

# Segmented Ethnicity and the New Jewish Politics

*Peter Y. Medding*  
(THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY)

American Jewry has recently undergone a fundamental political transformation. In the past it was politically weak and insignificant; today, it is prominent and widely regarded as an influential political force. The change is dramatically symbolized in the contrast between the inaction and impotence of American Jewry during the Holocaust and its current active public support for Israel.

This essay analyzes the variations and developments in Jewish ethnicity and the changes within American society and politics, which together led to the creation of a New Jewish Politics.

## THE SEGMENTATION OF JEWISH ETHNICITY

Jewish ethnicity is a controversial subject for Jews themselves and for scholars studying Jewry. For Jews, the breakdown of the traditional society in which Jewish ethnicity was clearly defined and widely accepted generated significant ideological disagreements about the core meaning of Jewish ethnicity and the relative significance of its constituent elements.

The efforts of academic scholars to introduce order and unity into the definition of Jewish ethnicity have not been particularly successful either. Their difficulties stem mainly from not taking sufficient account of the complex and changing nature of Jewish ethnicity.

For Jews, ethnicity is a more complex phenomenon than for other groups. Most other groups are identified by a single ethnic indicator such as "race, color, language, religion, customs, and geographical origin."<sup>1</sup> Among Jews, the ethnic indicator combines religion, language, customs and geographic origins in an intricate and inseparable mix of religion, culture and nationality.

The very complexity of Jewish ethnicity distinguishes Jews from other American ethnic groups. To be born Jewish confers membership in both a religion and an ethnic group. Among other nationality groups membership is by birth and one cannot join by conversion, as, say, with Italian-Americans. Conversely, membership of religious groups comes with initiation or conversion indicating accep-

tance of the faith; membership cannot be achieved by birth, as in the case of Catholics and Protestants. But with Jews, both operate: Membership in the group follows birth or conversion.

*From Community of Belief to Community of Shared Identity*

Jewish ethnicity was historically encompassed within a community of belief based upon a system of shared prescriptive values. As a result of modern social and political developments, it exists today within a community based upon shared identity. The differences between the two are significant. The former constituted a total system which controlled the individual's whole environment in a detailed pattern of prescribed actions and fixed roles. Group membership, consequently, was clearly defined. The latter has developed into a partial system of voluntary membership and individual decision, the boundaries of which are unclear. Personal feelings have been invested with heightened significance because they are the language and common denominator of shared identity, while ethnic roles have become a matter of personal choice and definition.

The community of belief had faith that its future had been guaranteed by divine assurances, as expressed in the traditional concept of the unity of Israel, the Torah and God. Just as God and the Torah were eternal, so, too, was Israel. In the traditional Jewish view of history, the latter might be punished severely for its sins and wayward behavior, but the destruction and disappearance of the Jewish people was not part of the divine scheme of retribution because the existence and chosenness of the Jews was believed to be the reason for the Creation itself. Increasing secularization and acceptance of more universal theories of history undermined the faith in these assurances and paved the way for the community of shared identity. In it not only the centrality of Jewish continuity but the very meaning of God, the Torah and Israel became the subject of deep internal disagreement and conflict.

The community of shared identity is also characterized by the increased significance of non-systematically articulated and non-text-centered elements of Jewish ethnicity, which are maintained without being related to the needs of logical or theological consistency. Since roles are performed and customs observed by virtue of individual choice and voluntaristic group decisions, external environmental influences become a major source of legitimation.

*Symbolic Ethnicity or Segmented Ethnicity?* Gans has argued that these changes in Jewish ethnicity have created a "symbolic ethnicity, an ethnicity of last resort," characterized by ethnic identity needs which are "neither intense nor frequent." Ethnicity is symbolic because "being and feeling ethnic do not depend upon the practice of ethnic culture or participation in ethnic organizations." The synagogue, for example, is such a symbol, requiring only occasional participation. Ethnic symbols are customs and cultural practices that are "'abstracted' out of the traditional religion, and pulled out of its original moorings." Thus "pride in the tradition can be felt without having to be incorporated" into daily life. Symbolic ethnicity is expressed "above all by a nostalgic allegiance to the culture of the immigrant generation, or that of the old country."<sup>2</sup>

However, to define contemporary Jewish ethnicity as “symbolic ethnicity” is to misunderstand it completely and to fail to recognize that the changed emphases within the complex mix of Jewish ethnicity have not led to the complete removal or replacement of the old elements. Connections with the latter may have altered or become attenuated, but they continue to exist. So, too, is the total system retained at the normative level.

To put it somewhat paradoxically, in the complex world of Jewish ethnicity, symbols are not merely symbolic. They are this and more. Thus the customs, practices and observances express values, affirm beliefs and reinforce fundamental commitments and rejections. That some practices are more popular than others, because of personal choices influenced by pragmatic and environmental considerations, and are not maintained as part of a total system, does not sever the connection with their substance and inner meaning. On the contrary, they reaffirm it.

The *rites de passage* and the holidays are a perfect case in point. According to Gans, these “are ceremonial, and thus symbolic to begin with; equally importantly, they do not take much time, do not upset the everyday routine, and also become an occasion for reassembling on a regular basis family members who are rarely seen.”<sup>3</sup> To dismiss them in this way is to miss their inner meaning. The ceremonies connected with the *rites de passage*—for example, *brit milah*, bar mitzvah, marriage and burial—not only mark stages in the life cycle but also create and affirm fundamental connections with the Jewish people, its land, its tradition and its God. So, too, with Sabbath, Festival and High Holy Day rituals, many of which are maintained today by the vast majority of Jews. For all Jews, including the most secularized, these are ethnically distinctive and separating religious rituals, which signify and reaffirm the acceptance of Jewishness in its broadest sense.

At the same time they imply total rejection of Christianity, the dominant and enveloping culture in all the Western societies in which Jews live.<sup>4</sup> Christianity is the formative<sup>5</sup> cultural system for most Americans, at both the value and emotional levels, even when they cease to accept its premises, beliefs and practices. In this sense America is a Christian society, despite constitutional guarantees of the separation of church and state. The constant vigilance and judicial battle needed to uphold the wall of separation and the neutrality of the state with regard to Christianity serve to underline the fact that society is not neutral.

In addition to fundamental religious and rationalist objections, Jews reject Christianity strongly at the emotional and affective levels. Jewish socialization processes imprint upon the core of personality feelings of belonging to a separate ethnic group, the Jews, one of whose most significant defining characteristics is that they are not Christians. This awareness is continually reinforced by the lessons of a long history of Christian antisemitism and persecution, supported by Christian theology, which believed that Jews suffered divine rejection for their obstinate refusal to accept Christianity.

Such feelings and emotions of affirmation and rejection lie close to the core of personality. In the community of belief, they were overshadowed somewhat by the commitment to the total system of faith and practice which completely encompassed the rhythm of their daily lives. In the community of shared identity, religious belief and practice have been downgraded in importance. As a result, the feelings and

emotions of ethnic belonging are relatively more significant in the total scheme of Jewish ethnicity and may, indeed, constitute its essence for many Jews. But to regard ethnic feelings and practices as merely symbolic or perfunctory is to miss their central significance for the individual, even when formal religious and ritual performance take up so little of the time and life pattern of the contemporary Jew.

Where the community was defined in terms of belief and faith, one could, in theory, leave it by a change of belief, that is, by religious conversion. In a world defined in religious terms, this was a possible option, although it was limited in practice by prejudice and antisemitism and the degree of willingness to accept Jews socially after conversion. In a world defined in terms of individual identity, severing connection with the community of shared identity is even more difficult because it means leaving the community of birth. It is, in a sense, to leave oneself and one's personality, somewhat like trying to get out of one's skin.

