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Bick, Etta Zablocki

**ETHNIC LINKAGE AND FOREIGN POLICY: A STUDY OF THE LINKAGE
ROLE OF AMERICAN JEWS IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES
AND ISRAEL, 1956-1968**

City University of New York

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LINKAGE ROLE OF AMERICAN JEWS IN RELATIONS BETWEEN
THE UNITED STATES AND ISRAEL, 1956-1968.

by

ETTA ZABLOCKI BICK


A dissertation submitted to the Graduate
Faculty in Political Science in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City
University of New York.

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Political Science in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Research in international politics in the past has concentrated on three levels of analysis - the study of political interaction in the international system, the study of particular subsystems, *i. e.*, nation-states, and the study of individuals and their decision making.¹ The systems approach studies international behavior from a global perspective. It highlights the power configurations among alliances of states. The behavior of the states is explained mainly by their position in the galaxy of states. This position dictates the rules and modes of behavior necessary to maintain a stable system and the states' positions in it. Nation-states are viewed for the purpose of analysis as monolithic units whose value systems and internal processes are of secondary importance for explaining their behavior. This perspective de-emphasizes the internal differences among states. It also ignores the influence of subnational groups in the international arena.

J. David Singer designates the systems approach as the "black-box" view of international politics in which states are viewed as almost homogenous entities.² Governments therefore formulate foreign policy by considering the power configurations in the world and their place in them. Analysis of international politics is replete with concepts such as balance of power, bipolarity, multipolarity, alliances and other structural descriptions. The actors are nation-states or in updated models of the systems approach, nation-states and international organizations.

The second approach to international politics stresses the importance of the internal processes of a single state in determining its foreign policy and in explaining its behavior in the international arena. The external environment, *i. e.*, the behavior of other states, is one influential factor among many that contribute to a foreign policy decision. This view of international politics emphasizes the difference among states, and the peculiarity of each decision maker and decision. The component parts of the domestic system--leaders, parties, interest groups, public opinion, governmental institutions and the struggle for power among them, are the foci of study for the analyst.³ Optimally, foreign policy results from the convergence of many influences and processes internal to a particular state. External events from the international environment are the stimuli that provoke the state to take action. The response of the decision maker is determined after consideration of several alternatives whose consequences will affect both the international and domestic system.

The third approach to international politics focuses on the decisions of the men who occupy the positions responsible for making of foreign policy decisions. It studies the policy makers' perceptions of the world, the different kinds of government structure that enable or impede decision-making. This approach also includes studies of individual leaders; their personalities and environments.⁴

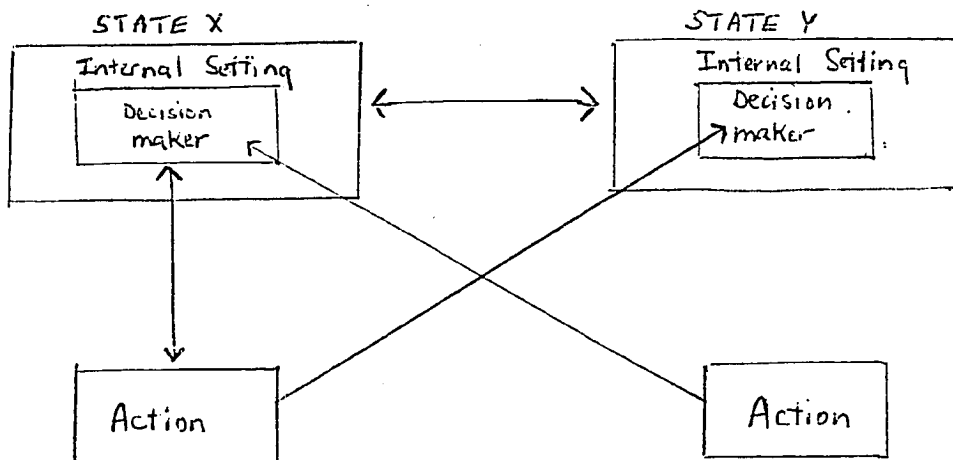
The decision-making schema by Snyder, Bruck and Sapin is a useful starting point for studying foreign policy.⁵ It incorporates the second and third approach: They suggested that the decision-making process which precedes initiating a foreign policy consists of the complex consideration of many factors, domestic and environmental. They directed the analyst to consider psychological and organizational factors in foreign policy decision-making. These factors include: the analysis of the structure of authority, communication flow, and efficiency within an organization (government bureaucracy), understanding the motivations of the decision maker, his past experiences and how these affect his perception of information. Snyder suggests a checklist of factors to consider when analyzing foreign policy-making.

The Snyder checklist influenced a generation of analysts by offering a starting point for analysis of one or more components of decision-making. Case studies were written about single decisions, public opinion, political parties, and interest group influence on foreign policy, psychological determinants in the decision-making process, perception and misperception, etc.

Snyder utilized the same broad conceptual framework drawn by systems analysts. That is, he too limited international interaction to that which occurs between states in the international system. Thus ethnic groups, labor and religious organizations, political movements, and business organizations that may act transnationally are subsumed within the nation-state. The possibility that these actors may function independently or semi-independently across state boundaries is ignored.

Snyder et alia diagram their concept of state-state relations in an exploratory article entitled "Decision-making as an Approach to the Study of International Politics."⁶ (see Figure 1) The two states interact government to government. The state-state relationship is perceived to be a level of interaction distinct from that which may occur within or between internal settings. The internal settings, that is, the various private citizens, interest groups and political parties and representatives of institutions within one state may interact with their counterparts or others within the internal setting of another state. The policy action taken by state X is reacted to both by country Y and also by the internal setting of country X. An unpopular action taken by country X, (for example, the United States' Christmas bombing of Hanoi in December, 1972) creates its own reaction within the state, creating new demands on the decision-making apparatus in addition to a response from country Y at whom the action was directed. (The bombing may or may not have brought the Vietnamese closer to reaching a peace agreement with the United States. It definitely generated large protests within the United States.)

FIGURE 1



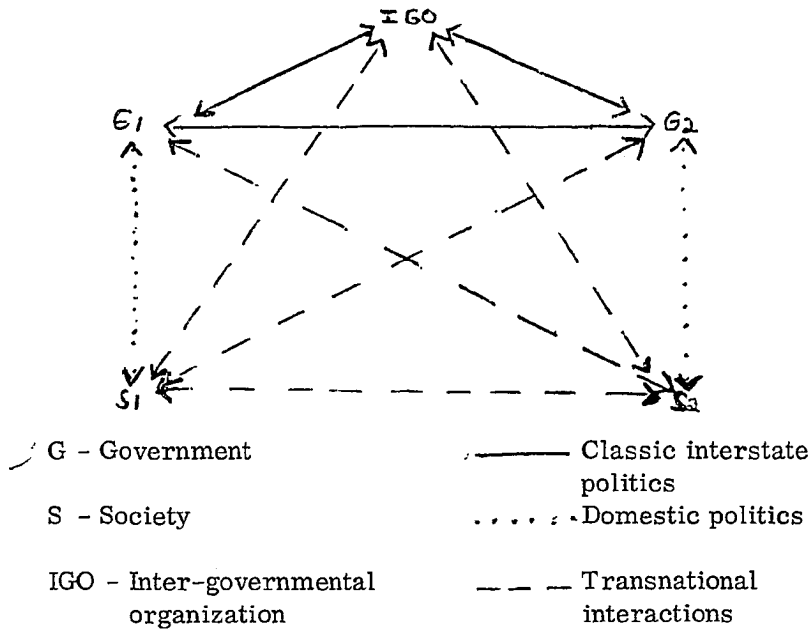
This conception of international politics represented in the Snyder approach neglects the study of non-governmental actors that interact with a foreign government and thus affect foreign policy. The non-governmental actor, as illustrated in the diagram above, acts only in response to his government's actions by appeal within the domestic system in support or protest or by interacting with his counterparts in country Y on a non-governmental level. Other state interactions across national boundaries are cultural exchanges, functional relations between labor groups, business and fraternal relations among religious and ethnic groups. These relations between sub-groups within states and their counterparts abroad help forge good relations among the "peoples" of states and thus may encourage popular support for the establishment of good political relations between states. Nonetheless, these "functional" relations affect international politics only indirectly.

The decision-making approach excludes non-governmental actors within states that may act independently in the international arena, interacting with foreign governments on a variety of issues. The activities of subversive groups which have strong ties with a foreign state, for example, Communist and Fascist

parties in the 1930s, are just one example of a kind of non-governmental actor - government interaction.⁷ Other examples are the activities of the Catholic Church and other religious organizations across state boundaries. Both the systems approach and the decision-making approach have wrestled in recent years with the problem of the inclusion of multi-national corporations among the actors in the international arena. Their economic power in the last three decades has become a force that influences the political decisions of sovereign states. A giant enterprise such as General Motors, for example, which is American controlled and directed, operates in many different countries. Its interests and perspective are broader than national, as it pursues economic and when necessary political goals across national boundaries. In a listing that compares the size of multi-national enterprises (MNE) to the size of nation-states, General Motors ranks twenty-third, after the twenty-two largest nations of the world. Of the top fifty, forty-one are states and nine are MNEs.⁸ The inclusion of MNEs in the analysis of international politics expands the traditional nation-state framework to include powers that lack sovereignty, as conventionally defined. This new focus on the economic transnational actor opened the way to a re-evaluation of the state-centric paradigm.

Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye in the introduction to the volume Transnational Relations and World Politics design an alternative paradigm. They suggest that "transnational interactions" defined as "the movement of tangible or intangible items across state boundaries when at least one actor is not an agent of a government or an intergovernmental organization" must be included in any comprehensive representation of international politics.⁹ Thus international interaction should be represented by the following diagram:¹⁰

FIGURE 2



The actors are governmental, transnational, and intergovernmental. Sub-national groups may act in world politics in two capacities. First, they may act as domestic actors influencing their government on a foreign policy decision. Second, they may act as transnational actors, interacting directly across national boundaries with a foreign government, its agent or its population.¹¹ As transnational actors they may play a significant role in international politics.

Maureen Berman and Joseph Johnson have added to the discussion of transnational actors in a short book entitled Unofficial Diplomats. They write

We refer to the range of private international relations as "unofficial diplomacy." Within this category fall many different kinds of participants, as well as a variety of channels and approaches. It should be made clear that our concern is not with domestic groups that work to influence only their own government, but with individuals and groups who have contact with private citizens or government officials from other countries as well as their own.¹²

Berman and Johnson study the activities of the Society of Friends and other church groups in the mediation of conflict and crises between countries. The innovative aspect of their study is the introduction of transnational actors, individuals or groups that play a role alongside official channels in international relations. They describe the function of the transnational actor as unofficial diplomat thus:

The supplemental functions that unofficial diplomats perform are aimed at preparing the way for or facilitating the conduct of interstate relations. Unofficial diplomats may set the stage for official actions, and contribute to the possibilities of success once matters are taken up in normal diplomatic channels.¹³

This study will focus on a non-governmental transnational actor, an ethnic group, and its activities in the foreign policy process in the United States and in international politics. This area of inquiry one might have expected to be subsumed in the study of interest group activity. For many years, ethnics have acted as organized domestic interest groups that "act as shared-attitude groups that make their claims through or upon any of the institutions of government."¹⁴ Ethnic group activities to influence foreign policy within the domestic system have been studied rather sketchily in several general studies about the role of ethnics in United States politics¹⁵ and in some limited studies of particular ethnic groups.¹⁶ These view the ethnic group as a domestic actor which is interested in a particular foreign policy because of its effect on its old homeland, or on relations with the enemy of its former homeland. The interest German Americans had before and during World War I in friendly United States relations with Germany and the interest of Irish Americans in preventing an American alliance with Great Britain during this same period, are examples of the kind of ethnic political goals studied.¹⁷ Another often cited example of ethnic involvement in foreign policy was the activities of Jewish organizations in the post World War II period to influence the White House, the State Department, and Congress to support the establishment of the State of Israel as a haven for European Jews rescued from the Holocaust and for Jews living under persecution in other countries.¹⁸

The American democratic framework offers opportunities for different groups to seek to advance their interests and influence government policy. The

First Amendment guarantees to all citizens the right to "peaceably . . . assemble and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." The interest group can organize freely in support of a particular policy or opposition to it and exercise various methods of persuasion -- lobbying, the media, private personal interventions with elected officials, protest demonstrations -- to achieve its goals. The ethnic group is but one of many actors in the American political system who seek to influence government policy.

What role have interest groups played in the foreign policy process? This question is difficult to answer for several reasons. The role of interest groups in the foreign policy process has not been systematically researched. First, and most important, it is difficult to measure the effects of the efforts of interest groups to influence (directly or indirectly) government decisions. Though most analysts agree that interest groups can and do influence foreign policy decisions, especially on the Middle East, there have been few studies done to empirically support this contention. Even though there is a great deal of interest group activity, the analyst has no way of accurately gauging exactly what impact this activity made on the decision maker. Bauer, Pool and Dexter, in their study American Business and Public Policy, indicate the difficulties defining the self-interest of an interest group and dispel the commonly held belief that businessmen are well informed of their interests and take united action in pursuit of those interests. Secondly they suggest that there is no automatic connection between "business pressure" and the formulation of public policy.¹⁹ Second, the general lack of attention paid to the role and effect of interest groups can be attributed to the present emphasis on political studies of the decision-making system within the government structure. Studies of bureaucratic decision-making, the role of the President, perception and personality concentrate on the government and its actors and only tangentially include domestic variables such as interest groups, political parties and public opinion.

The studies that do focus on interest group activity share the same approach. All perceive them as domestic groups (and not as transnational linkage

actors) whose interests lie in particular aspects of foreign policy. Raymond Bauer et al, for example, analyze the role of business groups in the process of determining foreign trade legislation. He concludes that the role of pressure groups in influencing Congressional decisions on foreign policy is overrated. Often their efforts fail to achieve any significant policy changes. Business groups that lobbied for particular tariff legislation found themselves met with equal pressures lobbying for the opposite effect, resulting in pressure stale-²⁰mates.

Paula Stern in The Water's Edge discusses the struggle by Jewish groups and allied right-wing groups in the early 1970s to deny the Soviet Union "most favored nation" status in trade with the United States unless it would liberalize its emigration policy and permit the exit of Soviet Jews to Israel. Her study touches in part on the intricacies of the relationship between the Israeli government and American Jewish groups, the former being more cautious than American Jews in the attempt to influence American policy on this issue. It discussed the role that presidential electoral politics played. It is an illuminating study of bargaining and negotiation among interest groups, Congress (especially Congressional aides) and the White House. Regrettably, however, it does not focus on the transnational role of American Jews.²¹

The China lobby, or as it was called The Committee of One Million, was studied in two comprehensive works.²² It was rather effective in influencing government policy in the 1950s and early 1960s against recognizing Communist China and for strengthening diplomatic, military and economic ties with Taiwan. Their success can be attributed to the fact that their position represented the view already dominant in legislative circles and congruent with the general conservative opinion in the country toward the Peoples' Republic of China. The Committee of One Million was effective because its position and the official position of the government were the same. When the government's policy on China became more ambiguous in the late 1960s, the Committee's influence waned. It eventually disbanded. It is interesting to note that Americans of Chinese origin were not active in the movement.²³

More general discussions of the role of interest groups in foreign policy can be found in Bernard Cohen's book The Public's Impact on Foreign Policy and, in William Chittick, State Department, Press and Pressure Groups. Cohen concludes that in most cases of foreign policy decision-making the State Department decides on the basis of its own experts' view of national interest and are not significantly influenced by public opinion. There is generally no attempt made at systematic analysis of public opinion. Opinion evaluation, when done at all, is done mostly by intuition. Department officials, according to Cohen, generally view public opinion (and as such the activities of most interest groups) as irrelevant and pointless except as vehicles of support for Department policy. That is, they devote their efforts to leading and educating public opinion in the direction of government policy.²⁴ Ethnic groups, for example, are regarded by officials as important sources of contact with the general public because of their special interest in relations with particular foreign states, but were not considered to have much direct impact on department decisions.²⁵

Chittick attributes to the State Department greater interest in the opinions of the public on foreign policy than does Cohen. He suggests that the State Department and interest groups share a mutual interest in sharing information about foreign policy. The Department wants to inform the American public and interest groups about foreign policy and wants feedback on how its policies are affecting various groups in the domestic public. The interest groups are interested in getting information about Department policies and passing this information on to their members. They also want to bring their interests and attitudes to the attention of the Department.²⁶

In general, little has been written on the role of the ethnic in American foreign policy. The first pioneering work was The Hyphenates in Recent American Politics and Diplomacy written in 1964 by Louis Gerson. In this historical study, Gerson discusses the attempts by ethnics throughout American history to influence American foreign policy. He states,

Whenever the United States has been at war or has been threatened with war, ethnic Americans invariably have been subject to the

influence of foreign governments or foreign nationalistic or ideological movements. Through consular officials, ambassadors or secret agents, parent countries or exile governments have overtly or covertly set up or sought to transform ethnic organizations in order to bind the immigrants to themselves.²⁷

He offers several illustrations from the activities of agents of Nazi Germany and Mussolini's Italy to influence Americans of German or Italian extraction. These examples suggest the limitations of the Gerson study which emphasizes the subversive character of transnational ties with a national homeland. The ethnic is portrayed as being torn between ties to the "old country" or hatred for the "old enemy" and the new political exigencies of American foreign policy.

On the effect of ethnic groups on American foreign policy Lawrence Fuchs writes, "Since our two king-size minority groups -- the Irish and Germans -- have been chronically hostile toward England, the main consequence of the intermingling of minority group pressures in foreign policy has been to inhibit the development of Anglo-American friendship, a basic goal toward which every President and Secretary of State has been more or less committed since 1870."²⁸ He concludes that minority ethnic groups have been able to impede the execution of foreign policy desired by the Executive to a limited extent, especially preventing early American involvement in World Wars I and II. Both Fuchs and Gerson study the role of the ethnic only through World War II.

Gerson stresses the role of the American political party (and local politicians) in perpetuating the "ethnic vote" and "ethnic political interests" by appealing to sentiments which the ethnic himself was willing to cast off. The political party in an attempt to gain the ethnic vote encouraged the ethnic to urge the government to formulate and execute foreign policies favorable to their ancestral nations. Gerson concludes, "Myth or not, it is the politician, the Congressman, the Senator, the President who influences, formulates and at times, executes foreign and domestic policies, often on the basis of his belief in the existence of an ethnic vote."²⁹

The significance of this appeal to the ethnic in American politics is the de facto legitimacy given to ethnic ties with the ethnic homeland. The role of the ethnic is discussed only in the context of a domestic lobby acting on a foreign policy issue. It is not considered as a factor in the determination or advancement of relations between his country and the ethnic homeland.

A more recent study of ethnicity in foreign policy is a book edited by Abdul Aziz Said. Said does not consider ethnic groups as serious influences on the foreign policy process. He includes chapters on the Greek lobby, Americans of Eastern European descent and Black Americans. The articles suggest that these groups, with the possible exception of the Greek lobby, have failed to develop their "potential" as factors in the foreign policy process.³⁰

The political activities of an ethnic group need not be limited to domestic activity. Are the ties that the ethnic individual or group has with the "homeland" he left behind or with the "homeland" he never knew ever manifested by real ties between that government and the ethnic? Does the ethnic actor ever have direct contact across his national boundaries with official representatives of a foreign state? If so, what are the ramifications for the foreign policy of the nation-state within which the ethnic holds citizenship? Let us consider the following examples of one ethnic group, the American Jewish community's behavior, the details of which will be discussed in depth later in this study:

1. A top assistant to the President of the United States contacts a prominent American Jewish citizen. The request: to transmit a message from the President of the United States to the Prime Minister of Israel. Content of the message: a request to change the present foreign policy stand of the State of Israel and containing an implied threat of sanctions if it does not change its actions.³¹

In this example, the ethnic actor, here an individual, is requested by his government to influence the foreign policy behavior of a foreign state. The government uses the ethnic actor both as a messenger and as a potential

"influencer", i. e., the message could have been routinely sent via diplomatic channels without the involvement of the ethnic actor. The deliberate selection of the ethnic was designed both to co-opt the messenger, who by agreeing to convey the message implies his support for the policy of his government and to influence Israeli policymakers with the pressure from the United States government and from its ethnic supporters. The ethnic thus behaves in the international arena as a link between the United States government and the State of Israel.

The dilemma of the ethnic may be considerable. As a loyal citizen of the United States, he wants to serve his country. As a Jew with emotional ties to Israel, he seeks to strengthen the fledgling state and is therefore interested in promoting good relations for it with the United States. In a time of disagreement between the two countries, the ethnic faces dissonant pressures. The most amicable solution for him is the re-establishment of harmony and ties of friendship between the two countries.

2. A prominent American Jewish leader meets with an ambassador of a foreign country in New York. The subject of discussion: the improvement of relations and the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel.³²

This interaction may have come about in any of three ways:

a) The ethnic actor acted on his own initiative based on his understanding of the interests and needs of the State of Israel.

b) The ethnic actor consulted a representative of the Israeli government prior to his embarking on his "diplomatic" mission. He offered to be of assistance in any way he could.

c) The ethnic actor was "requested" by an official representative of the State of Israel to "see what he can do" to improve relations with country X. It was suggested that a meeting with its ambassador to the United Nations would be helpful.

There are several political implications of this diplomatic venture:

(1) The prominence and influence of the ethnic group in the United States will be recognized by the Ambassador of the foreign government. The possible benefits for his country accruing from good relations with American Jews will be considered. He therefore will view it in his country's interest to meet with the American Jewish leader.

(2) Private ethnic individuals may be able to act on the diplomatic front, in some instances, with greater success and maneuverability than the official representative of the foreign state. For example, contact with an American Jew offers fewer risks of repercussions from Arab states than would contact with an Israeli, if the meeting were made public.

(3) The ethnic actor apparently views his intervention on behalf of the foreign state as legitimate, i. e., he sees no conflict between this activity and his allegiance to the United States. His underlying assumption is that the diplomatic relations his action would further would not be injurious to the United States but rather be in its interest.

3. American Jewish leaders meet periodically with the Israeli ambassador to the United States. The expressed purpose of these meetings is to keep informed of the most up-to-date information about political, social and economic conditions in Israel.³³

The interest of the Israeli government is threefold:

a) It gains the political advantage of having a "well informed" (that is, "correctly" informed) ally within the domestic system of the United States. It is in the interest of the foreign state that the ethnic group act as a well-informed political interest group (and be considered as such) within the domestic system. The best and most effective way of keeping this ally "correctly" informed is by periodic briefings by important members of its foreign policy establishment or the diplomatic corps.

b) The briefing gives the ethnic actor the opportunity to suggest to the foreign government possible courses of action on the domestic front in the United States. The benefits to the Israeli government are several:

(1) The Israeli government can receive the active assistance and advice from American Jews without having to "officially" request it.

(2) The Israeli government gains some control over the activities of American Jews on its behalf since a plan for action may be considered at a joint meeting of Jewish leaders and Israeli representatives.

(3) The Israeli government may receive from Jewish leaders an informed analysis of the political realities in the United States. It assumes (usually correctly) that the ethnic actor is well informed and understands American political exigencies.

The ethnic actor is interested to be briefed for two main reasons. First, it is in his interest to be well informed with up-to-date, detailed information. This is of great importance in the quest to influence foreign policy and especially for lobbying Congress for increased aid to Israel. Secondly, at the briefing, the ethnic actor gets the opportunity to express directly to the Israeli government representative his reservations on its policies.

4. The President of the United States requests the friendly assistance of the Prime Minister of Israel in a delicate American domestic problem during a meeting to discuss issues involved in the Middle East conflict. The Prime Minister is obliquely requested to influence Jewish citizens of the United States to refrain from publicly criticizing the President's policy in Southeast Asia.³⁴

The President clearly assumes that there is a continuous dialogue between the foreign state and the domestic ethnic group. He expects that the former has an influence over the political activities and opinions of the latter and that an appeal to act in the national interest of Israel will have greater impact on American Jews than other domestic considerations (*i. e.*, the interest not to jeopardize

good relations between the United States and Israel is of greater importance than the issue at hand.) Also, not only does the United States government "recognize" the channels of communication and influence that exist between Israel and American Jews, it is also willing to utilize those ties to gain its own political advantage. This was apparent in example one as well.

5. In this example several major Jewish organizations in the United States issue a sharp protest to the government of Israel. The problem was dissatisfaction with Israeli domestic legislation on the question, "who is a Jew?". The Ministry of Interior registers each resident of Israel according to his religion and nationality. The question originated around the issue of whether one can be Jewish in nationality but not by religion. The Israeli Supreme Court, in a technical decision,³⁵ permitted the separation of religion and nationality. The majority of the Labor party, all the religious parties, Herut and several members of other parties agreed that one who was not Jewish according to religion should not be registered as Jewish according to leom, nationality. This opened up a Pandora's box of controversy. What criteria determine a "Jew" by religion? The majority agreed that the traditional religious criterion of defining a Jew as someone born of a Jewish mother was required. They could not agree on the alternative criterion "or converted to Judaism". The Orthodox demanded that conversions must be conducted by Orthodox standards. This would, in effect, not recognize as Jews those converted by Conservative or Reform rabbis in the Diaspora (all countries outside of Israel where Jews reside). The controversy led to government crises in 1958, 1970, and 1972, and is still unsettled. Religious and secular groups in Israel and in the Diaspora, particularly in the United States remain emotionally charged and divided on the issue.³⁶ The Israeli government contends that this is entirely a domestic issue to be decided by the democratically elected Israeli Knesset which represents only the citizens of the State. Members of the ethnic group in the United States regard their "interference" as legitimate because -

a) The legislation will have indirect repercussions on Jews living outside of Israel.

b) All members of the ethnic group living outside the ethnic homeland have the right and duty to express their opposition to a policy which affects the character of the ethnic state. This right is defended by two arguments. First, the fate of all Jews is, in Jewish tradition, the interest of all Jews. Second, the existence of the Jewish state is a source of pride and a national resource of all Jews, no matter their country of residence or political allegiance.

c) American Jews have a right to criticize and make policy demands because they give the state tremendous financial and political support. ("He who pays the piper calls the tune.") This argument is made infrequently by the ethnic actor.

These five examples describe political behavior not accounted for in the state-centric paradigm. The ethnic group acts as a conduit of information for two sovereign states. The host government (where the ethnic actor resides) uses the ethnic group as an actor in its foreign policy. The foreign government also seeks the assistance of the ethnic actor for the achievement of certain policy goals. The ethnic actor may even act independently in what he perceives to be in the foreign state's interest. He acts, in addition to his activities as an interest group in the domestic system, beyond the boundaries of the nation-state to link the foreign government with his own.

The purpose of this study is twofold. The first is to broaden our understanding of transnational activities in international politics and foreign policy making. This will be done by focusing on one particular transnational, non-governmental actor during a specific, limited period of time.

The actor under investigation is an ethnic group, the Jewish community in the United States. It acts both within the national system as a domestic actor and outside the system as a transnational actor. This dual nature of one political actor's activities will illustrate the difficulties involved in distinguishing between domestic and international political roles. The period to be studied is from 1956 to 1968, the second Eisenhower administration and the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. It is hoped that this study of one actor during a

limited time period will not be merely an ideographic exercise but will inspire further empirical studies of other ethnic and transnational actors who play significant roles in the international arena.

The second purpose is to study the activities of the American Jewish community in the process of foreign policy and in international politics. Since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, American Jews have been well-known as its staunch supporters. They are often considered a factor of influence in the formulation of United States Middle East policy. In the period of the struggle for statehood, American Jews, for the most part, stood behind their ethnic "brothers" and actively sought American government assistance in the furtherance of these goals. Several studies have been written on the activities of American Zionists in the pre-1948 period.

Often, in studies of American policy-making in the Middle East, the influence of American Jews is considered to be an independent variable. It is frequently suggested in studies of American foreign policy that United States Jews play an important role in influencing American policy toward Israel. For example, William Coplin writes when discussing interest groups and foreign policy, "In the United States, for example, the Zionist organization has played a large role in influencing American policy toward Israel, primarily by financing some partisan leaders and having some crucial voting strength of its own."³⁷ There is no systematic study of the role of American Jews in the foreign policy process. The role of American Jews as transnational actors, linking the governments of the United States and Israel has not been considered.

There are several books that discuss the relationship between American Jews and Israel. Robert Silverberg wrote a historical study tracing the ties of American Jews with Palestine and later with Israel. He discusses the development of the Zionist movement in the United States, its internal squabbles that wracked the movement and their eventual resolution. He makes no attempt to place the study of American Jewish activities in a theoretical framework. His work is descriptive rather than analytical.³⁸

The role of the American Jews in the process of lobbying for foreign aid for Israel is discussed in a recent book written by Marvin C. Feuerwerker entitled Congress and Israel: Foreign Aid Decisionmaking in the House of Representatives, 1969-1976.³⁹ Feuerwerker focuses on the organized efforts of AIPAC, the registered Israel lobby, and other organizations, to pressure Congress to increase foreign aid to Israel. His interest is in the influence process in domestic decision-making and so he does not venture into the transnational implications of the Israel-American Jews connection.

Relations between Israel and the Diaspora, and among them Israel-American Jews relations, are discussed in Pressure Without Sanctions by Charles Liebman. Liebman suggests that there is an interdependence between world Jewry and Israel. The former lean on Israel for cultural, religious, and moral leadership and inspiration; the latter relies on the Diaspora for economic and political support. It is indeed a symbiotic relationship.⁴⁰ He discusses at length the involvement of Diaspora Jews in Israeli domestic affairs that affect religious status, and briefly examines Israeli attempts at "meddling" in Diaspora affairs. He does not attempt to place the role of Diaspora Jews, and as such, American Jews, in a transnational framework.

In this study, I will explore the activities of the American Jewish community as a transnational actor. I will discuss the following questions: What role does the American Jewish community play in influencing the formulation of American foreign policy? Do American Jews act independently of the Israeli government? What role does the Jewish community (as represented by its leadership) perceive itself to have? How does it describe its involvement in Israel-United States relations? From another perspective, what do the foreign policy makers in Washington think of this involvement? How do they react to the ties between American Jews and the State of Israel? And lastly, how does the Israeli government view the role of American Jews and how does it utilize them in the furtherance of its foreign policy interests?

This study is limited to the investigation of the linkage role of American Jews in relations between two governments. It will not discuss, therefore, the relations of American Jews with Israeli Knesset members or with the Opposition. Research of the American side of the linkage will be limited to the State Department and the White House. Congress, although it is involved in foreign policy decisions, especially those involving economic and defense aid to Israel, will not be discussed. For the most part, American Jews act as a domestic interest group in an effort to influence Congressional legislation (e. g. The America-Israel Public Affairs Committee). This study will focus on the transnational linkage role.

In Chapter II, I will examine the theoretical underpinnings for the study of a transnational, non-governmental actor in international politics. This inquiry may prove to be both elucidating and frustrating, since only an incipient effort has been made thus far by political scientists to build a comprehensive theoretical framework of transnational behavior.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

¹ See Kenneth Waltz, Man, The State and War (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965) and John Spanier, Games Nations Play second edition (New York: Praeger, 1975), pp. 9-42.

For a critical discussion of the systems approach see Kenneth Waltz, Theory of International Relations (Philippines: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

² J. David Singer, "The Level of Analysis Problem in International Relations", Klaus Knorr and Sidney Verba, The International System (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961)

³ See, e.g., Bernard C. Cohen, The Press and Foreign Policy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), Gabriel Almond, The American People and Foreign Policy (New York: Praeger, 1960) Vernon Aspaturian, ed., Process and Power in Soviet Foreign Policy (Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1971).

⁴ See, e.g. Joseph H. deRivera, The Psychological Dimension of Foreign Policy (Columbus: Charles E. Merrill, 1968). For the effects of personality on the perceptions of decision makers see Alexander and Juliette George, Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House (New York: Dover, 1964) and Ole R. Holsti et al., Enemies in Politics (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1967).

⁵ Richard C. Snyder, H. W. Bruck and Burton Sapin, "Decision-making as an Approach to the Study of International Politics", in their book Foreign Policy Decision-making (New York: Free Press, 1963)

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ For a discussion of the activities of subversive groups see Andrew Scott, The Revolution in Statecraft: Informal Penetration (New York: Random House, 1965).

⁸ Lester Brown, World Without Borders: The Interdependence of Nations, (New York: The Foreign Policy Association, 1972), pp. 213-216.

⁹ Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, Transnational Relations and World Politics (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), p. 12.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ See J. David Singer, "The Global System and Its Subsystems: A Developmental View," in James N. Rosenau, Linkage Politics (New York: Free Press, 1969), p. 24.

¹²Maureen R. Berman and Joseph E. Johnson, ed., Unofficial Diplomats (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), p.5.

¹³Ibid., p.6.

¹⁴David B. Truman, The Governmental Process (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1951), p.37.

¹⁵See Louis Gerson, The Hyphenates in Recent American Politics and Diplomacy, (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1964), Lawrence Fuchs, The Political Behavior of American Jews (Glencoe: Free Press, 1956), Bernard C. Cohen, The Public's Impact on Foreign Policy (Boston: Little Brown, 1973).

¹⁶See, e. g., Samuel Halperin, The Political World of American Zionism, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1961), Milton D. Morris, "Black Americans and the Foreign Policy Process," Western Political Quarterly, Vol. XXV, No. 3, September, 1972, p.45. Abdul Aziz Said, ed., Ethnicity and United States Foreign Policy (New York: Praeger, 1977).

¹⁷Gerson, The Hyphenates, p.53.

¹⁸See Naomi W. Cohen, American Jews and the Zionist Idea, (New York: Ktav, 1975) and op. cit. Samuel Halperin, The Political World of American Zionism.

¹⁹Raymond A. Bauer, Ithiel de Sola Pool, and Lewis Anthony Dexter, American Business and Public Policy, 2nd. ed. (Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1972).

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Paula Stern, Water's Edge: Domestic Politics and the Making of American Foreign Policy (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1979)

²²see Stanley Bachrack, The Committee of One Million (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973) and Ross Koen, The China Lobby in American Politics (New York: Octagon Press, 1973)

²³Rather than choose sides in the dispute, Chinese Americans kept a low profile and remained passive on the issue.

²⁴Cohen, The Public's Impact, p.63.

²⁵Ibid., p. 104.

²⁶William O. Chittick, State Department, Press and Pressure Groups (New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1970)

²⁷Gerson, p. 12.

²⁸Fuchs, The Political Behavior of American Jews, p. 47.

²⁹Gerson, The Hyphenates, p. 22.

³⁰Said, Ethnicity and United States Foreign Policy,

³¹Abba Hillel Silver, a prominent American Rabbi, was requested by President Eisenhower in 1957 to transmit a message to Prime Minister Ben Gurion. One source of the source of the story is An Autobiography by Abba Eban, (Jerusalem: Steimetzky, 1977), p. 217.

³²Interview with Joachim Prinz, January, 1979. Dr. Prinz relates that as Chairman of the Presidents' Conference he met with the Indian, Japanese and German ambassadors with the intent of improving Israel's relations with them.

³³Interviews with leaders of Jewish organizations.

³⁴Interviews with former Israeli diplomats in Washington. President Johnson asked Prime Minister Eshkol in 1968 to try to influence American Jews not to oppose his policies in Vietnam. Many American Jews were in the forefront of the anti-war protests.

³⁵For further details, see Charles Liebman, Pressure Without Sanctions: The Influence of World Jewry on Israeli Policy (Cranbury: Associated University Presses, 1977), pp. 97-98.

³⁶This matter directly affects a majority of American Jews who are at least nominally identified with the Conservative or Reform movements in the United States.

³⁷William D. Coplin, Introduction to International Politics: A Theoretical Overview (Chicago: Markham Publishing Co., 1971), p. 75.

³⁸Robert Silverberg, If I Forget Thee O Jerusalem: American Jews and the State of Israel (New York: William Morrow, 1970). A similar work on the same subject is Melvin Urofsky, We Are One: American Jewry and Israel (Garden City: Doubleday, 1978).

³⁹Marvin C. Feuerwerger, Congress and Israel: Foreign Aid Decision-making in the House of Representatives, 1969-1976 (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1979)

⁴⁰Liebman, Pressure without Sanctions.

CHAPTER II

A Look at Boundary-Crossing Activity and International Theory

The study of international politics has been traditionally focused on the interaction among nation-states. The nation-state, as represented by its government, competed and aligned itself in a series of temporary alliances with other states. This impermanence of alliances within the international system caused shifting balances of power among states, conflicts and wars. Analysts of the international system regarded the nation-state as an impermeable entity which acted to protect its citizens within it by maintaining heavy defenses of its borders. Basic to this view of the nation-state was the concept of sovereignty which was defined as a government's having supreme authority over territory and persons living in a limited territorial area. This sovereignty was challenged by other nation-states by threat of physical attack. This assumption by analysts that the state is able to protect its citizens and to control their actions vis-a-vis foreign states was more or less historically accurate until the twentieth century. John Herz described the traditional nation-state thus:

The fact that it was surrounded by a hard shell rendered it to some extent secure from foreign penetration, and thus made it an ultimate unit of protection for those within its boundaries. Throughout history, that unit which affords protection and security to human beings has tended to become the basic political unit; people, in the long run, will recognize that authority, any authority, which possesses the power of protection.¹

The twentieth century brought great changes in the nation-state system and challenged this concept. Increases of territory or superior weaponry could not prevent the penetration of the nation-state by foreign states nor did they

lessen its vulnerability. Herz concludes, "Since we are inhabitants of a planet of limited size, we have reached the limit within which the effect of the means of destruction has become absolute. Whatever remained of the impermeability of states seems to have gone for good."² He lists in the order of importance four factors that have radically altered the relationship between territorial power and sovereignty: a) atomic warfare, b) air warfare, c) ideological and political penetration, d) the possibility of an economic blockade.³ The first two factors are the result of scientific discoveries and technological progress of the twentieth century that have greatly altered the nature of modern warfare. The latter two, although they have been a challenge to the impermeability of the nation-state for centuries, have become increasingly more threatening to the nation-state and their effect more damaging.

Herz later modified his concept of the "demise" of the nation-state to accommodate the rise in demands of nationalist movements sovereignty, giving new life to the nation-state concept. The nation-state had proved resilient in defending its sovereignty, and yet, at the same time, more "vulnerable" to increasing penetration across its "permeable" boundaries. Herz writes in a later article that, in his view, "indirect penetration constitutes the most serious threat to the future of nations and their new territoriality."⁴

Penetration across national boundaries can take the form of covert support for one side in internal factional strife, support for political parties or groups within a state, flooding a state with ideological information (radio and television broadcasts, printed matter), recruitment of agents, infiltration of foreign agents, etc. The nation-state does not conform to the analytical model designed by its observers and it is doubtful if it ever did. The modern state is open to the influences of mass communication across its borders transmitted by radio, television, books and newspapers, visitors, letters, telephone, etc. Some national boundaries are more closed than others, but all are open to some penetration across them. All must contend with the challenges of new and foreign ideas in addition to deliberate attempts at infiltration by foreign

governments to advance their own political goals. The modern vulnerability of the nation-state calls into question the accepted conceptual delineation of an international system vs. a domestic system. The international area was viewed by political analysts as the environment, and with it and within it the state, as an impermeable entity, acted and interacted.⁵ This division was reflected both in the analytical distinction between the study of domestic policy and foreign policy and in the "level of analysis"⁶ distinction between systems analysis of the new international system and decision-making analysis of foreign policy decisions within the domestic system.

In recent years, the dichotomy between international and domestic has been questioned. Wolfram Hanrieder points to the need for new tools of analysis to study adequately boundary crossing activities. He writes,

If the decision maker finds that historical processes make it difficult for him to separate external and internal aspects of national policy, the analyst similarly is called upon to refashion his analytical tools and adjust his conceptual framework; important changes in concrete historical circumstances sooner or later impel revision of analytical paradigms.⁷

Analysts of international politics sought new frameworks for understanding the new vulnerability of states. At a conference of scholars from both comparative and international politics in January, 1966, James Rosenau criticized the discipline's reluctance to accommodate conceptually to the changes in the political environment. He argued that the influence of the international system on the domestic system, and the effect of changes in a domestic system on its environment "have never been subjected to systematic, sustained and comparative inquiry."⁸ Students of comparative and international politics conceptually separate domestic politics from international politics, thereby ignoring the complexity of interactions between domestic systems and their environments. One cannot discuss the internal processes of Thailand in the 1970s, for example, without taking into account the turmoil surrounding it in Southeast Asia. Nor can we understand the domestic problems brought about by shortages of energy in the United States and Western Europe without accounting for the rise of the newly

effective oil cartel OPEC and the continuing tensions in the Middle East. Rosenau succinctly states the problem:

To acknowledge (as often analysts do) the interdependence of national-international systems is not necessarily to make conceptual allowance for it. To probe linkage phenomena intensively is not necessarily to recognize their theoretical implication . . . To the extent that they are dealt with at all, national-international linkages are treated as dependent variables, not as independent ones.⁹

Rosenau attempts to correct the state of the discipline by offering his own conceptual framework for boundary crossing activities. He suggests the concept of linkage which he defines as "any recurring sequence of behavior that originates in one system and is reacted to in another."¹⁰ This new terminology focuses on the policy inputs and outputs of the domestic system from and into its environment. It releases the analyst from the confines of the boundaries of the sovereign state. It does not, however, deny the relevance of national boundaries. The nation-state remains distinct and interactions within it can be mainly understood without reference to the environment. What linkage study does is open up the investigation of transnational activity. Such sequences of behavior had gone unnoticed because analysts had stopped at the national boundary and studied either foreign policy decision-making or their international consequence. This limited perspective ignored patterns of transaction that originated in one system and were reacted to by the other. As Rosenau clearly states, "It is the recurrence and not the occurrence of events that serves as our focus."¹¹

J. David Singer, in the same volume, suggests that many sub-national associations play key roles in world politics. Joining the nation-state in the international arena are entities such as trade unions, financial institutions, corporations, ethnic, ideological and religious groups, political movements and parties. These groups may by-pass the formal agencies of their government and act in a variety of direct roles vis-a-vis foreign governments or their counterparts in other states.¹² He admits that this "linkage" between foreign governments and sub-national groups has often been neglected in the study of international politics.



The suggestion that actions may originate in one national system and continue within a different state was discussed in an earlier study in 1965 by Andrew Scott entitled The Revolution in Statecraft: Informal Penetration. Scott sets out to explain Cold War politics which he says are characterized by informal relations between states. "Agents or instruments of one country are able to reach inside the borders of another, with or without the knowledge and approval of the government of the second country."¹³ These relations can occur in conjunction with formal government to government relations and are as much instruments of foreign policy as formal ones. Scott suggests that informal penetration may be said to exist when one country's agents or instruments come into contact with the people or processes of another country in an effort to achieve certain objectives.¹⁴ This informal penetration is often conducted through face to face contact between the agents of one country and the citizens of another.

Scott describes several cases of informal penetration; among them the Nazi infiltration of Europe and their successful formation of Fifth Columns in several Western and Central European countries; the infiltration of Soviet agents into resistance organizations during World War II; American attempts to control internal developments in Central and Latin America in the 1950s and 1960s. He describes Soviet activities in neutral states and pro-Western states during the Cold War period which tried to gain a foothold by setting up front organizations, distributing written propaganda and proffering economic and technical assistance.

Several countries use informal penetration to promote their interests in particular target countries. For example, the United States' administration of economic and technical assistance programs to post-World War II Europe and to developing countries gave American personnel first hand knowledge of what was happening in these countries and access to their decision makers. The Cuban government under Fidel Castro has persistently endeavored to strengthen leftist groups in Central America, meeting various degrees of success.

The involvement of their "diplomatic personnel" in the political organization of pro-Castro elements in those countries suggest that the embassy itself can be an active source of informal penetration.

American foreign aid programs are another example of informal access to the government and people of a foreign state. One of the most important instruments for informal attack and support (of governments) used by the United States is covert. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), for example, was set up to oversee and put into effect American covert political operations abroad during peacetime. These operations have ranged from overt contributions of funds to support a pro-American newspaper in Chile, to the overthrow of the Arbenz regime in Guatemala in 1954. Scott persuasively argues that these boundary crossing activities by agents of a foreign government in another sovereign state point to the end of the inviolability of the nation-state. The nation-state system is now more vulnerable to penetration and thus open to transnational forces which may strengthen or undermine regimes.

Is informal penetration only a subversive, destructive force in international politics? Does it occur solely as a part of the competition between great powers for the control of the territories and peoples of neutral states? Though Scott in his book stresses the Cold War environment which encourages subversion and insurgency, propaganda and intrigue, he allows for "support" activities (benevolent penetration) which are intended to strengthen an ally or to support good relations with it. This informal access may characterize the relations of countries working together as well as those in conflict.¹⁵ He suggests that

The concepts of "support" and "attack" are useful but they do not exhaust the possibilities (of informal penetration). There is a middle range of activity that is both broad and important. The United States, for example, engages in programs abroad that cannot be characterized as involving either attack or support. It may operate an information program in a country in order to keep the attitudes of the populace friendly toward the United States with no thought of supporting or undermining

the government or of modifying the society in a significant way. From the point of view of the country penetrated, this activity may appear legitimate and may seem neither helpful nor threatening.¹⁶

Scott does not expand on this middle ground informal penetration, perhaps because it is most difficult to assess its impact on the penetrated state. These activities are tacitly accepted by the host government and are therefore somewhat "depoliticized" in the context of international politics. The extent of the influence and its effects may be recognized by the state only much later.

