But this assumption was somewhat challenged in 1980 by the victory of the most conservative Democratic figure (Jimmy Carter) over his "liberal" (Ted Kennedy) and "radical" (Jerry Brown) opponents. Contrariwise, the emergence of someone like Representative John Anderson as a significant if minority element in the Republican party could have a long term impact on loosening Jewish support for one party. While the vigorous pro-Israeli position of Ronald Reagan has netted him increased Jewish support among "internationalists," his domestic conservatism may have cost him an equal number of Jewish votes among "liberals." In short, when one looks closely at national elections, the Jewish vote remains ubiquitous only as a result of the vagaries of the political processes and party choices. In itself, Jewish voting patterns are centrist in policy and universalist in principle.

Whether state liberalism tendencies in the Democratic party will lead Jewish voters to embrace the Republican party is something else again. The Grand Old Party is itself in a period of intense transformation, generationally no less than ideologically. Also, awareness that starting with less than 10 percent of the black and

Jewish votes is a serious handicap not easily overcome may create new ideological patterns within Republicanism. Republican candidates may diverge widely on issues of Jewish concern. In 1980, John Connally may have sealed his fate in the primaries by arguing a need for a greater gap between the United States and Israel. It was perceived that behind this urging for realism in the Middle East was a call for diminution of Israeli power. During the same campaign, Ronald Reagan made a strong policy statement urging greater support for Israel and recognizing the unique stability of the friendship between the American Goliath and the Israeli David.

William Ray Heitzmann conceptualized the movement toward the Republican camp as a maturity in Jewish voting. It might be accelerated by their nomination of a Jewish candidate in a national campaign, as he asserted, but any changes are not quite so simplistic or so rapid as he indicates.(16) The decisive factor is not Jewish identification with Jewish candidates, but with American values of an enduring sort. Irish politicians like Father Robert Drinan or Daniel Patrick Moynihan easily defeated Jewish opposition -- with massive Jewish voting support. Unquestionably the age of automatic Jewish support for Democratic party candidates has come to a crashing halt. Just as undeniably, to the extent that the Democratic party better and more faithfully represents fundamental pluralistic liberal values, it will nonetheless continue to generate Jewish support. Political apathy or intellectual rigor mortis does not explain continuing Jewish support for Democratic candidates, but rather the inability of Republicans thus far to present viable options within the framework of the American Dream.

A New Jewish Pragmatism

Perhaps the best exponent of a new Jewish pragmatism is Milton Himmelfarb. While painfully accepting the facts of Democratic party preference, he sees the problem in ritual political voting rather than in ideology. Hence he argues that the need of the moment is to get beyond party identification into an appropriate self-interested Jewish posture.(17)

If our rote liberalism has been against our interest, it does not follow that rote conservatism would be in our interest. It is in our interest to feel free to vote for one party or the other, and especially to be seen to be free. It is further in our interest that we should be enrolled in each party in such numbers as to discourage stands damaging to us....

Jewish conservatism means giving a two-thirds vote to the most unpopular Democratic candidate in memory. Compulsive smokers know that smoking is not good for them but they keep smoking. Most Jews are compulsive Democratic voters. As a friend of mine puts it, 'I'm an independent, I

always vote Democratic.' A sensible Republican is unlikely to put great effort into hunting such elusive prey. A sensible Democratic candidate is unlikely to put great effort into winning over people who have shown that they will vote for him regardless.

The idea of planting flags in many political camps is reasonable enough. But whether such a strategy is much different or more compelling than Jesse Jackson's call to black voters to adopt a similar strategy is hard to detect. Whether such a dilution of strength in the Democratic party would cause both major parties to vie for Jewish support and Jewish votes is equally open to question. The possibility of a cancellation effect is sufficiently great that one might wonder if there is any single electoral strategy that will maximize Jewish strength. And, of course, Himmelfarb's position rests on the assumption that Jewish goals have a unitary character. The pragmatic point of view can be seen to have precisely the same sorts of dangers as idealistic overidentification which the Democratic party contains. In short, Jewish centrism is not simply a function of electoral strategy, but of shortcomings in presidential politics as such.

Those who present the Jewish question in the context of interest group politics have a dilemma. The model is not appropriate. Where factors such as race, class, and common ancestry cluster, then the interest group model has relevance. But the tripartite nature of Jewish life makes this an unlikely tactic.(18) Some Jews define themselves primarily in religious terms. Others define themselves in secular national or Zionist terms. Finally, others have a cultural view of Jewish life, relating to matters of psychology and norms of behavior. The Judaic tradition has its own special form of trinitarianism -- Israel, Torah and God. Corresponding to that in the secular realm is: 1) Israel as a state in the Hobbesian sense of retaining a monopoly of power; 2) peoplehood, in which the ethics embodied in the sacred documents are invested in the Jewish people as a whole, an entity without a physical boundary but a national people nonetheless; 3) the Hebrew God, in which a collection of values, precepts and concepts are fused in a religious tradition which takes on institutional expression. Such fragmentation means that American Jews are divided, indeed fragmented, on nearly every question other than the survival of Israel and opposition to anti-Semitism.(19) To expect Jews to behave as a narrowly focused interest group is politically improbable and perhaps worse, an intellectual disservice to the special historical role of Jews as a moral force.

One can interpret this position in several ways. Jewish political responses to American events may be seen as frozen, stagnant, even insensitive to new currents of political action. Or one might see this as a matter of Jewish consistency and resolve. At the practical level Jews have a strong emotive feeling that any sort of extreme, any totalitarian system, is dangerous to Jewish survival. Beyond that, the Jewish tradition argues for a centrist framework, in which justice

takes precedence over premises of historical inevitability or personal infallibility. The religion of the law translates into an ethic of personal responsibility, and as a result, while differences in outcomes are not only countenanced but encouraged, such differences have to be arrived at honestly, not through capricious or wrongful advantage.

Seen in this broad perspective, Jewish positions have changed little, whereas objective circumstances in American life have changed a great deal. The universalist premises of Jewish life function well in the national political arena only within the framework of the legal system. They function less well at the executive level and scarcely at all in Congressional terms, where particularistic values operate both to place legislators in office and keep them there. The emergence of interest groups, pressure groups and special advantages for special people may be well within the tradition of modern state liberalism. State liberalism is an approach to life and morals that is difficult for the Jewish tradition to absorb. In previous ages special advantages translated into Jewish disadvantages. In religio-social terms, emphasis on interest group approaches to political and social concerns falsifies Jewish law by depriving it of the universalist spirit for which it is known and upon which it is based.

What has taken place in Jewish life is a transvaluation of values. What constitutes Left, Center and Right takes on a new meaning. "Radicalism" in such a universe has more to do with the activities of the Jewish Defense League in the United States and Israel than with any special aspect of Marxology. What has been called "establishing internality," means creating or defining political tendencies within the Jewish company of players that are quite distinct from the larger mass of society.(20) Conservative trends increasingly refer to religious zealotry and attacks on secular culture. Such religiosity becomes an internalized expression of Jewish Rightism, a carrying of and a caring for the "tradition" not unlike certain Christian fundamentalist counterparts in the larger culture who are also identified as Right-wing oriented in their context.

If there is a Right drift or a Left tendency in Jewish life, its meaning must be situated and grounded within the specifics of Jewish dynamics. The fear of absorption into the dominant society propels such Left and Right tendencies. Jewish solidarity moves in various countervailing tendencies to offset Jewish centrism precisely because such centrism is isomorphic between the Jewish and Gentile worlds. Thus while it would be a mistake to exaggerate Jewish tendencies toward a Right or Left drift, it would be no less erroneous to claim that a comfortable Jewish life within the larger American society is an uncritical or undiluted blessing. In this sense, Jewish marginality to the larger society remains characteristic of the peoplehood as a whole, even if such marginality is increasingly expressed in terms of centrist commitments rather than as separatist political goals.

One final caveat should be registered concerning Jewish centrism. While for some it is a political posture, for perhaps the great majority centrism results from a difficult effort to find a proper political mansion. In this sense, centrism is a consequence of the

differing strains and tensions within Jewish life, rather than a fully articulated ideological belief system. Centrism in this sense is not a middle of the road position on issues, but rather the outcome of a melange of beliefs, persuasions and attitudes. Hence strong Jewish identification with civil liberties will occasion high Jewish support and participation in the movement for an Equal Rights Amendment and support for abortion reform legislation. The minority position of Jews in public schools will occasion their firm adherence to Jeffersonian premises of separation of church and state and hence rejection of religious worship in school assemblies. Even on foreign policy matters Jews were found to be in strong opposition to the Vietnam War, while at the same time equally supportive of increased United States aid to Israel.

What this suggests is that Jewish "self-interest" does exist, but more often than not issues of substance are determined on their merit. If Jews have political power, it is not simply or even primarily based on voting patterns, but on the selective impact through elites and establishments to register their points of view. Jewish concentration is perhaps larger in the policy process, which binds the academy to the polity, than in the political process directly. Hence this sort of centrism is based on selective decision-making on issues. It fits well with an American model which increasingly relies upon the policy process for its knowledge and decreasingly upon raw party membership or affiliation to determine domestic or foreign policy decisions of major consequence for the nation.

Candidates come and go, but the issues which vitally affect broad sectors of Americans, or sub-sets like Jewish Americans, have a durability which attests to the endurance of a democratic culture and no less to Jewish problems in dealing with that culture.(21) As I said about the 1972 election:

The 1972 political watershed was crossed only to find a fork in the road: one path leading to assimilation into the national culture, the other leading to separation from the national culture. And what decisions are taken depend of course on the evaluation of the worth of that American national culture and, beyond that, what realistic alternatives exist in that culture. In short, this watershed was a demonstration rather than a resolution of the Jewish agony since it sharpened in a dramatic fashion a choice between conservatism and radicalism, republicanism and egalitarianism. The automatic support of liberalism has finally come to a stark halt, replaced by a condition of polarization that, while not exactly new to the Jewish people, has seriously affected traditional Jewish assumptions about the universal rights to justice and equity. But this only demonstrates that the Jewish problem is, after all, tied directly to the American dilemma and can only be resolved along with it.

The events of these past years would indicate that the watershed of an earlier period has been crossed. Jewish identity has been reaffirmed and the politics of centrism has come to be viewed as the necessary corollary of such selfhood.

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Irving Louis Horowitz, Hannah Arendt Distinguished Professor of Sociology and Political Science at Rutgers University, is a long time observer of the Jewish scene in the United States and abroad.

Chapter 3

ARE AMERICAN JEWS BECOMING CONSERVATIVES AND SHOULD THEY?

Jonathan S. Woocher

Summary: After decades of voting in large majorities for Democratic presidential candidates, Jewish voters voted Republican in record numbers in 1980. While some heralded the emergence of a new conservative majority among American Jews, the election result was due largely to the unpopularity of the Democratic nominee, President Carter, and that the apparent American Jewish romance with political conservatism was both shallow and short-lived due to fundamental ideological incompatibilities. This is further clarified by reviewing the results of the Congressional races in that same year, where no such conservative trend was evident.

A Strong Republican Showing in 1980

The scent has been in the air for some time now, and the 1980 election marked, according to some, the full flowering of the American Jew as political conservative. After decades of almost rote support for Democratic presidential candidates by margins of 65 percent or better, Jewish voters in 1980 split their ballots nearly evenly between Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, with about an eighth rejecting both in favor of independent (ne Republican) John Anderson. Combined with the 30+ percent of the Jewish vote received by Gerald Ford and Richard Nixon, the new visibility and vocalism of self-avowed Jewish conservatives and neo-conservatives, the alienation of many Jews from their erstwhile "liberal coalition" partners, and the hardening attitude among Jews toward national defense and the Soviet Union, Ronald Reagan's near plurality among Jewish voters nationally and "victory" among Jews in some areas seems to signal the beginning of a new era; an era in which conservatism will be not only respectable, but perhaps even the dominant political posture of American Jewry.

Partisans of this ostensible shift hail it as a "coming home": a recognition (at last) by Jews not only of where their interests lie, but of the inherently conservative cast of Jewish social philosophy -- with its profound respect for individual freedom and initiative, its suspicion of powerful government, and its commitment to a standard of justice which favors neither the rich nor the poor. The contemporary conservative agenda, these proponents claim, is more compatible with the Jewish quest for security, fairness, and opportunity than a liberal agenda which espouses detente with the Soviet Union and unilateral

American arms reduction, racial and ethnic quotas in the name of affirmative action, and economic policies which stifle growth and enterprise. Judging from the election results, this is a message which is more than beginning to sink home.

Or is it? Did 1980 in fact herald the emergence of a new conservative majority among American Jews? Are American Jews wise to respond to the siren song of Republican outreach and neo-conservative Jewish intellectuals? Ronald Reagan did win over 40 percent of the Jewish vote. There are growing numbers of outspoken Jewish conservatives. But the result of 1980 can be read in other ways as well, and Jewish "conservatives" may well find themselves increasingly making common cause with their liberal counterparts (Jewish and non-Jewish), rather than with their ostensible conservative allies.

A Short-Lived Romance with Conservatism

I wish to argue that the apparent American Jewish romance with political conservatism is both shallow and likely to be short-lived, and that in the long run Jews will and should continue to be markedly "progressive" in their political orientation. I suspect, in fact, that 1980 marked the zenith of conservative and Republican voting among Jews -- although liberals and Democrats may by their failures to regroup effectively, somewhat prolong the conservative/Republican tide.