In a society based upon the legitimacy of individual expressions of identity and the affirmation of individual personality development, there is a constant emphasis upon the full and frank acceptance of oneself and one's origins and roots. Not to accept oneself in this way is not simply a matter of dropping out, of ignoring or avoiding the issue: It demands constant mechanisms of repression, with all the ensuing psychological costs. Moreover, however much the society recognizes the legitimacy of conversion in terms of individual choice and self-definition, it does not seem to be a commonly exercised option. Apart from the general decline in religious belief, it may conflict with the sense of self-, and group, honor and arouse deep guilt feelings as a result of the rejection of self, parents and the group at large. Such choices do not take place in a vacuum: Both the group of origin and the surrounding society may remind the individual of his roots and both, for different reasons, may "punish" him for attempting to leave them.

Jewish ethnicity in the community of shared identity is thus firmly imprinted deep in the core of personality. It exists very much in the present rather than in a "nostalgic allegiance" to the past. It is difficult to erase or escape even when the individual consciously seeks to do so. Jewish ethnicity, therefore, may remain significant without requiring the individual constantly to raise it to the level of conscious awareness or to express it consistently in a formal and prescribed pattern of behavior. In fact, in order to *be* Jewish one does not need to *do* anything. Thus, when the ethnic individual *does* something—when he consciously relates to it in one of many possible ways within the whole religious, national and cultural complex of available options—he further reaffirms and reinforces fundamental values and connects directly with core elements of personal and group identity.

There are, however, occasions in the life of the individual which characteristically raise the issue of Jewish ethnicity to the level of conscious awareness. One such occasion occurs when parents must make a decision about whether and how to hand on the ethnic heritage, values and identity to their offspring in response to the child's need for self-identity. It is in this context that a child-centered Judaism has developed. Educational institutions have been set up to formally induct the young into the community of shared identity, that is, to impart to them the main outlines of the ethnic values and heritage without making stringent demands upon their behavior or that of the parents.

Conversely, when the individual in the community of shared identity perceives prejudice or encounters discrimination and rejection by some sectors of society, particularly those with high social prestige, he is bound to feel that he, individually, has been rejected as a person, for whatever reason. Such an attack upon the personality is different in kind and has much greater impact upon it than the religious or philosophical rejection of Judaism by Christianity. It threatens all members of the community of shared identity, however tenuous their connection with it might appear to be. Even those, and in many cases particularly those, who have made a conscious and what appears to be a successful effort to sever all affiliation with the community of shared identity suffer deep personal affront and injury when confronted with social rejection because they are Jewish.

A striking insight into these mechanisms and the feelings accompanying them, even among Jews who appear to have shed all connections with their Jewishness, is to be found in the life and attitudes of Walter Lippmann. His biographer reports that to many, as one of his gentile friends put it, “‘Walter simply decided that he wasn’t Jewish, and that was that.’ But that, as it turned out wasn’t that. It rarely is. Lippmann had a complicated attitude toward his own Jewishness.” In pursuing this subject, his biographer discovered that Lippmann did not want to confront the issue. However, as a biographer he felt that he “had to. . . . I had to write about the Jewish issue not because Lippmann was Jewish, but because—as I learned from this and other episodes—it aroused his deepest feelings. It affected the kind of person he became, and even his approach to political issues.”<sup>6</sup>

Ethnicity for Jews in the community of shared identity is, thus, highly significant to the individuals, not perfunctory, even if ethnic roles are subject to personal choice and individual decision. The commitment to it and its fulfillment of deep personal needs are not necessarily reflected in the time devoted to formal ethnic performance. In this sense sexual roles and sexual identity offer a good analogy. The intense significance of sexual needs for human personality cannot be gauged from the time devoted to their fulfillment. Similarly, there is a clear parallel in the wounding capacity of the ethnic and the sexual insult. Both wound deeply because they cut through to the core of personality.

The nature of contemporary Jewish ethnicity is thus captured better in the term, *segmented ethnicity*. Compared with the total performance and commitment of the community of shared belief, Jewish ethnicity in the community of shared identity has become segmented. The area of the segment varies; for some it is broad, reflecting a commitment that involves many constituent elements of the contemporary mix of Jewish ethnicity; for others it may be narrower, indicating involvement with fewer elements, although these may be relatively weighty, representing a concentration of commitment. But the nature of the segment is such that however narrow it is, it derives from, and reaches into, the core. To remove the segment one must detach it from the core. To increase the size or weight or capacity of the segment is to attach it more firmly at the core.

The emphasis upon identity reinforces the concern of segmented ethnicity with continuity.<sup>7</sup> Whereas previously there existed a strong belief in continuity and in the existence of a divine promise guaranteeing it, in the community of shared identity continuity is deemed to be dependent upon the actions of the members of the group

themselves. This commitment to continuity as a self-evident, self-fulfilling or enemy-defying value highlights the political character of segmented ethnicity. Ensuring continuity is no longer a matter of faith, it has become a question of politics.

## JEWISH POLITICS

### *Constituting a Jewish Public Realm*

The movement from a community of belief to a community of shared identity had a revolutionary impact upon Jewish politics. The self-governing corporate community of belief had been a semi-autonomous Jewish polity, with a legitimate and clearly defined Jewish public realm. Emancipation destroyed this by according Jews equal citizenship rights as individuals while denying them rights as a political group and as a nation.<sup>8</sup>

The distinctive contribution of the community of shared identity has been to re-establish Jewry as a political group and as a nation. This necessitated the political mobilization of Jewry and the creation of a new Jewish public realm.

The new Jewish public realm extended beyond the boundaries of the Jewish community and involved Jews in the politics of the societies in which they lived, in pursuit of Jewish concerns. It was evident in the formation of new Jewish political organizations and movements, including Zionism, Bundism, and Territorialism, and in the participation of Jews in more general political movements such as socialism and communism. It was manifested in the activities of Jewish parties in the electoral and parliamentary politics of a number of Central and East European countries and in various Jewish representative organizations and roof bodies set up to promote domestic and international Jewish issues.

Jewish politics has become a major element in segmented Jewish ethnicity because it gives clear expression to *collective* needs. As with ethnic groups in general, "the politicization of ethnicity translates the personal quest for meaning and belonging into a group demand for respect and power."<sup>9</sup> This is based upon groups recognizing that politics is relevant to the "health of their ethnic cultural values," upon the political mobilization of the group, and upon political activity based on this awareness.<sup>10</sup>

Segmented Jewish ethnicity, as was noted above, has two major concerns: identity and continuity. Because group activity is necessary to secure these in pluralist societies, politics became increasingly significant with regard both to respect—the group's capacity to win acceptance of its identity—and to power—the capacity to influence those outcomes which will affect or determine continuity.

### *The Politics of Security: The Quest for Identity and Respect*

A Jewish public realm had begun to develop in the United States in the nineteenth century, and it received considerable impetus from the immigration influx and the pressure of events in the twentieth century. A significant event in this process was the establishment in 1944 of the National Community Relations Advisory Council

(NCRAC) as a coordinating body for the Jewish community relations agencies. (In 1971 the word Jewish was added to the name, and it has since been known as NJCRAC.) Today, its membership consists of 11 national and 111 local Jewish community relations organizations.