It is this benign aspect of Scott's concept of penetration that is most relevant to this study. A state may be penetrated by its allies as well as by its enemies. Penetration, as described by Scott, occurred mainly when a large power "penetrated" a smaller power, either for the purpose of attack or support. But is penetration always of a small state by a large power? The involvement of Cubans in Latin America and their recently publicized activities in Africa are example of penetration of smaller powers by an incendiary small power. The size and extent of military and economic might is not a necessarily significant factor in informal penetration. Could there be circumstances when a larger state is penetrated by a small state for the purpose of ensuring its continuance of support and friendship, economic and military assistance, etc? Scott does not preclude the possibility. This expansion of the concept of penetration suggests new areas of study of relations between friendly states.

Within the middle range of penetration a major power can be penetrated by a smaller state whose goals are limited. The objectives need not be the "authoritative participation in decision-making" or attempt to effect a change of leadership of the government. Attempts at middle-range penetration may make up a significant part of the strategic goals of smaller powers for achieving favorable relations with a larger power. These may be pursued through public relations campaigns (financed by the penetrator), seeking champions among prominent people in public affairs, and establishing linkages with a group or groups

in the target country. This last vehicle may be linked with the foreign state because of ideological affinity, mutual economic interests or ethnic identification. Political movements, trade unions, manufacturer associations, religious groups and ethnic groups all can play a role in middle-range penetration.

Karl Deutsch suggests in an article entitled "External Influences on the Internal Behavior of States" that the nation-state may be open to penetration and influence on some issues and not on others. The decision-making system may be highly centralized (and therefore less open to external influences) in regard to some operations than in regard to others. One subsystem of the national community may be linked to a foreign government and may be active on only particular issues. Deutsch defines a linkage group or potential linkage group (a subsystem in the national system) as "a group with links to the domestic system and with some particular links to the international or foreign input."¹⁷ He suggests that this group is more likely to be susceptible to inputs from abroad if its ties to the domestic system are weakened, *i. e.*, if it is discriminated against socially or economically, or if it perceives itself as such. The conceptual advantage of Deutsch's definition is that it lacks connotative implications. A linkage group may be loyal or disloyal to the nation-state, helpful or harmful to its interests.

The concepts of linkage and penetration were further discussed by James Rosenau and Wolfram Hanrieder.¹⁸ Both limit the application of the concept of penetration to situations in which the penetrated nation-states are weak and vulnerable to outside "dominance" and the penetrator, relatively strong. Rosenau argues that "a penetrative process occurs when members of one polity serve as participants in the political processes of another: That is, they share with those in the penetrated polity the authority to allocate its values."¹⁹ To illustrate, he provides the example of an occupying army, which is clearly a foreign body, making decisions and acting as part or as the only decision-making body of the occupied state. This is the most extreme case of penetration. He adds that the activities of foreign aid missions, subversive cadres on the

staffs of international organizations, the representatives of private corporations, the members of certain transnational political parties and others all can be linkages in a penetration process. His definition, however, unnecessarily restricts penetration activity to situations in which the participation is authoritative and direct. It is doubtful if most penetration activity could be considered "authoritative", following Robert Dahl's definition of authority as legitimate power or influence.²⁰ Certainly many citizens of the occupied polity and a substantial number of its leadership would not consider the foreign penetrator who has become the dominant force in the decision-making apparatus as "authoritative". Why do we need to insert the condition of "authority to allocate values" into the definition of the penetration process at all? Was the Vichy government perceived as legitimate by the majority of French citizens? Yet, was that not a very penetrated system? Who determines that a penetration is authoritative? Other members of a puppet government? the citizenry? the foreign penetrator? Do Arabs living on the Israeli occupied West Bank consider the Israeli government as "authoritative"?

Rosenau enumerates two other types of linkage processes, the reactive and the emulative. The reactive process, he states, is the reverse of the penetrative process. "It is brought into being by recurrent and similar boundary crossing reactions rather than by the sharing of authority. The actors who initiate the output do not participate in the allocative activities of those who experience the input, but the behavior of the latter is nevertheless a response to behavior undertaken by the former."²¹ This type of linkage, according to Rosenau, is the most frequent and may be the result of direct or indirect activities. An example of this is the activities of Palestinian groups in Western Europe who have forged ties with parties of the extreme Left and with anti-government groups in an attempt to effect a change in government policy toward the Palestinian question. Another example was the impact of the rise of Nasser to the leadership of the pan-Arab nationalist movement in the late 1950s, early 1960s on the rise in anti-French demonstrations and revolution in Algeria in 1962.

The last type of linkage process is a special form of the reactive type. Rosenau calls it the emulative process which is essentially the "demonstration" effect whereby political activities in one country are perceived and emulated in another. Anti-war protests in the United States in the late 1960s were inspired by similar anti-government protest activities in several countries in Asia and Western Europe. Jerome Skolnick, who studied the student protest movement writes,

The white student movement in America received inspiration in its early stages from dramatic student uprising in Japan, Turkey and South Korea ... American activists have been influenced by street tactics learned from Japanese students and by ideological expression emanating from France and West Germany ... The symbols of "alienated" youth culture, originating in Britain and the United States, have been adopted throughout Eastern and Western Europe ... The increasing cross-fertilization and mutual inspiration ... are then, the outcome of mass communication and informal contact.²²

The reactive process corresponds roughly to what we have called "middle range penetration". The penetrator does not insert himself into the government apparatus but instead interacts with non-governmental actors with the intent of influencing or modifying their behavior (and thus influencing their government). Rosenau's attempt to delineate between this behavior and what he calls the penetrative process confuses more than clarifies. Both categories involve "penetration"; the former, of non-governmental actors, the latter, the formal decision-making apparatus. Both may influence decision-making either directly or indirectly and both, in my view, may be "non-authoritative". In fact, the penetrated state may regard the attempt to penetrate non-governmental actors as "legitimate" behavior and an attempt to establish a foothold within the government "illegitimate", *i. e.*, non-authoritative!²³

Wolfram Hanrieder discusses the linkage between the external and internal dimensions of foreign policy. He criticizes the discipline for ignoring transnational phenomena and explains that the lack of linkage research in the past is because of "the tendency in the study of domestic politics to hold the

international environment constant, and a corresponding inclination in the study of international politics to hold the domestic environment constant."²⁴ He attempts in part to defend the separation between the "two levels of analysis"²⁵ by explaining the difficulties of correlating propositions derived from these two environments, since they stem from differently organized sets of empirical data and methodological assumptions.²⁶

Hanrieder develops two concepts for foreign policy analysis -- compatibility and consensus. Compatibility attempts to measure "degrees of feasibility of various foreign policy goals, given the structures and opportunities of the international system." Consensus "assesses the measure of agreement on the ends and means of foreign policy on the domestic political scene."²⁷ He then tries to apply these two concepts in a linkage analytical framework utilizing the concept of a "penetrated system".

Hanrieder criticizes Rosenau's definition of penetration for its stress on "authoritative" participation. He says this limits the participation to institutions and ignores penetration by events or people that take place without being direct and authoritative. He suggests his own definition of a penetrated system: "A political system is penetrated a) if its decision-making process regarding the allocation of values or the mobilization of support on behalf of its goals is strongly affected by external events, and b) if it can command wide consensus among the relevant elements of the decision-making process in accommodating to these events."²⁸ He views penetration as the process through which the goals of the nation-state and its environment overlap. The definition describes the most extreme case of a totally penetrated system; however, empirically, penetration can range from totally penetrated to marginally penetrated. He suggests that it now becomes possible to analyze systems of linkage between the international system and national systems by "applying concepts that, although they originate from distinct analytical environments, are sufficiently isomorphic to allow cumulative propositions."²⁹ Thus, penetration can be measured on a

continuum -- and the degree of consensus in accommodating to the penetration will vary from situation to situation. Hanrieder's definition describes an "ideal type" of penetrated system and implies that other systems under varying circumstances may be more or less penetrated. Thus the clause that requires "wide consensus" among the relevant elements of the decision-making process refers only to a totally penetrated system. A less penetrated system may have sharp dissensus among the relevant elements of the decision-making process as a result of the penetrating factors from the environment. Partial penetration may be enough to weaken a domestic government's ability to make decisions, thus preventing it from taking any action.

The effects of the penetration may be felt only with respect to the limited issues which the penetrator actively pursued. One example of this is the penetration of Lebanon since 1971 by Palestinians who have in fact forced the Lebanese government into a state of submission on the question of border attacks into Israel and freedom of activity on its southern border. Yet they do not "control" the Lebanese government or dictate policy on issues of the economy, social welfare or most foreign relations. In the last few years, the influence of the Palestinians and their Shi'ite allies has increased, thus impeding the freedom of action of the Lebanese government in foreign policy. Further restricting the decision-making freedom of the Lebanese government is the presence of another foreign element -- the Syrian peacekeeping force which has occupied part of Lebanon since 1979, ostensibly to maintain order and to separate between the Palestinians and the Christians. Lebanon is a penetrated system and is very much subject to the pressures and demands of the transnational "foreign" groups within it -- yet it could not be described as a totally penetrated system. The allocation of its values and goals are strongly influenced by the Palestinians and the Syrians, and its decision-making apparatus (for lack of power to do otherwise) has reluctantly agreed to accommodate to them.

A much less penetrated system is the United States, whose policies toward Israel and the Middle East are in part influenced by the activities of a linkage

group. This group is the American Jewish community, an ethnic group with close ties with the State of Israel. This linkage interaction will be the focus of this study. The degree of penetration of the United States can be described as slight, for several reasons:

1. the limited goals of the foreign state. The foreign government, acting with the help of the linkage group, does not try to influence American domestic policy, nor does it try to influence most areas of foreign policy. Its concerns are limited to American policy in the Middle East which directly affects the national interests of Israel.

2. limited range of influence. The main channel of penetration is via its relations with the American Jewish community. American Jews act to generate favorable public opinion and Congressional support for Israel, but sometimes have shown that they have "independent views" and take independent action.³⁰

3. limited effectiveness. Interest groups, and thus the linkage group as well, are only marginally effective in influencing foreign policy.

A comparatively limited penetration is penetration nonetheless. The permeable borders of the nation-state expose it to influences from elements in the environment who may have an impact on policy-making, yet not result in total penetration. Hanrieder adds that part of the definition of a penetrated system is that as "external events affect a wide range of value allocations, it follows that few allocations can remain isolated from external contingencies."³¹ The converse is also true. When external events affect a small range of value allocations, most allocations remain isolated from external contingencies, i. e., the system is penetrated, but only partially. This continuum of more or less penetration opens up a broad range of possible studies of boundary-crossing phenomena.

The nature of the penetrated system is important to the understanding of the penetration process. Are some systems more vulnerable than others to the influences of the external environment in their decision-making process? The

distinction between "open" and "closed" systems made by Norton Long and R. Barry Farrell is useful.³² Farrell distinguishes between two types of systems. The open political system he describes synonymously with constitutional democracy. The closed system, he suggests, resembles the totalitarian model as defined by Friedrich and Brzezinski.³³ The open system is characterized by "competitive regular electoral contests, legalized two or multi-party organizations aimed at offering alternative governmental leadership, a high degree of toleration for autonomous groups in politics and an acceptance of constitutional restraints on governmental power."³⁴ The open system has many channels of access to the decision maker and offers its citizens many opportunities to try and influence government decision-making. Foreign policy, although mainly in the hands of the Executive and a bureaucracy of experts (for example, the U.S. State Department) is also influenced by the citizens' exercise of their right to petition and influence their government's decisions. Consequently, the open system, because it encourages citizens' support for its foreign policy as well as allows dissent, is also susceptible to external influences from its environment on foreign policy issues. Farrell considers this openness to have some negative consequences. He says, "A disadvantage faced by the open system in the relationship between foreign policy leaders and the national public is in the area of internal penetration. The considerable freedom of the individual citizen makes it possible to identify alienated individuals and recruit them as spies, policy agents, propagandists, or fellow travelers for hostile foreign states."³⁵ Farrell, as other analysts, restricts the concept of penetration to "agents" from "hostile" states who are a danger or threat to the state's security. The open system is, however, also open to the external influences and boundary-crossing penetration by friendly states who have a stake in the nation's policies. The presence of linkage groups within the society, ethnic, economic, religious, etc., offer the foreign state opportunities for access to the decision makers in addition to formal diplomatic channels. The open system, by its very nature, offers a myriad of opportunities for penetration by external actors. Because

"open systems" are generally constitutional democracies that guarantee freedom of speech and a free exchange of ideas within the society and without, any attempt by the government to limit interaction between citizens or groups in the domestic system and groups, citizens or even governments in the environment would be regarded by the people as an illegitimate restriction of their guaranteed democratic freedoms. The McCarthy "witch-hunts" of the 1950s in the United States indicate how a search for "subversives" in an open system can result in the denial of civil liberties to a minority of citizens who hold dissident views, and in damage to the very "openness" of the system. There may be a very fine line distinguishing between intellectual discussion of revolution and plotting to overthrow a government, between ties with foreign citizens and subversion. In effect, the level of restrictions on domestic-environment relations is one indication of the degree of "openness" of the political system.

The Ethnic Group as a Linkage Actor

The discussion of the penetrated system suggested that systems may be penetrated by foreign states who try to influence one or several non-governmental actors. Penetration by a friendly state may be a limited goal, *i. e.*, to influence a decision or decisions of the penetrated system on an issue (or issues) that is (or are) of particular interest to the penetrator. The linkage forged between the foreign state and a non-governmental actor which links the two national governments' functions in addition to formal channels of diplomacy.

Robert Trice, in an innovative study, Interest Groups and the Foreign Policy Process, discusses the role of linkage groups in international politics.³⁶

He departs from Rosenau's definition of linkage. Rosenau, as discussed earlier, defines linkage as a process or recurrent sequence of behavior that originates in one system and is reacted to in another. Trice correctly suggests that this definition is so general that it seems to characterize all stable patterns of international behavior. What does the concept of linkage add to our understanding of international interaction? It is therefore necessary to redefine linkage in order

to operationalize its usage. Trice suggests that linkage is the process through which the outputs (policy decisions or implementation) of one national system are converted into the inputs (influences on the decision maker) of another.³⁷ The linkage actor (ethnic group, business group, corporation, religious group or institution) "performs the intermediary function of the conversion." He divides the linkage process into two parts: a) the linkage actor has direct channels of communication with two or more national political systems, b) the actor must convert the attitudes, preferences, or policy positions generated within one system into the inputs of another system.³⁸ He may also serve as an information link between two governments.

The linkage group actor often acts as a domestic interest group, *i. e.*, it has domestic interests and policy goals in addition to (and sometimes in conflict with) its role as linkage actor. This dual role serves both to the advantage and disadvantage of the linkage actor. The influence and "connections" it developed in its role as a domestic actor may augment its chances of getting a fair hearing for the "attitudes, preferences or policy positions" it transmits on behalf of the foreign system. A linkage actor (groups or their representative) which is active domestically and has established ties with political candidates, unions, minorities, etc., in the domestic system is in an advantageous position to be helpful to the foreign state. On the other hand, the linkage actor may be racked by dissonance and internal conflict if he is confronted with opposing, clashing demands from the two systems he works to "link". He may fear that his own group's domestic interests may be jeopardized by the demands made by the foreign state.

The ethnic groups plays a unique role in a linkage system. Its members associate because of a sense of "national" identity, or, in the case of the Jews, a combination of "national-religious" identity which makes them feel separate from other citizens of different ancestral background or religious identity. In the United States, the government allows (and as Gerson suggests, often encourages) its citizens to display the differences contained in the national

fabric, providing that on it is imposed a mesh of loyalty to the national system. Thus, despite their adopting identification as Americans, immigrants and natural born citizens alike often did not (except during wartime) seek to eradicate their national primordial sentiments. This apparently tolerant attitude toward holding both a primary loyalty (to the United States) and secondary loyalties (to countries of origin) gave the ethnic a sort of "green light" for linkage activities on its behalf. Louis Gerson cites evidence of deliberate appeals by politicians to the ethnic loyalties of the new immigrants.³⁹ These nurtured and added a sort of legitimacy to the continuance of cultural and emotional ties with their homelands.

Lester Milbraith explains that the influence process in which interest groups are involved is a sub-category of a general communication process, *i. e.*, influence is the process by which a decision maker considers the context of a message as he makes a decision. Thus, the most important goal for the interest group is to get accurate, persuasive information to the decision maker in time to be included as a factor in the process of decision-making. Milbraith outlines three basic conditions that an interest group must meet if it wishes to influence foreign policy decisions:

a) It must be acquainted with who is making the decisions and when they are being made. This information is vital for devising the best strategy for getting the most comprehensive and persuasive information to the person making the decision in time for it to be considered and be influential in the decision-making process.

b) It should gain some kind of access to the decision makers through different contacts in the government. (Importance of "who you know").

c) It must gain favorable reception from the decision maker, *i. e.*, the decision maker must view the group's views as worth listening to, (even if he does not agree with the views) because of any or combination of the following:

- 1) credibility of the group, that it is reputed to be or proven to be well informed,

balanced, and with well thought-out views, 2) grass roots support, 3) offers other domestic payoffs which can be cashed in on other issues, (e. g., support in a re-election campaign, financial contributions, votes).⁴⁰

The domestic interest group which acts as a linkage group with a foreign state may have particular advantages with respect to the conditions above. It may be a source of information for decision makers, which it gains directly from the foreign source. The ethnic actor, for example, through its close contacts with representatives of a foreign government may be in a good position to interpret and explain the foreign government's intentions to his own government. One of the strong points of interest groups is providing specific specialized information to support its view. Some foreign policy interest groups, such as the League of Women Voters, are dependent on government sources for their information and are lacking in the data necessary to support a view contrary to that of the government. The ethnic group, by contrast, may be well-informed since its "link" with the foreign government may make it privy to up-to-date information and attitudes of its leadership. The ethnic actor thus becomes an "expert" on that country's affairs and may be a useful source of information for his government.

The range of potential linkage groups within a political system is wide. The groups may differ in the intensity of their relationships with both governments (their own and the foreign government) their goals and the loyalties they profess. In order to clarify the range of possibilities, we can divide the linkage actors into three categories: a) agents of a foreign power, b) independent policy actors, c) helpful sympathizer actors. We will then compare them regarding their 1) political ideologies, 2) degree of independence in their choice of leadership and activities, 3) purpose of their organization, 4) the priorities of their political loyalties, and 5) the view of their own government of their activities.

A. an agent of a foreign power.

1) This type of linkage group is usually united by a common ideology which is shared by a foreign power and which is in opposition to the dominant ideology of their own government.

2) It receives instructions from a foreign power. The latter claims control over the majority of the agent's decisions. The linkage group has little input into the policy-making decisions of the foreign government. The internal structure of the group is dominated by the foreign government. Top personnel are selected and rejected by the foreign government.

3) It is interested and organized, in the main, for the purpose of political activity, domestic and transnational.

4) The interests of the foreign government take priority over the interests of the group's own national government. This may be rationalized in the interest of furthering the ideological goal which serves the ultimate good for all of mankind.

5) The agent's own government regards the linkage actor as potentially dangerous to the security of the state. It may take measures to limit his freedom of movement or access to sensitive information.

Examples of the linkage actor who is an agent of a foreign power are: members of Communist party cells in the United States and Europe, before and after World War II; Fascist parties in Central and Western Europe prior to and during World War II; once appropriate and now perhaps less so are the national Communist parties in Western Europe who now claim independence from Moscow's direction.

B. an independent policy actor. This category has the weakest links with the foreign state. The linkage group has the following characteristics:

1) The linkage group shares the ideology and values of the country where they live.

2) It has an independent internal structure and does not welcome interference in its internal affairs by the foreign government or by its own. It acts on its own and in its own interest on policies that may affect the foreign government. Action may be taken after discussions and consultations with representatives of both governments. It may be critical of the policies of either government when it deems it appropriate.

3) The linkage group is organized not only for political purposes. It has economic, philanthropic, cultural and/or social interests as well.

4) Its primary loyalty is to its national government. It perceives itself as acting in its own country's interests (as well as in its own) and in the interest (ultimately, even if not apparent in the short run) of the foreign government.

5) The linkage group's own government regards their interest in foreign affairs with equanimity. It may consult their representatives on policy and request their assistance in delicate negotiations with the foreign government. Their expertise in specific areas of foreign policy is often held in high esteem by government officials.

Most approximating this category of actors are corporate enterprises with investments and interests in countries abroad; black groups that take special interest in problems facing Black Africa; independent religious groups, (e.g. the Society of Friends) who may act transnationally on humanitarian causes. The American Jewish Committee prefers to view itself as an independent policy actor on questions of the Middle East, but reality, as will be indicated further in this study, acts more often than not as a helpful sympathizer actor, category C.

C. the helpful sympathizer actor. This category is most appropriate to the ethnic actor described in this study, the organized American Jewish Community.

1) The linkage group actor shares the ideology and values of the country where it lives.

2) Its internal structure is independent. However, it is sometimes affected by attempts at "meddling" by the foreign government. The latter may try to influence choice of group leaders. It accepts direction for the foreign government when its policies, tactics, and goals concur with the views of the sympathizer actor. When these policies conflict with the actor's views, the actor may "sit out" the issue rather than oppose the foreign government openly. It may offer advice and attempt to influence some policy decisions of the foreign government.

3) The linkage actor may have interests in issues that are not political, e.g., philanthropic, cultural, social economic. Its organizational activities are not limited to the range of politics nor need they involve the foreign government.

4) It perceives itself as acting in its own country's interests (although in conflict with the official government's policy) and in the foreign government's interest. Loyalty to its own country is professed to be paramount. Support for the foreign government is not considered by the linkage actor as undermining that loyalty.

5) The linkage group's own government regards its involvement with the foreign power with equanimity. It may be asked by the government to relay information and "requests" to the foreign government regarding particular policies.

Examples of the helpful sympathizer actor are the American Jewish community in their relationship with the State of Israel; the Catholic Church, in its relations with predominantly Catholic countries in Central and Latin America. Greek Americans and their activities on behalf of the Greek position in the controversy over Cyprus may fit the above listed criteria. Further study is required.

These categories present the range of linkage relationships possible between a linkage group and a foreign government. The penetration of the

national system by the foreign government can, in part, be measured and classified by understanding the nature of the relationship of the foreign government with the linkage group. The greater the foreign government's influence on the linkage group (and thus the less independence of the group) the greater the penetration. If relations between the two states are friendly and their systems of government and ideologies similar, then the threat to the national security of the penetrated country is small.

In the following chapters, I will explore the complexities of linkage through the study of one particular type of linkage and one linkage actor. The study of the ethnic actor as a linkage between two governments will increase our understanding of the process of penetration and of the role of a linkage group in the decision-making process of states. The focus will be on the nature of the links and on attempts to influence the decision makers in the foreign policy process.

In this study, I will sidestep analysis of the link between the linkage group -- here the ethnic actor -- and non-governmental actors within the foreign state. These links may be very significant in relations between states and deserve further study.

In Chapter III, I will briefly introduce and describe the ethnic actor -- the American Jewish community.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER II

¹See John H. Herz, "The Rise and Demise of the Territorial State", World Politics, IX (April, 1957). Reprinted in John H. Herz, The Nation-State and the Crisis of World Politics, (New York: David McKay, 1976), p. 101.

²Ibid., in The Nation-State, p. 118.

³Ibid., p. 115.

⁴Ibid., see chapter entitled "The Territorial State Revisited".

⁵Ibid., p. 242.

⁶See J. David Singer, "The Level of Analysis Problem in International Relations" in Klaus Knorr and Sidney Verba, The International System (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961).

⁷Wolfram Hanrieder, "Foreign Policies and the International System" (New York: General Learning Press, 1971), p. 11.

⁸James N. Rosenau, Linkage Politics (New York: Free Press, 1969) p. 2.

⁹Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 45.

¹¹Ibid., p. 48.

¹²Ibid., article by J. David Singer, "The Global System and Its Sub-systems: A Developmental View", p. 24.

¹³Andrew Scott, The Revolution in Statecraft: Informal Penetration (New York: Random House, 1965), p. 4.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁷Karl Deutsch "External Influences on the Internal Behavior of States" in R. Barry Farrell Approaches to Comparative and International Politics (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1966).

¹⁸Rosenau, Linkage Politics, and Hanrieder, "Foreign Policies".

¹⁹Ibid., Rosenau, p. 46.

²⁰Robert Dahl, Modern Political Analysis (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 33.

²¹Ibid.

²²see Jerome H. Skolnick, The Politics of Protest (New York: Ballantine Books, 1969), p. 86.

²³see Robert Dahl, Modern Political Analysis (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 33. Dahl defines authority as legitimate power or influence.

²⁴Hanrieder, p. 12.

²⁵J. David Singer, in Knorr and Verba, The International System.

²⁶Hanrieder,

²⁷Hanrieder, p. 13.

²⁸Hanrieder, p. 16.

²⁹Hanrieder, p. 17.

³⁰An example of such independent behavior is an American Jewish Committee proposal for the solution of the problem of the Arab refugees suggested in October, 1956. Files, American Jewish Committee, October 13, 1956.

³¹Hanrieder, p. 16.

³²Norton E. Long, "Open and Closed Systems" or Barry Farrell, "Foreign Policies of Open and Closed Political Societies" in R. Barry Farrell, ed., Approaches to Comparative and International Politics (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1966).

³³Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy (New York: Praeger, 1966).

³⁴Farrell, p. 168.

³⁵Farrell, p. 195.

³⁶Robert Trice, Interest Groups and Foreign Policy: U.S. Policy in the Middle East (Beverly Hills: Sage International Studies Series, Vol. 4, 1976).

³⁷Ibid., p. 73.

³⁸Ibid., p. 18.

³⁹Louis Gerson, The Hyphenates in Recent American Politics and Diplomacy, (Lawrence, University of Kansas, 1964).

⁴⁰Lester W. Milbraith, "Interest Groups and Foreign Policy" in James N. Rosenau, Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy (New York: Free Press, 1967), p. 240.

CHAPTER III

The American Jewish Community

In 1654, twenty-three Jewish refugees landed in Dutch New Amsterdam. They were fleeing from Brazil which had just been reconquered by the Portuguese. These refugees were the first of thousands of Jews who flocked to the shores of America seeking refuge from persecution and a better life for themselves and their families. Many Jews sought entrance to the United States, despite the difficulties of travel, language and a strange culture. Between 1880-1929, two and one half million Jews arrived from Europe to what they called the "golden land", where they believed a Jew could make his fortune. The fortune was made only by a lucky few. However, all benefited from the freedom from persecution, the end to pogroms and fear. The United States offered free education to all citizens, which American Jews correctly understood to be their passports to success. There was guaranteed freedom of worship; one could live as a Jew in the way one chose. American Jews availed themselves of the opportunities offered them and, in general, prospered.

In 1969, American Jews numbered an approximate 5,869,000 people, almost three percent of the American population. They were solidly middle class. In 1965, nearly one half of all Jewish families had incomes between \$7,000 and \$15,000, which only slightly more than one-quarter of all American families were earning in that income bracket. Seventy-five percent of employed Jews were working in white collar jobs, either as professionals, businessmen or as clerical workers. One indicator of the upward mobility trend of the Jewish community is that some 80% of Jewish youth of college age during the 1960s attended colleges. These percentages have increased even more in the 1970s.

American Jews tended to cluster in their own communities in large cities such as New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Miami. As their incomes and aspirations climbed, they followed the general trend of middle class urban Americans in the 1950s and 1960s in a movement to the suburbs. Nevertheless, the majority of American Jews still live in communities where there is a sizable percentage of Jewish residents and some Jewish institutions.

The Jewish community in America is a highly organized community. There are Jewish organizations on the local level; there are national organizations which coordinate between and connect the local branches, and there are umbrella organizations that coordinate and unite the many diverse national organizations. Membership in this complex organizational network is voluntary as is association with the Jewish community. Jewish life in the United States is expressed by the "voluntary commitment of individuals to be Jewish in a variety of ways."² The community has no method of enforcement or compulsion. Unlike the experience of the shtetl in Eastern Europe, where Jews were compelled by external authorities, the Czar or Church, and by strong social constraints, to remain within their communities and to be identified as Jews, the free, pluralistic American society offers each American Jew the choice of belonging to the Jewish community or not. Daniel Elazar explains that belonging to the Jewish community really depends on a voluntary associational act -- joining a synagogue, group, charity, etc. It is an act of choice.³

It is important to examine the nature of Jewish identity in America in order to help explain the linkage activities of American Jews. Why have American Jews, more than any other ethnic group, worked so diligently and committedly to strengthen and improve relations between a foreign government and their own? There are two factors here that require explanation: Why are American Jews so firmly united and vehement in their support for Israel? It would seem likely that the more acculturated and assimilated American Jews have become, the weaker their ties with Jewish causes, e. g., Israel, would be. And yet, for the community as a whole, quite the contrary is true. Support for

Israel has not declined as Jewish prosperity and acculturation has increased. How does one explain this paradoxical phenomenon? Why is it that in a period when observance of Jewish tradition is at its lowest among American Jews, support for Israel, politically and financially, remains high?

The second factor relates to the position and role of American Jews in the American political process. Why do American Jews participate so actively in American politics? What effect does it have on their linkage role? Stephen D. Isaacs, in his book Jews and American Politics, estimates that Jews comprised between ten and twenty percent of all those actively involved on the Democratic side of American politics in 1973. Yet they constitute only three percent of the population.⁴ A greater percentage of Jews vote in elections at all levels of government than any other group. They volunteer more to work in election campaigns and are among the biggest donors to party coffers. An examination of their reasons for active participation in American politics may help explain their engagement in linkage activities between the Israeli government and their own government.

The first part of this chapter will be devoted to an examination of the attitudes and beliefs of American Jews toward Israel and toward involvement in American politics. The second part will discuss the structure of the American Jewish community as it relates to linkage activities, e. g., which organizations act on behalf of Israel; to whom does the Israeli government turn if it wants to engage Jewish efforts to influence American policy; which organizations have more influence and why. Two organizations, the American Jewish Committee and the Presidents' Conference, will be the main focus of the study. They were the dominant linkage actors during the period examined in this study, 1956-1968.

1. The Commitments of American Jews

What does it mean to be Jewish in America today? This is a difficult question to answer. For some, the answer is clearly religious, steeped in observance of age-old traditions and religious practices. For the majority of

American Jews who are religiously not observant or well-versed in Jewish theology law or customs, being Jewish means a voluntary association with Jewish institutions and involvement in causes that affect the Jewish people. This somewhat tenuous link to the Jewish community is greater among those with religious ties to Judaism, manifested by membership in a synagogue. It is considerably weaker among those without Jewish religious or cultural affiliation and often nonexistent in their children. The latter, to the despair of Jewish leaders, are often far removed from the Jewish community; they may intermarry and assimilate totally into the general American society. This is perhaps the ironic result of freedom and opportunity in America: the best evidence of the elimination of prejudice against Jews and their acceptance into American society is their total assimilation into the Gentile society and their loss of Jewish identity.⁵

For the majority of American Jews who are unlikely to observe any Jewish traditions, how is "Jewishness" expressed? Charles Liebman suggests that commitment to and support for Israel have become the most important aspect of Jewish identity for most American Jews. He writes, "Israel has not replaced religion as the focus of Jewish identity; rather, it has increasingly become the content of the expression of Jewish religious identity."⁶ This does not mean, however, that the age-old Jewish aspiration to "return and rebuild Zion" or their centuries-old prayers for the "ingathering of the Exiles" and the "restoration of the Holy Temple" have taken on renewed meaning among American Jews. Quite the contrary is true. The majority of American Jews reject the concept of "aliyah", the Zionist aspiration of "going up", or moving to the land of Israel. Israel does not represent for them a national homeland, not in the present, nor in the future. Moreover, they do not consider Israel to be an ideological or cultural center for themselves.⁷

Lacking traditional Jewish content in their religious identity, American Jews have made support for Israel the mainstay of their Jewish religious experience. Support for Israel has become the symbol of Jewish identity at a time when other forms of religious Jewish expression have lost their meaning. It

offers Jews a reason to meet together. It is the "Jewish" cause around which they can rally and put into use their varied talents and energy. For the non-religious Jews, Israel represents a socially acceptable secular outlet of Jewish expression. Charles Liebman writes,

Concern for Israel, and efforts on its behalf increasingly represent the content of American and indeed Western Judaism. In other words, Israel has become instrumental to one's American Jewish identity. Israel, and concern for Israel, are pre-eminently a symbol of Jewish identity; support for Israel has become a boundary-defining aspect of membership in the Jewish community."⁸

Support for Israel unites American Jews across the spectrum of Jewish life. Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Zionists and non-Zionists, all share in a basic commitment to ensure Israel's survival and to work for its greater prosperity. Only two small fringe groups, on opposite ends of the religious spectrum, maintain an anti-Zionist posture and have, by doing so, divorced themselves almost entirely from the Jewish community. On the one end are the ultra-orthodox Neturei Karta, Satmar Hassidim who reject the irreligious "Zionist" state as an affront to traditional religious precepts. They deplore the Zionist attempt to establish a Jewish state before the coming of the Messiah. At the other end, in the 1950s stood a small but vocal organization, The American Council for Judaism, whose members were Reform or secular Jews who opposed the establishment of the State of Israel and viewed it with trepidation. They feared that a Jewish nation-state would raise doubts as to where the loyalties of Jews in America lay. Ironically, it was they themselves who raised the specter of dual loyalty against those Jews who supported Israel. The Council rejected the notion that there was an entity called the Jewish nation and therefore, the need for a national homeland, Israel. Their success in public relations gave their anti-Zionist stance more attention in the press than their numbers warranted. After the Six Day War in 1967, the Council's membership dwindled.

Among the observant of rituals and synagogue attendees, support for Israel is strongest. Jewish holidays and rituals are very closely tied to historical events and seasonal changes that occur in Israel. Jewish prayer includes

supplications for the rebuilding of Zion, for timely abundant rainfall for the land of Israel, etc. Jewish law and theology stress the "specialness" of "Eretz Yisrael" (the land of Israel) for the Jewish people.

Among non-observant Jews, activities in support of Israel have become increasingly the new secular rituals. Fund raising activities for Israel, Israeli cultural evenings, meetings addressed by speakers from Israel offer American Jews activities with Jewish "flavor" without demanding adherence to ritual observances or belief. The synagogue has become the local center for these activities. It is the place where Jews can meet socially, support Jewish causes and continue in some way the traditions of their parents without having to alter their own secular life-styles. In other words, American Jews have eagerly taken up the banner of Israel in part to fill the void in their otherwise empty Jewish identity.⁹ One's status in the Jewish community is often determined by how much one gives and how active one is in support for Israel. Charles Liebman contends that in the American Jewish community today, most American Jews (excluding Orthodox Jews) would probably view non-support for Israel as a greater "crime" for a Jew than the "crime" of intermarriage.¹⁰ Support for Israel serves to preserve the unity of the Jewish community in a period where little else unifies American Jews.

Support for Israel, therefore, serves the important functions of unifying the Jewish community and providing new challenges and cultural activities for it. There are, however, other reasons which explain the strong support given the Jewish state.

1) The memory of the Holocaust -- The mass extermination of six million Jews between 1939-1945 left an indelible mark of fear on the consciousness of many American Jews. Only four decades ago, modern, Western man systematically murdered more than one third of the Jewish people. The allied governments, for various reasons, stood by, in effect, and did not stop the murder. Refugees fleeing the Nazi inferno found the doors of most Western

countries closed to them.¹¹ Some were forced to return to German occupied Europe, to meet certain death. As a reaction to the tragedy, Jews throughout the world vowed that they would always be vigilant to prevent a repetition of such a heinous crime. After the war, American Jews united to support the establishment of the State of Israel in the hope that the new state would solve both the immediate problem of finding a home for thousands of homeless Jewish refugees and being a haven for Jews who seek to escape persecution. In Israel, they would be able to find security. No longer would Jews anywhere in the world be victims of anti-Semitism and persecution. In its first decade, Israel absorbed over one million immigrants from war ravaged Europe and from North Africa and the Middle East.

A second response to the Holocaust for some Jews is to think of Israel as the "insurance policy" of American Jews. In that view, Israel must exist and be strong, in case there is ever a rise in anti-semitism in the United States or in other western countries. Only a Jewish state could be relied upon to accept Jewish refugees from countries all over the world. Only a minority of American Jews seriously consider it possible that they may ever have to leave (or want to leave) the United States because of anti-Semitism. Nonetheless, among many there is that unspoken fear that if ever ... there must be a strong Israel.

Another aspect of the reaction to the Holocaust is a feeling of guilt held by the leadership and older generation of American Jews that not enough was done by American Jews to save European Jews from Nazi persecution. Several historians have suggested that American Jews had failed to do their utmost to rescue European Jews during the war years.¹² They had feared a backlash against Jews in America. They therefore did not do enough nor use all their resources to save European Jewry. After the war ended and the magnitude of the tragedy became known, many American Jewish leaders were filled with remorse. They threw themselves wholeheartedly behind Israel's cause and have

continued to staunchly and tirelessly support Israel. The slogan "lest we forget the six million" is often included in the now traditional rhetoric that calls for support for Israel.

One indication that in the view of many American Jews the survival of Israel is intimately connected with the quality and essence of Jewish life in the United States was the response to the threat of Israel's existence in 1967. American Jews reacted very strongly. Arthur Hertzberg, former President of the American Jewish Congress described the response thus:

As soon as the Arab armies began to mass on the borders of Israel during the third week in May, the mood of the American Jewish community underwent an abrupt, radical and possibly permanent change. In general, the immediate reaction of American Jewry to the crisis was far more intense and widespread than anyone could have foreseen. Many Jews would never have believed that grave danger to Israel could dominate their thoughts and emotions to the exclusion of all else; many were surprised by the depth of their anger at those of their friends who carried on as usual, untouched by fear for Israeli survival and the instinctive involvement they themselves felt. This outpouring of feeling and commitment appears to contradict all the predictions about the evaporating Jewishness of American Jews...¹³

American Jews raised over 100 million dollars in emergency aid to Israel during a period of two weeks. The massive support given Israel by American Jews surprised both the Israelis and American Jews themselves. The shared feeling of being survivors after the great loss of Jewish life in the Holocaust united both American Jews and Israeli Jews in the determination to support Jewish survival.

The "Lakeville" study of Jewish attitudes conducted by Marshall Sklare studied the depth of the feelings of American Jews during the 1967 war in one Jewish community. Sklare and his associates conclude,

In retrospect, it seems that what Lakeville Jews had unconsciously been concerned with was the possibility of another Holocaust. They evidently felt that their sense of self-worth depended on their helping to prevent such a disaster; and they feared that if Israel

which has created something new, clean and good out of the ashes of the Hitler holocaust were to go down, it would altogether destroy the meaning of Jewish existence.¹⁴

2) Pride in Israel's achievements -- The image of Israel as a land of "pioneers" striving to create civilization out of wilderness drew the sympathy and admiration of many Americans. The tenacious Israeli efforts to "make the desert bloom" and to create a new society was reminiscent of the pioneering spirit of the American western frontier. American Jews took special pride in Israel's achievements. They admired its accomplishments in absorption and rehabilitation of refugees from all over the world. The Israelis taught the immigrants a new language and culture and gave them a new national identity, that of "Israelis." The amazing successes of the small but competent Israeli armed forces earned the respect of most Americans. Charles Liebman aptly suggests that one appealing image of the Israeli is that of a strong, brazen, invincible "Sabra," a kind of Jewish superman. He refers to it as the "Exodus" image, referring to the best-selling novel about Israel by Leon Uris.¹⁵ After Israel's rousing victory in 1967, American Jews proudly expressed their support of and identification with Israel. It was seen as a victory of David over Goliath, in whose glory American Jews eagerly wanted to share. Contributions to the UJA reached their highest ever in 1967, 317.5 million dollars. For a minority on the Left of the political spectrum, Israel's victory in 1967, and resultant occupation of Arab lands, tarnished its more appealing image as "underdog". In their eyes, "David" became the conqueror, --the weak had become the strong. Ironically, Israel's success denied it the Left's sympathy or support. After 1967, Israel encountered the rapid disaffection of the Left, both Jewish and Gentile.

3) Philanthropic concern -- Jewish philanthropic interest in Israel is closely linked with the first two reasons of support, memory of the Holocaust and pride in Israel's achievement. First, because some American Jews subconsciously fear another Holocaust, they donate their time and money to help strengthen Israel militarily and economically. Second, because they take pride

in Israel's achievements, they want to take part vicariously in the challenge -- with their donations.

Charity and taking responsibility for the well-being of fellow Jews are part of the basic tenets of Judaism. The tradition of collecting for the less fortunate and of establishing Jewish institutions to care for the sick and needy is deeply rooted. Thus it is not surprising that American Jews continued this tradition in their communities in the United States. Jewish organizations were established to aid new immigrants, to care for the sick, orphans and the infirm. The tradition of giving generously was part of being Jewish; its application on behalf of Israel was its logical extension.

The philanthropic vigor of American Jews in support of projects in Israel is also explained by the immediate dividends the giver receives. Giving has become the measure of status in the Jewish community. To be known as a big donor is to be respected. Donors are honored. They are propelled into positions of leadership. One observer of Jewish philanthropic activities writes,

Philanthropy provides the necessary "cover" to launch an infiltration campaign into a new social world by permitting aspirants and social elite to join in accomplishing charitable goals in which both sides can avow concern. The rewards include recognition, appreciation, honor and a tested path to positions of status in more distinguished organizations.¹⁶

American Jews heeded the call to aid the thousands of refugees who came to Israel from the inferno of Europe after World War II, and from oppression in Arab lands. The rising costs of maintaining a secure military posture in face of the threat from surrounding Arab states forced the burden of the costs of social and cultural development to fall on the shoulders of the American Jewish community. American Jews rose to the task with enthusiasm.

Israeli and American fund raising strategists understood the social importance of giving, and the donor's wish for honor and recognition. They devised various rewards and gimmicks to gratify the American donors. At lavish banquets, tribute was paid to the big donor. On every ambulance, hospital room,

public building, forest, and classroom in Israel, there is a sign prominently displayed, "This _____ was donated by Mr. and Mrs. XYZ of Brooklyn, New York." American Jews, when visiting Israel, could then see the "fruit of their donation." Many Israelis resent the constant reminders in their schools and community centers of their dependence on the largesse of American Jews. Jokes with a bitter flavor circulate which tell of forests with changeable plaques which are quickly altered to display the name of that week's visitor from America, who expected to see his or her name prominently displayed.

The big givers and the active fund raisers, in addition to the prestige and acclaim which they get within the community, also get V. I. P. treatment from visiting Israeli officials. A handshake and short personal conversation with an Israeli Prime Minister or President are recognition commensurate for services rendered. Inclusion at intimate gatherings or briefings with Israeli officials visiting the United States gratified the givers. In 1968, the United Jewish Appeal organized Operation Airlift, which brought large donors to Israel for a hectic week, or "mission". Marc Lee Raphael writes,

No matter the size of the group, the giving potential or the length of the visit, certain features seem common to all. These include briefings by military officials as well as visits to immigrant absorption centers, "secret" military installations, and border kibbutz bunkers. The "mission" culminates with solicitation sessions, "guaranteed" to yield far more dollars in pledges than solicitations undertaken in the United States.¹⁷

Philanthropic support for Israel and all the personal and social rewards that come with it supply American Jews with a cause that has its roots in Jewish tradition, yet does not challenge the secular Jewish lifestyle prevalent in America.

4) Israel as the beginning of the redemption or of the renaissance of Jewish culture -- For a minority of American Jews who adhere to Jewish religious tradition, the rebirth of Israel, coming soon after the Holocaust, has deep religious significance. In their eyes, the new state is the beginning of the redemption of the Jewish people, the first stage being the ingathering of the exiles,

as promised in the Books of the Prophets. The new state offered the Jewish people the opportunity to return to its traditions and become worthy of G-d bringing them redemption. That view is held by religious Zionists. It is therefore not surprising that they are consistently concerned about the quality of religious observance in Israel and about government legislation which impinges on it. Unlike most American Jews, they keep well informed about Israel's domestic policies on such questions as Jewish religious education, autopsies, traffic on the Sabbath, etc., and often express their views to the Israelis.

Non-religious Zionists in America found themselves in an ideological quandary after the establishment of the State. They did not share the vision of the messianic redemption held by the observant. For many, Zionism meant the renaissance of Jewish culture within a modern, nationalistic, secular framework. The Israeli "chalutz" (pioneer) was the model-image; Hebrew was the national language, and the culture of modern Israel, the new culture. This new "culture" became the "secular Judaism" of a generation of American Jews.