First, the empirical questions. As Aaron Rosenbaum pointed out in his insightful article in Moment magazine, analyzing the 1980 "Jewish vote" is made difficult by the problem of identifying the "Jewish vote." Since it is idle to quibble about a few percentage points here and there, let us accept AIPAC's estimate that the Jewish voting split was 45 percent Carter, 42 percent Reagan, and 12 percent Anderson, and that Reagan won pluralities in several areas, including New York. This indicated, above all, that Jimmy Carter was an incredibly unpopular candidate among Jews as well as among the rest of the electorate. It also indicated, as Rosenbaum noted, that Reagan's Jewish supporters and those charged with making his pitch to Jewish voters were successful in establishing him as a respectable alternative for a large number of Jews. This was not done, however, by high-lighting Reagan's virtues as a conservative -- indeed, Reagan's relationship with the New Right and Christian conservatives was a problem for those courting the Jewish voter. If some Jews supported Reagan because he is America's leading conservative politician, many more, I would suggest, probably supported him in spite of this fact. The combination of Jimmy Carter's manifold disabilities (in policy, personality, and performance), Anderson's slide toward oblivion, and Reagan's attractive presentation of himself as a forthright supporter of Israel and a strong leader, produced a 42 percent vote among Jews for him as President. It is difficult to imagine a weaker Democratic candidate than Jimmy Carter from a Jewish perspective. And yet, Carter won a plurality of Jewish votes.

Would Reagan have fared nearly as well among Jews against any other Democrat? I doubt it. A Democratic centrist with a good record on Israel -- a Jackson or a Moynihan -- would have slaughtered him, I believe. Even a "liberal" Democrat -- a Bayh or a Kennedy -- would likely have beaten Reagan fairly handily among Jewish voters. On the other hand, a "moderate" Republican -- a Baker, a Ford, perhaps a Bush or an Anderson -- would probably have won a clear plurality of Jewish votes against Carter, or a majority in a two-man race. Anyone who spent any time among American Jews in 1980 would, I believe, have to concede that Jimmy Carter was for most Jews a "non-starter," at best the recipient of grudging support, at worst perceived as Yassir Arafat's surrogate.

That this may well have been grossly unfair to Carter is irrelevant. Within the Jewish community, his campaign was entirely defensive in tone and often inept in execution. Reagan's triumph was not in converting Jews to his conservatism, but in making himself acceptable to Jewish moderates. The collapse of the Anderson campaign masks the message in the 12 percent of the Jewish vote Congressman Anderson did receive; many Jews desperately wanted a candidate without Carter's Middle East policy, and without Reagan's social policies. Here we reach the nub of the question. There can be little doubt that many Jews do approve -- for both interested and ideological reasons -- of elements of the Reagan agenda. The promise of Great Society liberalism has been played out; Jews are troubled by the insensitivity they find among "progressives" to Jewish concerns; the identification of a Jewish commitment to social justice with the Democratic Party platform no longer appears inevitable.

What is it about contemporary conservatism that attracts Jews? There is an apparent congruence on several highly salient specific issues, but not a fundamental ideological convergence. Conservatives tend today to be more vocal than liberals in denouncing terrorism, in labelling the Soviet Union as an implacable adversary, in pushing for larger defense budgets, in opposing school busing and quotas in dealing with racial discrimination, in promising lower taxation, in singing the virtues of family and neighborhood stability, in calling for crackdowns on crime. These are appealing stances for many Jews who fear for Israel's security and for their own position in a society in which they constitute a dwindling percentage of the population.

But what about the other elements of the conservative agenda today? Insofar as it is possible to speak of a "conservative political philosophy" in the United States today, it is really not the mainstream Republicans (with whom some Jews now indeed find themselves comfortable) who are its ideological proponents. The Republican center has by and large made its peace with the New Deal. It offers a politics of moderation, of skepticism with regard to excessive liberal program-mongering, of fiscal restraint, and of a slightly augmented anti-Communism.

The acceptability of such a program, or that of neo-conservative intellectuals, or of Democratic "conservatives" or even neo-liberals (Gary Hart, Paul Tsongas), to Jews rests on the fact that it does not

challenge in any fundamental fashion the basic thrust of the past fifty years toward a society of greater economic, political, and social justice and more assured civil liberties. A political conservatism -- I would prefer to call it centrism or moderation -- which accepts the fruits of the 1930s and the 1960s and attempts to inject a note of caution and balance against those who urge more radical steps to cure the social ills -- domestic or international -- which liberalism has not eradicated, can indeed appeal to Jews. This is the type of "conservatism" which I suspect most of those Jews who voted for Reagan hoped they would get.

And they might. But the locus of conservative political energy in the U.S. today is in a very different place, in the hands of those New Right activists who wish to claim Reagan as one of their own. And this is a conservatism which many Jews, even, I would contend, many who voted for Ronald Reagan, find far less appealing and in some instances downright appalling. There are, especially among Orthodox Jews, those who can and will make common cause with elements of the New Right and Moral Majority. But far more Jews are afraid, and in my mind justifiably so, of what the imposition of the vision these groups hold for America would mean for American Jewry, and indeed for the quality of American society as a whole. Reflect: can one imagine even 40 percent of American Jewry supporting the return of prayer to the public schools; a constitutional amendment outlawing all abortion (the current version of this amendment is, according to some analyses, so absolute that even the exceptions endorsed by a stringent interpretation of halakhah would not be permitted); repeal of the voting rights act; drastic cuts in health and welfare programs, food stamps, foreign aid, programs for the elderly (even if Jews turned all of their projected tax savings over to Jewish federations, these cuts could cripple many of our Jewish human services agencies and programs); an overturning of the Warren Court decisions on civil rights and liberties; a completely free hand for the oil companies in setting energy policy? Should this become the face of conservatism in the United States, Jews will, I would predict, quickly discover how unconservative they remain.

No Jewish Shift in 1980 Congressional Races

Another look at the 1980 elections and at the Jewish reaction to them may help to reinforce this perspective. In the weeks following the election, I heard at least two dozen versions of the same plaint: "I don't mind Reagan winning (variant: 'Well, I supported Reagan'), but, oyl, the Senate." By no means were all of the liberal Democrats who lost in 1980 Jewish favorites; nor did all of their opponents prove to be undeserving of Jewish support. The fact remains, however, that Jews were stunned, and not a few frightened, by the magnitude of the defeat suffered by Democratic liberals on election day.

By and large, Jews were not part of the tide which swept Democrats out of office in 1980. The defeats suffered by Frank Church,

Birch Bayh, John Culver, and earlier Richard Stone and Donald Steward, all ousted at least in part by the same conservative wave which pushed Reagan to victory, took place despite the fact that (to my knowledge) they enjoyed overwhelming Jewish support. In the absence of detailed analyses of these and many other Senate and House races, it is difficult to be definitive. I know of no analysis, however, which has pointed to a wholesale shift away from Democratic and even liberal Democratic candidates by Jewish voters in other than the presidential contest in 1980.

In my own Congressional district, the 4th in Massachusetts, a massive outpouring of voters in Brookline and Newton -- centers of Jewish population -- helped a strong liberal, Barney Frank, narrowly defeat a more conservative Democrat (who enjoyed the endorsement of Henry Jackson) in a hotly contested primary. The fact that Frank is Jewish and that Boston's Cardinal Medeiros had injected himself into the race by calling for Catholics not to support pro-choice candidates complicates the analysis. But it also illustrates the fact that a turn to the right might quickly confront Jews with the prospect of allying themselves with forces and causes they are unprepared to join.

I have no doubt that the Jewish political profile in the U.S. is changing today. So too, however, is the political profile of the society as a whole. Not long ago there was a virtual congruence between American liberalism and Jewish political preferences. That congruence no longer exists as liberalism has lost its drive and focus and as Jews have redefined their own political agenda. American Jews do appear more prepared to assert such an agenda, and to vote in accordance with it. But this agenda is neither "liberal" nor "conservative" as such. Nor, though they tend to agree on its centerpieces, do all Jews agree on its scope and precise content. As a result, it is no longer unthinkable for significant numbers of Jews to support a "conservative" candidate -- if the circumstances are right.

Some conservatives, primarily of the moderate variety, have recognized this shift and taken advantage of it. Ronald Reagan was a beneficiary of this change in American Jewish political behavior, thanks in no small measure to the circumstantial assistance provided by Jimmy Carter. But Reagan's 42 percent of the Jewish vote is not, I would conclude, evidence of a substantial swing to the right by American Jews. It certainly is no sign that Jews in any significant numbers will embrace the brand of conservatism which today makes conservatism an ideological rallying cry. As I read it, Jews are simply not prepared to abandon the notion that government has a responsibility to promote economic security as well as opportunity, human rights as well as the fight against Communism, the liberties and aspirations of minorities as well as the "moral majority."

If such is the case, then we can expect that the romance of American Jews with political conservatism may be a rocky one. Its course will depend in part on the directions which conservative political forces themselves take. Should the New Right come to define the conservative agenda, the vast majority of Jews will, I

think, want out quickly. And even a more moderate conservatism may not long retain its luster.

Some of the expectations which led Jewish non-conservatives to support Reagan, both in the economic and foreign spheres, may well go unfulfilled. Saudi Arabia too is a "conservative" nation, and one which the American business community will not wish to see offended. Jews may also discover that a "benign neglect" of the cities, a turning away from national health insurance, a diminution in support for the service sector of the economy from education to social work, accelerated economic and energy development, and a less vigorous enforcement of civil rights legislation and court decisions do not enhance either the opportunities, the quality of life, or the relationships of Jews to other groups in our society.

That American Jews are no longer rote liberals is perhaps one healthy product of the general crisis of liberal-progressive politics in the United States today. The new independence of Jews, coupled with their new willingness to grapple with a specifically Jewish political agenda, will give them an opportunity to reexamine Judaism's own political tradition, to avoid overly facile identification of its elements with contemporary catchwords and to seek ways to put forward their own political vision(s) which may cut across both party and ideological lines. Yet I suspect, however, when all is said and done, that after this period of flirtation with political conservatism -- a flirtation, we must remember, which even in 1980 remained confined to barely half of the Jewish voting public, if that -- American Jews will find themselves once again preponderantly within the progressive camp. In any event, the message for American Jewish liberals need not be one of despair. The contestation of political viewpoints within American Jewry is another sign of our maturity -- as Americans and at least potentially as thoughtful Jews.

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Jonathan Woocher is a Fellow of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs and the Executive Director of the Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA). He is the former chairman of the Democratic Farmer Labor Party in Rice County, Minnesota.

Chapter 4

THE AMERICAN JEWS, THE 1984 ELECTIONS, AND BEYOND*

Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab

Summary: Contrary to predictions, the Jewish vote did not shift to the Republicans in 1984. Jewish support for Reagan was lower than in 1980 and they remained the most loyal white ethnic group for the Democratic party. Jews have remained economic liberals, despite their own rising prosperity, and are "cultural liberals" as well. Support for the separation of church and state was a key issue which affected perceptions regarding the presidential candidates, as exemplified by the close association of President Reagan with the evangelical Reverend Jerry Falwell. While most Reform and Conservative Jews voted Democratic, there was a clear Republican trend among Orthodox and Hassidic Jews. An insensitivity to Jewish concerns on the part of Democratic candidate Jesse Jackson triggered unrealized fears of a negative reaction by Jews to Mondale. Although Jewish voting strength is relatively small in numbers, Jews continue to comprise a significant percentage of campaign contributors and activists. While supporters of both parties can argue why their share of the Jewish vote should increase in the future, as of today Jews are still more comfortable in the Democratic party than in the Republican party.

As usual, the rumors about the Jews were wrong. There had been much speculation that American Jews were finally going to succumb to the political destiny of all affluent groups and vote Republican. They did not.

In fact, the Jews were the only identifiable group to give Ronald Reagan less support than four years earlier. They remained the white ethnic group most loyal to the Democratic party. Walter Mondale received a higher level of backing from Jews than from Hispanics or members of trade unions. Only the Blacks and the unemployed gave Mondale more support than the Jews did.

The several national exit polls completed on election day for TV networks and different newspapers agreed that between two-thirds and 70 percent of the Jews voted for Mondale, while Reagan's support among them actually declined from 40 percent in 1980 to 30-33 percent in 1984.(1) Almost all other supplementary and regional polls supported the same order of findings.

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The overwhelmingly Democratic Jewish vote in 1984 was not in itself unique. American Jews have voted Democratic in all presidential elections since 1924 by an average of about 25 percent more than the electorate generally. The Jewish vote in 1984, which varied from 25 to 30 percent from the national election results (60 percent Reagan, 40 percent Mondale), may have been even more Democratic than "normal."

There are three fundamental questions to be asked. Why do the Jews remain so persistently Democratic in their political loyalty? Were there any special factors in the 1984 election which caused the Jews to "spring back" from an uncharacteristically low Democratic vote in 1980 (45 percent for Carter)? And what are the implications for the future of Jewish political loyalty and of Jewish political influence in America?

The General Factors in the "Democratic Difference"

As some wag put it, "Jews earn like Episcopalians, and vote like Blacks." According to the ABC News poll, for example, about two-thirds of all Americans who earned more than \$30,000 a year voted for Reagan, while almost two-thirds of all Jews who earned more than \$30,000 a year voted for Mondale.

This pattern led many observers to comment that unlike others, American Jews do not vote their own self-interest. That is too broad a statement. But the pattern suggests that unlike any other group, the Jews do not vote their pocketbooks. Why?

Jewish values are frequently suggested as the main determinant of political behavior. Liberalism is somehow ingrained among Jews; that is, not just a concern with the welfare of the poor and needy, but a conviction that the community -- in this case, the government -- has a responsibility to provide remedies to the less affluent. Some years ago the Public Opinion Research office at Princeton made a survey of various religious groups and their support of the principle of guaranteed economic security. Except for the Jews, the percentage in favor corresponded almost exactly with the percentage of urban manual workers in each religious group. Thus, 51 percent of the Baptists were manual workers and 51 percent of the Baptists supported guaranteed security; 55 percent of the Catholics were manual workers and 58 percent supported guaranteed security; 28 percent of the Congregationalists were manual workers and 26 percent supported guaranteed security. But while only 27 percent of the Jews were manual workers, 56 percent of them supported guaranteed security.

