

The Jews, The 1984 Elections & Beyond

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

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

The several national exit polls done by major survey organizations for the TV networks and other journalistic sponsors agreed that between two thirds and 70 per cent of the Jews voted for Mondale, while Reagan's support among them declined from 40 per cent in 1980 to 30-33 per cent in 1984. \*Almost all other supplementary and regional polls supported the same order of findings.

However, this disproportionate 1984 Jewish Democratic vote was not in itself unique. From the data that has been offered in evidence, since 1924 American Jews have voted disproportionately Democratic in all Presidential elections by an average of over 25 points. (Graphic 6) In that sense, the Jewish vote in 1984 merely returned to a normative range of difference from that of the general population.

There are, then, three fundamental questions to be asked. Why do the Jews remain so persistently Democratic in their political loyalty? Were there any special factors in the 1984 election which caused the Jews to "spring back" from a historically low Democratic difference in 1980? And what are the implications

for the future of Jewish political loyalty and of Jewish political influence in America?

The General Factors in the "Democratic difference"

As some wag put it, Jews earn like Episcopalians, and vote like blacks. According to the ABC poll, for one, about two thirds of all Americans who earned more than 30 thousand dollars a year voted for Reagan; while almost two thirds of all Jews who earned more than 30 thousand dollars a year (a majority of Jews), voted for Mondale.

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

One factor usually invoked is that of an economic or social welfare liberalism somehow ungrained among Jews: that is not just a concern with the welfare of the poor and needy, but a conviction that the community- in this case, the government- has a responsibility to provide remedies. Some years ago, for example, the Public Opinion Research office at Princeton did a survey of various religious groups and their support of the political principle of guaranteed economic security. In each case, except for the Jews, the percentage in favor of guaranteed economic security corresponded almost exactly with the percentage of urban manual workers in that group. Thus, 51 per cent of the Baptists were manual workers and 51 per cent of the Baptists supported guaranteed security; 55 per cent of the Catholics were manual workers and 58 per cent supported guaranteed security; 28 per cent of the Congregationalists were manual workers and 26 per cent supported guaranteed security. But while 27 per cent of the Jews were manual workers, 56 per cent of them supported guaranteed security.

This pattern of economic liberalism apparently persists. In the 1984 CBS election survey, less than a third of the American population reported an income of over 35,000 dollars, as against over half of the Jews. Nevertheless, 60 per cent of the Jews said that federal spending on the poor should be increased, as against 40 per cent of the general population. An a higher percentage of the Jews than of the general population said that "fairness to the poor" was one of the issues which mattered most in deciding how they voted.

In the 1984 Los Angeles Times election survey, Jews were just as concerned as others with the level of government spending, but only about 40 per cent favored trimming the federal budget deficit by reducing the domestic budget, as compared with 59 per cent of the general population. To put it another way, only about a quarter of the Jewish suggestions for cutting the deficit had to do with reducing the domestic budget, as compared with about half of the general population's suggestions. Jews were more interested than others in cutting the deficit by raising taxes and, especially by cutting military expenses - a sentiment which deserves further comment later.

In the 1984 National Survey of American Jews, only 17 per cent of the Jews indicated opposition to current welfare programs such as food stamps. The American Jewish population is clearly welfare-state oriented, and that is the philosophy with which the Democratic Party is, of course, most closely associated.

For much of the first half of this century, economic liberalism was in the pocket-book interest of most Jews. But in the last few decades, the Jews have become the most personally affluent ethnic/religious group in America. Why this persistent social welfare orientation, against the economic grain?

Among the reasons commonly preferred has been that of Jewish religious values mandating concern for the poor and needy. But, of course, the Jews do not have a monopoly on such religious values. The Jews do have a history that accentuates community and communitarian responsibility. This communitarian responsibility, on an economic level, was often necessary for Jewish survival in modern Western history. Today, the Jews contribute in some vast disproportion to their own welfare institutions; and even contribute disproportionately to the welfare institutions of the general community. This has become translated into welfare politics. The Protestant tradition has less of an accent on communitarian than on individual responsibility.