One of the basic tenets of Zionism had always been "aliyah", to go up and live in the land of Israel. American Zionists gave lip service support to aliyah but did not uproot themselves from America. As the non-Zionist organizations became more and more supportive of Israel, the Zionists who remained in America were hard put to justify the continuance of their organizations. How did the armchair Zionist differ in action from a member of the non-Zionist American Jewish Congress or American Jewish Committee? What did their "Zionism" mean? The question of aliyah became an embarrassment to the Zionists. Prime Minister David Ben Gurion spoke of the American Zionist movement with derision. In the first eighteen years of the state, only between twelve and fifteen thousand American Jews went on aliyah -- hard evidence of the failure of the Zionist message to inspire its members.¹⁸ It is questionable whether the secular Zionist culture, devoid of the goal of aliyah and of religious content, will suffice to inspire a new generation of American Jews, for whom Israel is a state and not a dream, an established Western society and not a pioneering adventure.

These four reasons, the memory of the Holocaust, pride in Israel's achievements, philanthropic concern and the beginning of the redemption or of a cultural, national renaissance, explain the strong support given by American Jews to Israel. The Israeli government recognizes that its most reliable ally is world Jewry; within it, the strongest community is American Jewry. Israeli leaders understand that an effective linkage role played by American Jews on behalf of Israel must be founded on Jewish confidence and strength. They can only be of assistance to the State of Israel (and to their own government) if they are an integral part of America.

American Jews, as a group, actively participate in the American political process. They are strongly committed to the traditional American ideals of democracy, freedom, and equal opportunity. Because of their long history as a persecuted, subjugated people, they have been the foremost activists in support of civil rights and equality in America. American Jews recognize that only in a democracy, where the rights of all citizens are protected, will Jewish rights be secure.

American Jews are active in the political process in several ways. First, they turn out in very high percentages at the polls in elections at all levels of government. They vote far in excess of any other group in America, even when taking into account such factors as education and socio-economic status. American Jews regard the vote as a protection of democracy, a privilege which they must safeguard and utilize in their interest. In New York State, for example, Jews comprise an estimated fourteen percent of the population but cast between sixteen and twenty percent of the votes. American Jews realize that despite their small population (less than three percent of the total American population) their strength is in their participation, and politicians recognize that strength. In a Presidential election, for example, their vote may be decisive, especially since it is concentrated in states with big electoral votes.

In addition to voting, Jews are actively involved in clubhouse politics. Often, they are the fund raisers and campaign strategists for non-Jewish candidates. Stephen Isaacs, a close observer of Jews in politics, writes,

One finds the position of American politically active Jews to have striking parallels with their historic role in European politics: that of being court Jews. It may seem farfetched to apply the court Jew concept to the American experience, but the comparisons are too compelling to overlook. In Europe, the Jews served as moneylenders and brokers and tax collectors and performed chores so that the political and ecclesiastical rulers could hire armies to fight their wars. In America, the Jews act as though those same roles were compulsory, although the job descriptions have, of course, changed with the times. Here one calls them strategists, computer experts, media managers, fund raisers, but in the main they are still raising money and doing chores for the Protestants and Catholics who can hire the manpower to fight their (political) wars.¹⁹

This description fits the linkage role of American Jews as well. Later chapters will describe the activities of individual prominent Jews with standing "at court" on behalf of Jewish interests. The positioning of Jewish experts on the staffs of political candidates ensures access to those in power when Jewish interests are threatened.

In addition to such factors as education and social-economic status which explain increased political behavior, there are two factors peculiar to the Jewish historical experience which explain Jewish political involvement. The first factor is the omnipresent fear of a rise in anti-Semitism in the United States. American Jews vote and donate their money to a candidate's campaign in order to ensure that the "right" man gets into office.²⁰ Among those factors considered are whether the candidate will be good for the Jews as well as good for the country. That is why a right-wing candidate like George Wallace, whose supporters included the most racist elements in America, was considered anathema to Jews. Discrimination against one group in America poses a threat to the security of American Jews as well. A candidate who supports the security

needs of Israel appeals directly to the "need for security" of American Jews. Attacks on Israel are interpreted as anti-Semitic and a threat to American Jews.

The second factor which explains Jewish political participation is a feeling of gratitude and debt to the political system which gives American Jews the most comfortable, secure existence in all of Jewish history. Never has a Jewish community been accepted and prospered quite like in America. American Jews, some refugees from Europe, others the sons and grandsons of immigrants, feel a large debt to the country that gave them the opportunities to achieve. Their votes and political donations are expressions of their gratitude to the political system which gave them a chance.

The First Amendment guarantees to all Americans the right to "peaceably . . . assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." Interest groups with economic, religious, ethnic, or social interests petition the government to get action on a variety of special interests. American Jews have sought the government's assistance of "Jewish" matters without fear of charges of disloyalty or parochialism. Thus, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Jews have petitioned the government to use its influence to end the persecution of various Jewish communities abroad. In the period 1860-1890, for example, the Jews supported the Republican party for two reasons. The first was because of the idealism and tradition of Abraham Lincoln whom they greatly admired, and the second was because Republican Presidents and their Secretaries of State showed a readiness to act to relieve the misery of persecuted Jews in Eastern Europe.²¹ American Jews during the Holocaust appealed to the government to open its doors to the thousands of refugees who escaped from the Nazi death camps. Unfortunately, the government did too little, too late. Although a minority feared calling attention to the Jewish community qua Jews, and predicted dire consequences if Jews persisted in publicly supporting Jewish causes, the majority of the Jewish community rallied to support them.²² Their greatest fight was to gain approval from the American government for the establishment of an independent Jewish state. After Israel

was founded, American Jews strongly supported it politically and financially. They exercised their political muscle to influence the American government to maintain friendly relations with Israel and to give it military and economic assistance.

In the period 1956-1968, with the exception of the crisis in American-Israeli relations during and immediately after the Suez operation, American-Israeli relations were friendly. The American government position was consonant with that of American Jews. The latter, therefore, readily publicly supported Israel without conflict. However, in more recent years, especially during the Carter administration, American Jews found themselves in an uncomfortable position. The Administration clearly opposed some Israeli policies, for example, the building of settlements on the West Bank and Israeli military forays into Lebanon. American Jewish leaders were beset by the White House to influence them to pressure Israeli leaders. American policy and Israeli interests were clearly at odds. Both sides tried to convince Jewish leaders of the correctness of their position. As American and Israeli policies move further apart in the 1980s, the role of the American Jewish community as a link between the two governments may become more difficult to perform.

2. The Structure of the American Jewish Community

The American Jewish community is divided into five spheres of community activity: religious-congregational; educational-cultural; community relations; communal-welfare; and Israel-overseas.²³ For action in these five areas, there are various national organizations. These are united in several, overlapping umbrella organizations. The largest umbrella organization, the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations (the Presidents' Conference) will be discussed at length below. It includes in its membership the presidents of each individual organization and the presidents of the coordinating umbrella organizations. The Jewish community is highly organized, with grass-roots membership in the organizations on the community level and coordinating structures on the national level.

The description of the organizations that act in a linkage role between the United States government and Israel will be confined to two organizations, the American Jewish Committee and the Presidents' Conference. This limitation to two organizations is not meant to imply that other Jewish organizations do not on occasion act to improve American-Israel relations. They do. However, these two organizations were selected because they were the most active and most effective linkage actors during the years 1956-1968. Moreover, they were the organizations recognized by both the Israeli government and the American government as spokesmen for American Jews. They acted in Israel-American relations in addition to the official pro-Israel lobby, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC).

The American Jewish Committee

The American Jewish Committee is the oldest Jewish defense organization in the United States. It was founded in 1906 by wealthy prominent American Jews of German background "to prevent the infraction of the civil and religious rights of Jews in any part of the world."²⁴ The Committee was organized in response to reports of a wave of pogroms threatening the Jews in Russia. It used its influence to gain admittance of Russian refugees to the United States, and after World War I organized a relief committee to aid Jewish war victims. The Committee was oligarchic in structure, designed to admit to its ranks only the most prominent, wealthy and assimilated American Jews.

After World War II, the Committee expanded markedly in size and function. It founded chapters across the United States and opened up its membership to a broader sector. By 1980, it had a membership of 42,000 and still attracted the upper echelons of the Jewish community.

The Committee opposed the revival of Jewish nationalism expressed by Zionism. It tenaciously opposed the establishment of a Jewish state until 1946. Then it realized that the problem of the displaced persons could be solved only by the creation of a Jewish state. The Committee then cooperated with the

Zionists and other Jewish organizations in promoting the cause of the partition of Palestine. The Committee, in its own literature, describes its organization thus:

The American Jewish Committee, founded in 1906, is a national, non-partisan organization which seeks to combat bigotry, protect the civil and religious rights of Jews here and abroad, and advance those rights for all people of all religions and races.

The American Jewish Committee is a non-Zionist organization. It supported the establishment of the State of Israel as a home for those Jews who needed or wished to settle there. Within the framework of American interests, it has sought to help Israel become a bulwark of democracy in the Middle East.²⁵

The Committee's self-described non-Zionist status was its way of distinguishing its support for the Jewish state, which was for philanthropic and "Jewish" reasons, from that of nationalist Jewish organizations, such as the "Zionists". However, today, there is no effective difference between a non-Zionist and a Zionist. Both are pro-Israel American Jews, their homes in and allegiance being to the United States.

The Committee was hyper-sensitive to any hint of a political link between American Jews and Israel. They were dismayed by the continued insistence of certain Israeli leaders that all Jews should emigrate en masse to Israel and that Jewish survival could never be assured except in a sovereign Jewish state. In the early years of the state, the Committee, fearful of possible innuendos of dual loyalty which would be prejudicial to the position of Jews in America, concluded an understanding with Prime Minister Ben Gurion, in which the loyalties and relationship of American Jews with Israel was clarified. The accords, concluded with the President of the American Jewish Committee, Jacob Blaustein, declared that American Jews owed no political allegiance to Israel and that Israel could not and would not presume to speak in the name of Jews who were citizens of any other country. Mr. Blaustein, for his part, asserted that the vast majority of American Jews recognized the need

and desirability of supporting Israel for its own good and that of the world.²⁶ The Committee firmly rejected any suggestion by Israeli or Zionist leaders that American Jews have an obligation to emigrate to Israel.

The Committee's strength was not in its numbers but in the prominence of its members and their ties with non-Jews in important positions. Henry Feingold writes,

In its recruitment, the Committee prefers to think it is attracting what Edmund Burke might call the "weightiest people". When former American Jewish Committee president Morris Abram was asked by then Prime Minister David Ben Gurion how many members the American Jewish Committee had, Abram responded, "We don't count American Jewish Committee members, Mr. Prime Minister, we weigh them."²⁷

The Committee attracted a Jewish elite. Its members were prominent in their communities and professions.

Because its members had ties to the political and business elite of America, the Committee was helpful in promoting Jewish concerns with government officials. The Israeli government recognized the usefulness of men like Jacob Blaustein, Joseph Proskauer and others who could intercede with American decision makers on Israel's behalf. In the first fifteen years or so since Israel's independence, the Committee was the most important and effective linkage actor in relations between the governments of the United States and Israel. Its leaders held the confidence of both countries' leaders. The Israelis understood that the men who could often best represent Israel in economic negotiations with government or bank officials were members of the Committee. The latter had business and social ties with men in important positions and could facilitate business agreements more effectively than if negotiations were conducted strictly by embassy staff.

The Committee, perhaps because of its elitist posture, consistently opposes joining any organized body which would assume to speak in one voice for the American Jewish community. The Committee has refused formally to

join the Presidents' Conference, although it has "observer" status and has even contributed to its budget. In internal discussions in the late 1950s and early 1960s, it strongly opposed creating the impression that there was a "Jewish bloc" that supported Israel and pressured government officials on its behalf. It also contended that the Committee could play a more useful role in delicate situations that may arise if it maintained an independent posture.

The Committee's linkage role as mediator between the American government and the Israeli government diminished in the period prior to and after the Six Day War in 1967. The change occurred as a result of the greater attention paid to the Presidents' Conference by both governments. The Conference gained status when the Israeli government recognized the importance of the collective Jewish strength represented by the Conference. The Israelis courted the Conference; they briefed the chairman of the Conference more frequently and government representatives appeared more often before its membership. A new relationship was forged between the Conference and the Israeli government. The Committee, as a result, became less important.

The increased role of the Presidents' Conference and the resulting diminished role of the Committee was also the by-product of a new era in Israel-American relations. Since the Six Day War, greater publicity has been given by the United States to the growing "alliance" between itself and Israel. The role of American Jewry in support of Israel was given a more public exposure, by the American government and by American Jews themselves, and was given quasi-formal recognition as a linkage actor. The role of prominent individuals decreased as the position of organizational leaders qua heads of mass organizations increased in importance.

The Committee's particular forte, developed over the years, is the maintenance of contacts with non-Jewish groups. It works actively on interreligious activities with the dual purpose of improving relations between Jews and non-Jews in the United States and increasing the latter's understanding of

and sympathy for Israel. Its community relations activities which benefit both the Jewish community and Israel have all but replaced the linkage role it played in the first two decades of Israel's independence.

The Presidents' Conference

The Presidents' Conference was organized in 1955 out of a growing concern for unified action by major American Jewish organizations to help promote peace and stability in the Middle East. Its primary organizer was Dr. Nahum Goldmann, an American Jewish leader who had been actively involved in the struggle for the Jewish state and later, in negotiations for reparations to Jewish victims of Nazism from the German government. The Conference began as a consultative body; care was taken not to infringe upon the independence of the constituent members. It was called the "Presidents' Club" and was indeed a club of Jewish leaders who met regularly to discuss problems relating to Israel-American relations. Its power to decide policy was kept deliberately limited; each organization maintained its independence on policy issues. Nonetheless, on questions relating to Israel, the new organization represented the only single address to whom both the Israeli and American governments could turn when they wanted to hold discussions with the representatives of the entire Jewish community.

The Presidents' Conference, now representing thirty-two American Jewish organizations, is still mainly a consultative and coordinating body. All its decisions must be made unanimously. Thus, discussions are oriented toward achieving consensus and compromise among the members. Criticisms of Israeli policies are voiced in internal discussions but are never expressed in the collective public statements issued. These criticism may also be told directly to Israeli representatives. In 1966, the Conference voted to become the representative body of the constituent organizations rather than only the meeting club of their leaders. The latter were given the latitude to represent their organizations in policy discussions and votes.

The Chairman's report of activities of the Presidents' Conference for the period February 12, 1965 - March 2, 1966 indicates the direction and activities of the Conference:

Significant steps were taken in the past year to further the goals of the Presidents' Conference.

In addition to its American-Israel responsibilities, the Conference continues to act in the area of international Jewish affairs, consulting with high government officials and leading ambassadorial figures.

-- ongoing relations with our State Department remain constant. We have met with Secretary of State Dean Rusk, and members of the Near East and South East Asian desk at the State Department -- Philips Talbot, Raymond Hare and his staff.

-- the Conference consults frequently with Israeli officials here, and with members of the Israel Mission to the United Nations. We have met also with Mrs. Golda Meir when she visited this country --

-- we have met with today's leading political figures in Germany - Chancellor Ludwig Erhard, Ambassador Karl Heinrich Knapstein, Dr. Rainer Barzel (leader of the Majority Party of the German Bundestag), Mayor Willy Brandt of West Berlin, and others.

-- We have expressed ourselves on a variety of subjects:

- the presence of German scientists in Egypt
- peace and security in the Middle East
- diplomatic recognition of Israel
- economic negotiations with Israel

-- We have met with Ambassador Braj Kumer Nehru of India to promote better Indian relations with Israel. We shall continue our efforts with the Indian government, particularly in view of Mrs. Ghandi's visit to this country.²⁸

The list of activities continued regarding Conference activities on the issue of the Arab boycott and on behalf of Soviet Jewry and Greek Jews residing in Turkey. The entire Conference membership met thirteen times during that period. It was a period relatively devoid of crises for Jewry, in Israel and in the Diaspora.

The constituent organizations represent the broad spectrum of American Jewish life. Communal-defense, Zionist, religious, and fraternal organizations belong. The frequent meetings of the Conference enable the Jewish

community to share information, exchange views and most important, pursue cooperative action "to insure the security of the Jewish people in Israel and the world over."²⁹

The official registered pro-Israel lobby, AIPAC (the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee) is a member of the Conference. Thus, the membership is kept well informed of AIPAC campaigns in Washington and participates in the planning of strategy to attain pro-Israel policy goals. On the board of directors of AIPAC sit the presidents of virtually all major Jewish organizations. There is coordination of activities within the community and a minimization of overkill. AIPAC is expressly authorized to represent the views of the Presidents' Conference, and by implication, the overwhelming majority of the organized Jewish community. Part of the effectiveness of the Israel lobby in the United States can be attributed to the efficient information distribution system it has within the organized Jewish community. Back up action, in the form of phone calls, mailgrams, personal contacts, public statements, is guaranteed to AIPAC because of its ties with national Jewish organizations and with their grassroot branches on the local level.³⁰

Most Jewish organizations devote a large proportion of their political, cultural, social, and philanthropic activities to Israel-related themes. Since 1966, the Presidents' Conference has become the focal point of coordinating Israel-related community action. Likewise, the chairmen of the Conference, because of their representative role rather than because of their own personal prominence, have become the spokesmen of the entire Jewish community. In its first decade, the prestige of the Conference was dependent on the personal prominence of the chairmen.³¹ Today, the chairman of the Conference, whom-ever he may be, gains importance because of his representative role.

The Conference itself operates on a small budget, It has one professional on its staff. It draws upon the staff of member organizations such as the American Jewish Congress to prepare its public statements and reports.

Since the Six Day War in 1967, the Presidents' Conference has played an increasingly more prominent role in Israel-American relations. Israeli officials appear on a more regular basis to brief the membership on Israeli policies, both political and economic. The Chairman of the Presidents' Conference travels periodically to meet with Israeli leaders and is given V. I. P. treatment. The American government also began to accord greater respect and importance to the Conference, in part because the latter was now kept better informed by the Israelis. The White House during the Nixon and Carter administrations frequently invited a delegation from the Presidents' Conference to meet with the President or Secretary of State to discuss issues separating the Israeli and American governments. The Conference gained importance in its linkage role as both governments sought to explain to it their views. When those views diverged considerably, as for example during the Carter administration on the issue of settlements on the West Bank, the Presidents' Conference found itself the primary target of the American administration's persuasion efforts.

In chapter four, I will discuss how the linkage role operates. I will examine how American Jewish leaders are recruited by the Israeli government or by the American government to act as linkage actors between the two governments. How does the Israeli government keep Jewish leaders and their constituents informed and supportive of Israeli interests? Is the linkage role restricted to the elected leaders of the Jewish community or are other Jews linkage actors in Israel-American relations? These questions will be discussed in the next chapter.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER III

¹Mark R. Levy and Michael S. Kramer, The Ethnic Factor: How America's Minorities Decide Elections (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1972), pp. 95-100.

²Daniel J. Elazar, Community and Polity: The Organizational Dynamics of American Jewry (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1976), p. 7.

³Ibid., p. 8.

⁴Stephen D. Isaacs, Jews and American Politics (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1974), p. 7.

⁵Assimilation and zero population growth, adopted with enthusiasm by many Jewish couples, are the most serious problems facing American Jewry in the 1980s. The Jewish community is becoming increasingly smaller.

⁶Charles Liebman, Pressure Without Sanctions: The Influence of World Jewry on Israeli Policy (Cranbury: Associated University Press, 1977), pp. 198-200.

⁷Charles Liebman, The Ambivalent American Jew (Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1973), p. 88.

⁸Ibid., pp. 92-96.

⁹For a detailed discussion, see Liebman, ibid.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 92.

¹¹See Arthur Morse, While Six Million Died: A Chronicle of American Apathy (New York: Random House, 1967) and Henry L. Feingold, The Politics of Rescue: The Roosevelt Administration and the Holocaust, 1938-1945 (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1970)

¹²Ibid., Morse and Feingold.

¹³See Arthur Hertzberg, "Israel and American Jewry", Commentary, Vol. 44, August, 1967, p. 69.

¹⁴Marshall Sklare, Joseph Greenblum and Benjamin B. Ringer, Not Quite At Home (New York: Institute of Human Relations Press, American Jewish Committee, 1969), p. 32.

- ¹⁵ Liebman, Pressure Without Sanctions, p. 202.
- ¹⁶ Marc Lee Raphael, Understanding American Jewish Philanthropy (New York: Ktav, 1979), p. 30.
- ¹⁷ Ibid., p. 113.
- ¹⁸ George E. Gruen, "Aspects and Prospects of the Interaction Between American Jews and Israel", Reprinted from Conference on American-Jewish Dilemmas, 1971.
- ¹⁹ Isaacs, Jews and American Politics, p. 13.
- ²⁰ Ibid., p. 130.
- ²¹ Lawrence Fuchs, The Political Behavior of American Jews (Glencoe, Illinois, 1956) p. 45.
- ²² Most vocal in their criticism was the anti-Zionist American Council for Judaism.
- ²³ Elazar, Community and Polity, p. 206.
- ²⁴ Charter of the American Jewish Committee in In Vigilant Brotherhood (New York: The American Jewish Committee, Institute of Human Relations, 1965), p. 5.
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ Ibid., p. 54.
- ²⁷ Henry Feingold, A Jewish Survival Enigma: The Strange Case of the American Jewish Committee (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1981), p. 11.
- ²⁸ Files, The Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, February 12, 1965-March 2, 1966.
- ²⁹ See Yearly Report of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, 1975.
- ³⁰ Marvin C. Feuerwerker, Congress and Israel: Foreign Aid Decision-making in the House of Representatives, 1969-1976 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979), p. 92.
- ³¹ In its early years, the Conference gained prestige through the personal prominence of its leadership, for example, men like Nahum Goldmann and Philip Klutznick.

CHAPTER IV

Channels of Communication Between the Israeli Government and American Jews

American Jews, as represented by the elected leadership of multiple Jewish organizations, seek to play a role in furthering good relations between the United States and Israel. This goal of maintaining close ties of friendship between the two countries is second in importance only to that of protecting the Jewish community from any outbreak of anti-Semitism in the United States. Partly for reasons of self-interest, American Jews want their government to consider the Jewish state a friend and dependable ally, whose political system, policies and foreign policy interests are congruent with its own. Such close ties minimize any threat to the balance of loyalties of American Jews, *i. e.*, they are not forced to make a choice between allegiance and support for the United States government and its policies, and emotional, ethnic support for the survival and prosperity of the Jewish state. Some American Jews may have underlying and often unstated fear that if there ever arose a situation in which Israel policies clash with stated American interests, Jewish support for Israel may be misconstrued by certain elements of the American population as disloyalty to the United States. This could trigger the worst of all possible scenarios - an upsurge of anti-Semitism in America. Couched in anti-Israel or anti-Zionist tones, accusations of un-American activities by groups eager to arouse an anti-Semitic backlash could be the nightmarish result. Thus the possibility of discord between Washington and Jerusalem is viewed by some as a threat to the security of American Jews and raises serious questions as to what responsible political actions should American Jews take to prevent it.

How should American Jews, as individuals and as an organized community, react if there develops a rift between the two governments? Need the community qua community take a public stand at all? Should there be a collective response or should each group and/or individual decide for himself according to his own self-interest and conscience? Perhaps the best response is silence, to allow the governments to resolve the conflict through negotiations and compromise without Jewish intervention. Should American Jews openly express opposition to Israeli policies if they disagree with them or would the damage to Israel's standing in the United States generally, and among American Jews in particular, be too great to risk?

American Jews have, in the past, strongly preferred avoiding these dilemmas by working diligently behind the scenes to avoid conflict. A former President of the B'nai Brith and Chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations (from now on to be referred to as the Presidents' Conference), Philip Klutznick, described Jewish interests thus:

I feel as an American Jew that I have a dual obligation but not a double loyalty . . . I have an obligation to my country in any way I can (I spent thirteen years in government service) . . . I have an obligation to my people from which I stem. I try as well as I know how to keep them from conflict, and to avoid conflict, I do whatever I can to bring them together. There are times when that can't happen and then I have to make some very serious decisions. At times these are not easy. It would be much more relaxing not being a "Jewish leader" in the critical contests that arise between Israel and the United States government. I try to discharge my obligation by realizing that there's not always a 100% right and a 100% wrong . . . I have found it difficult but satisfying to be helpful where I could to both and unhappy when I had to make a choice . . .

I think the role of an American Jewish leader is to try to keep tranquility and a spirit of cooperation between Israel and the United States, recognizing that on occasion, you cannot do it . . .

This emphasis on "tranquility and cooperation" is a common theme expressed by many Jewish leaders. American Jews seek to strengthen the bonds

between the two countries and to minimize conflict not only out of self-interest but in the strong belief that it is in the American national interest as well. American Jewish leaders firmly believe that strong, friendly relations with Israel are very much the interest of the United States. They feel supported by public declarations by American political leaders of both parties, e. g. , Israel is a bastion of democracy in the Middle East, a faithful ally of the United States, an independent ally (i. e. , it does not request American troops to assist it in times of crisis or to defend its borders). Israel has proved itself to have a stable government and to have the ability to defend itself when under attack. It is firmly committed to an alliance with the West, unlike its Arab neighbors who shifted alliances between East and West with changes of their governments or policy. This view of the American interest lowers the levels of dissonance engendered by support for two independent states.

This congruity of interests was described by Rabbi Joachim Prinz, former president of the American Jewish Congress and former chairman of the Presidents' Conference. Prinz was asked, "Was there ever a conflict between what you thought was the American interest and what was the interest of the State of Israel?" He replied,

I don't think so. The basic thought was that the maintenance and strengthening of Israel was in the interest of the United States government and its interests in the Middle East. That was the assumption. Not that America is kind to the Jews or that America loves Israel, but that it had some very concrete interests in maintaining a strong Israel.²

Rabbi Prinz was active in Jewish affairs for over forty years. He considers himself to be somewhat of a maverick, an "independent thinker", who has often criticized Israeli officials in private about particular policy choices. Nonetheless, he considers his role as a leader of American Jewish "forces" in support of Israel (and of its good relations with the United States) as one with which he feels comfortable and which is truly compatible with American foreign policy interests.

During the period under study, with the exception of the Suez crisis in 1956 when there was a serious clash between Israeli actions and policy goals and

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the view of the American government, the United States and Israel maintained good relations and ties of friendship. This is not to say that each did not make difficult demands on the other, e. g. , Israeli requests for greater economic and military assistance; Israeli requests for a security pact with the United States; American pressures to solve the Palestine refugee problem; and American condemnation of Israeli retaliatory raids across its borders. But, on the whole, the United States government considered it in its foreign policy interest to support a strong and independent Israel and to develop economic, cultural and technological ties with it. This, of course, made the task of American Jewish leaders easier and all the more pleasant. They were able to work on behalf of Israeli interests and not feel any strain on their loyalties.

How did American Jewish leaders keep informed of Israel's needs? What channels of communication transmitted this information from the Israeli government to Jewish leaders? Were there periodic meetings? Were there exchanges of view, or did one side simply dictate and the other passively accept? To answer these questions, we must examine the nature and purpose of the briefings.

The briefing

Israeli officials conducted briefing sessions with American Jewish leaders on a periodic basis. Their frequency was dependent on political developments in the Middle East and on the urgency of issues that concerned Israeli policy makers and the American government. The briefing may have taken several forms and may have been either formal or informal, conveying detailed or general information. Its primary goal was to inform. The Israeli Foreign Office determined which information should be conveyed to American Jews in order, first, to gain their understanding and sympathy for Israeli policy, and second, to gain their active support for the effort to secure greater understanding and/or tangible support from the American public, Congress and the White House.

The quantity and detail of information conveyed depended on several factors; the confidentiality of the topic, the reputation of the listener(s) for discretion and silence, and the knowledge and ability of the listener to comprehend the complexity of the issues involved. Thus the briefing varied according to the kind of information to be revealed and the nature of the audience to receive it. The larger the audience was, the less confidential the information and the lower the level of complexity. In private conversations with select individuals, there was a greater possibility of maintaining secrecy and of explaining more complex, detailed information.

The audience: Jewish leaders meet together

Several times a year, an Israeli diplomat, either the Ambassador to Washington, the Ambassador to the United Nations, the First Political Secretary, or the Consul-General in New York, would appear before the Presidents' Conference and review for them the political situation in the Middle East or current Israeli relations with the Administration in Washington as Israel viewed them. Before such an audience, the tone was generally low-keyed. The information conveyed was minimally detailed and non-confidential. Problems were outlined and policy goals explained in simple layman's terms. The American Jewish leaders present, all presidents of national Jewish organizations, were neither weapons specialists nor economic experts. Most were not particularly well informed on global power politics or internal developments in the Middle East. Admittedly, their knowledge and understanding of Israel's problems and politics was greater and more sophisticated than that of their respective constituencies, but that did not mean much. Overall, their degree of competence in Middle East matters was very limited.

One former Israeli diplomat who served in Washington described the level of one such briefing:

The Ambassador went to brief the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations in the mid-sixties. But what did the briefing consist of? The Arabs are strong; there is a

military build-up. Israel is weak; we are not getting arms. The Jews reacted with great sympathy. "Oy vey! We will try to help you!" But what did it really mean? Could they speak intelligently to anyone in the State Department about the need to sell Israel arm? They did not begin to understand arms sales. So we talked to them in simple terms and they felt very important that we told them ...

This particular diplomat belittled the capabilities of American Jewish leaders to understand Israeli problems and to be of significant assistance to Israel. In the Israeli Foreign Office, he represented a minority view which minimized the importance of the political involvement of American Jews on behalf of Israel. This difference of view concerning the importance of American Jewish activities will be discussed in a later chapter. Nonetheless, the diplomat quoted here correctly suggests an important limitation of American Jewish leaders. The average Jewish leader was usually an intelligent, shrewd businessman or professional who had a strong commitment to furthering Israel's growth and prosperity. However, he had no expertise on technical matters, and, at best, a little second-hand knowledge about political, social and economic conditions in Israel. He was, though, an important leader of Jewish public opinion who would return to his constituency, the members of a national Jewish organization, and report to them the Israeli assessment of current political affairs. To his membership, he was an expert -- after all, he had been personally "briefed" by a high level Israeli diplomat. Thus, he was "in the know", and at his recommendation, the membership would mobilize its financial resources and public opinion forces to support whatever requests their leader transmitted from the Israeli representative.

The Jewish leader might report to the delegates at the organization's annual meeting, to its Committee on Middle East Affairs, and/or write an article in the membership newsletter describing the briefing, and of course, "their President's important participation" in it. It is important here to indicate that although the quantity and quality of information revealed at a meeting of the Presidents' Conference was of a general and limited nature, it was more specific and "confidential" than that which might be expressed by an Israeli diplomat in

an interview with a television network reporter or in a speech at an organization affair, such as the annual Zionist Organization of America dinner, or at a fund raising event for Israel Bonds. The latter type speeches are intended to inspire the audience. The dinner speech was usually replete with statements such as "Israel must live!" or "A strong Israel is a strong guarantee of American interests in the Middle East" and was responded to with predictable, enthusiastic applause. If the speaker did inject some specific information about a particular problem facing Israel, it was a very successful tactic. It made each individual present at the dinner feel very important and honored that "he" was among those chosen by Israel to be taken into its confidence about its problem. This sense of self-importance was often then translated into a greater financial contribution to Israel, a letter to a Congressman on Israel's behalf, and a stronger feeling of identification with Israel, its needs and goals.⁴

An example of a typical briefing in a non-crisis period was a meeting of the Presidents' Conference held on November 21, 1961, at the United Nations to hear a report from the Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Michael Comay. The topic was the Arab refugee problem, then under discussion at the United Nations. Rabbi Irving Miller, chairman of the Conference, opened the meeting. It is interesting to note his explanatory introduction. "The meeting is going to be devoted to the question of the Arab refugee problem, which is now to be debated at the United Nations. In order to know what we should do and what your tasks on this important matter will be, we felt that we ought to be briefed both by the Ambassador of Israel as well as the Ambassador from our own country ..."⁵ Rabbi Miller clearly stated the purpose of the briefing from the point of view of American Jewish leaders -- to obtain up-to-date information to assist them in deciding what action, if any, the Conference should take.

Ambassador Comay began his remarks with a request that the discussion remain "off the record" and confidential, to enable a free exchange of ideas. He then described the situation in the United Nations at the General Assembly session. The Arabs, he said, had begun a campaign to transform the Arab refugee problem

into a discussion of the "rights of the Palestinian people." Such a change, in Israel's view, would have serious consequences for Israel if accepted by the member nations. Comay assessed the Arab chance for success and analyzed the support Israel expected from friendly nations. He expressed Israel's dissatisfaction with the American position which opposed an African resolution calling for direct negotiations between parties in the Middle East.⁶ He then agreed to answer questions from the representatives but did not suggest to them what actions they should take to promote Israel's position.

After Ambassador Comay concluded his remarks, Rabbi Miller expressed on behalf of the Presidents' Conference, their appreciation for the presentation, saying, "I think you will all agree with me that we have reason to be grateful to Ambassador Comay for the frankness with which he spoke to us. I think we now realize what confronts Israel and what will confront us when this debate gets under way. From this point of view, this meeting and what heard will be of tremendous value to us . . ." He announced the later meeting with U. S. Ambassador Plimpton, adding: "Then I will convene a meeting of our Technical Sub-Committee for the purpose of discussion in practical terms, what we are called upon to do at this time . . . We don't want to stir up public opinion too much, but there is no question that public opinion is vocal and there is something that the Presidents' Conference can do."⁷ It is clear from the minutes of the meeting that the Presidents' Conference wanted to get involved in Israel's cause and viewed any debate affecting Israel its concern.

The subject of the briefing was strictly limited to the then ongoing maneuvering at the United Nations on the refugee problem. In this case, the Israeli Ambassador revealed to them information which was unreported in the press (for one thing, because of its lack of interest for the general public) and conveyed to them a feeling of urgency on the matter.

The Presidents' Conference subsequently decided to send a delegation to speak with the Assistant Secretary of State for Middle Eastern Affairs at the

State Department to express American Jewish support for the United Nations resolution proposed by the Brazzaville group of African nations which called for direct negotiations between the Arabs and Israel to reach a peaceful settlement. The United States opposed this resolution, in part, in order not to antagonize moderate Arab states. The Israeli government supported it, consistent with its policy of demanding that direct negotiations be the first step in resolving the Middle East conflict. The member organizations of the Presidents' Conference planned to send carefully worded letters to President Kennedy, Secretary of State Rusk and to United Nations Ambassador Stevenson expressing their hope that the United States will support the resolution.⁸

The purpose of the briefing

The subjects of the briefings varied. Often, as in the example above, the briefing served several purposes. First and foremost, it provided the Israeli representative with a valuable opportunity to explain Israel's position on a variety of issues to a group of influential, sympathetic American citizens. This was important as a means of influencing American public opinion irrespective of the religious or ethnic identification of the audience. American Jews are represented in all the professions, in education, and in civic organizations and are thus useful "transmitters" of opinion to the general American public.⁹ The Embassy was interested in explaining Israel's position to all segments of the American population and sought meetings with non-Jewish groups and leaders as well. However, with Jewish groups, there was a difference. The diplomat did not have to begin with basics. He did not have to justify the establishment of the State of Israel nor give an introductory talk about the plight of Jewry before, during and after the European holocaust. American Jewish leaders, on the whole, had Jewish interests at heart, and the Jews living in Israel were an important part of their concern. The leaders may have differed at times with Israeli policies and attitudes but underneath the surface differences was a bond based on common traditions, history and, significantly, a feeling of common "fate." This last

feeling was more or less left unstated and was perhaps underestimated in its importance until the Six Day War in June, 1967, when the enormity of the threat to Israel shook the foundations of security of Jews the world over, and in the United States as well.¹⁰ After the briefing, the American Jewish leader reported to his constituents who, in turn, might influence their neighbors, friends, colleagues at work, etc. They are what Gabriel Almond refers to as the "attentive public" which is informed and interested in foreign-policy problems.¹¹ Thus the briefing contributed to the establishment of a favorable climate of public opinion for Israel in the United States.

The second purpose of the general information briefing was to motivate the listeners not only to sympathize emotionally or intellectually with Israel, but to take some kind of action in support of Israel's cause. It must be convincing in its arguments and leave open options for American Jewish initiatives. Jewish leaders might decide on several possible courses of action:

1) The public outcry -- organizing public demonstrations and mass meetings of their respective memberships to protest a particular government policy toward Israel. Public statements might be issued and joint declarations of the membership sent to the President and to Congressmen. There are several goals intended: a) to bring to the government's attention the strong sentiments in the Jewish community on a particular issue. This may be especially important and effective in an election year. The government may not have appreciated the salience of the issue within the Jewish community. b) to gain the attention of the mass media. It is hoped that the media will take a sympathetic interest in the problem and therefore report on it "sympathetically" at length. Thus, via the media, the public will be informed and greater support gathered. The government then may be forced to respond more positively in light of heightened public interest on the issue. Elected officials whose political interests may be affected may be persuaded to reconsider their decision. In 1957, several organizations organized public demonstrations (the largest of them in Madison Square Garden in New York City) to protest the threatened economic

sanctions to be imposed by the United States and other members of the United Nations. Similar protests were held in June 1967 in an effort to gain government support for Israel. c) to unite Jewish groups and their memberships behind their leaders. The mass demonstrations give the participant a strong sense of belonging to a community of common interests and the feeling that he is indeed doing his part for Israel. The importance of this reinforcement should not be underestimated. It strengthens the sense of purpose of the community as a whole in the crisis at hand and for the future.

2) Letter writing, telegrams, to members of Congress and to the Administration -- The organizations mail to their members printed material describing the up-to-date situation in Israel and explaining the Israeli position on the issues. Also included is an article expressing the opinion of their American Jewish leaders and their call for action. This might include a request that a member contact his or her Congressman or write to the President to ask his support for the Israeli position. American Jewish support for Israel's cause is explained in the mailing solely in terms of the American interest in the Middle East or in the interest of "fairness" to a loyal ally and friend. Often, the leadership would include the suggested wording of the telegram or letter to be sent and a list of designated recipients. This method was usually marginally effective in gaining a representative's attention and sympathy, since it was often transparent that the letters and telegrams were engineered and centrally planned by a particular organized interest group. Thus they might be disregarded as being unrepresentative of general grassroots opinion.¹²

3) Lobbying in Congress -- The leadership of the Jewish organizations might decide to organize a coordinated offensive on both Houses of Congress with the aim of rounding up support for Israel's position. The purpose was often to gain the representatives' support for a specific military aid or economic assistance bill then under discussion, or to recruit signatures for a declaration to the President opposing a proposed administration policy. One example of this was the American Jewish effort to gain the support of the leadership in the Senate

for a declaration opposing economic sanctions against Israel in March 1957. President Eisenhower indicated on February 6, 1957, that the United States would support the United Nations if it called for economic sanctions against Israel.¹³ The American Jewish Committee in an internal memorandum claimed a part of the credit for organizing the opposition of the Senate leadership to economic sanctions. It reported that the Committee's foreign affairs expert, Nathaniel Goodrich, arranged to meet with an assistant to Senator Lyndon Johnson. Also present at the meeting was I. E. Kenen, the Washington director of the American Zionist Committee for Public Affairs¹⁴ who provided the precise technical information. Goodrich convinced the assistant of the desirability of opposing sanctions publicly. Subsequently, Senator Johnson contacted Senator Knowland, Minority Leader of the Senate, and the two arranged to meet with Secretary of State Dulles on this matter. Both later publicly opposed the imposition of economic sanctions against Israel. Goodrich suggested that it was Johnson's intercession in this matter that turned the tide in Israel's favor against sanctions.¹⁵

The New York Times reported on February 20, 1957, that President Eisenhower returned to Washington to confront a Senate "up in arms" against any prospect of United Nations sanctions against Israel. The opposition was bipartisan. Columnist Drew Pearson wrote, "Arriving at the White House, Ike blew off steam privately against Israel and at what he called the 'Jewish lobby!'"¹⁶ He then met with Congressional leaders in an attempt to explain the Administration's position. American Jewish intervention with key Congressional leaders, who were already sympathetic to Israel, is likely to have been effective in gaining bi-partisan support for a Congressional rejection of sanctions. From Pearson's article, it is apparent that at least one person thought so -- the President of the United States. The belief that the "Jewish lobby" is so powerful has perhaps a greater effect than the specific effort actually made by American Jews, i. e., the myth of its power is often its greatest strength.

Another interesting example of an effort to influence Congressional opinion and action was in 1969 when American Jews organized their efforts to try to get the White House to authorize the sale of fifty Phantom supersonic fighter bombers to Israel. The Israeli government requested authorization to purchase fifty American built Phantoms as part of its efforts to strengthen and modernize its Air Force after the June 1967 war. The request was first made public in mid-December 1967. The French government, which had been the major arms supplier to Israel in the period 1956-1967 had announced an arms embargo of all military equipment to Israel. This was actualized by its refusal to deliver fifty Mirage fighters to Israel that had been ordered before the war. Soon after the war, the Soviet Union began a massive resupply of arms to its Arab client states. The Israeli government explained their request for Phantoms as being crucial to the state's security and as a necessary and important demonstration of continued American support for Israel in light of Soviet activities in the area.

The State Department opposed the arms sale, viewing it as an unnecessary escalation of the arms race in the Middle East. They contended that Israel's security was not threatened and that shipments of sophisticated offensive aircraft such as the Phantoms would have a destabilizing effect on the region. The State Department wanted to "deescalate" the conflict by limiting military supplies to the area. Both sides worked to influence the decision of the President who withheld his decision until October 1968. The targets of Jewish lobbying pressure were the White House and both Houses of Congress. The latter sponsored several resolutions calling on the President to authorize the sale of the Phantoms to Israel.

Some insight into the nature of the pressure can be gleaned from a letter sent by the Chairman of the Presidents' Conference to the member organizations in which he writes, "At this writing, may we urge that you continue to enlist the support of Congressmen and Senators for the sale of the fifty Phantoms jets to Israel. As you may know, the House Resolution was "watered down" in the

Senate last week. A Senate-House conference will be reconciling the differences."¹⁷

Lucius Battle, the Assistant Secretary of State for Middle East Affairs in 1968, described the heavy pressure on the State Department and on the President from both the Congress and from Jewish groups thus: "LBJ told me at the ranch that never in all his years of political life did he have such political pressure -- from Jewish groups and Congressional pressure." The President, finding the pressure almost irresistible, asked Battle for better arguments against the sale of the Phantoms, saying, "You have to give me more reason not to do it . . ."¹⁸ The pressure was effective; in October 1968, the President authorized the sale.

4) Quiet diplomacy -- Often, when an Israeli foreign policy decision clashed with the stated position of the American government, Jewish leaders went to Washington to discuss the matter with officials at the State Department. Usually, prior to their visit, the Jewish leaders met with Israeli representatives who explained to them Israel's interests and some of the reasons behind its decision. The purpose of the visit to the State Department was to listen to an explanation of the Department's position on the issue and to inform the government of the keen interest American Jews have in an amicable resolution of the difference between the two governments. Often, they would suggest that the United States alter its policy to one more favorable to Israel because of what they perceived to be in the interest of both the United States and Israel. These discussions were usually held with the Secretary of State, the Assistant Secretary of State for Middle East Affairs, or his subordinate. The meetings were cordial and often the parties discussed several issues of specific interest to both countries. It is difficult to determine if the American Jewish leaders' visits ever succeeded in altering State Department policy. They probably never did. Nonetheless, the State Department, Jewish representatives and Israeli leaders considered these discussions to be useful. The State Department used the opportunity to convey to the representatives of a group of American citizens its view of the Middle East

situation and to explain its perception of the American interest when formulating American foreign policy for the Middle East. It is interested in maintaining ties with concerned citizens on particular foreign policy issues, in part, to generate a climate of public opinion favorable for them.¹⁹

The Jewish groups, on the other hand, want Israel's case to get a hearing, especially in view of its lonely status of being one state against numerous Arab countries in the Middle East. The Arab case was represented by Arab diplomats from twenty-two Arab states. Thus, the American Jewish community saw itself as an additional advocate for Israel's interests, providing, of course, it was in the American national interest as well. (A more in-depth discussion of State Department-American Jews relations will follow in Chapter VI.)