This orientation to economic liberalism apparently persists. In the 1984 CBS News/New York Times exit poll, less than a third of the American population reported an income of over \$35,000, as against over half of the Jews. Nevertheless, 60 percent of the Jews said that federal spending on the poor should be increased, compared to 40 percent among the electorate generally. And a higher

percentage of the Jews than of others said that "fairness to the poor" was one of the issues which mattered most in deciding how they voted.

In the 1984 Los Angeles Times exit poll, the Jews were just as concerned as others with the level of government spending, but only about 40 percent favored trimming the federal budget deficit by reducing the domestic items, as compared with 59 percent of the voting population. Jews were more interested than others in cutting the deficit by raising taxes and reducing military expenditures, a sentiment which deserves further comment later.

In the 1984 National Survey of American Jews conducted by the American Jewish Committee, only 17 percent of the Jews indicated opposition to "such government programs as welfare and food stamps." The American Jewish population is clearly welfare-state oriented, and that is the philosophy with which the Democratic party is, of course, most closely associated.

For much of the first half of this century, economic liberalism was in the pocketbook interest of most Jews. But in the last few decades, the Jews have become the most personally affluent ethnic/religious group in America. Why do they maintain a social welfare orientation, which seems to counter their economic gains?

Among the reasons commonly proffered has been that of Jewish religious values mandating concern for the poor. However, Jews do not have a monopoly on Biblical teachings, and in any case the Torah does not present a clear set of politically relevant directives. But the Jews do have a history that accentuates community and communitarian responsibility. In modern Western history, such reactions were often necessary for Jewish survival. Long before mass emigration to America, European Jewry developed a deeply held value that the fortunate must tax themselves for their poorer and weaker brethren. Communitarianism, welfare, charity, became the highest mitzvot (injunctions) of all. Those Jews who were poor and persecuted suffered not because of any personal weakness, but from the intolerance of the wicked. The Jews whom God blessed with wealth and security could only hope to maintain their fortunate state if they gave heartily of their treasure. When European Jewry and their offspring in America found themselves in a secure, open, secular society, the mitzvot became secularized in the form of the commitment to tsedakah (charity) to help both Jews and non-Jews. The latter value is clearly related to the politics of welfare, to aid the weak and poor and to support the rights of other minorities. Therefore, American Jews give disproportionately to general communal causes such as the United Fund, in addition to their heavy outlays to Jewish charitable organizations.

The Jewish ethic with its emphasis on community and family welfare may be contrasted to the Protestant ethic with its stress on individualism, on the dictum that "God helps those who help themselves." The former has obvious links to the principles espoused by American liberals and the Democratic party; the latter has clear ties to the values subsumed under laissez-faire competitive individualism as

expressed by American conservatives and the Republican party. The Catholic tradition, recently reiterated by the statement on economic principles of the American bishops, resembles the welfare values held by most Jews and Democrats, although the Church is closer to the G.O.P. on church-state and social issues. The electoral division in 1984 reflected these variations, Jews for Mondale, white Protestants for Reagan, and Catholics in the middle.

Economic liberalism which, according to the 1984 evidence, still marks the Jews, was an independent factor in the Jewish vote for the Democrats in 1984.(2) But other variables have been present in the Jewish Democratic preference over the years, which may be perceived as reflecting communal needs. These group self-interest factors have to do with maintaining a society whose nature allows Jews to flourish freely both as individuals and as a community. Thus, American Jews have always been the most ardent and sophisticated supporters of those civil liberties protected by the Bill of Rights of the American Constitution. In a compilation of surveys since 1980, Public Opinion (Oct/Nov 1984) found that Jews -- who, as a group, are much more "anti-militarist" than the general population -- are also more inclined than the rest of the population to allow a "militarist" to speak (67 percent to 56 percent). Protecting the institutions of a free society, such as free speech and assembly, is a recognized matter of special self-interest to the Jews. The larger context of such beliefs is "cultural liberalism," as distinct from economic liberalism. In practical terms, cultural liberalism connotes tolerance for individual and group differences.

This is the context within which American Jews have supported civil rights for Blacks and other groups in America, rights which Democrats have pressed more than Republicans since the 1930s. Jews were the only white ethnic/religious group to vote in favor of "civilian police review boards" in New York City, even though the issue was considered a Black and Puerto Rican one. Jews were the only white ethnic/religious group to vote against a referendum in California which tried to overturn the state's fair housing law. Within the past couple of years, the Jews have been the only white ethnic/religious group to give a sizeable vote to the Black candidates for mayor in Chicago and Philadelphia. And the 1984 Los Angeles Times national exit poll found that the Jewish voters were much more likely than the electorate at large to mention civil rights as an important election issue. Jews are also more supportive than other ethnic groups of equal rights for women and homosexuals.

According to the 1984 National Survey of American Jews, Blacks were ranked by more Jews as anti-Semitic than any other among 14 specified groups including big business, labor leaders, Hispanics, Protestants, Catholics and others. Various surveys have reported that a majority of Jews believe that "many" or "most" Blacks are anti-Semitic. (Studies of Black opinion indicate that this perception of rampant anti-Semitism among Blacks is mistaken, based largely on anti-Semitic statements made by a few Black leaders which have been magnified by the media). But the National Survey found that this

same sample of Jews was favorable towards the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the leading black civil rights group) by a five to one ratio, and supported affirmative action (without quotas) for minorities by a seven to two ratio.

Economic liberalism should also be seen within the context of cultural and political liberalism. Cultural and political freedoms, as Jews well know, have a precarious existence. A society caught in bitter internal conflict is vulnerable to the pathologies of bigotry, political extremism, and cultural and political repression. For Jews, that is an indelible lesson of history. Many American Jews were shaken by the bitter divisions and disorder of the 1960s, when anti-Semitism came out of the closet for the first time since the end of World War II. Government intervention is often seen as an antidote to the economic problems which produce a pathologically divided society.

Cultural liberalism connotes more than a number of specific issues. It describes the kind of pluralistic society with which Jews can feel comfortable. The Jewish attachment to the Democratic party has also been a measure of the cultural climate characterizing the two major American parties. The demographic composition of the Democratic party is more diversified, more pluralistic than that of the Republican. Jews feel more at ease in a party that emphasizes its links to other urban non-Anglo-Saxon groups rather than to rural or upper class Protestants.

Beyond issues which may relate to cultural attachments to liberalism or to a communitarian welfare ethic is the commitment most Jews have to the security of Israel. Concern for Israel's welfare is always a dominant one for American Jews, but affects their vote only if one candidate in an election is seen as hostile toward American support of Israel. In 1984, however, except for a few Senatorial contests, particularly Senator Charles Percy's race for reelection in Illinois, position on Israel was not perceived as a basis for a vote choice. So little was Israel a general issue in the election that it was not addressed by the major national polls. Nor was it important in the debate within the Jewish community. In one random sample comprising 751 Jewish Federation contributors in Northern California, only 22 percent favored Reagan, in keeping with the political temper of that very liberal area, but 66 percent thought that Reagan's election would be good for Israel, only slightly less than the percentage who thought the same of Mondale. A national survey by the American Jewish Congress corroborated that local finding. Both studies reinforced the general understanding that Israel was not an issue between the two presidential candidates.

The Church and State Issue

One "Jewish issue" did emerge as a strong differentiating factor, that of the relation of religion to politics and church-state separation. In the Northern California poll, for example, only eight percent of the

Jews thought that Reagan would do a good job on "keeping church and state separate" as against 89 percent who so assessed Mondale.

This was a highly publicized controversy during the campaign, given the close association of Reverend Jerry Falwell, the evangelical leader, with Reagan, and the President's support of such legislation as the reintroduction of (non-sectarian) prayers in the public schools. In the Los Angeles Times exit poll, opinion on Falwell came out as follows:

Attitude to Falwell	Jews %	National Electorate %
Favorable	5	16
Unfavorable	78	46
No Opinion	17	38

Falwell who, according to his antagonists, stands for the "Christianization of America," obviously had the hostile attention of the Jews to a greater extent than any other figure in the campaign. An ABC News exit poll asked people to indicate the one item which best described what they did not like about the candidate they voted against. Only seven percent of the general population checked that they disliked the candidate they voted against because he "mixes politics with religion," but 23 percent of the Jews cited that item. Clearly the issue that sparked a special Jewish aversion to the Republican candidate in 1984 was the church-state one in the context of Reagan's relationship with the Reverend Falwell.

The "religious right" as personified by Falwell had emerged dramatically in the presidential election campaign of 1980. Evangelical churches, which are the growing edge of church life in America, organized politically for the first time since Prohibition. Their stated mission is to reinstate religion to the more exalted position it had once had in America. Their goals include a return of religion in various forms to the public schools, e.g., prayers and the teaching of a Biblical version of Genesis alongside the theory of evolution. They express particular concern about the ways in which liberal attitudes on abortion, homosexuality and sex education have been allowed by courts and legislatures to undermine traditional morality.

In 1980 the leaders of this movement associated themselves with Reagan, who publicly welcomed their support and endorsed their objectives. However, the religious right did not prove to be powerful electorally. Analyses showed that it only affected the outcome of a few congressional races. And subsequent to Reagan's election, the right-wing evangelicals repeatedly expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that the President did not act as though the religious/cultural issues were very high on his political agenda.

Only during the campaign year of 1983-84 did Ronald Reagan and his political forces seriously address these questions again. It should be noted that neither Falwell nor Reagan called for a full return to the status quo ante. They both explicitly denied any desire to break

religious pluralism. The prayers and other public school ventures they proposed were always "non-sectarian" in nature.

Even so, they were not significantly successful in Congress. Proposals to permit non-sectarian prayers in public schools were defeated. A measure to allow religious groups to meet on public school grounds was finally passed as an "equal-access" law, but only after the addition of amendments which requires such meetings to take place before or after regular school hours, and without the involvement of school administrations.

The religious right was dissatisfied with the results, but Ronald Reagan's rhetoric supporting their objectives became stronger as the 1984 contest proceeded. The issue was caught up in the political campaign. Democratic leaders talked about the attempt to "Christianize America." The subject became even more heated when some leading Catholic bishops, not normally associated with the "religious right," spoke out on the need for political candidates to fight for the legalization of abortion.

In this climate the bulk of American Jews became concerned about the Reagan/Falwell alliance, about the apparent move away from the separation of church and state, about the fact that the courts seemed to be joining the swing, and that Reagan, as President, would probably be in a position to make enough Supreme Court appointments in the ensuing four years to shape the character of that Court. Wide currency was given to an undocumented report that Reagan had promised Jerry Falwell that he could designate some of the new appointees.

These considerations were not just technical constitutional issues for the Jews. Religious pluralism in America is at the very heart of the kind of cultural liberalism which is perceived as in the deepest Jewish self-interest. It bespeaks a climate of cultural tolerance, of cultural ease for Jews. Whether the "Christianization" theme was exaggerated or not, the Democratic party was given the opportunity to refresh the feeling of many Jews that it is the party of cultural liberalism. By so doing it refurbished the traditional feeling of most Jews that they are more comfortable, more welcome, in Democratic than in Republican ranks.

All signs pointed to the religious-linked issues as the special factor affecting Jewish behavior in the 1984 campaign. Indeed, a few observers had ascribed some of the lukewarm Jewish attitude toward Carter in 1980, and the low Democratic vote that year (45 percent for Carter, 15 for Anderson, and 40 for Reagan) to the fact that Carter was a "born-again" Christian, and stressed the effect of his religious beliefs on his politics. The clear and documented effect of the religious issue on the 1984 Jewish vote retroactively strengthened that perception about the Jewish vote in 1980. Mondale was the kind of Democrat with whom American Jews could be comfortable on this score, and they returned to their normal Democratic preference.

These results and interpretations have, however, been challenged by Jews active in the Reagan campaign. They cite the findings of Western View-Point Research, which was employed by the Reagan-Bush

Jewish Coalition to make its own exit poll of Jewish voters. This survey concentrated on areas of dense Jewish population and "weighted respondent preferences to reflect the incidence of the major religious subdivisions within affiliated American Jewry." The results indicated a significantly smaller Democratic lead than did the national media surveys, 59-41 for Mondale. The Reagan Coalition claimed that the difference resulted from the fact that the exit polls sponsored by networks and newspapers had underrepresented Jews in heavily Jewish sections. What this meant was that the national media surveys had ignored the Orthodox and Hassidic segments of the Jewish population. The Western View-Point survey found that its Reform and Conservative respondents voted close to the proportion reported by the other surveys for all Jews (65-35 percent for the Reform, 64-36 for the Conservative). But Western View-Point found that the Orthodox voted 59-41 percent, and the Hassidic sample 94-6 percent for Reagan over Mondale.

The controversy may be seen as an American political version of the "who is a Jew?" issue debated in Israel. The Republican Jewish Coalition indicated that its results were based on the assumption that 70-75 percent of American Jewry were Reform or Conservative, 13-18 percent were Orthodox or Hassidic, and 10 percent "other." The 1984 National Survey of Jews found that American Jews designated themselves as 57 percent Reform or Conservative, 7 percent Orthodox or Hassidic, and 37 percent "other," presumably largely unaffiliated. It is possible that the National Survey of Jews and the national media polls systematically underrepresented the Orthodox and Hassidic populations, but it is even more likely that the Western View-Point survey underrepresented the non-Orthodox and may have ignored many of the unaffiliated Jews.⁽³⁾ The Republican Jewish Coalition commentary on the Western View-Point refers to "the four million affiliated Jews in America," but the American Jewish Yearbook estimates a Jewish population of five and three-quarters million.