The economic liberalism which, according to the 1984 evidence, still marks the Jews, was an independent factor in the Jewish Democratic vote of 1984. But other factors have been present in the Jewish Democratic difference over the years.

Those factors of group self-interest have to do with maintaining a society whose nature will allow Jews to flourish freely both as individuals and as a community. Thus, American Jews have always been the most ardent and sophisticated supporters of those civil liberties protected by the Constitutional Bill of Rights. In a compilation of surveys since 1980, Public Opinion (Oct/Nov 1984) found that Jews-who, as a group, are more "anti-militarist" than the general population, are also considerably more inclined than the rest of the population to allow a radical militarist to speak. Protecting the institutions of a free society, such as free speech and assembly, are a recognized matter of special self-interest to the Jews. However, the larger context is that of "cultural liberalism," as distinct from economic liberalism. In practical terms, cultural liberalism connotes tolerance and more first-class footing, for individual and group differences.

It is within that context that American Jews have signally supported civil rights

for blacks and other groups in America. Jews were the only white ethnic/religious group to vote in favor of "civilian police review boards" in New York- a black and Puerto Rican issue. Jews were the only white ethnic/religious group to vote against a referendum in California which tried to overturn the state's fair housing law. Within the past couple of years, the Jews have been the only white ethnic/religious group to vote for a black mayor in Chicago, and for a black mayor in Philadelphia. And, in 1984, the Los Angeles Times election survey found that the Jewish group, more than the general population, felt that civil rights was an important election issue.

According to the 1984 National Survey of American Jews, the blacks were ranked by Jews as the most anti-semitic among 14 specified groups - including business, labor, hispanics, Protestants, Catholics and others - over a majority of Jews believing that "many" or "most" blacks were anti-semitic. In fact, according to independent surveys, this perception of anti-semitism among rank-and-file blacks is simply mistaken, based largely on the Jesse Jackson syndrome, magnified by the media. But the point is that the National Survey found these same Jews favorable towards the NAACP by a five to one ratio, and supportive of affirmative action (without quotas) for minorities by a seven to two ratio.

The Jews also consistently supported equal rights for women and for homosexuals as part of their ingrained cultural liberalism. It is not implausible to suggest that economic liberalism- to which the Jews have an independent attachment - can also be seen within the context of cultural and political liberalism. Cultural and political freedom exists least precariously within the boundaries of an orderly society. A society caught in bitter civil warfare is most vulnerable to the pathologies of bigotry, political extremism, cultural and political repression. For Jews, that is an indelible lesson of history. Economic liberalism is often seen as an antidote to such a pathological society. American Jews were more shaken

than most by the bitter divisions and disorder of the 1960s, when indeed anti-semitism came out of the closet for the first time since the end of World War II.

But whatever the reasons, and whatever the logic, economic, political and cultural liberalism remained in 1984 explicit factors which kept the Jewish population disproportionately supportive of the Democratic Party.

Cultural liberalism, of course, connotes more than a number of specific issues. It describes finally the kind of pluralistic society in which the Jews can feel a kind of comfort and ease. And the Jewish attachment to the Democratic Party has also been a measure of the comfort and ease with which the Jews have fit into that climate, as compared with the Republican Party climate. That compatible climate has partly been a function of the issues which the Democratic Party has championed. But the Democratic Party has championed such issues because of the nature of its population components, with whom the Jews have grown up in this country and feel most comfortable: e.g., urban Irish Catholics rather than rural or upper class Protestants.

But there is one set of issues which has always been a central part of the Jewish sense of cultural liberalism, and their sense of comfort with the urban components of the Democratic Party and which apparently provided a special impulse for their full return to the Democratic difference in 1984: religion and politics.

