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THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS AND U.S. SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

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List of Abbreviations

UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations' Security Council
UNGA	United Nations' General Assembly
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees
PACs	Political Action Committees
NSC	National Security Council
AIPAC	American Israel Public Affairs Committee
FEC	Federal Election Commission
CAMERA	Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America
CUFI	Christians United for Israel
ICEJ	International Christian Embassy of Jerusalem
BFP	Bridges for Peace
NCLCI	National Christian Leadership Council for Israel
CFOIC	Christian Friends of Israeli Communities
UCFI	Unity Coalition for Israel
CIPAC	Christian Israel Public Affairs Committee
NAAA	National Association of Arab-Americans
ADC	American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
AAI	Arab-American Institute
JDL	Jewish Defense League
ADL	Jewish Anti-Defamation League
AJC	American Jewish Congress
ZOA	Zionist Organization of America
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
IFCJ	International Fellowship of Christians and Jews
SFI	Stand for Israel
JStreet	Americans for Middle East Peace and Security

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Introduction

The United Nations' Partition Plan of 1947 has given the legal legitimacy to the creation of an Israeli state on parts of what was previously a British-mandated territory. At the same time, the Arabs' loss of the 1948 War has made the boundaries of Israel become defined by the armistice lines of 1949, rather than by those envisioned by the Partition Plan (See Index for Map).¹ This fact was iterated by U.N. Security Council resolution 242, which calls for a complete Israeli withdrawal from the territories it has occupied as a result of the 1967 War with its neighboring Arab states. Under those provisions, UNSC resolution 242 has also marked the future boundaries of a Palestinian state within Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Therefore, the recent application for full U.N. membership of a Palestinian state is built on the provisions of UNSC resolution 242, as well as on those of the Partition Plan, in order to enforce the call for a two-state resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.²

The Middle East Peace Process has been an attempt to resolve that conflict outside the chambers of United Nations, while using the particularity of UNSC resolution 242 as the main framework for Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. Giving the United States' close ties to the Middle East and its status as the world's leading superpower; the Peace Process has been led by the U.S. since the 1991 Madrid Peace Conference "almost to the exclusion of all other parties."³ As highlighted the former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N, Arthur Goldberg, in 2005, "only the United States could act as an intermediary and...all the parties involved have to accept resolution 242."⁴

However, as scholars as diverse as John Mearsheimer, Noam Chomsky and Steven Walt observe, U.S. approach to the general Israeli-Palestinian conflict has favored Israel almost 100% of the time.⁵ The U.S. has vetoed more than 35 UNSC resolutions that condemn Israel; it continues to supply Israel with nearly \$6 billion/year in direct and indirect military and economic aid; and it has *avoided* placing any political or economic pressure on Israel during the latter's peace negotiations with the Palestinians.⁶ In *The Israeli Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*, Mearsheimer and Walt argue that the Israeli lobby in the U.S. is the main reason behind such U.S. bias. And in the eyes of attentive observers around the world, the influence of the lobby and its allies within the American evangelical Christian community has had the effect of undermining U.S. role as the main facilitator of the Peace Process.

Thus, this thesis carefully follows the progress of the Peace Process under the current and last three White House administrations, and it highlights the influence of pro-Israel U.S. interest groups on U.S. role as the main mediator between the Israelis and the Palestinians. This author points out that the end-result of the Peace Process has been to create a Palestinian administrative entity in Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank, rather than a viable and independent Palestinian state. I will try to show that the support of evangelical Christian and Jewish-American U.S. special interest groups of Israeli policies aimed at maintaining such status-quo has undermined U.S. credibility as the main facilitator of the two-state resolution. It has resulted in the Palestinian Authority's application for full U.N. membership of a Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders, which has also brought the issue of Palestinian statehood back to the international community to resolve. The slogan of such Palestinian efforts has been: "Recognize Palestine—a New Path for Peace."⁷

This thesis is meant as a contribution to resolving the puzzle regarding the actual clout of pro-Israel U.S. special interest groups by studying their influence in relation to the Middle East Peace Process. This author builds on his first hand experiences of living in Palestine and the U.S., and analytical tools he has acquired by studying the role of United Nations in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well as U.S. history, politics and society. This study combines a qualitative analysis of U.S. official policies toward the Peace Process from 1991-2011, with a quantitative investigation of the Peace Process-related activities of pro-Israel U.S. special interest. The quantitative data is collected from public opinion polls, the Congressional Record, government documents, the reports of the Federal Election Commission, and the monthly publications of the non-partisan *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* from 1989-2011. The qualitative data is based on experts' and scholarly reflections about the Peace Process and the influence of special interest groups on the making of U.S. foreign policy.

Special attention is given to the influence of those groups over the presidential elections of the current and last three U.S. administrations; the Peace Process-related congressional resolutions and legislations that they have helped enact through their campaign contributions to congressmen and congressional candidates; and to other activities of those groups with significant impacts on the Peace Process, such as their facilitation of Israeli settlement projects in the West Bank. At the same time, in order to place the Peace Process-related activities of those groups in their appropriate historical and political contexts, this study divides the Peace

Process into three main stages and it investigates the influence of pro-Israel special interest groups on U.S. involvement in the Peace Process during each of those three stages. Additionally, the effects of external other factors on the Peace Process are taken into consideration, which include focus events such as the 9/11 attacks, Palestinian domestic politics, the divisions within the Jewish-American community on issues relating to Israel, as well as the Israeli subtle art of diplomacy. The strategic value of Israel-U.S. alliance is not discussed herewith, and the influence of pro-Israel interest groups on i.e. U.S. policies towards Iraq and Iran is only briefly referenced.

During the first stage of the Peace Process (1991-2000), the U.S. was *actively involved* as a mediator between the Israelis and the Palestinians. With President Clinton's help, the Oslo Accords for Palestinian self-governance were signed, resulting in the establishment of the Palestinian Authority as an administrative body of civilian affairs in parts of Gaza Strip and the West Bank. However, Israel has continued to confiscate Palestinian land for building settlements, and being restrained by the power of the Israeli lobby has prevented the Clinton administration from applying any constructive measures to enforce Israel's adherence to the land-for-peace formula of UNSC resolution 242. In fact, U.S. aid to Israel during this as well as later stages of the Peace Process has even subsidized the completion of Israeli settlement projects.

Towards the end of the Clinton administration's second term in office, the "final-status" negotiations between Israel and the PA were held at the Camp David Summit to decide on the borders and security of the future Palestinian state, the status of Jerusalem, and the fate of more than four million Palestinian refugees living abroad.⁸ However, that summit failed because the Palestinians demanded an independent and viable Palestinian state on all of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, while the Israelis continued to offer them a sub-administrative entity that has no control over its borders or security affairs. Moreover, soon after the failure of the Camp David Summit to deliver a Palestinian state, the second Palestinian Intifada broke out and pessimism ushered in the second stage of the Peace Process (2001-2008).

The George W. Bush administration joined the E.U., Russia and the U.N. in launching the Madrid Quartet for Middle East Peace in 2002 in order to revive the Peace Process; however, the Quartet was unable to reconcile the dire consequences that the 9/11 terrorist attacks brought

to the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, and to U.S. role as the main mediator between the two sides. At the same time, the creation of the Quartet has ushered in a greater involvement from the international community in mediating between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Nevertheless, during the Bush administration, the stagnating Peace Process continued to be led primarily by the U.S., as the Bush administration pursued a policy of *advantageous involvement* in the Peace Process. Soon after the 9/11 attacks, President Bush approached the Peace Process as a means towards the end of winning the hearts and minds of people in the Middle East and reaching regional stability for his agenda regarding Iraq and Iran.⁹ Meanwhile, the 9/11 attacks were used as a tool by pro-Israel U.S. interest groups to make the second Palestinian Intifada looked at by the Bush administration through the lens of combating terrorism, which gave legitimacy to Israeli actions to putdown this popular uprising, and to Israel's occupation of Palestinian land. In effect, reaching the goal of establishing a Palestinian state became a secondary objective for the U.S., and during President Bush's last months in office, Israel launched an all-out war on the Gaza Strip with U.S. support.

Additionally, even as the policies of the Bush administration started to fadeout with Barak Obama's winning of the 2008 U.S. presidential elections, the Peace Process remained ineffective; due to the influence of the Israeli lobby, the Obama administration became *hesitant* and unable to pressure Israel to stop building settlements in the West Bank. During this third stage of the Peace Process (2009-2011), Israel has continued its settlement-building activities, thereby leaving the Palestinians in control of merely 45% of the 22% of Mandate Palestine that is allocated to them by UNSC resolution 242. Thus, with the events of the Arab Spring calling for a regional geopolitical change, the Palestinian Authority submitted in September, 2011 its application for full U.N. membership of a Palestinian state. Further, the Obama administration's promise to veto that application has given greater credibility to other members of the Quartet such as the E.U. and the U.N. in facilitating future Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

The influence of pro-Israel U.S. special interest groups has made U.S. foreign policy toward the Palestinian-Israeli conflict path-dependent in its unconditional support of Israel, thereby convincing the Palestinian leadership of U.S. inability to be the enforcer of a two-state resolution. Such path-dependency has been primarily acquired by the success of those groups in shaping U.S. public opinion and using the U.S. electoral system to further their interests. It is a

“self-enforcing” and a “positive feedback” process that has made the monopoly of those groups over U.S. policies relating to Israel harder to break without a reform in the U.S. electoral system. It is backed by laws and the coercive economic and political clout of the world’s main superpower. The relative benefits that U.S. politicians and congressmen currently gain from unconditionally supporting Israel are high, while the costs of switching to i.e. previously plausible political campaign strategies are significant.¹⁰ Coupled with the fact that the centuries-old U.S. electoral system itself was built to resist change; U.S. foreign policy toward the Middle East has been locked in its current direction of unconditionally supporting Israel.¹¹

As Hamilton Jordan asserts, “It is even questionable whether a major shift in American public opinion on the issue of Israel would be sufficient to effectively counter the political clout of AIPAC,” the American Israel Public Affairs Committee.¹² In particular, “mistaken understandings” on such a direction-locked path do not usually get corrected, they rather become enforced and “susceptible to path dependence.”¹³ The Israeli lobby and its allied interest groups “have tended to believe that any gains for the Palestinians or the Arabs would mean a loss for Israel, as opposed to a positive sum game...”¹⁴ They have acted “not only as an advocate for Israel, but also as an anti-Palestinian and [anti] Arab force.”¹⁵

This study proceeds in the following manner. Chapter one (Special Interest Groups and the Making of U.S. Foreign Policy) provides a theoretical and a theological explanation to the function of pro-Israel special interest groups. Part one of this chapter explains the executive vs. legislative foreign policy roles. Part two gives a case study of AIPAC, which illustrates three of the main tools, strategies and techniques used by most interest groups: campaign contributions, voting, and influencing the media. Part three highlights the theological reasoning behind the evangelical Christians’ support of Israel and places it within the broader context of making U.S. foreign policy towards the Peace Process. Lastly, part four provides an explanation for the weakness of Arab-American groups in comparison to the pro-Israel evangelical Christian and Jewish-American special interest groups.

The remaining three chapters then follow the progress of the Middle East Peace Process during each of the above mentioned three stages, and highlight the activities of pro-Israel U.S. domestic groups in relation to U.S. role as the main facilitator of Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations. Chapter Two (Active Involvement) provides a short illustration of their reactions to

the peace efforts of the first Bush administration, whose assertiveness against the clout of those groups planted the seeds of the Peace Process and the hopes for mutuality in U.S. role as the main peace facilitator. Thereafter, the main focus of this chapter, the active involvement of the Clinton administration in the Peace Process, is studied through taking into account the Israeli ideology of Greater Israel and Palestinian domestic Politics, as well as highlighting the influence of and reactions of pro-Israel U.S. interest groups on/to the Clinton administration's official policy towards the Peace Process.

Subsequently, Chapter Three (Advantageous Involvement) explains the impacts of 9/11 attacks on the involvement of the second Bush administration in the Peace Process and the general Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This chapter also illustrates how the attacks were used as a tool by pro-Israel U.S. interest groups to restrain George W. Bush's outreach to the Peace Process, to make the Israeli crackdown on the popular Palestinian Intifada looked at by the U.S. as part of the War on Terror, and to further suppress the viability of the two-state resolution.

Lastly, Chapter Four (Hesitant Involvement) looks at the activities of pro-Israel U.S. interest groups during the first three years of the Obama administration, and offers a brief, but hopeful, look into the future of U.S.-Israel relations and the path-dependency of U.S. unconditional support of Israel. The conclusion gives a summary of how pro-Israel U.S. interest groups have undermined the viability and endurance of the Peace Process, and offers an outlook into the future of the two-state resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict following the Palestinian's U.N. application.

Chapter One

Special Interest Groups and the Making of U.S. Foreign Policy

I. The Executive vs. the Legislative Foreign Policy Roles

Special interest groups are coalitions of individuals, organizations, and Political Action Committees (PACs) that are actively lobbying to advance the interest of their respective groups, rather than the “public” interest that organizations such as the Environmental Protection Agency tend to promote. Their interest could be political, ethnic, racial, religious, or economic and they work to ensure that politicians and government officials see it as part the national interest. They generally apply their influence on U.S. Congress; however, the outcomes of their actions often bring lasting impacts on the domestic and the foreign policymaking of the different White House administrations. In particular, the groups that are “well funded and have large numbers nationally, heavy concentrations in particular areas of the country, or positions of power in society,” can become very powerful foreign policy actors.¹⁶

This is largely due to the special relationship between U.S. Congress and Presidency. Former Representative Lee Hamilton argues that the founders’ intent for the legislative and the executive branches of U.S. government “is neither for one branch to dominate the other nor for there to be an identity of views between them. Rather, the founders wisely sought to encourage *a creative tension* between the president and U.S. Congress that would produce policies that advance national interest and reflect the views of the American people [emphasis added].”¹⁷ In other words, the Constitutional Convention of 1787 “created a government marked less by separation of powers than, in political scientist Richard Neustadt apt phrase, by ‘separated institutions sharing powers.’”¹⁸

A Constitutional interpretation of the foreign policy roles of the executive and the legislative branches was given in the Supreme Court case *United States v. Curtiss-Wright Export Corp* (1936), when Justice Sutherland declared that “[i]n the vast external realm with its important, complicated, delicate and manifold problems, the President alone has the power to speak or listen as a representative of the nation.”¹⁹ At the same time, as Associate Justice Robert Jackson remarked in the 1952 case of *Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer*, “The president might act in external affairs without congressional authority, but not that he might act contrary to an act of Congress.”²⁰ In the majority of cases, Congress formulates policy through enacting

legislations and the president implements them.²¹ In other words, the president is to generally “execute [the] law, not make it.”²²

James Lindsay explains that “The pendulum of power on foreign policy has shifted back and forth between Congress and the president many times over the course of American history. The reason for those ebbs and flows does not lie in the Constitution,” argues Lindsay; “[r]ather, the answer lies in politics.”²³ Congress started to play a more assertive role in foreign policy in late 1960s and early 1970s. “Its newfound assertiveness was fueled by frustration with executive branch secrecy and abuses by the administrations of Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon in Vietnam and elsewhere.”²⁴ Since then, this “congressional assertiveness” tends to reach its highest levels in times of peace, while “congressional deference to the president” is more notable in times of war.²⁵ For example, during the decade that followed the end of Cold War, the Clinton administration was particularly subjected to congressional oversight, while the attacks of 9/11 made the Bush administration at a relative ease in pursuing its policies with little congressional opposition. At present, the Obama administration is again under intense congressional scrutiny.

Lee Hamilton argues that there are three essential ingredients of foreign policy: 1) presidential leadership, 2) congressional partnership and oversight, and 3) sustained consultation between the branches.²⁶ In particular, “congressional oversight of foreign policy can help protect the country from imperial presidency and from bureaucratic arrogance,” notes Hamilton; “It can make sure that foreign policy programs conform to congressional intent, are administered efficiently, are not subject to waste and abuse, and remain useful.”²⁷ However, as Hamilton points out, the partisan polarization of political elites in Congress has greatly affected the coherence of legislative and executive foreign policy roles;²⁸ and representation in Congress has become more diverse and more reflective of “widely varying American viewpoints, but...more chaotic and divided.”²⁹

Additionally, while in the past “[m]embership in Congress used to be considered a lifetime career,...many people join the institution [now] for just a few years. This greater transience brings many fresh voices into Congress, but it also reduces the number of members with a memory of history and a long-term perspective on foreign policy matters.”³⁰ Further, the shifting of power between Congress and the executive, and Congress’ “newfound” assertiveness

after the 1960s has given a “window of opportunity” for interest groups to inter the policymaking process. At present, members of Congress “tend to be heavily influenced by special interests, ethnic groups prominent in their districts, and short-term objectives.”³¹ And where those special interests coincide with a particular issue in the international arena, such as the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, the actions of many members of Congress become directed more at soliciting the support of the relevant domestic interest group, in this case the Israeli lobby, rather than supporting the president’s approach to the international issue being debated.

The absence of “an overriding global foe” during the decade following the Cold War made special ethnic lobbies “better able to assert that their particular interest is also the national interest.”³² During the 1990s, the Israeli, Irish, and Cuban lobbies, “have had particular influence on congressional debates over their respective areas of interest, and have often prevailed, as national public opinion remains generally unmobilized [sec] or unmotivated by these issues.”³³ In the case of Israel, U.S. support of it following WWII was pursued as a strategic instrument for countering the spread of communist influence in the Middle East; however, the absence of that “global foe” during the decade of the 1990s still gave the Israeli lobby the chance to further assert that supporting Israel remains the national interest. At the same time, in contrast to other ethnic groups, the Jewish-American community will always be active in relation to foreign policy. As Tony Smith explains, “Irish-American activism with respect to foreign policy will become a subject for the history books, to join the stories of Italian-American and German-American ethnic activism. In the case of these communities,” argues Smith, “there are no conceivable foreign issues that might trigger an ethnic awakening...”³⁴

Additionally, the 9/11 attacks have strengthened the Israeli lobby’s position in arguing that its interest remains the U.S. national interest. As the attacks refocused U.S. foreign policy on a global foe, Islamic terrorism, the Israeli lobby has been successful at promoting the stance that Palestinian resistance to Israel’s occupation of Gaza Strip and the West Bank should be included under the “War on Terror” doctrine of the George W. Bush administration. This is explained by, among other factors, Lee Hamilton’s assertion that “The lobbying techniques of interest groups are increasingly sophisticated. Many of them are well organized, have large amounts of money, employ the media effectively, and know how to flood congressional offices with telephone calls, letters, faxes, and e-mail messages.”³⁵ Additionally, they have also been successful at manipulating the executive department’s foreign policy apparatus.

Lee Hamilton points out that “along with the general diffusion of foreign policy authority has come a greater concentration of power in the National Security Council (NSC),” which is currently “the primary manager and coordinator of the various foreign policy activities conducted by the executive department.”³⁶ For Hamilton, this came about as a result of many factors, including the “growing complexity of international issues, the weakening of the State Department, the need to manage the interagency process, the national security advisor’s proximity to the president, and the politicization of many aspects of foreign policy.”³⁷ Therefore, by influencing who the president chooses to appoint to his NSC team, some interest groups such as the pro-Israel lobby have also become directly involved in the actual making of foreign policy.

II. Gaining Access to Capitol Hill: The Case of AIPAC

The Israeli Lobby Defined

According to Steven Walt and John Mearsheimer, the Israeli lobby is “a loose coalition of individuals and organizations that actively works to move U.S. foreign policy in a pro-Israel direction...”³⁸ This lobby is “simply a powerful interest group, made up of both Jews and gentiles, whose acknowledged purpose is to press Israel’s case within the United States and influence American foreign policy in ways that its members believe will benefit the Jewish state.”³⁹ The effectiveness of the lobby has been long viewed as “the text book example of how an ethnic group successfully influences American foreign policy.”⁴⁰

The lobby’s organizational leadership is very unique and is a role-model for other interest groups on Capitol Hill. As Tony Smith asserts, “no other American ethnicity has the organizational strength that the Jewish community enjoys.”⁴¹ Its central organ, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) “is universally recognized to be exactly what it calls itself—the most powerful, best run, and effective foreign policy interest group in Washington.”⁴² One of the main reasons behind this is that “whatever its internal rivalries or the differences of opinion, they have usually been contained by a greater sense of purpose and weight of accumulated experience than the institutions leading any other ethnic community possess.”⁴³ This has been the case until late 1990s and early 2000s, when divisions among the views of Jewish-Americans and the leaders of their main organizations such as AIPAC have

became harder and harder to reconcile, especially in regards to the Middle East Peace Process (See Ch. 2 and 4).

For Tony Smith, AIPAC generally has three main advantages. 1) It is a “single issue” constituency with Israel being the group’s primary focus, in contrast to i.e. the many countries and issues of debate that the Arab lobby tries to represent and influence.⁴⁴ 2) It represents “a community of large revenues.”⁴⁵ AIPAC maintains that it is funded through membership fees and non-tax-deductible contributions from private donors and organizations, and since it has the reputation of being successful at delivering results, “AIPAC’s political clout has been enhanced by its members’ generous financial support.”⁴⁶ 3) Concerns about the security of Israel, “when linked to the Holocaust act to impose a consensus—‘my country, right or wrong’—that might otherwise be lacking,” within other ethnic groups.⁴⁷

AIPAC’s strength also stems from its very institutional characteristics. As an organization, AIPAC is divided into multiple departments. Its executive division specifically lobbies the executive branch and the NSC to insure that legislations made in Congress and are favorable to its agenda, are being implemented in a similar fashion.⁴⁸ AIPAC’s most influential division, namely its legislative department, also actively and “[v]igorously lobbies Congress to urge the president to retract perceived anti-Israel administration pronouncements or policies,”⁴⁹ by i.e. drafting letters that congressmen sign and send to the officials of the executive branch. That department secures bipartisan support in Congress and maintains friendly relations with both parties.

At the same time, AIPAC’s research department daily monitors the Congressional Record and focuses the attention of the organization on any committee hearings that could directly impact Israel.⁵⁰ As Howlett and Ramesh explain, “[o]ne of the most important resources for interest groups is knowledge: specifically information that might not be available or less available to others.”⁵¹ Therefore, groups such as AIPAC, which are “most effective at channeling that information to bureaucrats and legislators,” argues Howlett and Ramesh, “often have an advantage in ensuring that their definition of the problem, and the range of potential solutions, is taken into account.”⁵² AIPAC’s research department provides all members of Congress with position papers that are generally perceived as credible and undistorted, unlike those provided by AIPAC’s counterparts such as the Arab Lobby.⁵³

Most importantly, AIPAC's largest division, namely its political development department, involves the organization in grassroots lobbying with the help of its strategically spread-out regional offices in the U.S. AIPAC's additional office in Jerusalem also provides the organization with up-to-date information about the most pressing issues on the political agenda of the Israeli government. This grassroots lobbying is usually cultivated through "provid[ing] information to congressional incumbents and challengers on Israeli issues; mobiliz[ing] constituent involvement; promot[ing] fundraising; provid[ing] training, and develop[ing] future leaders on colleges across the United States..."⁵⁴

Further, AIPAC holds an annual Policy Making Conference "to educate its members on political issues affecting Israel and to involve them in actual lobbying."⁵⁵ It makes appointments on Capitol Hill for the attendants of those conferences and it "strongly encourages them to lobby their Senate and House representatives,"⁵⁶ many of who are usually part of the audience to such conferences. At the same time, AIPAC uses a variety of tools, methods and techniques in collaboration with its associated groups, related Political Action Committees (PACs) and active Jewish-American individuals, to not only buy the loyalty of those members of Congress, but to also affect the broader public opinion in the U.S. towards issues relating to Israel. Those methods include: giving campaign contributions, mobilizing bloc voting, and influencing the media.

Tools, Strategies and Techniques

Campaign Contributions. As Thomas Birkland explains, spending money to promote or advocate for a position is "a form of constitutionally protected free speech."⁵⁷ According to the Center for Progressive Politics, "the candidate who spent most in a House contest won 95 percent of the time, in a Senate race 94 percent of the time."⁵⁸ The most basic form of this idea holds that an interest group would meet with a member of Congress and say: "if you vote with me, I will give you this campaign contribution."⁵⁹ The other variant of this idea is the member of Congress saying: "I will vote to promote your interest if you give me a campaign contribution."⁶⁰

The legal status of AIPAC prohibits it from contributing money to political campaigns, but its related PACs "allow AIPAC's members and non-profit Jewish organizations affiliated with AIPAC to contribute."⁶¹ For example, in 1986 AIPAC mobilized more than seventy pro-Israel PACs to contribute nearly \$7 million to various congressional candidates and former-

Senator Charles C. Percy is believed to have been defeated in part because of AIPAC's opposition.⁶² Jewish-Americans in general are regarded as the "largest ethnic contributors" to congressional campaigns and they also give out 50 percent or more of the funds the Democratic Party receives during presidential elections.⁶³ Those contributions have the effect of tying politicians to the interests of the donor group, and they make the political decisions of elected officials rather restrained.

According to former Foreign Service officer, Richard Curtiss, there are four distinctive features of the AIPAC-affiliated pro-Israel PACs. First, they chose "names that conceal," and out of the more than 121 pro-Israel PACs that were incorporated from 1978 to early 1990s, only eight of them mentioned in their titles Israel, Zionism, Judaism, "or anything connected to the Middle East."⁶⁴ Over the years those few PACs with explanatory titles "either changed their names or quietly closed down."⁶⁵ At the same time, only three out of the 35 active pro-Israel PACs in recent years have self-explanatory titles (See Index-Ch.1 for List). Second, they are "virtually unopposed,"⁶⁶ and as Table-1 in Index-Ch.2 shows, they have always drastically outspent their Muslim/Arab-American opponents during election years.