NJCRAC meets annually to consider the problems facing American Jewry. The results of its deliberations are formally incorporated in the *Joint Program Plan*, which provides guidelines for its affiliated agencies. These are not binding upon the members; consequently, considerable effort is made to achieve consensus on joint policies. Failing this, it also includes statements of dissent from majority formulations. It is, without doubt, the most representative and comprehensive statement of an American Jewish political agenda. When viewed historically, the *Joint Program Plan* gives unique expression to the changing political concerns and positions of American Jews.

The organization was founded in reaction to an American society which subjected Jews to discrimination in education, housing, employment, and admission to resorts, as well as to personal, public and often widely broadcast expressions of prejudice. The Christian character and substance of the American nation was instilled in schools and other public institutions. Jews were constantly reminded of their place in a Christian America.

Americanization demanded conformity to WASP culture in a manner that left no doubts about the inferiority of minority and immigrant ethnic cultures and that reinforced the social superiority of the WASPs. Some leading Christian groups denied Jews a place in America because of the incompatibility of Judaism with the universal demands of democracy. According to the *Christian Century* in 1937, the Jews threatened the cultural integrity which was essential to the survival of American democracy because they defined Judaism in ethnic rather than religious terms. "Can democracy," it asked, "suffer a hereditary minority to perpetuate itself as a permanent minority, with its own distinctive culture sanctioned by its own distinctive cult form?"<sup>11</sup>

This was deemed to be responsible for the Jewish problem because prejudice was "generated by their long resistance to the democratic process," arising from beliefs which "require racial integrity and separateness." In its view, "the only religion compatible with democracy is one which conceives itself as universal, and offers itself to all men of all races and cultures. The Jewish religion, or any other religion, is an alien element in American democracy unless it proclaims itself as a universal faith, and proceeds upon such a conviction to persuade us all to be Jews."<sup>12</sup>

In response to these pressures, NCRAC sought conditions which would enable Jews fully to enter American society. Jews wanted their due as American citizens, the rights of equality. From the mid-1940s until about the mid-1960s the problems confronting Jews and America were conceived of in individual terms. NCRAC regarded its role as facilitating the full integration of individual Jews into society, where they could enjoy their rights as citizens free of individual discrimination, pray in accordance with their conscience and be guaranteed equal opportunity by law.

This is clearly expressed in the *Joint Program Plan* for 1953: "The overall objectives of Jewish community relations are to protect and promote equal rights

and opportunities and to create conditions that contribute to the vitality of Jewish living. . . . These opportunities can be realized only in a society in which all persons are secure, whatever their religion, race or origin. . . . Freedom of individual conscience is a basic tenet of American democracy. The right of each person to worship God in his own way is the keystone in one of the major arches of our national edifice of personal liberties. Government must protect this right by protecting each in the pursuit of his conscience and by otherwise remaining aloof from religious matters."<sup>13</sup>

The same conception is prominent in the formulation of its section headings: "an immigration policy free from racism and other discriminations," "advancing civil rights," "effective defenses against communist tactics of infiltration and subversion," "fuller respect for and application of traditional American civil liberties," "protection of religious liberties, maintenance of separation of church and state, and promotion of interreligious understanding."<sup>14</sup>

Specific Jewish concerns and interests were also presented in these terms. Detailed recommendations with regard to discrimination in employment, education, and housing, for example, formed part of the section on civil rights. There is only the briefest mention of international Jewish issues: The Soviet Union's resort to antisemitism as an instrument of political policy and the dangers of a resurgent Nazism in Germany. Most striking is the reference to Israel: It is mentioned only once in passing, noting that the "Soviet Union has embarked on an active anti-Israel policy . . . that will deeply concern all Jewish organizations."<sup>15</sup>

Clearly, Israel had only a limited impact upon American Jewry in the 1950s. The excitement generated by the establishment of the state dissipated fairly quickly and organized support fell away, as evidenced by the decline in the membership of Zionist organizations.<sup>16</sup> In fact, the actual establishment of Israel initially heightened existing ambivalence and unease within some sections of American Jewry by raising the question of dual loyalty with greater urgency. Underlying this was the historic and continuing organizational rift between Zionists and non-Zionists.

This ambivalence was formally documented in the Ben-Gurion/Blaustein "Exchange of Views" of 1950, which affirmed that American Jews were not exiles and that they "owe no political allegiance to Israel." Although Israel inspired pride and admiration in all Jews, in Mr. Blaustein's view, it had also "placed some burdens on Jews elsewhere, particularly in America."<sup>17</sup> Generally, the relationship with Israel was expressed in terms which emphasized distance and separateness at least as much as commitment and connection. For example, according to the *1954 Joint Program Plan*, "American Jews have a deep and strong sense of cultural and ethnic affinity with the people of Israel and a warm sympathy for the young state."<sup>18</sup>

The Jewish leadership's response to the Sinai campaign reflected these concerns. It was internally divided over Israel's actions, to which some prominent Jewish leaders were actively opposed.<sup>19</sup> To maintain the public appearance of unity, only lukewarm and general statements of support for Israel were forthcoming, calling for "a bold and statesmanlike appraisal of the issues behind the conflict" and prayers for "the freedom and security of Israel and all other peoples in that part of the world."<sup>20</sup> Forthright criticism of American policy was avoided even when there was unanimous Jewish and considerable public opposition to the American threat of

unilateral sanctions.<sup>21</sup> Even then, American Jewish leaders privately encouraged Israel to meet the American government's request that it withdraw.

The divisions within the Jewish community were highlighted when the secretary of state invited a number of non-Zionist leaders to hear the administration's views on sanctions in the hope that "these leaders would exercise a 'helpful influence' upon the Israeli government."<sup>22</sup> This clumsy State Department attempt to split the Jewish community and to seek to influence Israel through American Jews was bitterly resented, even by those who opposed Israel's actions, because it exposed the deepest sources of unease within the Jewish community. It questioned the loyalty of some Jews to the United States and the commitment of others to Israel.

The non-Zionists had been invited because they were "less likely than the Zionists to be influenced by considerations of Israeli interests." Not surprisingly, the group unanimously and vigorously rejected this implication. They "made it plain that all American Jews approach issues affecting U.S. interests as American citizens and that there are no divisions among them in this regard."<sup>23</sup> To have accepted this implication would have lent support to the old accusation of dual loyalty, now reinforced by new Arab propaganda seeking "to create the impression that Jews everywhere in the world are to be regarded as Israelis, rather than citizens of their respective nations."<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, rejecting it enabled the non-Zionist group publicly to demonstrate a commitment to Israel.

The consistent need to support Israel in times of crisis began to dispel some of the apprehensions and unease felt by American Jews. In 1955 the fact that views held by American Jews regarding U.S. policy in the Middle East "differed rather sharply from those being pursued by our government," aroused concern about "special community relations problems."<sup>25</sup> But after the Suez crisis, they felt reassured that "the American public accepted the American Jewish concern about Israel . . . as a natural, normal manifestation of interest based on sympathies and emotional attachments of a sort that are common to many Americans."<sup>26</sup>

Simultaneously, the sense of distance and separateness from Israel, so prominent previously, began to be bridged. For the first time, the American Jewish political agenda incorporated Israel into American Jewish life. No longer was the connection spoken of as merely "sympathy" or "affinity" for the people of Israel, but it had become "clearer than ever . . . that the maintenance of dynamic relationships between American Jewry and the people of Israel . . . is regarded by the overwhelming majority of American Jews as conducive towards creative Jewish living here."<sup>27</sup>

The leadership's confidence about the significance of Israel for the overwhelming majority of American Jews seems more than a trifle misplaced in the light of survey findings. In 1958 only 21 percent of the Jews interviewed for the Lakeville study (dealing with a representative Jewish community) regarded support for Israel as essential "to be considered a good Jew," 47 percent thought it desirable and 32 percent believed it made no difference. Support for Israel ranked fourteenth in a list of twenty-two items, behind working for equality for Negroes ("desirable" or "essential" for 83 percent); helping the underprivileged improve their lot (95 percent); being a liberal on political and economic issues (31 percent "essential," 32 percent "desirable"); promoting civic betterment and improvement in the community (96 percent); and gaining respect of Christian neighbors (91 percent).<sup>28</sup> Clear-

ly, at this stage, the leadership was far ahead of the community in its understanding of the need for support of Israel and its role in Jewish life.