An example of this continuous dialogue between American Jewish leaders and the State Department was on the question of arms sales to Israel that arose in the winter of 1965. The New York Times reported on January 31, 1965, that the United States secretly gave permission to West Germany to transfer a number of American-made tanks to Israel. The United States was concerned over increased Soviet arms shipments to the United Arab Republic and thus authorized the secret transfer. Neither the United States nor West Germany had wanted the arms deal publicized lest it cause grave repercussions to their relations with Arab states. West Germany did not want Nasser to retaliate against it by recognizing East Germany. One week after this report, Bonn, yielding to immense Arab pressure, agreed to suspend military shipments to Israel. The Presidents' Conference issued a public statement on February 15, 1965, expressing its "anguish and bitter disappointment" over the West German decision.²⁰ It met subsequently with Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Abba Eban to discuss the matter and to be briefed on the possible consequences for Israel's security. The press release issued by the Presidents' Conference after the meeting said:

American Jews will urge the United States to use its good offices to persuade West Germany to remain faithful to its commitments and to resist Egyptian threats motivated by a publicly declared

intention to destroy Israel. Neither as Americans nor as Jews do we intend to remain silent witnesses to the unfolding of these events.²¹

The American Jewish leaders sought a meeting with Secretary of State Dean Rusk to urge him to exercise the State Department's influence in urging West Germany to resume arms deliveries to Israel. The meeting took place between Secretary Rusk and a delegation from the Presidents' Conference on March 16. Secretary Rusk explained that it was in the American interest to maintain a presence in the Middle East, *i. e.*, good relations with moderate Arab states and restrain from antagonizing Nasser. He listened to American Jewish arguments pertaining to arms shipments from Germany but refused to discuss specific developments on that question or on the subject of German-Israel relations. Also discussed at the meeting was the American position toward Arab water diversionary projects and the Israeli claim to a portion of the water under the earlier Middle East water plan.²² The Secretary expressed the Department's opposition to the Williams-Javits bill then before the Congress, which would forbid American companies to comply with the Arab economic boycott of Israel. The meeting was reported to have had "a frank exchange of views by both sides,"²³ a diplomatically phrased description of "nothing substantial accomplished."²⁴

Another channel of quiet diplomacy led directly to the White House. Meetings with the President were more difficult to arrange, usually shorter in time, and often less specific in content than were meetings with the State Department. Often, they were merely ceremonial, *e. g.*, when President Kennedy invited representatives of Jewish groups to the White House to be present when he announced the sale of Hawk missiles to Israel. (September, 1962) The President arranged a gathering of Jewish leaders, at the advice of his political advisors (some of whom were involved in Jewish affairs) in order to reap public relations benefits from the picture of a very pleased American Jewish leadership enthusiastically supporting a welcome Presidential action.²⁵ The President

also enabled American Jewish leaders to capitalize on their invitation to the White House. It enhanced their prestige in the eyes of their membership to be one of those "selected" to meet with the President of the United States. The President gained their appreciation at no additional political cost to himself.

A delegation from the Presidents' Conference met with President Eisenhower on September 14, 1960. The meeting was at their request. The topic of discussion was Jewish concern over the upcoming visit of Gamal Abdul Nasser to the United States and the seating of the United Arab Republic in the Security Council. Press Secretary Haggerty was present at the meeting, and apparently, did most of the talking, replying to the suggestions of the Jewish delegates. The President reassured them that seating the United Arab Republic in the Security Council was relatively unimportant, and that Nasser's visit would not be granted an official White House welcome. The minutes of the meeting suggest that the meeting was one of courtesy by the President, with perhaps an interest in increasing support for the Republican party among Jewish voters in the upcoming elections. At the meeting, no serious Middle East problems were discussed; no new information divulged, nor did they resolve any differences between the position of the United States government and the views of American Jews.²⁶ Both parties were satisfied with the meeting; the Jews had met the President. The President had charmed a few citizens who would return to their constituencies and report glowingly of their encounter. It is interesting that in discussions with former chairmen of the Presidents' Conference, each eagerly boasted that he had met with one or more Presidents of the United States. Each described these meetings as evidence of the important role the Conference, as representative of American Jewish concern for Israel, played in Israel-United States relations. The specific meetings they recalled were in the main limited to the staged public relations gatherings at the White House, which the Jewish leaders were more than happy to attend.

Generally, American Jewish leaders of organizations had little direct access to the White House. Thus, most of their quiet diplomacy was directed at

the State Department, which had an established policy of meeting with groups of citizens interested in foreign policy. Access to the White House, however, was not blocked to Jewish influence. Quite the contrary, there were several prominent individual Jews who were intimate personal friends, advisors or assistants to several Presidents and had close contact with them. These men also had close ties with some American Jewish leaders. For example, Abraham Feinberg in the Truman and Johnson administrations, Philip Klutznick in the Kennedy administration, and Arthur Krim in the Johnson administration, had easy access to the President. They were able to gain a President's ear and time to discuss Israel's problem with him. The Israeli government recognized that these individuals were crucial components of their diplomatic effort in the United States. They were "wined and dined" by the Embassy and their support cultivated. They were kept well informed by the highest level representatives of the Israeli government in the United States. Their opinions were sought and often, their suggestions heeded. This important aspect of "quiet diplomacy" will be discussed below.

The audience: The private conference with a private individual or organizational leader.

Higher level briefings were held between a high-level Israeli diplomat and key Jewish leaders who may have access to American political leaders. This type of briefing was usually a more intimate encounter between the president of a particularly influential Jewish organization and the Ambassador or First Secretary at the Embassy, or a meeting between the latter and a prominent American Jew with close ties to the administration in Washington. The latter was usually in a position of leadership in a Jewish organization.

The Israeli embassy during the early years of statehood took particular care to be on very friendly terms with the leaders of the American Jewish Committee. This national organization had a small, limited membership, mainly from the upper social and economic strata of the American Jewish community.

Many were from older established Jewish families. They were prominent professionals or businessmen and one could venture to say, more assimilated into American life than the members of the Zionist Organization of America or the American Jewish Congress. The members of its Executive Committee were often active and very influential in the upper echelons of both political parties. Several, such as Jacob Blaustein and Fred Lazarus were big donors to party campaign coffers. They had contacts with members of Congress and with the Executive branch, and could, when necessary, wield some personal influence with them on behalf of Israel. Moreover, the leadership of the Committee was respected by American officials for its knowledge and so-called "balanced" approach to Middle East affairs. Thus, the Israelis thought, accurately, that the leadership of the Committee, rather than other Jewish groups, would get the warmest reception from the State Department, if they went on Israel's behalf, and their suggestions and criticisms of American policy in the Middle East given serious consideration. The Committee also distanced itself from the organized, umbrella Jewish organization, (it did not belong to the Presidents' Conference) and thus maintained a reputation of independence. Its earlier non-support for the Zionist cause in the period before World War II and its later careful self-definition as a "non-Zionist" organization increased its leadership's credibility as "independents" in the eyes of American officials. The Israeli Embassy, therefore, cultivated close ties with these men, kept them informed, heard their criticisms, and most of all, worked hard to maintain their support.

The private conference briefing with the President of an organization usually took place over breakfast or lunch in an informal setting. It was arranged at the initiative of either party. The frequency of these meetings depended upon the urgency of political events in the Middle East and the need for Jewish involvement in support for Israel's position. Thus, in the mid-1960s, when the Middle East had low priority on the agenda of American foreign policy makers and Israel's borders were relatively quiet, these meetings were less frequent and, when held, were devoted to a general review of the Middle East

situation. Occasionally, the American Jewish leader would request a meeting to seek an explanation of Israel's domestic policy which his organization viewed as contrary to "democratic principles" or harmful to Jewish interests in the Diaspora. The two would also discuss current problems facing various Jewish communities around the world and what, if any, common policy Israel and American Jewry (or the Committee) should adopt.

The following two examples of private conference briefings held between Israeli Ambassador to the United States Abba Eban and Irving Engel, President of the American Jewish Committee are typical of the detailed, more intimate type of briefing. Their source is the summaries of the meetings, labeled "confidential", prepared by Mr. Engel. Israeli records of these meetings are classified, closed for a period of thirty years. Both meetings described below took place under routine circumstances; that is, not during a crisis situation.

On May 29, 1956, Irving Engel and Ambassador Eban met over breakfast "for the purpose of discussing the Middle East situation".²⁷ From the ensuing remarks, it seems that the initiative for the meeting was Mr. Engel's. The following subjects were discussed:

1. Arms: Mr. Engel writes, "A large part of our discussion was devoted to this subject. Somewhat to my surprise, he (Eban) stated that, with the possible exception of jet fighters, they are now receiving arms in fair amounts." It is interesting to note the measure of surprise. It seems that in Engel's earlier discussions with the State Department this information was not disclosed. Engel was under the impression that the United States was not assisting Israel with arms. It is often apparent in reading reports of briefings, that the Israeli officials disclose more information, and are more frank in their discussions with American Jews than is the State Department.

Eban relates that the American government's public stand was still to refuse to ship arms to Israel. However, as a result of its disillusionment with Egypt, it had used its influence to induce other countries to make such shipments.

This, he suggests, did not save America from arousing the ire of the Arab states and at the same time, has annoyed some of America's allies whom it has been pressing to send arms to Israel. One example he mentioned was France. He then discussed the possibility of Israel receiving jet planes from Canada. He said that the Canadian government had delayed acceptance of the order for various reasons, one of them being that they objected to having Canada treated as "another Czechoslovakia".²⁸

2. Security pacts: Mr. Engel described his meeting with Secretary of State Dulles, held on December 7, 1955, during which he discussed the need for signing a security pact with Israel. Secretary of State Dulles rejected his suggestion of a security pact, indicating that the United States was in the midst of an offer to reach a friendly settlement with Egypt and thus an offer of a security pact with Israel would be untimely. He said that if in a few weeks' time these efforts were to prove unsuccessful, then they would reconsider the question of offering security pacts. Mr. Engel inquired whether Ambassador Eban thought "it would be desirable to pursue this matter further with Mr. Dulles at the present time." He replied in the affirmative and explained Israel's view of the matter.

The Ambassador then reviewed the following subjects:

3. events at the United Nations;
4. internal developments in Jordan;
5. Egypt's demands for a land bridge over the Negev;
6. Israel's plans to divert the water of the Jordan River.

This review was for the general purpose of keeping Engel informed of the Israeli perspective on these Middle East issues.

Then the two men discussed the problem of Israel's public relations in the United States. Mr. Engel writes, "I stated it was our impression that there had been considerable improvement in the attitude of the American public toward Israel in recent months. He (Eban) agreed with this and indicated an awareness

that our staff was working with his." Engel then discussed the issues that needed further effort in public relations -- Arab refugees, Arabs in Israel, internationalization of Jerusalem, bombardment of Gaza. These issues, he thought, were poorly understood by the American public, and the impression the public had was not sympathetic to the Israeli position. On the last point, Engel expressed his opinion that Israel had made a great mistake firing on Gaza and inflicting casualties on civilians. Mr. Eban explained and defended Israel's policy.²⁹

This meeting was one of many held between the Israeli ambassador and the head of a Jewish organization. Its purpose was, in the main, to keep both sides informed of political activity on Israel's behalf and to reenforce the bonds of friendship between them. The Israelis wanted to encourage good relations with the American Jewish Committee and that was its primary purpose in holding this kind of periodic briefing. Building up reserves of friendship among Jewish leaders was important in case of later periods of crisis when their assistance would be invaluable. Therefore, it was more important that these periodic consultations took place than what actually was discussed with them.

Another example of a private briefing was a meeting held three months later, on August 21, 1956, between Mr. Irving Engel and Ambassador Eban at the Ambassador's apartment in the Savoy-Plaza Hotel in New York. The conference was at the initiative and invitation of the Ambassador. Among the matters discussed were:

1. The Suez crisis: Mr. Eban analyzed the situation in the Middle East after Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal. He assessed Nasser's chances of remaining in power as poor since he was confronted with overwhelming domestic difficulties.

2. Arms to Israel: Mr. Eban disclosed that shortly before the Suez crisis arose, an agreement had been reached among the United States, Canada, and France, under which Canada and France were to furnish jet planes to Israel and the United States would furnish other military equipment. The three

countries planned to make a joint announcement to that effect. The seizure of the Canal produced a change. Now the United States was willing to proceed in accordance with the agreement, provided there was no publicity. Israeli officials are trying to convince Canadian authorities to agree to furnish the planes without insisting on a joint announcement.

At this point, Mr. Engel comments in his report, "There was a decided variance between the statements made to me by Mr. Dulles and those made by Eban on the subject of planes. Dulles not only failed to mention the agreement referred to by Eban, by which these planes would be furnished; he argued that the planes were really not necessary for Israel's defense."

This was another example of American Jewish discovery that the briefing given by the State Department did not include "up-to-date information", and even more significant, was not completely frank and forthcoming as the American Jewish leader had thought it had been. It seems that the Israeli representatives on this issue were more revealing -- perhaps because the need for absolute secrecy on the arms deal was an American quirk and not an Israeli one.

In a similar vein, the American Jewish leader learned a bit about interstate relations and diplomacy at this same briefing, during a discussion of a proposed bank loan for a water project to irrigate Israel's coastal plain. Mr. Engel cheerfully reported to Ambassador Eban that Mr. Dulles told him that the State Department had advised the bank it had "no objection" to the proposed loan. Engel assumed he was relating "good news" only to hear Eban explain that "the Department usually takes a more positive position with reference to applications which it would like to see granted." In other words, Dulles rather adroitly "manipulated" Mr. Engel, thus minimizing Jewish criticisms of the Department's policy toward Israel.

The rest of the discussion centered on the American Jewish Committee's dismay at particular Israeli policies which affected world Jewry. The first was their opposition to the action taken by the Israeli government and the Jewish

Agency³⁰ designating the World Jewish Congress as the sole negotiator with the Moroccan government on the subject of emigration of Moroccan Jews. This decision, according to Engel, counteracted the efforts that the American Jewish Committee had already made on behalf of Moroccan Jews. Mr. Eban expressed his agreement with the Committee's position and his own oppositions to the efforts of Mr. Nahum Goldmann and others to form a world Jewish organization to handle these matters exclusively. Whether Mr. Eban followed up this discussion and suggested to his government changes in their policy toward the Morocco negotiations remains doubtful.

The second "Jewish" matter discussed was the alleged discrimination against Reform Jews in Israel. Mr. Engel cited the refusal of the Israeli government to grant permission to Mr. Nelson Glueck to establish a Reform Synagogue in connection with a new School of Archeology in Israel. The American Jewish Committee, he stated, being deeply committed to the defense of freedom of religion everywhere, could not be silent on this issue. (It is interesting here to note that the majority of the membership of the Committee identified themselves as belonging to the Reform branch of Judaism.) This complaint lodged against the internal policies of the Israeli government was considered by both men to be a legitimate intervention by American Jews. Again, Mr. Eban took note of Mr. Engel's complaint. No immediate changes in Israel's religious policy followed as a result of this discussion, and it is indeed questionable whether Engel's complaint was subsequently transmitted to the Israeli authorities involved.³¹

After the briefing, Mr. Engel reported back to the Executive Committee of the American Jewish Committee where future action, if any, would be discussed. At neither briefing described above was Engel requested to take any action on behalf of Israel. During periods of crisis or of serious disagreement between the United States government and Israel, the briefing would often take the form of a strategy meeting in which the American Jewish leader would request specific information on Israel's position and would discuss possible ways in which his "good services" could be useful. Then the two men might discuss

a public relations strategy, a future visit to the State Department or an effort by the Jewish leader to use his members' contacts with the Administration to gain access to the President or the Secretary of State.

The Committee, perhaps because of its self-defined status as a "non-Zionist organization", criticized Israeli domestic and foreign policy more than other Jewish groups (with the notable exception of the American Council for Judaism, a small, rabidly anti-Zionist organization). On many occasions, Committee leaders expressed disapproval of Israel's religious policies, especially those which denied official recognition to two large American branches of Judaism, the Reform and the Conservative.³² They vehemently protested Prime Minister Ben Gurion's often ill-chosen remarks about the need or duty of Diaspora Jews to move to Israel or his often expressed view that Israel was the center of world Jewry and that it represented Jews throughout the world. The Government of Israel would issue a formal protest to the government of any foreign country where an anti-Semitic incident had occurred. This Israeli propensity to view itself as the center, spokesman and defender of world Jewry offended the Committee which strongly believed that no one body or organization could represent even American Jewry. The Committee viewed each Jewish community as independent and owed its allegiance only to the country in which it resided.

An example of this divergence of views was expressed in a series of meetings between Prime Minister Ben Gurion and Honorary President of the American Jewish Committee Jacob Blaustein. In these discussions, Mr. Blaustein expressed his organization's opposition to the most fundamental of Israeli laws - the Law of Nationality, under which all Jews receive automatic Israeli citizenship unless they expressly state that they do not want it. This, the Committee thought, put American Jews (and others) in the uncomfortable position of being subject to dual citizenship involuntarily, unless they expressly renounce the Israeli option. Mr. Blaustein and Prime Minister Ben Gurion and other Committee officials conducted several discussions on the question of non-interference in the affairs of Jews living in the Diaspora. In 1950, the discussions culminated

with a public statement by Ben Gurion which declared that Israel represented and spoke only on behalf of its own citizens and not for Jews in other countries. At that time, Ben Gurion publicly declared that "the Jews of the United States, as a community and as individuals, have only one political attachment and that is to the United States of America; they owe no political allegiance to Israel."³³ He did, however, urge American Jews with technical knowledge and skills to come join in the effort to build Israel, but added, "that rests with the free discretion of each American Jew." This declaration was viewed as a personal triumph for Mr. Blaustein. It also indicates that Ben Gurion recognized how important it was to maintain good relations with American Jews and specifically with the Committee. Over the years, the Committee kept a watchful eye over statements issued by Israeli leaders on the status of Jewry and protested them when it thought they were incongruent with the 1950 Ben Gurion-Blaustein agreements.

Such was the case in May 1961 when Ben Gurion publicly reaffirmed the 1950 agreement at the urging of Mr. Blaustein and the American Jewish Committee. Mr. Blaustein was especially concerned after Israel issued protest notes to the American government and to several European governments after there were a number of swastika daubing incidents on Jewish institutions. This, and distress over the kidnapping of Adolf Eichman from Argentina by Israel and Israel's announced intention to try him in Israel "in the name of the Jewish people," created a situation which the Committee found intolerable. It thought Israel had overstepped its legitimate limited role as agreed upon in the earlier accords. Other statements by Prime Minister Ben Gurion calling for greater emigration of all Jews to Israel further exacerbated the problem. The reaffirmation of the agreement in 1961 angered Zionist groups in the United States and nationalist groups in Israel who viewed Ben Gurion's statements in the Blaustein accords as capitulation to Committee pressure. However, the Committee was still the most influential American Jewish organization with the American government and as such, needed to be "coddled."

The Committee also took advantage of its relations with Israeli officials to express its reservations on particular Israeli foreign policies. This criticism, however, was suggested only in private conversations with Israeli representatives. There was a general consensus among all Jewish organizations (except for the American Council for Judaism) that on foreign policy questions, any criticisms of Israel should remain private -- never exposed to the media. Outwardly, the Jewish groups presented a united front. And even the American Jewish Committee which kept an "official" distance from the other groups followed this rule completely. On several occasions, the leadership of the Committee in a meeting with Israeli officials suggested that the Israeli government "muzzle" Zionist groups who were publicly agitating on a particular issue. These activities, the Committee considered wrongly timed, in poor taste and counterproductive to Israel's interests. Thus, at the briefing, the Committee was able to voice its own views and objections on both Israeli actions and on American Jewish groups' actions on Israel's behalf. It was assumed that the Israeli government could influence the behavior of the latter. The briefing offered an opportunity for frank discussion for both parties and, if nothing else, strengthened the relationship between the individuals involved.

The second kind of private conference briefing was arranged between a top level Israeli diplomat and a particular prominent American Jew. The latter was usually somewhat involved in Jewish affairs and pro-Israel activities. Often, he was a big philanthropist who showed his support for Israel throughout the years by contributing large sums of money to Israeli educational or scientific institutions, cultural foundations, bonds, etc. He was not usually an elected executive of any popular Jewish organization (such as the American Jewish Congress, B'nai Brith, Zionist Organization of America) even though he might be a member of one. He was not a "Jewish leader" per se. The importance of this American Jew lay in his position of prominence and influence in non-Jewish American society. He was often a man of great wealth and, as such, a man whose business interests and connections had made him a person of considerable importance in the intertwined world of American politics and finance. Several

wealthy American Jews were very involved in national party politics. They might be themselves large contributors to political campaigns or, perhaps even more important, brilliant fund raisers and organizers who could, in a short period of time, organize a sizable group of large contributors (often wealthy Jews) to back a political campaign. This combination of wealth and fund raising know-how (facilitated by extensive business connections) plus devotion to the American political process and to a particular political party made these American Jews potentially powerful people in the "influence" game. The wealthy individual, because of his personal involvement in promoting political candidates and funding their campaigns, had close relations with several national leaders in the Senate and in the White House. He may have helped launch the political career of a Senator or Congressman, giving his financial backing and assistance when he was a political "unknown". He might be a personal friend of the President; remembered with fondness, for, at a time when the President's political fortunes were down (and coffers empty) this wealthy individual was instrumental in propelling his career back on course.³⁴ He may have close relations with the President's former campaign manager or top advisors who appreciate his past efforts on the President's behalf and want to continue to cultivate his good will for future political campaigns. The large contributor held several IOUs which could be "cashed in" for Israel (with no guaranteed result) when deemed necessary.

During each administration, Israeli diplomats sought to develop close ties with those American Jews who had personal access to the President and Vice President, and to influential members of Congress. Men such as Barney Balaban, President of Paramount Pictures during the Eisenhower administration, real estate magnate Philip Klutznick during the Kennedy administration, Abraham Feinberg of Kayser Roth and Arthur Krim of United Artists in the Johnson period, and Max Fisher in the Nixon administration, were considered important contacts by Israeli representatives because of their personal relationship with the President of the United States. American Jews were more active

in Democratic politics and thus, their personal contacts with Democratic Presidents were more frequent and more intimate than with Republican Presidents. Jacob Blaustein and Judge Joseph Proskauer were closely connected with Governor Dewey from New York, and thus were able to use that friendship as an indirect channel to the Republican administration. Fred Lazarus from Ohio, was a major financial supporter of the Republican party and a close friend of Senator Robert A. Taft, which gave him some access to the Eisenhower administration. All three were among the leaders of the American Jewish Committee and thus the committee had increased stature and usefulness for the Israeli during this period. However, this indirect access to the Republican administration was not as effective as the direct intervention of American Jewish individuals during Democratic administrations.³⁵

The importance of the prominent American Jews was described by former Israel Ambassador Avraham Harman thus:

In the process of persuading, human beings are open to all kinds of influences. One of the most important influences, especially in a large country like the United States, which is struggling with huge problems, is gaining a man's time. It is not that you are trying to persuade him to do something against his will, his interest or the American interest. It is a question of competing for his time. If there is somebody like an Abe Feinberg who has access to the President, doesn't overstay his welcome or abuse it, but reserves use of this access to matters of greatest importance, then he has gained Presidential attention on this matter. That is important. If you go through diplomatic channels, the information gets there, -- eventually ...³⁶

Thus the American Jew with contacts at the White House could play a crucial role in getting a hearing for Israel's case. This, however, could only be done successfully if the American Jew was 1) well informed of the issues involved and, even more important, 2) himself totally convinced that Israel's case was just.

Continued Ambassador Harman:

Mr. X (rather than mention names) is a man who has the President's confidence in some other field. He has access to the President. If he is a wise man, he won't abuse that access. He sees the President socially over a drink -- the conversation

wanders -- the President is relaxing with him. If the American Jew is instructed and himself convinced, then he can effectively discuss Israel's problem. If he is not convinced -- the President of the United States is not a slouch. He can interpret a conversation and can tell very well if the man talking to him is talking from a brief, like a puppet, or if he is really sold on something. If he is sold on it and has access to the President and engages the President's ear, then he has achieved something. He also must be convinced that it is not against the American interest. This is a matter which the President of the United States will have to decide on anyway. If someone talks to the President, he may have helped the matter forward.³⁷

Thus it was of the utmost importance for Israeli diplomats in the United States to find out who were the men with access to the President and then to cultivate their friendship. It was a top priority to keep them well informed and "convinced" that Israel's position on current issues was correct. A member of the Israeli diplomatic staff in Washington described the process thus:

Every official of the Embassy from the Ambassador down would ask himself who are the influential people of this Administration. Who has free access? Public or private figures, bankers, writers, businessmen, Jews and non-Jews who feel that it is in the American interest to strengthen Israel. I am talking about people who if they articulate their views on Israel to the President of the United States at a social occasion it is because that is the way they feel. They are not doing it to please me. On the other hand, they may not have done it on that occasion, without having been briefed, because they would not have been aware of how important the issue is ... They would not express their feelings if they were not convinced of it. They are not agents. That is the last thing they would want to appear to be. They would lose their standing in their community ...³⁸

The briefing of these individuals was one of the top priorities of the Embassy. The Israeli government considered this support a significant part of its diplomatic effort in the United States. It is interesting here to note that when Yitzchak Rabin came to the United States in 1968 as Israel's Ambassador to Washington, he rejected out of hand the long developed procedure of enlisting the assistance of prominent American Jews (and non-Jews) in Israel's cause. In Rabin's view, the diplomatic corps was there for the express purpose of

representing Israel to the American government. It did not need the amateurish assistance of Diaspora Jews appealing Israel's case. One can postulate that, in a way, Sabra war hero Rabin found it demeaning to the independent, sovereign State of Israel to depend on the intercession of wealthy Jews who lived in the United States and planned to remain there.

Rabin writes in his memoirs,

If I did not always see eye to eye with the American Jewish organizations, it may have been because the situation I discovered upon assuming my post was totally alien to me. Following a deeply ingrained pattern of Diaspora living, some of the leaders of the American Jewish community exercised their influence by means of a shtadlan, the traditional intermediary who had sought the favor of the ruling powers in Europe. Every modern president seemed to keep a kind of "court Jew" who served as a channel of communication between American Jewry and the incumbent administration. At first, for lack of choice, I too honored this mode of operation though I patiently and cautiously tried to change it without offending the sensibilities of the Jewish community's leadership. I believe that the Israeli embassy should assume the principal role of handling Israel's affairs at all political levels and that it was entitled to avail itself of the help of Jews and non-Jews alike, as it saw fit. In fact, it was clear to me that if Israel could rely only on the support of the Jews in the United States, she would be faced with a major setback, so I asked the Jewish leadership to help me foster the support of the entire American people.³⁹

In his early period in Washington, Rabin instituted new policies limiting the involvement of American Jews in Israeli matters. His disparaging attitude toward Jewish organizations succeeded in alienating Jewish leaders, and only after hard experience did he learn that in the United States, effective diplomacy on behalf of Israel required recruitment of all forces available, and most importantly, American Jews. Thus, in the struggle waged against the Rogers Proposals in 1970, Rabin was forced to seek the assistance of organized American Jewry, i. e., the Presidents' Conference, Max Fisher, and others. From that period on, he continued the traditional pattern of relationships with American

Jews and with the leadership of Jewish organizations established by his predecessors.⁴⁰

How was the briefing of an American Jewish leader or prominent individual arranged? A relationship with them was usually forged on a long term basis; that is, contact between the two parties was held regularly. From interviews with Israeli representatives, the following picture emerges. There were three possible types of interactions. The Israeli Ambassador or his deputy at the Embassy would call the American Jewish leader or the prominent private individual to arrange a meeting, in order to discuss the current situation in the Middle East. Often, after the briefing, the American Jew would ask if there was anything the Israeli government thought he could do to further Israeli interests or to prevent an unfavorable action by the United States government. Then the Ambassador would suggest possible effective courses of action. The American may suggest that on this issue he felt strongly and would like to go to the State Department (or to the President) to discuss the matter. The Israeli representative would often express his appreciation of the Jewish leader's desire to get involved and would then supply him with sufficient information in order for him to present convincing, cogent arguments at the State Department.

On other occasions, the Israeli government would call a particular leader and ask him to go to see someone on Israel's behalf. Shimshon Arad, a former member of the Israel Embassy staff in Washington explained:

There were occasions when none of us were reluctant or bashful to say to Blaustein (of the American Jewish Committee), "Listen, Jacob, do you think you could see so and so and tell him that it is really inexcusable that this situation go on . . ." Blaustein would answer something to the effect of "Yes, of course I'll go -- because I think you're right. Why didn't you ask me earlier?"⁴¹

There were, however, times when Blaustein or others would refuse, arguing that it was not the right time to approach certain decision makers. Or he would suggest postponing a visit, since he had recently met with a State Department official and did not want to overstay his welcome at the Department.

The third possible Israel-American Jews interaction was at the initiative of American Jewish leaders. American Jews went to the State Department on matters other than Israel. The plight of Jews in Morocco in 1958, of Syrian Jews and Egyptian Jews, and of Soviet Jews, was the frequent concern of Jewish organizations, and they sought meetings with the State Department to discuss possible American government intercession on their behalf. In that connection, Jewish leaders often contacted Israeli representatives to inform them of a planned visit to the State Department and asked them if there were any matters concerning Israel that would be helpful to Israel if discussed at that meeting. An Israeli representative would then invite them down for a briefing to review current Israeli problems and differences with the American government.

The briefings of the Presidents of leading Jewish organizations, and the briefings of individuals established patterns of dialogue between American Jews and Israel. The fact that these meetings were held on a fairly regular basis (although not at specifically defined intervals) suggests that they served a useful purpose for both sides. One party wanted to convey information; the other wanted to receive it. But were the discussions flowing in only one direction, *i. e.*, was it a monologue controlled by Israel, or was there a free exchange of ideas on policy? Did they suggest strategy and tactics on ways of influencing opinion in the United States? Was their advice ever heeded? Was there any sort of symmetry in the relationship or was it a one-way pattern of influence, Israel-American Jews? These questions suggest the very complicated problems of some aspects of the American Jews-Israel relationship. (It is important here to note that it is incorrect to discuss all Jewish organizations which were supportive of Israel in one broad generalization, since there were clear differences between one organization in particular and all the others. The American Jewish Committee refused to participate in any effort to unite American Jewish organizations and thus, did not join the Presidents' Conference. Moreover, in light of its special relationship with Israeli officials because of its influence in Washington, it took the liberty to express to the Israelis views different from other

Jewish organizations.) Was the "advice" or "criticisms" voiced by some in the Jewish community given serious consideration by Israeli policy makers? Did their protests influence Israeli decisions in any way? How should we characterize this diplomatic "partnership"?

It was certainly not a relationship among equals. Most leaders of Jewish organizations were reluctant to offer advice to the Israelis or to criticize their policies, even if the latter had put them in a difficult public relations position. There were several factors that account for this: the first and foremost was the feeling shared by most Jewish leaders that Israel was an independent state whose leadership and citizens must make their own decisions and live with the consequences. Its decisions directly affect only its welfare and only tangentially that of American Jews. Therefore, it was not the role of American Jews to tell the Israeli government what to do. American Jews were therefore cautious in the offering of advice or in criticising Israeli policies since they did not have to bear the responsibility for action. This was especially the case on defense issues. Israeli soldiers were risking their lives defending their borders, and thus only their government should have the right to make decisions that involve life and death issues.

This does not imply that American Jews never criticized Israeli policies. They did, but infrequently and gingerly. It was usually done without threats or pressure and, most important, privately. American Jewish leaders have generally followed an agreed upon policy of not airing their differences on policy with the Israeli government publicly. Rabbi Hershel Schacter, past president of the Presidents' Conference described the relationship thus:

... whoever is the Chairman of the Presidents' Conference looks to the professional foreign policy makers of the Government of Israel as the experts. They live the problems. They know best what is in the best interest of Israel. If they convey to us their feelings and we agree with them, it doesn't mean that they are dictating policy to us. Obviously, we meet ... They never ever consulted us on policy. We were never told what to do nor were we ever asked what we thought they should do. There were times when policies were questioned - not by the totality

of the American Jewish community or the Presidents' Conference but certainly by certain elements and segments of the Presidents' Conference who would get up and ask questions. "Why does the Government of Israel act this way?" In days of Golda Meir's regime, many times there were meetings of the Presidents' Conference when members put her on the spot and asked her why doesn't Israel prepare a real, reasonable peace plan or why doesn't Israel seek to negotiate peace? . . . This however was never public.⁴²

The second reason for the reluctance of American Jews to criticize and involve itself in policy making was a recognition that it was rather poorly informed of the situation in Israel. Whether the issue was what are defensible borders or problems of the Israeli economy, American Jewish leaders lacked expertise and were, in a sense, totally dependent on Israeli reports and explanations. Thus, even when they did express their reservations to Israeli officials or raise challenging questions regarding Israeli policy at a meeting with the Prime Minister or Foreign Minister, the latter's "knowledgable" reply was usually sufficient to silence the criticism. When asked if the Israeli government ever sought the advice of the leadership of Jewish organizations before embarking on a political campaign in the United States, Rabbi Schacter replied:

The Israeli Government to this day does not consult the American Jewish leadership. The truth of the matter is who should they consult? Could we for a moment think that Hershel Schacter, Israel Miller, Bill Wexler or Alex Schindler (all past presidents of the Presidents' Conference) know better? Are we such astute international diplomats to know the story? Certainly not!⁴³

Schacter here expressed his view, which was perhaps a very extreme expression of the American Jewish feeling of inadequacy in the area of policy making. Rabbi Schacter, an Orthodox Rabbi by profession, represented the later leadership of the Presidents' Conference who were not of the stature of the earlier leaders of the Jewish community. The earlier leaders, such as Nahum Goldmann and Joachim Prinz, had fought side by side with the Israelis for the establishment of the State in the diplomatic arena. This "latecomer" status of Schacter and others

was often reflected in a greater willingness to accept Israeli decisions without question. Other leaders, who perceived themselves as more independent than Rabbi Schacter, agreed that American Jewish leaders were never consulted on foreign policy questions either before or after the act, but were indeed consulted on strategies and tactics within the United States. Often, the private criticism was voiced that the Israeli officials were too arrogant and should have sought more advice on tactics in the American domestic arena from American Jewish leaders, who often were better acquainted with American party politics.

William Wexler, former Chairman of the Presidents' Conference recounted his relationship with Israeli leaders:

During the two years I was Chairman of the Presidents' Conference there wasn't a week when I didn't go to Washington for meetings with Yitzchak Rabin (then Israel's Ambassador to Washington) at his home or at the Embassy. (I lived in Savannah, Georgia) In order to discuss problems, strategy and tactics during this period, I was coming to Israel six to nine times a year to meet with Golda Meir and members of her government . . . It would be a mistake to say that this particular government didn't try to influence American Jewry, because it did. It would be a big mistake to say they shouldn't have done it because it was of utmost importance for them to get all the help they could from American Jewry . . .

The American Jewish community has been used and should have been used and it should continue to be used in a positive sense of the word. Nobody is going off on their own and doing things without proper instructions. The only place where those instructions could really originate was in Israel. . . It was a question of laying out strategy -- of how we were going to see to it that the United States remain friendly, use its influence in the United Nations to combat anti-Israel resolutions, etc.⁴⁴

Wexler suggested that he played an active role in advising Israeli representatives on the best tactic to advance their interests in the United States. However, he made it very clear that the source of the instructions and the final decision on strategy lay with Israeli leaders who alone bore the responsibility for action.

The third reason why American Jews were reluctant to take part in policy input or to publicly express criticisms of Israeli policy was the underlying fear of charges of dual loyalty. Even though Jews in the United States, certainly by the sixties, felt comfortable and secure both as loyal American citizens and supporters of the State of Israel, they were reluctant to appear capable of influencing Israeli policy. Charles Liebman, in his book Pressure Without Sanctions: The Influence of World Jewry on Israeli Policy, tells the following story:

When Jewish leaders met in Jerusalem in January 1969 at the invitation of the Prime Minister, many of them accused Israeli public relations of ineptitude. Irving Kane, then President of AIPAC (America-Israel Public Affairs Committee, the registered Israel lobby in Washington) was asked by an Israeli reporter if he felt that his or other Jewish organizations should at least be advised in advance of Israeli plans so that they could prepare for their public relations job. His reaction was reported as follows: "Heaven forbid -- it would put us in an impossible position to have knowledge that Israel was not passing on to the State Department."⁴⁵

American Jews, although they may have complained of not knowing enough about Israeli policy, or of being taken by surprise or embarrassed by Israeli action, preferred, when forced to think about it, the innocence of ignorance to the dilemma of being in a situation in which they would be privy to information that could be useful to the State Department, and would have to conceal it. In this way, they are forced to choose between an Israeli government's request for secrecy, and the responsibility of an American citizen to report useful information to his government. The Israeli government understood the sensitivity of the position of American Jews and usually took care not to put them in untenable situations. For example, American Jews, much to their confusion, were left totally in the dark about the outbreak of the Suez crisis in 1956. Israeli officials not only did not, in any way, warn them of the planned attack, but quite the contrary, fed them misleading information. Needless to say, Israel needed total secrecy for the success of the operation. Former ambassador to Washington Abba Eban described the first reaction of American

Jews as one of total incomprehension. They had not been warned. Israel had been saying publicly that they would not initiate an attack on any of its neighbors. It had given the impression that the main threat to Israel was coming from the Jordanian and not the Egyptian front. American Jews were sharply taken aback. They expressed resentment. There had been total discontinuity in what Israel had told them that its policy was and what it actually did. Eban added,

The other element was the choice of October for the attack. The feeling of the Government of Israel was that pre-election America was a good time to strike. Whereas American Jews knew it was quite wrong -- and indeed it was wrong, a miscalculation. It united the American people, including most American Jews, behind Eisenhower.⁴⁶

When asked why Israeli leaders did not ask for American Jewish advice on timing, Eban replied:

We could not because of military security. So few Israelis knew of the planned attack. They (American Jews) would have been in a very embarrassing situation if they had known. Because had they known something of such international importance, their Administration could say, "As citizens, if you knew something, why didn't you tell us? especially involving security of the world?" To have told them would have been a very grave mistake. In general, it is a very great mistake to tell them things they can't pass on to their government. It leaves them open to very serious suspicion ...⁴⁷

From Eban's remarks, it is evident that both the Israeli government and American Jews understood the limits of the role of American Jews. The Israeli government was careful not to place them in a situation that would compromise their position as American citizens. For if their role as advocates of Israel was ever tainted with charges of dual loyalty and of being "foreign agents", it would be hazardous to the security of American Jews and would considerably diminish their political usefulness to Israel.

The sensitivity of some American Jews to possible insinuations of dual loyalty was in the past the cause of a major disagreement between the Israeli government and the American Jewish Committee. It resulted in the Ben Gurion-

Blaustein agreements of 1950 and 1961, discussed earlier in Chapter III, which formally outlined the nature of Israel-American Jews relations and expressly declared the total political separation of American Jews from Israel. Ben Gurion declared,

... the State of Israel represents and speaks only on behalf of its own citizens and in no way presumes to represent or speak in the name of the Jews who are citizens of any other country. We, the people of Israel, have no desire and no intention to interfere in any way with the internal affairs of Jewish communities abroad ...

Any weakening of American Jewry, any disruption of its communal life, any lowering of its sense of security, any diminution of its status is a definite loss to Jews everywhere and to Israel in particular ... Our success or failure depends on a large measure on our cooperation with, and on the strength of, the great Jewish community of the United States and we, therefore, are anxious that nothing should be said or done which could in the slightest degree undermine the sense of security and stability of American Jewry.⁴⁸

The American Jews-Israel relationship thus can be characterized as having been mostly one-sided in terms of influence. The Israeli government selected the information conveyed to American Jews and determined the issues to be shared. It usually decided the time and place of the briefings. It did hear some American Jewish criticisms of Israeli policies and acknowledged that it owed them some sort of explanation regarding them. The criticisms remained "in the family" and were without conditions, *i. e.*, American Jewish support for Israel was never put on the bargaining table. American Jews did not demand that Israel change its policies or else it would cut off funds, criticize publicly, etc. This was mostly because of the emotional commitment American Jews and their leaders had to Israel. This commitment was never severely tested since during the period under study, with the possible exception of the Sinai campaign in 1956, American-Israeli relations were for the most part harmonious. American Jews were not put into the uncomfortable position of having to choose between support for their government and their commitment to Israel's survival and security.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER IV

¹Interview with Mr. Philip Klutznick, Jerusalem, Israel. July 23, 1979.

²Interview with Rabbi Joachim Prinz, West Orange, New Jersey. February, 1978.

³Interview with Mr. Mordecai Gazit, Jerusalem Israel. December, 1978.

⁴See Marc Lee Raphael, Understanding American Jewish Philanthropy (New York: Ktav, 1979).

⁵Files, The Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, November 21, 1961.

⁶ibid.

⁷ibid.

⁸ibid. December 7, 1961.

⁹See Bernard C. Hennesey, Public Opinion (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1970).

¹⁰See Arthur Herzberg, "Israel and American Jewry," Commentary, August, 1967. Vol. 44, p. 69.

¹¹For a discussion of the role of the "attentive public" in public opinion see Gabriel Almond, The American People and Foreign Policy (New York: Random House, 1961), pp. 33-34.

¹²See Bernard Cohen, The Public's Impact of Foreign Policy (Boston: Little Brown, 1973).

¹³The New York Times, February 7, 1957.

¹⁴The American Zionist Committee for Public Affairs was set up by I. E. Kenen soon after the establishment of the State of Israel. It is the official, registered lobby for Israel. It is now called the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee. Based in Washington, it operated during the period under study

with a small staff. Only two of its members were responsible for the actual contacting of government officials. Assisting the Washington office was a national committee consisting of about two hundred persons across the United States who work in their communities on Israel's behalf, frequently contacting their local Congressmen, public officials, other organizations and the media. The Washington office is in close contact with the Embassy and provides information to the national members.

¹⁵Files, American Jewish Committee, letter from Nathaniel Goodrich to Irving Engel, March 4, 1957.

¹⁶Drew Pearson, The Washington Merry-Go-Round, The New York Post, February 20, 1957.

¹⁷Files, Presidents' Conference, July 30, 1968.

¹⁸Interview with Mr. Lucius Battle, Washington D. C., August, 1977.

¹⁹For further discussion see William Chittick, State Department, Press and Pressure Groups (New York: John Wiley, 1970).

²⁰Files, The Presidents' Conference, February 15, 1965.

²¹Ibid., February 24, 1965

²²In October 1953, President Eisenhower appointed Eric Johnston to search for an equitable means of sharing the waters of the Jordan River. The purpose of the project was to lessen political tensions between Arabs and Israelis by proposing mutually advantageous economic schemes. The plan failed because of the refusal of the Arabs to participate in any plan which would give the Israelis any assistance in their economic development. The Israelis, for their part, accepted the plan, with conditions limiting United Nations control of storage areas of water within its borders.

²³Files, Presidents' Conference, April 26, 1965.

²⁴On February 6, 1966, the New York Times reported that the United States sold M48 Patton tanks to Israel, apparently the remainder of the tanks cancelled by West Germany in February 1965.

²⁵Interview, Klutznick, July 23, 1979.

²⁶Files, Presidents' Conference, September 26, 1960.

²⁷Files, American Jewish Committee, May 30, 1956.

²⁸The reference to Czechoslovakia here is intended to compare the role of Canada to that of Czechoslovakia in 1955 which made a "proxy" deal arms sale with Egypt for the Soviet Union.

²⁹Files, American Jewish Committee, August 22, 1956.

³⁰The Jewish Agency is an international, non-governmental body centered in Jerusalem which is the executive and representative of the World Zionist Organization, whose aims are to assist and encourage Jews throughout the world to help in the development and settlement of Israel. It was established under the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine, and until the establishment of the State of Israel, played the principal role in the relations between the National Home and world Jewry, on the one hand, and the Mandatory and other powers, on the other. In May 1948, the Jewish Agency relinquished many of its functions to the Israeli government, but continued to be responsible for immigration, land settlement, youth work, financed by contributions from Jewish communities the world over.

³¹Ibid., August 22, 1956.

³²All matters of personal status, i. e., marriage, divorce, births, death are under the jurisdiction of the religious communities -- Jewish, Moslem and Christian. The Jewish religious authority recognized by the government in these matters is from the Orthodox branch of Judaism. Conservative and Reform rabbis cannot perform marriages, conversions, arrange divorces, etc. The question remains a conflict of principle rather than of serious practical hardship, since there is only a tiny minority of "conservative" or "reform" Jews in Israel. Ben Gurion had been known to remark that although he sympathized with the arguments of the Reform and Conservative in theory, he saw the best solution to the problem as being mass immigration to Israel by Conservative and Reform Jews. Then, he said, there would really be an issue to discuss.

³³Files, American Jewish Committee, The Ben-Gurion-Blaustein Accords, 1950.

³⁴Abraham Feinberg, in an interview, said that he and Dewey Stone raised the money to revitalize the flagging Truman campaign in 1948.

³⁵Interview with Mr. Abba Eban, Jerusalem, Israel. March 1980.

³⁶Interview with Mr. Avraham Harman, Jerusalem, Israel. March 1979.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸ Interview with Mr. Shimshon Arad, Jerusalem, Israel. March 1979.

³⁹ Yitzchak Rabin, Rabin Memoirs (Boston: Little Brown, 1979), p. 229.

⁴⁰ Interview with Abba Eban. The story was confirmed by several American Jewish leaders as well.

⁴¹ Interview, Shimshon Arad, March 23, 1979.

⁴² Interview, Rabbi Hershel Schacter, New York, New York. February 1979.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Interview, Mr. William Wexler, Tel Aviv, Israel. July 1979.

⁴⁵ Charles Liebman, Pressure Without Sanctions: The Influence of World Jewry on Israeli Policy (Cranbury: Associated University Press, 1977), p. 14.

⁴⁶ Interview, Abba Eban, March 1980.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Files, American Jewish Committee. Joint statement of Ben Gurion and Jacob Blaustein, April 23, 1961.