Third, their "most significant feature" according to Curtiss, is "their demonstrated ability to coordinate donations."⁶⁷ Electoral laws prohibit a single PAC from contributing more than \$5,000 for the primary election and \$5000 for the general election to any one candidate; however, when active pro-Israel PACs in a given election cycle coordinate their activities, "they could provide whatever a candidate required."⁶⁸ AIPAC instructs its employees "to contact named PACs and tell them to give designated amounts to named candidates," which in effect makes AIPAC and those PACs a single PAC "circumventing the law."⁶⁹ Groups of former U.S. government officials filed complaints to this effect with the Federal Election Commission (FEC) starting in 1989; but no counter measures or restriction on AIPAC were ever imposed.⁷⁰

Fourth, although such PACs lobby for a foreign government, they are not registered as foreign agents, "on the technicality that their funds are raised in the United States rather than abroad."⁷¹ On the other hand, when compared to other PACs, the interest that AIPAC and its affiliated PACs represent "puts Americans at odds with people who have no other grievance with the U.S. Every year some American military personnel, diplomats, businessmen or tourists die,

not because of U.S. actions,” argues Curtiss, “but because the U.S. has become identified with brutal Israeli actions in the Third World.”⁷²

PACs were “unleashed” following the 1976 Supreme Court case of *Buckley v. Valeo*.⁷³ The winners under such a system are the media, which treats congressional candidates “like any other commercial advertisers,” while the losers are U.S. public, “whose representatives in Congress are forced to choose between the special interests whose donations they need to be elected, and their constituents, whose votes are easily swayed by expensive and generally misleading advertising.”⁷⁴ For instance, because the “uniquely non-descriptive names” of pro-Israel PACs “conceal their purpose;” argues Andrea Lorenz, “a candidate can list their donations without alerting constituents or watchdog groups to the fact that the funding comes from a lobby working for a foreign power,”⁷⁵ and in many cases from out-of-state sources.

As the former Representative and Senator Robert Torricelli said in 1997, the U.S. system of campaign finance “is an invitation to any interest with a desire to compromise the policy of the United States to use money as a lever of power.”⁷⁶ Not all Jewish-Americans identify with AIPAC, and not all Jewish-Americans are in favor of giving the policies of the Israeli government unconditional support. However, the suffering that Jewish people underwent during the Holocaust makes the generous campaign contributions from the leaders of their Jewish-American organizations reflective of their concerns for Israel. Interest groups theorist Tony Smith supports the arguments of Seymour M. Lipset as the latter explained that Jewish-Americans have many concerns when they go to the booths on Election Day, but their number one preoccupation is ‘commitment to and activities in support of Israel.’⁷⁷

Bloc Voting. In retrospect, voting is a second tool that is strategically used by the pro-Israel lobby to influence the making of U.S. foreign policy, despite the fact that Jewish-Americans make up only three percent of the U.S. population. As Smith explains, “Ethnic voters do not have to make a decisive difference in national elections for their voice to be heard in Washington. It may be enough,” according to Smith, “to be represented by well-placed members of Congress...whose duties give them a role in determining matters of significance to the ethnic community.”⁷⁸

For instance, in 1992 Jewish-Americans made up nine percent of the population of New York and since they usually vote for the Democratic Party, they constituted around fifteen

percent of that state's Democratic voters.⁷⁹ At the same time, "Since they tend to vote at twice the levels of the state average, they may perhaps account for 30 percent of all of the votes cast in a Democratic primary in that state alone."⁸⁰ Not all Jewish-Americans "take their ethnic identities with them into the voting booths, and even when they do their opinions may vary greatly;" however, their concern for Israel remains "real" and politicians act according to it.⁸¹ Smith argues that "Through their votes in New York State alone...Jews rather automatically have a place at the table in foreign policy deliberations in Washington."⁸² According to AIPAC's own estimates, "if 7 percent of the New York Jewish population had switched and voted for President Bush in 1992, he would have won the state."⁸³

Other states where Jewish-Americans' population exceeds 5 percent, and where they constitute at least 15 percent of the Democratic vote, are Florida and New Jersey, while they also have "electoral weight" in the Democratic primaries of Massachusetts, Maryland, California, and Pennsylvania.⁸⁴ In addition to the network of pro-Israel PACs that reward congressmen for their support of Israel, such rewards are also automatically gained from congressmen's own constituents as Jewish-Americans have the highest percentage of voter-turnout from all ethnic groups in the U.S.⁸⁵

Due to the nature of the electorate college, the role played by the primaries in congressional elections, and the decentralized nature of Congress, "voting pressure on Congress, especially on the House of Representatives, is a more likely source of access to decision making for ethnic lobbies."⁸⁶ Such pressure from the local to the state level and from the state level to the national level cannot be ignored, and as Smith points out, not taking it into account by scholars such as A.F.K. Organski, "substantially underestimate the role of interest groups in shaping American foreign policy."⁸⁷ At the same time, as Smith agrees, politicians "actively solicit such support," rather than "passively reacting to social pressure."⁸⁸

Jewish Americans are very attentive to issues regarding Israel and congressmen always take this fact into consideration when i.e. sponsoring/cosponsoring resolutions relating to Israel in U.S. Congress. Congressmen generally favor particular policies because the effects of such policies are simply popular among and by their constituents—policies that Arnold Douglas calls "politically compelling."⁸⁹ At the same time, because of the incentive of campaign contributions, issues relating to Israel are among the few that congressmen support even when a significant

Jewish-American constituency is not present in their districts. Generally speaking, congressmen are always concerned with their public ratings and they try to anticipate how their actions might affect those ratings, which could eventually be published by an interest group.⁹⁰

Despite the fact that AIPAC claims it does not provide endorsements of candidates, it “subtly” does so “by providing its members with challengers’ Israeli positions and incumbents’ voting records on Israeli issues...[and] it urges its supporters to remember Israel’s friends at the voting booth.”⁹¹ Additionally, AIPAC gives those ratings to the members of approximately 75 other Jewish-organizations, such as the American Jewish Congress and the Anti-Defamation League, in order to “mobilize the support of the majority of Jewish-Americans on political issues relating to Israel.”⁹² Morris Solomon characterizes this network of organizations and their members as “sophisticated public-relations machinery,” which allows AIPAC to rapidly “disseminate information to the organizations’ members and develop quick individual constituent responses reflecting a single voice on congressional issues affecting Israel.”⁹³ As a Capitol Hill staffer explained:

“It’s a remarkable system they have. If you vote with them, or make a public statement that they like, they get the word out fast through their own publications and through editors around the country who are sympathetic to their cause. It’s an instantaneous reward with immediate positive feedback, where the senator’s [and Representative’s] name, attached to a proposal or idea, becomes the subject of laudatory editorial or news show comment. Of course, it works in reverse as well. If you say or do something they don’t like, you can be denounced or censured through the same network. That kind of pressure is bound to affect Senators [and Representatives] thinking, especially if they are wavering or need support.”⁹⁴

A former legislative director “unanimously stated to a powerful Senator” that in short, “AIPAC has a near stranglehold over Capitol Hill policies relating to Israel.”⁹⁵ Whenever Israel’s interests are being challenged at the Senate or the House, AIPAC instantaneously organizes a resolution that is sponsored by a pro-Israel congressman.⁹⁶ Further, since it is often the case that congressmen are dependent on their aids to be their “eyes and ears,” “AIPAC actively recruits a portion of its staff members from political campaigns and from both parties in Congress.”⁹⁷ Furthermore, AIPAC sponsors congressional trips to Israel for freshmen House and Senate members, it ensures close consultation and coordination with key lay and Congressional supporters, it hosts dinners and meetings for key U.S. officials with their Israeli counterparts, and it cultivates the support of key media people.⁹⁸

Influencing the Media. Parallel to the lobby's influence on Capitol Hill runs its clout over the general U.S. public opinion. As Thomas Birkland explains, "Interest groups often try to 'arouse' or 'provoke' the news media to devote greater scrutiny to an issue or a problem."⁹⁹ This process works in the opposite direction as well, and one of the most effective tools that the pro-Israel lobby uses in its public-relations campaign in the U.S. is to downplay the story of the Palestinian side, by controlling the very images and stories presented in U.S. media outlets. Birkland asserts that "powerful groups retain power by working to keep the public and out-groups unaware of underlying problems, alternative construction of problems, or alternatives to their solution."¹⁰⁰ This in particular, has been the Israeli lobby's most effective tool at obtaining the support of the broader U.S. public opinion on issues relating to Israel.

As Robert Jensen explains in *Peace Propaganda and the Promised Land*, "in addition to the military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, Israel is also involved in an attempt to ideologically occupy the American media."¹⁰¹ Jensen points out that "after the public relations disaster of Lebanon," in 1982, when images of thousands of dead Palestinian and Lebanese civilians dramatically damaged the public reputation of Israel in Western Media, "Israel decided to set up permanent institutional structures to control how Americans would think about the Middle East."¹⁰² Nowadays, there are "scores of private American organizations, both Christian and Jewish, [which] reiterate the official line" of the Israeli government and organize "grassroots opposition" to any media coverage that is considered "unfavorable" to Israel; "the most important of these is AIPAC."¹⁰³

In effect, the views of "those progressive organizations opposing the Israeli government occupation policies, such as Jews Against Occupation and Americans for Peace Now, rarely make it through."¹⁰⁴ And when they do surface, they become faced with "a host of media watchdog groups that monitor and pressure journalists and media outlets, the most important of which is CAMERA," The Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America."¹⁰⁵ As Alisa Solomon notes, "You have activist organizations from the...pro-Israeli right that very effectively harass journalists and their editors and try to make sure that the coverage is objective, by which they mean pro-Israel."¹⁰⁶ Journalists such as Thomas Friedman do criticize the actions of the Israeli government in the occupied territories, but "anything more than the mildest criticism of Israel is taboo in the mainstream media."¹⁰⁷

Michael Lind explains “the problem is that the Arab-Israeli conflict is presented in the absence of any historical or political context.”¹⁰⁸ Not only is the image presented in U.S. media outlets about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict simply distorted, but until recent years, the majority of them also never mentioned that most of the violence in Gaza and the West Bank during the last two decades has been taking place on occupied territories, or as a result of occupation.¹⁰⁹ Most media outlets in the U.S. represented the violence as if it has always been a result of Israel defending itself against Palestinian terrorism, thereby eluding the suffering of the Palestinians living under Israeli occupation. As Noam Chomsky asserts, “you can’t defend yourself when you are militarily occupying somebody else’s land. That’s not defense. Call it what you like, but it’s not defense.”¹¹⁰

In *Peace, Propaganda and the Promised Land*, Robert Fisk explains another example of how the images and the stories presented in U.S. media outlets are simply distorted, as he narrates that during the first years of the second Intifada, “CNN sent out a memorandum to its staff in the Middle East [saying]: in the future, Gilo [an Israeli settlement in East Jerusalem] is to be called a neighborhood.”¹¹¹ Not only did this distort the context of violence happening around Gilo, but it also presented Gilo as an actual part of Israel, as opposed to it being a settlement built on an occupied territory. Additionally, between 2001 and 2003 alone, Israel demolished 1123 Palestinian homes in the occupied territories, making thousands of people homeless, but as Jensen explains, “If you watch American coverage, Israel’s demolishing of Palestinian homes is presented as simply enforcing of the law. What we don’t see,” argues Jensen, “is how the law is unequally applied in order to steal Palestinian land” and build settlements.¹¹²

Such actions of the Israeli occupation forces are given a cover up in American media, which completely distorts the message they should otherwise be sending to their viewers. Meanwhile, along with its public-relations campaign, AIPAC has established and maintained coalitions with non-Jewish organizations and groups such as unions, the African-American community, scholars and fundamentalist Christians, through which it has secured a broad policy consensus on issues relating to Israel and a bipartisan congressional access.¹¹³ For example, if Jewish-Americans usually vote for Democrats, this bipartisan congressional access is secured through the Israeli lobby’s alliance with evangelical Christians, who usually vote for republicans.

III. Evangelical and Fundamentalist Christians' Support of Israel

Indeed, one of AIPAC's strongest and most persistent allies are those with a system of beliefs known as Premillennialist Dispensationalism, despite the apocalyptic nature of this scheme. While the events of the Arab-Israeli conflict are generally looked at through the lens of their appropriate political and historical contexts, the premillennial dispensationalists usually think of them as happening according to a divine plan, and as part of a certain route that the human history is undertaking. They believe the future that awaits the Holy Land in the current "dispensation" is not one where peace and stability are enjoyed; rather, they foresee a future of wide-scale suffering that ends with the battle of Armageddon, before peace could finally be ushered in when Jesus comes back to establish his Millennium Kingdom.

Premillennialist Dispensationalism originated with John Nelson Darby, a 19th-century English Bible teacher, who believed that Jesus' second coming would precede the establishment of the Millennium Kingdom. In the 1860s and 1870s, Darby visited the United States and gathered the support of renowned evangelical pastors and Bible teachers. By 1920 Dispensationalism became widely endorsed in the U.S. by those who were already calling themselves fundamentalists.¹¹⁴ Premillennial Dispensationalists believe that "when Jews rejected Jesus," God "postponed Jesus' return, started putting together a new people, the church, and unplugged the prophetic clock. Thus, for its entire history, the church has existed in a prophetic time wrap, what Dispensationalists call the 'great parenthesis.'"¹¹⁵ They believe that Jesus' second return to establish his Millennium Kingdom would take place in two stages, "[s]ince God had decided to work with only one group at a time," the first group being his "earthly" people of Israel, and the second group being his "heavenly" people of the church.¹¹⁶

In the first stage, the rapture of the church, Jesus would come to meet his saints of true believers in the air, thereby saving them from the horrors of what would be awaiting the human race. The prophetic clock would then start "ticking" again.¹¹⁷ The second stage would start when Jesus arrives on earth with his saints to defeat the Antichrist and begin his millennium reign. In between the two stages would be the period of the Great Tribulation, which would last for seven years, or three years and a half according to Cyrus I. Scofield. For the Jews it would be "the time of Jacob's trouble."¹¹⁸ References were made about this period in the Bible, which described it as "a period of unequalled trial, sorrow, and calamity (Danile 12:1; Matthew 24:21), spiritual

darkness and open wickedness (Luke 18:7, 2 Peter 3:2-4); It is the night of the world (John 9:41; Luke 17:34).”¹¹⁹

The Premillennialists, who interpret the Bible literally, believe that in our current dispensation of the “great parenthesis,” special events would happen and be considered “signs of the time.” In other words, their occurrence would pave the way for an imminent second return of Jesus. Leading up to the first stage of “end-time” events in the Premillennial Dispensationalists’ eschatology, the Jews would return to Palestine in “unbelief” and they would establish there a state, rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, and reestablish the sacrificial service.¹²⁰ At the same time, human civilization would decay with increasing rates of crimes, wars, drug addictions, and diminishing levels of morality and religion in our lives and daily interactions. They believe this would make the Antichrist appear, who would declare himself as the true Messiah and God, and would enforce his rule over the Jewish state by a reign of terror.¹²¹

144,000 Jews would accept Jesus as their savior at the beginning of the Great Tribulation; “They would recognize the events that would occur at that time as proceeding according to the Christian predictions they had heard from missionaries or read in pamphlets.”¹²² Those Jews would become “apostles of the truth of the Christian message among their brethren and the nation,”¹²³ but they would be persecuted by the Antichrist. Accordingly, Dispensationalists insist on supporting Jewish people and spreading their message about the “end-time” events among them, even if their “converts” do not fully gentile and abandon their Jewish heritage. The period of the Great Tribulation would be characterized by “famine, plagues, wars and natural disasters such as earthquakes.”¹²⁴ This would cause death in unprecedented numbers among the Jews; only one third of them would survive and the rest would perish.¹²⁵ The Battle of Armageddon (named after Megiddo - a site in Northern Israel), puts an end to the Great Tribulation and its horrors as Jesus and his saints arrive on earth to destroy the forces of Antichrist and throw him into “the lake of fire.”¹²⁶

The Millennium would then begin as Jesus becomes the King and the peaceful ruler of the world for one thousand years, with Jerusalem as the capital of the world, and Satan would become “bound and harmless.”¹²⁷ Jesus would then judge the nations, especially according to their behavior towards the Jewish people throughout history. The Jews who survive their “time of Jacob’s trouble” would declare Jesus their “Lord and Savior” and they would “turn into an

evangelizing nation that abandons its Jewish heritage and spreads the true belief in God among the nations of the earth.”¹²⁸ At the end of the thousand years of Jesus’ reign, the world would again go through “a metamorphosis.” Satan would be released and Jesus would crush him and his followers, who would be forever defeated.¹²⁹ “Cosmic changes would then take place. There would be ‘a new heaven and a new earth...’ The dead would be resurrected and God would pass judgment upon them. The eternal Kingdom of God would thus be ushered in, to last for evermore.”¹³⁰

Premillennial Dispensationalism¹³¹ and U.S. Foreign Policy

From there, we can clearly see the centrality of the role that Jewish people are meant to be playing in the Premillennial Dispensationalists’ “end-time” scheme of believes. This is the outlook that is endorsed by millions of evangelical and fundamentalist Christians in the U.S. While “most Dispensationalists are best classified as fundamentalists...,[and while] fundamentalists and evangelicals differ substantially in terms of style and openness to the culture,” argues Timothy Weber, “they remain close theologically,”¹³² especially with their literal interpretation of the Bible.

Since the late 1800s, the two groups have been supporting the Jews and Israel passively and actively; passively through mostly publications and radio/television shows, and actively as they entered politics and started lobbying Congress on issues relating to Israel. The turning point took place after the Arab-Israeli 1967 war. For the Premillennialists, the territories acquired by Israel in 1967 made her map look more like the biblical map of Israel,¹³³ and it thereby gave them reassurance that the end is near and that their eschatological hopes for the Second Return of Jesus are soon to be achieved; the results of the 1967 war became a “sign of the time.” from as early as March 1977, they criticized Jimmy Carter’s call for establishing a Palestinian “entity,” which is believed to have had lost him their votes and led to the rise of the “committed Christian Zionist,” Ronald Reagan.¹³⁴

In an article that was published in the *Jerusalem Post*, Reagan was quoted telling Tom Dine, the former Executive Director of AIPAC, “I turn back to your ancient prophets in the Old Testament and the signs foretelling Armageddon and I find myself wondering if we are the generation that is going to see that come about.”¹³⁵ Throughout the Reagan’s era of 1980s,

organizations such as Moral Majority and Religious Roundtable spread the dispensationalists' eschatological scheme of beliefs to most corners of the U.S. This was facilitated by Jerry Falwell's TV Show, *The Old Time Gospel Hour* and his newsletter, the *Moral Majority Report*. Tim Lahay's *Left behind Series* also distributed the premillennialists' eschatological belief system throughout the following two decades as 32 million copies of them were sold by 2003.¹³⁶

Based on a recent Pew survey, "evangelicals comprise the largest religious group in America [26.3% out of 51.3% protestants], with Catholics running a close second at 23.9 percent."¹³⁷ A 2008 study by Judy Baumgartner et al reports that 63 percent of evangelicals believe "events in Israel are essential to fulfilling biblical prophecy," and more than 21 percent of Americans cite "religious beliefs" as the primary reason for their stances on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.¹³⁸ This study also reports that "Evangelical affiliation is the only religious indicator [besides Judaism] that consistently influences public opinion on foreign policy issues" and that "Evangelical's foreign policy opinions transcend partisanship and tap into a larger religious effect."¹³⁹ The significance of this group lies in the fact that they constitute more than twelve times the number of Jewish voters,¹⁴⁰ and they proved very influential during the particular presidency of George W. Bush.

Most of the renowned leaders of evangelical Protestants today, such as Jerry Falwell, Hal Lindsey, John Hagee, and Pat Robertson have expressed both "in their writings and in live evangelical campaigns," their approval of the return of Jews to Palestine and the holding of a Jewish "commonwealth" there.¹⁴¹ They see the birth of Israel and its military victories as "a sign of the time," and they have attempted since the 1970s to use their influence on American politics to promote the cause of the Jewish state, and have thus far proven to be very influential; "As the political potency of this segment of American Protestantism has increased dramatically, its voice is often heard when decision-makers in Washington make their choices."¹⁴²

They rally public support for their Premillennialist message through their more than 200 evangelical Christian television stations and the nearly 1500 Christian radio stations in the U.S.¹⁴³ Further, they mobilize grassroots support through a long list of organizations such as the Christian Coalition of Pat Robertson and Ralph Reed; and the lobbying evangelical Christian organizations of Christians United for Israel (CUFI), the International Christian Embassy of Jerusalem (ICEJ), Bridges for Peace (BFP), The National Christian Leadership Council for Israel

(NCLCI), Christian Friends of Israeli Communities, The Unity Coalition for Israel, and the Christian's Israel Public Action Committee (CIPAC); all of which support the expansionist Israeli policies of building settlements, and coordinate with AIPAC lobbying activities on issues relating to Israel on Capitol Hill.

IV. Weak Link: The Arab Lobby and its Interest Groups

Under those conditions, Jewish-American and evangelical Christian special interest groups have a monopoly over lobbying activities related to the Israelis and the Palestinians. To mobilize the support of the above highlighted forces of influence in the U.S., Israel has “devoted considerable monetary and intellectual resources” since its establishment in 1948 “to maintain institutes that study the role of public opinion polls, media, politics, and government in the United States.”¹⁴⁴ On the other hand, Arab leaders have rarely understood the way U.S. political system works. As Janice Terry points out, “In the decades immediately following World War II, many Arab officials thought that lobbying was illegal and that all efforts should be directed solely through diplomatic channels.”¹⁴⁵

Additionally, Arab governments have failed to “coordinate” their strategies to promote their interests in the U.S., which “has hindered their overall effectiveness.”¹⁴⁶ Until recently, Arab states have generally “agreed to disagree” on finding a common strategy for addressing their social and political problems, and when Arab governments found out how complex the U.S. political system really is, “they paid huge amounts to U.S. based public relation firms and professional lobbyists to design publicity campaigns or to influence politicians.”¹⁴⁷ They did not attempt to effectively mobilize Arab-Americans, their embassies in the U.S., or the office of the Arab League in Washington, D.C. Further, when such professional lobbyists were hired, “they did not usually coordinate their efforts and they often even worked at cross-purposes with one another.”¹⁴⁸

At the same time, when Arab-Americans mobilized their activism on their own, following the example of other ethnic groups in the U.S.; organizational problems, lack of funding, and lack of unity in addressing central issues in the Middle East such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, were three of their main weaknesses.¹⁴⁹ The National Association of Arab-Americans (NAAA) was established in 1972 to lobby U.S. Congress and write to the White

House “on specific issues of important [sec] to Arab Americans and the Middle East.”¹⁵⁰ In 1980, another lobbying organization, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) was established, and it soon became “the foremost advocate for Arab Americans.”¹⁵¹ Other grassroots Arab-American organizations include the Arab American Institute (AAI); however, Arab-American organizations in general “have never had a lobbying success,”¹⁵² especially with regards to foreign policy. As Janice Terry assert, “no other ethnic group has ever achieved anything close to the power of the Jewish-American lobby groups in influencing and fashioning U.S. foreign policy.”¹⁵³

To be fair, Arab-American organizations have also been faced with aggressive opposition from the pro-Israel lobby, which sometimes turned violent. In 1985, ADC offices were bomb attacked, resulting in the murdering of ADC West Coast Director Alex Odeh. While the FBI suspected members of the Jewish Defense League (JDL), “to date there have been no convictions for his murder.”¹⁵⁴ Such staunch opposition from pro-Israeli groups has aimed not only at silencing the emerging counterforce, but at also making “politicians and advisers...reluctant to deal openly and/or directly with Arabs or Arab Americans.”¹⁵⁵ Janice Terry reports that congressmen have generally avoided accepting campaign contributions from pro-Arab organizations as they fear “a political backlash from pro-Israeli forces.” According to Terry, “Candidates as diverse as George McGovern, Walter Mondale, and Mayor of Philadelphia, Wilson Goode, have all refused or returned donations from Arab Americans.”¹⁵⁶ As *Washington Times* correspondent Martin Sieff puts it; “support for Israel brings a congressman opposition only from fringe groups, but giving strong support to the Arabs brings legislators powerful enemies.”¹⁵⁷

In particular, the Israeli lobby in the U.S. has been engaged in “politics of smear” against Arab-American elites and their supporters, which is what the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* has referred to as the “new McCarthyism.” This is in reference to the false charges of collaboration with communists that were made by General McCarthy during the early years of the Cold War. While McCarthy prepared lists of “alleged” communist-collaborators that affected the victims’ socio-political standings; since the late 1980s, the charge has become supporting the PLO, being anti-Israel, anti-Semitic, or even supporting the terrorists. The victims of such “blacklisting” have included Arab-American leaders such as the President of the AAI, James Zogby, as well as public intellectuals, politicians, and journalists, among others.¹⁵⁸

Former AIPAC employee, Gregory Slabodkin, reports that “a covert section” within the research department of AIPAC “monitors and keeps files on politicians, journalists, academics, Arab-American Activists, Jewish Liberals, and others it labels ‘anti-Israel,’” in what has Slabodkin called “an organized blacklisting operation.”¹⁵⁹ AIPAC and the Jewish Anti Defamation League (ADL) have been engaged in such activities since 1974, when they launched the “truth squad” with the purpose of “combat[ing] ‘pro-Arab propaganda’ and the emerging ‘Arab lobby.’”¹⁶⁰ At the same time, following the negative public reactions to AIPAC’s publication of *The Campaign to Discredit Israel* in 1983, where specific individuals, public intellectuals, and organizations were openly targeted for charges of “Anti-Semitism;” AIPAC’s “opposition research” became produced and published in *Activities*.¹⁶¹ AIPAC employees are not allowed to take *Activities* out of the office,” according to Slabodkin, nor to “mention the existence of *Activities* outside AIPAC’s walls.”¹⁶²

Additionally, Slabodkin points out that this “covert section” of AIPAC coordinates its efforts with the ADL and AIPAC’s college liaison department, or with its Political Leadership Development Program. Noam Chomsky, who has been constantly accused of being “anti-Israel” and a “self-hating Jew,” has compared ADL’s 150-page file on him to an FBI file. He said: it’s full of “clips from newspapers and inter-office memos saying I was going to show up at this or that place, surveillance of talks I have given, [and] characterization of what was said in the talks. All this material goes into a central source,” Chomsky explains, “then when I give a talk somewhere, my file will be given to the appropriate local group,” to make defamatory statements and publish them in “unsigned pamphlets.”¹⁶³ The information in *Activities* is also used by the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council (NJCRAC), American Jewish Congress (AJC), The Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), CAMERA, The National Jewish Coalition (NJC), and the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA).¹⁶⁴

In addition to being targeted for defamation by the Israeli lobby, the fact that most Arab-Americans and their leaders “detest and oppose” U.S. support of authoritarian regimes in the Middle East placed them in the past “at a distinct disadvantage in dealing with the White House and Congress. Arab Americans often [found] themselves in an adversarial position vis-à-vis the U.S. government in marked contrast to the cordial relations enjoyed by Jewish Americans.”¹⁶⁵ During the 1970s U.S. Presidents Ford and Carter often refused to meet Arab-American groups, and when they did meet with them, discussion of central issues such as the Israeli-Palestinian

conflict were always avoided.¹⁶⁶ On the other hand, Jewish-American groups have their own liaison in the White House, whose job is to coordinate similar meetings.¹⁶⁷ Additionally, “in contrast to letters or meetings with other American domestic pressure groups, correspondence and meetings with Arab Americans and Arab American organizations are not in the public liaison files, but in...[the National Security Council] files and are dealt with by that office.”¹⁶⁸

Following the first Persian Gulf War, President Clinton met with leaders of Arab-American organizations more often than his predecessors, which showed “recognition of the increased participation and impact of Arab American organizations.”¹⁶⁹ During the 2000 presidential elections, Muslim/Arab-Americans also “made their first major political mark in what turned out to be the closest presidential race in American history,” with a bloc vote for President Bush.¹⁷⁰ However, such activism did not “necessarily translate into impact on foreign policy,” as the 9/11 attacks and the passage of the U.S. PATRIOT ACT have made their efforts harder to undertake, “just as they were becoming more active and involved.”¹⁷¹

At the same time, a multiplicity of U.S. research institutes, think tanks, and associations passively advocate for the Palestinians’ right to self-determination and the implementation of UNSC resolution 242. They include The Institute for Palestine Studies, The Middle East Policy Council, The Institute for Research: Middle Eastern Policy (IRMEP), The Association of Arab American University Graduates (AAUG), and The Middle East Institute. Additionally, The National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations (NCUSAR) attempts to create understanding of the Arab world and its culture through organizing a Model Arab League event for High School students in fifteen cities around the U.S., and an annual Policy Makers Conference in Washington, D.C. However, the activities of those organizations have not been focused on lobbying Congress or trying to affect the making foreign policy in Washington.