The slowly strengthening relationships with Israel stemmed from greater Jewish understanding of the problems and dangers which it faced and a growing concern about Israel's security. By the early to mid-1960s there was a clear parallel between the domestic and international aspects of the American Jewish political agenda. The main focus of both was security. Thus, in addition to its usual concentration upon gaining acceptance of, and respect for, individual constitutional rights, the 1964-65 *Joint Program Plan*, for the first time, dedicated a section to Jewish security and status in the United States. A complete section on Israel and the Middle East analyzed U.S. policy in the region. It urged continuation of the American commitment "to the protection of [Israel's] security against armed aggression," in light of the "acceptance and recognition of Israel," as indicated by the first official state visit of an Israeli prime minister to the United States.<sup>29</sup>

### *Ethnic Pluralism*

This increasing emphasis on security and status reflects a turning away from the focus on individual rights and citizenship to a greater preoccupation with group and cultural distinctiveness in a pluralist context. Much of the impetus for the development of this perspective came from developments and changes within American society, which rendered the theory and practice of pluralism more consistent.

Pluralism separated Americanism from ethnicity, religion and nationality. On the other hand, nationality and ideology were fused, with the result that the nation was defined in political terms. This meant that ethnic groups could retain their integrity and separateness and perpetuate their cultural distinctiveness as long as they accepted American political ideas, values and symbols. American nationality related to allegiance to the political principles of equality, freedom and unalienable rights, not to ethnic origins. Thus there exists a body of ideas known as "Americanism," in the sense that "Britishism" or "Frenchism" do not exist. The latter rest on organic national and ethnic ties, whereas Americanism is an ideology. Because the test of Americanism is adherence to this ideology, it is perfectly compatible with the maintenance of ethnic culture, traditions, ascriptive social ties and separate social structure.<sup>30</sup>

In direct contrast with the earlier Americanization model which sought to have nationality follow politics and to make citizens into one people, the adoption of ethnic pluralism separated politics from nationality. But it stopped short of making ethnicity a principle of political organization. As at its foundation, the American political system recognizes only citizens and individuals, not ethnic groups, and individual rights, not group rights, although some aspects of affirmative action seemed to be based upon recognition of the latter.<sup>31</sup> This enables individuals to determine for themselves the extent of their ethnic involvements, while the maintenance of pluralism is dependent upon the capacity of the various ethnic groups and cultures to fill it with distinctive content.

From the 1960s onwards, ethnic group politics in the United States has been characterized by public and militant ethnic self-assertiveness, most notably in the

black struggle for full recognition of their civil rights. The intense and active public opposition to the American military involvement in Vietnam extended such politics to the realm of foreign policy. In both, the limits of civil obedience and protest in democracy were tested and extended.

These developments had a direct impact upon Jewish politics in the United States. In general, they reinforced the legitimacy of organized and public Jewish political activity. Specifically, they broke down many of the barriers which previously had inhibited opposition on foreign policy issues. Moreover, in the two areas of greatest concern—the survival of Israel and the security of their place in American society—Jews encountered or perceived opposition and competition from other political forces, including rival ethnic groups, sometimes supported by powerful non-ethnic interests.

The promotion of ethnic Jewish political interests was thus cast in a framework of political competition between ethnic groups rather than in a polarized contest between the Jews and the rest of society or the policies of the U.S. government. Jewish political activity fitted into the accepted competitive pattern of American politics, in which many groups legitimately contest with each other to influence the content and direction of policy.

Ethnic pluralism transformed the general societal stance of Jews. By the end of the 1970s the strength of the society and its capacity to live up to democratic and American goals are perceived in terms of pluralism and group diversity rather than citizenship and rights. This is clearly stated in the *1984–85 Joint Program Plan*:

Jewish community relations activities are directed toward enhancement of conditions conducive to secure and creative Jewish living. Such conditions can be achieved only within a societal framework committed to the principles of democratic pluralism; to freedom of religion, thought and expression; equal rights, justice and opportunity; and within a climate in which differences among groups are accepted and respected, with each free to cultivate its own distinctive values while participating fully in the general life of the society. . . . The Jewish community has always been profoundly aware that maintaining a firm line of separation between church and state is essential to religious freedom and the religious voluntarism which foster the creative and distinctive survival of diverse religious groups, such as our own.<sup>32</sup>

### *The Politics of Survival*

American Jewry has recently come to believe that the health of its major ethnic values, indeed their very continuity, are directly dependent upon political activities. Central to this concern is the belief that the Jewish public realm in Israel is permanently threatened with physical destruction. If this is not averted, American Jewish ethnic group cultural and spiritual distinctiveness and personal identity are deemed by many to be unlikely to survive. American Jewry thus seeks to exercise political power wherever public policy touches on the group's survival. This urgent concern distinguishes the New Jewish Politics from that of all other ethnic groups in the United States.<sup>33</sup>

The politics of survival is a recent development in Jewish politics in America brought about by two separate but interrelated factors: the growing trend toward

using the Holocaust as a historical and political frame of reference in confronting group issues and the steady rise in Israel-consciousness as a major element in the self- and group-identity of segmented Jewish ethnicity. When Israel's security and continued existence suddenly appeared to be in grave danger, these combined with great impact to transform the politics of security into the politics of survival, which lies at the base of the New Jewish Politics. Although Israel is its major focus, the values and responses of the politics of survival pervade American Jewry's collective identity and have fundamentally changed its perception of its place and role in American society.

During the 1950s and 1960s there was almost no consciousness at all of the Holocaust as a historical event or of its impact upon, or meaning for, American Jewry.<sup>34</sup> The term *Holocaust* appears only once in the *Joint Program Plan* before 1969–70, in 1961–62 in the context of the Eichmann trial. It also appears obliquely in 1964–65 in relation to Rolf Hochhuth's play *The Deputy*. On both occasions previous fears that these would arouse antisemitism had proven to be unfounded. Moreover, considerable reassurance was derived from the apparent willingness of Christians to show sympathy and accept a measure of moral responsibility.<sup>35</sup> Despite increasingly common public usage during the 1960s, the actual term *Holocaust* reappeared only in 1969–70, brought to the surface by the 1967 War.

During the 1960s the outpouring of historical and literary material about the Holocaust together with the organizational efforts of the Holocaust survivors who had become established in American society, made memory of the Holocaust a central theme in Jewish life. This was not just a historical exercise or an act of commemoration. A clear political message was also transmitted—that antisemitism and prejudice left unchecked can have the most disastrous consequences for Jewry even in the most enlightened, cultured and civilized of societies. Particularly shocking in the 1960s was increasing evidence of indifference to the plight of Jewry and even obstruction of rescue efforts by many of those who had previously been regarded as friendly, in particular President Roosevelt and his administration.