The Hassidic Jews and major segments of the Orthodox community are clearly not disturbed by church-state issues or matters of cultural liberalism. Many, in fact, called for support of Reagan on the same grounds that orthodox Christians did, that he favored some state support of religion and was conservative on social issues. There is no evidence to indicate whether as compared to other Jews the Orthodox are less committed to economic liberalism, or that they are not committed at all. There is, however, considerable indication in the behavior of Orthodox Jews, particularly in Israel, that their views about tsedakah (charity) are highly particularistic, only for Jews, or, frequently, only for their special segment of Jewry. The emphasis on tsedakah seemingly had to be secularized before it could be made universalistic, and therefore is apparently much stronger among the unaffiliated and non-Orthodox. In any case, the traditional connection of Jews to the Democratic party does not prevail among the Orthodox.

The variation among the different Jewish groups may have some portent for local politics in New York City, or for the distant future

of Jews in America, particularly since the Orthodox have a much higher birthrate than the others. But at the moment, the body of Jews to which the politicians are responsive continues to exhibit its traditional preference for the Democratic party.

Prior to the Democratic party convention in July, there was considerable anticipation that the "Jesse Jackson factor" would have more impact on the Jewish vote than the "Jerry Falwell factor." The Reverend Jesse Jackson, the Black presidential candidate for the Democratic nomination, was obviously worrisome to the Jews because of his pro-Palestinian Arab sentiments, his flirtation with anti-Semitism, and the vicious statements made by one of his closest associates, the notoriously anti-Semitic Black Muslim, Louis Farrakhan.

As a candidate, Jesse Jackson repeatedly proclaimed his belief in and support of Israel. But that support was accompanied by a classic politicized "Third World" bias which made Jews more than a little uneasy. He embraced the concept of Palestinian Arab self-determination in a way that few Democratic party leaders were willing to do. It was poignant for Jews that Jackson had James Zogby, the leader of the chief Palestinian Arab lobby in this country, make one of the seconding addresses for him as a presidential candidate at the 1984 Democratic convention.

Jackson demonstrated a level of insensitivity to anti-Semitism that outraged most Jews. Early in the campaign year, in a private remark that was repeatedly cited, he had referred to Jews as "Hymies." He was slow to acknowledge the evil of that remark. Even more troublesome was Jackson's continued public relationship with Louis Farrakhan, who not only uttered blatantly anti-Israel remarks, but referred to Judaism as a "dirty religion." Jackson was also very slow to disassociate himself from that remark, which he finally did, or from Farrakhan.

Mondale, of course, attacked Farrakhan's statements, and strongly criticized Jackson's views on Israel, but he did not disassociate himself from Jackson, who seemed to be a formidable political figure in the party and clearly had considerable personal support in the Black community. Given the fact that Jackson was encouraged to play a role in the Democratic campaign, particularly among Blacks, there seemed good reason to believe that he would cost Mondale many Jewish votes.

The "Jesse Jackson factor," however, did not end up as potent as the "Jerry Falwell factor." In the Los Angeles Times exit poll, Jews did register a more unfavorable-to-favorable ratio in their sentiments on Jackson (58-23 percent) than did the general electorate (42-32). But the rejection of Jackson by Jews was significantly lower than their repudiation of Falwell (78-5 percent), discussed earlier.(4)

The variations in the Jewish reaction to two highly politicized Protestant ministers provide some indication of the proportion of Jews located at each end of the political spectrum -- 23 percent at the far left and five percent at the far right -- and the difference in the ways Jews regard threats from the white evangelical and the Black

communities. The white fundamentalist evangelicals are linked in Jewish minds with the historic sources of anti-Semitism, even when their leaders speak up strongly for Israel. And their challenge to cultural pluralism is magnified by their seeming closeness to the President. Blacks, conversely, are seen as politically weak and as fellow victims of discrimination by the majority community. Even open expressions of anti-Semitism and opposition to Israel do not convince many Jews that the Black danger is as potentially serious as the white fundamentalist Christian one.(5)

Applications for the Future

Does the 1984 experience suggest that American Jews will remain largely bound to the Democratic party for the foreseeable future? Does their close and stubborn relationship to the Democratic party mean that the Jews will have no leverage with the Republican party, which has won four of the last five presidential elections?

To begin with, it must be understood that American Jewish strength in politics has only been partly associated with voting. The chief influence of the Jews comes from the fact that they have been hyperactive on the political scene. One classification of power bases distinguishes among "expert power," "reward power," and "coercive power." The Jews, of course, have no direct coercive power. And their strength at the voting place, while not to be ignored, is not great. Although Jews tend to register and vote in almost twice the proportion of the rest of the population, they still represent three percent or more of the population, and five percent or more of the voters, in only eight of the 50 states. In most states, they are one percent or less of the voting population. They cannot be ignored by candidates, but neither can they affect the outcome as voters, except on rare occasions.

However, for some time the main Jewish reward power has been related to their political hyperactivism. American Jews have at times contributed as much as half of the Democratic party coffers nationally, and a disproportionate amount to the Republican party as well. They also have comprised a significant number of political activists, to a considerable degree as "expert" volunteers, as well as "expert" professionals -- important to candidates and elected officials.

Whatever the vote, the 1984 campaign probably represented a modern high point of Jewish activism in the Republican party. A Reagan-Bush Jewish Coalition and its local counterparts were more visible in fundraising and promotion in the Jewish communities than any previous Republican effort had been. The ways Jews voted was obviously disappointing to the Jewish Coalition, but the increased level of Jewish involvement was significant. Republican leaders appear to appreciate the Jewish activism on their behalf and, partly because of it, still hope for the political salvation of the Jewish electorate.

Several reasons continue to be advanced by those anticipating a shift to the Republican party. Some suggest that a sizeable number of Jews are close to becoming Republicanized because of shifting viewpoints on the domestic agenda. The thought is not that Jews will turn away in any large numbers from a bias toward economic liberalism, but that more of them are ready, along with many other Americans, to turn away from New Deal liberalism.

The many national polls conducted during the Reagan era have documented the seemingly contradictory pattern that the majority of Americans (and an even larger proportion of Jews) favors maintaining or increasing expenditures for the assorted welfare state measures identified with the Democratic party, and opposes most of the specific cuts proposed by Ronald Reagan. At the same time most Americans seek to lower taxes, and identify the improvement in the economy and favorable personal financial prospects with Reagan policies. The majority voted its pocketbook in 1984, while continuing to tell pollsters that the program of the Reagan administration benefits the rich, and that they favor policies designed to help the poor. Many Jews, however, while seeing the issues and the situation in this way, voted "altruistically," that is, they opted for their communitarian ideals rather than their pocketbooks. But given the similarity in perceptions between many of the non-Jewish Democrats who shifted to Reagan and the Jews who stayed with Mondale, there is some likelihood that the more affluent Jews will eventually follow in the footsteps of the non-Jews should "supply-side" policies continue to be linked to economic expansion and a low inflation rate.

The links of Jews to the Democratic party are also strongly related to foreign policy concerns, beginning with the struggle against Nazism identified with Franklin Roosevelt, whose efforts to resist Hitler were met with opposition from the Republicans, seen as isolationists and neutralists. This tie was continued and deepened in the post-war era by Truman's support for Israel, behavior contrasted with Eisenhower's apparent ambivalence (he forced Israel out of the Sinai in 1956), and Johnson's and Humphrey's strong backing for the Jewish state in 1967 and beyond.

The Democratic party has been seen by Jews as the particular political friend of Israel. This may be a circular reality and a circular perception: Democratic party leaders being closer to and supported by the Jews have been seen as, and for the most part actually have been, extremely sympathetic to Israel. At least one study has found that generally Americans who are personally close to Jews are more favorable toward Israel. In this sense, Hubert Humphrey epitomized the Democratic party for American Jews. It was obvious that he was personally and sentimentally committed to Israel. When he ran for President in 1968, he received over 80 percent of the Jewish vote, almost double his vote in the electorate at large. (One reason for Mondale's showing among Jews in 1984 may have been the perception that he was the "son of Hubert," the protege of the man American Jews regarded as their best political friend).

At some point, perhaps during the 1970s, it began to be clear to some Jewish observers that American support of Israel would finally rest less and less on personal and sentimental commitments and more and more on hard-headed evaluations that Israel was important for America's national interest. Such an evaluation would depend on a global view of the East-West conflict, and on the total context of American foreign policy.

Starting with the struggle against the Vietnam War, a substantial number of Democrats formulated an isolationist and anti-militarist position, seeking to reduce America's militant anti-Communist posture and overseas commitments. Most liberal Democrats who adopted this position, such as George McGovern and his campaign manager, Gary Hart, Edward Kennedy, and to a considerable degree, Jimmy Carter, continued to advocate strong support for Israel. Some of their followers, particularly among Blacks, feminists, and New Politics left-liberals, however, reached the conclusion that the United States should also cut back on its commitments to Israel. At the same time, the identification of the Democratic left with the international peace movements and Third World activists linked them to groups which were avowedly pro-Palestinian.

Conversely, a number of prominent conservatives, including Ronald Reagan and various Christian fundamentalist ministers, have strongly backed Israel. In addition to various personal and religious reasons, they view the alliance with Israel as part of the larger struggle against Communist expansionism and the rise of radical anti-Western Third World leaders.

These developments have put many American Jews in a dilemma. Israel's most militant supporters internationally and to some degree nationally, are on the right. Her overt enemies are disproportionately to be found on the left in the ranks of Communists, Socialists, Third World nationalists, and, to a growing though still small extent, American liberals and radicals.(6)

These developments logically should lead to a move toward the Republicans by American Jews. Yet as we have seen they have not. The immediate answer to this conundrum may be that in spite of their concern for Israel's security, most Jews are not only liberals on domestic issues, they are also in the forefront of foreign policy liberalism. Although clearly not pacifists, they are markedly anti-militarist. For example, in the 1984 Los Angeles Times exit poll, 59 percent of the Jews said that they favored a nuclear weapons freeze, as against 38 percent of the total electorate, and 52 percent of the Jews felt that the U.S. should reduce military spending, as compared to 38 percent of all those voting.

Israel, however, complicates Jewish foreign affairs liberalism. In the 1984 National Survey of American Jews, the Jews approved by a 61-24 percent ratio the statement that "in order to be a reliable military supplier of Israel, the U.S. should maintain a strong military capacity." But they also agreed by a 59-27 percent ratio with the opinion that "to help reduce deficits and relieve world tension, U.S. military spending should be cut."

These two statements are not automatically mutually exclusive, since there is the sophisticated argument that U.S. military spending can be reduced without diminishing its military capacity. But most Americans are not really very clear about how that can be done. In this case the Jews just reflect an uneasy tension in much of the American mind. Surveys consistently find that Americans are not averse to aiding democratic forces and states, especially where Soviet aggression may be concerned, but are strongly opposed to military involvement. The question now being raised by some Republican Jews in their missionary activity is whether the Democratic party -- with its neo-isolationist, excessively anti-militarist, even anti-American and politicized Third World elements -- is not leading the country in directions which are deleterious to both Israel and the U.S.

Giving further hope to Jewish Republicans has been the idea that the emergence of a disproportionately Jewish group designated as "neo-conservatives" is both a sign of political changes among their co-religionists generally and evidence of a major right-wing shift among intellectuals. This hope, however, is based on myth and exaggeration.(7) While there may be an intellectual tendency which could sensibly be called neo-conservatism, it is not a political movement nor anything but a loose network of a few individuals and journals who are not always in concert with each other.

Neo-conservatism as a movement is largely a myth created by a socialist leader, Michael Harrington. During the 1960s, the former chairperson of the Socialist party sought to disassociate himself and his colleagues who had formed the Democratic Socialists from another political sect which had also come out of the dissolved Socialist party, the Social Democrats U.S.A. He coined the term "neo-conservatives" to describe a group of people, many of whom had been identified with socialism or with the anti-Communist Humphrey wing of the Democratic party, as well as some associated with Senator Henry Jackson, a liberal on economic issues and a hawk on foreign policy. These included ex-radicals such as the three editors of The Public Interest, Daniel Bell, Nathan Glazer, and Irving Kristol. Others were Kristol's wife, historian Gertrude Himmelfarb, Norman Podhoretz, editor of Commentary, and his wife, writer Midge Decter. Saul Bellow and Sidney Hook were also on the list, as was Carl Gershman, Social Democratic leader. Some were followers of Hubert Humphrey or Henry Jackson, Jews like Max Kampelman, Ben Wattenberg and the authors of this article, and non-Jews like political scientists Austin Ranney, and Jeane Kirkpatrick and her husband, Evron, long time executive director of the American Political Science Association. Other non-Jews frequently mentioned were closely associated with Commentary and The Public Interest, like Daniel Patrick Moynihan and James Q. Wilson.

What these people had in common, in addition to a strong identification with welfare state policies and support for trade unions, was a deep suspicion of the Soviet Union, advocacy of hard-line foreign military programs and a passionate concern for Israel's security. Almost all of us had reacted strongly against the New Left movement

of the 1960s and early 1970s. Identifying with democracy as an end in itself and strongly attached to the values of scholarship, we had argued that the attacks by the New Left on the university and on the democratic political system were not only unwarranted, but played into the hands of anti-democratic extremists, both of the left and the right. Hence we were regarded as renegades by the New Left.