The most effective role played by such groups is channeling humanitarian aid to the Palestinian Territories. A variety of NGOs in Washington, D.C. deliver USAID assistance to Palestinians in Gaza Strip, West Bank, East Jerusalem, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Those include the American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA), Islamic Relief, The Associate for Rural Development (ARD), and Tomorrow’s Youth (TYO). Humanitarian assistance to the Palestinians is also channeled through Churches of other Christian denominations and community activist groups in the U.S. such as The Palestine Aid Society, United Holy Land

Fund, The Quakers, American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), “the highly effective” Palestine Human Rights Campaign (PHRC), and Sabeel - the “ecumenical grassroots organization.”¹⁷²

This chapter has provided a theoretical and empirical illustration of the function and influence of pro-Israel interest groups in the U.S., with the goal of better explaining how those groups have undermined U.S. role as the facilitator of the Peace Process. Their clout overrides all other U.S. domestic groups on issues relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by manipulating congressional and presidential elections to their advantage, and rallying a wide-ranging national consensus for their unwavering support of Israel. Giving this, next chapter follows the progress of the Peace Process from early 1990s-2000; investigates the reactions and influence of such pro-Israel U.S. domestic forces to/over the Peace Process; and points out the effects of Israeli domestic politics and Palestinian militant groups on issues relating to the Peace Process.

Chapter Two

Active Involvement

I. Planting the Seeds of the Middle East Peace Process

After the first Gulf War, the Madrid Peace Conference of October 30, 1991 brought Arab and Israeli diplomats in one room for the first time. Self-governance for Palestinians in Gaza Strip and the West Bank was one of the main issues that delegates to that conference discussed in many rounds of negotiations held over the following two years. At the same time, fourteen rounds of secret negotiations between the Israeli Labor Party and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) were carried out in Oslo. Once this second track of negotiations proved, the Oslo I agreement (The Declaration of Principles) was signed in 1993 between the Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, and the PLO Chairman, Yasser Arafat, at the White House.

An assertive U.S. executive attitude in the face of staunch opposition from “Israel’s friends in Congress”¹⁷³ was a necessity for starting the snow-ball effect of the Peace Process. It is the reason why Arafat stated in 1991: “We have full confidence; we trust them [the U.S.] as an honest broker...”¹⁷⁴ The first Bush administration launched in 1989 the PLO-U.S. talks in Tunisia, where it became evident that the PLO was “firmly committed to the peace process,” and that it renounced violence.¹⁷⁵ In reaction to those U.S.-PLO talks, the Senate “attempted to force on the Bush administration an amendment introduced by [Senator] Jesse Helms...and strongly backed by AIPAC and B'nai B'rith International that would have barred the U.S. from talking with any PLO official unless the administration could certify he had never been associated with terrorism.”¹⁷⁶

Following AIPAC’s attempt during the 1984 North Carolina senatorial campaign to unseat Jesse Helms, when AIPAC’s PACs “poured so much money into the campaign of Helms Democratic rival” to the extent that that campaign became “the most expensive up to that time in Senate history,” Jesse Helms became “determined never to risk AIPAC targeting again.”¹⁷⁷ However, responding to demands from President Bush, “a less restrictive measure was passed”¹⁷⁸ and S.763 bill required the State Department to report to Congress “the extent of compliance by the PLO with its commitments to stop terrorist activities and to recognize Israel’s right to exist.”¹⁷⁹

At the same time, in June, 1989 AIPAC “elicited a letter from 95 senators endorsing Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's election proposal, even though Shamir had threatened to arrest any [Israeli] candidate who supported the PLO.”¹⁸⁰ While addressing “Israel’s friends in Congress,” then-Shamir’s Deputy Foreign Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, pleaded: “You have to ‘tough it out’ in the fight against the PLO... We need your help.”¹⁸¹ When such attempts did not succeed in thwarting U.S.-PLO dialogue, congressional sanctions on the PLO were imposed in response to its application in 1989 for full membership of Palestine at the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNESCO. This was iterated by S.Res.875 and H.Res.2145, which “prohibit U.S. contributions to the United Nations if full membership as a state is granted to any organization...[in reference to the PLO] that does not have the internationally recognized attributes of statehood.”¹⁸²

In another bold move with lasting impacts on U.S. role as the facilitator of the Peace Process, the House and Senate passed a resolution in 1990 stating that ““Jerusalem is and should remain the [undivided] capital of the state of Israel.””¹⁸³ Israel has annexed Eastern Jerusalem in June, 1967 and it continues to build settlements in that part of the city in defiance of international law, and the land-for-peace formula of UNSC R.242. At the negotiation table, the Palestinians insist on having East Jerusalem as the capital of their future state, and from the 1967 Arab-Israeli war until the passage of this Jerusalem resolution, U.S. official policy considered East Jerusalem an Occupied Territory. Thus, this resolution has had the effect of undermining U.S. ability to fairly mediate between the Israelis and the Palestinians before the Peace Process even picked up its momentum.

Furthermore, in response to the first Palestinian Intifada of December 1987, Congress continuously condemned Palestinian attacks on Israel while remaining “indifferent”¹⁸⁴ to Israeli violence against Palestinian civilians. Ignoring or under-emphasizing the severity of the Israeli treatment of Palestinians became a recurring-theme of the way Congress has viewed the Conflict since the late 1980s. Between December, 1987 and December, 1995 1418 Palestinians were killed by the Israeli Army in the Occupied Territories,¹⁸⁵ and no resolution from Congress was passed to condemn such Israeli actions. At the same time, in contrast to the legislative one-sidedness, the executive branch of the Bush administration demanded from the Israeli government a total freeze of its settlements building in the West Bank, before the U.S. considered an Israeli request in 1991 for \$10 billion in loan guarantees.

President Bush Sr. worried that Israel would use the loan guarantees to build more settlements in Gaza Strip and West Bank, thereby undermining his administration's sponsorship of the on-going peace negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbors. He famously said in September 1991, "There are 1,000 lobbyists up on the Hill [for the loan guarantees] and I'm only one little guy down here."¹⁸⁶ When President Bush Sr. was asked if linking the loan guarantees to a settlement freeze was a smart strategy for his second-term presidential election campaign, he said: "That is not the question, whether it is good 1992 politics. What is important is that we give this peace process a chance, and I don't care if I get one vote in next year's presidential election."¹⁸⁷

Reconciliation was only reached when the relatively moderate Labor Party of Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Perez, which was carrying out the secret negotiations with the PLO in Oslo, won Israel's elections of June, 1992. H.R.5368 that gave Israel \$10 billion in U.S. loan guarantees was passed and sent to the president for signing "in the closing rush by both houses" of the 102nd Congress (1991-1992).¹⁸⁸ While the U.S. government could not monitor where Israel would spend those loan-guarantees, and while the Bush-Rabin terms of agreement still allowed Israel to complete the building of settlements under construction as well as their natural growth, the agreement stipulated that "every dollar spent on settlements in the occupied territories (including East Jerusalem) after October 199[2] will be subject to deduction from the U.S. government-guaranteed loans."¹⁸⁹ Those were given to Israel over a period of five years in \$2 billion installments, in addition to the annual \$3 billion in direct U.S. aid that Israel receives.

As Richard H. Curtiss points out, it was President Bush's pressure on Israel with regards to the settlements that made Israel participate in the Madrid Peace Conference of 1991, brought down the hard-line Likud government of Shamir, and helped bring back the Labor Party to power after 15 years of Likud rule (1977-1992).¹⁹⁰ President Bush's conditions on the Israeli request for loan-guarantees in the face of congressional opposition, while the secret negotiations between the PLO and Israel's Labor Party were taking place in Oslo, has planted the seeds of the Peace Process and the hopes for mutuality in U.S. ability to mediate between the Israelis and the Palestinians. With the relative absence of such assertiveness and diplomatic maneuvering during the following three U.S. presidencies, the Israeli lobby has always been successful at defining the nature of U.S. involvement in the Peace Process.

II. The Peace Process and the Clinton Administration (1993-2000)

President Bush Sr. was not elected for a second term, despite the breakthrough that he accomplished in starting the Middle East Peace Process, and despite the major victory that his presidency achieved in leading an international coalition against the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The former Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Shamir, remarked soon after the 1992 U.S. presidential elections “that Bush’s defeat had put an end to American policies aimed at returning Israel to the pre-1967 line.”¹⁹¹ Such words resonate with sounding clarity even 20 years later. At the minimum, the result of the 1992 elections drew a line-in-the-sand with regards to applying U.S. economic pressure on Israel—regardless of how much such pressure did in fact contribute to Bush Sr.’s defeat. His defeat strengthened any pre-existing “myths” about the power of the Israeli lobby.

Not only did presidential candidate William Clinton publicly criticize Bush’s approach to the Israeli loan-guarantees issue during the 1992 presidential elections, but he also vowed: “If I ever let Israel down, God would never forgive me...I’ll never let Israel down.”¹⁹² Exit polls showed that 85 percent of Jewish-Americans voted for him in the 1992 presidential elections, and Clinton became the first incumbent U.S. president to ever speak at an AIPAC convention.¹⁹³ According to Tony Smith, around 60 percent of the money that Bill Clinton received for his campaign during the 1992 primary race came from Jewish groups and individuals.¹⁹⁴ Additionally, most of the “friends of Israel..., who played pivotal media and funding roles” in Clinton’s 1992 campaign were kept on board for his 1996 campaign, when Clinton spent \$40-\$45 million, most of which was raised from private sources.¹⁹⁵ The majority of those aids “were strong supporters of the “not-one-inch of land for peace” policies of Likud Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.”¹⁹⁶

During his presidential elections, Bill Clinton did not only criticize Bush Sr.’s pressure on Israel, but he also vowed to be more “anti-Palestinian” than his predecessor. At the Sheraton Carlton Hotel Clinton told an audience of the Jewish Leadership Council on June 30, 1992 that “The Palestinians should have the right...to participate in the determination of their own future, but they do not have the right to determine Israel’s future. And for that reason, I oppose the creation of an independent Palestinian state.”¹⁹⁷ This was also the 1992 campaign promise of former president George H.W. Bush, who said at the 1992 convention of the Jewish-American

B'nai B'rith organization, "I still oppose a Palestinian state. I've been consistent on that for a long, long time." However, in contrast to Clinton's statement, Bush still added that he thought "the framework lies in successful step-by-step progress on these negotiations,"¹⁹⁸ while demonstrating during his first term the kind of pressure that is needed to facilitate them. During the Clinton administration there was no longer any pressure on Israel's expansion of settlements, and while previous administrations considered East Jerusalem an occupied territory, Clinton's administration spokesmen referred to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as "disputed – not occupied" land and they did not designate Jerusalem as even a disputed territory.¹⁹⁹

The Israeli Vision

Yitzhak Rabin explained in an interview with Israeli TV reporter Nasim Mish'al on Sept. 6, 1995 that "There is an ideological conflict between Greater Israel and a Jewish State that does not want to rule over another people, which means an agreement to create a Palestinian entity," according to Rabin, would lead to "something less than a state" that lives in peace with Israel.²⁰⁰ Thus, even from the start of the Peace Process, Israel's goal was not establishing an independent and viable Palestinian state living in peace and harmony along its borders, but establishing a self-governing entity that would not have its own independence. Giving the power asymmetry between Israel and the Palestinians, and the lack of pressure from the peace broker, it should not be surprising that this is the vision that eventually prevailed.

Despite the signing of the Oslo agreement with the PLO in 1993, Rabin's government, as well as the governments of his successors, Shimon Peres, Benjamin Netanyahu, and Ehud Barak, carried out settlements building in the occupied territories.²⁰¹ During his seven months in office, Shimon Peres "continued lavish spending on Jewish West Bank Settlements and networks of by-pass roads...[that] isolate West Bank Palestinian towns and villages from Jerusalem and from Each other."²⁰² Additionally, from the beginning of Netanyahu's first term as Israel's Prime Minister (1996-1999), the Israeli government focused its settlement activities on East Jerusalem, while confiscating additional land from neighboring Palestinian towns of Bethlehem, Beith Sahour, Beit Jala and Um Tuba, to build the new settlement of Har Homa on Jabal Abu Ghneim.²⁰³ Between 1993-2000, the settler population in Gaza Strip and the West Bank reached 380,000, which was a 72 percent increase over the pre-Oslo level.²⁰⁴

Instead of pressuring Israel to stop building settlements or attempting to enforce existing measures against building them, the Clinton administration even subsidized their construction. Building on State Department estimates, which indicated that Israel spent \$437 million on settlements in 1993, and \$311.8 million in 1994, President Clinton reduced the loan guarantees to Israel for 1994 and 1995 accordingly.²⁰⁵ However, he “arbitrarily added” \$500 million to the \$3 billion that Israel received in direct aid in 1994, while his administration was undergoing major budget cuts.²⁰⁶ Similarly, in 1995 “U.S. investigators concluded that Israel had spent \$300 million on Jewish settlements and provisions were made to deduct that amount from Israel’s \$2 billion in U.S. loan guarantees” for 1996.²⁰⁷ However, after the signing of Oslo II (The Interim Agreement) in 1995 President Clinton promised Israel \$240 million, “to facilitate the withdrawal of its troops” from parts of the West Bank.”²⁰⁸ Responding to such generosity, the Rabin government authorized the construction of 1,833 housing units in the West Bank in 1994, and 3,230 more in 1995.²⁰⁹

In other words, as the Palestinian entity was being established under President Clinton’s sponsorship, his administration was subsidizing the building of settlements on other parts of the West Bank, thereby enforcing the Israeli vision of limiting Palestinian self-governance to a sub-administrative entity that takes charge of Palestinian civil affairs, while being militarily controlled by Israel. For FY’1998, Congress also added \$460 million in military aid to Israel in addition to the \$3.1 billion Israel received in economic and military aid for that year, just as the last installment of \$2 billion in loan guarantees was given to Israel in 1997.²¹⁰

With U.S. taxpayers’ money Rabin launched the Sheves Plan, “which cleverly obscures in ‘development’ terminology plans for the construction of settlements, both government and private, and highways to serve them.”²¹¹ However, if concealing the plans for building those settlements made it easier for Rabin to deal with international public opinion, he could not make the visionaries of Greater Israel among his electorate approve of his subtle art of diplomacy. Rabin was assassinated by a right-wing Israeli citizen at a peace rally soon after the signing of Oslo II Interim Agreement on September 28, 1995.

At the same time, increased Palestinian suicide bombings in Israel in mid 1990s “precipitated a growing shift to the right in Israel,”²¹² and indicated that the dreamers of Greater Palestine within the Palestinian population would become yet another obstacle. If the Israeli

version of the Peace Process aimed at creating a Palestinian entity, “something less than a state,” the dreamers of Greater Palestine functioned as the best allies of their Israeli counterparts, the dreamers of Greater Israel, in making the Peace Process fail at creating even a functioning Palestinian entity. As Rabin himself pointed out in the above-highlighted 1995 interview, the extremists from both sides “like to gloat over spilled blood. They do not condemn murderers, but instead help them attain their political goal.”²¹³ The political goal of extremists from both sides has been to bring down the Peace Process.

Palestinian Domestic Politics

After Rabin’s assassination, Israel stopped to facilitate Arafat’s efforts to stop the attacks by Hamas and other groups such as Islamic Jihad against Israeli targets. In one occasion, after Arafat reached an agreement with Hamas prior to the Palestinian elections of 1996 to suspend Hamas’s attacks on Israel, Shimon Peres responded by assassinating one of Hamas’ top leaders, Yahya Ayyash, which sabotaged Hamas-PLO dialogue that “could have eventually developed into an agreement.”²¹⁴ Rabin’s assassination made Perez afraid for his own life and prevented him from carrying out the Oslo Accords’ provisions for security cooperation between the two sides.

Furthermore, when Rabin’s assassination led to four suicide bombings in Israel that killed 63 innocent Israelis, Israel imposed a closure on the Gaza Strip. By 1996, the unemployment rate in the Palestinian territories reached 60 percent in Gaza Strip and 50 percent in the West Bank, largely due to “ongoing closure – the sealing off of the territories.”²¹⁵ As Palestinian suicide bombings facilitated the winning of extremist Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel’s 1996 elections, Israeli policies of closing down the Palestinian territories, and collaterally punishing the Palestinians, precipitated a growing resentment of the moderate Palestinian Authority within the Palestinian territories. Rather than being a state-building entity with the primary responsibility of improving the living standards of its constituents, during the second half of the 1990s, the PA became a tool for controlling the different Palestinian factions, while Hamas’s social services became “the only source of aid for many Palestinians.”²¹⁶

Averaged polls conducted by the Center for Palestine Research and Studies (CPRS) from September, 1993 to December, 1994 on public support of the different political factions within

the Palestinian population indicated that Arafat's Fatah enjoyed a 41% support, while Hamas enjoyed 14.1% support.²¹⁷ However, the PA's crackdown on religious extremists in Gaza Strip and the West Bank, while Israel was collaterally punishing the Palestinian population every time there was an attack in Israel, became increasingly seen by the Palestinians as an appeasement to the "enemy." Nine Palestinians were killed on the hands of PA forces from 1994-1996, either due to being tortured by interrogators, or as a result of fatal shootings against Palestinian demonstrators.²¹⁸ In effect, this increased the Palestinians' sympathy for extremist groups and by December, 1997 Hamas enjoyed an increasing 35% support within the Palestinian territories.²¹⁹

The PA became caught between its constituents' disapproval of its focus on containing the different Islamic groups, while not working enough to improve their living conditions, and Netanyahu's insistence that it wasn't doing enough to stop terrorist attacks against Israel, while further undermining the terms of the Oslo agreement by building more settlements. As explained *Yediot Ahronot's* reporter, Roni Shaked, Netanyahu demanded "peace for peace," while rejecting the land-for-peace formula of UN Resolution 242 and 338, which meant that "the Palestinians would serve as a surrogate police force for Israel in the West Bank and Gaza, while Israel retained ultimate control."²²⁰ At the same time, through Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, the Clinton administration demanded that Arafat "'restrain Palestinians from further terrorist attacks,' [which] as *The New York Times* phrased it, showed little grasp of reality."²²¹

Benjamin Netanyahu's First Term and the Peace Process

By now, Oslo I agreement of 1993 (The Declaration of Principles) gave the Palestinians administrative and political control over Gaza City in the Gaza Strip and Jericho in the West Bank. Oslo II agreement of 1995 (The Interim Agreement) gave the Palestinian Authority a five-year interim control over six more cities and 420 villages in Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and called for two additional Israeli withdrawals from the West Bank before the "final status" negotiations were held five years later. However, after winning Israel's elections in 1996, Benjamin Netanyahu who "vowed to give up 'not one inch' of land for peace...,"²²² stated that "there would be no more territorial concessions. He also made it clear that the settlements that gradually are precluding such compromises would remain and expand,"²²³ and during his 1996

electoral campaign he repeatedly said that “the Palestinians will not have a state and will not have East Jerusalem as their capital.”²²⁴

Therefore, from his very first month as Israel’s Prime Minister, Netanyahu took many steps that were aimed at thwarting the implementation of the Oslo Accords. He delayed for two years the implementation of Oslo II agreement, which divided the West Bank into three areas: area (A) under complete Palestinian control, area (B) under mixed Palestinian-Israeli administration, and area (C) under Israeli control (See Index-Ch.2 for Map). To gradually transfer the parts under Israeli control to the PA, this agreement called for two additional withdrawals (three in total) from the West Bank, aimed at increasing the size of Area (A), while decreasing the size of Area (B) and Area (C). However, Netanyahu even obstructed the completion of the first withdrawal from 4 cities and 420 villages in Gaza Strip and the West Bank, by delaying an agreement on the status of the city of Hebron and starting the construction of the Har Homa settlement in East Jerusalem.

Meanwhile, in his book *Fighting Terrorism*, Netanyahu explains that Israel’s “war on terror” would “continue into the indefinite future,”²²⁵ without acknowledging the fact that his own vision of Greater Israel is one of the main reasons behind all the terrorist attacks against Israel. If the PA was able to deliver better results from the Peace Process to its own constituents, their support of Hamas and other radical groups would not have been on the rise. The PA’s crackdown on those groups would have been seen by the Palestinian population as a necessity for improving their collective living standards. Poverty and economic hardships encourage radicalism. As David Hirst of the *Guardian* remarked in 1996, “‘For Israel and the U.S. the ‘war on terror’ is but a way of transferring the Arab-Israeli struggle from the moral and political grounds on which it probably belong to security ones.’”²²⁶

However, the growing impatience of the Clinton Administration with Benjamin Netanyahu, because of i.e. his plans to build the new settlement of Har Homa, resulted in more “balanced” statements from Secretary of State Madeline Albright and more concrete steps by the Clinton administration to carry on the Peace Process. This made Netanyahu’s rhetoric about Israel’s “war on terror” independent from official U.S. policy during the 1990s. In 1997 Madeleine Albright denounced in a speech to Israeli high school students Netanyahu’s settlement policies as “provocative,” and urged the Israelis to take a “time out” from expanding

settlement.²²⁷ Even though this “suggest[ed] that Israel might resume what international law regards as an illegal activity when the time is right,” Netanyahu’s spokesman, David Bar-Ilan, “immediately rejected her plea...[by] saying, “We cannot freeze settlements any more than we can freeze life.”²²⁸

At the same time, under mounting *diplomatic* pressure from the Clinton Administration in 1998, which included a threat of “going public”²²⁹ with an American “Peacemaking Package,” which ran counter to congressional demands of refraining from pressuring Bibi, Netanyahu and Arafat signed an agreement at Wye River in 1998 for a second Israeli withdrawal. The resulting Wye River Memorandum called for “increasing the West Bank area under complete Palestinian control (Area A) from about 3 percent to almost 18 percent,” and reducing the area under joint Israeli-Palestinian control (Area B) from 27 percent to 25 percent, “of which 3 percent [would] be a ‘nature reserve’ which can be used by neither side.”²³⁰

The Wye Memorandum also called for opening a Palestinian airport in Gaza Strip; building an industrial zone on the Israeli-Palestinian border; opening two routes for “safe passage” of the Palestinians between Gaza Strip and the West Bank; and releasing 750 of the more than 3,000 Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails.²³¹ On the Palestinians side, the PA agreed “to arrest and try 29 of 30 Palestinians the Israelis accuse of attacking Israeli citizens, to reduce the various Palestinian military and police forces; to confiscate excess arms in Palestinian-controlled areas, and to convene a meeting to rescind clauses in the Palestinian National Covenant calling for the destruction of Israel.”²³² Further, Clinton agreed on having the CIA as the verifier of the Palestinians’ and the Israelis’ commitments to the implementation of this Memorandum.²³³ Arafat also succeeded in keeping the bargaining chip of unilaterally declaring a Palestinian state on May 4, 1999 (five years after the establishment of the PA), if the frameworks for a third Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and the “final status negotiations” were not agreed upon by that date.

However, Netanyahu’s government withdrew from only two additional percent of land and released 250 prisoners instead of 750.²³⁴ Additionally, following an attack on a car transporting an Israeli soldier by a group of “angry teenagers,” Netanyahu called the incident a “lynching” and “immediately cancelled all further implementation of the peace accords,” even though the soldier survived the attack.²³⁵ Moreover, he unilaterally added three conditions to the

agreement: “that the Palestinians must (1) stop asking for the release of prisoners, (2) stop inciting violence, and (3) stop preparation for declaring statehood on May 4th.”²³⁶

Further, responding to the call: “take over the hills of the West Bank before it is too late,” by then-Netanyahu’s Foreign Minister, Ariel Sharon; land-grabs by Israeli settlers intensified, adding to the fact that Israeli settlement constructions after the signing of Oslo I agreement in 1993 increased by 40%.²³⁷ Sharon also announced that if the Palestinians declared a state on May 4, 1999 Israel would annex parts of the West Bank.²³⁸ On the other hand, the Clinton administration watched with passivity, and measures such as placing economic restrictions on Israel to force its adherence to the Oslo Accords and the Wye River Memorandum were not contemplated by the Clinton administrative officials.

Instead, on the eve of a PLO Council meeting in Gaza City to decide on what to do on May 4th, a letter from Bill Clinton prompted the Palestinian leadership to postpone their anticipated declaration of a Palestinian state, gave a U.S. pledge “to support the Palestinians’ will to ‘determine their future as a free people on their land;” and called for “the renewal of negotiations for a final settlement ‘in accelerated mode,’ the implementation of previously signed agreements, and the cessation of unilateral acts including a Palestinian declaration of state and Jewish settlement building.”²³⁹ This letter served “to fill the legal vacuum left at the end of the interim agreement on May 4,” which would have made the PA left with a constitutional vacuum as its interim five-year autonomy expired.²⁴⁰ However, while reaching such a deadline was only postponed, the chaos at the end of the tunnel might have been the intended policy of Netanyahu’s government.

The “Final Status” Negotiations and the Second Intifada

At the same time, since the Clinton administration’s *diplomatic* pressure on Benjamin Netanyahu yielded very few results, once Ehud Barak from the Labor Party won the Israeli elections of May 17, 1999 the Clinton administration “decided that the United State would no longer act as [a] mediator in peace talks but as a ‘friendly observer.’”²⁴¹ This also had a lot to do with domestic U.S. political considerations. According to professor of government and foreign affairs at the University of Virginia, William B. Quandt, from the start of the Oslo Accords the Clinton Administration was in a state of “permanent campaign” and at this juncture, this

campaign was “working on behalf of Vice President Al Gore’s presidential run and Hillary Clinton’s Senate bid in New York.”²⁴² Thus, if winning a second term during the 1996 elections gave President Clinton the flexibility to pressure Netanyahu regarding the Wye River Memorandum of 1998, the closing-in of the next election cycle made his administration more careful regarding its policies towards Israel.