Antisemitism was not the only factor to which this indifference was attributed. Part of the blame was attached to the Jewish leadership and the Jewish community: They, too, may have been indifferent or not active enough, may have placed unwarranted trust in the good faith of those who had none, and may have been unduly intimidated by prejudice, disunited, and weakened by internal political differences. It was becoming increasingly felt that more might have been done had organizational rivalries and personal conflicts as well as other long-term goals (the establishment of a Jewish state) not been given precedence over efforts to rescue European Jews facing immediate death.<sup>36</sup> The direct political lesson learned from the exposure of this agonising and traumatic period was that Jewish passivity and inaction was partly responsible for the failure to save more Jews from death at the hands of the Nazis.

Holocaust-consciousness gave rise to the political response that Jews must act resolutely to promote their own security, not repeat the past mistake of misplaced trust, and that, in the last resort, they can rely only on themselves. It was positively reinforced by the example of the establishment of Israel, which maintained its security by military self-reliance.

The 1967 War brought this consciousness to a head. There was first the image of Israel surrounded by its enemies, literally facing a battle for survival against what seemed to be superior forces. The independent Jewish state, which previously had seemed to provide a safe haven for Jews and an answer to the ineradicable evils of antisemitism, suddenly was perceived as a potential stage for a second Holocaust because of the concentration of Jews in one place. In a twist of historic irony, this conveyed the worst image of the Holocaust. Israel's few friends, however well-meaning, did not seem able to act decisively to assist it. Once more, as in the Holocaust, the Jews appeared to stand alone. These fears dramatically brought home the central role of Israel in segmented Jewish ethnicity: The threat to collective group identity was perceived as a direct threat to personal identity.

Jewish politics, thus, became the politics of survival. Neither the military victory of 1967 nor the eventual military success of 1973, which demonstrated Israel's capacity to guarantee its own survival, had much impact upon the felt analogy with the Holocaust. There was, firstly, the recognition that Israel's survival was *always* in question because it could not afford to lose a single battle. Secondly, there was deepening isolation of Israel in the United Nations, which came to a head in 1975 with the "Zionism is racism" resolution. Because it sought to de-legitimize the Jewish state by undermining the basis of the national right of the Jewish people to self-determination, opposition to the resolution was regarded by Jews as the minimum indication of support for Jewish survival.

By the mid-1970s these themes came together. Jewish apprehensiveness, although perhaps mistaken and surely excessive, was warranted by "the long, dark Jewish history of persecution, . . . in which the Holocaust and Nazism are not part of the dead past, and in which the virus of antisemitism is not exterminated or conquered. . . . [The Jews] cannot relax their anxiety while a beleaguered Jewish state, restored after centuries of exile is threatened because it is Jewish, by a surrounding Arab world which in its worldwide propaganda propagates antisemitism along with political anti-Zionism."<sup>37</sup>

The role and significance of Israel were made more explicit, "The state has become for many Jews the symbol and embodiment . . . of the continuity of Jewish life. Any threat to Israel is therefore a threat to Jews." Thus the "Zionism is racism" resolution was regarded as masked antisemitism. Moreover, "given the profound sense of identity with the people and the state of Israel, American Jews often perceive the level of antisemitism in America as strongly influenced by, and in a measure, reflected in, our government's policies and public posture towards Israel."<sup>38</sup>

The relationship between American Jewry and Israel was intensified by the politics of survival. Thus in the 1980s it came to be characterized as one of "intense support for Israel and identification with the Jewish state" and "deep commitment to its security and survival."<sup>39</sup> Similarly, it was recognized that for "Jews everywhere, the security and vitality of the Jewish State of Israel and the welfare of its people are integral to their own vitality as Jews and as Jewish communities."<sup>40</sup> This is a far cry from the distance and ambivalent attitudes of the 1950s.

The politics of survival is posited upon a number of basic premises: (1) that the survival of Israel is at stake; (2) that the meaning of Jewish life everywhere is

dependent on Israel; (3) that a threat to Israel's survival is a threat to Jews everywhere; (4) that Jews must be militant in acting to ensure Israel's survival; (5) that in acting to ensure Israel's survival, Jews are thereby acting to ensure their own survival and continuity; (6) that the response of non-Jews to Israel's struggle for survival is indicative of their attitude to Jews in general and (7) that in the light of history, indifference to these concerns is as dangerous as outright antisemitism.

In stark contrast with the situation in the 1950s, such attitudes are not the monopoly of the American Jewish leadership but are widely held throughout the community. Recent surveys have documented this consensus as well as the slightly more intense response among Jewish leaders.<sup>41</sup> The 1981–82 National Survey of American Jews found that 83 percent of those surveyed agreed “that if Israel were destroyed, I would feel as if I had suffered one of the greatest personal tragedies in my life.” Only 12 percent agreed that “Israel's future is secure.” In all, 94 percent categorized themselves as very pro-Israel or pro-Israel. In 1983 similar results were obtained, and, as well, 78 percent agreed that “caring about Israel is a very important part of my being a Jew.” Among a sample of leaders, 90 percent agreed. Jews were secure about publicly identifying with Israel; only 10 percent of the public said, “I am somewhat uncomfortable about identifying myself as a supporter of Israel,” as did 4 percent of the leaders.

On the other hand, Jews were very insecure about where American non-Jews stood on these questions and the degree of support and understanding which they might expect from them. Only 8 percent of leaders in 1982 disagreed with the proposition that “the world is still not ready to let Jews live in peace.” In 1983, 54 percent of the Jewish public and 41 percent of the leaders agreed that “when it comes to the crunch few non-Jews will come to Israel's side in its struggle to survive”; 55 percent of the public and 48 percent of the leaders were “worried the U.S. may stop being a firm ally of Israel”; and only 27 percent of the public and 44 percent of the leaders agreed that “virtually all positions of influence in America are open to Jews.” In 1983 and 1984 only about 10 percent of the Jewish public disagreed with the statement that “antisemitism may, in the future, become a serious problem for American Jews.”<sup>42</sup>

## THE NEW JEWISH POLITICS

Some of the major elements of the New Jewish Politics are captured well in the following excerpts from a speech by one of the leading officials of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) to its 1985 Annual Policy Conference. It is not surprising that the speech was made at AIPAC, because it, more than any other single Jewish organization today, is the epitome of the New Jewish Politics:

Forty years ago—April, 1945—we had failed. We didn't know then the extent of our failure, but we knew we had failed. And, for many of us . . . that failure has haunted us and driven us and provided us with the internal fuel needed to create a politically active people pledged to survival. . . .

In our modern world, Jews have been torn between a desire for maximum integration in the general culture on the one hand and the will for Jewish survival on the other. But,

the aftermath of the Holocaust, the creation of the State of Israel, and then in 1967 and 1973 the experience of almost losing what it took the murders of six million to create, drove home the urgency of putting Jewish survival first. I believe that today we recognize that if we fail to utilize our political power we may be overwhelmed by our adversaries throughout the world. We understand that if that happens, Jewish existence itself is endangered. . . .

As we have bitterly learned, it is when we assume too low a profile and fail to develop economic and political power, that we are perceived as having no vital societal role. That is what makes us dispensable—that is what made Polish Jewry dispensable in the 1930s. *NEVER AGAIN*. . . .

The specter of *dual loyalty* still haunts our community. . . .

But here, in this country of ours, we ought not be shy about our interest in Israel. This is a pluralistic society and our survival here is dependent upon that pluralism. . . . Our concern for Israel does not erase our concern for America's domestic policies nor, in fact, does it mean that we do not have such concerns. . . .

We care to the depths of our souls about what happens to both the United States and Israel—that caring is not inconsistent—it is not un-American—and *it is not dual loyalty*. It is part of democracy.