#### Special Factors in the 1984 Election

The issue of Israel is always a dominant one for American Jews, if one candidate in a race is perceived as hostile towards American support of Israel. The organized Jewish community and the Jewish electorate demonstrated this concern in several 1984 Senate races. In particular, the defeat of Senator Percy in Illinois is generally ascribed to the dedicated opposition of the organized Jewish

community to Percy's perceived friendliness towards the Palestinian Arab cause. This was not just a matter of Jewish votes, but of unusual Jewish financial and campaign support for Percy's opponent.

Jews voted somewhat more heavily for Democratic Party Congressional candidates (78 to 22 in the Los Angeles Times survey) than they did for Mondale, but as usual, the Democratic Party vote of the general population was heavier for congressional candidates than for Mondale, virtually splitting between the two parties. And the Jewish Democratic Party vote was presumably based on the same general factors of Democratic Party bias as have been described. By and large, Israel was not an issue in Congressional races (although the assessment of AIPAC and other pro-Israel observers was that the overall pro-Israel temper of Congress had been improved as a result of the election).

Nor was Israel a factor in Jewish voting between Reagan and Mondale. So little was Israel a general issue in the election that it was not addressed by the major national polls. Nor was it a major issue in the debate within the Jewish community. In one random sample comprising 751 Jewish Federation contributors in Northern California, only 22 per cent favored Reagan, in keeping with the political temper of that area, but 66 per cent thought that Reagan would be good in the matter of Israel, only slightly less than the percentage who thought Mondale would be good on the subject. A national survey by the American Jewish Congress corroborated that finding and the general understanding that Israel was a "wash" as an issue between the two presidential candidates.

However, one "Jewish issue" did emerge as a strong differentiating factor between the two candidates; that of religion and politics and the church-state separation. In that Northern California poll, for example, only 8 per cent of the Jews thought that Reagan would do a good job on "keeping church and state separate," as against

89 per cent who so assessed Mondale.

This was a highly publicized issue during the campaign, because of the close association of Reverend Jerry Falwell, the evangelical leader, with Reagan; and because of Reagan's own support of such legislative proposals as the reintroduction of (non-sectarian) prayers in the public schools. In the Los Angeles Times survey, the opinion on Falwell fell out as follows:

	<u>Jews</u>	<u>General</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Favorable	5	16
Unfavorable	78	46
No Opinion	17	38

Falwell who, according to his antagonists stood for the "Christianization of America" obviously had the attention of the Jews --and their hostile attention to an extent no other figure in the campaign captured. The ABC poll asked people to indicate the one item which best described what they did not like about the candidate they voted against. Seven per cent of the general population checked that they disliked the candidate they voted against because he "mixes politics and religion"; but 23 per cent of the Jews checked that item.

If there was one issue that sparked a special Jewish aversion to the Republican candidate in 1984, it was the church-state issue, and Reagan's close relationship to Reverend Jerry Falwell. It is quite possible that American Jews exaggerated that issue and that relationship. On the surface at least, the on slaught against church-state separation seemed mild enough, perhaps merely the pendulum swing back against the developments of the previous decades. Since World War II, the U.S. courts had laid down a Maginot Line against excessive church-state involvement.

Bible-reading, once a staple in many public schools, had been ruled out by the courts along with any kind of prayers, sectarian or otherwise. Government aid to religious schools had been limited to special welfare situations. Three rules-of-thumb had been laid down by the Supreme Court: nothing would be allowed which caused serious entanglement of church and state, which gave serious aid to religious institutions, or which did not have a primarily secular purpose.

The "religious right" as personified by Reverent Jerry Falwell emerged dramatically in the presidential election campaign of 1980. Evangelical churches, which were the growing edge of church life in America, organized politically for the first time since Prohibition. Their stated mission was to return religion to the more exalted status it had once had in America. Specifically, their politicized goal was to again legalize abortion. But they had a number of other symbolic goals, which touched upon Jewish concerns about cultural liberalism. These goals included a return of religion in various forms to the public schools: prayers, the teaching of a biblical version of genesis along with the theory of evolution, the promotion of religious groups in the schools.