In effect, not only did Barak try to further suspend the implementation of Wye River Memorandum, but he also attempted to postpone carrying out a third Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank until after the “final status” negotiations took place. However, he eventually yielded to the Palestinians’ inflexibility, giving the fact that a unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders would have isolated Israel, and made Israeli settlements in the West bank further exposed as illegal under international law.

When the PA accused Barak of “breaching the trust,” he carried out the second withdrawal that was called for at Wye River from an additional 5% of West Bank territory (still 6% short of the 13 percent promised at Wye).²⁴³ Further, the “safe passage” between Gaza Strip and the West Bank was opened in August, 1999 and building a seaport on Gaza beach began a few months thereafter. Furthermore, with Madeline Albright present as a “witness,” an agreement was signed between Arafat and Barak for a third withdrawal from an additional 11% of the West Bank, the release of an additional 350 Palestinians, and the start of the “final status” negotiations in February 2000.²⁴⁴

At the same time, the Camp David Summit where those negotiations took place did not come about until July, 2000. Adding to the atmosphere of distrust between the parties prior to that summit, Barak strengthened the Israeli possession of more than 50% of the West Bank by approving the settlers’ confiscation of yet more Palestinian land. According to the PLO Map Center, the rate of settlement expansion in the West Bank under Barak’s government surpassed that of Netanyahu’s.²⁴⁵ Moreover, Barak carried out the “E1-Plan” for constructing “inter-connecting by-pass roads” between Jewish settlements in the West Bank, such as Rout 45 that runs in the shape of a ring around Jerusalem.²⁴⁶

As one of Rabin’s official spokesmen highlighted soon before the signing of Oslo II agreement, Israel’s policy has always been that of “enlarging and strengthening some existing settlements [to] make it easier to argue that they should be retained’ as the so-called peace

process [took] shape.”²⁴⁷ Barak’s expansion of those settlements and his building of interconnecting roads between them only signaled that his government pursued the same policies of Rabin as well as those of Netanyahu’s. Furthermore, just before leaving for the Camp David Summit,” reports Victor Ostrovsky, “Barak said ‘It is my main goal in these upcoming negotiations to guarantee the safety of the citizens of the state of Israel, while keeping within the red-lines this government has marked for itself.’ For Barak, those “red lines” were: “separation between the Palestinians and Israelis, refusal to return to the 1967 borders, a unified Jerusalem under Israeli Jurisdiction, and a refusal to accept responsibility in the matter of the [Palestinian] refugees.”²⁴⁸

Afif Safih, Former head of PLO delegation in Washington, reports that in contrast to the Israeli and American narrative of a “generous offer” that Israel had allegedly presented the Palestinians at Camp David, Barak offered them only close to 85% of the West Bank and in an op-ed piece in *New York Times* he “explicitly stated that Israel should keep fifteen percent of Judea and Samaria, plus a security zone in the Jordan Valley.”²⁴⁹ Thus, giving the fact that signing the Camp David offer would have divided the West Bank into three separate “cantons;” left the Palestinians with no sovereignty over East Jerusalem and no control over their borders; and would have not allowed for the return of Palestinian refugees to their homes nor provided for their compensation; the Palestinians rejected the offer. The difference between what was offered and what the Palestinians demanded is the same as that between an “entity” and a “state,” and the Palestinians refused to accept any offer that does not give them the viability, sovereignty, and independence of a state.

A few months after the summit, the second Palestinian Intifada also broke out, in declaration of the Palestinian population’s rejection of the status quo. For Afif Safieh this uprising was the collective result of: (1) the subjection of the Palestinians to “fifty-three years of diasporisation and thirty-four years of endless occupation...the longest military occupation in modern history, with humiliation and harassment of an entire people on a daily basis;” (2) the failure of the peace process to deliver concrete results that would grant the Palestinians independence and sovereignty in a separate state; (3) the “failed nature and the content of the Camp David talks” of July 2000, and the provocative visit of Ariel Sharon to Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem on September 28, 2000 with 1000 armed security guards.²⁵⁰

In 1996, Congressman James Moran (D-VA) openly questioned U.S. aid to Israel at the House International Relations Committee by pointing out that the U.S. has “substantial leverage with Israel.” Moran argued “There is that \$3 billion a year we give her. We have the responsibility to use the leverage to further the peace process... We are more than a disinterested, passive observer.”²⁵¹ However, such rare remarks in U.S. Congress were ignored. The 1996 level of U.S. aid to Israel amounted to “\$1,000 for every Israeli man, woman and child. Every Israeli family of five, therefore, receive[d] the equivalent of \$5,000 U.S. dollar in aid per year – every year. This is more than the average amount received by U.S. citizens on welfare, who represent small portion of the total U.S. population, but generate a great deal of political heat,”²⁵² yet the U.S. never used such economic leverage as a tool for pressuring Israel in the Peace Process.

From 1949–2000, total U.S. economic and military aid to Israel reached \$91,816,507,200 (not including the amounts incurred by U.S. tax payers in interest on this sum), while U.S. aid to all of the sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean counties combined reach 64,127,500,000 by 1997.²⁵³ Based on an agreement that was signed between Benjamin Netanyahu and Bill Clinton in 1999, U.S. aid to Israel was reduced by \$120 million in *economic* aid starting in FY’2000 and for every year thereafter for nine years until it reached zero.²⁵⁴ However, starting in FY’2000, U.S. *military* aid for Israel became “slated to increase every year by \$60 million” so that by 2010 U.S. annual military aid to Israel would reach a total of \$2.4 billion annually –not including any extras from Pentagon’s budget.²⁵⁵

As Richard Curtiss argues, since the U.S. never tied the actual U.S. aid to Israel to Israel’s performance on the negotiation table, “in contrast to conditions it places on its aid to the Palestinians, this immense outlay by U.S. taxpayers actually hinders the peace process by encouraging Israeli intransigence.”²⁵⁶ Such aid was never conditional since all U.S. aid is approved through Congress, where the Israeli lobby and its allies in the evangelical Christian community have the most leverage. At the same time, this still does mean that their influence on the executive is insignificant.

Based on a 1992 conversation between AIPAC’s former president, David Steiner, and a potential AIPAC donor, AIPAC “negotiated” with President Clinton the names of his appointees to the posts of Secretary of State, Foreign Policy Adviser, and National Security Adviser.²⁵⁷ Steiner was forced to resign following this press-leak; however, just as that conversation

entailed, Martin Indyk who was a former AIPAC employee, “was named National Security Council senior director for the Near East and South Africa and as a special assistant to the president.”²⁵⁸ In the past, “no one who had not been a U.S. citizen for at least 10 years could be named a Foreign Service officer,” but Indyk had been a U.S. citizen for nearly one month before being “put in charge of White House Middle East policy.”²⁵⁹ Further, Dennis Ross, who was “another former lobbyist for Israel,”²⁶⁰ was appointed by the Clinton administration to the State Department as chief Middle East negotiator and Special Envoy to the region, which further explains why there has been little economic pressure on Israel during the Clinton administration.

III. The Israeli Lobby and the Peace Process

Following the election of Yitzhak Rabin as Israel’s Prime Minister in June 1992, there was “a major shakeup of both the board and staff” of AIPAC to accommodate the changing of government in Israel from the Likud to the Labor party. In particular, after Rabin “made it clear he wanted AIPAC to concentrate on Congress and leave negotiating with Clinton to the Israeli government,” AIPAC’s former president, vice president, and executive director were all forced to resign “over different issues.”²⁶¹ However, Rabin remained unable “to control many of the American Jewish organizations that are independent of Israeli government funding, and leaders of some of them had become vocal private and public critics of the peace process, and of Rabin’s handling of it.”²⁶² Those organizations include the Zionist Organization of America, Americans for Safe Israel, the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, B’nai B’rith, and “most other components of the 50-member Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.”²⁶³

Jewish-American critics of Rabin’s peace camp were particularly supported by “fax attacks sent by Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu to members of the U.S. Congress;” however, countermeasures were still expressed in newspaper advertisements by i.e. 1,000 Rabbis on September, 1995 agreeing that “the Peace Process must continue,” and calling upon members of Congress “to renew the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act (MEPFA).”²⁶⁴ MEPFA was passed on April 30, 1994 and it authorizes the U.S. government to provide the Palestinian Authority with \$500 million in aid over the second half of 1990s. This bill was introduced by AIPAC’s friend in Congress, Jesse Helms, and it was supported by Rabin’s successor, Shimon Peres, who

told members of Congress during his December 12, 1995 visit to the U.S. that “aid to the Palestinians ‘is not only important for the peace but for the future.’”²⁶⁵ U.S. aid to the Palestinian Authority, and the creation of the PA itself, has relieved Israel from having to administer the Palestinian territories by itself.

On the other hand, once the Likud party in Israel regained power with the election of Benjamin Netanyahu in 1996, AIPAC went back to supporting Israel’s hard-line policies that call for making no concessions to the Palestinians. Former Foreign Service officer, Eugene Bird, notes that “in contrast to the appearance of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin” at the AIPAC annual conference of 1995, “which was followed by a floor fight over the Peace Process; Netanyahu swept the delegates” to AIPAC’s 1997 conference “to their feet repeatedly.”²⁶⁶ At the same time, polls conducted by The Israeli Policy Forum indicate that by 1997 “70 percent of [American] Jews express[ed] strong support for the Oslo accords,” despite the majority of Jewish-American organizations’ endorsement of Netanyahu’s attempts to undermine the Peace Process.²⁶⁷

With the help of the Israeli lobby, many resolutions and congressional statements in reference to the Peace Process were passed/made during the 103rd-106th sessions of Congress (1993-2000), some of which have had lasting impacts on U.S. handling of the Peace Process. During the 103rd Congress (1993-1994), when AIPAC was undergoing major transformation to support Rabin’s government, those resolutions included concurrent²⁶⁸ S.Res.43, which expressed “the sense of the Congress concerning the historic opportunity for peace in the Middle East;” S.CON.Res.50 and S.RES.184, which condemned the massacre in Hebron—where an American-born settler, Baruch Goldstein, killed 29 Muslim men and boys at prayer in February 1994—and urged “all parties in the Middle East Peace Process to renew energy to achieve a just peace;” and Senate Amendment 1538 that expressed “the sense of the Congress concerning United Nations resolutions on Jerusalem.”²⁶⁹

In reaction to a 1994 UNSC resolution that described East Jerusalem as an “occupied territory,” then-U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., Madeline Albright, expressed in a letter to her colleagues the U.S. government’s “belie[f] that resolution language referring to [final status] issues should be dropped, since these issues are now under negotiation by the parties themselves.”²⁷⁰ These issues include the status of Palestinian refugees, the settlements, and the

territorial sovereignty and status of Jerusalem.²⁷¹ Ian Williams argues that in effect, what Albright was asking for was “that international law and the decisions of the United Nations be set aside so that the Israelis, from a position of strength, can force the Palestinians into agreeing to give up their rights.”²⁷² According to Phyllis Bennis, despite the admittance of the PLO as a U.N. observer in early 1990s, the U.S. succeeded “at keeping the U.N. out of the peace process in the region,”²⁷³ by vetoing UNSC resolutions critical of Israeli actions in the occupied territories, and making the UN role limited to providing humanitarian assistance to Palestinians under occupation. Further, while Albright argued that issues such as Jerusalem should be left for the parties to negotiate, U.S. Congress was attempting to enforce new facts on the ground as it was urging Clinton to recognize United Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

In August 1994, four members of Congress, including Rep. Newt Gingrich, sent a letter to President Clinton calling for Jerusalem to remain the united capital of Israel, which supported a Senate amendment that “prohibits any new U.S. offices or official meetings in Jerusalem to deal with the Palestinian Authority and calls upon the administration to protect Jerusalem ‘from any Palestinian claim to the city.’”²⁷⁴ Another letter that was endorsed by 200 members of U.S. House of Representatives urged Clinton “to use his influence to keep Palestinian Authority’s Yasser Arafat from holding any official meetings in East Jerusalem.”²⁷⁵ Thus, on May 17, 1995 the Clinton administration used the first U.S. veto in five years against a UNSC resolution, which “suggested that...Israeli land confiscation in Jerusalem [should] be stopped.”²⁷⁶

During the 104th Congress (1995-1996), the issue of Jerusalem was ever prominent due to Senator Robert Dole, who introduced the bills S.770 and S.1322 (The Jerusalem Embassy Act), which call for moving the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem by 1999 and authorizes \$100 million for “preliminary” spending.²⁷⁷ However, President Clinton signed the waiver for implementing this act, based on “a compelling national interest.”²⁷⁸ Lucille Barnes notes that “during his 40 years in Congress, Senator Dole somehow has avoided thoroughly prostituting himself to the Israel lobby. This is partly because it is not required for re-election in his home state of Kansas...”²⁷⁹ But, his decision to run for U.S. presidency in 1996 made him try to mobilize the support of a powerful constituency (both Jewish and evangelical) that could play an important role in a presidential election.²⁸⁰ During the 104th Congress, Dole also sponsored S.RES.69 that condemned suicide bombings in Israel, which was reiterated by Jesse Helms’ S.RES.228.²⁸¹

In the 105th session of Congress (1997-1998), S.CON.RES.21 congratulated “the residents of Jerusalem and the people of Israel on the thirtieth anniversary [since 1967] of the reunification of that historic city.”²⁸² Further, 14 letters were sent to the Clinton administration, signed by more than 140 Senators and Representatives, urging the White House “not to participate in...[a] Gaza meeting to mobilize international pressure against Israel’s decision to build” 6,500 housing units in the settlement of Har Homa in East Jerusalem.²⁸³ Representative Newt Gingrich even accused Arafat of being “in coalition with ‘the forces of terrorism’ and [of] waging an ‘information warfare campaign against Israel...’ Regarding Har Homa, he said, ‘Let me be clear. Har Homa is not, as the media attempt to insist, a settlement. It is a Jewish neighborhood in the city Israel has chosen as her capital.’”²⁸⁴

When the Clinton administration was attempting in 1998 to announce the American Peacemaking Package that laid out the frameworks for the Wye River Memorandum, “Israel launched a full-scale public relations and lobbying blitz in March and April...and Netanyahu sent his foreign advisor, Uzi Arad, to lobby key congressmen to quietly pressure Clinton not to go public with the plan.”²⁸⁵ Furthermore, “he sent Israeli cabinet members and American Jewish Leaders to tell anyone who would listen that the administration was on a collision course with Israel.”²⁸⁶ Therefore, on April 5, 1998 Senator Joseph Lieberman sent a letter to Clinton, signed by 81 Senators, claiming that “Israel had kept the promises it made at Oslo, but that the Palestinians had not kept their security promises and that Arafat had refused to conclude negotiations on the remaining interim status issues.”²⁸⁷ The letter also “urged Clinton not to go public with ‘a peace proposal which is known to be unacceptable to Israel,’” as it required additional Israeli withdrawals from the West Bank.²⁸⁸

In May, 1998 Senators Alfonse D’Amato, Connie Mack, and Arlen Specter further criticized the White House through letters and public statements, while in practical terms they were only trying to please their campaign contributors (See Table 1 and Table 2 in Index-Ch.2). Mack reportedly said, “we should not publicly pressure an ally to violate their own Security assessment.”²⁸⁹ Additionally, in a letter that was signed by 236 Representatives and sent to President Clinton on May 6, U.S. Congress “strongly [urged] Clinton not to pressure Netanyahu.”²⁹⁰ Then-Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich, also held a press conference where he stated: “‘now it’s become the Clinton administration and Arafat against Israel,’ and that as

Israel celebrates its 50th anniversary, ‘the Clinton administration says, Happy Birthday. Let us blackmail you on behalf of Arafat.’”²⁹¹

Newt Gingrich even attempted during a May, 1998 AIPAC-sponsored congressional trip to Israel to “visit the proposed site of the new U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem and participate in a cornerstone-laying ceremony.”²⁹² Additionally, thirteen Republican representatives wrote a letter to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in October, 1998 arguing against her demanding that “Israel should refrain from unilateral acts, including what Palestinians perceive as the provocative expansion of settlements, land confiscation, home demolitions and confiscations of IDs.”²⁹³ As Rep. John Fox told the Jewish Telegraph Agency, “the majority’s role [in Congress was] to support Netanyahu and to support the protection of Israel from the [alleged] violence and arrogance of Arafat.”²⁹⁴ However, in effect they were only making the U.S. lose its credibility as the facilitator of the Peace Process, as well as adding to the general atmosphere of distrust that led to the collapse of the Camp David Summit.

At the same time, as that Summit was being delayed during the 106th session of Congress (1999-2000), and discussions among the leaders of the Palestinian Authority were taking place with regards to making a unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state, “Israel’s friends in Congress” passed many resolutions and bills that were designed to condemn and punish the Palestinians’ as well as their supporters. S.CON.RES.5 urged the President “to assert clearly United States’ opposition to a unilateral declaration of [Palestinian] statehood.”²⁹⁵ Moreover, S.CON.RES.36 condemned “the Palestinian efforts to revive the original Palestine Partition Plan” and it condemned the United Nations’ Commission on Human Rights for its April 27, 1999 resolution, which “endorses Palestinian self-determination.”²⁹⁶ S.Res.2938 of July 26, 2000 also “prohibit[s] the United States assistance to the Palestinian Authority if a Palestinian state is declared unilaterally.”²⁹⁷

Further, S.Res.3007 that became known as the “Unilateral Palestinian Statehood Disapproval Act of 2000” calls for voting against Palestinian membership in the United Nations or other international organizations, as well as cutting economic assistance to a Palestinian state declared through the U.N. or any affiliated agency, “except for humanitarian assistance and cooperation on security and antiterrorism matters.”²⁹⁸ Furthermore, S.Res.3250 or the “Peace Through Negotiations Act of 2000” provided for downgrading the status of PLO office in the

U.S. and withholding financial contributions to international organizations that recognize a unilaterally declared Palestinian state.²⁹⁹ As stated earlier, the path-dependence of U.S. support of Israel is backed by the coercive political and economic power of the U.S. While Netanyahu has always wanted to prevent the creation of a Palestinian state through the Peace Process, the Israeli lobby in the U.S. has worked tirelessly to ensure that such a state would not be declared unilaterally; thereby enforcing the status quo that gives the Palestinians a sub-administrative entity lacking the viability and the independence of a state.

Even more, in reaction to the breakout of the second Palestinian Intifada that rejected those dictations, the House of Representatives passed by a roll-call vote of 365-30 a resolution “expressing its solidarity with Israel, condemning the Palestinian leadership for encouraging the violence and doing little to stop it, and urging the administration to use its veto power to prevent the U.N. Security Council from passing ‘unbalanced’ resolutions concerning the violence in the Palestinian territories.”³⁰⁰ This was in reference to UNSC Res.1322, which condemned “acts of violence, especially the excessive use of force by the Israeli forces against Palestinian civilians,” as well as the “illegal” settlements.³⁰¹ 96 Senators also signed a letter to President Bill Clinton urging that he “‘express solidarity with Israel at this critical moment..., condemn the Palestinian campaign of violence..., and stand with Israel in international arenas.’”³⁰²

On the other hand, no condemnation was made in U.S. Congress of Israel’s use of U.S.-built Israeli gunships against the Palestinian demonstrators in Gaza Strip and the West Bank.³⁰³ What resonates with a sounding clarity is an analogy made by Jewish-American Peace Activist, Rachelle Marshall, who stated in March 2001 that “If a similar conflict were taking place in any other country, U.S. support would be expected to go to the freedom forces rather than the oppressor.”³⁰⁴ If the U.S. helped arming the Libyan rebels when Qaddafi used similar tactics to those of Israel’s to put down a popular uprising; is it legitimate to expect the same from the U.S., or at least something similar, in relation to the Palestinians’ demands of ending the Israeli occupation of their land?

Pro-Israel PACs Contributions

The majority of the sponsors and cosponsors of resolutions by U.S. Congress in relation to the Peace Process during the 103rd-106th sessions of Congress, as well as the signers of letters

sent to the Clinton Administrations, were Congress members who received campaign contributions from the network of pro-Israel PACs; such as Carl Levin, Jesse Helms, Dianne Feinstein, Richard Lugar, Arlen Specter, Robert Torricelli, Mitch McConnell and James Inhofe (See Table 2 in Index-Ch.2). Sponsoring or cosponsoring a resolution that favors Israel is a strategy of “position taking” that signals the responsiveness of those Congress members to “attentive publics” such as the pro-Israel PACs.³⁰⁵ This in turn translates into more campaign contributions, which facilitate congressmen’s re-election. As former representative Les AuCoin (D-OR) said in 1989, “Something is systemically wrong with Congress today, and it’s money, the pursuit of money, the endless pursuit of money, the virtual hourly pursuit of money, either to finance the perpetual campaign or to maintain a certain standard of living.”³⁰⁶

Based on data compiled by this author from the *Washington Report’s* bi-annual publications on pro-Israel PACs—compiled themselves from the Federal Election Commission’s (FEC) quarterly reports—the top recipients of campaign contributions from pro-Israel PACs serve on key committees and subcommittees in the House and Senate, such as the Foreign Affairs, Foreign Relations, Appropriations, Defense, and Armed Services committees. Considerable portions of such contributions are also “early elections money,” i.e. given as early as 1.5 years before elections, which “help build war chests so huge that opponents [of those favored] are discouraged from running at all.”³⁰⁷ Additionally, as illustrated in Table 1 in Index-Ch.2, pro-Israel PACs have generally out-spent Arab/Muslim-American PACs by margins greater than 100%.

Pro-Israel PACs usually favor incumbents rather than challengers and “in cases where the challenger was Jewish and the incumbent was not, but had a pro-Israel [voting] record, most pro-Israel PACs support the incumbent.”³⁰⁸ This helps the pro-Israel lobby maintain a selected group of supporters in Congress that promotes its policies regarding the Middle East through introducing, sponsoring and cosponsoring resolutions. In particular, the policy path-dependence that this system creates makes U.S. policy of unconditionally supporting Israel harder to change, especially in terms of economic aid. Those campaign contributions help politicians and members of Congress build their political careers, and as such, they would only be expected to show loyalty. As James Zogby point out, “when money and voters and winning elections are at stake, principles and understanding take a back seat to politics.”³⁰⁹

At the same time, following the signing of the Oslo agreement, all of the directors of pro-Israel PACs complained “about a lessening of interest among American Jews in supporting Israel...Some...believed the century-old dispute between [the] Israelis and [the] Palestinians was over. Others disapproved of any Israeli government that proposed to trade land for peace. For both reasons, donations declined.”³¹⁰ At least eleven pro-Israel PACs closed down in 1993 and 1994 due to low contributions.³¹¹ As Table-1 in Index-Ch.2 also indicates, the totals raised by pro-Israel PACs in all election cycles are greater than the amount they raise from individual donations, which leaves PACs a reasonable sum “to use for various other expenses such as travel, banquets and other social events, and mailouts soliciting more money;”³¹² therefore, another reason behind those closures was rumors about the high salaries that PACs executives received. In 1992, Pro-Israel PACs raised \$14,015,509, but donated only \$3,963,007 to that election cycle, and for the following election cycles an average of only \$5 million was raised.

This was the case mostly due to a sharp decline in donations for the reasons pointed out above; however, pro-Israel PACs also started using techniques that conceal the actual totals, which could be calculated from FEC records by watchdog groups. During the second half of 1990s, pro-Israel PACs started using methods such as “bundling” checks of small amounts from individual donors and sending them directly to congressional candidates, instead of being the ones who cash and donate those checks, in order to hide the actual totals of campaign contributions they otherwise need to report to the FEC.³¹³ This is “‘soft money,’ whose origins and purposes cannot be traced...The amounts of these individual donations over \$250 could be recorded, but the purposes of the donations could not.”³¹⁴ Matthew Dorf of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency reported that “Jews gave more than \$25 million” to fund the 1996 congressional elections,³¹⁵ in contrast to the \$5,228,998 officially reported to the FEC (See Table-1 in index-Ch.2).

“Bundling” is also used by candidates who do not accept PAC contributions.³¹⁶ In fact, many of the pro-Israel candidates do not need to accept PACs contributions if they are from “prosperous states with large Jewish populations..., because they have enough wealthy pro-Israel residents to donate directly to them.”³¹⁷ Former Senators such as Robert Packwood have also “asked PACs for membership lists, so that they can conduct fund-raising activities with pro-Israel individuals directly.”³¹⁸

Pro-Israel PACs look at potential vacancies in key congressional committees, i.e. the Appropriation Committee that approves the annual U.S. foreign aid bill, and they support the pro-Israel candidates with the highest chances of filling them. In effect, this means pro-Israel PACs would support evangelical and Republican candidates, like Newt Gingrich, regardless of their views on other issues such as imposing prayers in U.S. schools, which most Jewish-Americans oppose. As James Zogby emphasizes, the actions of those PACs are “not a reflection of Jewish attitudes, since the bulk of the PAC money is derived from a rather small group of individuals (less than one thousand) and are directed by an even narrower group of leaders to serve a single issue.”³¹⁹ Based on late 1990s polls, “over two-thirds of American Jews support[ed] the Middle East peace process and, surprisingly, a large percentage of American Jews even support[ed] a Palestinian state,”³²⁰ while the majority of Jewish-American leaders and PACs directors supported the hard-line policies of the Likud government of Netanyahu.