CHAPTER V

Examples of Linkage Activities

The linkage between the Israeli government and the American government through the participation of American Jews is a continuous, ongoing process. It is a dialogue conducted among concerned friendly parties which has developed over three decades. At certain times, Jewish involvement was greatly required by one country or the other. At others, Jewish intervention was regarded by one or both of the parties as misguided and/or unnecessary and thus one party tactfully requested that it be silenced. On many issues, American Jews were left totally in the dark.¹

In the first section of Chapter V, I will discuss several examples of the involvement of American Jewish organizations and leaders in furthering Israel's interests and in protecting their own position in the American political arena. Each example illustrates a different aspect of the linkage role. The first is the linkage role of American Jews during the Suez crisis. During this period, American Jewish leaders, both on their own initiative and at the initiative of the American government, intervened to try to resolve the differences between the two governments. The intervention of Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver is included in the section describing the activities of "organizational" leaders even though, during the Suez crisis, he was not in an official position, because he was so clearly identified in the eyes of American leaders, American Jews and Israel as a "Zionist" leader and had held many official leadership positions in the past. The second example of Jewish involvement (or in this case non-involvement) is in the Lebanon crisis in 1958. American Jews were in close contact with the Israelis and each advised the other and recommended actions to be taken. The

American government was in close communication with the Israelis. The third example discusses efforts by the Israelis and American Jews to change United States policy on Palestinian refugees. The United States government supported a United Nations plan to resolve the problem of the Arab refugees. The Israeli strongly objected to the plan and requested the assistance of the American Jewish community in a campaign to get the White House to back down.

The second section of Chapter V will discuss the role of the private Jewish individual who acted in a non-institutional capacity, that is, not as an official representative of a Jewish organization. His personal relationship with the President of the United States or with others in the Administration was useful in gaining a hearing for Israel's interests and improving its standing with the American government. The task of the Israeli diplomatic staff in the United States was considerably eased by the involvement of these individuals. In fact, Israeli diplomacy suffered its most difficult period during the Eisenhower administration when, to quote one Israeli diplomat, "There was no Jew at court." Tensions remained tensions and disagreements were prolonged without the mediating intervention of friends of Israel with close ties to both protagonists.

The third section of Chapter V will look at the linkage activities of American Jews in relations between the Israeli government and governments other than the United States. It will discuss the extension of the linkage role into relations with several governments which did not have official diplomatic ties with Israel. Improvement of Israeli relations with other governments was in the American interest, since the United States government preferred its "friend" to have better relations with Europe, Asia and Africa, thereby being less isolated in the international arena. This would lessen the diplomatic burden on the United States, which was often reluctant to appear as the lonely champion of the Israelis.

Information about the intervention of individual Jews, and evaluations of their effectiveness, was gathered in interviews with Israeli diplomats who

served in the United States, with State Department officials, and with the Jewish individuals themselves. None of this activity was ever reported in the press or in the internal memoranda circulated by Jewish organizations. The latter may have been uninformed of the private initiatives. They tended to take credit for their own organization's involvement, to the denigration of any unofficial, non-organizational interventions.

I. The Organizational Leadership

1. The Suez Crisis

The outbreak of the war in the Middle East on October 29, 1956 took the American Jewish community by surprise. None of the leaders had any advance warning or hint that Israel planned a massive, coordinated attack against Egypt. The region had been a hotbed of tension since the nationalization of the Suez Canal by Nasser in July 1956. This act, however, did not directly affect Israel, since Israel's shipping had been banned from the Canal under British-French management as well. Soviet arms sales to Nasser via Czechoslovakia in 1955 had heightened the tensions in the area, but by October 1956, Israel was receiving arms from the French, and thus was not in apparent desperate straits. Fedayeen attacks across Israel's borders were killing and maiming civilians and depressing the national morale. However, these attacks were from Jordanian territory. Thus, there seemed to be no immediate precipitant for an attack on Egypt.

American Jews and the United States government were unaware of the coordinated planning among France, Great Britain and Israel to attack Egypt, ultimately aimed at causing the overthrow of Gamal Abdul Nasser. Therefore, they were very shocked by the action. In fact, American Jews had been led to believe by Israeli statements that Israel's main antagonist at the time was Jordan, which had persisted in a series of murderous raids across Israel's border. Each raid had been followed by an Israeli act of retaliation. Tension and saber rattling emanated from both sides of the border.

The Eisenhower Administration reacted angrily to the invasion, furious at its allies for impetuously going to war without the approval of the United States and for placing in jeopardy the delicate balance of power between the United States and the Soviet Union. For the first time, American Jews were confronted by an Israeli action that ran counter to the American position. There was no precedent in Israeli-American relations. American Jews were pleased and relieved by Israel's quick success on the battlefield. They were, however, quickly faced with a very serious dilemma -- how were they to reconcile privately and publicly the divergent positions of Israel and the United States on the question of withdrawal from lands occupied by Israel as a result of its military successes. The United States demanded complete Israeli withdrawal from occupied lands, both in the Sinai and Gaza Strip, with no pre-conditions. Israel, on the other hand, after initial bravado statements about keeping the conquered territories, agreed in principle to withdraw, but demanded several security guarantees from the United Nations in order to prevent further border raids from Gaza, and to ensure free passage of Israeli ships through the Gulf of Aqaba. It was in the interest of American Jews to have the conflict resolved as quickly as possible. It was a very trying period for Jewish leaders, caught in an imbroglio between the two parties about whose interests they cared.

Philip Klutznick was, at the time of the Suez crisis, the national President of the B'nai Brith and the Chairman of the Presidents' Conference, and had close ties with Israeli diplomats in Washington. He recalled his reaction to the news of the outbreak of war in the Middle East in October 1956. He described how he learned of the crisis and American Jewish reaction to it:

... There was a terrible concern about the whole issue of withdrawal. The issue of Sinai precipitated a lot of different opinions between Israeli representatives and American Jewish leaders. For example, first of all, the thing was so secretive. I recall the Sunday in New York hours before the troops moved in, I was at the Waldorf Towers to make a speech that night. The late Reuven Shiloah, who was a minister (at the Embassy in Washington) came up to see me at 11:00 A.M. to go over a few matters.

While he was there, the phone rang and Aubrey (Abba) Eban was calling him (then Israeli Ambassador to Washington). He had just come back from Israel. After he was through talking, I asked him, "Was there any news of consequence we should talk about?" He said, "No, they were just on a routine trip." Reuven Shiloah was a close personal friend of mine, aside from being a minister.

I spoke that night at a dinner honoring a friend. The rumors were flying thick that Israel had invaded the Sinai. They (the audience) turned to me and asked me what I know. I told them it wasn't so -- that I had spoken to Shiloah that morning. Well, it was so, and it created a flare up ...²

It is interesting here to note how, twenty-three years later, Mr. Klutznick described rather emotionally how let down he felt by "his friend Shiloah," as well as how embarrassing it was for him, an important Jewish leader, to be caught so totally unaware of Israeli policy, especially in front of a Jewish audience. When asked if Jewish leaders were angry at being caught by surprise, Klutznick replied,

I don't know -- not anger. It was more disappointment. It's very hard to get angry at these people who have had such a hard time putting this state together ... Yes, there was a certain amount of disappointment, that there wasn't enough confidence in the American Jewish leadership at least to warn them that they were sitting on a hot skillet.³

Other Jewish leaders, with perhaps more modest expectations and understanding of their role in the linkage process, expressed their surprise and feeling of disorientation as to how they should go about explaining this Israeli action, but they did not express the same disappointment and perhaps resentment as did Mr. Klutznick.

There were other embarrassing consequences for some American Jewish leaders. The outbreak of hostilities diminished somewhat the status of one particular Jewish leader as a useful, reliable and credible link with Israel for the American government. Anger at Israel for initiating the attack spilled over into displeasure with American Jews who neither prevented it nor advised

the Government in advance of it. Internal memoranda among foreign policy advisors of the American Jewish Committee suggest that the State Department, as a result of the Suez attack, had become less inclined to regard American Jewish suggestions or representations as seriously as it had previously. State Department officials testily reminded a representative of the Committee that Mr. Jacob Blaustein (Honorary President of the Committee) had assured Assistant Secretary of State Rountree, just a week before the Israeli attack in the Sinai, that he knew from reliable sources that "Ben Gurion would never start a war . . ." ⁴ This pointed reminder suggested that, in the eyes of the State Department, American Jews failed to be much help in preventing the crisis or in warning their government of the brewing storm. Officials further remonstrated that the matters involved in the Middle East crisis were so serious that "private citizens ought to be careful as to how they 'intervene' in matters properly handled by governments." ⁵ This rebuke did not, however, discourage American government officials from trying to mobilize influential American Jews to pressure the Israeli government to agree to American demands for total withdrawal.

Abba Eban describes in his autobiography the Jewish reaction to the Suez invasion. He writes that the first reaction was confusion. Some criticized the Israeli action and some expressed resentment over the embarrassment caused them because of it. He describes their response thus:

Among American Jews the confusion was great. The Zionist leader Abba Hillel Silver telephoned me from Cleveland and promised to give his full assistance. He thought there had been "an error in judgment even more serious than in the case of the Kinnereth operation." Other Jewish leaders told me that no ground had been prepared and that a military operation a week before the presidential election increased their embarrassment and threatened their position. But I also received expressions of pride about the efficiency with which the Israeli forces were carrying out their tasks. ⁶

Eban was busy at the Security Council, so he dispatched his deputy, Reuven Shiloah, to a meeting of the Presidents' Conference to explain the Israeli action.

Eban surmises, from Shiloah's report, that he had had a difficult hour. "For the first time in our memory," writes Eban, "there was a reluctance to justify Israel's action without reserve."⁷ Jewish leaders in the previous weeks had accepted Israel's statements that Israel would not start a war. Shiloah reported that they now found it hard to make a swift change in what they were telling their members. In other words, the credibility of the leadership, in the eyes of the rank and file membership, was threatened by Israel's unprecedented action. Some American Jewish leaders suggested at the meeting that Jewish reservations about Israel's step be openly published. After long discussion "more normal counsels prevailed and the Jewish leaders rose with an expression of solidarity for Israel and an appeal to the United States to strengthen Israel's security and Middle East peace."⁸

Eban's description of the Jewish leadership's reaction to Suez fits the established pattern of American Jewish-Israel relations during this period. Anger, criticisms, resentment, could be and were expressed behind closed doors. Jews among Jews expressed their reluctance to support Israeli policy. Publicly, however, they formed a united supportive front, burying their differences in the interest of Israel and in the interest of gaining American government and public opinion support for Israel.

The American government reacted with indignation to the Israeli invasion of the Sinai and the collusion of Britain and France in the plan. The use of force in face of earlier American warnings not to resort to force to resolve the crisis in the Canal Zone was considered a grievous error. Secretary of State Dulles was angered by the violation of the United Nations charter and thus the weakening of the authority of that international organization. It was feared that unless the United States acted quickly to defuse the crisis and restore the status-quo, it would become involved in a major confrontation with the Soviet Union. This factor partly explains the hard-line American response. The United States took the lead in marshalling support for a resolution in the Security Council condemning the invasion and demanding a restoration of the

status-quo ante bellum. The President and the State Department were clearly angered by what they viewed as a betrayal of trust by their allies, Britain and France, who, without consulting the United States, had brought the Western world to the brink of confrontation with the Soviet Union. The timing of the military operation could not have been worse from the Administration's point of view, coming in the closing days of the Presidential election campaign. It put in doubt the unity of the Western alliance which the Republicans had claimed as one of their great foreign policy achievements. The Israel incursion began on October 29. Already, on October 30, the United States had introduced a resolution to the Security Council calling on all countries to refrain from force in the Middle East, thus upstaging the Russians. Britain and France vetoed it, much to the anger of Eisenhower and Dulles. After two days of maneuvering at the United Nations, Secretary of State Dulles, determined to forestall Soviet moves, and to prove to Prime Minister Eden that he could not act independently of the United States, introduced a resolution calling for a Middle East cease-fire. It was overwhelmingly approved by the Security Council, Britain and France abstaining.

American Jewish organizations embarked on a series of public relations activities in an effort to gain public and Administration understanding of the Israeli position. Both the Presidents' Conference and the American Jewish Committee issued public statements appealing to President Eisenhower "for a fresh appraisal of the conflict." They explained that the conflict was not simply between Egypt and Israel, but between "democracy and an expansionist dictatorship, between the free world and Nasserism backed by Moscow . . ." ⁹ A return to the status-quo, they contended, would only bring continued instability to the region. They asked that the United States take the lead in bringing about direct peace talks between the Arabs and Israel. Telegrams were sent to members of Congress and to the White House, calling on the American government to seek a settlement through direct negotiations between the parties.

The United States, in addition to its public statements and official dispatches sent via diplomatic channels to Prime Minister Ben Gurion, enlisted the services of one prominent American Jewish Zionist leader in an attempt to influence Israeli leaders toward moderation. The choice of a Jewish private citizen as a "go-between" suggests the linkage role played by American Jews in American-Israel relations. Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, a veteran Zionist leader of the American front in the struggle for the establishment of the Jewish state, was requested by Sherman Adams, President Eisenhower's Chief of Staff at the White House, to convey a message to the Prime Minister of Israel, David Ben Gurion. Silver, who was one of the few important Jewish figures identified with the Republican party, was not at the time in an official leadership position in the American Jewish community.¹⁰ In May 1947, he reached the climax of his Zionist career when, as chairman of the American section of the Jewish Agency, he presented the case for an independent Jewish state before the General Assembly. He was forced from Zionist leadership by internal rivalries within the Zionist Organization in the early 1950s and thus, in 1956, was occupied with his congregation in Cleveland and with scholarly pursuits. Nonetheless, his prestige among American Jews remained great and it was assumed by the Administration that his intercession on behalf of the American position would have influence with Israeli leaders. This, according to one Israeli, was, in fact, an error, since Rabbi Silver, a right-wing Zionist, was not a favorite of Mr. Ben Gurion, a Laborite.

On October 30, less than twenty-four hours after the Israeli invasion of the Sinai, Sherman Adams phoned Abba Hillel Silver with a message from President Eisenhower which the latter wanted conveyed to Prime Minister Ben Gurion. The message was that the President would like to publish a declaration expressing his deep appreciation and firm friendship for Israel. Therefore, he wished to receive a promise from Israel that it would not retain its forces in the area that it had occupied. The President wanted Ben Gurion to announce that since Israeli forces had completed their mission, i. e., the

liquidation of the fedayeen bases, they would return to the previous boundary.¹¹ The President stressed in the message that despite the temporary convergence of Israel's interests with those of France and Britain, "you should not forget that Israel's strength is principally dependent upon the United States." The President requested an immediate reply. The message was an obvious offer of the "carrot" and a subtle hint of the "stick". If the Israeli government complies -- all will be forgiven -- at least in public declarations. If Israel was considering not complying, it was reminded here that it was dependent on the assistance of the United States. That dependence need not have been spelled out to the Israelis.

The use of Rabbi Silver as a mediator is very interesting. Why could not straight diplomatic channels have been employed? Could not this "message" have been transmitted directly from the White House to Ben Gurion or from the White House to Ambassador Eban? Why did the White House choose to involve an American Jew in its communications with the Israeli government? We can assume the President probably thought that the message, coming as it did from an American Jewish leader, would be read in Jerusalem as pressure from American Jews to comply with the Eisenhower request. By having Rabbi Silver transmit the request of the Administration, it was hoped that the Israeli government would interpret it as the position of American Jews in the conflict. It did not, however, have the anticipated effect on the Israelis. Rabbi Silver gave the message to Ambassador Eban. He suggested that Silver telephone it personally to Ben Gurion. The Prime Minister refused to answer the message, saying "the enemy is listening and I can not possibly tell you now if we will withdraw or not."¹²

Eban writes in his autobiography that the next day he met with the leadership of the American Jewish Committee, under the leadership of Jacob Blaustein and Joseph Proskauer. He describes the meeting as cordial, *i. e.*, they did not criticize but gave friendly advice. They said that Israel should regard time as an important factor, not to allow the crisis in Israel-American

relations to drag on. Judge Proskauer suggested that Eban approach Governor Thomas Dewey, the titular head of the Republican party, a man close to Eisenhower and could perhaps influence him to soften his stand on unconditional withdrawal. Eban followed his suggestion and met with Dewey. As a result of their conversation, Eban contacted Ben Gurion and conveyed to him Governor Dewey's assessment of the situation. He also urged that Ben Gurion reply immediately to the earlier Eisenhower message. It is interesting here to note the activities of the Committee leaders, suggesting to Ambassador Eban how to proceed on the domestic front to gain access to the President.¹³

When Ben Gurion did not reply at once, the Administration made another attempt to pressure Israel through the good offices of Rabbi Silver. Sherman Adams, and then the President himself, spoke to Rabbi Silver on October 31. The President said, "I would like to know if Ben Gurion intends to withdraw his forces from Sinai? You can tell him in my name, that I am interested in an immediate improvement of our relations with Israel. Please tell Mr. Ben Gurion that if I learn during the next few hours that Israel intends to withdraw her forces from Sinai and return them to her own borders, I am ready to broadcast a most friendly declaration toward Israel in a special television and radio program tonight." Rabbi Silver conveyed this message to Ambassador Eban. The latter added his own request: "Please consider deeply and reply with highest priority." Silver then transmitted this second message directly to Prime Minister Ben Gurion.¹⁴

Eban writes, "On October 31, Ben Gurion sent me his reply to the message from Eisenhower through Sherman Adams to Silver. I passed it on to Silver in Cleveland so that he could telephone it to the White House. At Proskauer's suggestion, I also made the text available to Governor Dewey."¹⁵ The diplomatic road was very winding. The message went from Israel to the Embassy to Silver to the White House. Why was this complicated course necessary? Perhaps it is just "correct" diplomatic procedure to answer a message via the same route by which it came. Nonetheless, it suggests the important

role played by Silver as a personal link between the Israeli government and the American Administration. In this case, the Administration chose to involve an American Jew to further its policy interests.

Ben Gurion replied that he would be prepared to withdraw Israeli forces if Nasser would sign a peace treaty which would include clear assurances that he would abstain from hostile acts against Israel. These included the dispersion of the fedayeen units, an end to the economic boycott, the stoppage of the blockade in the Red Sea and the Suez Canal and abstention from any military alliance against Israel. He made it clear that Israel considered any withdrawal of its forces from the area before a peace agreement was signed to be suicidal. He expressed his hope that the present action of Israel would not disrupt Israel-American friendship.¹⁶

Negotiations took place between the American government and Israeli representatives in Washington throughout the winter of 1957, with little progress reported. Abba Hillel Silver was kept informed by both sides of developments, although messages from the White House to Jerusalem were no longer transmitted through him. Abba Eban relates that President Eisenhower consulted Silver in an attempt to "understand" Israeli leaders. For example, in early November 1956, Ben Gurion requested a secret summit meeting with Eisenhower to attempt to iron out the differences between the two countries. Eisenhower refused, claiming he was unwilling to give Ben Gurion what Eban calls "the prestige victory" of a summit meeting. Eban reports that Eisenhower had phoned Rabbi Silver upon receipt of the request to ask whether Ben Gurion's reputation for balance and rationality was really well founded.¹⁷ One may assume that Silver attempted to reassure him.

During the next few months of tension in Israel-American relations, Silver was involved as an unofficial mediator and interpreter of United States policy. After a public address by President Eisenhower to the American people in February 1957, in which he issued a veiled threat that the United States would "have to adopt measures which might have far reaching effects on Israel's

relations throughout the world," Silver contacted the Embassy to explain that the intent of the President's speech was not to close the door on further negotiations but to leave it open.¹⁸ It must be assumed that this explanation was given him by White House sources. On several other occasions, Silver was involved as a link between the two governments. He appealed to each for understanding of the other's difficulties and worked at bringing both sides closer together. It seems apparent that if the purpose of the American government in involving Silver was to apply his personal pressure on the Israeli government, that purpose failed. If, however, through Silver's involvement, both sides received reliable explanations of the other's position and thus greater understanding of the stakes involved, then both may have benefited.

Abba Eban, in an interview with this writer, assessed the importance of Silver's role in the Suez dispute:

They (the White House) thought it wise from their point of view (and I think it was) to use the good offices of a man like Silver who was a Zionist leader. He could have a restraining influence. What Silver said to Ben Gurion was "it's all very well for Britain and France to act but your interests lie with the United States. You should, therefore, try to rebuild this relationship as soon as possible by clarifying the limited aims of the Suez expedition."

He had a very useful effect, from the Israeli point of view as well. He helped limit and defuse the most serious confrontation Israel ever had with the United States by making it clear to Israel that it ought to reconstruct the relationship with the United States and by making it clear to the United States that Israel had no intention in the Sinai campaign to stay around the Sinai. Israel¹⁹ only wanted to secure certain limited security objectives.

The crisis in Israeli-American relations continued until mid-March 1957. The United States insisted on no pre-conditions to withdrawal, denying to Israel the possibility of holding on to any territories captured by its forces in the October invasion. The Administration announced that if the United Nations General Assembly voted to impose economic sanctions against Israel to force

compliance on withdrawal, the United States would support the action. American Jewish organizations organized public protests and a lobbying campaign to arouse Congressional and public opposition to the imposition of sanctions against Israel. Behind the scenes, several American Jews tried to influence the leaders of both governments to reach some sort of compromise. Immediately after the "victory speech" made by Ben Gurion in the Knesset on November 7, 1956, in which he announced Israel's intention to hold on to some of the territory it occupied, Nahum Goldmann sent the following communication to Prime Minister Ben Gurion:

With regard to Israel's refusal to move from Sinai or even to transfer its positions to an international force ... I must tell you that it will be impossible to mobilize an American Jewish front to support this posture. If there will be an open dispute between Israel and the United States government on this point ... (and) if this should lead to cessation of the UJA and Bonds, I foresee great difficulties in renewing their enterprises, even if the American authorities would again give their agreement ... what is needed is a step that will prevent an open split with Eisenhower ... I must add that I am certain that if the United States takes steps against us, Germany would stop reparations.²⁰

Nahum Goldmann, founder of the World Jewish Congress and of the Presidents' Conference and the then President of the World Zionist Organization was a cosmopolitan Jewish leader who was well known for his maverick views and sharp exchanges of view with the leaders of Israel's government. He was respected as a Jewish "statesman", having represented Jewish interests before foreign governments before and after the establishment of the State of Israel. His views were often at odds with the ruling establishment in Israel. His view here was not an accurate representation of general American Jewish opinion. Never was there an organized expression of opposition to Israeli policy or a diminution of support for Israel as he had predicted. Nonetheless, he did accurately express a fear prevalent among Jewish leaders; that the United States would end tax-exempt status to donations to Israel and freeze all American philanthropic and aid activities for Israel. This, in fact, was hinted at on several occasions in

public and private American statements by State Department officials. The threat of economic sanctions against Israel put into question the future of all American Jewish assistance programs to Israel. This would have seriously damaged Israel's economy and also have increased the rift between Israel and American Jews.

Another example of American Jewish leaders urging a particular course of action to Israel's leaders was the involvement of some of the leaders of the American Jewish Committee. Judge Joseph M. Proskauer, then Honorary President of the American Jewish Committee, early in the crisis, sent a personal telegram to Prime Minister Ben Gurion urging him to withdraw. Proskauer, a person with independent views, hoped by his intervention to influence the Israeli leader to reconsider his Government's position. The wire was sent in confidence and was not publicized. It read,

Most strongly urge you authorize your embassy to negotiate compliance with President Eisenhower's request. Public opinion here strongly in your favor if you do not thwart it by refusal to comply with unanimous request of United Nations. Believe consequences most serious if you do so thwart it. Am satisfied that your embassy can work out an acceptable way for you to comply with President's request. Kind regards.²¹

Proskauer and several other members of the Committee expressed their consternation to the Israelis -- but only in private communications. No opposition to Israeli policy was ever expressed publicly. Israeli officials said these reactions by American Jews were taken under consideration, among the many other factors considered.

A more interesting attempt at American Jewish involvement in the mediation of the Suez conflict is described in the unpublished diaries of Rabbi Israel Goldstein, then the President of the American Jewish Congress and a member of the Presidents' Conference. Goldstein, a Conservative Rabbi and a lifelong active Zionist, sought to utilize his connections with one prominent

American Jew to gain access to the White House. Israeli-American negotiations were at a standstill in early 1957. Goldstein hoped to enlist several influential Americans in Israel's cause.

On Thursday, February 7, 1957, Rabbi Goldstein visited General David Sarnoff, President of the RCA Corporation, to discuss American policy in the Middle East during the Suez crisis. Sarnoff, prominent in corporate circles, was active in Jewish affairs and financially supportive of Jewish institutions. He was a member of the board of directors of the Jewish Theological Seminary and a member of Goldstein's congregation. Rabbi Goldstein reviewed for him the issues involved and asked Sarnoff if he supported Israel's position in the conflict. If he did, Goldstein asked, would he try to influence the President not to support the imposition of sanctions. Sarnoff expressed agreement with the Israeli position and added that he had even discussed the matter days before with Secretary of the Treasury George Humphrey at a White House luncheon. His impression was that the President's thinking on the Middle East was completely influenced by Secretary of State Dulles and thus very difficult to change. Goldstein then asked whether Walter Bedell Smith had any influence with President Eisenhower. Smith was a close friend of David Sarnoff and was known to be a friend of Israel. During World War II, he had been Chief of Staff to General Eisenhower. He was appointed Undersecretary of State in 1953. Sarnoff replied that several months earlier, Eisenhower had wanted to appoint Bedell Smith his White House advisor on foreign policy, but his appointment was blocked by the State Department, which apparently did not want independent White House involvement in foreign affairs. Thus, it was likely that Smith would have some influence on the President. However, at this time, it was futile to try to influence the President with regard to sanctions. In the event that Israel yields in her position, then it might be worthwhile to approach the President. Sarnoff suggested that if the necessity arises, he, Sarnoff, could be useful as an unofficial emissary between President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Ben Gurion.

The next morning, Sarnoff contacted Goldstein and told him that he had had a change of heart. He had decided to try to do something after all. He had contacted Bedell Smith and together, they had worked out a proposal for bringing the parties closer to a solution. This would be conveyed to the President directly by Smith. The proposal suggested the following points: The United States would give a private assurance to Israel that if Egypt would take any action against Israel, the United States would come immediately to Israel's defense. On the basis of this assurance, Israel would agree to comply with the United Nations resolution calling for its withdrawal from the territories it occupied.

Sarnoff wanted to know if this proposal would be acceptable to Israel. Goldstein answered that he would find out. The "connection" with Israel was now put into operation. Foreign Minister Golda Meir was then in New York at the Savoy Plaza Hotel. Goldstein phoned her that Friday night and conveyed to her the Smith-Sarnoff proposal. She agreed that the proposal would be acceptable to Israel, providing that it would be the kind of proposal that Nasser would know about and thus, it would have deterrent value.

Saturday morning, February 9, Goldstein phoned Sarnoff and reported Mrs. Meir's reply. Sarnoff, encouraged, said he would proceed accordingly.

The next day, General Sarnoff told Rabbi Goldstein that Bedell Smith had been to the White House. The proposal was before "the people concerned." He added that a part of the suggestion was that, if necessary, he, Sarnoff, would be the emissary to fly to Israel and deliver the proposal to the Israeli government. Throughout these discussions, Sarnoff insisted that he remain anonymous -- that neither Israeli representatives nor American Jewish leaders find out about his involvement. This, he thought, would give him greater freedom of action in the event of other problems in which he could be helpful.

On Monday, February 11, Eisenhower announced that the United States would guarantee free passage through the Gulf of Aqaba. Sarnoff and Goldstein

expressed their suspicions that the Sarnoff-Smith proposal was at least partly responsible for this announcement.

On Wednesday, February 13, Foreign Minister Meir contacted Rabbi Goldstein and suggested that they meet. She had several important suggestions that she wanted him to convey to his "contact". At the meeting, she outlined in detail Israel's position on the future of the Gaza Strip and the problems she foresaw with the stationing of any United Nations troops in Gaza. She suggested a commission should be sent to study the Aqaba problem and bring back its recommendations. Goldstein suggested to her that she meet with Jewish leaders within the framework of the Presidents' Conference, to explain the Israeli position. He pointed out that Israel's position in Gaza was not at all understood and thus failed to get sufficient support from Jewish leaders. Mrs. Meir agreed to the suggestion and met with the Presidents' Conference the following week. Goldstein conveyed Mrs. Meir's suggestions to General Sarnoff.²²

As the conflict dragged on without resolution, President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles were even more determined to use the power of world opinion and economic sanctions to force Israel to accept withdrawal without any territorial gains or other concessions. They seemed to desire that punitive action be taken against Israel, whose recalcitrance weakened the authority of the United Nations and the position of the United States, its chief ally and supporter. Evidence of the hardline approach supported by the President can be found in the President's memoirs where he described his policy intentions. Eisenhower writes that he preferred a United Nations resolution which would call on all U.N. members "to suspend not just governmental but private assistance to Israel." Obviously, this addition of "private assistance", although presented as a restriction on the entire international community, applied in the main to American private contributions which were then a substantial part of Israel's budget. On February 16, 1957, the President asked the Secretary of the Treasury to call Under Secretary of the Treasury for Monetary Affairs, W. Randolph Burgess, to ask for a rough estimate of American private

contributions. Burgess reported that American private gifts to Israel then totalled forty million dollars a year, and the sale of Israeli bonds, fifty to sixty million, a total of one hundred million dollars in private aid.²³ This money was largely the contribution of the American Jewish community, and was a crucial pillar of Israel's fledgling economy. Suspension of these funds would be disastrous for the Israeli economy. The Administration was particularly cognizant of American Jewish efforts to influence Congressional and public opinion and was resolved not to bow to the pressure from either. Eisenhower writes that Dulles strongly expressed the view that "we had gone as far as possible to make it easy for Israel to withdraw. To go further, would surely jeopardize the entire Western influence in the Middle East and the nations in that region would conclude that U.S. policy toward the area was, in the last analysis, controlled by Jewish influence in the U.S. In such event the only hope of the Arab countries would be found in a firm association with the Soviet Union."²⁴ Thus Jewish activities on behalf of Israel served to harden the resolve of the Executive branch to withstand the pressures and achieve Israeli withdrawal without granting Israeli demands for concessions.

Nahum Goldmann had warned the Israeli government early in the crisis (November 7, 1956) that the United States might propose such serious economic measures.²⁵ His forecast, based on discussions with Administration officials had proved accurate. In mid-March 1957, Israel announced its agreement on withdrawal. The relative importance of each of the factors influencing this decision is difficult to assess. The total isolation of Israel in the international community, its almost complete dependence of foreign sources of arms to maintain its army, the loss of American friendship and assistance were some of the important factors. The threat of economic sanctions, affecting public and private assistance demanded by Eisenhower was also a serious blow to Israel's decision-makers. The final assurances offered by the Eisenhower administration on navigation rights in the Gulf of Aqaba and on United Nations supervision of the Gaza Strip were accepted by the Israelis, who were now convinced that

this was the best deal they could get from a very unyielding Eisenhower administration.

Evaluating the resolution of the impasse between the two governments, two weeks after the Israeli final withdrawal, General Sarnoff suggested to Rabbi Goldstein that the final development in ending the conflict was closely related to the original Smith-Sarnoff proposal submitted to the President. Eisenhower sent a message of assurance to Israel guaranteeing freedom of navigation in the Gulf of Aqaba and the Suez Canal through arrangements with certain maritime powers. Sarnoff disclosed that Bedell Smith spoke on the phone at great length to Ben Gurion the night before the Eisenhower message. This laid the groundwork for the agreement. The Israelis then agreed to withdraw. He said that President Eisenhower and others in the Administration recognized the helpful role Sarnoff played in the resolution of the conflict.²⁶ This last statement is perhaps open to question. Did Sarnoff, via Bedell Smith, achieve a breakthrough in the negotiations that could not have been achieved via more traditional diplomatic channels? Was the Sarnoff-Smith proposal crucial in bringing the two sides in the conflict together? Perhaps. What is very significant is the role of two American Jews, one a Rabbi and leader of a Jewish organization; the other, a very wealthy, prominent businessman, who utilized their contacts with both the American government and the Israeli government to bridge the gap between them. Their goal was to resolve the crisis and restore harmonious relations between the two governments. Their involvement was in the interest of all three parties -- the United States, Israel, and American Jews.

A possible indication of the contribution of Goldstein and other American Jewish leaders to Israel's diplomatic effort in the United States is the entry in Rabbi Goldstein's diary of February 28, 1957: "I was supposed to leave for Israel Monday night but because of the situation in the United Nations ... those of us who have remained here, namely, (Emmanuel) Neumann, (Louis) Segal, and I have been asked by Golda and others to remain until the situation would clear up, as we might be needed if there are difficulties."²⁷ The Israelis

involved in the negotiations and American Jewish leaders, recognized that American Jewish involvement in American-Israeli relations was helpful.

The involvement of Goldstein, Sarnoff, Silver and Proskauer in the effort to resolve the differences between the United States and Israel is an important example of the linkage process. These American Jews, important not only as organizational representatives, but rather because of their personal influence or connections with individuals influential in the American government were helpful in bringing the two governments to an understanding and to the restoration of friendly relations between them.

2. The United States Intervention in Lebanon

In the summer of 1958, the Middle East again became an area of American concern. In Iraq, a group of nationalist officers, led by General Abdul Karim Kassem and Colonel Abdul Salam Arif, overthrew the pro-Western government and murdered the King, Faisal II, and the Prime Minister, Nuri Said. The coup rocked the unsteady Western alliance of Baghdad Pact nations and caused alarm within pro-Western Arab states. The United Arab Republic quickly applauded the revolution and signed an alliance with the new government. The United States, although recognizing the new regime, increasingly feared that this new outbreak of Arab nationalism, which was allied with pro-Nasserite and perhaps pro-Soviet forces, would spread revolution and instability throughout the Middle East. Only Lebanon, Jordan and Saudi Arabia were still outside the Nasserite camp and the first two showed the signs of pre-revolutionary unrest. The Western position in the Middle East seemed on the brink of disintegration.

The Eisenhower administration took decisive action. Lebanon had been plagued for some time with civil war between Moslems and Christians. The Christians wanted a pro-Western independent Lebanon; the Moslems, inspired by Arab nationalist zeal in the region, demanded closer relations with the United Arab Republic. The Moslems received arms and fighters from Egypt and Iraq.

Jordan also feared the spread of revolution across its border with Iraq. King Hussein felt threatened by the pro-Nasser sentiment prevalent among the masses and army officers in Jordan. Both countries invoked the Eisenhower Doctrine, requesting military assistance from the United States.²⁸ The British sent paratroopers into Jordan and the United States sent fourteen thousand men into Lebanon. The action gave the two governments the power and time to strengthen their regimes and to weed out their opponents. The immediate threat of revolution ended and both Britain and the United States withdrew their troops in late October. The Western show of force made it clear to the Arab states that the United States was resolved to protect its interests in the area.

The Israeli reaction to the Western intervention was one of reserved satisfaction. The government was very pleased that American will and military muscle was being flexed, thus striking a serious blow to Nasser and Soviet intentions in the area. The governments of Lebanon and Jordan, although pledged to be at war with Israel, were resigned to maintaining the status-quo with Israel because of their ties to Western powers. Thus it was in Israel's interest to support the strengthening of those governments. Revolutionary regimes on Israel's borders, on the Nasserite model, posed a serious threat to Israel's security. Thus, Israel regarded the American intervention as a stabilizing act in its interest.

Former Israel Ambassador to Washington, Abba Eban, in an interview, described the Lebanon episode as one of cooperation between Israel and U.S. authorities. In fact, Secretary of State Dulles consulted Eban on the action. He also requested Israel's agreement to allow overflights of British airforce jets over Israeli territory. Israel agreed. On the domestic scene, Dulles asked Ambassador Eban to act in the Congress to gain understanding for the American intervention. Eban recalled going to see Senators Johnson, Knowland and others to gain their support for the American action.²⁹

What was the American Jewish response to the Lebanese crisis? On the whole, U.S. Jews maintained a low profile, supporting the American effort to protect Western interests in the Middle East. Israeli officials were in contact with the foreign affairs experts at the American Jewish Committee, keeping them informed of developments in the region and of Israel's position in their regard. The Lebanon example is an interesting case of discussions held between American Jews and Israeli diplomats on an issue not directly involving Israel.

The foreign affairs expert at the American Jewish Committee, Simon Segal, suggested to the Israelis two ways they should gain public relations advantage from the Lebanese crisis. The first was that Israeli representatives should do everything they could not to inject Israel into the American press. Israel should stay out of the headlines so that the impression that people have been getting the last few months, namely, that Israel is not the sole reason for turmoil in the Middle East, would be strengthened. This tactic would focus the attention of American public opinion on the instability and ferment in the Arab world which has serious consequences for the West, irrespective of the Arab-Israel conflict. Segal, in this instance, offered his opinion of what tactic would enable Israel to reap public relations benefits from the crisis.

His second suggestion to the Israelis was that 'at all cost they should ask the Zionists, pro-Zionist and pro-Israeli organizations in this country to keep quiet and not make any statements even if those statements are in approval of the United States government.' Segal explained it was important not to inject the Jews of the United States into present Middle East issues. It is somewhat surprising that Segal saw no 'problems of principle' in suggesting to Israeli officials that they 'quiet' American Jewish organizations. Perhaps the Committee implicitly recognized and accepted the relationship between pro-Zionist organizations and Israel, that the latter had in the past told the former when to get involved and when not to. However, it is a curious situation since one can be sure that if an Israeli official had suggested to 'quiet' or 'restrict' the Committee's freedom of expression, especially on matters involving the American

government and national interest, the Committee would have been greatly indignant at the invasion of their rights as American citizens. On other occasions as well, the Committee, sensitive to possible backlash against Jewish support for Israel, urged the Israeli government to "muzzle" Zionist and other Jewish groups in America.

Segal writes in his report to the Executive Committee of the American Jewish Committee that the Israelis were very much concerned with the fact that a great number of prominent liberals in the United States had not been outspoken in their endorsement of the American intervention in Lebanon. They pointed out that although the official Democratic leadership, Senator Johnson, House Speaker Rayburn, former President Truman and others had come out in favor, other important Senators had responded lukewarmly at best. The Israelis were particularly concerned with the position of Senator Hubert Humphrey, who had reportedly suggested that high level meetings between U.S. officials and Nasser be held to discuss peace. Unknown to the Committee, this concern was shared by the American State Department, which had requested Israeli assistance in mobilizing Congressional support for the Lebanon action. The Israelis suggested that perhaps members of the American Jewish Committee could approach some of the liberal leaders in the United States like Governor Harriman, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, Senator Douglas, and others to get them to issue positive endorsements of the American action in the Middle East. This would give the Administration the appearance of unified backing of the American people across the political spectrum.³⁰

Israeli interest in gaining public support for the American action was, of course, indirectly in her own interest. The intervention in Lebanon demonstrated that the Eisenhower Doctrine had teeth and that the United States would honor its commitments to allied countries when called upon to do so. In the Israeli view, it set an important precedent and thus it was important that it be regarded as a bipartisan effort.

The discussion between Segal and Israeli officials is an example of a more or less routine exchange of views on an issue. Neither party hesitated to suggest a course of action for the other to follow. American Jewish groups did not issue any public statements regarding the Lebanon intervention. However, there is no evidence that it was because of Israeli requests that they refrained from doing so. The Israeli request that the Committee approach several members of Congress was an unusual instance of linkage behavior. A foreign government asked ethnic group leaders to act within their domestic system to gain support for their own government's action, on an issue indirectly related to the foreign government. If Eban's recollections are accurate, the interaction is even more complex -- the Israelis were fulfilling the request made by the American government! Committee files did not indicate whether the request of the Israelis was actually fulfilled.

3. The Arab Refugee Problem: The Johnson Proposal

The Middle East situation received renewed attention at the start of the new Democratic administration in March 1961. President Kennedy believed that the time was right to start a new initiative to achieve at least a partial settlement of the Arab-Israel conflict. According to one former advisor, Kennedy concluded after his election, in which he had received the overwhelming support of American Jews, that he could successfully resist pro-Israel (or Zionist) pressures since the Zionists had nowhere else to go but the Democratic party.³¹ Thus Kennedy embarked on a new effort to woo Arab states closer to the United States. In May 1961, he sent letters to five Arab heads of state in which he suggested an American solution to the Palestine refugee problem, on the basis of "repatriation or compensation for lost property." The United States offered its good offices in negotiating an end to the Arab-Israel conflict if the parties wanted it to do so. He also offered American assistance in finding a just solution to the problem of development of the water resources of the Jordan River. The letters expressed the American commitment to abide by United Nations General Assembly resolutions

on refugees and American support for the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine.³² The President suggested an American initiative on refugees knowing that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) mandate would be up for review in the General Assembly in the fall. The previous administration had more or less accepted the status-quo on refugees, being preoccupied with forming pro-Western regional alliances in the area. The Israelis had maintained throughout the years that the refugee problem was one of the problems to be solved within the framework of a total Middle East settlement. They had expressed their willingness to repatriate a limited number of refugees, providing that the rest accept resettlement in the Arab world or outside of it.

The Kennedy initiative caused great consternation within Jewish circles. Already in July 1961, Israeli representatives met with representatives of the American Jewish Committee to brief them on how they regarded the American position, and to explain their objections to it. They reported on President Kennedy's talks with Prime Minister Ben Gurion on the subject during the latter's visit to the U.S. in late May. Ben Gurion, according to one diplomatic source, had been very upset after Kennedy disclosed his intention to initiate the Johnson mission to the Middle East. He was reported to have said to his aides that he considered the threat to Israel from taking in the Arab refugees to be worse than all the arms that the Soviet Union was sending the Arab states. Ben Gurion was very worried and decided to inform American Jews about the initiative and to request their "assistance" in warding off this ominous threat to Israel's security.³³ Publicly, the Israeli official response was to express a willingness to negotiate for an equitable, practical solution to the problem. The Israelis perceived the American action as dangerous because it suggested to the Arabs proposals contrary to Israel's longstanding terms for a peace settlement. It also offered to the Arabs American assistance while to the Israelis, the Administration merely said "Rely on us", offering "trust" rather than concrete assurances.

It did not require the Arabs to recognize Israel or to negotiate a peace settlement. Neither did it require them to accept resettlement as their contribution to a solution to the problem.³⁴

In July 1961, a high level Israeli diplomat briefed the American Jewish Committee's Executive Committee on the refugee problem. He suggested that "if the White House staff or others close to the President could draw his attention to the implications of the recent actions by the United States government in terms of United States-Israel relations, worthwhile results could be accomplished." To the question of whether it might be helpful is the American Jewish Committee could find a way to point out to the Administration the dangers in the present American approach, the answer of the Israeli official was an emphatic "Yes".

The Presidents' Conference also convened to discuss the Kennedy initiative. Like the Committee, they decided not to issue any public statements but to continue to follow developments and when necessary, work through quiet diplomacy to modify the American position.³⁵ During the next eighteen months, American Jewish leaders worked together with Israeli officials to prevent American adoption of a plan for the refugees contrary to Israel's interest. An examination of American Jewish involvement in the negotiations between the United States and Israel on the Arab Refugee question during this period offers fascinating insights into the linkage activities of this ethnic group. It is also interesting to note the different approaches of the American Jewish Committee and the Presidents' Conference.

On August 21, 1961, the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine (CCP) appointed Dr. Joseph Johnson, head of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, to be "its Special Representative to undertake a visit to the Middle East to explore with the host Governments (of the refugees) and with Israel practical means of seeking progress on the Palestine Arab refugee problem." Johnson visited the countries in the Middle East and negotiated with their

leaders for several months. He prepared a report with specific recommendations for solving the problem of the refugees, which was submitted to the Conciliatory Commission on Palestine. Contents of the reports were leaked to the press and were made public as early as October 1962. American Jews, however, were informed of its contents even earlier.

President Kennedy notified Ben Gurion, in August 1962, that he decided to supply Israel with Hawk missiles. He sent his advisor on Jewish affairs, Mike Feldman, to inform him of the decision. Ben Gurion writes in his memoirs that he had reacted to the news with great emotion and sent to the American President a message conveying the deep gratitude of the Israeli people. Ben Gurion writes that only a few weeks later did he learn what, in his view, was the real price of the Hawks. State Department officials informed Ambassador Harmon that Israel must accept the Johnson plan. Ben Gurion was furious. He informed Foreign Minister Meir that if the price of the Hawks was acceptance of the Johnson plan, then Israel would forego them.³⁶ A few weeks later, he sent Mrs. Meir to New York to meet with Jewish leaders. The campaign against the Johnson plan had begun.