In 1980, this movement associated itself with Reagan- who associated himself with it. However, the religious-right political movement did not prove to be awesomely powerful politically. Analysis showed that they may have had an effect only in a few local congressional races. And subsequent to Reagan's election, this movement expressed constant dissatisfaction with the fact that Ronald Reagan did not act as though the religious/cultural items in question were very high on his political agenda.

Only in the campaign year preceding the 1984 election, did Ronald Reagan and his political forces seriously address these questions again. It should be noted that neither Falwell nor REagan called for a full return to the status quo ante. They

both explicitly denied any desire to breach religious pluralism. The prayers and other public school ventures they proposed were always "non-sectarian" in nature.

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

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

In this climate, the bulk of American Jews became concerned about the Reagan/Falwell association, about an apparent pendulum-swing in the society, about the fact that the courts seemed to be joining the pendulum-swing- and that Ronald Reagan, as President, would probably be in a position to make enough Supreme Court appointments in the ensuing four year to shape the character of that Court. There was even wide currency to an undocumented report that Reagan had promised Jerry Falwell that he could veto such appointments.

These were not just technical constitutional matters for the Jews. Religious pluralism in America is a prime signal of the kind of cultural liberalism which is in the deepest Jewish self-interest. It bespeaks a climate of cultural tolerance,

of cultural ease for the Jews. Whether the "Christianization" theme was exaggerated or not in this election campaign, in this matter, the Democratic Party refreshed the feeling of many Jews that this was the Party of cultural liberalism. And it further strengthened the traditional feeling of most Jews that this was the party within whose ranks Jews would feel most comfortable.

All signs pointed to this as the special factor in the 1984 campaign, building on top of these general factors which continued to support a Democratic difference among Jews. Indeed, a few observers had ascribed some of the lukewarm Jewish attitude towards Carter in 1980, and the low Democratic difference in 1980, to the fact that Carter was himself an avowed "born-again" Christian. The clear and documented effect of this issue on the 1984 Jewish vote retroactively strengthened that perception about the Jewish vote in 1980. Mondale was the kind of Democrat with whom American Jews were more comfortable on this score, and they returned to their normal range of Democratic difference.

There was, however, a noteworthy phenomenon within the American Jewish community, related to denominational difference. The Western View-Point Research organization was employed by the Reagan-Bush Jewish Coalition to make its own post-election survey of Jewish voting. This survey concentrated on areas of dense Jewish population and "weighted respondent preferences to reflect the incidence of the major religious subdivisions within affiliated American Jewry." The results of this survey indicated a significantly smaller Democratic difference than the national network surveys, a proportion of about 59-41 for Mondale.

The Republican Jewish Coalition charged that the network surveys had under-represented Jews in denser Jewish sections. Interpreted, however, the meaning of that charge was that the national network surveys had under-represented Orthodox and Hassidic segments of the Jewish population. The Western View-Point survey found that its

Reform and Conservative respondents voted close to the proportion reported by the network surveys for all Jews (65-35 for the Reform; 64-36 for the Conservative). But it found that the Orthodox voted 59-41 for Reagan, and the Hassidic sample voted 94 to 6 for Reagan.

The controversy is partly an American political version of "who is a Jew?" The Republican Jewish Coalition indicated that its results were based on the assumption that 70-75 per cent of American Jewry were Reform or Conservative, 13-18 per cent of American Jewry were Orthodox or Hassidic and 10 per cent were "other". The 1984 National Survey of Jews found that American Jews designated themselves as 57 per cent Reform or Conservative, 7 per cent Orthodox (or Hassidic) and 37 per cent "other". It is very possible that the National Survey of Jews, and the national network surveys methodologically under-represented the Orthodox and Hassidic populations, but it is even more likely that the Western View-Point survey under-represented the non-Orthodox and unaffiliated Jews in the country. The Republican Jewish coalition commentary on the Western View-Point results, refers to "the four million affiliated Jews in America," but the American Jewish Yearbook estimates a Jewish population of 5.7 million in the U.S.