Harrington and his fellow Democratic Socialists shared many of the positions taken by their erstwhile comrades. They were, however, more concerned with keeping their image as leftists, and sought to create a post-Vietnam socialist movement which included the New Left activists. They were hampered by the fact that many of the younger New Leftists regarded them as conservative, since the Democratic Socialists had criticized New Left tactics and insisted that the democratic Left oppose communist-led movements in Third World countries. Harrington sought to create a chasm between himself and those he regarded as right-wing Social Democrats, in order to build bridges to people once active in the New Left and New Politics movements.

The subsequent development of and seemingly increased influence of the neo-conservative "movement" are a good example of a phenomenon sociologists describe as "labeling." Labels determine reactions to those labeled, whether they are described as psychotic, communist, or conservative. In the case of the neo-conservatives, the label led many of their former friends and allies, for whom "conservative" is an invidious term, to reject them. Conversely, the label led many genuine traditional conservatives, Republicans, and business people, long unhappy about their limited support among intellectuals, to welcome as new allies this group of prominent intellectuals who, they were told, had come over to their side.

"Neo-conservatives" found themselves rejected by their old friends and welcomed by their opponents. The latter's welcome frequently included appreciative audiences, particularly when the neo-conservatives dealt with issues upon which they and the conservatives agreed, such as foreign policy, opposition to affirmative action quotas, and the need for higher moral standards.

Since most prominent neo-conservatives, particularly the editors of the magazines most associated with the term, Commentary, The Public Interest, and in more recent times, the New Republic, were Jewish, the development was seen as indicating a shift by a significant number of Jewish intellectuals to conservatism. In fact, however, only a few, such as Kristol and the Podhoretzes, became Republicans and conservatives, although Kristol still is a supporter of the welfare state. Others, such as Jeane Kirkpatrick and Richard Perle, while remaining welfare Democrats on domestic issues, were recruited to Reagan's foreign policy and defense teams. (Soon after her speech to the Republican convention in Dallas, Kirkpatrick appeared on NBC with Roger Mudd and reemphasized her attachment to the Democratic party and the welfare state).

Most, therefore, are still Democrats, some are also socialists. They have been active in the Coalition for a Democratic Majority

(CDM), founded by Senators Henry Jackson and Daniel Patrick Moynihan and chaired by Ben Wattenberg. Most of those in the CDM, which includes other prominent Democratic Congressional and trade union leaders, supported Walter Mondale for nomination and election, seeing in his candidacy a continuation of the Humphrey-Jackson anti-Communist liberalism. The Democratic neo-conservatives identify much more with the New Republic, perhaps the clearest exponent of CDM politics, than with Commentary. They would prefer to be labeled as "neo-liberals." This term, however, has been taken over by others who are somewhat more fiscally conservative on domestic policies but much more dovish on foreign issues. Morton Kondracke, the executive editor of the New Republic, has solved the dilemma by referring to himself as a "Neo-Lib-Neo-Con...."

The intellectual trend among many identified neo-conservatives -- which combined a basic economic and cultural liberalism with a more aggressive anti-Soviet foreign policy -- served as a bridge for some Jewish intellectuals from the Democratic party to the Republican party, especially when the domestic political agenda itself seemed to become more complicated. It was the basis for the increased Republican party activism by a relatively small number of Jews in 1984. These developments, especially as they seemed to involve the fate of Israel, led to the anticipation that more Jews would move toward the Republican ticket.

As we have seen, these expectations, even as bouyed by Jesse Jackson's prominence in the Democratic party, did not materialize in 1984. However, the Jewish activist corps in the Republican party will continue to try to build a foreign policy bridge away from the Democratic party, largely in the name of Israel's interests. They will continue to reinterpret in Republican terms the current Jewish state of confusion about foreign policy liberalism. It is at least conceivable that if there is no Humphrey-like nominee in the Democratic party future, if there are more Jesse Jacksons and George McGovern, if the Democratic party's foreign policy becomes further factionalized in a radical direction, if the party's economic liberalism does not become more modernized, and if the Republican party repudiates the effort to saddle it with politicized Christianity -- that a more substantial movement toward the Republican party can ensue.

But these are a lot of "ifs." As the 1984 election suggested, it will take more than a single intellectual bridge for the Jews to cross over in large numbers. And their hesitancy on that score must finally be assessed on some measure other than those used in election surveys.

"Liberalism," as we have seen, is a matter of some imprecision. It is historically compounded of several dimensions. But however it is defined, the fact is that Jews are more disposed than others to identify as liberals. In the several 1984 exit polls, twice as many Jews on the average described themselves as liberals rather than conservatives (42-21 percent) and about twice as many Jews described themselves as liberals as did Americans generally (42-22 percent).

Apart from the fact that most Jews agree with most liberal positions on both domestic and foreign policy, they still have a historically based visceral feeling that they belong in the company of political liberals. They were released from the medieval ghettos by "the liberals." They were joined in the fight against Nazism by "the liberals." Anti-Semitism, religious intolerance, and immigration restrictions, in their memory, have been associated with "the conservatives." (8) The Democratic party is perceived as "the liberal" party and the Republican party as the "conservative" party -- compounded in these stereotypical terms by the church-state issue in 1984. Jews are still more comfortable in the Democratic party than in the Republican party. As noted earlier, they are more at ease with the kinds of people they find in the Democratic party -- their fellow ethnics with whom they grew up in America -- than with the WASPS (White Anglo-Saxon Protestants) still predominant in the Republican party.

Substantive issues could eventually make a difference, but it will take an emotional wrench, or more generational distance, to eliminate the Democratic party advantage in Jewish voting. It is at the level of cultural liberalism that we still find the deepest seat of Jewish reluctance to make that change.

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NOTES

1. The surveys referred to in this study basically include the exit polls conducted on election day by ABC News, CBS News/New York Times, NBC News and the Los Angeles Times, plus one conducted by Western View-Point for the Jewish Republican Coalition. The latter reported some differences with the other surveys, as discussed within the body of this paper. Reference is also made to the 1984 National Survey of American Jews conducted for the American Jewish Committee. Exit polls are sample surveys taken of voters as they leave the voting booths. A systematic sample of individuals in a random number of election precincts are given short questionnaires which after being filled out are deposited in a box. Hence those replying are assured of anonymity. For an analysis of the 1984 election generally, based on exit and other polls, see S.M. Lipset, "The Elections, the Economy and Public Opinion: 1984," PS, 18 no. 1 (Winter 1985).
2. According to the Los Angeles Times exit poll, Jews voted somewhat more heavily for Democratic House of Representatives candidates (78 to 22 percent) than they did for Mondale. The electorate generally divided evenly between the two parties in Congressional balloting.
3. Both Richard Wirthlin, the chief pollster of the Reagan campaign, who surveyed hundreds of thousands during the election, and William

Schneider, interpreter of opinion surveys at the American Enterprise Institute, who systematically evaluated the discrepancy between the media polls and the Western View-Point exit polls, report the media polls were much more correct. (See Public Opinion, December 1984/January 1985).

4. In tandem with these findings, the National Survey of American Jews reported only seven percent favorable to the "Moral Majority" and 69 percent unfavorable, while, as noted earlier, 57 percent were favorable and only 12 percent unfavorable to a query about the NAACP. The exit poll conducted by the American Jewish Congress reported that 44 percent of the Jews sampled indicated that Reagan's stand on religion and the state had affected their vote, while only 20 percent said the same about Jesse Jackson's campaign behavior.

5. When those queried by the 1984 National Survey of American Jews were asked to decide which among 14 groups were considered anti-Semitic, "fundamentalist Protestants" were second only to Blacks in the percentages (46-54) who thought "most" or "many" in the two groups were anti-Semitic. Conversely, among those answering that "few" in the groups were anti-Semitic, six percent chose the fundamentalists and seven chose the Blacks.

6. The dilemma is actually more complicated. Surveys indicate that as a group American Jews are more dovish than Israelis on issues such as accepting Arab or Palestinian sovereignty over the West Bank and Gaza in return for a peace treaty which gives Israel assorted security guarantees. But most dovish American Jews feel they should not publicly criticize Israel on such matters.

7. All studies of the political attitudes and behavior of the intelligentsia and the intellectuals indicate they remain the most liberal occupational strata in America. And the Jews among them are even more liberal. These generalizations hold up for surveys of university faculty conducted by Everett Ladd and myself during the 1960s and 1970s, of high status persons in the media, the sciences, and various policy relevant professions taken by Stanley Rothman and Robert Lichter, and of undergraduates carried out by Alexander Astin and David Drew.

8. These images continue. In the 1984 National Survey of American Jews, 35 percent said that "most" or "many" conservatives are "anti-Semitic" compared to only seven percent for liberals. Close to half, 47 percent, replied that "few" liberals are anti-Semitic, while only 12 percent had the same opinion of conservatives. Similar variations were expressed for "big business" and "labor leaders." Forty-four percent felt that "most" or "many" of the former are anti-Semitic as against 23 percent for the latter. In related fashion when the American Jewish Congress exit poll inquired which political party cares most about the Jews, 61 percent of the Jews answered the Democrats while only 11 percent said the Republicans.

American Jews, in spite of agreeing by 83 to 6 percent that "the U.S. has offered Jews more opportunities and freedom than any other diaspora country," continue to worry about anti-Semitism. They disagree that "anti-Semitism in America is currently not a serious

problem to American Jews" by 47 to 40 percent with 13 percent "not sure," and that "virtually all positions of influence in America are open to Jews" by 58 to 31 percent with 11 percent "not sure."

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Professor Seymour Martin Lipset is one of America's leading political sociologists and a frequent commentator on current Jewish affairs.

Earl Rabb is former director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of San Francisco and a well-known observer of the American Jewish scene.

Chapter 5

JEWISH PACS: A NEW FORCE IN JEWISH POLITICAL ACTION

Michael J. Malbin

Summary: The establishment of more than 75 political action committees (PACs) to channel campaign funds to pro-Israel candidates is a phenomenon new to the 1980s. They have had a significant impact in a number of U.S. House and Senate races and provide key financing to both Republicans and Democrats. PACs grew more rapidly when the U.S.-Israel relationship was under stress and their growth slowed as the relationship improved. The danger of a backlash to special interest pleading remains. A stronger U.S.-Israel relationship would be better based on joint business ventures.

Jews have always been active in American politics and government on two levels. Jewish organizations typically lobbied the government, but did not get involved as organizations in electoral politics. On the other hand, Jewish electoral involvement was heavy, but only by individual Jews on a personal basis.

More Than 75 Pro-Israel PACs Today

During the 1980s this situation changed radically with the formation of political action committees (PACs). Practically speaking, Jewish PACs did not exist in 1980. By 1986 there were more than 75 pro-Israel PACs active in American congressional elections. (These PACs tend to have innocuous sounding names so that their political leanings will not be overly visible.) The very existence of these PACs has been controversial among Jews. To some extent, it seems that the first PACs were formed because some Jewish activists thought the new campaign finance law meant that anyone who wanted to be influential had better be part of a PAC. At the same time, there was a greatly felt need to be influential because of Jewish dissatisfaction with President Carter in the 1980 election, the AWACS sale of 1981 and the problems Israel had with American public opinion after the 1982 war in Lebanon.

All this insecurity made 1982 a banner year for Jewish PACs. Eleven of the fifteen largest pro-Israel PACs were formed that year, and in their first election these PACs were able to claim a couple of major scalps as they helped Dick Durbin defeat Paul Findley of Illinois for the latter's seat in the House of Representatives and George Mitchell of Maine defeat David Emery for the Senate. In 1984, a

major PAC victory was the defeat of Illinois Senator Charles Percy, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Who are these PACs and how have they grown so quickly? In the 1980 election, there were only seven pro-Israel PACs, and they contributed only \$310,000 to congressional candidates. Only two years later, PACs gave more than six times as much or \$1.9 million to congressional elections. That figure doubled again, to \$3.6 million for the 1982-84 cycle. Although more than 75 PACs are identifiably pro-Israel, the action is concentrated in the hands of the largest. The top 15 PACs contribute more than 75 percent of the total financial outlay.

Whom do PACs support financially? Obviously, candidates have to be demonstrably pro-Israel to get anything, but is there any test beyond that? For some PACs, Israel is only a threshold question; candidates have to satisfy the PAC conditions on a range of other issues as well. Generally, PACs that have organized around a single issue are more likely to support Republicans and domestic policy conservatives than those PACs that use a multiple test. One good test to identify which category a PAC fits into is to look at the percentage of the PAC's contributions that went to Republicans.

PAC Contributions to Republicans

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>% Repub.</u>
	<u>\$ 750K</u>	<u>446</u>	<u>36</u>
National PAC			
Joint Action Cmte for			
Polit Affairs (JACPAC)	260	134	9
Washington PAC	192	238	33
Delaware Valley PAC	187	132	33
Citizens Organized PAC	174	121	35
Desert Caucus	142	117	31
St. Louisans for Better			
Govt	132	62	25
Florida Cong'l Cmte	115	64	49
Hudson Valley PAC	112	91	58
San Fran for Good Govt	111	72	44
Roundtable PAC	107	48	33
Americans for Good Govt	102	101	45
Nat'l Action Cmte (NACPAC)	85	50	10
Mass. Cong'l Campaign Cmte	66	3	4
Citizens Concerned for			
the National Interest	56	28	82
Total for 15 PACs	2.6M	1.7M	35%

Some reporters have looked at these numbers and concluded that the pro-Israel PACs are doing something unsavory by giving away so much money to Republicans. One hysterical headline on an article by Robert Kutner in The New Republic in May, 1986, described the PACs as being in an "Unholy Alliance" and said that "Jewish PACs may save the Republican Senate."