On September 20, 1962, Mrs. Golda Meir addressed the Presidents' Conference. In a two-hour session, she explained the problems Israel was confronting at the General Assembly session and the proposals of the Johnson plan. She was reportedly very disturbed by the Johnson proposals and very interested in activating American Jewish pressure on the Administration to drop its pursuit of a solution to the refugee problem which so endangered Israel's vital interests. Mordecai Gazit, a close associate of Mrs. Meir, then serving at the Israeli Embassy in Washington, recalled his meeting with Mrs. Meir at the airport when she arrived. She was very worried about the Johnson proposals. She requested that he organize a meeting of Jewish leaders so that she could address them and share her concerns with her "fellow Jews". She wanted American Jews to unite behind Israel and use their political clout to pressure the White House to back down on its support for the Johnson proposals. Gazit, it should be noted, held a

minority view in the embassy and diplomatic corps -- that there was no need at all to seek American Jewish help in intergovernmental matters. Gazit regarded Golda Meir's dependence on American Jews to be entirely unnecessary and to be the psychological carryover of a Diaspora "Galut" mentality of the older generation of Israeli leaders. (It was characteristic of Ben Gurion and Levi Eshkol as well.) They were still influenced by the self-perception of the weak Diaspora Jew who must enlist the help of other powerful Jews to save him in time of need. (A Mordecai-Esther complex?)³⁷ Gazit, on the other hand, recommended to Mrs. Meir that Israel stand firm and openly reject the American initiative without resorting to extraneous assistance from Jewish groups. She rejected the advice out of hand.³⁸

Two weeks later she met with the Executive of the American Jewish Committee and explained to them why Israel considered the Johnson proposals "unacceptable". The Johnson proposals included the following points:

1. Appointment of a new U.S. administrator and staff charged with the duty of carrying out the 1948 U.N. Assembly resolution for the repatriation or resettlement of the refugees.
2. Individual refugees and heads of families would be given confidential questionnaires. They would make a "preliminary" choice, keeping the right to change their minds later. Possible choices would include return to former property in Israel; return to alternative locations in Israel; resettlement in Arab countries; resettlement elsewhere in the world. Although the refugees would indicate preferences on the questionnaires, they would be told from the start that they would not necessarily get their first choice.
3. U.N. agents would consult Israel on possibilities for repatriation and with Arab and other countries specified in the preliminary questionnaires regarding resettlement.
4. Israel would be asked not to set a maximum number of returning Arabs it would admit. However, Israel would retain the right to reject individual Arabs as security risks, subject to U.N. overall surveillance and review.
5. A special U.N. fund consisting of voluntary contributions from governments and the world public would be set up to help the refugees become integrated. Israel would be expected to make a substantial contribution to the fund.

6. Israel, with help from the U.N. and friends (mainly the United States) would be required to pay indemnities to Arabs who lost property in Israel.

7. Expenses of the U.N. administrator and agents would go into the regular U.N. budget, assessed against all one hundred and ten members.

8. The U.N. agents would be "co-ordinators" and "catalysts" with the responsibility of inform the individual refugees and see that they understand and obtain their rights. (Illiterates, for example, would get special help.)

9. All refugees would be entitled to a U.N. fund indemnity covering the hardships undergone by them.

10. The Arab host governments (United Arab Republic, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon) and Israel would be invited to name representatives to a council of advisors to the U.N. administrator.³⁹

Israel objected to the proposals for several reasons. Mrs. Meir explained these objections at a meeting with Jewish leaders. She raised the following points:

1. The proposals derogated from Israel's sovereignty in that it made Israel's decision to bar the return of specific refugees as "security risks" subject to review by a U.N. body.

2. There was no ceiling on the number of refugees Israel might be asked to take back. Arab leaders may embark on a campaign to get large numbers of refugees to demand repatriation.

3. Even after a certain number of refugees are admitted to Israel, the U.N. supervision does not cease. Refugees will be assisted in becoming "integrated", thus involving U.N. agents in Israel's internal affairs even after repatriation.

4. The administration of the proposed questionnaire raises many serious problems. The widespread illiteracy among the refugee population and the political propaganda they will be subjected to by Arab governments cause Israel to suspect that there will not be "free expression of individual preferences." More likely, the refugees will be pressured into choosing repatriation

as the only acceptable solution. Any attempt by Israel to reject the influx of overwhelming number of refugees will then be distorted by Arab states and perhaps by the United Nations organization in propaganda portraying Israeli as intransigent, unsympathetic and acting contrary to world opinion.

Thus, Israel's sovereignty, security and reputation were seriously threatened by these proposals.⁴⁰

American Jewish leaders responded sympathetically to Israel's predicament. Since the proposals were not officially made public, nor had the United States taken any specific public actions in support of them, American Jews and Israeli diplomats had time to plan their strategies and engage in quite discussions with the State Department and the White House. The State Department, for its part, agreed to discuss the Johnson proposals with the Presidents' Conference, in the hope that its presentation would reassure American Jews and through them, convey to the Israelis that the United States was indeed concerned about Israel's security and would insure its protection. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Philips Talbott came to New York to meet with the Presidents' Conference on October 24. He tried to reassure the Jewish leaders that the United States was working very much in Israel's interests in seeking a solution to the thorny problem of the Arab refugees. Its solution, he maintained, would bring needed stability to the region. Talbott reviewed one or two features of the Johnson plan with the Jewish leaders but did not go into the details, explaining that the plan had not yet been made public. Jewish leaders expressed their serious reservations about the plan, indicating that they were better informed about the plan than Talbott had thought.⁴¹

The Presidents' Conference made a second effort to discuss the proposals with the State Department. Rabbi Irving Miller, chairman of the Conference and a small delegation of Conference members, visited the State Department and met again with Assistant Secretary of State Talbott. This time Mr. Talbott understood that the American Jewish leaders were well informed of the

details of the plan. The meeting lasted one and one half hours, during which time Talbott tried to persuade his visitors of the wisdom of the Johnson plan. Again he tried to reassure Jewish leaders that the proposals were drawn up with due regard for the sovereignty and security of Israel. He disclosed that an oral suggestion had been made to the Israelis to "depend of the good offices of the United States to see to it that Israel's interests will in no way be harmed." The United States, he said, was extremely disturbed by Israel's flat rejection of the proposals, in contrast to the Arab States' response of neither acceptance nor rejection. He warned that Israel would face the brunt of world public opinion against her since her position was contrary to the intent of the United Nations to find a solution to the refugee problem.⁴²

The meeting was a good opportunity for a frank exchange of views. The Conference delegation reported that Talbott was not moved by any of their arguments; nor were they influenced by his. They understood that the United States was resolved to introduce the Johnson proposals to the General Assembly and act in the U.N. Conciliatory Commission for Palestine to convince the other members to support them as well. The delegation reported about their State Department discussions at a meeting of the Presidents' Conference. They then discussed what further action should be taken. Private conversations with Mr. Mike Feldman, the White House assistant responsible for relations with Jewish groups revealed that the White House was actually uncertain whether to back the Johnson plan. It seems that the White House and the State Department were at odds over the question. Final policy would eventually be decided by the White House. In view of this fact, the Conference members decided to concentrate their efforts on influencing the White House to reject State Department pressures on behalf of the proposals. Thus, at the November 26 meeting of the Presidents' Conference, the members decided on a strategy of action specifically directed at the White House. The Chairman, Rabbi Irving Miller, wired Presidential Assistant Mike Feldman, expressing the Conference's grave concern over American support for the Johnson proposals. He requested that the

Conference be given the opportunity to meet with the President and present their views to him. Feldman replied in a phone conversation that an appointment with President Kennedy was not possible, explaining that Mrs. Meir, Israel's Foreign Minister, was also seeking an appointment with the President. The President, he said, would not be able to see both. Furthermore, he added, if it became known that the President had met with a Jewish group and with an Israeli official before the Assembly debate on refugees, it would create a bad impression as to the objectivity of American policy. However, Feldman promised that he himself would put the Conference's view before the President.

The Conference had another close contact in the Administration. Philip Klutznick, former President of the B'nai Brith and former Chairman of the Presidents' Conference, was appointed by Kennedy an Ambassador to the United Nations, as deputy to U.N. Ambassador Adlai Stevenson in the area of economic and financial affairs. Klutznick had been an active supporter and fund raiser for Kennedy in his election campaign, and an unofficial advisor on Jewish affairs. Explaining his involvement in Jewish affairs while working for the White House, Klutznick said, "You can't be in the administration, in a Presidential position, and be Jewish, and if you have Jewish interests, without getting involved from time to time."⁴³ Thus, Klutznick entered the discussions on the refugee question. He contacted Mike Feldman, with whom he often worked, and expressed his dissatisfaction with the reception given Rabbi Miller's request for a meeting with the President. He urged Feldman to seek an appointment for them or to intercede on their behalf.

Rabbi Miller reported to the Conference on December 12, 1962 about the final chapter in the struggle to "kill" the Johnson proposals. Mike Feldman had called him to related the unfolding of events at the White House. After the Klutznick intercession, Mike Feldman called Presidential appointment secretary Kenneth O'Donnell and asked him to accompany him to the President to discuss the refugee proposals. Both together would seek to influence the President against adopting the Johnson plan. O'Donnell agreed and that afternoon both went

to see the President. Apparently their arguments were persuasive. At the end of the meeting, Secretary of State Dean Rusk was called in. The President made it clear to him then that the Johnson proposals were dead, as far as the Administration was concerned. This researcher does not know whether arguments exposing the pitfalls of the plan itself convinced the President or whether domestic considerations, e. g. , Jewish opposition, were the decisive factors in quashing the plan. The next morning, Assistant Secretary of State Talbott and an assistant met with Mike Feldman, Israeli Ambassador Avraham Haron and his aide Mordecai Gazit. Talbott informed them that the United States would not put forward the Johnson proposals in the General Assembly. The battle had been won.⁴⁴ American Jewish leaders decided not to remonstrate the Government on its decision to oppose the Brazzaville resolution in the United Nations calling for direct negotiations between the Arab states and Israel. The Administration was to be given a respite from Jewish pressure, in appreciation for its decision to abandon the Johnson plan.⁴⁵ Rabbi Miller reported that the State Department felt very much let down by the turn of events.

The State Department did not give up its interest in an American plan for the solution of the refugee problem. It suggested a new plan in January 1963. The Israelis, it recommended, should admit ten percent of the refugees and the rest of the Arab states would take the rest. Negotiations with Israel would be conducted with the United States, since the Arab states would not negotiate directly with it. The United States would offer Israel security guarantees. The absorption of the refugees would be gradual, over a period of ten years. Prime Minister Ben Gurion distrusted the plan and American assurances of guarantees. On November 20, 1963, Foreign Minister Meir briefed the Presidents' Conference about the plan and presented Israel's objections to it. Soon after, President Kennedy was assassinated and with his death, American plans to settle the refugee problem were suspended.⁴⁶

It is difficult to assess who influenced whom successfully in the process of decision-making. Was the involvement of American Jews the significant factor in swaying the President to reject the advice of his State Department? From

reports of the Presidents' Conference, it is apparent that they thought their involvement had achieved significant results. Perhaps. A President makes a policy decision based on several component factors, not all of them known to the analyst. Perhaps the Administration did not regard the proposals as important enough to its foreign policy program to engage in confrontation with domestic opponents of the proposals. Or can the White House's retreat be explained simply by the fact that the Administration realized that the plan was a hopeless effort -- the Arab states were known to be against the plan; the Israelis had already flatly rejected it. Why should the Administration go out on a limb to promote a plan which was acceptable to neither side in the conflict? Since the chances of acceptance of the Johnson proposals were very slim, the Administration had nothing to gain by advancing them and domestically, it had something to lose.

The episode of the Johnson proposals is important for linkage research in that it demonstrates the linkage role of American Jews. The Israeli government had actively enlisted the assistance of American Jews in the fight to quash the Johnson proposals. American Jews, after hearing Israeli arguments, presented to them by no less a personality than the Foreign Minister herself, rallied to support Israel's position. Their subsequent involvement had two main goals: 1) to explain to the State Department why Israel rejected the proposals, thus, perhaps, gaining more understanding for the Israeli position; Jewish leaders hoped they could at least mitigate the anger and resentment Department officials felt toward Israel; 2) to quash the proposals, thus achieving Israel's immediate policy goal.

The State Department made a serious effort to explain to Jewish leaders its position. It had two purposes: the first, to explain the State Department view of the issues and by doing so, modify or change the views of the Jewish leaders; the second, to have the reassurances and promises made by the Department related back to Israeli representatives, thus reenforcing these commitments in the eyes of the Israelis. This does not mean that the Department honestly

expected to convince American Jewish leaders to alter their views and represent Department views back to the Israelis. Nevertheless, the repetition of State Department assurances to Israeli leaders via American Jews does, in effect, serve the Department's interest as well.

The American Jewish Committee's Committee on Israel met to discuss the Johnson proposals and the American government's position several days later. From the minutes of the meeting, it appears that they had not been informed of the final developments at the White House regarding the proposals. The meeting was called "to consider what the American Jewish Committee should or could do under these strained circumstances to bring about greater mutual comprehension." They decided to refrain from public statements on the issue, in order to maintain its "unique and valuable reputation for objectivity, so that it would be available to the parties at the proper time," and to work through quiet, informal channels to bring the parties closer together. It was suggested that members with contacts with Israeli representatives should ask the latter to tell American Zionist groups that the public statements they had issued were harmful to Israel under the present circumstances, and they should therefore refrain from doing so in the future. The Committee suggested that it mediate between the two governments, explaining to Israel that it was not in their long range interest to reject publicly and irrevocably the American initiative. Efforts should also be made to point out to the State Department that it was both unrealistic and unfair to expect Israel to give a binding commitment to take back a specific number of refugees unless there were equally firm assurances from the Arab states that there would be steps taken to resettle the remaining refugees in Arab lands.⁴⁷

The Committee considered itself a more detached "objective" linkage actor. It perceived its role in this period of tension between Jerusalem and Washington as an "impartial" mediator whose main interest was to restore harmony and understanding between the two. Although obviously sympathetic to Israel's arguments, the Committee's stated main goal was not to quash the

proposals entirely (as was the goal of the Presidents' Conference) but to bring the parties together for a friendly dialogue. Confrontation was in the interest of neither party and certainly harmful to the interests of the ethnic linkage group as well.

It is interesting to compare the unfolding of developments revealed in American Jewish sources explaining the fate of the Johnson proposals to that suggested in an article by William Quandt. Quandt concludes it was the domestic political costs of the plan, *i. e.*, American Jewish opposition to it, that made the Administration back away from the plan. As long as the plan seemed to have some chance of being accepted (by either party) efforts were made to reduce domestic opposition to it. In fact, Quandt claims that the United States made direct requests to the Israelis "to temper the opposition of their American supporters." If this is indeed true, and the "American supporters" being in this case mainly American Jews, it suggests an interesting aspect of the linkage relationship. The American government requests a foreign government to use its influence to modify the legitimate political behavior of a group of citizens exercising their rights as Americans to protest a particular policy of their government. Implicit in this request is, first, American recognition of the close relationship between the Israeli government and American Jews; and, second, American unofficial recognition that this relationship is legitimate. Third, the U.S. considers that this relationship could and should be manipulated in the interest of the American government, *i. e.*, Israel could influence American Jews for the United States government.

Quandt writes that the Kennedy Administration ended its effort to deal with the refugee problem in the fall of 1962. The President was interested in getting as many Democrats as possible elected to Congress in the November elections. Quandt claims that Kennedy was reportedly told that some campaign contributions would be withheld from Democratic Congressional candidates unless the Johnson initiative was stopped. This was a significant threat as some of the large campaign contributors to the Democratic party were Jews

sympathetic to Israel. Quandt concludes that in the absence of countervailing pressures, this threat may have been effective.⁴⁸

Quandt seems to have fallen prey to the trap of the "myth" of Jewish power at election time. It is true that Jewish influence -- contributions and votes -- plays a role in determining Democratic policy toward Israel in an election year, but in this case, Jewish sources and the chronological development of events challenge Quandt's rather simplistic contention. The election was held the first week of November. The President, according to the minutes and reports described above, only decided to end the American initiative on the Johnson plan on or about November 28, 1962, and informed the Israelis of it the following day. This was one month after the elections. Behind the scenes efforts by Jewish leaders were in full force after the election, and to a much lesser extent before. The President did not gain politically in time for the election. Although in error about election pressure as being decisive, Quandt is yet another corroborator that American Jewish leaders were very much involved in the discussions regarding solution of the refugee problem.

This quiet involvement, as in the Suez crisis, was in addition to and separate from public actions on behalf of Israel organized by the Jewish organizations. Public statements, paid advertisements in newspapers, letter writing campaigns and other forms of pressure on the Administration to support a policy favorable to Israel's interests may occur simultaneously with the private, quiet informal linkage operation. The public action is part of the lobby-interest group role of a domestic ethnic group. The private action of Jewish leaders or private individuals is an extension of the diplomatic arms of the two governments, the United States and Israel. Both countries activate the link in an attempt to further their foreign policy goals and to achieve greater understanding of them. The linkage group acts to mediate between the two governments; its foremost goal being the maintenance of harmony and friendship and minimization of conflict between them.

II. The Prominent Private Individual

The private individual who is not an official representative of a Jewish organization has often proved to be the "right man, at the right place, at the right time." That is, at a time of impasse between Jerusalem and Washington, when official Jewish interventions fail to bring the parties closer together, the mediation of a private, trusted individual may be very important. This is particularly helpful in a situation where Jewish organizational efforts indirectly to influence the President through Israel's supporters in Congress or through the force of public opinion fail to achieve results.

The President may be confronted with several policy choices. He may be subject to conflicting pressures from several different groups and interests in the political arena. Economic interests, ethnic groups, the State Department, independent foreign policy interest groups may have tried to influence the President's decision. Moreover, he may be so bombarded with professional "arm-twisters" from both sides of the issue that he is worn out and very resentful of any further intercession. At this juncture, the low-keyed intervention of a personal friend of the President might be significant. He may be the only advocate remaining with possible direct access to the President. His participation on behalf of Israel must be introduced carefully and sparingly; his arguments and recommendations must be well thought out and logical, and most of all, he himself must be truly convinced by them. There is a great qualitative difference between the advocacy of an issue that one truly believes in and the presentation of arguments supplied by others when the advocate is only half-convinced of their validity. The President can usually quickly distinguish between them. Accustomed to being barraged by arguments of professional "hired" advocates of causes and special interests, it is likely that he would automatically turn a deaf ear to another advocate as just another pressure to be withstood. The personal friend whose sincerity and devotion to his cause was apparent and recognized by the President and whose friendship with him was valued, has a better chance successfully to discuss the issues with him. That does not guarantee a

positive response from the President. It merely gains his attention and consideration in the interest of friendship or political debt.

The President, because of his esteem for his friend, recognizes that he would not "bother" the President or take undue advantage of their friendship if he did not consider the issue important. Thus, the President already from the start is alerted to the fact that the matter under discussion is important, and deserves his personal consideration and sympathy.

The Israeli foreign policy experts in Washington and in Jerusalem recognized the importance of these few individuals. They were cognizant that their advocacy of Israel's cause could be crucially important at times when Executive support for Israel's interests was in doubt. Furthermore, Israeli representatives realized that this "precious diplomatic commodity" should be used sparingly and only at the right time. Overuse and misuse could diminish its value. Israeli Ambassador to Washington Abba Eban described it thus: "They would be used and listened to because they didn't do it too often. American Jews with personal connections to the White House used to say to us, 'Don't ask us to waste our ammunition on small things but on something that is important. On arms, on reiterating America's commitment to Israel's security, on Israel's water program, sale of the Hawk missile, etc.'"⁴⁹ The American Jew and the Israeli representatives recognized that the enlistment of the former to intervene with the White House was to be used only on matters of great importance and in instances when interest group pressure, public opinion and routine channels of diplomacy failed to achieve results.

The earliest enlistment of the individual American Jew to reach the Oval Office on behalf of Israel was in the Truman Administration prior to the establishment of the State. The individual, Eddie Jacobson, differed considerably from the private persons involved in the linkage process generally because he was not in the traditional sense a "political" friend of the President's, *i. e.*, his friendship with the President did not stem from political ties within the Democratic Party, appreciation of his fund raising efforts or a recognition of

the importance of his possible assistance in future political campaigns. Jacobson's relationship with Truman was entirely personal. Their's was an old friendship, dating back to their stint together in the U. S. army in World War I. Lt. Truman and Sergeant Jacobson, both from Kansas City, were in charge of their artillery unit canteen. After the war, they set up together a haberdashery, but the venture ultimately failed. These early experiences cemented a lifelong friendship between the two men. Jacobson was, one could say, a typically assimilated Midwestern Jew. He was a member of a Reform Congregation, and a nominal member of the B'nai Brith. He evidenced no particular interest in Jewish communal activities in Kansas City, nor in Zionism. After World War II, when the painful news of the destruction of European Jewry was revealed and the struggle for the establishment of the State of Israel enlisted the support of the majority of American Jews, Jacobson joined in the fight for Israel.⁵⁰

In February 1948, Jacobson was recruited by Frank Goldmann, national president of the B'nai Brith, to intervene for the cause of Palestine. The President, at the time, was bitter and angry over the conduct and discourtesies of Zionist leaders who were using all possible pressure to get the United States to support the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine upon expiration of the British mandate. It reached the point that Truman refused to meet with any American Jewish or Palestinian advocates, including the respected Chaim Weitzman, the future President of the State of Israel. Eddie Jacobson wired the President, asking him to agree to meet with Weitzman. Truman refused. Unwilling to accept defeat, Jacobson traveled to Washington and met with the President. He pleaded with Truman to meet Weitzman, who he said was his personal hero, and in his view, "the greatest Jew who ever lived." The President reluctantly agreed. The meeting between Truman and Weitzman had important consequences for the future of the Jewish state. Truman, a man for whom personal relations with people was an important component of his political reactions, was greatly impressed with Weitzman. Moreover, he was impressed by the fact that Jacobson, who was not himself a Zionist, had "risked" his friendship with the

President in the interest of the Jewish state. The personal element, although not sufficient by itself to counter-balance the strong pressure of the State Department against the establishment of an independent Jewish state, was an important factor in the final decision of Truman to grant immediate recognition to the new State.⁵¹

Jacobson was enlisted on several occasions to intercede on Israel's behalf. Others who were close to Truman were Abraham Feinberg and Dewey Stone, Democrats who played a significant role in raising funds and generating support for the Truman reelection campaign in 1948. They wielded their influence with the President, getting from him important statements in support of the Jewish state and promises of economic aid during his administration. They were the more typical linkage actors involved in "personal" diplomacy on behalf of Israel.⁵²

In the Eisenhower administration, the Jewish community felt locked out. There were, for the most part, no Jewish leaders or private individuals who had close ties with the President or with his assistants. Emmanuel Neumann, the former president of the Zionist Organization of America wrote, "We did not get much help or sympathy from the Eisenhower Administration which had come into office in 1953 owing nothing to the Jews as some politicians put it. Its Middle Eastern policies were definitely shaped by the State Department, headed by John Foster Dulles, with its conglomerate following of Arabists, oilmen and missionaries. We had virtually no 'friends at court'."⁵³ This view of the anti-Israel stance of the State Department was perhaps more representative of the opinions of ardent Zionists like Dr. Neumann than of general Jewish opinion. However, it did reflect the prevalent Jewish view that their access to and influence on the Eisenhower Administration was negligible.

American Jews had greater access to the Executive during the Kennedy administration. Kennedy was quite aware of the fact that Jewish fund raising efforts and votes played no small role in getting him elected. Several Jews occupied important positions in the Democratic party. Mike Feldman and Philip

Klutznick, the former president of the B'nai Brith and past chairman of the Presidents' Conference, were political assistants of the President. Abe Feinberg, a major fund raiser for the Kennedy campaign had easy access to the President. American Jews felt that the line to the White House was open. Evidence of this is the successful campaign mounted to change the administration's policy on the Johnson refugee plan discussed above.

Abraham Feinberg and Arthur Krim were the key Jewish influentials during the Johnson administration. Their involvement was kept entirely behind the scenes. They sought no publicity for their activities. On the contrary, any public revelation of their role would have only damaged their effectiveness and limited their access to the White House. Indeed, one of the important aspects of their relationship with the President was that it was kept completely private. Neither man capitalized on his White House connection nor did he seek the admiration and prestige that could have been his, especially from Jewish organizations. Their proven efforts to protect the confidentiality of the relationship made them very valuable presidential "friends" and useful diplomats in Israel's cause.⁵⁴

Abraham Feinberg has been active in Democratic politics for over three decades. A wealthy businessman, Feinberg organized Jewish support for the Truman candidacy in 1948, and was instrumental in organizing Jewish support (especially financial) for John F. Kennedy in 1960. Feinberg was a man with "connections" in the Democratic party. He knew the powerful men within the party and had influence with them. He could raise large sums to launch a political campaign and his refusal to support a campaign could render severe damage to a political hopeful. He kept himself well informed of political issues, domestic as well as those relating to Israel. He often intervened on behalf of Democratic Administrations with members of the Congress. Feinberg described his involvement in an interview: "My importance was on the domestic scene, within the Democratic party. If the President needed legislative support on a domestic issue, in many cases, I rounded up support in Congress and in the Senate for the

administration on issues irrelevant to Israel. The President knew that I am helpful to him on other issues."⁵⁵ Harry Truman, in recognition of Feinberg's importance in his reelection effort and in view of Feinberg's strong interest in and support for Israel, offered Feinberg the appointment of United States Ambassador to Israel. Feinberg, who had been the founder and first president of Americans for the Haganah, an organization which helped provide arms and other critical materiel to the Jewish fighters in Palestine in the pre-state period, was very touched and flattered by the offer. However, he regretfully declined. His reasoning in this case, and at other times when he refused appointments to official posts within the Democratic administrations, was simple and forthright. He preferred to remain outside an administration so he could have the freedom to fight the administration when necessary for the causes he thought were important. He could, he said, be more effective in Israel's interests wielding his influence from outside than being bound to the administration's official policies from within.

Feinberg's closest relationship with an American President was with Lyndon Johnson. The latter regarded him as a close personal friend. During the Johnson administration, Feinberg was a frequent guest at the White House. He often held discussions with the President on domestic and international issues. Johnson knew very well that Feinberg was concerned about the welfare of Israel and had close ties with Israeli officials in Washington and Jerusalem. The Israelis, for their part, were very aware of the Johnson-Feinberg relationship, and understood that it could be used to their advantage at a time of crisis.

Lyndon Johnson set great store in personal relations. Consultation with respected friends could influence the President's decision in a White House whose style was highly personalized. The intervention of non-bureaucrats in discussions of foreign policy enabled the President to circumvent the State Department and relate on a more personal level with the foreign leaders. Thus, Feinberg, because he was a personal friend of the President, and had close ties with Israeli government leaders, played an important role in bringing the leaders of Israel and

the United States closer together, unencumbered by bureaucrats and slow-moving channels of official diplomacy. Messages could be transmitted quickly and personally between leaders and misunderstandings smoothed over or avoided. Formal diplomatic interactions continued concurrently with the private, personal exchanges between the leaders of two governments via American Jews.

In an interview, Feinberg told an interesting anecdote about his involvement in U.S. -Israel relations in the period immediately preceding the outbreak of war in the Middle East in June 1967.

Two weeks before the war started, LBJ called me at my home in the country. This was at the time when the Straits of T'iran were closed by Nasser. He asked me to go to Arthur Goldberg's apartment - then the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations - and to get Avraham Harmon, Israel Ambassador to the United States, to come up from Washington and go there, too. He then would call us all by phone there. I did that. The President talked to us on the phone from ten P. M. until two A.M. There were about half a dozen phone calls. He pleaded with Israel to give him time to organize the allies to break the blockage on the Straits. Harmon called Israel. Military action was forestalled for a time, giving Johnson a chance to try. His attempt failed since only Holland agreed to join the United States. The Israeli government gave notice that they couldn't wait any longer. They called me to notify LBJ. I told him at a Democratic dinner we both attended... The war began a day or two later.⁵⁶

It is obvious that this entire intergovernmental exchange could have taken place without the involvement of Abraham Feinberg. Both countries had diplomatic channels that were open for transmittal of messages between government leaders. The Ambassadors of both countries had been involved anyway. Nonetheless, the personal involvement of the American Jewish actor served to increase the sense of trust and friendship between the parties in a time of crisis and tension. Informal ties between two nations via an individual who has the confidence of both were important as buffers against misunderstandings by either side. They blunted the edges of disagreement and brought the parties a little closer together, when the formal channels of diplomacy were official and

unbending. Feinberg claimed that on several occasions, Johnson called him his "unofficial ambassador."⁵⁷

Israel's request to purchase fifty American F-4 Phantom jet fighters was made public in mid-December 1967. The Israelis had been concerned over post-June war developments in the Middle East. The French government was steadfast in its determination to withhold the Mirage fighter planes on order for Israel since before the war. The Soviet Union, three weeks after the war, embarked on a massive resupply effort of military hardware to its defeated Arab allies. In October 1967, the United States lifted the embargo of arms to the Middle East which it had imposed immediately after the war, and allowed the delivery of two squadrons of Skyhawk jets promised to Israel in 1966. Other than that, it restricted further shipment of arms to the area.

Prime Minister Levi Eshkol visited the United States in early January 1968. During a visit to the LBJ ranch in Texas, Eshkol presented Israel's request for the sale of Phantoms. The Israeli policy-makers thought it was important to get from the U.S. a positive gesture of support for Israel in view of the increased Soviet involvement with its hostile neighbors. Thus, the military purchase would have great political significance for the balance of power in the region. The Phantom was a more sophisticated fighter plane than the Skyhawks purchased earlier and would significantly increase Israel's military strength. There was strong opposition to the sale from the State Department and the Department of Defense. Johnson promised to consider the request over the next few months and refused to give any commitment to the visiting Prime Minister. The President thus opened himself up to the pressures from all sides, for and against the sale.

The State Department opposed the introduction of Phantoms into the Middle East. It argued that the United States should de-escalate the arms race in that troubled area. Its position was based on the following assumptions: First, Israel was in a position of unchallenged military supremacy in the area and was therefore in no great need for arms shipments. Israel's lightning victory over

three Arab armies only months before was clear evidence of its military strength. This was backed up by the analysis of Israel's strategic strength by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Second, the United States could prevent acceleration of the arms race only if it refused to initiate new arms sales to the region and by not increasing the level of sophistication of offensive weapons in the Middle East. Third, only a limitation of the arms race could enable the diplomatic efforts to reach a negotiated solution to the Israel-Arab conflict to progress.

Lucius Battle, then the Assistant Secretary of State for Middle Eastern Affairs, recalled the intense pressure and counterpressures on the President on the Phantom issue. Said Battle, 'LBJ told me at the ranch that never in all his years of political life did he have such political pressure -- Jewish groups and Congressional pressures. He said, "You have to give me more reason not to do it.' I told him about the arms race and the American interest not to accelerate it. I gave him a prepared draft explaining the Department position." Battle expressed resentment and an almost righteous anger towards the Jewish groups and their Congressional allies who interfered in the conduct of U.S. foreign policy. In his view, it was election year politics that swayed the Presidential candidates of both parties and a majority of the Congress to advocate the the sale of the Phantom fighters to Israel.⁵⁸

The American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) set as its top priority the creation of favorable public opinion in and out of Congress for the sale of Phantoms. At its annual Policy Conference in Washington, in March 1968, it issued a policy statement calling for the United States to provide Israel with the arms it needed to maintain its deterrent capacity. In April 1968, a resolution of the "sense of the House of Representatives" was introduced urging the United States to sell the Phantom jet fighters to Israel. Over the next two and one half months, over one hundred representatives signed or expressed their support for the sale. Support in Congress snowballed. In the summer of 1968, both Houses of Congress passed a sense of Congress resolution as part of the Foreign

Assistance Authorization Act of 1968 calling on the President to take whatever steps necessary to negotiate the sale of Phantoms to Israel.

The President remained undecided. Having already announced in March 1968 that he would not run for re-election, he could have withstood the political pressure had he wanted to. Israeli representatives interviewed suggested that the personal interventions of Abraham Feinberg and Arthur Krim played a crucial role in swaying the President to agree to the Phantom sale. Feinberg recalled having met with the President on dozens of occasions to get him to agree to the sale. He had been well briefed by the Embassy and was himself totally convinced on the importance of the sale. A frequent guest at the White House, he remembered staying there overnight several times to discuss the issue with the President. Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Krim were over at the White House more often. Krim, an influential financial backer of the Democratic party, was the president of United Artists. His wife had studied at the Weitzmann Institute in Rechovot, Israel. Both were staunch supporters of Israel but not members of the "Jewish establishment". Krim's involvement on behalf of Israel was kept a closed secret. Feinberg considered Krim's involvement in the Phantom affair to have been of the greatest importance in swaying the President's view in favor of the sale. Krim was briefed by the Embassy. Because of his personal friendship with the President, he had easy access to him and was able to discuss with him the merits of the Phantom request.

On October 9, 1968, the President directed the Secretary of State to open negotiations with the Israeli government on the sale of Phantoms. In December 1968, the United States government announced a final agreement. Delivery of the first Phantom jets were scheduled to begin in the fall of 1969.

The personal intervention of Feinberg was helpful in the period of negotiations as well. The Departments of Defense and State made a last ditch effort to reap some benefit from a deal they had vehemently opposed. The then Secretary of Defense, Clark Clifford, wanted to set conditions in return for which Israel would receive the Phantoms. He demanded from the Israelis that in

return for the sale of the Phantoms, they would have to agree to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. Israel had refused to do so in the past and was not willing to agree to it in return for the arms deal. This proposal had been suggested earlier in the negotiations and Israel's opposition noted. Suggested now again at the end of the negotiations process, it threatened to torpedo the talks. The time factor was important to Israel since it was anxious to have a signed agreement from this Democratic administration before it would leave office. The agreement would then bind the next administration, after the elections, to carry out the deal. The Israelis did not want to begin the whole negotiating process again with a new administration. The latter, especially in the beginning of its term, usually tries to initiate new peace initiatives with the Arab states and thus would be reluctant to negotiate new weapon sales to Israel. With an agreement signed and sealed with the Johnson administration, the delivery of the Phantoms would be assured. The Arab states would cast the blame on Johnson and the new administration would be free to embark on its own diplomatic ventures.

In an interview, Feinberg disclosed that he had discussed the condition of signing the non-proliferation treaty with President Johnson early in the negotiations in the present of Presidential foreign affairs advisor Walt Rostow. At that meeting, Johnson had stated categorically that there would be no conditions on the sale. When Secretary of Defense Clifford raised the condition again of signing the treaty, Feinberg re-entered the negotiations. He located Walt Rostow having dinner at Clark Clifford's house and reminded him that he had been present when the President decided not to make any conditions on the sale. Faced with double evidence of the President's decision not to force Israel to agree to conditions, Clifford withdrew the demand and the next day, the deal was signed. Feinberg added, with a note of pride in his voice, "When the Phantoms were delivered to Israel, I was the only American present at the airfield."⁵⁹

It is difficult to weigh the relative importance of each contributing influence on the President in the Phantom decision. The Jewish "lobby" was important in gaining strong Congressional support for the sale. Jewish groups mobilized their forces to gain media support. Jewish organizations succeeded in getting the inclusion of an endorsement of the sale in the platforms of both political parties in an election year. The personal involvement of friends of the President who had unimpeded access to him and had his trust was very significant in influencing the President to decide in Israel's favor. The combined effort succeeded.

The assistance of a party influential such as Feinberg was helpful to the Embassy in planning strategy and tactics for lobbying campaigns on behalf of Israeli interests. He had close relations with many Democratic Congressmen, several of whom had served in the House or Senate for many years. Several were now in positions of power, as chairmen of committees. Feinberg kept himself informed of which bills were coming before which committees and of the political forces lining up for and against them. He then would advise the Embassy when and with whom they should use their influence. He would advise them when the time was ripe for a trade-off with the White House and a Congressional committee.

The linkage role of private individuals and organization leaders was significant in mediating between the leaders of two governments in times of crisis and in preventing misunderstandings from arising. The Israeli government viewed their assistance as indispensable -- an extension of its diplomatic mission in the United States. It did not hesitate to seek the help of Jewish leaders or individuals when it deemed necessary.

III. American Jews and Foreign Governments

Another aspect of the informal diplomatic activities of some American Jews was in relations of several foreign governments with Israel. On several occasions, American Jews, either leaders or prominent individuals, met with representatives of foreign governments to discuss the status of their country's

relations with the State of Israel. These incidents were infrequent and except in the possible special case of relations with the German Federal Republic, there is no evidence that they achieved the desired results.

One example of these quasi-diplomatic activities was efforts to improve Israeli-Indian relations. The Israeli government, since its independence, had made numerous attempts to establish diplomatic relations with Asia. The most important country, in both size and influence, was India. Prime Minister Nehru, in November 1947, instructed his representative in the United Nations to oppose the partition plan which proposed the establishment of a Jewish state and an Arab state in Palestine. In talks with Zionist leaders in the pre-State period, Nehru displayed a marked lack of sympathy and understanding for the plight of the European Jewish refugees and their desire for a homeland. Rather, he viewed the Zionist independence movement as the tool of British imperialism in the Middle East. One observer of Indian attitudes toward Israel suggested that because India was so far removed from the centuries-old persecutions of Jews by Christians, it had little understanding or sympathy for the victims of anti-Semitism.⁶⁰ Israeli efforts to gain acceptance to the Asian bloc of nations were rebuffed. India delayed recognition of Israel for over two years, and after formally doing so in September 1950, it refused to establish diplomatic relations with Israel. It did, however, permit Israel to operate a consulate in Bombay and thus have ties with the Jewish community there. Nehru's refusal to establish diplomatic relations with Israel was based not only on ideological grounds, but on political exigencies. He feared the adverse reaction of Moslem Pakistan to any improvement of relations with Israel. At home, he did not want to ignite the passions of tens of millions of Moslems living in India, who were disgruntled living under the rule of the Hindu majority. In practical economic interests, trade opportunities were greater with the Arab world.

American Jewish leaders, on several occasions, attempted to influence the Indian government in regard to establishing full diplomatic relations with Israel. In the course of this research, I have found no material evidence that

indicates that Israeli representatives formally requested the involvement of American Jews in the matter. However, it is highly unlikely that American Jewish leaders initiated talks with Indian representatives without having discussed the matter, at least informally, with the Israelis. American Jews would not have been aware of the strong interest Israel had in improving these relations.

In August 1956, members of the executive committee of the American Jewish Committee discussed a possible avenue to Prime Minister Nehru. The plan was that the Washington representative of the Committee, Seymour Rubin, would approach Justice Felix Frankfurter with the request that he, in turn, ask Chief Justice Earl Warren to include in his exchange of views with Prime Minister Nehru the question of Indian-Israeli relations. Committee files do not have any follow-up report on the meeting. The plan, however, indicates two interesting points: First, the interest of the Committee in promoting Israeli-Indian relations, and, second, the complicated route from the Committee to Prime Minister Nehru.⁶¹

Rabbi Israel Goldstein writes in his diaries that in late 1956, when Prime Minister Nehru was in Washington, Chester Bowles, a former Ambassador to India, tried to arrange a short meeting between Nahum Goldmann, then Chairman of the Presidents' Conference and President of the World Jewish Congress, and the Prime Minister. Goldmann declined the meeting, saying he preferred to visit Nehru in India and discuss the matter at length. In this instance, an official of the American government acted to bring together a foreign leader and an American Jewish leader in an effort to improve Israeli-Indian relations.⁶² Rabbi Goldstein himself visited India in 1959 and met with Prime Minister Nehru. Among the topics discussed was the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel. Nehru reiterated his reasons for rejecting an improvement of relations.⁶³

A more formal meeting with an Indian official was held by a delegation of the Presidents' Conference with Indian Ambassador Nehru, in New York, in December 1965. The delegation outlined to the Ambassador a list of grievances.

Among them was, again, the lack of diplomatic relations with Israel. The Jewish leaders complained that prominent Indians had been issuing approving statements applauding the Palestine Liberation Organization. They also relayed Israel's complaint that in recent days visas had been denied to Israelis wanting to attend various international conferences in India, and on similar restrictions on Indian travel to Israel.

The Ambassador explained to the Jewish leaders that India's position was, in essence, a "compromise". It was separate from the Arab position because it recognizes Israel de jure if not de facto. However, India was interested in Arab good will, especially in India's quarrel with Pakistan over Kashmir. There could be, therefore, no change in the status of relations between Israel and India. The Ambassador insisted that if Israelis were denied visas to India, this was due to "mishandling" by lower echelon officials and would be corrected.

Jewish leaders were impressed that the Ambassador was eager to have the goodwill of the American public, an important part of it American Jews. He took great pains to assure Jewish leaders that there was no question of anti-Semitism in the Indian position. He said that the pro-Arab stance of India was due, in the main, to the fact that there are fifty million Moslems in India and to the conflict with Pakistan.⁶⁴ Israel-India relations have not improved since that period.

During the years 1956-1968, Jewish leaders engaged in discussions with the governments of Spain, Greece, Japan, the Vatican, and the German Federal Republic, in an effort to improve their relations with Israel. Jewish leaders were involved in discussions with West German leaders on a variety of issues: bringing to trial Nazi war criminal and extending the Statute of Limitations on Nazi war crimes, reparations to Jewish war victims, and diplomatic relations with the Jewish state. American Jewish leaders were particularly concerned over the presence of West German scientists in Egypt in 1964 who were working

there on the development of sophisticated missiles. Protests were made to the German government and Jewish leaders held meetings with several high level German officials.⁶⁵

Diplomatic relations between the State of Israel and West Germany were not established until 1965. In the early 1950s, this diplomatic "distance" was desired by the Israeli government, which could not, for ideological and domestic reasons, establish formal ties with the nation which, only a decade before, had massacred six million Jews. The survivors of the Holocaust and their families would not countenance any overtures of friendship to the German government.

In 1965, the West German government announced that it was terminating the limited military assistance it had begun to extend to Israel. This action was taken as a direct result of Arab pressure. The West German government feared that Egypt and other Arab countries would retaliate by giving recognition to East Germany. The Presidents' Conference met to discuss the suspension of arms. The chairman, Dr. Prinz, traveled to Bonn to discuss the issue with Chancellor Erhard. These talks, however, did not produce a change in German policy.

By 1965, domestic opposition in Israel to relations with Germany had muted. Despite a bitterness and awkwardness that would remain between the two countries for a long time, Israel was interested in establishing diplomatic relations with Germany. Bonn was reluctant to improve relations lest it arouse the ire of the Arab states. The Israelis and American Jews opened up negotiations with the West German government on the issue. American Jewish leaders pursued the matter in discussions with Chancellor Ludwig Erhard, with the German Ambassador to the United States and in correspondence with the Minister for Foreign Affairs Schroeder.⁶⁶

On March 7, 1965, the German Federal Republic offered to establish diplomatic relation with Israel. The timing of the offer was linked to an official visit to Cairo by Walter Ulbricht, head of the German Democratic Republic.

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Ulbricht's visit was considered by West Germany as a provocation by President Nasser and an overture to the establishment of diplomatic relations with East Germany. Nasser also incited strong opposition in the Arab world to West Germany's sale of military hardware to Israel, even after the sales had been terminated. Diplomatic relations between Germany and Egypt and most Arab states were subsequently broken off. The Israeli government and the Knesset accepted the West German offer, and on May 12, 1965, diplomatic relations were established.

American Jews were particularly active in negotiations with West Germany on issues relating to Israel because they thought Germany owed a tremendous debt to the Jewish people. Its payment was demanded not only in financial retribution to survivors but also in the diplomatic and political actions taken by the German government toward Israel. Thus, the presence of West German scientists in Egypt assisting on an armament project which threatened Israel's security and the reluctance of the Bonn government to establish full diplomatic relations with Israel were issues of special concern to American Jews.

American Jewish leaders explained their readiness to approach foreign leaders and representatives on behalf of Israel as another part of their efforts to assure Israel's security and well-being. Breaking out from its isolation in the Middle East was one of the primary goals of Israel's foreign policy. Aiding Israel in this effort was another aspect of the informal diplomatic activities of American Jews. They did not see any conflict of interests with the American government in this; rather the contrary. The United States government preferred that Israel expand its relations with many countries, thus giving Israel diplomatic and economic support from sources other than the United States.⁶⁷

Some foreign leaders thought that maintaining good relations with American Jews would be helpful to them in gaining better press or more aid for their countries. They thought American Jews could influence the media or the government in their countries' favor. Rabbi Herschel Schacter recalled discussions

with one Greek leader when he was chairman of the Presidents' Conference. The latter sought his assistance in gaining better press from The New York Times in the Greek-Turkish conflict over Cyprus.⁶⁸

Israeli officials, when asked if American Jewish intervention with foreign governments was helpful in Israeli diplomacy, downplayed their importance. One Israeli diplomat, however, conceded that American Jews should have been used more in relations with foreign governments. As Americans, they had more access to some countries than did the Israelis. From the Israeli point of view, their involvement could only be helpful.⁶⁹

How did the American government view the linkage role of American Jews? Did they ever try to influence Israeli leaders by enlisting the assistance of Jewish leaders? Did they try to limit the linkages between American Jews and Israel? At the beginning of Chapter V, I discussed the use of the services of Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver as an "emissary" from the White House to Israeli leaders. Was this involvement a rare incident or did the American government recognize the assistance of the ethnic group to further its foreign policy goals? The view of the United States government on linkage activities of an ethnic group will be discussed in Chapter VI.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER V

¹ Research sources of information about most "routine", non-crisis meetings are limited. Routine interaction between an Israeli embassy representative and an American Jewish leader was often unmemorable and thus unrecorded. Thus, in the course of interview research on this subject, this researcher was often given a general description of numerous meetings and few specifics because "there were so many" or "we discussed all the problems facing Israel." Few records were kept of these discussions. The interviewee was often hard pressed to find specific examples to illustrate the general impression of a close, lasting relationship between American Jewish leaders and Israel. Because of this, the best sources of information describing the interaction among the parties are the minutes of several meetings held to discuss specific problems confronting Israel. Minutes of these meetings were made available to this researcher by the Presidents' Conference, the American Jewish Committee and by several private individuals.