Additionally, PACs do not take into consideration the fact that “the overwhelming majority of American Jews are repulsed by the Christian fundamentalist agenda that has been adopted by the Republican majority in Congress” since the 1990s.³²¹ A study by Beth Rosenson et al on Senators sponsorship/cosponsorship of legislations favoring Israel from 1993-2002 indicates that from the 103rd-105th sessions of Congress, Senators identification as a Republican and/or evangelical produced “higher levels of support for Israel.”³²² Republicans were “75% more likely to support Israel at the highest level than Democrats,”³²³ while particularly in the 104th Congress (1995-1996), when the Oslo I and Oslo II agreements were being implemented, “evangelical identification ha[d] its strongest impact.”³²⁴ One of the main findings of this study indicates that “conservatives appear to have replaced liberals...as the most vocal supporters of Israel.”³²⁵

IV. Evangelical Christians’ Reactions

As Colin Chapman argues, “It is hard to think of another situation anywhere in the world where politics have come to be so closely bound up with religion and where scriptures have such a profound effect on political action.”³²⁶ After Netanyahu’s first election in 1996, 70 American evangelicals and fundamentalist leaders were flown to the Holy Land for a tour and a conference at which they “pledged their support for what was essentially a Likud agenda.”³²⁷

Additionally, when Benjamin Netanyahu visited Washington in 1998, “his initial meeting was not with President Clinton but with Jerry Falwell and more than 1,000 fundamentalist Christians. The crowd saluted the prime minister as ‘the Ronald Reagan of Israel,’ and Falwell pledged to contact more than 200,000 evangelical pastors, asking them to ‘tell President Clinton to refrain from putting pressure on Israel to comply with the Oslo accords.’”³²⁸

Evangelical Christian leaders in the U.S. do not only believe that “the West Bank forms an integral part of the land given by God to the Jewish people forever,” but they also have acted on those beliefs by “assisting Jews to emigrate from the former Soviet Union, [and]...support[ing] their resettlement within the Occupied Territories.”³²⁹ The evangelical Christian organization of Bridges for Peace (BFP) asks the rhetorical question: “‘What is so sacred about the June 4th, 1967 line?’ Nothing, they argue, since historically this was all part of biblical Israel and ‘squarely won in defensive battles in 1967 and 1973.’”³³⁰

Stephen Sizer points out that the 1990 Jerusalem resolution came about as a result of efforts from the International Christian Embassy of Jerusalem (ICEJ), which made Representative Richard Hellman testify before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in February, 1984 “to urge the U.S. to move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and recognize the city as the capital of Israel.”³³¹ In an effort to enforce the 1990 Jerusalem resolution, in 1992 the ICEJ also “sponsored various receptions marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of what they referred to as the ‘Reunification of Jerusalem.’”³³² Additionally, in 1997 the ICEJ “gave support to a full-page advert placed in the *New York Times* entitled ‘Christians Call for a United Jerusalem,’” which was signed by prominent evangelical leaders such as Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell.³³³

Moreover, in 1991 the evangelical Christian president of Religious Roundtable launched the Christian Israel Public Affairs Committee (CIPAC), with the initial task of lobbying Congress on the issue of Israeli loan guarantees,³³⁴ as well as Jerusalem. CIPAC “was modeled on the powerful American Israel Political Affairs Committee (AIPAC),” and one of the members of its board of directors was former AIPAC Executive Director, Tom Dine.³³⁵ In the 1990s CIPAC was one of the main lobbying organizations that opposed the implementation of the Oslo Accords. Moreover, the Unity Coalition for Israel (UCFI) was founded by Esther Levens in Kansas in 1992 and by the early 2000s it comprised 200 “different and autonomous Jewish and Christian

organizations, representing 40 million members who are ‘dedicated to secure Israel’[and] their principle strategy is to lobby the US media and political establishment, to challenge what they term ‘disinformation and propaganda’ and to express ‘the truth about Israel.’”³³⁶

Further, in response to the signing of the Oslo Accords, Ted Beckett founded in 1995 the Christian Friends of Israeli Communities (CFOIC) with the purpose of “forg[ing] links between illegal Jewish settlements in the Occupied Territories and churches and individual Christians internationally.”³³⁷ Under CFOIC’s “Adopt-a-Settlement” program, 39 illegal settlements in the West Bank “were adopted by over fifty denominational as well as independent churches in the U.S., South Africa, Germany, Holland, and the Philippines.”³³⁸ The settlement of Har Barch was adopted by The Faith Christian Center in Indiana; the settlement of Itamar was adopted by the Johnston Federal United Methodist Church in Ohio; the settlement of Alei Zahav was adopted by Clavary Chapel in Tennessee; and the settlement of Shiloh was adopted by Shiloh Christian Fellowship in California.³³⁹ CFOIC works closely with Lev Ha’Arets, “the tourism body for Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, to promote Christian tours to biblical sites now managed by the settlers,” in order to help the settlements “in becoming self-sustaining.”³⁴⁰

At the Third International Christian Zionist Congress that was held in Jerusalem in February 1996, 1,500 delegates from over 40 countries declared: “The land of Israel has been given to the Jewish people by God as an everlasting position by an eternal covenant. The Jewish people have the absolute right to possess and dwell in the land, including Judea, Samaria [the West Bank], Gaza, and the Golan.”³⁴¹ CFOIC warns that withdrawals from Palestinian cities, or implementation of the Oslo Accords, “run counter to ‘God’s Plan for the Jewish nation.’”³⁴² CFOIC’s Adopt-a-Settlement program is thus intended “to be a means by which financial assistance as well as practical support for the settlers is delivered.”³⁴³ This includes “medical equipment, computers, preschool supplies, library books..., furniture,” as well as specific programs such as ICEJ’s “Bulletproof Bus for Efrat” and BFP’s “Operation Ezra” that funds more than fifty projects like the settlement farm Sde Bar.³⁴⁴

Furthermore, a serious threat to the peace and security of the region as a whole and that illustrates evangelical Christians’ hastening of Armageddon, is the evangelicals’ support of the Temple Mount Jewish organizations that aim at destroying Al Aqsa mosque and Dome of the Rock, rebuilding the Jewish temple, and reinstating temple worship, priesthood and

sacrifices.³⁴⁵ Those organizations include the Temple Institute, the Jerusalem Temple Foundations, Gush Emunim, Ateret Cohanim, and the Temple Mount Faithful of Gershon Salomon. Speaking at the Christian Zionist Congress in 1998 as a guest of the ICEJ, Salomon asserted: “The mission of the present generation is to liberate the Temple Mount and to remove – I repeat, to remove – the defiling abomination there... We [Jewish people] will fly our Israeli flag over the Temple Mount, which will be minus its Dome of the Rock and its mosques and will have only our Israeli flag and our Temple.”³⁴⁶ In another occasion, Solomon demanded: “The Messiah will not come by himself; we should bring Him by fighting.”³⁴⁷

Grace Halsell argues that “between 1967 and 1990 there were over 100 armed assaults on the Haram Al-Sharif by Jewish militants, often led by rabbis.”³⁴⁸ Instead of condemning such attacks, the Israeli government appointed in 1994 Meir Davidson, “a senior official of Ateret Cohanim, as a municipal adviser on Palestinian properties,” in Jerusalem.³⁴⁹ In 1996 Ateret Cohanim, which is largely funded by tax-exempt donations from Jewish-Americans, opened a tunnel that was “excavated in secret night-time operations,” and “runs the length of the Al Aqsa complex.”³⁵⁰ 65 Palestinians and 15 Israelis were killed in the fighting that broke out following the tunnel’s opening; however, “the Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu proudly visited the tunnel, as have fundamentalist Christian leaders.”³⁵¹ Soon thereafter, the Pentagon under the Clinton administration also gave Israel \$50 million “in excess U.S. military hard ware.”³⁵²

Halsell points out that “millions of U.S. evangelical Christians endorse and financially support this Jewish plan...[and they give] their gold wedding rings and gold earrings to finance the mosque’s destruction.”³⁵³ She argues that Stanley Goldfoot of the Jerusalem Temple Foundation raises up to \$100 million a year “through American Christian TV and radio stations and evangelical churches;” and he has also “acknowledged” receiving funds from the ICEJ.³⁵⁴ Other evangelical Christian organizations such as the Christian Broadcasting Network of Pat Robertson and Peter Wagner’s World Prayer Center have also funded Solomon’s Temple Mount Faithful.³⁵⁵ They hasten Armageddon through such actions, which could agitate the entire Muslim world against the state of Israel, given the fact that Al-Aqsa is the second most important holly place in Islam. But they are not worried, as they believe they will be “raptured” and “wafted up to heaven to view the slaughter below.”³⁵⁶ Televangelist Jerry Falwell insists: “I’m not worried. You know why? I ain’t gonna be here!”³⁵⁷

Sizer argues that evangelical Christians in the U.S. also promote hatred of Arabs, which is “personified” in their attitudes toward Yasser Arafat. He points out that in the June 1997 issue of the ICEJ’s *Middle East Intelligence Digest* there was an article entitled ““Evil that will not die: Arafat shares Hitler’s determination to wipe out the Jews.””³⁵⁸ Clarence Wagner of BFP argues that ““We need to encourage others to understand God’s plans, not the man-inspired plans of the U.N., the U.S., the EEC, Oslo, Wye, etc...Messiah is not coming back to a Moslem city called Al-Quds, but to the regathered, restored Jewish city of Jerusalem.”” For those evangelicals, “Arabs and Palestinians are Satanic enemies of the Jewish people,” and peace talks are “not only a waste of time, they demonstrate at best a lack of faith and at worst a rebellious defiance towards God’s plans.”³⁵⁹ Pat Robertson even retorted that “Rabin’s assassination was an act of God, a judgment for his betrayal of his own people.”³⁶⁰

This chapter has followed the progress of the Middle East Peace Process from early 1990s -2000, while highlighting the effects of Palestinian domestic divides, as well as the Israeli vision for settling the conflict, on the actual path of the Peace Process. It has explained the influence of the Israeli lobby on the election and administration of former President Bill Clinton; and the reactions of the Lobby and its evangelical Christian allies to the Peace Process and its implementation. The following chapter investigates the effects of the 9/11 attacks on the Middle East peace policies of the second Bush administration (2001-2008), and how the attacks were used as a tool by pro-Israel U.S. interest groups to further suppress the Palestinian aspirations for a state of their own.

Chapter Three

Advantageous Involvement

The Bush administration's approach to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict after 9/11 was a means towards the end of creating regional stability for its "agenda regarding terrorism and Iraq;" "Bush's end game was not a peace settlement."³⁶¹ At the same time, Israeli policies to putdown the second Palestinian Intifada became looked at by the Bush administration as part of the broader "War on Terror," rather than through the lens of a popular uprising, which gave legitimacy to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land. The attacks "highlighted" the Palestinian use of suicide bombing as a terrorist act. "Coupled with much publicized Palestinian rejoicing in the streets following 9/11, it was not difficult to associate Palestinian terror with the broader war against terror."³⁶² This was further fueled by the Israeli seizure in January, 2002 of an Iranian arms ship that was allegedly on its way to the Palestinian Territories. There was no evidence that "directly implicated Arafat;" some even argued that the ship was bound to Hezbollah in Lebanon.³⁶³ However, "the Israeli government and the lobby worked hard [and successfully] to make the case that Arafat had procured the weapons and explosives to abet his terrorism campaign against Israel."³⁶⁴

After 9/11, the Bush administration "came to see Israel as the 'canary in the coal mine' for Islamic terror...,"³⁶⁵ and its tilt toward Israel became clear in 2002, when Bush met several times with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, "whom he called 'a man of Peace,'" and repeatedly refused to meet with Arafat.³⁶⁶ This is the same Israeli official who "compared the Rabin government [After it signed Oslo II] with the Jewish community council in Europe, whose World War II collaboration with the Nazis is widely blamed in Israel for facilitating the vast slaughter of Jews during the European Holocaust."³⁶⁷ Additionally, "the targeting of terror groups focused on Israel" on November 2, 2002, when the State Department added the Palestinian groups of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, as well as Lebanese Hezbollah, to its list of foreign terrorist organizations, "signaled the 'War on Terror' was wider than al-Qaeda, but also that the U.S. and Israel had developed a relationship of mutual interest in the region."³⁶⁸

Anouar Boukhars and Steve Yetiv paint the picture by contrasting U.S. to European reactions after 9/11. They explain that "the Europeans condemned Palestinian terrorist attacks on Israeli civilians, but at the same time argued that it was quite counterproductive for Israel to

launch major military reprisals, to re-occupy Palestinian-controlled areas, to impose wide-ranging curfews, and to assassinate suspected terrorist masterminds.”³⁶⁹ As Boukhars and Yetiv point out, in the eyes of the Europeans those “tactics” “only exacerbated the problem and provoked even more terrorism.”³⁷⁰ On the other hand, greater understanding to such Israeli policies was given from the U.S, which “was much more likely after 9/11 to view the Israeli tactics through the prism of international terrorism, than were the Europeans.”³⁷¹ When the U.S. blamed Arafat “for not doing enough to stop terrorism,” the Europeans held the position that “he could not control all terrorism.”³⁷²

President Bush Jr. wanted to combat terrorism, and Ariel Sharon succeeded in convincing the Bush administration that the Palestinians were part of the problem, rather than being part of the solution for it; that the Palestinians were determined to “wipe out Israel” just as Bin Laden launched an all-out war on the U.S. and its interests in the region. However, the part that was lost in translation was that the Palestinian moderates’ quest for independence and having a state of their own was not in any way connected to the violent ambitions of the bin Ladens. Arafat and the PA recognized Israel as part of the Oslo Accords and they wanted to have a state living in peace with Israel, but it was the Likud policies of building more and more settlements that have always been the main obstacle for peace. While Arafat “publicly told Osama bin Laden to stop claiming he was fighting for the Palestinians,”³⁷³ President Bush, just like Ariel Sharon, insisted that Arafat must go, and they pursued aggressive policies toward the Palestinian uprising.

I. The Bush Administration and the Middle East Peace Process (2001-2008)

As Kenneth W. Stein highlights, this was particularly enforced by the fact that “on the field of Arab-Israeli diplomacy, the Bush administration could not have inherited a negotiat[ion] process more unlikely to succeed.”³⁷⁴ The region erupted in violence after the failure of the Camp David Summit to deliver a viable and independent Palestinian state, and the failure of that final summit in the Oslo Accords made the Bush administration more pessimistic about mediating between Israel and the Palestinians.

President Bush “inherited” from the Clinton administration the George Mitchell Fact Finding Committee and its report, which was called for at a Sharm al-Shaykh agreement in October, 2000. This Mitchell Report “investigated the underlying causes of the Intifada,

suggested ways to prevent violence from recurring, and offered ways to reduce tensions and build confidence between Palestinians and Israelis.”³⁷⁵ Thus, before 9/11, Bush’s administrative officials “attempted to use [Mitchell’s] report as a springboard for America’s re-engaging in the Arab-Israeli negotiations.”³⁷⁶ Building on the report’s recommendations, then-CIA Director George Tenet was appointed in June, 2001 to “broker a cease-fire” between the Palestinians and the Israelis.³⁷⁷ However, neither the findings of the Mitchell Committee, nor the George Tenet Plan for bringing about a cease-fire were effective; violence continued to escalate, and U.S. executive remained a passive observer.

On the other hand, after Sept. 11, 2001 the Bush administration became more engaged, and according to CATO Institute, it advanced two alternative approaches toward the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. First, it attempted to counter anti-American sentiments in the Arab world, stabilize its presence in the Middle East, and enhance its efforts to build an alliance with Arab states for its “War on Terror,” by supporting the Middle East Peace Process.³⁷⁸ In an address at the U.N. General Assembly on November 10, 2001 President Bush became the first U.S. President to “formally declare the U.S. support for the establishment of a Palestinian state.”³⁷⁹ This was a ground-breaking initiative giving the fact that “[a]ll previous attempts to endorse a Palestinian state in the formal language of a Security Council resolution had been vetoed by the U.S.”³⁸⁰ Hence, the Bush administration directly addressed the main reason behind anti-American sentiments in the Middle East, namely the U.S. support of Israel despite its oppression of the Palestinians.

Further, the Bush administration tried to advance the Tenet Plan for reaching a cease-fire by appointing in November, 2001 retired Marine Corps General Anthony Zinni to the region. Zinni did not succeed at building bridges of trust between the two sides, but the Bush administration remained proactive as Secretary of State Colin Powell made multiple trips to Israel and the Palestinian territories, and the Bush administration joined the E.U., Russia and the U.N. in forming the Quartet for peace in the Middle East. The Quartet issued in 2002 the infamous Roadmap for Peace, with provisions for creating a Palestinian state within three years. Furthermore, Colin Powell announced the U.S. support of an Arab initiative calling for the normalization of Arab-Israeli relations conditional to Israel’s withdrawal from all Arab land it has occupied since the 1967 war, and its recognition of a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as a capital. UNSC Res.1397 that endorses this initiative was passed on March 12, 2002 with U.S.

support. However, Israel felt it was being singled out and it turned down the initiative; the populous Palestinian uprising continued; and Israel carried on its “anti-terrorism” campaign with U.S. support.

In March, 2002 the Israeli army launched its Operation Defense Shield, the biggest military “incursion” into Palestinians cities after the 1967 war, as the Israeli army re-occupied Palestinian cities in the West Bank and Israeli tanks surrounded Arafat in his Muqata’a headquarters, nearly demolishing the entire building with Arafat inside. Giving his, as well as Israel’s, resentment of Arafat’s “inability” to stop terrorism—the populous Palestinian Intifada—and in an effort to be more even-handed, President Bush drew “on the broader principles enunciated in the War on Terror,” and decided that “regime change of some form was necessary in the Palestinian Authority.”³⁸¹ Following his White House speech of June, 2002 it became clear that President Bush’s proposal for Palestinian statehood “called for new leaders, a functional democracy, constitution and market economy - prior to statehood,” which, “as one observer notes, had not been accomplished by any Arab state after a half-century of independence.”³⁸² He also called Arafat “the leader of a terrorist organization” and in his June, 2002 speech he asked Arafat “to step down as leader of the Palestinian Authority.”³⁸³

In the lead up to U.S. war on Iraq, President Bush’s call for regime-change in the Middle East “seemed to be making major headway in the reshaping of the Palestinian Authority” as Arafat announced in March, 2003 the creation of a Prime Minister post and the appointment to it of Mahmoud Abbas.³⁸⁴ Moreover, the Palestinians “began to speak openly of problems with Palestinian Authority corruption.”³⁸⁵ However, a clash of power and autonomy between Arafat and Abbas made the latter resign, and following a suicide bombing in Israel, Sharon launched a second major military operation in the West Bank with U.S. support.

The Peace Process on the “Policy Backburner”

According to Cato Institute, the Bush administration then started pursuing its second approach toward the Conflict: putting the Peace Process on the “policy backburner,” while applying, or attempting to apply, U.S. military power against radical players in the region such as Iraq and Iran, and supporting Israeli wars against the two Iranian proxies of Hezbollah and Hamas.³⁸⁶

With the beginning of U.S. war on Iraq, academics and analysts' attention became "focused on a White Paper written in 1996 for then-Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu" by Douglas Faith, David Wurmser and Richard Perle, called "A Clean Break! A New Strategy for Securing the Realm."³⁸⁷ President Bush's policy towards the Middle East after the 9/11 attacks simply reflected the provisions of this paper. "The realm the neocons sought to secure was not the United States, but Israel. American policy would be so manipulated that the United States would use its military power to fight Israel's enemies—of which Iraq was the first."³⁸⁸ Douglas Feith's Office of Special Plans was the primary reason behind the false information that was provided to the Pentagon on Iraq's "weapons of mass destruction." Former Foreign Service officer, Andrew I. Killgore argues that "The OSP's real purpose was to promote an American war against Iraq, during which Israel would have a free hand in Palestine."³⁸⁹

Attempting to reach a peaceful settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict formally became a secondary objective with the start of U.S. campaign against Iraq in 2003. In "a grandiose" speech in February 2003, Bush linked Iraq to Palestinian "terror" and argued that "once the patron is gone, Palestinian terror would be reduced, and willing Palestinian moderates could rein an independent Palestine."³⁹⁰ However, "the road from Baghdad did lead to Jerusalem, but not as the Bush administration expected it would."³⁹¹

After Arafat was deceased in November, 2004 and Mahmoud Abbas won the Palestinian presidential elections of early 2005, a peace summit between Sharon and Abbas at Sharm el-Sheikh led to a cease fire between the two sides. Sharon claimed that he finally found a partner for peace. This was followed by the implementation of Sharon's "unilateral" disengagement plan from the Gaza Strip in September, 2005, which was not coordinated with the PA and side stepped the provisions of the Roadmap for establishing a Palestinian state by the end of 2005. However, President Bush still supported the Israeli plan in a letter to Ariel Sharon in April, 2004 as well as the Israeli request for a \$2.2 billion in additional U.S. aid to finance the withdrawal.³⁹²

In May, 2004 eighty-two "former American diplomats wrote President George W. Bush to express their firm believe that his...endorsement of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's unilateral 'disengagement plan' was not in the best interests of the U.S., or Israel, or the Palestinians. Through his endorsement," they argued, "Bush had closed the door to negotiations with Palestinians and the possibility of a Palestinian state."³⁹³ Bush's letter to Ariel Sharon (See

index–Ch.3 for full text of the letter) endorsing the disengagement plan denied “the right of refugees to return to their homeland,” and supported Israel’s possession of “five large illegal settlement blocs in the occupied West Bank” as part of any future agreement.³⁹⁴ Additionally, Bush’s endorsement of the plan, argues the former American diplomats, “severely damaged long standing U.S. policy” that strictly called for full Israeli withdrawal back to the 1967 borders.³⁹⁵

The implication of the disengagement plan became clear soon thereafter, as the Bush administration “permitted, if not encouraged, Israeli wars on neighboring Hezbollah and Hamas forces in 2006 and 2008, partly out of concern that the post-Saddam Middle East tilted the balance of power toward Iran and its proxies.”³⁹⁶ During the second half of 2006, more than 400 Palestinians were killed in Gaza Strip as a result of a five-month Israeli operation to free Gilad Shalit, an Israeli soldier that Hamas militants kidnapped.³⁹⁷ The Gaza Strip was put under Israeli siege soon thereafter and the Israeli operation destroyed its main electricity power station, leaving its population in darkness for years to come. A UNSC resolution condemning Israel’s “excessive” use of force during that operation, while “calling on the Palestinians to stop their rocket attacks” was vetoed by the U.S.³⁹⁸ Thus, it became seen that the main effect of the disengagement plan was to further undermine the Palestinian demands for an independent and contingent Palestinian state and to make them pre-occupied with issues of autonomy. At the same time, the U.S. focus on “combating terrorism” pushed the Peace Process further and further into the policy backburner.

During the 2006 Israeli war on Gaza Strip, Arab states renewed their 2002 initiative, and even Hamas’ Foreign Minister, Mahmoud Zahar “endorsed” their call “for comprehensive Middle East peace negotiations under U.N. sponsorship.”³⁹⁹ Hamas’ spokesman, Khaled Meshal, also indicated Hamas’ “willingness to coexist with Israel” as he talked about “establishing a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza.”⁴⁰⁰ Talks between Mahmoud Abbas and Hamas’ Prime Minister Ismail Haniyah nearly led to an agreement in mid-November, 2006 “on a plan calling for Hamas officials to be replaced by neutral administrators in a government of national unity with Fatah” and for the new government to release Shalit.⁴⁰¹ On Nov. 27, 2006 Sharon’s Labor-Party successor, Ehud Olmert, himself offered that “Israel would free ‘numerous Palestinian prisoners,’ reduce the number of checkpoints, dismantle some West Bank settlements, and release Palestinian tax revenues collections as soon as the Palestinians released Cpl. Gilad Shalit and established a government that agreed to renounce violence, recognize

Israel, and accept previous Israeli-Arab peace agreements.”⁴⁰² However, the U.S. did not back those peace efforts, and an Israeli attack on the town of Beit Hanoun, which “culminated a week in which 62 Palestinians had been killed,” made the Abbas-Haniyah agreement be indefinitely postponed.⁴⁰³

After supporting the municipal and parliamentary elections in the Palestinian Territories in late 2006-early 2007, the Bush administration was dissatisfied with Hamas’ winning of majority seats (56%) in the parliamentary elections, and it immediately placed its financial assistance to the Palestinian Authority on-hold. Bush viewed Arafat “as either unable or unwilling to stop terrorism and thus part of the problem. Yet, even after Arafat, the U.S. did not make a priority out of achieving a solution.”⁴⁰⁴ Following the Palestinian elections, the Bush administration pursued a different agenda, as Hamas had been designated by the State Department as a terrorist organization. In its efforts to “combat terrorism,” the Bush administration launched an “Iran-contra” styled operation in Gaza Strip to oust Hamas from the power positions it held as a result of the elections.⁴⁰⁵

Tying Israel’s occupation of Palestinian land to U.S. foreign policy proved to be an effective Israeli strategy, as Hamas’ entry into the political process became the major focus of U.S. “War on Terror,” and U.S. support of Palestinian democracy retracted. In late 2006, the Bush administration requested an emergency \$86 million from Congress to support Mahmoud Abbas’ PA forces with weapons and training.⁴⁰⁶ As the funds were pending approval from Congress, the State Department reached out to other countries in the region such as Egypt, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates; and their contributions led to the shipment of the first load of arms for Fatah and PA forces in Gaza Strip.⁴⁰⁷ Consequently, heavy fighting between the Palestinian rival groups of Fatah and Hamas was sparked, but with the mediation of Saudi Arabia, they signed in February, 2007 an agreement to establish a unitary-government in Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Following the signing of this agreement, the U.S. and the E.U. officially withdrew their financial aid to the PA and the Bush administration launched its Action Plan for Palestinian Presidency. U.S. General Keith Dayton worked closely with Muhammed Dahalan, one of the leaders of PA forces in Gaza Strip and the West Bank, to arrange for “specialized training abroad” for a selected group of Fatah fighters, while Abbas was to replace the unitary-

government by an emergency government at the end of 2007.⁴⁰⁸ Thereafter, this new group of “authority” was to increase its “level and capacity” to 15,000 men over a period of five years, with their needed training, salaries, arms, and equipments provided for by the U.S.⁴⁰⁹ This Action Plan for the Palestinian Presidency was described by Dahalan’s aid, Bassil Jaber, as a plan “to create a security establishment that could protect and strengthen a peaceful Palestinian state living side by side with Israel.”⁴¹⁰ However, giving the low popularity of Mohammed Dahalan among Hamas forces; leaks about this Action Plan in the Jordanian newspaper, *Al Majd*, led to the renewal of armed-clashes between Fatah and Hamas, and the arrival of 500 heavy-armed Fatah National Security Forces, fresh from training camps in Egypt, further intensified the situation.⁴¹¹

On June 7, 2007 “there was another damaging leak, when the Israeli newspaper *Ha’aretz* reported that Abbas and Dayton had asked Israel to authorize the biggest Egyptian arms shipment yet—to include dozens of armored cars, hundreds of armor-piercing rockets, thousands of hand grenades, and millions of rounds of ammunition.”⁴¹² Just before the second group of Fatah National Security Forces was scheduled to leave for training in Egypt, “the coup began in earnest,” and within a few days Hamas took control of the Gaza Strip, Abbas dissolved the unitary government agreement and established an emergency government in the West Bank, and Gaza Strip became put under tighter Israeli siege.⁴¹³ The goal of the Bush administration was to eventually cleanse the Gaza Strip of Hamas forces, but Hamas struck first and its coup forced the PA forces out of Gaza Strip.