### *The New Jewish Politics and the American Political System*

The New Jewish Politics is characterized by its total integration into the normal operation and domestic political agenda of American politics, on the one hand, and by its rationalization of internal Jewish community politics, on the other.

The Jewish political organizational framework and political agenda is more than ever before totally integrated into the mainstream of American politics. Jews are no longer an outside group, sporadically involved in the political process, and organized on an *ad hoc* basis when a crisis erupts. This was how the Jewish community behaved in the past, making representations mainly to the administration. When the issue was resolved, it went back to its regular pursuits, until the next critical issue arose. This was the politics of notables and organizational leaders, who descended on Washington for the occasion and left immediately after.

Jewish issues are today part of the warp and woof of American politics, and the Jewish organizations and professionals involved in their promotion and in the pursuit of Jewish political interests are insiders in American politics. For insiders the political process is a day-to-day operation, highly sophisticated, fast-moving and fluid. It is subject to short-term and shifting coalitions and alliances as well as to longer-term loyalties. To keep abreast of politics under such conditions necessitates full-time, skilled, professional organization—both in Washington and across the country—that is able to get on top of extremely complicated and sometimes obscure legislative procedures, stratagems and maneuvers. It must be capable of dealing with a whole range of complex policy questions, often demanding a high level of scientific or technological knowledge and advice, together with a grasp of politics that comes only with direct and intimate political experience and the capacity to take decisions quickly in the light of these considerations. This is no game for amateurs.

Jewish political organization and professionals became insiders in the American political process when Israel became a regular item on the congressional appropria-

tions agenda, following the marked increase in the level of U.S. foreign aid and defence assistance. This was reinforced by the United States' role as Israel's main source of military supplies and by its increasingly active role in peace making in the Middle East after 1967. Israel had thus become important in both congressional and presidential politics; as a result, it was a significant factor in electoral politics. Although only part of a larger picture, the changes in AIPAC over the years accurately reflect the Jewish political response to these developments.

AIPAC began modestly in the early 1950s as the American Zionist Public Affairs Committee. Its status as an ultimate outsider was symbolized by the constant pressure to register as an agent of a foreign government.<sup>43</sup> (The name change was partly in response to this pressure and accompanied a decision to register as a domestic lobby). AIPAC undertakes activities aimed at "promoting strong and consistently close relations between our country and Israel."<sup>44</sup> In recent years it has developed a grass roots membership of some fifty thousand members spread all over the country and its budget and full-time professional staff have grown dramatically: In 1985 it had a budget of \$5 million and a full-time staff of seventy in Washington, which represented a more than fivefold increase in less than ten years. Prominent among these are its string of legislative lobbyists and a high-level academic research and information service.

The lobbyists closely monitor all aspects of congressional activity that relate in any way to AIPAC's goal of gaining support for Israel, and they work with the relevant congressmen and senators. This means keeping fully abreast of the congressional agenda and working closely with the congressional staff at all levels so as to be apprised of developments on an ongoing basis even before they come to committee. In this they follow the established pattern in Washington whereby a considerable amount of activity in Congress on behalf of congressmen, senators, party leaderships, committees, sub-committees and special committees is transacted by members of the staff. The elected representative is often brought in only at the last stages of negotiation and discussion when a decision is required or a vote is to be made.<sup>45</sup>

Some insight into the changed status of AIPAC can be gained from an analysis of the career patterns of its leading officials. Its founder, I. L. Kenen, came from the ranks of the officials of the American Zionist movement. His successor, Morris J. Amitay, had worked for the State Department as a foreign service officer and then had served on the congressional staff for a number of years as a legislative aide to Senator Ribicoff. His successor, Tom Dine, had been a Peace Corps volunteer and then worked in the Senate for ten years as an aide to senators Kennedy, Muskie and Church. Many of those employed to act as lobbyists have also worked on the Hill, have gone back to the Hill or have become established as private lobbyists after leaving AIPAC. For example, when Amitay left AIPAC he set up his own office as a lobbyist representing a number of leading corporations.

Detailed, firsthand, intimate knowledge of the congressional process and familiarity with its byways and its staff members are not only clear indication of insider status but are absolutely essential for the successful operation of a body such as AIPAC, which is dependent on professional and political expertise. Here, too, AIPAC differs little from the many Washington-based lobbying and consulting

firms which are staffed with professionals who had previously worked on the congressional staff. Rather than return to their hometowns or relocate, they stay in Washington as consultants and lobbyists.<sup>46</sup>

AIPAC maintains close contact with members and key personnel in congressional districts to bring its point of view to the attention of congressmen whom they may have been unable to reach in Washington. AIPAC members who have worked on the electoral campaigns or are otherwise well known to the representative are of particular relevance in this regard.

These activities are not just restricted to the congressional district. AIPAC activists and members come to Washington to lobby their representatives, and this is carried further in an organized manner during the AIPAC annual policy conference. The more than one thousand activists who come to Washington to participate in it spend some of the time with their representatives in Congress. In all, there are identifiable Jewish communities in 384 of the 435 congressional districts, which means that mobilized Jewish constituents have direct contact with about 90 percent of the House members.

AIPAC's activities dovetail neatly with another significant aspect of the New Jewish Politics, the eighty or so Political Action Committees (PACs) which generate congressional support for Israel by raising funds and allocating them to candidates who have supported, or are pledged to support, pro-Israeli policies in Congress. The largest and most significant of these is NATPAC situated in Washington, which is nationally organized; most of the others are locally organized. Here, too, the New Jewish Politics has demonstrated its insider status by its rapid and extensive involvement in this fairly new but major development on the American political scene.<sup>47</sup>

Congressmen tend to be guided by key congressional figures in all areas. Two groups which are particularly influential on matters affecting Israel are the Jewish members of Congress and the members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. There is some overlap between the two groups: In 1984, 25 percent of the members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee were Jewish, as were 30 percent of its Middle East Subcommittee. Overall there has also been a significant increase in the number of Jewish members of Congress. In 1974 there were eleven Jewish members of the House and 2 Jewish senators. By 1985 in the Ninety-ninth Congress there were thirty Jewish House members, many from districts without large or significant Jewish constituencies, and eight Jewish senators. Unlike the past when the great majority were Democrats, in recent years about a quarter are Republicans, which provides further evidence of the integration of Jews into the American political system as insiders.

The Jewishness of the congressmen is not as significant as their attitudes to Jewish and Israeli issues. A survey in the late 1970s of the twenty-four Jewish members of the Ninety-fourth Congress found that most of them actively and openly identified with the Jewish community. They adopted Jewish interests and pursued them openly and effectively. Generally, they were more sympathetic to Israel than members of the House at-large. In fact, they held views about the Arab-Israeli conflict which were well within the mainstream of opinion within the organized

American Jewish community. As such, they were described as constituting an “in-house lobby” for Israel.<sup>48</sup>

AIPAC’s congressional activities on behalf of Israel must be set against the background of general support for Israel in the United States and within the Congress, and the process of congressional decision making. There was considerable support for Israel in Congress because of members’ belief in Israel’s democratic character, its spirit of sacrifice, its efficient use of foreign aid and the tradition of friendship between the two countries. Others saw support for Israel in terms of America’s commitment to peace in the region—any possible war being considered more costly to the United States—and in terms of the national interest in supporting Israel as a bastion against the Soviet Union and communism. Congressmen have also been influenced by public awareness of the Holocaust, particularly those with active Jewish constituencies. It is a common phenomenon for congressmen to identify with the values and feelings of their constituents and to internalize them.