² Interview with Philip Klutznick, July 23, 1979. Jerusalem, Israel.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Files, American Jewish Committee, letter from Seymour Rubin to Simon Segal, November 15, 1956.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Abba Eban, An Autobiography (Tel Aviv: Steimatzsky's Agency Ltd., 1977), p. 213. The Kinneret operation was in October 1955. The Israeli army retaliated against Syria after the Syrians had attacked Israeli fishing boats on Lake Kinneret.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ The New York Times, November 1, 1956, p. 10.

¹⁰ Although not holding an official leadership position in the Jewish Community at this time, Silver still commanded the respect of the rank and file of the Jewish community and of the American government. There were no doubts as to his "Zionist" or pro-Israel credentials.

¹¹Michael Brecher, Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), p. 277.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Eban, An Autobiography, p. 218.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 231.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Interview with Abba Eban, March 1980. Jerusalem, Israel.

²⁰Brecher, Decisions, p. 287.

²¹Files, American Jewish Committee, November 8, 1956.

²²Personal Diaries, Rabbi Israel Goldstein Archives, Jerusalem, Israel. (unpublished).

²³Dwight D. Eisenhower, Waging Peace (New York: Doubleday, 1965), pp. 185-186.

²⁴Ibid., p. 186.

²⁵Brecher, Decisions, p. 287.

²⁶Diaries, Goldstein Archives.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸The Eisenhower Doctrine announced that the United States would take on the responsibility of being the major peacekeeper in the Middle East. It stated that the United States "is prepared to use armed forces to assist any nation or group of such nations requesting assistance against armed aggression from any country controlled by international communism." International communism was left undefined.

- ²⁹ Interview, Abba Eban, March 1980.
- ³⁰ Files, American Jewish Committee, July 17, 1958.
- ³¹ William B. Quandt, "United States Policy in the Middle East: Constraints and Choices" in Paul Y. Hammond and Sidney S. Alexander, Political Dynamics in the Middle East (New York: American Elsevier, 1972), p. 514.
- ³² The New York Times, June 24, 1961.
- ³³ Interview with Mordecai Gazit, Jerusalem, Israel. December 1978.
- ³⁴ Files, American Jewish Committee, July 10, 1961.
- ³⁵ Files, The Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, New York. July 11, 1961.
- ³⁶ Michael Bar Zohar, Ben Gurion (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1977). Hebrew edition. P. 1524.
- ³⁷ Refers to the famous Book of Esther, in which Mordecai requests of Queen Esther to go to King Ahasuaras to plead with him to abort Haman's decree to kill all the Jews of Persia.
- ³⁸ Interview, Gazit.
- ³⁹ American Jewish Committee, internal study on the refugee problem, October 1, 1962.
- ⁴⁰ Files, American Jewish Committee, minutes of the Executive Committee, October 1, 1962.
- ⁴¹ Files, Presidents' Conference, minutes of meeting, October 24, 1962.
- ⁴² Ibid.
- ⁴³ Interview, Philip Klutznick, Jerusalem, Israel. July 23, 1979.
- ⁴⁴ Files, Presidents' Conference, December 4, 1962.
- ⁴⁵ The Brazzaville resolution was put forth by a group of African countries calling for direct negotiations between Israel and the Arab states. The

Israelis enthusiastically supported it. The United States, not wishing to antagonize moderate Arab states, did not. It informed the Israelis that it would vote against it.

⁴⁶Files, Presidents' Conference, November 20, 1963.

⁴⁷Files, American Jewish Committee, December 4, 1962.

⁴⁸Quandt, p. 516.

⁴⁹Interview, Abba Eban, March 1980.

⁵⁰Zvi Ganim, Truman, American Jewry and Israel 1945-1948 (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishing, 1979), p. 20.

⁵¹See John Snetsinger, Truman, the Jewish Vote and the Creation of Israel (California: Hoover Institute Press, Stanford University, 1974).

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Emanuel Neumann, In the Arena (New York: Herzl Press, 1976), p. 287.

⁵⁴It is interesting here to note that although several members of Israel's diplomatic staff and the former head of the American desk at the Israeli Foreign Office pointed to both men as indispensable in the effort to obtain F-4 Phantom fighters for Israel in 1968, neither man nor the involvement of any private Jewish individual was even hinted at in a recent dissertation devoted entirely to the American Jewish effort on behalf of Israel's Phantom request! (see Marshall Amnon Hershberg, Ethnic Interest Groups and Foreign Policy: A Case Study of the Activities of the Organized Jewish Community in Regard to the 1968 Decision to Sell Phantom Jets to Israel. University of Pittsburgh, 1973.) Their names do not appear in the records of the Presidents' Conference nor in the Jewish or non-Jewish press. All information about their contribution to the campaign for the Phantoms was gathered from interviews with those men themselves and with former Israeli diplomats and Foreign Office personnel.

⁵⁵Interview, Mr. Abraham Feinberg, Jerusalem, Israel. July 2, 1980.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid.

- ⁵⁸ Interview, Lucius Battle, Washington, D. C., August 1977.
- ⁵⁹ Interview, Feinberg.
- ⁶⁰ See Walter Eytan, The First Ten Years (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1958), Chapter Eight.
- ⁶¹ Files, American Jewish Committee, Memo from Eugene Hevesi to Simon Rubin, August 3, 1956.
- ⁶² Diaries, Goldstein, January 23, 1957.
- ⁶³ Ibid., October 13, 1959.
- ⁶⁴ Files, Presidents' Conference, December 7, 1965.
- ⁶⁵ Files, Presidents' Conference, January 5, 1964.
- ⁶⁶ Files, Presidents' Conference, January 5, 1964 and April 26, 1965.
- ⁶⁷ Interviews, Rabbi Herschel Schacter, William Wexler, Philip Klutznick.
- ⁶⁸ Interview, Rabbi Herschel Schacter, February 1979. New York. Rabbi Schacter recalled meetings with the Greek Consul in New York and with former Prime Minister George Papadapoulous.
- ⁶⁹ Interviews with Moshe Bitan and Mordecai Gazit, in Israel. 1978.

CHAPTER VI

The White House, the State Department and American Jews

One of the fundamentals of the American democratic system is the right of citizens to petition their government to enact legislation in their interests. The First Amendment guarantees to all American citizens the right "to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." The arguments presented by the petitioners may be couched in language arguing for the good of the majority, or unabashedly expressed as the narrow interests of a vocal minority.

On domestic issues, groups formed according to different economic interests, race, ethnicity, religion, or region, and competed to influence the policies of the President and Congress. The latter, whose members represent smaller constituencies, and in the House of Representatives are up for re-election every two years, is quite vulnerable to the pressures applied by individuals or groups. The Congressman can ignore the demands of his constituents only at serious risk to his chances for re-election. As a result, domestic policy decisions are often the result of struggle and compromise among competing interest groups and elected representative.

On foreign policy questions, however, the influence of interest groups is much weaker. Most policy decisions are made by the executive branch, within the walls of the foreign policy bureaucracy, far removed from the clamor of interest groups. The President, his foreign affairs advisors, the State Department and other executive agencies determine the course of foreign policy in what they consider to be the national interest. The effect of domestic considerations on many decisions is limited. Many foreign policy decisions have no direct

effect on the average citizen and therefore lack salience for the general public. With the possible exception of particular trade agreements that affect employment or debates surrounding the involvement of American troops overseas, most foreign policy decisions were left quite comfortably by most Americans to the Executive. This is explainable both by reasons of general lack of interest in foreign policy as well as a lack of understanding and information necessary to make intelligent decisions on issues. The majority of citizens, except perhaps on a decision that requires the stationing of American troops abroad or the involvement of armed forces in combat, are not directly affected by decisions on foreign policy, and are thus content to allow the "experts" at the State Department to decide for them.¹ Only specialized foreign policy interest groups, such as the Foreign Policy Association, peace groups, one-issue interest groups, such as the Committee of One Million, and ethnic groups interested in relations with a particular country, regularly express their views to the government on foreign policy. The disadvantage these groups have is that their knowledge of facts and expertise on the subject is usually inferior to that of the government. Unlike domestic issues, about which most lobbies are extremely well informed and can serve as sources of information for legislators and the White House, on foreign policy, interest groups must depend on the government to supply them with information. One exception to this is economic interest groups which often would work to influence foreign policy in the area of tariff and trade legislation. They are usually more successful than other groups trying to influence foreign policy.²

According to one study of foreign policy decision-making, only on those issues on which the interest group's position and the official position of the government were the same were interest groups active in foreign policy successful.³ For example, the apparent success of the Committee of One Million in the two decades following the Communist victory in China in 1949 is explained by the fact that the United States government's official position at the time was refusal to recognize the People's Republic of China. When, in the late 1960s, the

American official position became somewhat more ambiguous, and finally reversed itself completely when Richard Nixon visited China in 1972, the Committee of One Million all but disappeared. Ethnic interest groups such as Americans of Slavic and East European descent demanded that the government act to liberate their homelands from Soviet domination after World War II. The government gave lip-service sympathy to the plight of their ethnic "brothers" overseas, but did not determine policy to satisfy ethnic demands. The closest the East European interest groups came to influencing policy was in words: The Republican platform in 1952 declared that the United States' policy in Europe should be to aim at the achievement of a "roll back" of Communist forces and the "liberation" of the captive peoples of Europe. The rhetoric pleased the ethnics and lashed out at the Democrats, but did not cause a real shift in America's policy toward the Soviet Union, nor did it offer any hope for a real change in the conditions of the countries under Soviet domination.

The only ethnic group that had more political clout and thus, some influence on American foreign policy was American Jews. This can be explained by several factors: First, Jewish groups had particular clout because of their geographic distribution. Heavy concentrations of Jews live in states with large electoral votes, causing their support to be important in swinging an entire state for a Presidential candidate. Jews reside throughout the United States and are thus spread out over many Congressional districts. They are active politically, both in campaigning and in financing political campaigns. Candidates for Congress were well aware of the support they got from Jews in their district and of the possible consequences if they withdrew that support.⁴

Second, Jews are usually well informed of the general interests of Israel, its security and economic requirements and hence, are able coherently to press Israel's case to their representatives.

Third, and most importantly, Israel's interests are of primary importance in the eyes of Jewish citizens and thus they used their political clout, in Israel's interest. Fortified by a combination of political clout,

information, and commitment, the Jewish supporter of Israel tended to be a formidable constituency to cross. However, the greatest support for the Jewish interest in Israel was that an independent, secure and strong State of Israel in the Middle East had been a basic component of United States foreign policy since 1948, and was considered to be in the American national interest. The congruence of the Jewish position with the traditional commitment of the American government and American public opinion enabled the ethnic group and their "targeted Congressmen" to support assistance to Israel without conflict. More aid or less, what kind of sophisticated arms should be sold, were issues vulnerable to interest group influence because the basic commitment to Israel was firm. Whether Jewish pressure alone could have changed the course of American Middle East policy is indeed doubtful. In the years 1956-1968, the basic commitment to Israel remained firm. This did not mean that the United States always supported Israeli actions. For example, Jewish pressure in support of Israel in early 1957 did not alter President Eisenhower's determination to support a motion calling for the imposition of economic sanctions against Israel in the Security Council, nor did it soften his hard-line approach toward the Israelis on the question of unconditional withdrawal.

In Chapters IV and V, the relationship between American Jewish leaders and Jewish private individuals on the one side, and the Israeli government on the other, was discussed. The latter actively courted American Jews in an attempt to influence the American government's policy in the Middle East. In addition to the conventional official "lobby" in Washington, the Israelis and American Jews wove an intricate network of personal channels of influence from the Israeli government to the White House. American Jewish leaders were intensively briefed by embassy officials and sent off, armed with information, to defend the Israeli position before American foreign policy makers. At times of crisis, several American Jews intervened in Israel-United States relations to try to mitigate misunderstandings and bring the parties close together. At other times, American Jewish leaders carried Israel's case to the State Department, augmenting the

effort of the embassy staff. The President and the Department of State were well aware of the intricacies of the relationship between Jewish leaders and the Israeli government. Neither American Jews nor the Israeli government made any effort to keep the relationship secret. Meetings were held openly. American Jews often told State Department officials that they had met earlier with Israeli officials.

The President and the Secretary of State were somewhat insulated from direct Jewish pressure. Presidential staff restricted access to the President, and thus, only on rare occasions -- usually at a time when the President could reap the most political benefits from a meeting -- were American Jewish leaders invited to meet with the President. Presidents Kennedy and Johnson appointed special presidential assistants whose job it was to handle relations with American Jews for the President. This assignment, assistant to the President for minority affairs, continues at the White House. The presidential advisor, on the one hand, is evidence of the recognition by the President and his staff of the need to be responsible to the interests of American Jews. On the other hand, the institutionalization of an advisor for Jewish affairs kept the President removed and protected from these groups. Therefore, even though American Jewish leaders may have had a quick hearing from the President's advisor, it was often the "end of the road" in the attempt to gain access to the President.

The State Department was more open to frequent Jewish approaches. However, being a bureaucratic organization, the Secretary of State usually delegated responsibility for discussions with Jewish groups to an Assistant Secretary of State or to a country-desk officer. Thus, the Secretary of State, although he met with Jewish leaders more often than did the President, was also partially insulated from their pressure.

In this chapter, I will discuss the attitude of the White House and the State Department towards the role of American Jews in Israel-American relations. Was there a difference between the two institutions? Since the State

Department and the President were aware of the Israel-American Jews relationship, did they try to utilize it to their advantage? Were they successful in manipulating the linkage to further United States interests?

The White House and the State Department have different perspectives regarding the involvement of ethnic groups in the foreign policy process. Both would agree that it would be much easier for them if there was no citizen participation (read interference) in the field of foreign policy. The bureaucrats and elected officials would prefer making decisions in foreign affairs in what they perceive to be in the national interest of the United States, without having to take into account election-day pressures by citizen groups, or having to defend its policy to ethnic or other interest groups. Thus, if United States Middle East policy could be made without having to engage in public debate or private discussions with American Jews, the job of the decision makers would be simpler. However, the avid interest of American Jews in policies that will affect Israel and the intensive effort by Israeli officials to keep American Jews informed compels the American government to devote part of its energy to discussions with American Jews on the subject of the Middle East.

The White House

The President and his advisors paid attention to the demands of ethnic groups on foreign policy as a political expediency, in the interest of success for their party in elections for offices at all levels of government. This did not necessarily mean that only policies agreeable to the ethnic group were formulated. Rather, the President recognized the need to "discuss" some foreign policy issues with certain ethnic groups, *i. e.*, explain the administration's view and try to influence the ethnic leaders to support the policy. The White House is a political institution and its considerations in the area of foreign policy include weighing the possible domestic political consequences of an action. Thus, the cost of inviting the displeasure of American Jews by pursuing a foreign policy in the Middle

East which Israel opposed had to be weighed against its advancement of the geopolitical interests of the United States in the area.

Often the proper timing of the policy allowed for the minimalization of political costs. American presidents, for example, have frequently initiated new policies in the first year of their administration in an effort to improve the American position with Arab states, or to achieve a peace settlement in the Middle East. Confident after winning the election, and having three more years in which to repair relations with American Jews, the White House embarked on new Middle East initiatives. I. L. Kenen, the former head of AIPAC, the powerful Israel lobby in Washington, explained, "The first year of an administration is always the worst year for the Jews. Every new administration wants to prove itself by starting on new and independent initiatives -- except for Johnson, who was good throughout."⁵ This in part explains the intransigence of the American position on unconditional withdrawal from all territories occupied after the cease-fire along the Suez Canal in 1956. Eisenhower was confident after his landslide victory over Stevenson in November, and secure in the knowledge that he had four more years as President, that he had been elected without the electoral or financial support of American Jews, and that he could not run for a third term anyway. Thus he was willing to arouse the ire of Jewish voters and threaten Israel with economic sanctions if it did not comply.

John Kennedy, soon after taking office in January 1961, sent letters to five Arab heads of state in an effort to repair U.S. relations with them. He made new overtures to President Nasser of Egypt, hoping to begin a dialogue with him. As early as spring 1961, the Kennedy administration began exploring the idea of having a special United Nations representative seek new solutions to the Arab refugee problem. This evolved into the American backed Johnson mission of 1961-1962, discussed in Chapter V. American Jews, who had given the Kennedy election campaign overwhelming electoral and financial support, were greatly disappointed by their President's shift in direction. The Johnson administration

did not seek new solutions to the Middle East conflict nor did it disappoint American Jewish supporters of Israel. Pre-occupied with Vietnam, the administration did not rank the Middle East high on its priorities.

The ascendancy of Richard Nixon to the Presidency in January 1969 brought new initiatives to solve the Middle East problem. The first indication of a possible shift in American policy already appeared prior to Nixon's inauguration. As one of his first diplomatic efforts, the President-elect requested the former Governor of Pennsylvania, William Scranton, to visit the Middle East as his personal representative and to map out possible policy lines for the new administration. After visiting several Arab capitals, Scranton declared that he now expected "a more even-handed policy" from the United States, one that would "take into consideration the feelings of all persons and countries in the Middle East and would not necessarily espouse one nation over another."⁶ This statement created quite a stir in Jerusalem and among American Jews, who feared that Scranton's statement portended an end to the close and special relationship which had developed between the United States and Israel under the Johnson administration. Later, in March 1969, the United States, despite vigorous protests by Israel, embarked on four-power talks at the United Nations on the subject of the Middle East conflict. The Rogers Plan, detailing an American prescription for resolving the Middle East conflict, followed in December 1969. Israel rejected the American plan as being a grave threat to its very existence. Nixon, in his first year of office, felt himself relatively immune from domestic political pressures. Moreover, his 1968 electoral victory had been achieved despite Jewish support for his opponent, Hubert Humphrey, and thus, he did not feel much beholden to American Jews.

The President generally was more open to domestic pressures on foreign policy issues than was the State Department. He usually was a politician who had risen through the Senate and State House and was experienced in the give and take of politics. Dwight Eisenhower, for that matter, was a notable exception, coming

to the Presidency without having held an elected office previously. Jewish leaders found him cold and unapproachable. The Democratic presidents all had had close contact with Jewish advisors, and backers, in their political past. Both Presidents Kennedy and Johnson depended on Democratic party fund raisers who were Jewish. Philip Klutznick, one of the central fund raisers for the Kennedy campaign, recalled that several American Jews played a key role in launching the Kennedy career. In his campaign for the Senate seat in Massachusetts against Henry Cabot Lodge in 1952, Dewey Stone organized Jewish support for the young Congressman. He arranged for a meeting of Jewish leaders in the Boston area who met with Kennedy and after that meeting, threw their support to him. In Klutznick's view, their support shifted the balance in Kennedy's favor.⁸

Later in the Presidential campaign, Jewish advisors Mike Feldman and Philip Klutznick, and fund raisers such as Abraham Feinberg, played important roles. The latter two were active in the Johnson presidential campaign as well. The Jewish contributors made no secret of their deep commitment to Israel and made that commitment known to the candidate. Moreover, before their support was gained, the candidate had to satisfy their probing questions on the subject of commitment to Israel and peace in the Middle East. Philip Klutznick recalled a private meeting he had with John Kennedy in early 1958 when Kennedy was beginning to put together his campaign for the 1960 race for the Presidency. The Kennedy team sought the early support of Klutznick and arranged the meeting. The discussions lasted three hours. Klutznick described the meeting:

After discussing several general matters I said, "I assume that I was invited here not only as an American but as a Jew and I'd like to discuss a few things in that connection . . . I haven't seen any utterances of yours that indicate a clear position of what the American attitude should be towards the State of Israel. You were not present in the midst of the struggle in 1956 and as a matter of fact what I have seen has been rather cloudy . . .

I think you ought to know my position. I speak as an American of the Jewish faith who I think is representative of the sentiments of 90-95% of American Jews . . . What do you think on this whole question?

His answer to me was cloudy. "Well," he said, "you know this is a difficult problem in the Middle East . . . a problem of keeping the place from blowing up . . . There is a question of the refugees . . ." He went along these lines.

At one point I said, "Look Senator, if you plan to run for President and that is what you are going to say, count me out and count a lot of other people out too."

Later in the conversation, Kennedy asked Klutznick what kind of statement on the Middle East would satisfy American Jews. Klutznick refrained from answering directly, suggesting to him only that Eisenhower's policy on the issue of Sinai in 1957 was not satisfactory and Truman in 1948 was. He would have to decide on a position and American Jews would decide if it sufficed.⁹

In early 1959, Kennedy was given an award by the Bnai Zion Jewish Fraternal Organization in New York. There he made a speech which was very supportive of Israel. Kennedy sent the speech to Klutznick with a note saying "What do you think of this now?" It marked, in Klutznick's words, a "complete departure from my private conversations with him."¹⁰ Kennedy had learned to value Jewish support. Klutznick soon joined the Kennedy campaign team.

Kennedy recognized that his electoral victory in 1960 was due in no small part to the financial and electoral support of American Jews. An estimated 80 percent of American Jews supported Kennedy in 1960, and because they were concentrated in states with large electoral votes, their support gave Kennedy the majority in the electoral college. Although Kennedy was determined to improve American relations with the Arab world, he also wanted to show his appreciation for the Jewish support he had received. Michael Ben Zohar, author of Ben Gurion's memoirs, relates an incident which indicated Kennedy's feeling of debt to American Jews and his early ineptitude and crudeness in dealing with Israeli leaders. All efforts made by the Israeli Foreign Office in the Spring of 1961 to arrange an official meeting between Prime Minister Ben Gurion and the new American President in Washington failed. The most the Americans would

agree to was an unofficial meeting in the Waldorf Astoria in New York between the two men on the Prime Minister's way home from an official visit to Canada. This refusal to invite the Israeli Prime Minister to Washington was in line with the Kennedy Administration's intent to repair relations with the Arab states. He did not want to give the Arab states any cause to charge that the United States was allied with Israel. The meeting took place at the hotel. Ben Zohar describes the meeting as a "pleasant chat." An incident that occurred at the end of the meeting reflected Kennedy's feeling of debt to the Jews, his experience as a politician, and his inexperience as a statesman. Ben Zohar,

They went their separate ways, when suddenly the President returned to him (the Prime Minister), and put his hand on his shoulder in a friendly manner, and asked him to return to his room for a minute so he could tell him something important. When the door closed behind Ben Gurion and the two were alone, Kennedy turned to "the old man" and said to him with astonishing frankness. "I know I was elected because of the votes of American Jews. I owe them my election. Tell me, is there something that I have to do?"

Ben Gurion evaded the question. He answered, "You must do what is best for the free world." Later Ben Gurion said disparagingly of Kennedy to his advisors, "What a politician!" He was affronted by Kennedy's approach.¹¹

The anecdote reveals that the President indeed recognized he owed a debt to American Jews. He obviously felt that some kind of gesture was in order. However, the need to "do something" did not cause any change in overall American policy in the Middle East, part of the evidence being that it did not convince Kennedy to receive the Israeli Prime Minister officially in Washington. Kennedy rather crudely expressed the politician's considerations, offering a "pay-off" to a Head of State, which Ben Gurion proudly refused. Soon after, Kennedy embarked on an American initiative to solve the refugee problem, one which aroused the strong opposition of the Israeli government and American Jews. The United States supported the proposals put forward by Dr. Joseph Johnson, which called

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on Israel to repatriate those Arab refugees wishing to return to what was now Israel. (For a full discussion of the Johnson plan, see Chapter V)

The White House was cognizant of political pressures by American Jews on Middle East policy but this did not necessarily cause capitulation to their demands. The White House, while making overtures to Arab states, was careful to issue statements supportive of Israel and to reassure Jewish leaders of the commitment of the President to Israel's existence and security. Support for Israel remained a basic foundation of American Middle East policy, upon which each President then sought his own initiative in solving the Middle East conflict.

Since the White House sought to keep a balanced approach to the Middle East, American Jewish pressure for increased aid to Israel sometimes actually served the Administration's purpose. This contradictory interpretation of the pressure group-White House relationship was suggested by I. A. Kenen, a long-time Washington observer and the founder and head of the Israel lobby AIPAC for over twenty-five years. In Kenen's view, the White House often considered it important for Israel to receive certain military hardware and trade benefits but did not want to initiate these policies for fear of upsetting moderate Arab states who maintain diplomatic relations with the United States. Thus, the policy makers might welcome the pressure put upon them by the Israel lobby and other Jewish groups for aid to Israel so that they could then turn to Arab leaders and say, "We're forced by domestic political exigencies to give in to Jewish pressure and supply Israel . . ." Rather than accept the responsibility for improved relations with Israel and the resulting fall-out with Arab states, American leaders could say "what else could we do?"¹²

Abba Eban describes in his autobiography relations with the United States in the period after the Israeli victory in the Six Day War in 1967. "President Johnson had let us know bluntly that the American attitude on withdrawal would be strongly influenced by the reaction of public opinion to Israel's case.

If he were to hold firm against pressures for our withdrawal, he could only do so on the foundation of strong, public support for Israel. His advisors had told us that it 'was up to Israel to win support.'"¹³ This is a good example of Kenen's belief that the American government sometimes welcomed pressure by Israel and its friends in the United States. A coalition of Israel supporters, Jews and non-Jews, succeeded in creating an atmosphere of public support for Israeli retention of occupied territories as trading pieces in direct negotiations between the warring parties. The Johnson administration did not pressure the Israelis to withdraw. Needless to say, the opportunity for trading territory for peace did not come until a decade later.

The White House, because it recognized the political benefits and costs that would result from favorable gestures toward Israel, often sought to use American policy to gain political support from American Jews. Thus, for example, when the Kennedy administration agreed to sell Hawk missiles to Israel in September 1962, Kennedy's advisors Mike Feldman, Philip Klutznick, and Abraham Feinberg met with the President to discuss how he should announce the sale in order to gain the most political advantage. Certainly, the timing was important, coming several weeks before Congressional elections. Abe Feinberg and Mike Feldman pleaded with the President to invite a representative group of Jewish leaders to the White House to tell them first of the President's decision. This, in their view, would give the Jewish leaders the feeling that the President was confiding in them before making the sale public. The President agreed, delegating to Mike Feldman the job of making the announcement. The Jewish advisors strongly objected, saying that it was crucial that the President himself attend the meeting. The President agreed, leaving the arrangements and details to his Jewish advisors.

The Jewish leaders were invited to the White House. Mike Feldman, Philip Klutznick and Abe Feinberg handled the meeting. The President came for ten minutes. He spoke eloquently of the American friendship for Israel, and

then delegated the job of answering any questions the Jewish leaders had to Feldman and Klutznick.¹⁴ From interviews with Jewish leaders who had attended, it seemed the Jewish leaders were quite impressed with the "royal" treatment they had received and were very pleased with Kennedy's action. The President had achieved two goals: He sold arms to Israel, according to his own foreign policy calculations, and he gained political capital from American Jewish leaders who would give glowing reports to their rank and file. Especially several weeks before Congressional elections, the President could use their support.

In the Eisenhower administration, unlike under Kennedy and Johnson, the Secretary of State was the main decision maker in foreign policy.¹⁵ John Foster Dulles designed the overall approach and was intimately involved in its execution. He had much more control over foreign policy than did Dean Rusk, the Secretary of State under Kennedy and Johnson. Thus, it is not surprising that Dulles was also involved in relations with a domestic ethnic group, American Jews. During the Suez crisis, President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles together devised a plan to use American Jews as a lever against Israel. It was the first time in American-Israeli relations that an American President, albeit with subtlety, tried to use American Jews in an effort to influence Israeli policy.

In February 1957, the political situation in the Middle East was tense. A cease fire was in effect between Egyptian forces the Israeli forces in the Sinai. Israeli forces occupied the Sinai and Gaza Strip. Israeli leaders had announced that Israel would not withdraw to the 1949 Armistice lines without security guarantees and access to Israeli shipping through the Suez Canal and the Straits of Tiran. It also wanted guarantees that there would be no Egyptian presence in Gaza. The Americans, although recognizing Israel's security interests, refused to consider any conditions before the total withdrawal of Israeli forces behind the old armistice lines was assured. An impasse was reached; neither side was willing to back down. The Administration decided to try to convince American Jewish leaders that it was in the Israeli interest to compromise and

withdraw without preconditions. The purpose of an approach to American Jews was to co-opt their support for the American position, thereby further indicating to the Israelis that they were progressively losing more and more of their supporters. The President and his advisors hoped that the Presidential "appeal" to Jewish leaders would succeed in gaining their support and thus put further pressure directly or indirectly on the Israelis.

The President called Mr. Sidney Weinberg, a Jew who was very active in the Republican party, and asked him to organize a meeting with American Jewish leaders. He contacted Mr. Barney Balaban, President of Paramount Pictures and active in the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai Brith. Balaban was asked to draw up the list of Jews. According to one account, Balaban refused to do it and so the White House selected six Jewish leaders and forwarded the list to Balaban.¹⁵ The list included: Mr. Samuel D. Leidesdorf, treasurer of the United Jewish Appeal of Greater New York, Mr. Jacob Blaustein, former President of the American Jewish Committee, Mr. William Rosenwald, general Chairman of the United Jewish Appeal, Mr. Mendel Silverberg, a leader of the Los Angeles Jewish Community, Mr. Irving Engel, President of the American Jewish Committee. Mr. Balaban added two others, Mr. Philip Klutznick, President of the B'nai Brith and chairman of the Presidents' Conference and Mr. Louis Novins, an officer at Paramount Pictures and a member of the American Jewish Committee. The Jewish leaders were informed that they were invited to a conference with Secretary of State Dulles to discuss the Middle East situation. They were requested not to announce the meeting in advance and to keep its proceedings completely secret.¹⁷ The Jews were told that if they were not satisfied with their discussions with the Secretary of State, the President himself would set aside time to meet with them immediately thereafter.

The choice of the Jewish leaders was indeed unfortunate. None were representatives of Zionist organizations. It opened the Administration up to charges that the White House was trying to cause a split in Jewish ranks, driving a wedge between Zionists and non-Zionists. At best, it tried to give the impression

that the Jewish community was not united in its support for Israel. If that was the intent of the White House, it failed dismally since the non-Zionist leaders stood firmly behind Israel.

A letter from the foreign affairs counsel of the American Jewish Committee to a Committee associate sheds light on some of the deliberations among Jewish leaders prior to attending the meeting with the Secretary of State. Simon Segal wrote,

The question arose (among American Jewish Committee leaders) whether one should attend such a meeting in Washington. After some consideration, it was decided that it would be impossible for a group of American citizens to refuse an invitation extended by the President. Furthermore, practically all these gentlemen at one time or another approached the State Department on Middle East problems and it should have been odd if at this time they had refused to discuss these problems with the Department.¹⁸

The Jewish leaders braced themselves for what they knew would be a very difficult meeting.

Philip Klutznick described the evening before the meeting with Secretary of State Dulles:

The night before the meeting, the President went on television to the world and, for the first time, he called Israel an aggressor. We listened to that broadcast in Barney Balaban's apartment and we decided that we could not accept this situation. I think for the first time in my memory, we agreed on a counteraction; to tell the Secretary when we arrived that the President could cancel his "appointment" with us, no matter what would take place at the meeting, because we felt he had prejudiced the matter. We told the Secretary of State this. He turned red . . . Max Rabb was at the meeting and he called up and cancelled the meeting with the President.¹⁹

The New York Times reported the meeting on February 22, 1957 under the headline "Non-Zionist Jews Asked to Aid U.S.", and reported that "the Administration sought to put pressure on Israel through non-Zionist Jews."

It claimed that the non-Zionists, several of whom were leaders of fund raising organizations for Israel were asked to help influence Israel to withdraw its troops from Gaza and the Gulf of Aqaba. An Administration source, reported the New York Times, said, "The Administration hopes that leaders of American groups having connections with Israel may exercise 'a helpful influence on the Israeli government.'"²⁰

American Jews denied that the Secretary of State had requested them to exert pressure on Israel. At the meeting, Mr. Dulles "explained" the American position and the Administration's view of the serious consequences of Israeli non-compliance. There was a question and answer period. The meeting lasted for ninety minutes. If the Administration intended to split the Jewish community and weaken its support for Israel, it did not achieve its objective. The entire group unanimously expressed the view that Israel should be given proper guarantees before it withdraws. In any event, the United States government should not support sanctions against Israel.

Politics very often involves subtlety. Thus, it is not surprising that the Secretary did at no time bluntly request that American Jews exert pressure on the Israelis. However, there is no doubt that the original purpose of the meeting was to get the Jewish leaders to influence the Israelis to become more flexible. The careful selection of non-Zionist leaders, who would be perhaps more independent-minded than Zionist leaders and less tied to the Israeli point of view, is partial evidence of White House intent. Moreover, the selection of fund raisers, leaders of the United Jewish Appeal, the lifeblood of the Israeli economy, was not a coincidence. It was a subtle warning to both Israelis and American Jews that Israel's non-compliance could lead to a cut off in the flow of funds from American Jews to Israel. The Secretary, although he did not expressly ask the Jewish leaders to intervene, surely expected that the group would be in touch with Israeli representatives, if for no other reason than to at least inform them about the meeting.²¹

The Dulles-Jewish leaders meeting was really the only formal attempt by an American administration to threaten the Israelis into submission by use of American Jewish leaders. Its failure, and the outcry in the press against such tactics which followed, discouraged the White House from ever repeating the tactic during the period 1958-1969. This is not to say that the White House did not try to influence Israeli leaders through the good offices of American Jews. But the approaches were private and less formal, were made individually, and were less threatening in tone.

In general, the White House and State Department, in periods of quiet in the Middle East, negotiated mainly with the Israeli Embassy in Washington. Their meetings with Jewish leaders therefore were usually either for the purpose of public relations to gain support for their policies, or in response to requests from American Jews for a meeting. There is, however, one notable exception to this generalization which reflects the view of one American leader, that American Jews had influence in some aspects of Middle Eastern affairs.

In July 1957, Vice President Richard Nixon returned from an official visit to several countries in North Africa. During this visit, he conferred with the leaders of Libya, Liberia, Tunisia and Morocco on the subject of the Arab-Israel conflict. Upon his return, he contacted Philip Klutznick, then the president of the B'nai Brith and asked him to attend an informal dinner at his suite at the Statler Hotel in Washington. Several other Jewish leaders were also invited. The dinner was held on Thursday, July 11, 1957. It was private and was intended to be completely off the record. It was not reported in the press nor in any Jewish organization publications.²²

Attending the meeting were: Philip Klutznick of the B'nai Brith, Rabbi Jay Kaufman of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Samuel Rothstein of the United Synagogue of America, Herman Bilk of the Zionist Organization of America, Adolf Held of the American Jewish Labor Committee, William Carmen of the Jewish War Veterans, and Rabbi Joachim Prinz of the American

Jewish Congress. Deputy Attorney General William Rogers, a friend of the Vice President, (later to become Secretary of State) attended as well.

During the discussions, the Jewish leaders expressed to the Vice President their disappointment in the disregard of organized Jewry shown by the Administration during the Suez crisis several months earlier. They referred specifically to the invitation of eight non-Zionists to the White House discussed above. They described to him the structure of American Jewry, especially the purpose of the Presidents' Conference, founded several years earlier. The Jewish community, they explained, was no longer represented by "wealthy Jews selected at random", but rather by its own duly elected representatives. The Vice President agreed that the Administration had indeed mishandled the situation.

The Vice President had a specific reason for inviting the Jewish leaders. After a general discussion of the Administration's domestic record on civil rights and integration in the South, Mr. Nixon turned to the Middle East. He said that in his conversations with North African leaders, they had agreed that the existence of Israel was a fact. They privately recognized that. However, each had said that the conflict in the Middle East would be solved more easily if the problem of the Arab refugees could be solved. This, they felt, was the heart of the matter. Nixon had promised them he would try to do something about it; hence the meeting with American Jews.

Nixon said, "I am deeply concerned that the State of Israel should make a constructive contribution to the problem ... I don't care how many refugees Israel accepts. If she only accepts a token number, she will have made a great contribution toward a solution to the problem. The United States government is willing to do whatever it can ..."

Then came the real reason for the dinner meeting with Jewish leaders: "In addition, I want to suggest to American Jews that they might want to make a contribution toward the solution too. I know of your great ability to raise funds.

I have spoken at fund raising meetings myself. I admire the generosity of American Jews. If you could get together and raise funds specifically for the refugees, regardless of the amount raise, it would be an enormously valuable contribution."

The suggestion, coming from the Vice President of the United States, was somewhat astounding. Not only did he suggest to American Jewish leaders that the Israelis should be more receptive in negotiating a solution to the refugee problem, in contradiction to Israel's announced position, but he also threw the onus on the shoulders of American Jews, implying that if they were really concerned about Middle East peace, they would do something themselves for the Arab refugees. Nixon intended to persuade the Jewish leaders to cooperate with him in solving the refugee problem and to influence Israel to go along.

American Jewish leaders replied that Israel had already announced its willingness to contribute to a solution to the refugee problem and to make peace with its Arab neighbors, but only if it had clear assurances that any contribution by it would be part of a total solution of the Arab-Israel dispute. Rabbi Prinz, who wrote a report of the meeting, described the Jewish response.

To the second suggestion that American Jews raise funds for the Arabs, we remained cool. Philip Klutznick related that Eisenhower had made such a suggestion to him privately at a dinner which took place several years ago. Klutznick then had pointed to the large number of Jewish refugees made homeless by Arab rulers. He said it would be difficult to convince American Jews of the urgency of the Arab refugees but under certain circumstances and as part of a concerted effort which would include Israel, he was assured that American Jews would be willing to contribute to the solution of what was not only a political problem but a human problem . . .

The Vice President and the Jewish leaders then discussed the problem of the Arab boycott of American companies dealing with Israel and the problem of the United States Army bases in Dharam, Saudi Arabia, where army personnel of the Jewish faith were not permitted entry by the Saudis. Nixon expressed

sympathy with American Jews on both issues but did not offer any encouragement for any change in the situation. This was consonant with American policy on the boycott; to deplore the idea of a boycott but to take no official action to counter it. Jewish leaders left the four-hour meeting charmed by the Vice President's manner, but disturbed over his suggestion that American Jews raise funds for the Arabs.²³ Nothing developed from this meeting and its discussions were never made public.

The meeting with Vice President Nixon, the meeting of eight non-Zionist Jewish leaders with Secretary of State Dulles and other meetings between American Jews and the President indicate that the White House both recognized, and in some cases utilized for its own purposes, the linkage between American Jews and Israel. The influence relationship was a reversible one. Just as Israel used the intercession of American Jews to argue its case before American leaders, so American leaders used American Jews to transmit messages, recommendations, promises and threats to the Israel government. At times, the President might want to gauge Israeli reaction to an American proposal of whose wisdom the United States government itself was not fully convinced. Rather than float the trial balloon publicly or through official diplomatic channels, the President preferred to raise the issue in discussions with American Jews who he knew were in contact with the Israelis. They could sound out Israeli reactions for them. This allowed both parties to withdraw or oppose a plan without losing face or having the disagreement become an issue of major contention in Israel-American relations. An example of this was the discussions Philip Klutznick said he had had with President Eisenhower over dinner concerning the refugee problem. The many discussions Lyndon Johnson held with Abraham Feinberg on Middle East problems are further examples. Discussions with American Jewish leaders at the State Department often included off-the-record suggestions to the Israelis which the Assistant Secretary of State hoped would get back to them. Calling in the Israeli Ambassador and telling him the American point of view was a more formal, serious step which the Department sometimes preferred to avoid. American Jews were a convenient, informal medium.

Rabbi Herschel Schacter, a former chairman of the Presidents' Conference, recalled visiting the State Department in January 1969 and meeting with outgoing Secretary of State Dean Rusk. After a general discussion of the situation in the Middle East, the Secretary got down to specifics. He expressed the Administration's displeasure with Israel on two matters. The first was the recent action by Israel's air force to blow up airplanes in Beirut in retaliation for Palestinian guerrilla hijackings of civilian airplanes in the Middle East. The Secretary was incensed because the situation in Lebanon had been quiet and the United States was interested that it remain so. The Israeli action, the U.S. feared, would threaten the fragile stability of Lebanon. On the second matter, the Secretary said bluntly to Rabbi Schacter, "Tell your Israeli friends that the President has had many sleepless nights" over what was happening in Dimona, referring to Israel's atomic reactor plant. President Johnson was worried that the Israelis were building an atomic bomb. The Secretary expressed the concern of the United States and wanted to enlist the sympathy of American Jews over what it considered the reckless policies of the Israeli government.²⁴

The most extraordinary issue involving the linkage of American Jews and Israel and the manipulation of that relationship by the White House was during the Johnson administration on the subject of the Vietnam War. This episode reversed the usual pattern of the American government exercising its influence American Jews to try to influence Israeli policy makers. On the question of the Vietnam War, the United States government used its good relations with Israeli leaders to suggest to them that they influence American Jewish leaders to tone down their opposition to the war. Of course, in politics, as in most situations involving pressure and persuasion, the methods used were subtle. Threats were veiled and oblique, yet understood by the other. There is often no need to request bluntly that an action be taken or stopped. It is sufficient for one party to explain its view and to suggest the possible consequences if that view is not heeded, and the long term effect on relations between the two states. It was not necessary for the Israelis to request expressly Jewish leaders to mute Jewish anti-war activities, although they did so

anyway. It would have been quite sufficient to express to them Israel's support for the American involvement in Vietnam, and to explain why Israel thought U. S. commitment to South Vietnam was fundamental to American global interests and to its policy in the Middle East. Whether American Jewish leaders would then fall in line and mute their protests and that of their constituents was quite another matter.

In 1966 and 1967, public opinion to the war in Vietnam grew louder and more insistent. Lyndon Johnson felt besieged by a vocal minority of protestors who he thought distorted the goals of his policies and subverted the public understanding of the war in Vietnam. Many more Americans were drafted. The war dragged on, with victory on the battlefield no closer. The United States expended money and equipment and caused massive destruction to lives and property in a country far from American shores, without achieving its policy goals. Students, professors, intellectuals, clergy and others, publicly protested the American involvement. According to Gallup polls, in the spring of 1966, one hundred twenty thousand people demonstrated against the war. 35 per cent of Americans asked disapproved of American policy in Vietnam. By spring 1967, the numbers had reached 150,000 demonstrators and 45 per cent disapproval. In spring 1968, there were 280,000 Americans demonstrating and 62 per cent of Americans disapproved of the American involvement in Vietnam.²⁵

American Jews were split on the question of Vietnam. Jewish organization on the whole refrained from taking public stands in favor or against the war, leaving it to the individual consciences of their members. However, most Jewish leaders strongly defended the right of American Jews, just as that of any other American, to express their views for or against the war. One segment of American Jewry was an early opponent of the war. In June 1966, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, an organization representing the Reform clergy, at its annual conference, adopted a statement that scored the Administration's policy on Vietnam. The Conference called on the Administration to put "full weight of American influence behind the movement to uphold free elections in

South Vietnam by September 15 in accordance with the promise of the Ky government." The resolutions questioned American intentions in Vietnam.²⁶ Also in June, the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, which included Jewish mass membership groups such as the American Jewish Congress, B'nai Brith, the Anti-Defamation League, the Jewish Labor Committee, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the United Synagogue of America, the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations and the National Council of Jewish Women, passed a resolution which supported the right of Americans to protest and dissent from Government policy on Vietnam.²⁷ Jewish students and intellectuals participated in anti-war demonstrations and were in leadership positions in the protest movement in far greater number than their proportion in the general population or in the student population.

The President, hurt both politically and personally by the protests, failed to comprehend the intensity of the opposition. He was very much aware of the prominent role played by Jews in the protests, and felt personally betrayed by them. Several people who had dealings with the President at the time recalled that he regarded the participation of American Jews in the protests as a betrayal of the understanding and friendship he showed toward their interest -- Israel. Explained one Jewish leader who had been called to the White House to discuss Jewish opposition to the war with Johnson:

LBJ was deeply disappointed because the average Jew was not supporting him in Vietnam and did not want to fight in Vietnam. The overwhelming majority of protestors or draft resisters were Jews (exaggeration! ed.). This disturbed him because he thought he was a great friend of the Jews, which he was, and a great friend of Israel, which he was, and he combined the thought that anyone who gave so much support to Israel as he did was entitled to a little consideration on another matter, - Vietnam. Being a politician who was willing to sell favors to buy favors, this was his feeling.²⁸

Seeking to curb the protests of the influential Jewish community in America, Johnson discussed the matter with the President of Israel, Zalman Shazar,

when he paid an official visit to the United States. Shazar met with Johnson at the LBJ ranch in Texas and there the American President said candidly that he felt Jewish support for the Vietnam involvement was his due in light of his record of support for Israel. Raymond Hare, then Assistant Secretary of State for Middle Eastern Affairs, was present at that meeting and confirmed that the President expressed his dissatisfaction with American Jews. Hare explained that the Johnson White House was very highly personalized. Hence, the President truly expected Jewish support as a personal thanks to him. He expressed his dissatisfaction to the Israeli President, clearly suggesting that it was in Israel's interest to take notice of the President's displeasure and relate the message back to its American supporters.²⁹

Less subtle was the meeting between the President and Malcolm Tarlov, national commander of the Jewish War Veterans, on September 10, 1966, at the White House. According to the New York Times account, Johnson told Tarlov that he was "puzzled" why so many distinguished Jewish leaders and rabbis opposed his policy in Vietnam, especially in view of their support for American support for Israel.³⁰ American Jewish leaders reacted sharply to the President's comments. They resented the implied threat that the President's support for Israel was in any way contingent on Jewish support for his policies in Vietnam.