All of this may raise some problematics for the American Jewish political pattern in the future. The Hassidic Jews and segments of the Orthodox community are clearly not disturbed by church-state questions or matters of cultural liberalism. There is no evidence to suggest that they are less committed to economic liberalism - or that they are not - but the traditional connection to the Democratic Party does not seem to prevail.

That may have some portent for local politics in New York City, or for the distant future in the country. But at the moment, the body of Jews to which the politicians are responsive, continue to behave with their traditional Democratic Party difference,

as particularly spurred in 1984 by concerns about cultural liberalism.

In the presidential campaign period, it was generally recognized that the church-state question, "the Falwell factor", would loom large as an influence to draw Jews away from support of Reagan. But there was also much discussion of the "Jesse Jackson factor" as an influence which might draw Jews away from support of Mondale. Jesse Jackson was obviously a burr for the Jews, both because of a perceived pro-Palestinian Arab sentiment on his part, and because of his flirtation with anti-semitism and with one notorious anti-semite, the black Muslim Farrakhan.

Jesse Jackson never failed to proclaim his belief in and support of Israel. But that support was leavened by a classic politicized "third-world" bias which made Jews more than a little uneasy. In general, he was perceived as a spokesman for some measure of American withdrawal from the world scene. In particular, he embraced the concept of Palestinian Arab self-determination in a way that few leading Democratic Party leaders were willing to do. It was poignant for Jews that Jackson had Zogby, the leader of the chief Palestinian Arab lobby in this country, make one of the seconding addresses for Jackson as a presidential candidate at the 1984 Democratic Convention.

And, in the matter of anti-semitism, Jackson had demonstrated at least a level of insensitivity that outraged most Jews. Early in the campaign year, in a private remark that was publicly quoted, he had referred to Jews as "Hymies." He was slow to acknowledge the evil of that remark. Even more troublesomely, Jackson had a close, public relationship with Louis Farrakhan, who not only uttered blatantly anti-Israel remarks, but referred to Judaism as a "dirty religion." Jackson was also very slow to dissociate himself from that remark, which he finally did, or from Farrakhan.

And while Mondale did attack Frrakhan's remarks, and did dissociate himself from Jackson's, he did not dissociate himself from Jackson, who seemed to be a formidable political figure in the Party. Most Jews did not find satisfactory Jackson's indirect "apology" at the Democratic Convention, and were disturbed by his apparent status at the Convention.

However, the "Jesse Jackson" factor did not end up as potent as did the "jerry Falwell factor." In the Los Angeles Times survey, for example, the Jews did register a more unfavorable -to-favorable ratio in their sentiments on Jackson (58-23) than did the general population (42-32), especially marked since the Jewish Democratic Party vote was so much higher than that of the general population. But it was significantly lower than the Jewish unfavorable-to-favorable ratio on Falwell (78 to 5).

A major difference was apparently that Reagan was seen as sympathetic to Falwell's objectives; while Jews noted Mondale's strong positions on Israel and against anti-semitism, and believed that he was more independent of Jackson.

#### Implications for the Future

Does the 1984 experience suggest that American Jews will remain largely bound to the Democratic Party for the foreseeable future? Does that close and stubborn relationship to the Democratic Party suggest that the Jews will have no leverage with the Republican Party, which some think is gaining a new strength on the American scene?

To begin with, it must be understood that American Jewish influence in politics has only been partly associated with the Jewish vote. The chief strength of the Jews is that they have been hyper-active on the political scene. One classification of power bases (French and Raven) distinguishes among "expert power," "reward power,"

and "coercive power". The Jews, of course, have no direct coercive power. And their strength at the voting place, while not to be ignored, is not overwhelming. Although Jews tend to register and vote in almost twice the proportion of the rest of the population, they still represent 3 per cent or more of the population, and five per cent or more of the voters, in only eight of the fifty states. In most of the states, they are no more than one per cent of the voting population. They cannot be ignored by candidates, but neither can they make the difference as voters, except on rare occasions. Those occasions may become even more rare as the Jewish population disperses out of the larger urban centers.

