

Adherents of the "standard liberal agenda" have been shrinking in number; so have the Jewish adherents. But that's about as startling as to note that drivers of eight-cylinder cars have been diminishing in number.

Democratic Party and self-styled liberal Americans have been voting for Proposition Thirteens all over the country. That is not part of the "standard liberal agenda." The persistent standard-bearers of *that* agenda have become increasingly ghettoized. The bulk of the old liberal corps has taken on a new pattern in domestic philosophy. As usual, the Jews epitomize -- or, if you will, caricature -- that new pattern.

A recent regional survey of Jewish attitudes suggests the nature of that pattern. By at least a three to one margin in each case, the Jews supported the admission of all Vietnamese refugees who could not find refuge elsewhere; supported the active involvement of the Jewish community in fighting job discrimination against blacks; and supported necessary government measures to improve health care for the aged. And about one third of the Jews made a distinction between "quota" programs which they opposed, and "affirmative action" programs which they supported.

At the same time, by about a two to one margin in both cases, these Jews supported a statutory limitation on government spending and opposed the creation of more public service jobs with federal funds. And by an even larger margin, they supported longer sentences for criminals.

The Jews remain *socially liberal* with respect to their active political concern about refugees, oppressed, deprived, poor. They are significantly more responsive on such questions than any other segment of the white population -- in the case of the Vietnamese refugees, more responsive than *any* segment of the population.

But the Jews are *fiscally conservative*, to about the same degree as the rest of the white population, but more strongly than Jews have been before. And the Jews are *law-and-order conservative*, again like the rest of the population, but more explicitly than Jews have been. The terms "liberal" and "conservative" as used here remain happily undefined, beyond referring to apparent distance from the "standard liberal agenda."

This is the "new pattern," for the Jews; and, to some extent, for most of the standard liberal host. It has some obvious implications for political choice which are lost on no one.

However, there is another matter which tends to differentiate Jewish consciousness even more sharply from erstwhile "standard liberal" perceptions. The A.D.L. once published a book about anti-Jewish hostility entitled *Danger from the Right*, certainly a standard liberal item. The modern version would have to be entitled *Danger from the Left*. The reason is compounded of connected concerns about Israel and about American anti-semitism.

On the Middle Eastern front, the American Jews have become acutely aware of the central anti-Israel role of the Soviet Union. They were aware of the Cuban troops in Syria. They are aware of the PLO's connection with the Soviet Union, however strained through Levantine nationalism; they are aware of the PLO's self-styled "Marxist-Leninist" bent. In short, the Camp David agreement with Egypt, and the subsequent prominence of the PLO issue, have made the Jews more aware than ever before that the operative anti-Israel force in the world is a "left-wing" force, not always Soviet-captive, but always ideologically anti-American and anti-Western democracy.

Furthermore, this "left-wing force," is linked around the world, often by the PLO itself, in a "Third World" context. In Africa and in Latin America, as well as

in the Middle East, where this left-wing force emerges, it inevitably emerges with anti-Israel rhetoric. And so it does in the industrialized nations, including the United States.

In the United States, there has long been perceived a certain flirtatious subservience to this "left-wing force" in its Third-World cape, by certain elements of the "standard liberal" establishment -- notably among some sectors of the intellectuals, clergy and urban "activist" bureaucracy. With a newly clarified sense of what's going on in the world, wider circles of Jews have noted the mushy approach of these particular "liberal" sectors to issues of Israel and PLO. Nor was it lost on Jews that the dangerous singling-out of American Jewry, following the Andrew Young resignation, stemmed from some of these liberal sectors and was not signally rejected by some others.

In brief, a significant number of American Jews have self-consciously lost their deadly innocence on this score.

What is this likely to mean for political choices by American Jewry in 1980? Perhaps never before has the specific presidential candidate been so important. Most Jews would still like to find their candidate within the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party still stands for the kind of general social liberalism to which the Jews cling. The Republican Party has long been stigmatized as the party without social compassion. But there is something else.

American Jewry has scarcely forgotten the "danger from the right." Jews will not trust oil-company candidates, nor embrace prophets of social or political repression, no matter how widely they may bare their teeth in friendly grins towards Israel. "Right-wing extremism" and "anti-semitism" are still seen as companion pieces, and the Republican Party is seen as the potential site of such right-wing extremism.

The Jews have no place to go but to the "center." They will remain heavily Democratic in registration, but will become more "independent" than ever in the voting booth. They will vote for a candidate who stands for some optimal combination of social liberalism and fiscal conservatism; but, most of all, they will be wary of any Democratic Party candidate who does not project a clear recognition of the danger from the left -- in terms of the Middle East, for example; and in terms of America's military and moral strength. Insofar as they find no such candidate, some may indeed drift to the Republican Party, if that Party's candidate does not frighten them.