As Robert Novak notes, Colin Powel’s departure from the Secretary of State during President Bush’s second term (2005-2008), ““eliminated the administration’s last major figure who was at all serious about the Peace Process.”⁴¹⁴ After sparking that Palestinian civil war, which resulted in nearly 700 deaths among the Palestinians,⁴¹⁵ the Bush administration resumed its “peace efforts” and a Peace Conference was held in Annapolis in November, 2007. The conference promised the establishment of a Palestinian state within a year, but “Bush had little leverage or no credibility to bring states to the table, and little came from the final year of talking despite numerous shuttling visits by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.”⁴¹⁶

The “peace efforts” of President Bush’s final year in office were taking place while the population of Gaza Strip was being put under heavy siege that starved the population and cut off

their basic food, medicine, electricity and other humanitarian needs as a way of isolating Hamas. Talks about peace were being carried out as the situation between southern Israel and Gaza Strip witnessed increased intensity and exchanges of assaults that eventually led to an all-out Israeli war. At the same time, “the American government and Mainstream Media...voiced not one word of protest. The U.S. only [gave] Israel more and more weapons to continue the attempted starvation”⁴¹⁷ of the Gaza population and Hamas’ moderate remarks in late 2006 about coexisting with Israel were simply ignored rather than worked with. The defining course of action was the Israeli-U.S. alliance in their War on Terror.

II. U.S. Public Opinion and the Media

U.S. public opinion and the general perceptions of U.S. citizens after the 9/11 attacks also linked Israeli policies to putdown the Palestinian Intifada to the U.S. War on Terror. Even after the high death toll in Palestinian lives (more than 1400 people) due to Israel’s war on Gaza strip from December, 2008 – January, 2009 Gallup polls indicated that 59% of Americans sympathized with Israel, while only 18% sympathized with the Palestinians.⁴¹⁸ The 9/11 attacks and U.S. War on Terror made the humanity of the Israelis emphasized, while the Palestinians became de-humanized.

Due to the fact that U.S. media “highlighted” some Palestinians’ rejoicing of the attacks in Gaza streets, a Zogby International poll from October, 2001 indicated that “the PA was seen favorably by only 10% of U.S. public and negatively by 72%.”⁴¹⁹ Such findings were exploited by the public-relations campaign of pro-Israel groups in the U.S. Earlier in 1997, when U.S. media were reporting on the Clinton administration’s efforts to stop Netanyahu’s Har Homa settlement project, the media watchdog group of CAMERA solicited \$160,000 in public funding “to conduct ‘a multi-faceted campaign to expose the ‘bias’ and promote more complete and accurate reporting’ in the *New York Times*.”⁴²⁰ While this was motivated by the perceived need of providing a cover-up for such Israeli policies, it soon became evident that CAMERA succeeded in having this cover up ingrained within the institutional and publishing character of *New York Times* during the Palestinian Intifada.

For instance, a study by Susan Ross on the way *New York Times* editorials framed the Palestinian-Israeli conflict from March, 2001-March, 2002 found that after 9/11, “the losses and

suffering of the Palestinians...[were] made acceptable... Their human costs often [were] ignored or minimized.”⁴²¹ Ross reports that the editorials portrayed the Palestinians “as a configuration of hate, a plague of death, a suicide cult, and a puppet spouting anti-American and anti-Israeli vitriol.”⁴²² Her study indicates that after 9/11 NYT editorials depicted “the Palestinians as terrorist suicide bombers led by a bitter hypocrite [Arafat] who taunts Israel to hide his own ineptitude.”⁴²³ They showed that “the needs for Palestinian sovereignty and security is routinely presented as less substantial or legitimate than the same interests of the Israelis. What Israelis deserve; Palestinians are begrudgingly or conditionally granted.”⁴²⁴ Ross highlights that “the relative preponderance of editorials...immediately after Sep. 11 indicates that *New York Times* editorials did tie the conflict to the global anti-terrorism initiative of the United States,”⁴²⁵ to rally public opinion support of Israel’s crackdown on the Palestinian Intifada.

Another two-year study by If Americans Knew found that during the first year of the Intifada *The New York Times* reported on 42% of Palestinian deaths and on 119% of Israeli deaths, while in reality “over three times more Palestinians were being killed than Israelis.”⁴²⁶ IFK’s study notes that when in 2004 eight Israeli and 176 Palestinian children were killed, the *New York Times* “headlines and lead paragraphs reported on Israeli children’s deaths at a rate almost seven times greater than Palestinian deaths.”⁴²⁷ When IFK presented such finding to *The New York Times*, they were simply ignored, or purposefully not acknowledged.⁴²⁸ Richard H. Curtiss points out that Abe Rosenthal, then-chief editor of *The New York Times*, had a “passionate Attachment to Israel.”⁴²⁹ Alfred M. Lilienthal recalled that, for instance, when Thomas Friedman described the Israeli 1982 bombardment of Beirut as “indiscriminate” for a *New York Times* article, Rosenthal gave Friedman a \$5000 raise but warned him: “if you pull a stunt like that again, you are fired.”⁴³⁰ The *New York Times*, which is considered “‘the newspaper of record,’ with hundreds of newspapers” subscribed to its *News Service*, also referred to settlements such as Gilo and Har Homa as “neighborhoods in Jerusalem.”⁴³¹

Robert Murdoch, the owner of more than 120 news corporations in the U.S. himself has “strong personal and business attachments to Israel,” which made him “become a strong political backer and close friend of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.”⁴³² Murdoch’s PAC of “News America Holding” even makes campaign contributions to Israel’s supporters in Congress, such as Rep. Howard Berman, Eric Cantor, Steny Hoyer and Harry Reid, among others.⁴³³ A study by Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) found that “only four of 99 network reports on the

Middle East from Sept. 28 to Nov. 2 2001 mentioned occupation,” leaving the public unaware that the Israeli army during that period was “in Palestinian cities in violation of international law.”⁴³⁴

A second study by If Americans New found that from Sep. 29, 2000 to March 31, 2001 the *San Francisco Chronicle* “gave readers a false sense of parity between Israelis and Palestinians by reporting nearly equal number of deaths on both sides, despite the fact that Palestinians [were] being killed at a rate three to four times greater than Israelis,” while the *San Jose Mercury News* even “inverted the death rates in its front-page headlines.”⁴³⁵ Alex Ionides points out that coverage by American mainstream media of the frequent Israeli “incursions” into the Palestinian Territories during the first five years of the Intifada generally labeled them as “operations to filter out ‘militants’ or ‘terrorists.’”⁴³⁶ In effect, they “essentially ignore the injustices perpetrated on the Palestinians by the Israeli military, and rarely question[ed] the facts on the ground.”⁴³⁷

Robert Fisk notes that journalists became required to say “Israel is under siege by Palestinians (rather than occupying Palestinian land), that Palestinians are responsible for the violence (even though Palestinians are the principle victims), that Arafat turned down a good deal at Camp David (though he was offered just over 60 percent of his land, not 94 percent), and that Palestinians indulge in child sacrifice,” rather than Palestinian children being shot to death by the Israeli Army.⁴³⁸ According to Fisk, this made it easier to learn about “the brutality of Israeli soldiers” through Israeli newspapers such as *Ha’aretz* than the American media.⁴³⁹

The Israeli lobby manipulated the media and public debates in the U.S. regarding the Israeli treatment of the Palestinians during the second Intifada to the extent that Fisk compared its targeting of academics, analysts and reporters “who dare to criticize Israel (or tell the truth about the Palestinian uprising)” to the “MaCarthyite” era.⁴⁴⁰ The Zionist Organization of America demanded for instance the dismissal of Edward Said’s professorship from Columbia University “solely because he points out, with clinical ferocity and painful accuracy,” argues Fisk, “the historical tragedy of Palestinian dispossession, the brutality of Israel’s continued occupation and the bankruptcy of the Oslo ‘peace’ agreement.”⁴⁴¹

In 2004, in anticipation of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling on Israel’s separation Wall in the West Bank, which considered it illegal under International law, “hundreds

of American Jewish Activists launched a concentrated pre-emptive media campaign...to minimize negative publicity for Israel.”⁴⁴² They contacted local news organizations across America “to argue—in advance of...ICJ’s decision—that Israel has the right to fend off terrorists,” and their messages “were carefully crafted and orchestrated” by The Israel Project, a Washington-based pro-Israel advocacy group.⁴⁴³ This event was cosponsored by the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, the United Jewish Communities and the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, and as a result of it a Community Relations Council network was established to coordinate media strategies in local communities.⁴⁴⁴

In retrospect Israel’s siege on Gaza Strip was rarely criticized, and U.S. public opinion’s support for Israeli/U.S. policy toward the Palestinians was further strengthened. Moreover, the Palestinian Intifada’s demands for an independent Palestinian state were not addressed, and Israeli occupation of the West Bank was given legitimacy.

III. U.S. Congress and the Middle East Peace Process

This right-or-wrong support for Israel did not only manipulate U.S. public opinion through censoring the media and labeling critics as anti-Semitic (i.e. Jimmy Carter) or as “self-hating Jews” (i.e. Norman Finkelstein and Norman Chomsky), but it was also carried out in U.S. Congress, where legislators were competing to please their campaign contributors. As explained in Ch.1, the executive and the legislative foreign policy roles are particularly complementary to one-another in times of war. Additionally, Congress reflects the opinion of the general public, since congressmen are closer to the electorate and they try to represent them during the public policy debates on the Hill; but Congressmen could also be manipulated by other factors, just as public opinion is heavily influenced by media watchdog groups. All such mechanisms worked in sync with one another in regards to U.S. policy towards the Palestinians after 9/11.

AIPAC and its “dollar-dispending minions” keep record of congressional votes on Israel and they financially subsidize the winning, or losing, of their “friends and foes.”⁴⁴⁵ For instance, they donated \$300,000 to the single election of Artur Davis During the 2002 congressional election cycle.⁴⁴⁶ Pro-Israel PACs in this case supported the challenger of five-term incumbent Representative Earl Hillard of Alabama’s 7th congressional district, because Hillard had other interest to represent, namely those of the African-American community, and “refused to play

Steppin' Fetchit for Israel."⁴⁴⁷ Hillard was once quoted as saying “we never pass anything bashing the Israelis when they do something wrong,” and comparing the Palestinians to American civil rights activists in the late 1960s;⁴⁴⁸ thus, he was targeted for defeat by AIPAC.

While pro-Israel PACs contribute to the elections of hundreds of congressmen at a much higher rate than Arab/Muslim-American PACs (See Table 3 and Table 4 in Index-Ch.3), their campaign contributions are usually made to a selected group of candidates. For the 2005-2006 election cycle, Pro-Israel PACs contributed to the campaigns of 271 candidates.⁴⁴⁹ However, during that election cycle they targeted a group of 21 candidates for an average contributions of \$68,000 each, while the remaining 251 candidates they favored received an average of only \$6,000 each.⁴⁵⁰ “In other words, by giving modest ‘retainers’ to the vast majority to whom they contributed, the pro-Israel PACs could give substantial amounts—enough, perhaps, to make a difference in close elections—to a handful of candidate.”⁴⁵¹ This also leaves room for competition among congressmen to be part of the targeted group for high levels of contributions, by voting for, sponsoring and co-sponsoring resolutions that favor Israel.

107th Congress (2001-2002)

During the 107th Congress, both of Israel’s staunchest supporters and top recipients of campaign contributions from pro-Israel PACs, Jesse Helms and Sam Brownback, remained in the Senate positions of Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Near East Subcommittee, respectively. Further, Ben Gilman, who was another asset for AIPAC in Congress, became the Chairman of the Europe, Middle East and South Asia Subcommittee. Other members of those committees and subcommittees such as Shelley Berkley started this session of Congress by saying “it was time to regard Arafat and the Palestinians as ‘terrorists.’”⁴⁵²

During the 107th Congress, the campaign promise of George W. Bush to start the move of U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem was enforced by the passage of series of resolutions, including H.CON.RES.30, H.R.598, and H.R.1643.⁴⁵³ Co-sponsors of all those resolutions, such as Jewish-American Eric Cantor, were among the top-recipients of campaign contributions from pro-Israel PACs (See Table 4 in Index-Ch.3). Additionally, H.R.2500 and S.1215 called upon the State Department to re-enforce the Jerusalem Act of 1995 by 1) placing

the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem “under the supervision of the U.S. ambassador to Israel;” 2) making “any official U.S. government documents that list countries and their capital cities identify Jerusalem as the capital of Israel;” and 3) recording the place of birth as Israel in all passports, registration of birth certificates, or certificates of nationality of U.S. citizens born in Jerusalem.⁴⁵⁴ Those provisions became inserted in all subsequent appropriation bills for the State Department and their effects on the Peace Process were simply ignored, since the campaign contributors of the sponsors of such resolutions aimed at both: keeping the status quo as it was unfolding, and strengthening the Israeli possession of Palestinian land.

At the same time, rather than acknowledging the demands of the Palestinian uprising and attempting to enforce the call for a two-state resolution, H.Res.2566 demanded a removal of all direct and indirect aid to the PA “unless the president certifie[d] ‘that no excavation of the Temple Mount in Israel is being conducted, other than that authorized by the Israeli Antiquities Authority.’”⁴⁵⁵ Eric Cantor, who introduced this resolution, declared that his goal is “to fight ‘all efforts to create a Palestinian State’ and ‘strong-arm Israel into sacrificing its land.’”⁴⁵⁶ Cantor also introduced H.R.3624 to prohibit any U.S. funds from being used ‘for any form of assistance directly or indirectly to the Palestinian Authority or any instrumentality of the Palestinian authority.’”⁴⁵⁷

As Shirl McArthur indicates, Pro-Israel groups’ success in influencing U.S. Media coverage after 9/11 was met with “overwhelming success in the U.S. Congress...This [was] evident by the steady stream of bills and resolutions in both houses of Congress designed to condemn or punish the Palestinians.”⁴⁵⁸ H.R.2098 and S.1377 called for establishing in the Department of Justice an office “to, among other things, monitor acts of ‘international terrorism’ allegedly committed by Palestinians.”⁴⁵⁹ H.R.1087 prohibited “all direct or indirect aid to the PA ‘or for programs, projects, and activities to the West Bank or Gaza,’ unless the president certifie[d] to Congress that the PA leadership...has ‘taken all actions within its capacity to bring an end to the violence’” of the second Palestinian uprising.⁴⁶⁰

H.Res.1795, The Ackerman bill, called for denying visas to PLO and PA officials, cutting off aid, except humanitarian assistance, to the West Bank and Gaza, downgrading the PLO office in Washington, and designating the PLO ‘or one or more of its constituent groups’ as a ‘foreign terrorist organization.’”⁴⁶¹ Additionally, in an effort that was echoed by manipulated media

outlets, Elliot Engel introduced H.CON.RES.202 to condemn “the Palestinian Authority and various Palestinian organizations for [allegedly] using children as soldiers and inciting children to acts of violence and war,” rather than condemning the Israeli army for killing innocent children, and it urged the president “to withhold any future assistance to the PA until it stop[ed] the use of children in armed conflict.”⁴⁶² Further, Senator Bob Smith introduced S.Res.157, which urged the State Department to “redesignate” the PLO as a terrorist organization.⁴⁶³

Balanced and coherent statements were predictably ignored or sidestepped in U.S. Congress, which included those of Rep. James Traficant who stated that “Bombs alone will not stop terrorists. America must pursue a comprehensive strategy, and part of that strategy should support statehood for Palestine...Until the issue of a Palestinian homeland is resolved, there will always be terrorists.”⁴⁶⁴ The Jewish-American magazine, *Forward*, reported that during the second session of a three-part hearing chaired by Benjamin Gilman on U.S. Policy Towards the Palestinians after 9/11, “every Jewish lawmaker present [i.e. Tom Lantos, Gary Ackerman, Shelley Berkley and Eliot Engel] was outspoken in rejecting efforts...to draw distinctions between Palestinian terrorism and the kind identified with bin Laden.”⁴⁶⁵

Such pro-Israel voices in Congress worked hard, tirelessly, and successfully, to make the case that the Israeli crackdown on the Palestinian Intifada should be looked at as part of the broader U.S. war on terror, rather than through the lens of a popular uprising. As a result, H.CON.RES.222 declared Congress’ support of Israel “in its legitimate exercise of internationally recognized rights of self-defense,” and H.CON.RES.278 “recount[ed] that the U.S. is engaged in a war against terrorism and claim[ed] that ‘Israel has fallen victim to numerous similar unspeakable acts of violence committed by terrorists against the people of Israel.’”⁴⁶⁶ H.CON.RES.280, which was introduced by Tom Lantos and Henry Hyde, also expressed “solidarity with Israel in the fight against terrorism.”⁴⁶⁷

At the same time, Senators Nita Lowey, Mitch McConnell, and Dianne Feinstein, among others, reinforced the restrictions of the Ackerman Bill on the PA and Arafat by introducing an identical bill, S.1409, and S.2194 (The Arafat Accountability Bill). Eighty-nine Senators also signed an AIPAC drafted letter calling on George W. Bush “to remain steadfast” in standing with Israel, to “express that solidarity with Israel publicly,” and to continue his policy of not

meeting with Arafat “until he has taken the necessary steps to end the violence and terrorism against Israel.”⁴⁶⁸

Additionally, in October, 2001 outspoken evangelical Christian Tom Delay joined Jewish-American Tom Lantos in writing to Secretary of State Colin Powell to urge that the U.S. includes Hamas, Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad “as part of its war on terrorism;” thereby defining official U.S. policy towards the Palestinians for years to come.⁴⁶⁹ Tom Delay then introduced the Solidarity with Israel Bill, H.RES.392, which supported “additional United States assistance to help Israel defend itself.”⁴⁷⁰ Soon after the 9/11 attacks, Lantos even asked all members present at a hearing of the House Middle East Subcommittee “to stand for a moment of silence—not in honor of the thousands of victims of the attacks, but in honor of one Israeli colonist [settler] who had been killed in occupied Palestine.”⁴⁷¹ On at least two occasions during the first session of 107th Congress, Lantos also “demanded a roll call vote [on resolutions], presumably so that AIPAC could take names,”⁴⁷² of who doesn’t express unconditional support of Israel.

Moreover, in March, 2002 a letter signed by 235 Representatives, and initiated by one of the top recipients of campaign contributions from pro-Israel PACs, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, “commend[ed] Bush for his strong criticism of PA Chairman Yasser Arafat and urge[ed] that he ‘take even stronger action’ by adding three Fatah and PA groups to the list of foreign terrorist organizations: Al-Aqsa Maryrs’, the Tanzim, and Force 17.”⁴⁷³ Further, a Senate letter that was signed by 52 Senators, and was initiated by Dianne Feinstein and Mitch McConnell, expressed “‘profound concern and dismay’ at Arafat’s failure ‘to do what is necessary to help bring peace to Israel and his people,’” and urged Vice President Richard Cheney “to reconsider his offer to meet with Arafat ‘until Mr. Arafat and the Palestinian Authority demonstrate their commitment to end the violence.’”⁴⁷⁴ In other words, Congress was looking at the Palestinian uprising through a completely different reality; one that failed to grasp the uprising was a spontaneous popular revolt against the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land; one that refused to acknowledge the rights of the Palestinians to independence and dignity.

At the same time, some balance was shown by Representative John Dingell in H.CON.RES.253, which referred to UNSC resolutions 242, 338, and 1397 in its support of a two-state resolution.⁴⁷⁵ John Dingell was quoted by *The Washington Post* as saying, “‘How do you become an honest broker when you give one side the feeling you’re against them?’”⁴⁷⁶

However, Dingell's remarks were ignored, for being an honest broker was never part of congressional considerations on issues related to Israel. Giving Israel unconditional support has always been the defining course of congressional action. Dingell's H.CON.RES.253 was countered by H.CON.RES.369 of Representative Jim Saxton, which expressed that "the relinquishing of...territories by Israel could give rise to new and potentially mortal threats to the Jewish state."⁴⁷⁷

AIPAC's April 20-22, 2002 meeting was attended by half the members of the Senate and 100 Representatives, as well as several senior administration officials.⁴⁷⁸ At the meeting, Senators Dianne Feinstein, Barbara Boxer, and Mitch McConnell, called Arafat "unreliable, a liar, and worse,"⁴⁷⁹ all in support of Israel's Operation Defense Shield that practically put Arafat under house-arrest. Further, Charles Schumer "criticized the president for 'telling Israel, which is simply trying to defend itself, to pull back'" from West Bank cities it was reoccupying as part of its Operation Defense Shield.⁴⁸⁰

To enforce President Bush's June, 2002 call for reform in the PA, the House appropriation Bill for FY'03 expressed that "no funds may be provided to support a Palestinian state unless the Secretary of State certifies to Congress that several reform measures, including democratic elections, have been undertaken by the Palestinians."⁴⁸¹ On the other hand, while U.S. aid to the Palestinians was being restricted, *The Washington Post* reported on Nov. 26, 2002 that Ariel Sharon's chief of staff met with then-National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice, "to request an extensive new economic aid package for Israel: \$10 billion in loan guarantees and \$4 billion in military aid."⁴⁸²

On Dec.5th, Ariel Sharon told Israeli reporters such loan guarantees and extra aid would arrive "in the very near future," while assuring them that "This aid is unconditional...and not linked to Israel's agreement to a peace plan based on the 'Bush framework,'" of the Roadmap.⁴⁸³ When AIPAC pressured and lobbied legislators to support this additional aid, its argument was that "Israel has never defaulted on a loan," while in reality the U.S. "automatically 'forgives' loans to Israel, so that it never has to repay the money."⁴⁸⁴ From 1974-2002, the U.S. gave Israel \$42 billion in "waved loans,"⁴⁸⁵ and adding to this, on March 25, 2003 president Bush "presented his \$74.7 billion 'war budget' to Congress," which included \$1 billion in additional military grants and \$9 billion in loan guarantees for Israel.⁴⁸⁶

108th Congress (2003-2004)

As the Republicans won majority seats in Congress during the 2002 elections, the congressional tilt toward Israel became more persistent. Rep. Tom Delay became the House Republican Majority Leader and the other evangelical Christian, Rep. Roy Blunt, became the House Majority Whip.⁴⁸⁷ Subsequently, Blunt named Eric Cantor as his Chief Deputy Whip. Cantor is “the House’s only Jewish Republican member, whom one House staff member once referred to as ‘AIPAC’s errand boy.’”⁴⁸⁸ Another AIPAC asset, Rep. Ileana Rose-Lehtinen, became the Chairwoman of the Middle East subcommittee (See Table 4 in Index-Ch.3 for a list of top recipients of campaign contributions from AIPAC’s PACs during that election cycle).

On April 30, 2003, the day when President Bush released the Road Map for peace, a letter signed by 88 Senators and 322 Representatives, circulated by Senators Barbara Boxer, Richard Durbin, John Ensign, Mitch McConnell, and Representatives Roy Blunt, Steny Hoyer, Henry Hyde, and Tom Lantos; called upon Bush to demand a “new Palestinian leadership, the creation of a new Palestinian security apparatus, and a cessation of terrorism before pressing Israel to take any positive actions.”⁴⁸⁹ Additionally, on May 7 Rep. Tom Lantos, Henry Hyde and Gary Ackerman “introduced and passed as an amendment to the State Department Authorization bill, the ‘Israel-Palestinian Peace Enhancement Act,’” which included provisions such as “support[ing] the establishment of a Palestinian state, authorize[ing] a large U.S. aid program for the new state, and call[ing] for the president to encourage a multilateral aid effort.”⁴⁹⁰ S.1029/S.1944 bill by Senator John Ensign was also entitled the “Israel-Palestinian Peace Enhancement Act” and it was passed on May 9.

While the Israel-Palestine Peace Enhancement Act seemed balanced at first sight, it crafted “an eight-item list of requirements” from the PA, which included “holding democratic elections, renouncing terrorism and the incitement to ‘acts against the state of Israel and its citizens;’ and...‘engaging in ongoing and extensive security cooperation with Israel.’”⁴⁹¹ Former Foreign Service officer Shirl McArthur highlights that “with the exception of one ‘finding’ that appears in the House version but not in the Senate bill, all of the actions called for in the act are to come from the Palestinian side, with no mention of either parallel or reciprocal actions by Israel.”⁴⁹² The “finding” stated that “‘Israel should take concrete steps to support the emergence

of a viable, credible Palestinian state;”⁴⁹³ however, it did not require Israel to evacuate the settlements, nor did it tie U.S. aid to Israel to a settlement-evacuation. In other words, it was an enhancement of Israel’s policy of postponing the inevitable, especially given the 3-year framework of the Roadmap. This “finding” was amended in S.1944 by the statement: “Israel has committed itself to concrete steps to achieve that end.”⁴⁹⁴

Speaking at the Israeli Knesset during an AIPAC sponsored trip to Israel in late July, 2003, House Majority Leader Tom Delay declared that “the Palestinian people’s ‘plight is real; they have been oppressed and abused by a pernicious enemy. But their enemy is not Israel, nor its people, nor its democratic government. Their enemy is Yasser Arafat...Israel is not the problem; Israel is the solution.”⁴⁹⁵ However, confining people into air-opened prisons enclosed by concrete Israeli walls is the real oppression the Palestinians face; and that’s just one example of Israel’s occupation policies that find unconditional support in U.S. Congress.

During their AIPAC-sponsored trips to Israel, “many members of Congress” such as Shelley Berkley, were outspoken “in supporting the West Bank wall and criticizing [a] reported State Department plan to penalize Israel for building the wall by deducting an equal amount [of its cost] from the \$9 billion in U.S. loan guarantees.”⁴⁹⁶ Additionally, a House letter circulated by Nita Lowey and Henry Waxman was sent to President Bush on August 5th, 2003 in objection to the State Department’s plan, and stating that “the U.S. must never pressure Israel to take a position or action which would jeopardize the security of its citizens.”⁴⁹⁷ A similar letter in the senate was circulated by Charles Schumer and argued that “By building a security fence in the West Bank, the Israeli government is pursuing a reasonable policy that respects the terms of the cease-fire currently in force and does no violence to the Palestinian people.”⁴⁹⁸

When the 2004 presidential candidate, Howard Dean, stated in a Sep. 2003 New Mexico speech that “the U.S. should not ‘take sides’ in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and that ‘we all know...enormous numbers of the settlements...are going to have to come out;” Sen. Joseph Lieberman replied that Howard Dean proposed “a ‘major break’ from half-century of U.S. policy of explicitly siding with Israel.”⁴⁹⁹ The Bush administration did not reduce the loan guarantees to pressure Israel with regards to the West Bank wall, and the congressional “knee-jerk” support of Israel intensified.