The grass roots activity of AIPAC is well suited to the electoral interests of members of Congress. Jewish support for Israel may only affect a small percentage of the voters, but it is exceedingly intense; most other voters are uninformed or do not care. Support for Israel under these conditions can be instrumental in gaining considerable electoral support, whereas generally none can be gained by being against Israel. The benefit to the specific group of voters is deeply appreciated, whereas the costs are widely distributed throughout the whole political system, which in politics is generally a good reason for a representative to support an issue. This gains not only individual voter support but also that of any organization which promotes the issue. Not surprisingly, there was a positive relationship between the proportion of Jewish voters in the constituency and support for Israel: Support for Israel was considerably lower among members who had no Jewish constituents than in the rest of the House.

Beneath all these considerations lay the fact that there was considerable general support for Israel in American public opinion. Polls conducted for the last forty years have found that views about Israel are generally favorable and that support for Israel in the Middle East conflict was always considerably greater than support for the Arabs.<sup>49</sup>

Although the New Jewish Politics is most clearly evident with regard to Israel, its agenda is, in fact, broader. Jews and Jewish organizations actively pursue a wide range of international and domestic political interests both in the national capital and in many state capitals and major cities. Particularly significant among these are the Washington offices of major Jewish organizations such as the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, ADL, the Council of Jewish Federations and the major synagogue and religious bodies.

While pursuing programs and activities in line with their goals and purposes and catering to the needs of their members, the net effect of this whole plethora of activity is the presence—sometimes in the central role—of Jewish organizations in a tremendously wide range of coalitions engaged in the whole gamut of political activity as it is practiced in the United States. Many of these activities are not directly connected with Jewish political issues per se and relate to the day-to-day

questions and issues of American politics. Thus Jewish organizations are involved in various coalitions concerned with health and human services, labor, veteran, education, environment and energy issues as well as in the more traditional coalitions on such matters as civil rights and church-state issues in which direct or indirect Jewish interests are more clearly evident.

Many of the leading positions are occupied by Jewish political professionals who have previously worked either in Congress or in the administration or both. These coalition relationships give Jewish professionals and organizations access to a wide range of groups and individuals in the American political system. They create relationships of mutual support and understanding which may later be utilized to gain support for Jewish policy positions on matters of concern, particularly on the survival issues. In particular, they provide indirect avenues to groups and individuals otherwise relatively inaccessible to Jews.

### *The New Jewish Politics and the Jewish Community*

The American Jewish representational structure has traditionally been diverse and disunited, but agreed on the principle that no single body or organization spoke on behalf of American Jewry as a whole. Although since the 1950s a degree of political coordination slowly developed, it was limited by organizational rivalries and the desire of some major organizations to retain their autonomy and not be bound by majority decision. Some Jewish leaders found virtue in this diversity and pluralism because it reflected American society.<sup>50</sup>

The New Jewish Politics is characterized by considerably increased rationalization and unity at the top levels of the Jewish community structure. But this is more implicit than explicit, and it exists in informal organizational arrangements rather than in formal agreements or institutional structures. The major focus and cause of this unity is Israel and its survival, which evoke intense feelings of support and identification from almost all of American Jewry. This is particularly evident if the legitimacy of the state and its right to exist are under external attack. Ideological differences over government policies are brushed aside to enable the creation of united public support for Israel, which includes many on the margins of the Jewish community who are critical of Israel.<sup>51</sup>

Thus the commitments engendered by the politics of survival operate as a unifying factor overcoming other differences. Similarly, on the American Jewish political agenda, Israel's needs are generally recognized as having precedence; this has served for the first time to introduce a clear sense of priorities among Jewish interests.

Such unity is a major political advantage in the group pattern of American politics where internal division is taken to indicate political weakness. Popular and leadership consensus in the Jewish community about Israel is therefore of fundamental importance. The specific policies and tactics which give expression to it are decided by the various organizations and professionals involved in promoting the cause of Israel. Generally, it has become the accepted practice for the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations to represent the Jewish community's views on Israel and other international Jewish questions (such as Soviet Jewry) to

the White House and the executive branch, while AIPAC directs its attention to the congressional front.

The division of function is maintained by careful coordination. AIPAC operates within the parameters of policies that are acceptable to the Presidents' Conference. To ensure this, AIPAC has in recent years extended its organizational framework. The executive committee has been widened to include the top leaders in major Jewish country-wide organizations, many of whom are also members of the Presidents' Conference as well as the executive bodies of the Council of Jewish Federations and NJCRAC. Some are also leaders in large Jewish communities. Thus, although AIPAC is registered as a domestic lobby and its main activity is professional and executive, it has developed an extensive network of organizational links within the Jewish community. This overlapping of organizational leadership provides it with the legitimacy of representativeness that it would otherwise lack. AIPAC can justifiably claim to speak for the whole Jewish community with regard to Israel.

Regular informal consultations take place among the professionals working for Jewish organizations in Washington to discuss alternatives and to act as a clearing house for ideas and tactics. The group is a vital link in the process of ensuring that all organizations and their leaderships are fully informed about developments and, above all, that they do not act independently. Where issues are particularly complex, these informal discussions are widened to involve many others on the Washington political scene who share a commitment to ensuring Jewish survival by strengthening U.S.-Israel relations.

Further unity and coordination is introduced by informal consultation and cooperation with representatives of Israel, both in Washington and Jerusalem. It is symptomatic of the New Jewish Politics that it has gotten over the sensitivities of charges of dual loyalty and that these contacts are open and frankly admitted.<sup>52</sup> Contact with official Israeli representatives is necessary to ensure that, in promoting the interests of Israel as they perceive them, American Jews take into account the views about these which are held by the Israeli government and people. In pragmatic political terms nothing could be more damaging to the pursuit of these interests than Israeli representatives promoting views in conflict with those of American Jewry. While there may, indeed, be legitimate differences between the two, these must be worked out prior to action being taken. The American Jewish input in this process has proved to be considerable. The evidence suggests that Israel has learned a considerable amount from the expertise and professional knowledge of the practitioners of the New Jewish Politics and that the latter are far from being mere mouthpieces or messenger boys for the Israeli government.

The 1984-85 *Joint Program Plan* gives clear expression to the changed nature of the Jewish political agenda under the impact of the politics of survival and the New Jewish Politics. The contrast with the 1950s is striking. International issues—Israel and the Middle East, Soviet Jewry, Ethiopian Jewry, Argentina—take up the first half of the document. These are followed by a series of domestic issues—church-state and interreligious relationships, social and economic justice, energy, Jewish security and individual freedom—in which specifically Jewish and general public issues are dealt with *inter alia* without clear lines of differentiation among them.

Informing all of them is the common thread of the New Jewish Politics—the politics of an “American Jewish community . . . primarily native-born; exceptionally well educated; affluent; secure; articulate; fully integrated into American society, yet proudly identified as a Jewish community . . . [whose] use of political power became ever-more sophisticated.”<sup>53</sup>

### Notes

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1. Robert H. Jackson, “Ethnicity,” in Giovanni Sartori (ed.), *Social Science Concepts: A Systematic Analysis* (Beverly Hills: 1984), pp. 205–233.

2. Herbert J. Gans, “Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America,” in Herbert J. Gans, Nathan Glazer, Joseph R. Gusfield, and Christopher Jencks, (eds.), *On the Making of Americans: Essays in Honor of David Riesman* (Philadelphia: 1979), pp. 193–220, at 193.

3. Gans, “Symbolic Ethnicity,” p. 205.

4. As Ben Halpern has put it, “America is really a Christian country.” See the illuminating discussion in his *Jews and Blacks: The Classic American Minorities* (New York: 1971). The citation is on p. 60.