The President dispatched U. S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Arthur Goldberg, an American Jew, to mollify leaders of the Jewish community. About forty Jewish leaders met with Goldberg at his apartment. Goldberg categorically denied that the President had ever "threatened" or sought to seek a "quid pro quo" from the Jewish community or any other group in seeking support for the Administration's Vietnam policy. Ambassador Goldberg said that the President realized that the Jewish community was not monolithic and that Jewish opinion covered a broad political spectrum. The meeting was held at the suggestion of the Chairman of the Presidents' Conference, Rabbi Joachim Prinz, himself an opponent of the war. Ambassador Goldberg, it was reported, succeeded in calming Jewish leaders.³¹

Prinz arranged the "clarification" meeting in order to mitigate tension between the White House and the Jewish community. This reflected one of the foremost interests of Jewish leaders: to prevent a rift from forming between American Jews and the United States government or between American Jews and the Israeli Government. Balancing on the tightrope between the two were American Jewish leaders. The issue of Vietnam was a difficult strain on that balance.

Before the President met with Tarlov, he had raised the question of Vietnam several times with both American Jews and Israeli visitors. Reported the New York Times, "President Johnson's sensitivity about the feelings of American Jews has evoked private expressions of concern among some of their leaders and among the leaders of Israel . . . The Israelis are worried that lack of support for the President among American Jews might injure their interests in the United States. They, too, have therefore urged leaders of the Jewish community to try to contain the criticism."³²

American Jewish leaders and Israeli government representatives differ in their recollections of the Israeli effort to curb Jewish anti-war activity. American Jewish leaders recalled difficult sessions with Israeli leaders who did not hesitate to tell American Jews "how to behave." Israelis who served as diplomatic representatives refused to characterize their discussions of Vietnam with Jewish leaders, as "attempts to influence" them or to "pressure them" into silence. Former Israeli Ambassador to the United States Abba Eban described the Israeli position thus: "America has a commitment. We were interested in fidelity to commitments and not the abandonment of commitments . . ."³³ Eban, who had addressed the Presidents' Conference in October 1966 on the subject of Vietnam, did not recall ever speaking to them on the subject. The address had been off-the-record and confidential. Thus there are no notes of the meeting. A letter to Michael Arnon, Israel Consul General, from Rabbi Joachim Prinz describes how the meeting on the subject of Vietnam was arranged.

I think we had a good talk with Mr. Eban. He just wanted to be sure that what we decided will in fact be the topic of his talk to the Presidents' Conference.

I do not believe that American Jewry's commitment to Israel is strong enough to persuade them that Israel's interests in matters concerning Vietnam should be any kind of motivation for their action or inaction. Since Mr. Eban is of the opinion that the Vietnam problem is of great importance to Israel, he will have an unusual opportunity to talk to our people in great earnestness about it. I would recommend that he deal with this problem to the exclusion of any other. We will inform our people that this will be the topic and that the meeting will be strictly confidential. Mr. Eban should therefore know that he will be able to talk without any reservations whatsoever.³⁴

Rabbi Prinz, himself an outspoken critic of the war in Vietnam, seemed to recognize the legitimate right of Israel to be concerned over the possible repercussions to it because of American Jewish opposition to the war and hence, its right to present its view to Jewish leaders. The Israelis, according to some Jewish leaders, were not reluctant to chastise American Jews on the subject. Nahum Goldmann, in his memoirs, recalled a heated exchange between Prime Minister Golda Meir and Rabbi Joachim Prinz on the subject of the right of American Jews to oppose the war without regard to Israel's needs.³⁵ However, it did not change American Jewish opinions. American Jewish leaders seemed to be understanding of the Israeli concern and accepted as more or less legitimate its attempt to convince them to restrain their opposition to the war. Prinz, after all, arranged a forum for Abba Eban to address Jewish leaders on Vietnam. Another Jewish leader expressed his understanding of what the Israelis were trying to achieve, saying, "I would have thought very little of them if they didn't ask. They had responsibilities too."³⁶

In an interview, Abba Eban described Lyndon Johnson's reaction to Jewish anti-war activity.

President Johnson told Eppie Evron (at the Embassy in Washington) and others that he does not understand the contradiction in American Jewish attitudes. When it comes to Israel they are interventionists; they want America to be active militant. When it comes to Vietnam, they want America to be pacifist.

I remember a rather interesting talk he had with me in 1968. He told me a story about May 1967. He said, "A bunch of rabbis came to me and told me to put the whole American fleet into the Gulf of Aqaba -- to show the flag in the Straits (of Tiran). On the other hand, I shouldn't send a _____ screwdriver to Vietnam." He was struck by this lack of consistency. They didn't have a clear doctrine for commitment or against commitment. They were selective, and he thought he had caught them out on a contradiction.³⁷

Charles Liebman writes that the issues of Vietnam and Jewish opposition to Vietnam was raised again by President Johnson during talks with Prime Minister Levi Eshkol in January 1968. On that same trip, after meeting with the President, Eshkol addressed a meeting of 300-400 Jewish leaders in New York. In his speech, he defended American intervention in Vietnam. Liebman comments, "The sequence of events suggests recognition by the United States of Israel as capable of influencing American Jewish policies in matters that one might have thought to be entirely internal to the American Jewish community."³⁸

The issue of Vietnam is a startling case of linkage manipulation. The United States government asked the leaders of a foreign government to influence the behavior of a group of its citizens on a matter at best only indirectly the interest of the foreign government. Dissent against the war in Vietnam was Lyndon Johnson's domestic problem. His requesting the assistance of Israel in a domestic matter was an abuse of relations between states. American Jews indignantly rejected the Israeli effort and resented the Administration's repeated requests to the Israelis to influence Jewish opinion. The American government, in its actions, not only indicated that it recognized the legitimacy of the linkage, but it also tried to manipulate it for its own goals.

Eban recalled that as opposition to the war became more widespread and more strident (1968), the Israeli Foreign Office changed its policy. It warned Ambassador Rabin to be careful as to what he said publicly about Vietnam. The Foreign Office was afraid that if Israeli diplomats continued publicly to support the war, they might gain the temporary appreciation of the

Administration, but antagonize public opinion in America, harming Israel interests even more.³⁹

More common were Administration requests to the Israelis to silence American Jewish protests on issues of the Middle East. Specifically, the Administration wanted the Israelis to get the message to their American supporters, Jewish and non-Jewish, that, for example, arms sales to an Arab country were part of an overall arms deal for the Middle East in which Israel, too, would benefit. Moshe Bitan, a former assistant director general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, explained that Johnson expected the Israeli government to tell American Jews "what they should or should not say on matters concerning the Middle East." He recalled that in 1965, the United States wanted to sell tanks to Jordan and at the same time give Israel the same, indirectly, via West Germany. It was reported in the press and American Jews were in an uproar. Bitan said,

At that time, Johnson wanted Israel to tell American Jewish leaders that they should not worry about this -- that Israel accepts the fact that the United States sells tanks to Jordan. If the United States would not do it, then Russia would do it. So it was preferable that it be done by the United States. He asked Eshkol, not officially, to tell U. S. Jews not to make too much noise about it. Eshkol was very hesitant. He said, "how can I as Prime Minister of Israel tell American Jews what they should or should not say in matters concerning citizens of the United States?"

When asked if Prime Minister Eshkol actually spoke to American Jews, Bitan hesitated. "Not really," he answered, "He gave them to understand -- not blatantly ... Johnson was not very sophisticated -- very simpleminded. 'Tell them!' he said."⁴⁰

Often military aid to Israel was linked to similar aid being given to Arab states friendly to the United States. The Israelis were told that their receiving sophisticated aircraft was conditional on a balanced arms sale to the Middle East, i. e., arms sales to Jordan, or Saudi Arabia. Thus, the Israelis found themselves in the peculiar position that they were in effect working in Congress for

arms to the Arab states and telling their friends to keep quiet. Abba Eban recalled, "There was a time when we gave a sort of yellow light to certain arms for Jordan because on it depended getting our requirements. It was more important for us to get Skyhawks than to prevent Jordan from getting its Spitfires or whatever. Therefore we had to tell American Jews to lay off."⁴¹

In both the Vietnam and arms to the Middle East examples the U. S. administration clearly indicated that it recognized and wanted Israel to utilize its link with American Jews to further American interests. The Israelis, although somewhat reluctant "in principle" to get involved in what were clearly internal matters of the United States, in practice, clearly told American Jews what to do. On the question of Vietnam, the Israelis were told firmly to "butt out". Their interference, although understood by Jewish leaders, was resented. On questions of the Middle East, American Jews generally followed Israel's lead since Israel was its own best judge of its interests in the area. They recognized that they did not know all the factors involved in Israel-American arms negotiations and therefore prudently followed Israel's lead.

The State Department

The State Department is the bureaucratic organization that oversees the daily operation of American foreign policy. In conjunction with other government agencies, the Defense Department, the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Council and on economic issues, the Treasury and Commerce Departments, it manages the relations of the United States government with foreign states. The President, in consultation with the Secretary of State charts the direction of foreign policy and determines its basic outline. The State Department professionals execute that policy, working out the finer details. To the professionals, the most important determinant of a foreign policy is the national interest. Domestic considerations of pressure group interests or repercussions at the polls which influence the thinking of the President or Congress do not, for

the most part, affect the Department professional. Some at the State Department resented the interposition of domestic considerations into foreign policy. They found their "expert" advice disregarded by the Chief Executive because of interest group pressure.⁴² The Secretary of State must give consideration to both domestic politics and external factors in foreign policy.

The interference by Jewish leaders in the making of American Middle East policy was not particularly welcomed by professionals at the State Department.⁴³ Naturally, if Middle East policy could have been made without having to consider domestic opposition, the task of the decision makers would have been easier. This does not imply that Jewish intervention significantly influenced most foreign policy decisions. Nonetheless, the Department was well aware that Jewish leaders were looking over its shoulder on matters relating to Israel. They also understood that their recommendations might be overruled by the White House if the domestic costs to the President were considered too high, or if the action was poorly timed politically.

High level State Department officials met at least twice yearly with Jewish leaders. They engaged in serious correspondence with them; their letters were given the courtesy of a "substantive" reply. Although most of the visits with the Secretary of State or the Assistant Secretary of State for Middle East and South Asian Affairs were at the initiative of American Jewish leaders, there were many meetings arranged at State Department initiative as well. Jewish leaders met with Department officials not only to discuss American relations with Israel, but also on other matters, e. g., the welfare of Jewish communities throughout the world or the Arab boycott of American companies with commercial ties to Israel.

The State Department periodically briefed Jewish leaders on American policy in the Middle East. It did so for three reasons: to explain American policy to interested American citizens; to have American government views related to the Israelis; to get some feedback from American Jews of the mood and response of the Israelis to American policies. The first reason is by far the

most important. Meetings with Jewish groups were part of the routine public relations activities conducted by the Department with different groups of citizens. It was important for the Department to meet with interested citizens and explain to them what American foreign policy was in a particular region and why such a policy was followed. This was one way the Department informed the general public about American foreign policy.⁴⁴ After being briefed by the Department official, the group relayed the information to a larger audience in newsletters, meetings or in the press, thus passing along the Department's view to the general public. In the case of Jewish groups, the Department was particularly interested in presenting its view of the American interest in the Middle East, thus ensuring that the Jewish leaders will hear it from them first hand and undistorted. The possibility of convincing Jewish leaders of the wisdom of the American stance on an issue was greater in direct contact with them than by correspondence or press releases. William Quandt described the interaction, "To see the influence relationship or the activities of interest groups as a one-way process would be misleading. Rather, lobbying and counterlobbying occur, and Jewish leaders are often called in and asked to transmit governmental positions to their own more militant constituents."⁴⁵

In addition to presenting the Department's views, meetings with interest groups gave them the opportunity to get some feedback as to how its policies were being received by the domestic public. In the late 1960s, the Department tried to have the liaison on foreign policy matters with Jewish leaders shift from the Presidential Assistant for Minority Affairs at the White House to the State Department. The consideration was that it would be more effective if the Department communicated directly with Jewish leaders than if it had first to brief a White House official and then he would relay the information to Jewish leaders. This effort failed when the June 1967 war broke out and Jewish leaders immediately looked to the White House to protect Jewish interests and support Israel's demands for security.⁴⁶

Lucius Battle, the Assistant Secretary of State for Middle East Affairs in 1967-1968, described his contacts with Jewish leaders:

I always encouraged citizen participation. I also went on speaking tours. We were awfully busy . . . I asked my Jewish friends who were the leaders of the Jewish community. I went and invited them up and met with quite a few of them. I took the initiative.⁴⁷

These initiatives to Jewish groups represented a change from earlier attitudes of Department officials. Although they had recognized the need for a dialogue with Jewish groups, State Department officials also expressed some resentment of the barrage of visits, letters, calls received from them. The following apocryphal story told by George Gruen, foreign affairs counsel for the American Jewish Committee illustrates this point: In the mid-fifties, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles had allegedly remarked to an aide upon receiving a request for a meeting from the chairman of the Presidents' Conference who was then a European-born Rabbi. "Why should I waste my time meeting with Rabbi X when I can hear the same arguments directly from Israeli Ambassador Abba Eban and in much better English at that."⁴⁸

Department officials were well aware that the Jewish leaders visiting their offices were briefed by the Israelis. Sometimes, this close relationship was utilized by American officials to get the Government's view transmitted by Jewish leaders to the Israelis. However, in general, there seemed to be a consensus among Department officials that in actual policy discussions, American Jewish leaders were not useful because they could only parrot Israeli views and lacked the expertise and authority of Israeli diplomatic representatives.

Former Assistant Secretary of State for Middle East Affairs Raymond Hare, who had met with both Jewish leaders and Israeli representatives, compared them thus:

The Israelis we worked with on the whole were more realistic than American Jews. They were closer to it. To them, facts are more clear cut. If there are certain threats to Israel, the Israeli will know what the threat is; he will evaluate the balance

of forces. Someone who is not involved in it, only sees the threat and he will be more emotional than the Israeli because he doesn't know all the facts.

Hare distinguished between the chairman of the Presidents' Conference and other Jewish organizational leaders. The former was usually better informed and could deal with specifics. His general impression was that with Israeli representatives he could do business, even on emotional issues; with American Jews, he could not. He explained,

With American Jews nothing was precise. You really can't discuss with him. He wants to have peace with the Arabs ... but he doesn't react from knowledge of the facts, just impressions and generalities. Yet, he is an intelligent man. You can't get far in a discussion with him; everything for him is already decided.⁴⁹

The reaction of American Jews was one of the considerations of Department officials in discussions with Israeli representatives. They were well aware that Israel enjoyed tremendous public support both from Jewish and non-Jewish groups. In private discussions with the Israelis, the Department had to consider that if the Israelis thought they were being pressured or dealt with unfairly, they would go public with details of their talks and organize a very vocal opposition to Department plans. Said Raymond Hare,

... We were conscious that the Israeli Embassy could get out the information to an interested American public. Both sides knew it. We spoke very straightforwardly with Abe Harmon (the Israeli ambassador to Washington). We understood each other. We battled it out over planes - like with any other country - but always in back of our minds, we remembered there was a tremendous Jewish influence in this country ...⁵⁰

Whether the Jewish influence in actuality was really so powerful is open to dispute. That the State Department in its considerations thought so served Israel's interests well.

The second interest of the Department in meeting with Jewish leaders was to emphasize to the Israelis how strongly it considered a particular matter. Thus, in discussions with Jewish leaders, the Department official might express strong disapproval of Israeli actions and describe what he thought were the serious consequences for stability in the region. The indignation and vigorous condemnation he expressed to American Jews would surely be reported back to the Israelis, with whom the Department knew the Jews had frequent contact. Department officials knew that after a visit to the State Department, Jewish leaders reported the content of the meeting to the Israelis and thus, the view of the State Department would be repeated again to the Israelis. Of course, the Department would have been more successful if it had also succeeded in convincing American Jews that the American position and not that of the Israelis was correct. Then they could add their voices to that of the State Department in expressing disapproval to the Israelis. Several Jewish leaders recalled meetings at the State Department in which the expression "Tell your Israeli friends..." or something similar was said.

The leaders of the American Jewish Committee understood the interests of the Department and tried to be "obliging". The following discussions at the Committee reflect the multiple considerations of their leadership. In June 1957, the Committee leadership visited Israel and held discussions with Prime Minister Ben Gurion. Internal correspondence among the Committee leaders and their foreign policy advisors shed some light on the purposes of the trip. Seymour Rubin, the counsel for foreign affairs in Washington, suggested to the Executive that it was important that the committee leadership make a trip to Israel for several reasons. First, was to be able to have first-hand impressions to report to the annual meeting of the Committee of the post-war situation in Israel. Rubin wrote,

All this would have value not merely in terms of a first hand and immediate report to the annual meeting ... but also (and more importantly in my parochial view) in terms of relations with and influence on the State Department in the months to come ...

Here we have a situation of vital concern, in which representatives of the leading organizations here have been advising, suggesting and pressing the State Department in various ways, but in which no one can, at present, say that he was on the spot and is able to report personal impressions as well as views based on reports, etc.

This was the second reason: to gain greater first-hand knowledge of the situation in Israel and to report it back to the State Department. Continued Rubin,

Indeed, I think that the Department itself would be pleased to have the Committee view of American attitudes and policies reported directly to the Israelis.

Rubin, who had worked for several years at the State Department as a legal advisor on economic affairs, indicated that Jewish groups were quite aware of the Department's interest that they add their weight in the transmittal of American attitudes to the Israelis.⁵¹

Rubin suggested a third reason why the State Department was interested in discussing Middle East problems with American Jews. It wanted to get more information about the intentions of the Israelis and the general attitudes of Israeli leaders. Exchanges among diplomats were surely "correct" and polite. American Jews, who may have witnessed the angry reactions of Israeli representatives or heard Israeli complaints could relay to the Department a more accurate picture of the mood in Jerusalem. George Gruen, head of the foreign affairs department of the American Jewish Committee phrased it simply: "The State Department wanted to 'pick our brains!' They knew we had access to Israeli leaders, visited them, etc."⁵² The Israelis, for example, expressed their strong fears about the Johnson mission on refugees much more openly to Jewish leaders than they did to Department officials. While Israel officially "considered" the plan, internally, the government raged and stormed against the unfairness and dangers of the plan. This they expressed to American Jewish leaders who then used their political clout to discourage the American government from lending its support to the plan.

Receiving information about Israeli intent and mood and the transmittal of messages and attitudes from the Department to Israel via American Jews were of secondary importance. The primary purpose of the Department in meeting with American Jews was to inform and discuss foreign policy with interested citizens. The importance of Jewish leaders increased in the eyes of the Department the more the Israeli government took them into its confidence. In the late 1960s, American Jewish leaders gained in importance as the Israelis after the Six Day War included the organized Jewish leadership more and more in discussions and explanations of its policies.

In the early fifties, State Department officials expressed displeasure at the frequency of Jewish visits. American Jews then were disorganized. There were more than twenty different Jewish organizations interested in affairs concerning Israel and eager to speak to the Department about its Middle East policies. Large mass organizations, fraternal organizations, Jewish defense organizations, and various Zionist groups sought appointments with Department officials. One official described it as a revolving door of Jewish groups -- "out walked one, in walked another." Each said the same thing more or less and were poorly informed. The State Department could hardly distinguish among them, not knowing which organizations were truly representative or influential, and which were not. The end result was the alienation of Department officials and the dilution of Jewish influence. Nahum Goldmann recalled that he was asked in 1954 by Assistant Secretary of State Henry Byroade, after the Israeli raid on Kibya (in Jordan), which was strongly condemned by the United States, to form one united organization of American Jews.

He showed his calendar and five delegations of Jews were coming to see him. Each one, he said, repeated the same thing. He asked me whether I could arrange a unification of Jewish groups (except for the anti-Zionists) to speak in one voice. I invited Philip Klutznick of the B'nai Brith and Maurice Eisendrath of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and together we established in a loose form the "Presidents' Club" and I was the chairman for the first few years.⁵³

Indeed, other Jewish leaders confirmed that the State Department was the source of the initiative to found the Presidents' Club, later called the Presidents' Conference. The Israelis, too, appreciated this improvement in the organization of American Jewry, in that now, a united Jewish support for Israel would be expressed. Moreover, when Israeli leaders wanted to brief Jewish leaders, they now had an address to go to, rather than having to approach the different organizations and invite each to a meeting. The earlier situation had created tension and squabbles among the organizations and often, problems for the Israelis if they overlooked a Jewish organization or decided not to include it at a briefing.

Abba Eban in his autobiography, interestingly also takes credit for the establishment of the Presidents' Conference. He writes,

It was now becoming increasingly laborious for me to go from one Jewish organization to another in order to explain our policy. I therefore worked hard with Nahum Goldmann for the establishment in April 1954 of a permanent framework for cooperation among Jewish organizations on Israeli issues. I was not yet able to persuade the influential American Jewish Committee headed by Jacob Blaustein to join, but that organization gave stalwart, independent and effective service to the alleviation of difficulties between Washington and Jerusalem.⁵⁴

In my discussions with Jewish leaders, they did not mention the role played by the Israeli ambassador. It is significant for understanding the linkage role of American Jews that both American officials and Israeli officials take credit for organizing American Jewry into a strong, united, more effective participant in Israel-American relations. State Department involvement in the founding of the Presidents' Conference suggests its recognition and acceptance, if reluctantly, of the participation of American Jews in policy-making relating to Israel.

American Jews, for their part, had traditionally considered the State Department to be the stronghold of "Arabists" whose sympathies lay with the Arabs. They did not expect to get from them more than a polite but cool reception. Maxwell Rabb, former Secretary of the Cabinet in the Eisenhower Administration, himself a Jew, reflected this view. In an interview he said, "The State

Department has never changed. It has always been pro-Arab. No matter who the Secretary of State is he succumbs to the Arabists who run the Department of Near East Affairs."⁵⁵ Rabb, who had not been particularly involved in Jewish affairs, unhesitatingly condemned the State Department. This charge of the prejudice of the Arabists at the State Department was commonly expressed by Jewish leaders and referred specifically to the level of Assistant Secretaries of State and not to the Secretary himself. It was founded on the assumption that because several Assistant Secretaries had served in the diplomatic corps in the Arab world over long periods of time, they had naturally become sympathetic to the views of their former hosts. Their perceptions of events in the Middle East was therefore influenced by their emotional ties to particular Arab States, to Arab culture and thought. None had ever served in Israel nor did they display any particular sympathy toward Zionism or to the problem of persecution of Jews, which the establishment of Israel was intended to solve.

In addition, the economic and strategic considerations of ensuring the flow of Middle East oil to the United States was an important factor early in the discussions prior to 1948 on whether the United States should support the establishment of a Jewish state lest it antagonize Arab oil sheiks. They argued that it was important that the latter remain friendly with the United States and in the Western camp.

American Jews found further evidence of State Department lack of sympathy for the founding principles of the Jewish state in a statement made by Assistant Secretary of State Henry Byroade in 1954. In a public address, Byroade advised that Israel see its future as a Middle Eastern state rather than as "a headquarters . . . of peoples of a particular religious faith who must have special rights within and obligations to the Jewish state." He rejected the principle upon which there was general consensus among Jews in Israel and abroad, i. e. , that Israel was not just another "secular" state, but was a national homeland for Jews the world over. Whether an individual chose to exercise his "right of return" was his free choice. Byroade also said that "despite pressures from

groups in the United States (obviously alluding to American Jews) the State Department would be neither pro-Arab nor pro-Israeli, but only pro-American."⁵⁶ He implied here a criticism of American Jewish efforts on behalf of Israel to influence government policy. His remarks raised the ire of American Jewish leaders who issued a strong statement of protest. Similar views were expressed by Raymond Hare, a former Assistant Secretary of State, in a private conversation with me. He implied that those demanding a pro-Israel policy were not really considering the interests of the United States. Jewish groups interpreted such accusations as further evidence of the State Department's insensitivity to Jewish interests. Its strong stand toward Israel in the Suez crisis and its consistent support for solutions to the refugee problem despite Israel's opposition to them further convinced American Jews that the State Department was "pro-Arab".

It is difficult to assess whether the charges leveled by Jewish groups were correct. One State Department official suggested that American Jews were so vehement in their support for Israel that they interpreted any deviation from their views as "if you are not with us, then you are against us." There is some truth to this argument. American Jews were indeed very single-minded in their support for Israel. Jewish charges of "Arabists" at the Department are not borne out in the period under study. Only two of the Assistant Secretaries for Middle East Affairs had studied or worked in the Middle East before working at the Middle East desk.

American Jews were quick to realize that they would not get a sympathetic hearing from the State Department. Therefore, they focused their efforts on the Congress and the White House, in an attempt to circumvent the Department. The Congress and the White House were more sympathetic and more vulnerable to petitions from their Jewish constituents. Jewish electoral support and financial backing were valuable assets for politicians facing re-election contests.

In this chapter, I have discussed the relations between Jewish leaders and the American government, the White House and the State Department, respectively. The interests of American Jews to meet with government officials is clear. They wanted to become better informed on American Middle East policy and they wanted to influence the government's decisions. More interesting is the limited reciprocity of the relationship. The White House and the State Department were, at times, particularly interested in meeting with Jewish leaders. This was often because the former wanted to explain its view, score public opinion advantage, and manipulate the latter for electoral purposes. At other times, American officials had specific information they wanted transmitted to the Israelis or had particular interest in finding out what was the Israeli thinking on an issue. Jewish leaders were an informal diplomatic channel of getting the message through. Moreover, the American government, on several occasions, manipulated the linkage to pressure Israel to influence American Jews to support the government's policies on issues that may or may not have been related to the Middle East.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER VI

¹For further discussion see Gabriel Almond, The American People and Foreign Policy (New York: Praeger, 1960).

²For a discussion of economic interest groups see Raymond Bauer, Ithiel de Sola Pool and Lewis Anthony Dexter, American Business and Public Policy (Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1973).

³John Spanier and Eric M. Uslaner, How American Foreign Policy Is Made (New York: Praeger, 1974), p. 86.

⁴See Marvin C. Feuerwerker, Congress and Israel: Foreign Aid Decision-making in the House of Representatives (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1979).

⁵Interview with I. L. Kenen, Washington D. C. August 1977.

⁶The New York Times, December 10, 1968.

⁷See Shlomo Slonim, United States-Israel Relations, 1967-1973: A Study in Convergence and Divergence of Interests. (Jerusalem Papers on Peace Problems: Hebrew University, September 1974).

⁸Interview, Mr. Philip Klutznick, April 8, 1964. Conducted by Professor Moshe Davis, Hebrew University Oral History Project, Institute for the Study of Contemporary Jewry.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Michael Bar-Zohar, Ben-Gurion (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1977) Hebrew edition. p. 1394.

¹²Interview I. L. Kenen, Washington D. C. August 1977.

¹³Abba Eban, An Autobiography (Tel Aviv: Steimatzky's Agency Ltd., 1977) p. 417.

¹⁴Interview, Klutznick, 1964.

¹⁵For a discussion of the role of John Foster Dulles in determining American Foreign policy, see, Michael A. Guhin, John Foster Dulles: A Statesman and His Times (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972) and John G. Stoessinger, Crusaders and Pragmatists: Movers of Modern American Foreign Policy (New York: W.W. Norton, 1979).

¹⁶Diaries of Rabbi Israel Goldstein, Goldstein Archives; Jerusalem; February 21, 1957.

¹⁷Interview with Philip Klutznick, July 23, 1979, Jerusalem.

¹⁸Files, American Jewish Committee, Letter from Simon Segal to Mr. Milton Weill, February 25, 1957.

¹⁹Interview, Klutznick; 1979.

²⁰The New York Times, February 23, 1957.

²¹There are many sources of information about the Dulles-non-Zionist Jews meeting. New York Times, February 22, 23, 1957. Maurice Bisgyer, Challenge and Encounter (New York: Crown, 1967), p. 219. Naomi Cohen, American Jews and the Zionist Idea (New York: Ktav, 1975), p. 102. Israel Goldstein Diaries; (unpublished) February 21, 1957. Interview, Philip Klutznick, July 23, 1979. Files, American Jewish Committee, February 25, 1957.

²²A detailed report of the meeting was sent to Rabbi Israel Goldstein by Rabbi Joachim Prinz who attended, July 11, 1957. Goldstein Archives, Jerusalem.

²³It is truly fascinating to read Rabbi Joachim Prinz's analysis of Nixon's character. Prinz wrote to Goldstein:

An evaluation of this most remarkable interview hinges upon the question of Nixon's honesty and sincerity. It is a difficult question to answer. If he proves not to be sincere and honest in these matters, his name should be added to the list of the most accomplished actors of our time, for none of us who saw him in action had seen a man speak and act with so much candor, charm and astuteness. These are attributes of a man who is capable of impressing not only large groups of people at mass meetings

but particularly of swaying the opinion of important people who gather around him in the kind of intimate and candid atmosphere that prevailed throughout the three or four hours of our meeting with him. IF HE IS DISHONEST, HE IS THE MOST DANGEROUS MAN IN AMERICA.

This was written in July 1957.

²⁴ Interview with Rabbi Herschel Shacter, February 1979. New York.

²⁵ See Jerome Skolnick, The Politics of Protest (New York: Balantine Books, 1969), p. 32.

²⁶ The New York Times, June 23, 1966.

²⁷ Ibid. September 11, 1966.

²⁸ Interview, Dr. William Wexler, July 1979. Tel Aviv.

²⁹ Interview, Mr. Raymond Hare, August 30, 1977. Washington, D. C.

³⁰ The New York Times, September 11, 1966.

³¹ Ibid. September 15, 1966.

³² Ibid. September 11, 1966.

³³ Interview, Mr. Abba Eban, March 1980. Jerusalem.

³⁴ Files, Presidents' Conference. Letter from Rabbi Joachim Prinz to Michael Arnon, September 26, 1966.

³⁵ Nahum Goldmann, The Jewish Paradox (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1978), pp. 82-85.

³⁶ Interview, Wexler.

³⁷ Interview, Eban.

³⁸ Charles S. Liebman, Pressure Without Sanctions: The Influence of World Jewry on Israeli Policy (Cranbery, New Jersey: Associated University Press, 1977), p. 27.

³⁹ Interview, Eban.

⁴⁰ Interview, Mr. Moshe Bitan, 1978. Tel Aviv.

⁴¹ Interview, Eban.

⁴² Interviews, Lucius Battle, August 1977. Washington D. C. Hare, 1977.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ For a discussion of the importance of public opinion in foreign policy making, see Bernard C. Cohen, The Public's Impact on Foreign Policy (Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1973), and William O. Chittick, The State Department, Press and Pressure Groups (New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1970).

⁴⁵ William Quandt, "United States Policy in the Middle East: Constraint and Choices" in Political Dynamics in the Middle East, edited by Paul Hammond and Sidney Alexander (New York: Elsevier, 1972), p. 529.

⁴⁶ Interview, Lucius Battle, August 1977. Washington, D. C.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ George Gruen, "Group Solidarity and Dissent in Israel-Diaspora Relations" discussion paper for the American Jewish Committee Task Force on Israel-American Jewry Interaction. 1977.

⁴⁹ Interview, Raymond Hare.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Files, American Jewish Committee, letter from Seymour Rubin to Simon Segal, March 6, 1957.

⁵² Interview, George Gruen, February 1979, New York.

⁵³ Interview, Nahum Goldmann, May 1979. Jerusalem.

⁵⁴ Eban, An Autobiography, p. 182.

⁵⁵ Interview, Maxwell Rabb, March 1977. New York.

⁵⁶ Quoted in Naomi Cohen, American Jews and the Zionist Idea (New York: Ktav, 1975), p. 99.

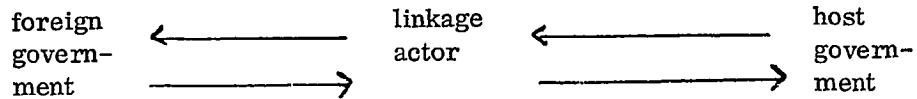
CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

On Linkage Research

In this study of linkage behavior, I have analyzed the role of American Jews in Israeli-American relations. This research, limited to the study of one linkage actor, has indicated how the concepts of linkage, informal penetration and transnational political action can be applied to the analysis of concrete political behavior. Linkage was defined by Robert Trice as "the process through which the outputs of one national system are converted into the inputs of another."¹ Similar definitions were suggested by James Rosenau and Karl Deutsch.²

At the outset of this research, I began by applying this definition of linkage to the study of American Jewish involvement in Israel-United States relations. Theoretically, the linkage process was conceived to be a one-way interaction, i.e., the outputs of one national system were to be converted into the inputs of another. However, in the course of the research of the linkage activities of American Jews, I found that they acted not only to assist the Israeli government's decision makers convert their outputs or decisions into inputs into the American system, but they also acted to convert the outputs or decisions of the American government into inputs or influences on the Israeli system. The linkage actor was actually a double linkage actor and linkage activity occurred in reverse as well:



Specifically, my research of the years 1956-1968 indicates that American Jews acted in a dual linkage role, i. e., the Israeli government utilized its ties with American Jewish leaders and prominent private individuals to enlist them in an effort to influence American policy-makers on issues of interest to Israel. The American government likewise took advantage of the relationship between Israeli leaders and American Jews and, less successfully, tried to enlist American Jewish support and assistance on matters of interest to the United States.

In chapters IV, V, and VI, I described how the linkage connection operated. In chapters V and VI, several cases of linkage behavior were presented. One example was during the period 1961-1963, when the United States was considering support for the Johnson plan for the solution of the Palestine refugee problem. The Israeli government sent high-level representatives to meet with the Presidents' Conference and the American Jewish Committee to explain why, in the Israeli view, the Johnson plan portended serious dangers to Israel's security. The Israeli presentation convinced Jewish leaders of the serious threat posed to Israel. They then launched a private and public effort to convince the Kennedy administration to shelve the plan. The State Department, aware of the Israeli-American Jews relationship, invited American Jewish leaders to Washington to confer on the subject of American foreign policy in the Middle East. These sessions at the State Department had the dual purpose of explaining the American position to a group of concerned American citizens and having the American view relayed back to the Israelis by a party friendly with both governments. Thus the linkage process functioned as an informal channel of communications between two states via the participation of a trusted third party, i. e., the linkage actor. The linkage actor worked behind-the-scenes in an unofficial capacity, enabling the governments to negotiate and iron out differences of opinion without fear of

public disclosure or commitment. The involvement of Rabbi Israel Goldstein and David Sarnoff in the quest for conditions acceptable to Israel and the United States on the question of withdrawal from the Sinai in 1957 was an example of dual linkage.

The linkage actor enjoyed the trust of the foreign government and was well briefed about its interests. It was even able on occasion to enter into negotiations on its behalf with governments other than its own. This expansion of the linkage role to linkages with other states was done with the assumed acquiescence of the linkage actor's own government. Thus, American Jewish contacts with the Indian, German and Greek governments on Israel's behalf were viewed as being in the ultimate American interest as well. Ending Israel's isolation in the international community would ease the diplomatic burden of the United States.

The linkage role played by American Jews in Israeli-American relations is an example of activities not included in conventional international politics approaches. Their linkage activities were conducted with representatives of a foreign state across state boundaries. The linkage actor acted as a domestic actor within the political system and as a transnational actor in relations with a foreign state.

The choice of an ethnic actor as a beginning of research of transnational linkage activity was an obvious one, given the often intense emotional ties ethnic groups living outside an ethnic homeland may have with their homeland. I began this study with the question whether these emotions ever were translated into significant transnational linkage activity. In the case of American Jews, this research has indicated that American Jews have been involved significantly in periodic linkage activity since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948.

The involvement of American Jews in linkage activities, however, is predicated on two factors, the combination of which may be unique to the

American Jewish community: its high socio-economic status and its close ties with the leadership of the foreign government, Israel. The American Jewish community is, on the whole, prosperous, well-educated and active in political affairs. This combination of high social and economic status and political involvement has given American Jews two advantages: the political understanding of whom to approach and in what way, and the personal relationships with and influence on the men in power. The second factor, close ties with the leadership of the foreign government is a result of the common political struggle for the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948. The joint effort continued on the philanthropic and political fronts in later years. This relationship enabled American Jewish leaders and prominent individuals to relay messages from their government directly to Israeli leaders, and to relay Israeli responses back. American government officials knew that American Jewish leaders were in touch with Israeli leaders and their trust.

The question posed for further ethnic group linkage research is whether an ethnic group without high socio-economic status or connections with the leaders of a foreign state could function in a linkage role. It is doubtful if there is another ethnic group in the United States whose leaders have the confidence of the leaders of its ethnic homeland and close relations with its own government. Do other ethnic groups in countries other than the United States act as linkage actors? Are church organizations or corporate actors involved in transnational linkage activities? These questions require further research following the linkage approach utilized in this study.

American Jews as Linkage Actors, 1956-1968

American Jews in the period 1956-1968 willingly accepted a linkage role in Israeli-American relations. The unity of American Jews in support of Israel and their willingness to take action to help its cause were dependent on affirmative answers to the following questions: 1) Did the issue requiring their support involve Israel's security and survival? 2) Were the Israeli people themselves

united behind their government on the issue? 3) Was Israeli policy consistent with the democratic image of Israel? 4) Was Israeli policy congruent with the stated national interest of the United States?

1) Security and survival -- The problems Israel contended with during the years 1956-1968 involved for the most part the two vital elements of security and survival. At least, this was how Israel's needs were presented by Israeli leaders to American Jews. In 1956, Israel was surrounded by hostile Arab states which had vowed not to rest until they "had thrown Israel into the sea." Periodic fedayeen raids across Israel's borders resulted in many Israelis killed or wounded. These were part of an Arab campaign to keep Israel's borders in a constant state of crisis. Reports of the raids drew a picture of an embattled fledgling state, struggling to survive, at least in the eyes of American Jews. The American refusal to sell any major weapons to Israel sharpened the image of a "threatened state". Their government became the target of Jewish political efforts to effect a change in American weapons sale policy. Ideological, religious or political differences among Jews did not split the Jewish community in its support for Israel. The Israelis found a Jewish community united (with the exception of a small minority) in their determination to help Israel survive and prosper, and eager to join forces with it on the political front. The American government's attempt to divide the Jewish community in the aftermath of the Suez fighting failed. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles invited eight non-Zionist Jewish leaders to the State Department with the apparent intent of getting them to issue a statement critical of Israel and supportive of the American position. This attempt backfired. American Jews resented the Secretary's attempt to split the community and in response, strengthened their resolve to stand firmly behind Israel.

2) Consensus in Israel -- The Israeli policies which American Jews were asked to support had the support of an almost unanimous Israeli population. There was a national consensus in Israel on questions of security, the need for

arms, refusal to repatriate Arab refugees, the need for American security guarantees and the need for economic assistance from the United States. Thus American Jews could see that a united Israel was asking them to join in their struggle, a struggle for Israel's survival. An Israel divided internally might destroy the unity of purpose necessary for the support of American Jews.

3) Israel as a democratic state -- American Jews took pride in Israel's accomplishments in building a new society, in agriculture, in its social and political institutions, in the field of education and in absorption of immigrants. American Jews proudly pointed to Israel's democratic system of government, especially when compared to the almost feudal governments of some of Israel's Arab neighbors and the left wing dictatorships of others. Israel's citizen army performed surprisingly well in 1956 and had startling successes in the June 1967 war. Most American Jews shared in the celebration of Israel's military achievements. They were eager to identify with an Israeli David fighting the Arab world Goliath. The American media played up this image, reinforcing the positive image of Israel in the eyes of American Jews.

4) Congruence of Israeli and American interests -- There were no major differences between Israel and the United States in the period 1956-1968, with the major exception of the Suez crisis. During the Suez crisis, American Jews found themselves in the uncomfortable position of being in opposition to the Administration's policy. (This, however, did not isolate American Jews from the general public, since Democratic leaders also opposed Eisenhower's threat to issue sanctions against Israel. Moreover, America's allies, Britain and France, had acted in alliance with Israel.) The United States government continued to maintain diplomatic relations with Israel during and after Suez, although not quite as "friendly" as the Israelis and American Jews would have liked. Until 1962, the United States refused to sell military equipment to Israel and it persistently worked to improve its relations with the Arab world. This was regarded by American Jews as being at the expense of American relations with Israel.

Nonetheless, despite the government's determination to demonstrate even-handedness in its relations with Israel and the Arab states, American Jews were confident that the United States, for ideological and strategic reasons, was committed to the survival and security of Israel. This commitment was publicly affirmed by the White House on many occasions. American Jews, therefore, did not consider their support for Israel inconsistent with the American national interest. Since the differences between Israel and the United States were not the major concern of American policy makers at this time, American Jews were not forced to choose between their support for Israel and what was purported to be the American national interest.

The issue of security and survival, consensus among Israelis in support of their government, Israeli actions consistent with its democratic image, and congruence between Israeli government policy and American interests, were important factors influencing American Jewish willingness to support Israel and to act as a linkage actor. They were comfortable and confident in their linkage and support roles. However, what would happen if any or all of the above listed factors were to change, *i. e.*, if the issues dividing Israel and the United States did not involve security; or if the Israelis themselves were seriously divided over Israeli policy; or if Israeli policies seemed inconsistent with the ideals for which Israel had been respected in the past; or if the United States and Israel were in serious conflict over the issue and the United States government stated that Israel's policies were harmful to the American national interest? Would American Jews persist in their public support for Israel? Would they continue to act in their linkage role to improve relations between the two countries?

These questions are indeed pertinent to the study of Israel-American relations in the period after 1968. The post-1973 negotiations between the United States and Israel on withdrawal from territories occupied by Israel and mutually acceptable conditions for peace talks have strained relations between the two countries. It would be interesting to study the role of American Jews as linkage

actors during this troubled period of Israeli-American relations and compare their linkage behavior to that of 1956-1968.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER VII

¹Robert Trice, Interest Groups and Foreign Policy: U.S. Policy in the Middle East, (Beverly Hills: Sage International Studies Series; Vol. 4, 1976), p. 73.

²James Rosenau, Linkage Politics, (New York: Free Press, 1969), p. 45 and Karl Deutsch, "External Influences on the Internal Behavior of States" in R. Barry Farrel, Approaches to Comparative and International Politics, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1966).

APPENDIX I

Much of the research for this study was gathered from primary sources, archives and personal interviews. The following American Jewish organizations permitted this researcher access to their archives:

The American Jewish Committee

The Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations

The American Zionist Council

All three are located in New York City. The American Jewish Committee has the most organized detailed files. However, it restricted this researcher to files through 1962 only.

In Israel, Rabbi Israel Goldstein kindly permitted me access to his personal, unpublished diaries and correspondence. The Israeli government has classified its documents pertaining to Israel-American Jews and Israel-United States relations for 30 years, and they were therefore unavailable to me.

Interviews were arranged with several individuals involved in Israeli-American relations. There were four categories of interviewees: former policy makers in the American government; former Israeli policy makers or diplomats; former leaders of American Jewish organizations; and private Jewish individuals who are described by any of the above as influential in Israeli-American relations. The interviews were conducted in New York; Washington D. C.; South Orange, New Jersey; Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. American Jewish leaders frequently visited Israel and were therefore easily accessible for interviews in Jerusalem and in Tel Aviv.

APPENDIX II

The following organizations were members of the Presidents' Conference in 1967:

American Israel Public Affairs Committee
American Jewish Congress
American Zionist Council
American Trade Union Council for Histadrut
B'nai Brith
Central Conference of American Rabbis
Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds (observer)
Hadassah
Jewish Agency for Israel -- American Section
Jewish Labor Committee
Jewish War Veterans of the U. S. A.
Labor Zionist Movement
Mizrachi-Hapoel Hamizrachi
National Community Relations Advisory Council
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of Young Israel
The Rabbinical Assembly
Rabbinical Council of America
Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
United Synagogue of America
Zionist Organization of America

Source: Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Annual Report, year ending March 31, 1967.

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- Mr. Lucius Battle, former Assistant Secretary of State for Middle East and South Asia Affairs.
- Mr. Charles Bick, former President of American Hapoel Hamizrachi.
- Mr. Moshe Bitan, former Assistant Director-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Mr. Abba Eban, former Israeli Ambassador to Washington, and Israeli Foreign Minister.
- Mr. Abraham Feinberg, U.S. banker and politically influential.
- Mr. Mordecai Gazit, former Minister Plenipotentiary, Israel Embassy in Washington D. C.
- Mr. Nahum Goldman, former President of World Jews Congress and founder of the Presidents' Conference.
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- Mr. Yitzchak Rabin, former Israel Ambassador to Washington and later, Prime Minister of Israel.
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