PACs Give 35 Percent to Republicans

One may seriously question whether there is anything wrong with the PACs giving about 35 percent of their money to Republicans. After all, about that percentage of Jews voted for President Reagan over Walter Mondale in 1984. Kutner's view that it is somehow wrong for pro-Israel PACs to reflect the diversity of political opinions among American Jews resembles the oft held opinion that the only legitimate Jewish position is the one the speaker himself happens to hold.

The New Republic was not only wrong in principle, it was incorrect on the facts of where the money is actually going. A look at which Senate candidates received the largest contributions (as of September, 1986) from the 15 largest pro-Israel PACs combined makes this error clear.

PAC Contributions to Senate Candidates

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Amount</u>
INCUMBENT	
Alan Cranston (D-CA)	\$ 81,250
Patrick Leahy (D-VT)	52,000
Paula Hawkins (R-FL)	38,500
Robert Kasten (R-WI)	76,500
Bob Packwood (R-OR)	34,500
Arlen Specter (R-PA)	57,500
CHALLENGER	
John Evans (D-ID)	84,500
Tom Daschle (D-SD)	75,000
OPEN	
John Breaux (D-LA)	24,500
Henson Moore (R-LA)	10,000
Harry Reid (D-NV)	52,000
Harriet Woods (D-MO)	50,500

PACs Support Incumbents

One can see that when the PACs support Republicans, they tend to be incumbents. Challengers and open seat candidates, with a few exceptions, tend to be Democrats. This is made even more clear when one looks at the dozen or so races that decided whether there was going to be a Republican or Democratic Senate in 1987. For the Democrats to control the Senate in 1987, they needed a net gain of four seats on election day.

Races Crucial for Control of Senate

R-HELD

ID (to Evans, D)
NV (to Reid, D)
SD (to Daschle, D)
FL (to Hawkins, R)
NC (to Sanford, D)
MD (not giving in primary)

D-HELD

LA (to both)
MO (to Woods)
CO (to Wirth)
CA (to Cranston)
VT (to Leahy)
Pro-Israel PACs giving to 9 Ds, 2Rs in
above 11 races.

The press has been as hysterical about the growth of PACs as they have been about who is getting Jewish PAC money. There is no question that these PACs grew rapidly between 1980 and 1984, but there seemed to be a considerable slowing down or perhaps even a contraction in 1986. This trend is perfectly understandable in light of the general state of United States/Israeli relations. The PACs grew, as noted previously, at a time when the relationship seemed a bit shaky. Now, people in both parties are saying that the United States/Israel relationship may be stronger than under any president since Truman.

A pause in the growth of the PACs at this point could be very useful. The assumption behind the growth of many PACs, not just the pro-Israel ones, has been that legislators could easily be bludgeoned or cajoled by campaign contributions. This is a vast oversimplification of the reality of Washington lobbying, as the realtors, oil company executives and other large contributors, who took it on the chin in the new tax bill, would be the first to acknowledge. Campaign money and active lobbying can be important at the margins or on low visibility issues, but only within a context whose basic framework is set by real world events and by the general state of public opinion.

PACs or "Jobs for Your District"

It would be dangerous for Israel if the general public began to get the impression that the main reason Israel receives so much foreign aid from the U.S. -- fully one-fifth of the total U.S. foreign aid budget -- is because of lobbying by a "special interest group." This feeling is already widespread in some farm belt states. It would be especially tragic if American Jews helped feed this perception.

What should Israel's supporters do? I do not advocate the contributors reducing their support for the PACs, but American Jews and Israel would be served better if these organizations were a bit more low-key in their lobbying efforts. In addition, an effort to improve the more fundamental ties that shape the realities which strengthen the public opinion context regarding Israel is even more important. The most promising development of recent years is the free-trade zone agreement between the United States and Israel. Why? Because the most compelling lobbying argument for any member of Congress is not "I gave at the office," but "this action will gain or lose jobs for your district." Should one give to a pro-Israel PAC? I would say go ahead, give a little, but to really help United States/Israeli relations, it is better to start a business that either exports to Israel or one that imports Israeli parts for products made in the U.S.A.

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Michael J. Malbin was a Resident Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research in Washington, D.C. and is presently a Research Scholar at the University of Maryland. He prepared this article for the Jerusalem Center's program on the American Jewish Agenda for the Year 2000 and Beyond.

Chapter 6

FOR OURSELVES AND FOR OTHERS: DEFINING JEWISH INTERESTS

Marshall J. Breger

Summary: There are over 2,100 countrywide Jewish organizations and over 700 local Jewish federations, a significant number of which participate in the political process on an intense and daily basis. Unfortunately this Jewish political activism is often unfocused, if not diffuse. Jewish organizations should create a political agenda based on clearly defined Jewish interests and should set priorities among the many issues with which they deal. This involves weighing maximalist vs. minimalist interpretations of true Jewish interests. It is not clear that coalitions are essential to Jewish political effectiveness and it may be that a minimalist parochial definition of Jewish interests is the most legitimate one.

2,100 Jewish Organizations

In 1831, Alexis de Toqueville, the peripatetic French observer of the new American nation, wrote that "Americans of all ages, conditions, and dispositions constantly form associations." No group is better characterized by this statement than American Jews. There are over 2,100 countrywide Jewish organizations and over 700 local Jewish federations -- almost one organization for every 2,500 Jews. While many of these groups have little to do with the world of politics, a significant number participate in the political process on an intense and daily basis.

A few examples underscore the scope and degree of Jewish political activism. The Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, created to be the main address for Jewish groups in their representations before the United States government, is but one of many voices. There are three major community relations organizations: the American Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. The American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) covers the Israel beat. There are the Zionist organizations. There are also 75 political action committees (PACs) organized to contribute money to elect officials who support Israel.

Today, these "Jewish lobbies" are considered to be among the most effective of interest groups. Wider margins of congressional support for Israel aid packages and successful efforts to limit arms sales to Jordan and most recently to Saudi Arabia have underscored the real or perceived power of the "Jewish lobby."

Unfortunately, this Jewish political activism is often unfocused, if not diffuse. Moreover, as they deal with a variety of disparate political issues, Jewish organizations often fail to concentrate on specifically Jewish concerns when creating a political agenda or at least take an unusually broad view of what constitute Jewish interests. While this universalist approach has shifted dramatically since the late 1950s, even today little effort has been made to define what Jewish interests actually are.

Defining Jewish Interests

The following four definitions may be useful to test public policy positions from a specifically Jewish perspective:

1. Jewish interests are matters that affect Jews as a group.

In the 19th century, defining the Jewish agenda was rarely a problem for Jewish political activists. The central Jewish political issue was civil emancipation -- the effort to eliminate political disabilities from Jews as a class. Issues included the right to vote, the right to hold public office and the right to own land. These status disabilities were more easily susceptible to collective remedies.

In this century, the impetus shifted to assistance to distressed communities abroad and the removal of social and economic discrimination at home. After World War II and the Nazi destruction of European Jewry, all of the major Jewish organizations saw support for Israel as vital to Jewish communal survival. Efforts to win freedom for Jews in the Soviet Union, Syria, and Ethiopia are seen in similar terms. The recent use of racial quotas as official U.S. government policy in distributing government grants and contracts has been seen as detrimental to Jews as a group, even by those organizations that support the ultimate goal of compensating for past discrimination.

The defense of religious freedom has been a continuing concern of Jewish defense organizations. In America the increased interpenetration of the public and private sectors in our century has made this problem especially acute. In protecting religious freedom, government must at times promote specific practices or institutions that make religious expression possible. In the United States, government intervention has been used to require places of employment to protect the rights of Sabbath observers, to require nursing homes to make kosher food available and to protect the rights of students at every level of education to worship or not to worship.

At times this presents difficult choices. In Wilder vs. Sugarman, black children represented by the New York Civil Liberties Union attacked New York State's policy of permitting Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant children to be placed in foster families of the same religion through denominational family services. Since Jewish agencies provided high-quality services to primarily white Jewish children, the Civil Liberties Union claimed racial discrimination. Yet without the

opportunity for a denominational focal point, the very *raison d'être* of sectarian social services is undermined.

2. Jewish interests heed Jewish law and tradition.

From the perspective of traditional Judaism, the only area in which rabbinical statements carry religious authority is when they are interpretations of *halakhah* (Jewish law). It is very difficult to say that Jewish law should be limited to religious matters, because it is not. Its scope includes guidance and even legal decisions on commercial matters as well as social and political issues. It is therefore difficult to say that Jewish law is not relevant to political decision-making.

From the perspective of Reform Judaism, the pursuit of social justice is a religious imperative. From this vantage point, Jews must take a Jewish position on the full range of social and economic policy issues.

3. Jewish interests promote the self-interest of many individual Jews.

The fact that significant numbers of individual Jews may be affected by particular government policies may create a Jewish interest in preserving the deductibility of state and local taxes since many Jews live in high tax areas, a Jewish interest in maintaining current levels of student aid since a high percentage of Jews go to college, and a Jewish interest in federal urban grants since many Jews are city-dwellers.

Though these matters affect large numbers of Jews, they are not uniquely Jewish issues. They affect the economic well-being of individual Jews and thus have an indirect impact on the financial strength of communal institutions.

4. Jewish interests are what Jewish leaders say they are.

New Liberal-Conservative Tension

Historic Jewish liberalism is now being challenged by a new generation of "neo-conservative" intellectuals. As a result, it is now far more difficult for Jewish leaders to equate their personal policies with the Jewish interest, however broadly conceived.

As one example of this new tension, the decision of the Los Angeles Jewish Community Relations Council to support the National Organization for Women's march on Washington may reflect an interest in developing alliances with feminists on behalf of Israel. However it is hard to see how support of the march is within the purview of a Jewish organization dedicated to developing public support and sensitivity for Israel, Soviet Jews and Jewish tradition. On the other hand, Jewish conservatives must face the challenge of explaining how support for the Contras or the Strategic Defense Initiative can be defined as a Jewish interest.

In another example, the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council (NJCRAC) issued a statement in 1985 which reflected its belief that since Jewish security depends upon a society "committed to equal rights, justice and opportunity" and that denial of these values "breeds social tensions, conflicts and dislocations" and threatens democracy in general, thus Jewish security is also threatened. Therefore, "the stake of the American Jewish community in a strong democratic society" depends upon Jewish opposition to cuts in social programs, support for federal job creation efforts, government funding of day care, and increased federal support to local schools.

Minimalist vs. Maximalist Interests

Such generic appeals to Jewish values or Jewish law are fraught with difficulties. The minimalist position is succinctly embodied in the slogan -- "Never Again" -- and Jewish interests lie in insuring that the Jewish community does everything it can to sustain itself. The maximalist position justifies taking public policy positions that reach beyond an immediate Jewish interest. Hence the Reform "social action" view uses Jewish tradition to justify participation in the grape boycott, while Orthodox groups rely on halakhah to oppose a New York City executive order prohibiting organizations with city contracts from discriminating against homosexuals.

The maximalist position is difficult to sustain where the relationship between Jewish law and a specific policy is often tenuous. The appeal to Jewish values often collapses into a wholesale endorsement of policies that can be justified by values or rationales drawn from other sources as easily as they can be rationalized from a Jewish perspective.

The suggestion that Jewish interests be restricted to core Jewish issues in no way means that Jews as citizens should limit their range of political activity. On the contrary, Jews should be urged to support important non-Jewish causes as citizens of their country and this is what actually happens. Jews have been among the most generous contributors to liberal causes over the last decades and they are beginning an involvement with conservative causes as well. The fear expressed by Hyman Bookbinder of the American Jewish Committee and others that a focus on Jewish self-interest for Jewish organizational activity will cut Jews off as citizens from across-the-board political activity is simply not warranted.

The Problem of Priorities

Perhaps the most difficult challenge to the organized Jewish community is the need to set priorities among the issues on its political agenda. The NJCRAC policy statement has the organized Jewish community taking an "official" Jewish stand on almost every issue before Congress. This melange of public policy interests does a

disservice to Jewish communal interests and blurs the message sent to policy-makers. When a group of Jewish organization leaders met with President Reagan's Chief of Staff, Donald Regan, the first half of a 40 minute meeting was taken up by a discussion of pending legislation regarding aid to dependent children (AFDC), leading Regan to inquire whether this was a specifically Jewish issue. This extension of the Jewish imprimatur to issues outside the core scope of Jewish concerns weakens community unity. Nearly all Jews support Israel, but they differ on AFDC. The failure to set priorities mutes the intensity of focus on the central concerns of the Jewish community.

Coalitions Have Not Worked

One argument in support of the maximalist approach claims that Jews need to form coalitions with other interest groups in order to maintain power and that they must therefore take on non-Jewish issues in exchange for support on Jewish issues. Senator Carl Levin (D-Michigan) has stated: "If we do not fight the injustices that affect others, will they fight the injustices that affect us?" On the conservative side, Irving Kristol has noted that for Jews to expect conservative support for Jewish concerns, they "must have a large portfolio of issues with which to deal."

For Jews to be part of such coalitions, they have to make policy concessions and take on the causes of other groups. In short, participating in such coalitions requires a diversion of resources to non-Jewish issues. In addition, such coalitions often have little direct control over the policy-making process so that the advantages which accrue from this distortion of the Jewish agenda are either indirect or tangential.

Outreach efforts designed to forge or reinforce coalitions have not produced any measurable increase in support for Israel. The best attempts to increase conservative support for Israel barely altered the fact that most conservative congressmen supported the AWACS sale in 1981 and more recent Saudi arms sales. Similarly, the American Jewish Congress and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) joined the 1983 March on Washington commemorating the 20th anniversary of Martin Luther King's march in order to preserve the Black-Jewish alliance and, by extension, Black support of Israel, despite the fact that the sponsors of the march included PLO supporters and leaders who condemned Israel and Zionism.