5. Cynthia Ozick pushes the argument beyond religious values to language, “A language, like a people, has a history of ideas, but not *all* ideas; only those known to its experience. When I write in English, I live in Christendom.” Cited in Arnold M. Eisen, *The Chosen People in America* (Bloomington: 1983), p. 167.

6. Ronald Steel, “The Biographer as Detective: What Walter Lippmann Preferred to Forget,” *New York Times Book Review*, 21 July 1985, pp. 3, 16; see also the full-length biography by Ronald Steel, *Walter Lippmann and the American Century* (Boston: 1980), pp. 186–196.

7. Is there a more dramatic example of the latter than Emil Fackenheim’s “614th Commandment,” of not “handing Hitler any posthumous victories,” of insisting on the primacy of Jewish continuity because the Nazis sought to destroy the Jews?

8. Cited in William Safran, “France and Her Jews: From ‘Culte Israélite’ to ‘Lobby Juif’,” *Tocqueville Review* V (Spring–Summer 1983), pp. 101–135; and Judith Friedlander, “‘Juif’ ou Israélite? The Old Jewish Question in Contemporary France,” *Judaism XXXIV* (Spring 1985), pp. 221–230. Their translations vary slightly.

9. Joseph Rothschild, *Ethnopolitics: A Conceptual Framework* (New York: 1981), p. 6.

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Christian Century*, 9 June 1937, cited in Eisen, *Chosen People*, p. 34.

12. 7 July 1937, cited in Eisen, *Chosen People*, p. 34.

13. *Joint Program Plan* (JPP) 1953, pp. 3, 21.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 5–6.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

16. Between 1948 and 1963 membership of the Zionist Organization of America fell from 250,000 to 87,000. See Ernest Stock, *Israel on the Road to Sinai, 1949–1956* (Ithaca: 1967), p. 142.

17. The whole issue, including the circumstances which led up to the exchange, is discussed in Charles S. Liebman, *Pressure Without Sanctions: The Influence of World Jewry on Israeli Policy* (Rutherford: 1977), pp. 118–131; citations from pp. 124–125.

18. JPP 1954, pp. 4–5.
19. Liebman, *Pressure without Sanctions*, p. 173.
20. Statement of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, 31 October 1956.
21. On this occasion the presidents of seventeen major national Jewish organizations cabled the president, secretary of state and members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. They sought equity and fair play for Israel, pointed out the double standards involved in light of Egypt's failure to comply with previous UN resolutions about freedom of passage and urged support of Israel's request for a promise of non-belligerency by Egypt. The most critical aspect of the statement was its last sentence, "Most earnestly and respectfully do we appeal to you not to allow our Government and our people to be involved in what history will surely judge to be a double standard of morality" (18 February 1957).
22. *American Jewish Yearbook* LIX (1958), pp. 208–210.
23. JPP 1957–58, pp. 8–9.
24. JPP 1956–57, p. 4.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
26. JPP 1957–58, p. 9.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
28. Marshall Sklare, *Jewish Identity on the Suburban Frontier* (New York: 1967), p. 322.
29. JPP 1964–65, pp. 24–26.
30. See Samuel P. Huntington, *American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1981), pp. 23–30.
31. Michael Walzer, "Pluralism: A Political Perspective," *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1980), pp. 781–787.
32. JPP 1984–85, pp. 3, 29.
33. As Nathan Glazer has put it, "Israel is unique in that it is not threatened with defeat or loss of territory or the loss of respect—it is threatened with annihilation, up to, one assumes, the massacre of its inhabitants." Cited in Murray Friedman, "AWACS and the Jewish Community," *Commentary* LXXIII, no. 4 (April 1982), p. 31.
34. See Leon A. Jick, "The Holocaust: Its Use and Abuse Within the American Public," *Yad Vashem Studies* XIV (1981), pp. 301–318, for an analysis of the development of the awareness of the Holocaust in the United States for both Jews and non-Jews. See also Stephen J. Whitfield, "The Holocaust and the American Jewish Intellectual," *Judaism* XXVIII (1979), pp. 391–401.
35. Thus in 1961–62 "there was evidence that the conscience of the world had been touched. Some Christian clergymen publicly acknowledged a measure of collective guilt on the part of the Western Christian world for the Hitler Holocaust. More generally, there was a reawakened awareness of the horrors of genocide," JPP, p. 16. In 1964–65 the controversy "has revolved to a large extent around the broad question of guilt for allowing the Hitler extermination program to be carried out—not only whether Pope Pius shared the guilt, but whether all Christians were not remiss in their silence. A derivative of that discussion has been an attitude of great sympathy and warmth toward Jews on the part of many Christians and a revulsion against overt antisemitism," JPP, p. 6.
36. These are detailed in David S. Wyman, *The Abandonment of the Jews: America and the Holocaust 1941–1945* (New York: 1984); and Henry L. Feingold, "The Condition of American Jewry in Historical Perspective: A Bicentennial Assessment," *American Jewish Yearbook* LXXVI (1976), pp. 3–40.
37. JPP 1975–76, p. 44.
38. *Ibid.*
39. JPP 1983–84, pp. 11, 17.
40. JPP 1978–79, p. 3.
41. This is not surprising in view of the considerable empirical evidence in the United States demonstrating greater partisanship among leaders than among the public and greater intensity of leadership support for democratic ideals and practices within the context of widespread public support.

42. Steven Martin Cohen, "The 1981–1982 National Survey of American Jews," *American Jewish Yearbook* LXXXIII (1983), pp. 89–110; the 1982, 1983 and 1984 figures are from mimeographed reports distributed by the American Jewish Committee.

43. I. L. Kenen, *Israel's Defense Line: Her Friends and Foes in Washington* (Buffalo: 1981) gives a personal history of AIPAC's early years by its founder and long time executive officer.

44. AIPAC Policy Statement, *Near East Report*, 29 April 1985.

45. See Michael J. Malbin, *Unelected Representatives: Congressional Staff and the Future of Representative Government* (New York: 1980), for a critical analysis of the pivotal and burgeoning role of congressional staff.

46. Malbin, *Unelected Representatives*.

47. On PACs in general see Larry J. Sabato, *PAC Power: Inside the World of Political Action Committees* (New York: 1984).

48. Marvin C. Feuerwerger, *Congress and Israel: Foreign Aid Decision-Making in the House of Representatives, 1969–1976* (Westport: 1984).

49. Feuerwerger, *Congress and Israel*, pp. 77–90.

50. See the discussion of these issues in Philip Bernstein, *To Dwell in Unity: The Jewish Federation Movement Since 1960* (Philadelphia: 1983), pp. 204–207, 341–343, 356–359.

51. See Edwin Epstein and Earl Raab, "The Foreign Policy of Berkeley California," *Moment*, September 1984, pp. 17–21 for an interesting example of how "Jews with sharply conflicting views on specific issues joined ranks when they perceived an insidious threat to Israel in general" (p. 19). It also pointed out the value of Jewish political linkages with other segments of the community on matters of general concern that led to the successful coalition to defeat the anti-Israel measure.

52. See Ben Bradlee, Jr., "Israel's Lobby," *Boston Globe Magazine*, 29 April 1984; William J. Lanouette, "The Many Faces of the Jewish Lobby in America," *National Journal*, 13 May 1978 (no. 19), pp. 748–759; Wolf Blitzer, "The AIPAC Formula," *Moment*, November 1981, pp. 22–28.

53. JPP 1984–85, p. 61.