However, for some time the main Jewish reward power is related to their hyperactivism on the political scene beyond the voting place. American Jews have at times contributed as much as half of the Democratic Party coffers on the national scene, and a disproportionate amount to the Republican Party as well. They also have comprised a massively disproportionate number of volunteers on the political scene, and much of it has been "expert" voluntarism-as well as "expert" professionalism - important to candidates and elected officials.

Whatever the vote, the 1984 campaign probably represented a modern high point of Jewish activism in the Republican Party. The Reagan-Bush Jewish Coalition, and its local counterparts were more visible in fund-raising and promotion in the Jewish communities than any

recent Republican effort had been. The results were obviously disappointing to the Jewish Coalition but their Jewish involvement was significant in itself, and there is no reason to believe that there will be some kind of backlash within the Republican Party because of the 1984 vote. Generally speaking, Republican leaders appreciate the Jewish activism on their behalf, and partly because of it, still have some hope for the political salvation of the Jewish electorate.

There are several reasons to have such a hope, and they are the same reasons that there was such an apparent spurt of Jewish activism in the Republican Party. There are those who feel that more Jews are ready to be Republicanized because shifting viewpoints on the domestic agenda. The thought is not that the Jews will turn away in any large numbers from a bias towards economic liberalism, but that more of them are ready, along with many other Americans, to turn away from *New Deal* liberalism. There is a universal concern about the country's economic deficit, which is in tension with the desire for social programming. The Jewish population itself is caught in that dilemma, registering (on the *Los Angeles Times Survey*) a slightly higher concern with the deficit than the rest of the population, but a slightly lower concern with "government spending" than the rest of the population. Finding a formula for the domestic programming which Jews want, while reducing the deficit which Jews also want, reflects the general problem with which the Democratic Party is wrestling.

However, it is the foreign affairs agenda which provides most hope for those who wanted to Republicanize the American Jews. At the same time that economic liberalism has become somewhat more murky and complicated because of concerns about the deficit, "foreign affairs liberalism" has become even more murky and complicated. Foreign affairs liberalism has usually conoted not isolationism but a benign internationalism--that is an interventionism whose guidelines are roughly the same on the world scene as they are on the domestic scene: support for foreign regimes which are economically and culturally liberal. And while foreign affairs liberalism has traditionally not been pacifist, it has been markedly anti-militarist. For example, in the Los Angeles survey, 59 per cent of the Jews say that they are in favor of a nuclear freeze, as against 38 per cent of the general population; and 52 per cent of the Jews say that the U.S. should reduce military spending, as against 38 per cent of the general population.

Israel has obviously been one of the factors which has complicated Jewish foreign affairs liberalism. In the National Survey of American Jews, the Jews approve by a 61-24 ratio the statement that "in order to be a reliable military supplier of Israel, the U.S. should maintain a strong military capacity." But they also agree by a 59-27 ratio with the opinion that "To help reduce deficits and relieve world tension, U.S. military spending should be cut."

Those two statements are not automatically mutually exclusive;

after all, there is the sophisticated argument that U.S. military spending can be reduced without diminishing its military capacity. But most Americans are not really very clear about how that can be done, and holding both those opinions in the mind at the same time normally creates a tension. In this case, by the way, the Jews just reflect- only more so an uneasy tension in much of the American mind. Surveys consistently find that Americans are not averse to interventionism, especially where Soviet aggression may be concerned, but are averse to military involvement.

For American Jews, the Democratic Party has been the vehicle for foreign affairs liberalism, as well as other categories of liberalism. It was the Democratic Party whose benign interventionism confounded isolationism and led us in the war against Nazism. It has been the Democratic Party which has led the post-war fight against "excessive" militarism and jingoism. That is the prevailing perception, even if it is one that future historians may have some trouble with. But even when Lyndon Johnson was seen as the villain of Vietnam, it was elements closer to the Democratic Party than to the Republican Party which led the opposition to that war.