Jewish support of an event tinged with anti-Semitism suggests another drawback to a coalition strategy. Many of the issues for which other groups seek support can divide the Jewish community. When issues on which Jews disagree such as school prayer, quotas, Central America and women's rights are defined as Jewish and added to the Jewish agenda, it contributes to needless discord and diversion of resources.

It is not clear that coalitions are more essential to Jewish political effectiveness than the direct grass roots support reflected by

the ability of the Jewish community, in Bookbinder's words, "to mobilize influence within their local constituencies." Nor are coalitions the best mechanism for advancing particular Jewish interests. Indeed, when forced to choose between maintaining an alliance with Jewish groups and pursuing an area of specific concern, other interest groups have not hesitated to part company. Why should Jewish groups behave differently than did organized labor, normally one of Israel's staunchest supporters, when it lobbied vigorously against the Free Trade Agreement with Israel? As an American Jewish Committee task force concluded, "in any coalition of interests, if one party pursues the 'general good' while the other parties advance their constituents' interests, the result must invariably be the victimization of the constituency whose representatives pursue the 'general good.'"

The fact is that a minimalist notion of Jewish interests is the most effective way to get policy-makers to pay attention. The important coalitions are those formed by PACs with key policy-makers and political parties seeking Jewish backing precisely because Jewish support is targeted to potential allies who support Jewish issues in particular.

Parochialism Is Legitimate

An additional argument for a minimalist definition of Jewish interests recognizes that on the really significant issues, American Jews have had to manage largely alone because the prevailing opinion in America was either indifferent or opposed to the Jewish interest. Hence, being parochial should be considered neither sinful nor impolitic. As former AIPAC lobbyist Aaron Levine has stated, "parochialism is a legitimate and necessary fact of political life. It affects Jews no less than other groups. It requires neither apologies nor handsprings to show how universal we are. Using Jewish access to promote the views of a broad coalition of Jewish and non-Jewish organizations is an abuse; it confuses how Jewish priorities are received and thereby dilutes Jewish power."

When Norman Podhoretz suggested some 15 years ago that the criterion for judging Jewish political activity should be "Is it good for the Jews?," his challenge was met with squeamish embarrassment. That the question is now an accepted part of Jewish communal discourse reflects the awareness that the Jewish state and the survival of all Jews depends largely on Jewish efforts. It follows that the appeal from communal self-interest must be separated from other appeals. At the very least, it is incumbent on all parties which purport to represent the Jewish community to make clear with what voice they have chosen to speak, and to defend their positions within the parameters of their perspective. We cannot afford the luxury of equating the public interest with the Jewish interest on all fronts. This may seem overly cautious to some, but both history and the workings of politics provide no real alternative.

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Marshall J. Breger was the White House liaison to the Jewish community for President Reagan and is presently the Executive Director of the Administrative Conference of the United States.

Chapter 7

HOW NEW YORK JEWS VOTE: MYTHS AND REALITIES

David M. Pollock

Summary: There are numerous popular beliefs concerning Jewish voting behavior in the United States which may not necessarily be true. In actual fact, Jewish voter turnout is high but many still do not vote; Jews will vote Republican if they believe it is in their interest to do so; Jews do not vote as a bloc; Jews are not a single issue constituency; Jews do not vote automatically for other Jews; and because of their concentration in the largest electoral vote states, Jews can make a difference in a close presidential race. Future Jewish clout will continue to focus on the arenas of the polling booth, lobbying, and campaign contributions.

Among the many myths in popular circulation today are those which surround Jewish voting behavior in the United States. The time has come to demystify Jewish political power. There are seven common myths about the Jewish vote which do not bear up too well under the scrutiny of research.

Myth #1: All Jews Vote

Voting participation involves two components: the proportion of eligible voters who are registered to vote and the number of eligible voters who actually turn out on election day.

True, the proportion of Jews who are registered and do vote (as compared to the general population) is inordinately high. Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) figures indicate that at the beginning of 1984, three out of four eligible Jews in the New York metropolitan area were registered to vote. This compares favorably to the rest of the population of New York City who registered at a 50 percent rate.

However, the Jewish community cannot rest on its laurels. According to a 1983 JCRC study sponsored by the Scheuer Foundation, these statistics translated into 325,000 eligible Jews in the New York metropolitan area who were not registered to vote. Worse yet, four out of five of the unregistered Jews are under the age of 45.

During 1984, the JCRC mobilized its member agencies and other groups in New York in a major effort to increase the number of registered voters residing in 19 target New York state assembly districts in the metropolitan area. Jews represented a high proportion of the registered voters in each sample district.

A tracking of Board of Election registration figures between April, 1984 and April, 1985 disclosed a 9.8 percent increase in Jewish registration during that year. Some "yuppie" districts such as the Upper West Side of Manhattan showed a 33.6 percent increase in voter registration. Orthodox districts also showed major increases (e.g. Borough Park, +18.3 percent and Far Rockaway, +21.5 percent). The increase in Jewish voter registration in the five boroughs of New York City was estimated at between 85,000-90,000.

Registration is of no value if people do not vote. A study of the same 19 assembly districts indicates a slight absolute decrease in the Jewish voter turnout rate (68 percent in 1984 vs. 70 percent in 1982), but a rise in the total number of Jewish voters of 35,000-40,000. The 68 percent figure still represented a significant rise over the Jewish turnout rate in 1980, when less than half of New York City's eligible Jews (47 percent) voted.

Factors Affecting Turnout

This rise in voter participation was the result, at least in part, of a serious effort by the JCRC and others to increase Jewish turnout, but it must be noted that the presidential choices offered to the Jewish community in 1984 were certainly more palatable than in 1980. Walter Mondale, even with the "liability" of Jesse Jackson, was viewed much more positively than Jimmy Carter.

A reliable indicator of candidate satisfaction rather than party satisfaction can be found in the presidential primary elections. Carter was defeated 4:1 by Ted Kennedy in the 1980 New York presidential primary. Walter Mondale won the 1984 New York primary, with Gary Hart taking less than half (44 percent) of the Jewish vote.

Although Mondale was viewed more positively than Carter, he still had to deal with his association with Jesse Jackson. The National Exit Survey of the American Jewish Congress indicated that the votes of one out of three (34 percent) Jewish voters for Republican candidates in 1984 were strongly influenced by Jackson's campaign.

Even considering the Jackson factor, Mondale managed to consolidate most of the Carter and Anderson vote of 1980, and pick up some 1980 non-voters as well, according to precinct poll analyses by the JCRC. Reagan slightly increased his percentage of the New York Jewish vote, and also gained some 1980 non-voters. Even so, a third of the registered Jews did stay away from the polls, perhaps feeling that their vote would not make a difference in light of the "inevitable" landslide, or that they did not want to vote for either candidate.

The New York City mayoral primary of 1985 again demonstrated that the slippage of Jewish voting has been reversed. According to the NBC Exit Poll, close to one-third (32 percent) of the primary voters were Jewish, and the Jewish turnout rate (52.3 percent of the enrolled voters) was almost twice that of the non-Jewish rate. In the

1984 presidential primary, by comparison, Jews had comprised 26 percent of the primary voters.

Myth #2: Jews Always Vote Democratic

The JCRC Election Study indicated that in 1984, the New York City Jewish vote split 62:38 in favor of Mondale. NBC's New York State figure was 63:37. ABC reported a 70:30 split. In Massachusetts the split was 78:22. Yet although Mondale won the Jewish vote by a significant margin, he did not gain the plurality of many of his Democratic predecessors.

This vote represented another step in the steady erosion over the years of automatic Jewish identification with the Democratic party. Early survey data dealing with the Roosevelt years are unreliable, but most point to FDR garnering 90-95 percent of the Jewish vote. According to the Gallup Poll Index (November, 1972), Truman received 75 percent of the Jewish vote, Stevenson tallied 64 percent (1952) and 60 percent (1956), Kennedy received 82 percent, Johnson, 90 percent, and in 1976, Carter won 76 percent of the Jewish vote.

The JCRC Election Survey shows, however, that the pattern has not always been smooth. For example, although Humphrey did poll over 80 percent of the Jewish vote in 1968 in his race against Nixon, McGovern polled only 58 percent of the New York Jewish vote in 1972. It seems that a strong, sitting President who is known as a friend of Israel could gain a significant portion of that vote. The return of the Jewish vote to Carter and the Democrats in 1976 did not hold true in 1980. Then, 60 percent of the Jewish vote went to the Republican and Independent candidates -- Reagan, 36 percent, and Anderson, 24 percent.

Jewish self-identification with the Democratic party also seems to be slowly eroding. ABC poll data indicate that 56 percent of Jews called themselves Democrats in 1980, but only 53 percent did so in 1984.

In New York, Jews have supported Republican candidates such as Javits, Rockefeller and Lindsay. A study of Jewish voting patterns in Westchester shows considerable ticket splitting among Jewish voters. In 1985, the NBC Exit Poll of Democratic voters indicated that the favorable performance rating of Republican Senator Alfonse D'Amato by Jews was significantly higher than that of non-Jews.

Myth #3: Jews Vote as a Bloc

The aforementioned numbers indicate that Jews do not vote as a bloc. A close analysis of precinct data reveals that approximately one in four Jewish voters will consistently opt for conservative candidates, and approximately one in five can be labelled as a regular "swing voter," one who will readily change his/her vote based on candidates and issues. Similarly, ABC poll data indicate that 16

percent of Jews call themselves Republican and 31 percent are Independent.

Two other phenomena bode for continued change in Jewish voting patterns. First, young Jews are becoming more conservative. Studies of entering college freshmen (Jewish College Freshmen -- An Analysis of Three Studies) by Geraldine Rosenfeld of the American Jewish Committee show that while these freshmen are more liberal than their non-Jewish peers, they are more conservative than their parents. This is borne out by Survey Research Center (University of Michigan) data that show that younger Jews are voting more conservatively, although not as regularly, than those of their parent's generation. In 1984, there emerged a Jewish "Yuppies for Reagan" that paralleled the non-Jewish phenomenon.

Second, the 1984 campaign focused attention on the Orthodox Jewish community, which currently comprises approximately 12 percent of the population in the New York metropolitan area. The Satmar Hassidic community of Williamsburg voted 4:1 in favor of President Reagan, and communities such as Kew Garden Hills and Borough Park voted 2:1 for the Republican ticket.

Myth #4: Jews are a Single Issue Constituency

True, support for Israel among the American Jewish community is solid. Yet, in the 1984 Presidential race, Israel barely emerged as an issue. Once both candidates were perceived as being strong supporters of Israel, the forum quickly shifted to other issues.

In its Exit Poll, ABC asked which issues were important to respondents in making their presidential choice. Interestingly, the option mentioned most often was "My candidate's stand on the nuclear weapons freeze (30 percent)," followed by "My candidate's stand on abortion (25 percent)," followed by "My candidate's stand on equal rights for women" and "the Reagan/Mondale debates (22 percent)."

One area in Brooklyn covered by the JCRC Election Study had an overwhelming majority of senior citizens. This area voted for Mondale 4:1. One might say that these voters had Social Security and Medicaid on their minds more than any other voter preference criterion.

Although the Jewish community's advocacy on behalf of Israel and Soviet Jewry are often perceived as particularly Jewish issues, the Jewish community often approaches these issues from a universalist standpoint. Soviet Jewry is not only an issue of Jews living under an oppressive regime, but one of basic human rights. As such, it is logical that the Jewish community is in the forefront of the fight to end apartheid in South Africa and of many other "decent" causes.

On the other hand, in ABC's Exit Poll, only one Jew in six mentioned "the Moral Majority's support of Ronald Reagan (17 percent)" as an important issue in their choice for president. Still, the majority of Jews do espouse many liberal positions which are diametrically opposed to those of the Moral Majority.

While looking at the data, one might posit that the key variable in Jewish voting behavior is that of individual freedom. There is a perception that when society starts to dictate issues of private morality, then it might also impose sanctions restricting the rights of minority groups, including Jews.

According to Steven M. Cohen, who conducted the study, The Political Attitudes of American Jews, 1984, for the American Jewish Committee, Jews still perceive themselves as "outsiders" in American society and, therefore, Jews identify with those who are left-of-center. 77 percent of Jews believe that anti-Semitism in America may become a serious problem. Of all respondents, 35 percent believe that most or many conservatives are anti-Semitic, while only 7 percent of liberals are labelled as such. They perceive more danger from the right than from the left.

Jewish attitudes toward issues of individual freedom manifest themselves in interesting ways in this study. For example, although Jews are clearly troubled by the visibility of gays, they are pro-gay rights by 9:1. Similar splits are found on questions of abortion and equal rights for women, which are also issues of individual freedom. Both these issues are supported at a 9:1 rate in the Jewish community. However, it should not be assumed that Jews embrace the entire liberal agenda -- Jews are in favor of capital punishment by 2:1.

Another facet of the personal freedom issue relates to church-state separation. While Jewish views on church-state issues are the inverse of the general population's, Jews are only 2:1 against tuition tax credits or silent meditation.

Perhaps one explanation for the comparatively lower status of the church-state issue in the collective Jewish mind is the comparatively lower status of religion itself within that psyche. According to the Religion in America Gallup Poll of March, 1984, only one in four Jews indicated that religion was "very important in their life." This answer is less than half of any other major group. Many in organized religion feel that Jewish efforts against school prayer, etc. are based on an anti-religion view, rather than as supporting religious freedom.

