

THE NEW LINE-UP

As to American public support of Israel, there seem to be mixed signals.

On the one hand, there was the AIPAC survey of Congressional candidates, recently reported here, indicating a higher level of support for Israel than two or four years ago. There are also the recent surveys which show that American public opinion has become even *more favorable* to Israel. There is, for example, the finding that while Americans in 1976 favored sending military support to Israel by about a two and a half to one ratio; today, Americans favor military support to Israel by a five to one ratio.

On the other hand, more Americans are critical of this or that action by Israel, *at the same time* that they favor increasing aid. Americans just don't care strongly about most of the actions they criticize; their main criterion is American national interest. A more disturbing "mixed signal" is the loss of a number of old established "friends of Israel" among the U.S. senators who went down in the recent Tuesday Massacre.

Of course, Senators Church, Culver, Stone and the others were not defeated because they were "friends of Israel." They were not attacked because of their positions on Israel; Israel was not an issue in their campaigns. Nevertheless, they *were* defeated and those interested in Israel's welfare have a sense of loss. However, AIPAC presents evidence that the senators who replaced them are, by and large, supportive of Israel.

John Culver in Iowa was replaced by Charles Grassley, who generally opposes foreign aid, but supports aid for Israel. As a Congressman, he said: "Israel is strategically located and its importance as an integral component of our defensive line cannot be downplayed." He opposes the PLO vigorously. Slate Gorton, who replaced Warren

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Magnuson, also supports Israel and opposes the PLO vigorously. Dan Quayle, new conservative senator from Indiana, supports aid to Israel, attacks the pro-Arab UN resolutions, opposes arms to Saudi Arabia. Conservative Warren Rudman, who replaced John Durkin in New Hampshire, supports aid to Israel, and vigorously opposes the PLO. Even James Abdnor, of Lebanese background, who replaced McGovern in South Dakota, has been supporting aid to Israel and attacking the PLO. Paula Hawkins, who replaced Richard Stone, supports aid to Israel, calling Israel "central to U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and a significant deterrent to further Soviet aggression."

Why, then, do we have a sense of loss? In brief, some of the senators who were defeated had a special emotional attachment for Israel. Many of the incoming senators do not; rather, they have just made the cold appraisal that support of Israel is currently in the American national interest. They could be argued out of that position, conceivably, all the more easily because they do not have any special feeling for Israel.

On that score, we have been largely fortunate in the congressmen who represent this immediate area. Philip Burton is the prototype of the congressmen who *both* know about Israel's importance to America *and* have a special feeling about Israel. Indeed, Phil Burton is at least as responsible as any other man in the country for the high level of support given to Israel by Congress. John Burton has become a significant part of that tradition.

Both Burton offices have been open to and actively involved in other particular Jewish concerns, such as Soviet Jewry and immigration. In his period of service, Congressman Bill Royer of the North Peninsula was also consistently supportive of

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Israel -- and extraordinarily open to other particular Jewish concerns. Bill Royer was defeated in the last election, but his successor, Tom Lantos, has a long record of having been personally and actively involved in matters related to Israel, and in other issues on the Jewish agenda.

Some would suggest that Congressman Pete McCloskey of the South Peninsula departs from that happy pattern. It was Congressman McCloskey who attempted to cut aid to Israel in the last session, in the amount that Israel presumably spent on the "West Bank." McCloskey finally voted for the aid bill, as indeed he has voted for all support to Israel in the past. But he has apparently swallowed the notion that American national interest (and Israel's security) would be best served by giving the hard-line Arabs what they want without further ado. With the new line-up in the Senate and Congress, that is the kind of logic that could sink both Israel and the United States.

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