In reaction to the International Court of Justice's hearing on the legality of the Wall, several letters were sent by congressmen to President George W. Bush, Secretary of State Colin Powell, and even U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan in support of Israel. On January 22, 2004 Rep. Gary Ackerman sent a letter to Colin Powell urging that "the Secretary of State...take an active role in challenging the use of the ICJ 'to put Israel on trial.'"⁵⁰⁰ Then, on January 29th co-Chairmen of the Democratic Israel Workshop Group, Henry Waxman and Robert Matsui, sent a letter to President Bush requesting "a U.S. brief before the ICJ in support of Israel's right to implement defensive security measures."⁵⁰¹ It also accused Bush of sending Israel "'mixed signals' by 'claiming that the security fence being built is an obstacle to the peace process, and urged Bush 'to be clear that Israel has the absolute right to defend itself from terrorism.'"⁵⁰²

Further, on February 19, J.D. Hayworth sent a letter to President Bush "supporting 'the right of Israel to protect its people by building a security fence,' and echoing Israel's claim that 'this is a political matter that is outside the jurisdiction of the ICJ.'"⁵⁰³ Furthermore, Senators Hillary Clinton, Charles Schumer, Orrin Hatch, and Gordon Smith "circulated for signatures a letter to Annan urging him to 'reverse' his support for the ICJ hearing."⁵⁰⁴ The letter was signed by 79 (out of 100) Senators. Then, Rep. Mike Pence introduced H.CON.RES.273, which "'support[ed] the construction by Israel of a security fence to prevent Palestinian terrorist attacks and condemn[ed] the decision by the [UNGA] to request the [ICJ] to render an opinion on the legality of the security fence."⁵⁰⁵ H.CON.RES.390, H.CON.RES.371, H.RES.713, as well as S.Res.408 expressed similar provisions; and H.RES.713 referred to the Occupied Territories as "disputed" territories.⁵⁰⁶

M.J. Rosenberg observes that it hasn't mattered whether such measures "'are likely to actually become law, whether they advance U.S. policy goals or whether, if implemented they would benefit Israel. The point is to go on record as blasting Palestinians in the hope that pro-Israel donors and voters believe that anything that hurts Palestinians helps Israel and that they will reward them accordingly.'"⁵⁰⁷

After President Bush endorsed the "unilateral" disengagement plan in his April 14, 2004 letter to Ariel Sharon, H.CON.RES.460 expressed the House's support and stated that the goal is to "'build the capacity and will of Palestinian institutions to fight terrorism, dismantle terrorist organizations, and prevent the areas from which Israel has withdrawn from posing a threat to the

security of Israel,”⁵⁰⁸ rather than building a coherent Palestinian state. H.CON.RES.460 was introduced by Tom Delay and Steny Hoyer, co-sponsored by Tom Lantos and Henry Hyde, among others, and it was passed on June 23 by a roll-call vote of 407-9. Dov Weisglass, senior Sharon aide, called the House vote “a watershed, ‘one of the most important in U.S.-Israel relations.’”⁵⁰⁹ The Israeli government and its U.S. lobby work in a complementary manner. In its essence, H.CON.RES.460 supported the Israeli vision of giving the Palestinians an entity, rather than a state; an entity that would govern the Palestinian civil affairs, while acting as a policing force for Israel and being military controlled by the Israeli army.

109th Congress (2005-2006)

Congress’ unconditional support of Israel continued during its 109th session, and it was given a boost by the outcomes of the 2004 congressional elections. Following those elections Senators Lincoln Chafee and Barbara Boxer remained the Chairman and the Ranking Member, respectively, of the Near Eastern Subcommittee.⁵¹⁰ Additionally, Henry Hyde and Tom Lantos returned as Chairman and Ranking Member of the House International Relations Committee; while Ileana Lehtinen and Gary Ackerman remained the Chairwoman and the Ranking Member of the Middle East Subcommittee. Ackerman, Boxer, Shelly Berkley, Ros-Lehtinen, Lantos, as well as other members of those committees and subcommittees were among the top recipients of campaign contributions from pro-Israel PACs during that election cycle (See Table 4 in Index-Ch.3). During its 109th session, Congress was pre-occupied with other issues on the international arena such as Iraq and Iran, but this did not prevent it from addressing the outcomes of the Palestinian elections and U.S. aid to the PA.

The rise of Mahmoud Abbas to Palestinian presidency brought a lot of optimism. Majority Leader Bill Frist and Minority Leader Harry Reid introduced S.Res.27, which was unanimously passed on Feb.1 and it commended the Palestinian presidential elections of Jan 9, 2005, and “support[ed] the ‘vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.’”⁵¹¹ Majority Whip Roy Blunt and Minority Whip Steny Hoyer also introduced H.Res.56, the House version of that resolution, which was passed on Feb. 2nd.⁵¹² On the other hand, Evangelical Christian Tom DeLay became one of the staunchest challengers to supporting the new Palestinian president with \$200 million in additional economic aid and

Ackerman, who's Jewish, described him as being “more Jewish than the chief rabbi,” by adding many restrictions on the aid package and removing a provision for a presidential waiver of such restrictions.⁵¹³ In a statement that highlighted his changing attitudes, Ackerman criticized DeLay by saying, “if you want to ensure that there will not be a peace process, then you attach enough strings that you strangle the process.”⁵¹⁴

H.R.1143 by Anthony Weiner prohibited aid to the PA “for programs in the West Bank and Gaza unless a series of stringent conditions were met.”⁵¹⁵ On April 28, Weiner also introduced H.R.2036 “to make it illegal for the PLO to maintain an office in the U.S.”⁵¹⁶ Further, the Appropriation Bill for FY'06 included many restrictions on aid to the PA such as an amendment by Shelley Berkley “saying that of the total amount of aid available to the PA, no more than 25 percent may be obligated and spent during any calendar year.”⁵¹⁷ Highlighting the nature of another obstruction, Thomas Reynolds sponsored H.R.588, which reaffirmed Congress' call for recognizing Jerusalem as the united Capital of Israel.⁵¹⁸ Furthermore, Senators Sam Brownback, Mike Crapo, and Gordon Smith introduced S.J.Res.14, “providing for the recognition of Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel before the U.S. recognizes a Palestinian state.”⁵¹⁹

Shirl McArthur notes that in 2005 a group of top recipients of campaign contributions from pro-Israel PACs such as Shelley Berkley, Tom Lantos, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, and Anthony Weiner seemed “oblivious or indifferent to the changes taking place in the Israel-Palestine arena.”⁵²⁰ As M.J. Rosenberg described it in *The Israeli Policy Forum*, they seemed to believe “that humiliating Abbas and the Palestinians helps Israel. For them Israel and Palestine is a zero-sum game: help one, hurt the other, [but] they could not be more wrong.”⁵²¹ This was particularly emphasized by the actions of Republican congressmen such Tom Delay, which reflected their evangelical Christian believes in an apocalyptic eschatological scheme that simply advocates for the battle royal and considers the peace process irrelevant.

Such indifference was carried out parallel to congressional attempts to signal the United Nations out of the equation for a peaceful settlement to the Conflict. In reaction to a U.N. resolution that condemned Israel's 2006 War on Gaza Strip and Lebanon, H.Res.282 “specifically equate[d] anti-Israel actions” at the U.N. with anti-Semitism.⁵²² It's identical Senate version that was introduced by Rick Santorum, S.Res.240, expressed “the sense of the Senate

regarding manifestation of anti-Semitism by U.N. member states and urg[ed] action against anti-Semitism by U.N. officials, U.N. member states, and the Government of the U.S.”⁵²³ Between 1989-2004, the U.S. vetoed twelve UNSC resolutions condemning Israeli actions against the Palestinian demonstrators of the first and the second Intifada and/or condemning Israeli confiscation of Palestinian land and the building of settlements.⁵²⁴ Among their provisions, H.Res.242 and S.Res.240 say that “the President should direct the U.S. Permanent Representative to the U.N. to continue working toward further reduction of anti-Semitic language and anti-Israel resolutions.”⁵²⁵

At the same time, in the lead up to the Palestinian municipal and parliamentary elections of late 2006, Eric Cantor introduced H.Res.575, which advised that “‘‘ Hamas and other terrorist organizations should not participate in elections held by the Palestinian Authority.’’⁵²⁶ After Hamas became a U.S. designated terrorist organization, while its activities never focused on the U.S., efforts were now being carried out to prevent it from participating in a call for democratic changes in the region, made by the U.S. Seventy Senators sent a letter to George W. Bush stating that “‘‘ if terrorist groups such as Hamas were brought into the PA, ‘the U.S.—and no doubt other countries as well—would have little choice but to re-evaluate all aspects of [their] relations with the Palestinian Authority.’’⁵²⁷ H.R.4668 by Rep. Vito Fossella, and S. 2237 by Senator Rick Santorum also called for “‘‘ limiting aid to the PA.’’⁵²⁸

At the highlight of the 108th Congress was the passage of H.R.4681 (The Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act) after Hamas’ winning of the Palestinian Parliamentary elections. H.R.4681 was introduced by Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Tom Lantos, and, among other provisions, it “‘‘ prohibit direct assistance to the PA unless the president issues a ‘certification’ that the PA has met a long, unrealistic list of requirements, including several unrelated to Hamas and the election results.’’⁵²⁹ While the Bush administration worked at ousting Hamas from its democratically held power positions, U.S. Congress ensured with its restrictions on aid to the Palestinians that the moderates in the PA would be equally suppressed.

David Rose’s 2008 article “The Gaza Bombshell” in *Vanity Affairs* highlights that those specific restrictions on U.S. aid to the PA significantly contributed to the weakening of Fatah forces and the Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip. As a result of it, Fatah officials lost their salaries, while Iran emboldened Hamas forces by providing them with their needed financial

capacities.⁵³⁰ The Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act also “restrict[ed] the travel of PA representatives to the U.N., prohibit[ed] a PA or PLO office in the U.S., and tr[ie]d to prevent international financial institutions from helping the PA.”⁵³¹ At its March 5-7, 2006 annual conference, AIPAC specifically promoted this resolution and soon thereafter it became co-sponsored by a total of 296 Representatives.⁵³²

Mitch McConnell introduced the Senate version of this Act, S.2370, which gave the president “slightly more flexibility,” and made the provisions of the House bill regarding restrictions on PA officials “discretionary rather than mandatory.”⁵³³ Allan C. Brownfeld argues that this Act was “watered down” due to the efforts of liberal Jewish-American groups including the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, Americans for Peace Now and the Israel Policy Forum.⁵³⁴ On the other hand, when Rep. Betty McCollum voted against this Act, she “received a phone call from an AIPAC representative in Minnesota saying that her ‘support for terrorists would not be tolerated.’”⁵³⁵ When passed, H.Res.4681 also contained a presidential waiver for its restrictions on visas for PA representatives and the maintenance of a PLO office in Washington, D.C; and S.2370 contained many provisions aimed at Hamas, requiring it to undertake reform.⁵³⁶ At the end; however, both versions of that Act made U.S. aid to the PA and U.S. contact with the new government pursued through microscopic lenses scrutinizing every aspect, including aid to international organizations operating in the Palestinian Territories such as UNRWA.

Consequently, Chairman of the House Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, Rep. Jim Kolbe, inserted a provision in the appropriation bill for FY’06 stating that “no direct aid can be given unless the Secretary of State certifies that the PA has ‘demonstrated its commitment to the principles of nonviolence, the recognition of Israel, and the acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the ‘Roadmap.’”⁵³⁷ Meanwhile, as U.S. aid to the PA was being restricted, Rep. Ileana Rose-Lehtinen introduced H.CON.RES.412, which urged the President and Secretary of State “to affirm as a matter of U.S. policy that Jerusalem must remain the undivided capital of Israel” and that the president should begin “the process of relocating the U.S. Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem.”⁵³⁸ S.CON.RES.98 called for similar provisions; however, in Dec., 2006 President Bush “exercised his waiver authority,” thereby preventing this relocation of U.S. Embassy in Israel based on national security approximations.⁵³⁹

110th Congress (2007-2008)

According to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, the 2006 congressional election cycle increased the number of Jewish-American Senators from 11 to 13, and Representatives from 24 to 29.⁵⁴⁰ Shirl McArthur reports that as a result of the 2006 elections, Israel's "knee-jerk" supporter, Rep. Tom Lantos, became the Chairman of the House International Relations Committee, while the main sponsor of The Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act, Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, was replaced by the relatively moderate Rep. Gary Ackerman as Chairman of the Middle East Subcommittee.⁵⁴¹ Iran was at the center of congressional debates during the 110th Congress; however, some congressional action still took aim at the Palestinians.

Building on the Palestine Anti-Terrorism Act, U.S. aid to the PA was suspended after the signing of the Hamas-PLO unitary government agreement in February, 2007. At the same time, the Bush administration requested an additional \$86 million "to strengthen...Abbas' security forces,"⁵⁴² or to advance its Action Plan for Palestinian Presidency. This request was placed "on hold" by Nita Lowey, while Tom Lantos, Gary Ackerman, Ros-Lehtinen and Mike Pence wrote to Condoleezza Rice "urging her to reconsider the decision."⁵⁴³ State Department spokesman Sean McCormack then said that "in the light of the national unity agreement between Fatah and Hamas, the administration was seeking assurance from Abbas that none of the funds would benefit Hamas."⁵⁴⁴

Additionally, in March, 2007 seventy-nine Senators signed an AIPAC drafted letter to Rice, stating that "no aid or no direct contact" shall be made "with any member of a Palestinian Government that does not explicitly and unequivocally recognize Israel's right to exist, renounce terror, and accept previous agreements."⁵⁴⁵ The liberal Jewish-American organization Brit Tzedek v'Shalom opposed this letter and "urged its supporters to call their senators and tell them not to sign" this letter. Brit Tzedek v'Shalom argued that "At a time when the U.S. should be supporting forces of moderation among the Palestinians, this letter weakens those forces and demonstrates to the Palestinian people that moderation brings them nothing."⁵⁴⁶

At the same time, on April 25, Sam Brownback and Susan Collins introduced yet another resolution regarding Jerusalem, as S.J.Res.12 "provid[ed] for the recognition of Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel before the U.S. recognizes a Palestinian state,"⁵⁴⁷ just as Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert expressed willingness during his negotiations with Abbas to divide

Jerusalem into two capitals. H.RES.895 called for similar provisions and was introduced by Tom Reynolds. Additionally, Tom Lantos' H.CON.RES12 “congratulat[ed] Israel on the 40th anniversary of its victory in the Six-Day War and the reunification of Jerusalem,”⁵⁴⁸ thereby approving Israel’s occupation of Arab land as a result of that war. M.J. Rosenberg notes that this resolution, H.CON.RES.12, “presents more evidence that the U.S. [was] abandoning the role of honest broker.”⁵⁴⁹

However, despite the fact that H.CON.RES12 highlighted the views of a great majority in Congress, it was countered by a more balanced and reasonable resolution, S.Res.224/S.Res.321 of Dianne Feinstein, which reaffirmed, among other provisions, “the Senate’s ‘commitment to a true and lasting solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict, based on the establishment of two states, the state of Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security, and with recognized borders.’”⁵⁵⁰ S.Res.224/S.Res.321 had only 38 cosponsors out of 100 Senators.⁵⁵¹

Meanwhile, after armed-clashes between Hamas and Fatah resulted in Hamas’ takeover of the Gaza Strip on June 11, 2007 the unitary government was dissolved, and the U.S. and other members of the Quartet lifted their “embargo on direct aid to the Palestinian Authority under President Mahmoud Abbas [in the West Bank].”⁵⁵² Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced on June 18 “an aid package that would redirect all of the previously allocated \$86 million to help Abbas’ government provide essential services.”⁵⁵³ Additionally, following the Annapolis Conference of Nov., 2007 President Bush’s emergency supplemental appropriation request for 2008 included \$410 million in aid for the Palestinians.⁵⁵⁴ On the other hand, a “Memorandum of Understanding” between the U.S. and Israel in 2007 expressed that the U.S. would “provide Israel with \$30 billion in military aid over the next 10 years.”⁵⁵⁵

IV. Evangelical Christian Activism

The language of resolutions passed in U.S. Congress during the Bush administration did not only reflect the views of AIPAC, but it also reflected the premillennialist personal beliefs of many congressmen. In reaction to the 9/11 attacks, evangelical leaders such as Pat Robertson called for “strong, decisive, hard-line military action against the Palestinians.”⁵⁵⁶ In an interview on Robertson’s *700 Club* TV Show, Jerry Falwell compared the Palestinians to Hitler “in

wanting to eradicate the Jews and gain world domination.”⁵⁵⁷ In reference to the Camp David summit in another occasion, Pat Robertson said that the summit was ““weakness in Israel under the Barack administration that let Hezbollah come screaming through the borders, emboldened the Palestinians.”” To this, his *700 Club* Show guest, Steve Emerson, replied: ““we’ve seen weakness since Oslo was signed - we lost the deterrence.””⁵⁵⁸

At a Washington rally in April 15, 2002 the evangelical radio talk-show host, Janet Parshall, “ridiculed calls for Israel to give up occupied territory in exchange for peace. ‘It means giving away Israel one piece at a time,’ she said. ‘We will never divide Jerusalem...We will never vacillate in our support for Israel.’”⁵⁵⁹ At a New York rally for the same occasion, Jerusalem Day, Israel’s Consul General Alon Pinkas, described Israel’s relationship with evangelical Christians as one ““that has not been twisted or dictated by politics or interests,”” and he expressed Israel’s gratitude for their support of Israel ““especially in these times of crisis.””⁵⁶⁰ As Sharon’s government was using excessive force to putdown the Palestinian uprising, “the godfather of the Christian right,” Ed McAteer, expressed on a CBS TV Show “we are seeing prophecy unfold so rapidly and dramatically and wonderfully and, without exaggerating, [it] makes me breathless.”⁵⁶¹

Such views make the dreamers of Greater Israel build as many settlements as they want, confiscate as much Palestinian territory as they pleased, and suppress the Palestinians as they wished, while still counting on U.S. support. For evangelical Christians, “the only Israelis who are really listening to God are the hard-line Jewish settlers who live on the West Bank and Gaza and refuse to move.”⁵⁶² Malcolm Hedding of the ICEJ, which by 2004 had branches in more than 55 countries, declared that evangelical Christians ““stand for the right that all the land...God gave under the Abrahamic covenant 4,000 years ago is Israel’s...and He will regulate the affairs of how Israel comes into the allotment which is hers forever...There is no such thing as a Palestinian.””⁵⁶³

The decade after the 9/11 attacks witnessed the establishment of a growing number of evangelical Christian organizations, dedicated to give Israel unconditional support. In 2002, the president of the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, Orthodox Rabbi Yechiel Z. Eckstein, joined former executive director of the Christian Coalition and then-chairman of the Georgia Republican Party, Ralph Reed, in launching the organization Stand for Israel. Eckstein,

who raised over \$60 million for Israeli settlements by 2002, announced that Stand for Israel would ““press the button and mobilize the troops,”” in a situation ““for example, where someone in Washington is pressuring the Prime Minister of Israel to hold back in the fight against terrorism...””⁵⁶⁴

Stand for Israel became yet another lobbying organization working on behalf of Israeli hard-liners on Capitol Hill. CIPAC, the other evangelical Christian organization that was launched in response to the Oslo Accords, also lobbied Congress against placing limits on Israeli actions in the Occupied Territories during the Intifada. CIPAC’s president, Richard Hellman “called on U.S. leaders ‘to desist from proposing any more plans to settle the Israel-Arab dispute.’”⁵⁶⁵ As Ralph Reed notes, evangelical Christians were ““shifting the center of gravity in the pro-Israel community to become a more conservative and Republican phenomena.””⁵⁶⁶ According to Morten Klein, an AIPAC staff member, ““in many districts where there are very few Jews, the members of the House and Senate are Israel’s supporters in part because of the strong Christian lobby on Capitol Hill.””⁵⁶⁷

On March 4, 2002 Senator James M. Inhofe said on the Senate floor: ““I believe very strongly that we ought to support Israel...because God said so...Look it up in the Book of Genesis...This is not a political battle at all. It is a contest over whether or not the word of God is true.””⁵⁶⁸ *The Wall Street Journal* highlighted in its May 23, 2002 issue that then-House Republican leader, Dick Armey went ““so far as to suggest that Palestinians, not Israelis, ought to be the ones to surrender land in the quest for peace.””⁵⁶⁹ In an interview with Chris Matthews on CNBC, Armey stated: ““I’m content to have Israel grab the entire West Bank...There are many Arab nations that have many hundreds of thousands of acres of land, soil, and property and opportunity to create a Palestinian State.””⁵⁷⁰ In 2002 Dick Armey also asserted: ““Let me be clear, Israel is fighting the same war on terrorism that we are fighting.””⁵⁷¹

Evangelical Christians were the main factor behind George W. Bush’s winning of the 2004 close presidential elections; Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell “claim the support of 100 million Americans with whom they communicate weekly.””⁵⁷² *The Wall Street Journal* highlighted in 2002 that the evangelical Christians’ support of Israel explains ““More than any other single factor...why there has been so little pressure from a Republican White House on Israel to curb its crackdown on Palestinians.””⁵⁷³ President Bush’s support of Israel was

strengthened by the fact that it was a successful campaign strategy. In particular, during his first term as U.S. president, Bush couldn't risk losing evangelical Christians' support for pressuring Israel to be more humane in its treatment of the Palestinians.

When Israel launched its first major military operation in the West Bank and started to re-occupy Palestinian cities in March and April, 2002, Bush called for an immediate withdrawal; however, he soon changed his stance by one that expressed support of Israel's "right to defend itself." At a CBS *60 Minutes* show, Jerry Falwell claimed what happened was that he sent a letter "of protest to the White House, which was followed by 100,000 e-mails from Christian conservatives. [Therefore] Israel did not move its tanks. [And] Bush did not ask again."⁵⁷⁴

In a second occasion in 2003, President Bush "publicly berated" Israel for attempting to assassinate Hamas's founder, Ahmed Yassin, as provocative of more violence. However, his public statements on this issue changed very quickly as he again expressed solidarity with Israel's "right to defend itself." According to Gary Bauer, president of American Values, "[s]everal evangelical leaders took issue with the president...I got thousands of e-mails the next day," reports Bauer, "that were copies of e-mails sent to the president," thereby bringing about Bush's changing course of action.⁵⁷⁵ Further, in April, 2004 the White House became "publicly supportive" when Israel assassinated Dr. Rantisi, who was another political leader of Hamas.⁵⁷⁶

In retrospect, in January, 2004 the Israeli Knesset formed the Christian Allies Caucus "to coordinate activities with Christian Zionist supporters."⁵⁷⁷ Former Israeli Tourism Minister Benny Elon, reported that 400,000 evangelical Christians traveled to Israel in 2003, "contributing millions of dollars to the Israeli economy."⁵⁷⁸ Christian Friends of Israeli Communities' "Adopt-A-Settlement" program brought ten tour groups a month to nearly 60 settlements.⁵⁷⁹ Likud leaders such as Yitzhak Shamir, Benjamin Netanyahu and Ariel Sharon addressed gatherings of those supporters in Jerusalem and met with their leaders during their visits to the U.S; the leaders of the more than 200 pro-Israel organizations.⁵⁸⁰

The newest of such is John Hagee's lobbying organization of Christians United For Israel (CUFI), which was launched on February 2006. The number of its members grew from 4,000 people during its first months of operation to 428,000 by 2010.⁵⁸¹ At CUFI's founding conference, Hagee "coined the term 'Islamofacist,' 'and within a week [President] Bush was using it.'"⁵⁸² In his book *The Jerusalem Countdown*, Hagee envisions an apocalyptic scenario

where Iran would launch a nuclear attack on Israel, thereby ushering in the battle of Armageddon.⁵⁸³ Jewish-Americans who welcome the support of such evangelical leaders simply “dismiss the evangelical theology,” argues Allan C. Brownfeld; ““since they don’t believe in the apocalypse of Second Coming, they regard such predictions as irrelevant. What matters [to them] is here-and-now support.””⁵⁸⁴ Speakers to the second annual conference of CUFI included Sen. Joseph Lieberman, who “compared the Christian Zionists to Moses,” former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, former Israeli Ambassador Dore Gold, and then-Israeli Ambassador Sallai Meridor.⁵⁸⁵ In his introduction of Sallai Meridor at that conference, Gary Bauer demanded that Israel never gives up “one centimeter” of Palestinian land, “even under American pressure.”⁵⁸⁶

With its organized offices in every state of the Union, CUFI holds the point of view that the U.S. should never “tell Jerusalem how to conduct its foreign or domestic affairs.”⁵⁸⁷ Its Charter states that “God gave the land of Israel to the Jewish people in perpetuity. Therefore, any talk about the ‘legality of the settlements is meaningless, since all the land West of the Jordan...belongs to the Jewish people forever. No U.N. resolution,” CUFI asserts, “can compete with the power of God.”⁵⁸⁸ In effect, CUFI has recently given \$6 million in aid to the settlement of Ariel in the West Bank, it holds more than 40 events per month nationwide, it sponsors outreach programs to Hispanic and African Americans, and “it boasts a growing network on college campuses” through its national initiative CUFI on Campus.⁵⁸⁹ On the last day of its 2010 annual conference, its members and conference participants called and visited their congressmen to remind them that “their reelection might depend on how they vote...on Israel,” and that they speak “not just for CUFI but for the 50-70 million U.S. evangelicals whose support of Israel [is] unwavering.”⁵⁹⁰

This Chapter has explained the Bush administration’s approach to the Peace Process. It has highlighted how Israel and its allied groups in the U.S. linked U.S. “War on Terror” to the Israeli policies towards the Palestinian Intifada, in order to strengthen the Israeli vision of giving the Palestinians only a sub-administrative entity. By censoring the Media and U.S. public opinion; issuing series of resolutions that expressed congressional support of Israel and “condemned or punished the Palestinians;” and heavily lobbying Congress to advance particular apocalyptic

sceneries; pro-Israel special interest groups in the U.S. were successful at diverging the focus of U.S. Middle East policy from the Peace Process to an Israeli campaign of “combating Palestinian terrorism.” As a result, radical groups in the Palestinian territories were isolated by the U.S., Israel as well as the PA, which made them become more extreme, increased Palestinians’ suffering, and pushed the Palestinians further into the corner of autonomy-related debates and away from independence. The “War on Terror” gave legitimacy to Israeli occupation of Palestinian land and it has heavily undermined the future of the two-state resolution. The following chapter discusses the Obama administration’s approach to the issue of Palestinian statehood, as well as the Israeli lobby’s influence over the official U.S. course of action in regards to the Peace Process.