It is also the Democratic Party which has been seen by Jews as the particular political friend of Israel. That is another perception which may bear more careful documentation. It may be a circular reality and a circular perception: Democratic Party leaders being closer to the Jews, were seen, or actually were, more sympathetic to Israel. At least one study has generally found that Americans who are personally closer to Jews are more sympathetic

to Israel. In that sense, Hubert Humphrey epitomized the Democratic Party for American Jews. It was obvious that he was personally and sentimentally committed to Israel.

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

At this point, the conservative Americanist pro-Israel view of foreign policy began to merge (in converse) with the radical anti-American, anti-Israel politicized "third world" view that Israel and America had a joint venture going.

The question that is now being raised by some Republican Jews, in their missionary activity, is whether the Democratic Party--with its allegedly neo-isolationist, excessively anti-militarist, even anti-Americanist and politicized third world elements--is not leading the country in directions which are deleterious to both Israel and the U.S.

Promoting the anti-Democratic Party belief, and giving hope and intellectual succor to Jewish Republicanizers was that highly publicized, disproportionately Jewish group designated as "Neo-conservative." While there may be an intellectual tendency which could sensibly be called neo-conservatism, it is not a political movement nor anything but a loose network of a few individuals and journals who are not always in concert with each other.

"Neo-conservatism" as a movement is largely a myth invented by Michael Harrington, a socialist leader who sought to dissociate his Democratic Socialists from the Social Democrats U.S.A. He coined the term, "neo-conservative" to describe a group of people, many of whom had been identified with socialism or with Humphrey Minnesota Democratic Farmer Labor Party socialism.

These included persons such as the three editors of *The Public Interest*, Daniel Bell, Nathan Glazer and Irving Kristol and his wife, historian Gertrude Himmelfarb, the editor of *Commentary*, Norman Podhoretz and his wife, writer Midge Decter, individuals such as Saul Bellow, Sidney Hook, (and to varying extents the authors) who had had a sometime relationship with Trotskyism and socialism, Carl Gershman, Social Democratic leader, some followers of Hubert Humphrey, Jews like Max Kampelman and Ben Wattenberg, and non-Jews like political scientist Austin Ranney and Jean<sup>e</sup> Kirkpatrick and her husband Evron, one-time executive director of the American Political Science Association. Other non-Jews who had been associated with *Commentary*, like Daniel Patrick Moynihan and James Q. Wilson, were also included among the neo-conservatives.

What these people had in common was identification with socialist or left liberal causes, a strong commitment to welfare state and Keynesian redistributive policies, a deep suspicion of the Soviet Union, which involved support for hard-line foreign military programs, strong backing for trade unions, and a passionate concern for Israel's security. Almost all of them had reacted strongly against the use of militant civil disobedience tactics by the New Left led anti-war movement of the 60s and early 70s. Identifying with democracy as an end as well as a means and strongly attached to the values of scholarship, they argued that the attack by the New Left on the university, on the democratic political system, was not only unwarranted, but played into the hands of the anti-democratic extremists, both

of the left and the right.

Harrington and his fellow Democratic Socialists shared many of these positions. They, however, saw themselves as more dovish on foreign policy, more domestically committed to strong redistributive policies, and desirous of building a post-Viet Nam socialist movement which included the New Left activists. They were, however, still identified by many of the younger New Leftists as conservative, as overly involved in anti-Communist policies. By attacking his former socialist colleagues as neo-Conservatives, Harrington successfully created a chasm between himself and them and built bridges to others once active in the New Left and New Politics movements.

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

"Neo-Conservatives" now found themselves rejected by their old friends and welcomed by their opponents. The latter's welcome frequently included well-financed podiums, lecture and writing fees and appreciative audiences, particularly when the

neo-Conservatives dealt with issues upon which they and the conservatives agreed, such as foreign policy, affirmative action quotas, and the need for moral standards.