Myth #5: Jews Vote for Jews

As stated earlier, Jews vote on the basis of issues, and on their evaluation of the qualities of individual candidates. Rockefeller was able to attract a significant portion (and often the majority) of the Jewish community against Jewish opponents. Robert Wagner defeated a Jewish opponent in the Democratic mayoral primary (Arthur Levitt) and went on to victory over a Jewish Republican opponent (Louis Lefkowitz). In both races, Wagner carried the Jewish vote.

In recent years in dozens of races, be it Moynihan vs. Abzug, Carey vs. Samuels, or Cuomo vs. Lehrman, Jews broke ethnic ranks and voted for the non-Jewish candidates in greater numbers than for their Jewish rival.

Myth #6: There are Too Few Jews to Make a Difference

The 1984 Reagan landslide was, most likely, a statistical aberration. Unless the fabled historic realignment among the nation's voters has taken place, results of future presidential elections are more likely to resemble those of 1980.

Reagan's 1980 plurality in New York was only 165,000. 90,000 of those votes can be identified as Jewish "shifters" from 1976 Carter voters, in addition to the 100,000 Jewish votes for Anderson. Similar results occurred in Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Ohio and Pennsylvania, all states with high Jewish populations. If Carter would have maintained his 1976 edge among the Jewish population in 1980, the results might have been different.

In New York, Jews comprise approximately 13 percent of the November electorate. Yet because of turnout patterns, they comprise up to 40 percent of the primary voters. In the foreseeable future, the primaries are where the greatest Jewish electoral impact will be felt.

Future Jewish Clout

With more and more Jews voting in differing patterns, no party or candidate can take the Jewish vote for granted. A more realistic approach to Jewish political behavior should reveal targets of opportunity for both parties. The Jewish vote is up for grabs and this vote can make a difference for the foreseeable future.

Future Jewish clout will be felt in three arenas: the polling booth, political education (the direct lobbying of legislators by concerned constituents), and campaign contributions. The Jewish population in the United States is shrinking and, without intervention, Jewish clout will ultimately decrease. Yet Jewish political power, if honed to perfection and used effectively, could and should achieve a net increase in the immediate future. And that, to answer the time-honored question, is good for the Jews.

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David Pollock is the Assistant Executive Director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York.

Chapter 8

THE JEWISH CONTEXT OF THE NEW JEWISH POLITICS

Daniel J. Elazar

Summary: A principal feature of Jewish life in the past century has been the reconstitution of the Jewish polity. It has been marked by a shift in power within the three traditional domains of authority and power in the Jewish polity from the keter Torah to the keter malkhut (domain of civil rule) which deals with the day-to-day governance of Jewish affairs. The unity of the Jewish people, which rests upon a combination of kinship and consent, has come to rest increasingly on the conscious desire to be actively Jewish. Jewish identification and self-expression increasingly rests on political and religious dimensions far more than ethnic or cultural ones. This is reflected in the constitutional principles implicit in the activity of the American Jewish community. The world Jewish polity is being constructed around a series of functional authorities to handle its worldwide business and the Jewish people needs to develop a sense of civic responsibility toward these institutions.

Reconstitution of the World Jewish Polity

The Jewish people has progressed substantially in the past hundred years toward its self-reconstitution as a polity -- that is to say, a community with a public agenda which can be pursued with a substantial amount of autonomy through institutions which provide for a substantial amount of self-government in matters related to that public agenda. While the Jewish people has always been a polity as well as a religious community and whatever else, for most of the last thousand years of Jewish dispersion it has been difficult to develop appropriate political instrumentalities and serve the people as a whole that would give expression to the Jewish polity. Moreover, in the modern epoch, especially after the French Revolution, the temper of the times discouraged and even forbade overt Jewish political self-expression. Hence, Jews had to deal with their public agenda and other guises and through other institutional reforms. The emergence of Zionism began to reverse that trend and the establishment of the State of Israel provided a basis for the contemporary reconstitution of the Jewish polity. The Jewish polity is real if for no other reasons than it possesses institutions of substance which employ and mobilize substantial numbers of people who earn their living and who find personal satisfaction through those institutions.

The model that best describes the Jewish people and its polity is that of a matrix, consisting of a number of cells of varying size

linked together by a common communications network and an emergent set of institutions. This model reflects the diversity and complexity of the Jewish people.

The Three Domains of Authority

Authority and power in the Jewish polity are traditionally divided among three domains, in Hebrew, ketarim (crowns): the keter torah (the domain of Torah), the keter kehunah (the domain of priesthood), and the keter malkhut (the domain of civil rule). The first is the domain of those who bring the transcendent message of Judaism to the people. The second is the domain through which the people reach out to that which transcends themselves. The third is the domain of day-to-day governance of Jewish affairs.

In the classic biblical period, the prophets represent the keter torah; the priests, the keter kehunah; and the kings, judges, and elders, the keter malkhut. In subsequent ages, different institutions emerged to represent each domain. The sages became the representatives of the keter malkhut. In our own time, in the American Jewish community, scholars, particularly Torah scholars, have become the principal bearers of the keter torah, synagogues and their rabbis the principal institution of the keter kehunah, and federations and their instrumentalities the representatives of the keter malkhut. This model has real implications for the division and sharing of functions within the American Jewish community and in the patterns of cooperation and conflict among its institutions.

In some respects, the Jewish people offers a paradigm of the renewed concern with ethnic self-expression in our times and its state-diaspora relationship, a sign of what is likely to come in a world grown more interconnected in which territorial boundaries are more permeable. In this respect, there are parallel phenomena among other ethnic communities in the world -- the ethnic Chinese, for example, or the Armenians. But, in the last analysis, the Jewish people remains unique with respect to its multi-faceted character, its long endurance, its place at center stage in the unfolding of world history, and in the degree to which it has institutionalized the interconnections among its various parts.

Kinship and Consent

As in the past, the unity of the Jewish people today rests upon a strong sense of shared kinship, but beyond that sense of kinship there needs to be consent as well, a conscious desire to be actively Jewish, to live Jewishly in some way and to be part of the Jewish polity. While the sense of kinship is not strictly dependent upon the religious dimension, neither is that dimension entirely absent even among those who deny it. Israel is considered sacred by most Jews because it works for them spiritually. This is not a matter of

reflection but of basic emotional response which supplements the sense of kinship with a spiritual dimension. It is out of this linkage that the civil religion which unites so many Jews grows. In sum, being Jewish is to be part of a theo-political phenomenon.

The Political Dimension of Jewish Identification

Jewish identification and self-expression in the United States will increasingly rest on political and religious dimensions far more than on ethnic or cultural ones. Indeed, the increase in the importance of the political dimension is perhaps the most noteworthy phenomenon of recent decades. Jews who maintain only the most pro forma links with the Jewish religious tradition, who know little or nothing of Jewish culture, increasingly express themselves Jewishly in connection with Jewish political causes or interests, whether Israel or persecuted Jewries overseas or internal issues deemed to be of Jewish concern.

At the same time, it has become clear that while this kind of Jewish political expression is important, even necessary in our times, it is not sufficient to preserve Jewishness from generation to generation. To do so, religious and cultural dimensions are necessary as well. Hence, new syntheses are required. These new syntheses have been emerging and have been termed by students of the matter as the new Jewish civil religion. Both American and Israeli Jewries have developed their own expressions of this new civil religion which attempts to bring together traditional Jewish symbols and behavior with the new political concerns of the Jewish people. The civil religions of both communities are strikingly similar in many ways and are increasingly interconnected. Together they represent the reemergence of a Jewishness which focuses on the Jewish state rather than on the achievement of individual and communal holiness through traditional halakhah and mitzvot.

For all that American Jewry views itself as an autonomous community capable of generating its own Jewish way of life in every aspect, American Jews simultaneously view Israel as legitimizing their existence as Jews and as the focal point of Jewish identification. This problem has become more complex as Israel ceases to be viewed strictly through the prism of Jewish emotion and more as a real place and Israelis are no longer perceived as needy cousins but as another Jewish community with the same mix of virtues and vices as every contemporary Jewish community.

At the present time, the Jewish people seems to be building a series of functional authorities, the chief of which is the Jewish Agency, to handle its worldwide business. These authorities are public bodies structured in such a way that both the Jewish state and diaspora communities can be represented within them. The new world Jewish polity is being constructed around these authorities but the Jewish people has to be educated to understand it and to develop civic responsibility within it.

A Constitutional Framework for the American Jewish Polity

The American Jewish community has developed an implicit constitutional framework for its polity. The elements of that framework include:

- (1) voluntary citizenship -- (no one is compelled to be a member of the polity);
- (2) associationalism -- the basic units of the polity are organized through formal organizations;
- (3) federalism -- the organizations are compounded into larger units through federation or confederation;
- (4) aristocratic republicanism -- the polity belongs to the entire people but is led by its trustees;
- (5) shared/divided authority -- there is no hierarchy; instead power and authority are dispersed among different functional authorities with a different sense of controls;
- (6) consensualism -- the polity strives to make decisions through consensus;
- (7) Jewish survivalism -- its principal goal is to assure Jewish survival;
- (8) covenant of responsibility (brit arevut) -- a sense of mutual responsibility of one Jew for another;
- (9) Israel -- the preservation of Israel, its centrality to at least some significant degree; no one in the polity can disavow Israel and remain a respected member;
- (10) respect for Jewish tradition -- one cannot be neutral or hostile towards Jewish tradition, but one can define that tradition in a wide variety of ways.

The fact that American Jews live in an open society has led to problems of defining not only citizenship but membership in the Jewish community. It is possible to identify several classes of membership in the community:

- (1) Those who are Jewish not only because they recognize their kinship links but who consent in an active way to be Jewish and members of the community.
- (2) Those who recognize their Jewishness in a kinship sense but do not go beyond it.
- (3) Those who pass for Jewish but whose formal status as Jews is in doubt from the kinship perspective.
- (4) Resident aliens, such as non-Jewish spouses of Jews, who live in a Jewish milieu but do not claim to be Jews or formally identify with the Jewish people.

Federations — The Framing Institutions of American Jewry

The framing institutions of American Jewry, the community federations, which once served individual cities, are now spread over large metropolitan regions. To deal with this new situation, an increasing number are reorganizing or considering reorganization on territorial as well as functional lines. Simultaneously, adjacent federations or federations in the same state are beginning to form linkages or confederations in order to provide services which need to be provided on a regional or statewide basis. The thrust towards regionalization often includes an effort to expand involvement in Jewish communal affairs, including more opportunities for participation and various devices for encouraging members of the Jewish community to help set communal priorities.

There is a growing tendency among Jewish community federations to become operating agencies. This may be a logical next step in the evolution of federations -- from agencies for federated giving to instruments for community planning to operating agencies. But it is one which changes the federated character of the community. Hence it is likely to be resisted by the federations, constituent agencies and by other institutions in the community fearful of the consequences of such a change. Crucial decisions will be made within the next decade in this regard.

To Build an Authentic System of Jewish Living

The issue remains as to whether or not it is possible to have a Jewish polity without strong and serious commitment to the whole of Jewish tradition, including Jewish religious tradition; that is to say, commitment to Knesset Yisrael in the fullest sense.

However important Israel is in the present scheme of things, diaspora Jews cannot live vicariously through Israel. They must strive to integrate Israel into a system of Jewish living that is authentically theirs. If they fail to do so, it is unlikely that their diaspora communities will survive. Thus American Jewish youth stand to benefit greatly from exposure to Israel under any circumstances, but to benefit greatly their exposure must come as part of a larger program of Jewish education in which they are prepared for Israel beforehand and to which there is follow-up after their time in Israel.

If current demographic projections are correct, sometime after the year 2000, perhaps around 2010, Israel will become the largest Jewish community in the world. Its Jewish population will then be 4.5 million, due to natural growth and aliyah, while at the same time the American Jewish community will drop to below 4.5 million as a result of a negative birthrate and attrition through assimilation. This will inevitably lead to major shifts in the life of the Jewish people along a variety of fronts, including linguistic dominance (Hebrew is likely to become the principal language of world Jewish business rather than English), retention of committed Jews (seriously committed

American Jews will be more likely to make aliyah), and a shift in the locus of power within the Jewish polity.

All Jewish institutions will have to cope with the contradictory phenomena: the growing shallowness of the Jewish life and culture of most Jews in the United States, on one hand, and the outstanding achievements of small groups of Jews in developing an authentic and substantial Jewish life and culture in North America, on the other. The institutions of the Jewish community will need to cope with both of these phenomena.

One of the main weaknesses of the Jewish polity is its inability to plan ahead. It has inadequate planning mechanisms for other than the most short range goals such as the next year's budget.

The commitment to traditional Judaism is a powerful element in developing Jewish civic consciousness but is one which motivates only a small percentage of the total Jewish people. Its new forms of civic education and motivation for civic education must be developed. Educating for Jewish citizenship has two dimensions: (1) an empirical analysis of how the world Jewish polity and its components work and (2) the normative question, what should the polity be like.

Under the best of circumstances, the Jewish polity will be made to work by a relatively small number of Jews. In that sense, it is a polity governed by an elite who serve as trustees for the rest. While it is desirable that Jewish civic education reach everyone, it is especially necessary for this elite. Part of that education should be designed to prevent self-fulfilling prophecies, that is to say, given the sociological realities and demographic projections, there is always a tendency for people to adopt what appears to be the safest course, to reconcile themselves to what seems to be happening anyhow. This is equally, if not more true of leaders who want to be on the winning side, but this could simply complicate the problem.

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Daniel J. Elazar is President of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, Senator N.M. Paterson Professor of Political Studies at Bar-Ilan University, and Director of the Center for the Study of Federalism at Temple University. He is presently a member of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations by Presidential appointment and has served on various state and local boards and commissions as well as serving as an officer and board member of numerous Jewish organizations.