Since most prominent neo-Conservatives, particularly the editors of the magazines most associated with the term--*Commentary*, *The Public Interest*, (and, in recent times, *The New Republic*)--were Jewish, the development was seen as a shift by major Jewish intellectuals to conservatism. In fact, this impression was wrong. Some, such as the Kristols and the Podhoretzes, did give up their economic and welfare liberalism, although Kristol still describes himself as a supporter of the welfare state. Others such as Jeane Kirkpatrick, Richard Perle, while remaining welfare Democrats on domestic issues, were recruited to Reagan's foreign policy and defense teams. (Soon after her speech to the Republican convention in Dallas, Kirkpatrick appeared on CBS with Walter Mudd and re-emphasized her attachment to the Democratic party and the welfare state.) Most have remained Democrats, have been active in the Coalition for a Democratic Majority (CDM), founded by Senators Henry Jackson and Daniel Patrick Moynihan and chaired by Ben Wattenberg. Most of those in the CDM, which includes other prominent Democratic Congressional and trade union leaders, supported Walter Mondale for nomination and election, seeing in him a continuation of the Humphrey-Jackson anti-Communist liberalism. The Democratic "neo-Conservatives," who now also include many identified with the *New Republic*, perhaps the clearest exponent of CDM politics, have always preferred to be labeled as "neo-liberals," a term, however, which has been taken over by some who while agreeing with them on domestic policies are much more dovish on foreign issues.

That intellectual strand among many identified neo-Conservatives--which combined a basic economic and cultural liberalism with a more aggressive, Americanist, anti-Soviet foreign policy--did serve as a bridge for some few Jewish leaders from

the Democratic Party to the Republican Party--especially when the domestic political agenda itself seemed to become more complicated. It was the basis for the higher Republican Party activism by a relatively small number of Jews in 1984. And that intellectual bridge, especially as it seemed to involve the fate of Israel, led to some expectations that more Jews would move towards the Republican ticket.

Those expectations, even as buoyed by Jesse Jackson's prominence in the Democratic Party did not, of course, materialize--at least not in the 1984 voting booths. However, the Jewish activist corps in the Republican Party will continue to try to build that foreign policy bridge away from the Democratic Party, largely in the name of Israel's interests. They will continue to try to reinterpret, in Republican Party terms, the current Jewish state of confusion about foreign policy liberalism. It is at least conceivable that if there is no Humphrey-like Mondale in the Democratic future; if there is more Jesse Jackson; if Democratic foreign policy becomes somewhat factionalized in a radical direction; if the Democratic Party's economic liberalism does not become more modernized; and if the Republican Party does not continue to saddle itself with politicized Christianity--then a more substantial movement towards the Republican Party can ensue.

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

"Liberalism," as we have seen, is a matter of some imprecision. It is historically compounded of at least several different kinds of dimensions. Jews continue to see themselves disproportionately as liberals. In the several 1984 surveys,

on the average, twice as many Jews describe themselves as liberals rather than as conservatives (42 - 21); and about twice as many Jews describe themselves as liberals as do Americans generally (42 - 22).

But apart from the fact that Jews feel substantively that they are economic liberals, and hope that they are foreign-policy liberals, they still have an historically based visceral feeling that they belong in the company of the political liberals. They were released from the medieval ghettos by "the liberals." They were joined in the fight against Nazism by "the liberals." Anti-semitism, religious intolerance, and immigration restrictions, in their memory, have been associated with "the conservatives." The Democratic Party is perceived as the "liberal" party, and the Republican Party as the "conservative" party--compounded in these stereotypical terms by the church-state issue in 1984. They are still more comfortable in the Democratic Party in those terms than in the Republican Party. And, in the same emotional terms, they are more comfortable, still, with the kinds of people they find in the Democratic Party--the kinds of people with whom they grew up in America--than with the kinds of people they find in the Republican Party.

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

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\* The surveys referred to in this study basically include the exit polls conducted by ABC, CBS, NBC and the *Los Angeles Times*. Reference is also made to an exit poll conducted by *Western View-Point* for the Jewish Republican Coalition, which found one

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difference with the other surveys, as discussed within the body of this paper. Reference is also made to the *1984 National Survey of Jews* conducted for the American Jewish Committee.