Chapter Four

Hesitant Involvement

I. The Obama Administration and the Peace Process (2009-2011)

Neal Allen highlights that the Bush administration's "War on Terror," was a "presidentially-created foreign policy regime" that resulted in a punctuated equilibrium. Such equilibrium has made the current Obama administration struggle to smoothly breakaway from certain policies of its predecessor, such as the war on Iraq and Afghanistan, and the closing down of Guantanamo prison.⁵⁹¹ Therefore, as Stanley Renshon notes, President Obama became one of "vast domestic ambitions," but it remains unclear "whether he has such large ambitions internationally," or how consistent those ambitions are.⁵⁹² For instance, in his 2009 Cairo speech, President Obama called for the establishment of a Palestinian state and his administration attempted to broker a two-state resolution based on the 1967 borders of Gaza Strip and the West Bank; however, such efforts remained passive and George Mitchell, Obama's Special Envoy to the Middle East, has resigned in May 2011. Additional inherited policies from the Bush administration such as adding Hamas to the State Department's list of foreign terrorist organizations has constrained the Obama administration's diplomatic maneuver, as a mediator between Israel and Palestine.

At the same time, in its peace efforts, the Obama administration was further inhibited by the influence of U.S. domestic forces that contributed significantly to Obama's winning of 2008 presidential elections. Exit polls show that 78% of Jewish-Americans voted for President Obama and giving the fact that they usually contribute 60% of the funds collected by the Democratic Party in a presidential election; Jewish-Americans gave out \$457.9 million to the campaign of Barak Obama in 2008.⁵⁹³ President Obama was silent about Israel's 2008-2009 war on Gaza Strip, which was purposefully waged soon after his election and before the ascendance of his administration to the White House, and in fear of becoming a one-term president, Obama has been "compelled to devote all his time and energy to get reelected. In such a situation," argues former Knesset member Uri Avnery, "he cannot afford to provoke AIPAC and run the risk of losing the votes—and the money of [Jewish-Americans]."⁵⁹⁴

Arnaud de Borchgrave has described presidential candidates' kowtowing at AIPAC's 2008 annual conferences, as becoming "a political rite of passage, like a medieval contract for

exchanging goods and services...Anyone who doesn't pass the litmus test" argues de Borchgrave, "can forget about becoming president of the United States."⁵⁹⁵ Philip Weis asserts "it would be hard to imagine a more naked exhibition of political power;" AIPAC's 2008 conference was "a convention of 7,000 mostly rich people, with more than half the Congress in attendance, as well as all the major presidential candidates, the Prime Minister of Israel, the Minority Leader, the Majority Leader [in Congress] and the Speaker of the House."⁵⁹⁶

The Obama administration has made many gestures toward the Palestinians, but as Avnery notes, "in any real test with Netanyahu and AIPAC," President Obama has been "the first to blink."⁵⁹⁷ For example, in the midst of U.S. pressure on Israel with regards to the settlements, Netanyahu's government "publicly humiliated" Vice President Joseph Biden when it announced, during a March, 2010 visit of the Vice President to Israel, the construction of 1,600 new housing units in the Israeli settlements of East Jerusalem.⁵⁹⁸ However, in recognition of AIPAC's clout, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, as well as "more than half the members of Congress" were later present at the March, 2010 annual conference of AIPAC.⁵⁹⁹ At that conference, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton "firmly repeated the administration's position that continued Israeli construction in the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem, damages prospects for peace. However, Netanyahu defiantly declared that he had no intention of halting construction in East Jerusalem."⁶⁰⁰

At the same time, following intense diplomatic pressure from the Obama administration and other members of the Quartet, Benjamin Netanyahu agreed to freeze the building of settlements for two months, thereby giving way for a peace proposal by the Quartet that called for the establishment of a Palestinian state by the end of 2011. However, after the expiration of the two months, Netanyahu resumed building settlements, and he has rejected multiple requests from President Obama for renewing the settlement freeze. The Obama administration even offered Netanyahu "\$3 billion worth of F-25 attack jets," and said it would "make no further demands for a settlement freeze, and veto all U.N. resolutions critical of Israel as well as any attempt by the Palestinians to gain U.N. support for a declaration of statehood," all in exchange of three-additional months of a settlement freeze.⁶⁰¹ Netanyahu's Cabinet still rejected the offer. Obama never asked again. The U.S. still vetoed a UNSC resolution in February, 2011 condemning the settlements, even though that resolution ran parallel to official U.S. policy since 1967.

Threatening that the U.S. would cut its annual aid to Israel if the latter does not stop building settlements was out of the question, despite the fact that many members in Netanyahu's Cabinet even advocate for an Israeli annexation of the West Bank.⁶⁰² In such a situation where the U.S. was losing its credibility as an honest broker, President of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, started placing his own conditions on negotiating with Israel, asserting that the PA would not talk to Netanyahu's government until it stopped all settlement-related activities. Additionally, on May 4, 2011 the Palestinian rival groups of Fatah and Hamas signed an agreement to form "an interim government composed of neutral technocratic experts," with parliamentary and presidential elections to be held the following year.⁶⁰³ In reaction to the signing of that agreement, the Obama administration threatened to cut U.S. economic aid to the PA, on the grounds that " Hamas is a terrorist organization that targets civilians," and should, therefore, be excluded from any future Palestinian government until it renounced violence and accepted Israel's right to exist.⁶⁰⁴ Needless to say, the Peace Talks reached a dead-end.

As the Norwegian diplomat Jonas Gahr notes, " Hamas is a social, political, religious and military reality that governs 1.5 million Palestinians... 'It will not simply go away as a result of Western isolation,'" nor will it change its covenant without a mutual Israeli recognition of Palestine's right to exist.⁶⁰⁵ Further, studies by the IMF, the U.N., and the World Bank "have found the Palestinian Authority to be fully capable of running an independent state," but highlighted that this "could not be sustained unless Israel eased its political, physical, and economic restrictions in the West Bank and Gaza."⁶⁰⁶ It has become evident that Israel's control of more than 60% of the West Bank through its settlements, as well as its economic and political suppression of the Palestinians, are the main obstacles to establishing a Palestinian state. Hamas's leaders, for instance, "repeatedly have expressed a willingness to endorse a peace agreement with Israel that is approved by a majority of Palestinians."⁶⁰⁷

On the other hand, Moshe Ya'alon, Netanyahu's Deputy Prime Minister, told the magazine *Besheva* in an interview that Israel's "intention is to leave the situation as it is: autonomous management of civil affairs. If they [Palestinians] want to call it a state let them call it that. If they want to call it an empire, by all means; we intend to keep what exists now."⁶⁰⁸ In other words, Israel's continuation of confiscating Palestinian land is endangering the two-state resolution by enforcing new facts on the ground (the settlements), which hinder the coherence and viability of a future Palestinian state, while finding unwavering support among the Israeli

allied U.S. special interest groups. Thus, the PA has refused to settle for having a non-functioning as well as dependent “entity,” and it has decided to enforce UNSC R.242 and the U.N. Partition Plan through other channels than the Peace Process. Soon after the signing of the Palestinian unitary-government agreement, the PA has announced its plans of seeking full U.N. membership of Palestine within the 1967 borders of Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, and West Bank.

In his May 24, 2011 speech to Congress, Netanyahu himself declared “to a chorus of nonstop cheering by Democratic and Republican legislators,” that there would be “no return of Palestinian refugees, no negotiations with a Palestinian Authority that included Hamas, no return to Israel’s 1967 borders and no withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Jordan Valley [West Bank border area with Jordan].”⁶⁰⁹ He also insisted that Jerusalem would remain undivided, while receiving unwavering support from U.S. Congress. As Rachele Marshall puts it, “The Palestinians’ decision to go to the U.N. has...exposed the hoax that Israel is willing to accept a two-state solution.”⁶¹⁰ Uri Avenry, a former Israeli Knesset member, argues that just like his predecessor Yitzhak Shamir, Netanyahu’s strategy has been since the 1990s “To prevent any advance toward peace, since peace means the evacuation of settlements and the setting up of a Palestinian state,” which runs counter to his vision of Greater Israel.⁶¹¹

At the same time, as part of his 2012 presidential election campaign, President Obama has promised that the U.S. “would oppose ‘symbolic actions to isolate Israel at the U.N.’”⁶¹² Additionally, after declaring in May, 2011 that the 1967 borders should be the main framework for creating a Palestinian state, with mutually agreed land swaps between Israel and the Palestinians, President Obama backtracked his remarks to accommodate for Netanyahu’s policies. He said that “‘The parties themselves will negotiate a border that is different than the one that existed on June 4, 1967 to account for the changes that have taken place over the last 44 years.’”⁶¹³ This is in essence what George W. Bush said in his letter to then-Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in 2004, which signaled to the Palestinian leadership that it should no longer rely on the U.S. as the broker of a two-state resolution.

The support of the Israeli lobby in the U.S. to the Israeli policy of giving the Palestinians a sub-administrative entity is deceptively changing the long-held U.S. position of endorsing UNSC Res.242 as the framework for any future settlement. It is also violating the fourth Geneva Convention, to which both of Israel and the U.S. are signatories, and which prohibits an

occupation force from transferring its population into any land it has acquired as a result of military force. Thus, what benefit is there for the Palestinians out of counting on the U.S. as an honest broker, if the Israeli lobby is already starting to change the basis of any future negotiations? “We go to the United Nations now,” wrote Abbas in a May 17 op-ed for *The New York Times*, “to secure the right to live free in the remaining 22% of our historic homeland.”⁶¹⁴

And this is not a unilateral move, as declared Maen Areikat, chief PLO representative in Washington, DC; “By seeking U.N. membership...the Palestinian Authority is trying to show the international community that it is trying to preserve a two-state solution—because the only other alternative is a continuation of the status quo.”⁶¹⁵ Areikat asserted prior to the Palestinians’ application at the U.N. that the PA is “not in the business of delegitimizing Israel. We are in the business of legitimizing Palestine.”⁶¹⁶ On the other hand, once Mahmoud Abbas officially submitted the UN membership application, Abbas was “punished by \$200 million cut in aid from the U.S.”⁶¹⁷ Additionally, building on U.S laws from early 1990s (See Ch.2), the U.S. has withdrawn its financial contributions to UNESCO as soon as it admitted Palestine as a full-member state in late 2011.

Meanwhile, the Quartet announced, on the same day as when the PA officially submitted its petition to the international community, an additional proposal for resuming Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. For the remainder of 2011, the PA has placed its U.N. plans on-hold, Israel has accelerated its settlement activities in East Jerusalem, the members of the Quartet have continued to be passive observers, and “peace talks” continued to stagnate. However, the attitudes of U.S. executive and legislature toward the Palestinians’ quest for statehood has made the U.S. lose credibility in being the future facilitator of the two-state resolution, and has given way for other members of the Quartet, such as the E.U. and the U.N., to play a more influential role in bringing about a peaceful settlement to the conflict.

II. The Israel Lobby and U.S. Congress

111th Congress (2008-2010)

Obama’s hesitancy to confront AIPAC and Netanyahu’s government was further enforced by the un-conditional support that Israel enjoys in U.S. Congress. As a result of the 2008 congressional election cycle, Jewish-American Senators remained 13 (13%), and Jewish-

American Representatives in the House reached 32 members (7%), compared to the 2% of Americans who are Jewish.⁶¹⁸ Top recipients of campaign contributions from pro-Israel PACs (See Table 5 in Index-Ch.4) such as Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, and House Minority Leader John Boehner have all retained their positions.⁶¹⁹ Additionally, Jewish-American Representative Eric Cantor became the House Minority Whip.⁶²⁰

Despite being faced with domestic economic crisis, the 111th session of Congress showed that “congressional blind support for Israeli actions, regardless of how egregious, has not wavered. Within a week of convening, and in the middle of Israel’s onslaught against Palestinians in Gaza,” reports Shirl McArthur, “both the Senate and the House managed to find time to pass similar resolutions expressing ‘their vigorous support and unwavering commitment’” to Israel’s security, and “‘right to act in self-defense to protect its citizens.’”⁶²¹ S.Res.10 and H.Res.34 were passed on Jan.9 and they concluded by the sentence “‘against Hamas’ unceasing aggression.’”⁶²² Needless to say, the 2008 Israeli war left the Gaza Strip devastated and resulted in Israel’s killing of more than 1400 Palestinians and the injuring of more than 3500 others, while only 13 Israelis were killed. S.Res.6 expressed “‘solidarity with Israel in Israel’s defense against terrorism in the Gaza Strip,’” and H.Res.37 condemned “‘Hamas for the recent attacks against Israel.’”⁶²³

At the same time, some reasonableness was still shown by the statements and actions of a small minority of Congress members. A letter drafted by Representatives Lois Capps and John Olver was sent on Jan. 28 to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, with 64 signatures, expressing “‘the signers’ deep concern for the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip’ and request[ing] ‘immediate action by the U.S. to address this crisis.’”⁶²⁴ Speaking on the floor of the House, Rep. Kucinich also pointed out that “‘Israel’s use of ‘U.S.-provided F-16 jets, Apache helicopters and white phosphorus against the people of Gaza...imposes upon...Congress a moral obligation to speak out.’”⁶²⁵ He introduced H.Res.66 on Jan. 15 “‘expressing the sense of the House... concerning the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.’”⁶²⁶

Additionally, on Jan. 28th, Sen. Patrick Leahy described “‘an Israeli atrocity against the family of a Palestinian recent graduate from Vermont’s Middlebury College,’” Amer Shurrab, and said that “‘the case ‘cries out for an immediate, thorough, credible and transparent

investigation by the Israeli government.”⁶²⁷ Further, On Feb. 4, 106 co-sponsors of H.Res.130 “express[ed] support of the appointment of former Senator George Mitchell as Special Envoy for Middle East Peace...in [the] vigorous pursuit of a diplomatic resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab conflicts based on the establishment of two states, the State of Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security, and with recognized borders.”⁶²⁸ Furthermore, at a House Foreign Affairs Middle East Subcommittee hearing on “Gaza after the war,” Rep. Robert Wexler said “the notion that Israel can continue to expand settlements...without diminishing the capacity of a two-state solution is both unrealistic and...hypocritical,” while chairman of the subcommittee Gary Ackerman “specifically equated terrorism and the firing of rockets with ‘the march of settlements and outposts’ and ‘the perpetuation of settler pogroms.’”⁶²⁹

At a March, 2009 “donor’s conference to raise funds for Gaza recovery,” Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced plans to provide \$300 million for reconstruction efforts of the Gaza Strip. However, the unconditional support of Israel in U.S. Congress still persisted as AIPAC’s representatives Shelley Berkley, Eric Cantor, Mark Kirk, Mike Pence, Mike Coffman, Nita Lowey, and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, “reflexively” opposed this aid package. “Berkley wrote to Clinton demanding that the money be conditioned on the release of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit...,” and Mike Coffman sent a letter to Clinton “urging her to withhold the \$300 million for Gaza because giving money to Palestinians in Gaza ‘is no different than giving the money directly to Hamas.’”⁶³⁰ Mike Kirk and Rose-Lehtinen, through their H.CON.RES.29 and H.R.557, even urged cutting aid for the Gaza refugee projects of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).⁶³¹

Additionally, in reaction to the release of the Goldstone Report that accuses both Hamas and Israel, of committing “war crimes as well as possible crimes against humanity” during Israel’s latest war on the Gaza Strip, Senators Kristen Gillibrand and Johnny Isakson sent a letter to Hillary Clinton, signed by 29 others, “urging that the U.S. ‘work very hard to block any punitive actions against Israel that this report mentions.’”⁶³² Without even reading the more than 450 page-long report, Representatives Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Howard Berman also introduced H.Res.867, which “call[ed] upon the president and secretary of state to oppose unequivocally any endorsement or further consideration of the Report...in multilateral fora.”⁶³³ H.Res.867 charges that “the report is ‘irredeemably biased and unworthy of further consideration or

legitimacy,” and it was passed by a “roll call vote” of 244-36.⁶³⁴ On the other hand, UNGA adopted the report by a vote of 114-18 countries with 44 abstentions and a “no” vote by the U.S.⁶³⁵ In his statement before the House Floor on Nov. 3, 2009, Rep. Dennis Kucinich said “if this Congress votes to condemn a report it has not read, concerning events it has totally ignored, about violations of law of which it is unaware, it will have brought shame to this great institution;” and he called H.Res.867 “the ‘Down is Up, Night is day, Wrong is Right’ resolution.”⁶³⁶

As Shirl McArthur asserts, voting for this resolution was just an attempt by congressmen to pass AIPAC’s “Litmus Test.”⁶³⁷ AIPAC requests from all new congressmen a “position paper on Israel” to decide whether or not they should be supported.⁶³⁸ In such “position paper” new Senator Scott Brown said that, among other things, the Goldstone Report is a “blatant manifestation” of “efforts worldwide aimed at undermining [Israel’s] fundamental right” to defend itself, that he “firmly supports’ Israel’s ‘security barrier,” and that he “reaffirms Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel.”⁶³⁹

When Israel “publicly humiliated” Vice President Joseph Biden during his March 2009 visit to Israel, AIPAC-drafted letters were sent by members of Congress to Hillary Clinton urging her “to ensure that the announcement of construction in East Jerusalem not derail U.S.-Israel relations, and that any difference between the two countries be resolved privately rather than in public.”⁶⁴⁰ Nine Senators and forty-nine Representatives also “made statements on the House and Senate floor, or submitted statements for the record, reaffirming the U.S.-Israel relationship,” over U.S. attempts to resume the peace negotiations.⁶⁴¹ The House letter was initiated by Majority Leader Steny Hoyer and Minority Whip Eric Cantor and was signed by a total of 333 Representatives, while the Senate letter was distributed by Barbara Boxer and Johnny Isakson, and was signed by 76 Senators.⁶⁴²

Moreover, Rep. Doug Lamborn introduced H.Res.1191, “reaffirming ‘that Jerusalem is and should continue to be the undivided capital of the State of Israel’ and calling upon the president to fully implement the Jerusalem Embassy Act.”⁶⁴³ Further, Rep. Scott Garrett introduced H.Res.1241, which “support[ed] the right of Israel to defend itself against terrorists...;” and Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen introduced H.CON.RES.260, which “recogniz[ed] the 62nd anniversary of the independence of the State of Israel,... reaffirm[ed] unequivocal

support for the alliance and friendship between the U.S. and Israel,” and included statements from the Obama presidential campaign such as ““Jerusalem will remain the capital of Israel and it must remain undivided.””⁶⁴⁴ It ignored the fact that Obama himself changed this position soon thereafter by stating that ““Jerusalem ‘is going to be up to the parties to negotiate.’””⁶⁴⁵

As the Palestinian Authority announced its plans of seeking recognition for a Palestinian state through the United Nations and its agencies, three resolutions were passed in U.S. Congress in opposition to the Palestinian efforts. Other than the Israeli plan of giving the Palestinians a non-functioning entity, it is unclear which scenario such pro-Israel domestic forces in the U.S. would like to help implement. Republican Representative Ted Poe introduced both of H.Res.1731 and H.Res.1734, which call upon the administration “to oppose 1) the unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state; and 2) any attempt to seek recognition of a Palestinian state by the U.N. or other international forums.””⁶⁴⁶ Those two resolutions also demand that the U.S. “veto any such U.N. Security Council resolution.””⁶⁴⁷

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Meanwhile, with the Republicans’ winning control of the House of Representatives as a result of 2010 congressional elections, Obama’s efforts to retrieve the peace process were further undermined. As stated in Ch.3, the evangelical Christians’ takeover of the Republican Party gave the Israeli policies of building settlements unwavering support since they believe the West Bank belongs to Israel according to a divine covenant; the influence of the pro-Israel lobby ““crosses party lines.””⁶⁴⁸ White House spokesman during the Bush Administration, Ari Fleischer, “noted gleefully that ‘The takeover of the House by Republicans is great news for Israel and her supporters,’” and he pointed out that ““The House leadership and almost every GOP member is rock-solid behind Israel.””⁶⁴⁹ A few days after the 2010 congressional elections, Netanyahu’s government “ordered the demolition” of an additional 88 Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem, and it announced “plans to build 320 new units in the city’s Ramot section and 1,000 in Har Homa.””⁶⁵⁰

On January 18, Kristen Gillibrand and 17 other Senators wrote to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton urging her to veto the U.N. resolution that called Israeli settlements in East Jerusalem and elsewhere in the West Bank as “illegal.””⁶⁵¹ Eric Cantor, Steny Hoyer, Gary

Ackerman, as well as other Representatives also wrote to President Obama “urging that the U.S. veto the resolution” and demanding that Obama “‘pledge[s] in response to thi[er] letter to veto any UNSC resolution that criticizes Israel regarding final status issues.’”⁶⁵² To further support Netanyahu’s settlement policies, and building on a long list of congressional actions that date back to 1990, Joe Wilson introduced H.CON.RES.5 that “‘calls upon the President and the Secretary of State to repeatedly affirm publicly, as a matter of U.S. policy, that Jerusalem must remain the undivided capital of the State of Israel;’” and reaffirms the congressionally-held perception of “‘Israel’s right to take necessary steps to prevent any future division of Jerusalem.’”⁶⁵³ Such congressional actions not only inhibit the Peace Process, but they also attempt to dictate the outcomes of future Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations.

On the other hand, in reaction to the PA decision to seek the international community’s recognition of a Palestinian state, Chairwoman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, declared that Congress “‘should finally hold PA leaders accountable, which is why...[she intended to] introduce legislation to clarify and tighten existing U.S. laws that deny funding to the PA until they meet their commitments.’”⁶⁵⁴ She claimed that, apparently, “‘Washington has given the PA ‘a blank check.’”⁶⁵⁵ Additionally, in March, 2011 forty-six representatives signed a letter to President Obama urging that he and his administration “do all in [their] power to insist that President Abbas reenters peace talks, without preconditions, and demand that President Abbas eliminate all vestiges of incitement coming from his government.”⁶⁵⁶ Moreover, Shelley Berkley and Eliot Engel introduced H.Res.1592, which says that “‘no funds made available for assistance to the Palestinian Authority may be obligated or expended if the president determines and certifies that the Palestinian Authority has unilaterally declared a Palestinian state.’”⁶⁵⁷

On one hand, pro-Israel congressional forces opposed the Palestinian international efforts; and on the other, they asserted their reservations on the main frameworks of the Peace Process. After President Obama said in a May, 2011 speech that “‘the borders of Israel and Palestine should be based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps,’” AIPAC reported that “‘500 lobbying meetings were held with members of Congress.’”⁶⁵⁸ As a result, on June 3, H.CON.RES.59 was introduced by Republican Rob Bishop and stated that “‘it is contrary to U.S. policy and our national security to have the borders of Israel return to the armistice line that existed on June 4, 1967.’”⁶⁵⁹ S.CON.RES.23 asserted similar provisions, and soon thereafter

Robert Dold introduced H.Res.270, “which would reaffirm the ‘principles regarding the security of Israel and peace in the Middle East’ articulated in two resolutions passed in 2004.”⁶⁶⁰ Such principles include the congressionally-held belief “that it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949.”⁶⁶¹

Meanwhile, additional resolutions were passed in opposition to the Palestinians’ attempt to change the current status quo in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Both of H.Res.268 (357 co-sponsors) that was introduced by Majority Leader Eric Cantor, and S.Res.185 (90 co-sponsors), which was introduced by Benjamin Cardin, condemned “Palestinian efforts to unilaterally declare statehood and the reported inclusion of Hamas in a unity government.”⁶⁶² Further, H.Res.297, expressed the “‘sense of the House’ that the U.S. should withhold U.S. contributions to the regular U.N. budget ‘if the General Assembly adopts a resolution in favor of recognizing a state of Palestine outside of or prior to a final status agreement negotiated between’ Israel and the Palestinians.”⁶⁶³ At the same time, to ensure that such negotiations would never take place, H.Res.1006 called for cutting off “some State Department funding unless the U.S. Embassy in Israel is established in Jerusalem no later than Jan. 1, 2013” and it removed the presidential waiver of the Jerusalem Act of 1995.⁶⁶⁴

Moreover, Joe Walsh introduced the “Palestinian Accountability Act” or H.Res.2457 of mostly Republican co-sponsors, which “would prohibit U.S. government documents from referring to areas controlled by the PA as Palestine; would prohibit U.S. funds to the PA; would prohibit U.S. funds to the U.N. or any U.N. entity if it declares or recognizes statehood for the Palestinian territories; and would bar U.S. funding for UNRWA unless it meets the same conditions imposed on the Palestinians.”⁶⁶⁵ H.Res.2261, introduced by Thaddeus McCotter would also “withhold U.S. contributions to the U.N. or a U.N. agency if the U.N. or such agency supports the recognition of an independent Palestinian state.”⁶⁶⁶

Further, Chairman of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee Kay Granger and Ranking Democrat Nita Lowey wrote to PA President Mahmoud Abbas “implicitly threatening to withhold aid if the PA seeks U.N. statehood recognition.”⁶⁶⁷ Furthermore, to take advantage of such suppressed call of freedom, on Sept. 8, Rep. Joe Walsh and 42 other House Republicans introduced H.Res.394 in declarations of Congress’ support of “‘Israel’s right to

annex Judea and Samaria in the event that the Palestinian Authority continues to press for unilateral recognition of statehood at the U.N.”⁶⁶⁸ Rep. Steve Israel went as far as introducing H.Res.2893, “to prohibit Foreign Military Financing program assistance to countries that vote in the U.N. General Assembly in favor of recognizing a Palestinian state in the absence of a negotiated border agreement’ between Israel and the PA.”⁶⁶⁹

The occasion became an opportunity for the Republican conservatives to finally be able to apply extortive measures reflecting their long-held detestation of the U.N. Republican Senator Orrin Hatch and eighteen Republican co-sponsors introduced S.1595, which “prohibit[s] funding for the U.N. if the Security Council or UNGA grants Palestine a change in status in the absence of a comprehensive peace agreement.”⁶⁷⁰ Rep. Ileana Rose-Lehtinen argued that “Washington not only should cut off aid to the Palestinians, but should also withhold funding to any U.N. entity that granted membership, any upgraded status, to the PA,” and she introduced H.Res.2829 that, among other provisions, calls for this effect.⁶⁷¹

As former Foreign Service officer Shirl McArthur agrees, “It is unclear why” the Palestinians’ application for full U.N. membership was considered “such a threat to Israel, except that it might hinder Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu’s apparent strategy of pretending to want to negotiate, while relentlessly expanding Israeli colonies in the West Bank and Jerusalem.”⁶⁷² A few days before the 66th General Assembly meeting, “58 House Democrats, led by Rep. Steny Hoyer, wrote to 40 European heads of state urging them to ‘stand with the United State’ in opposing ‘unilateral’ actions by the PA at the U.N.”⁶⁷³

Additionally, 14 Senators wrote to President Obama prior to his speech at that U.N. GA meeting, “urging him that he uses his speech to restate strong U.S. support of Israel, which is just what he did.”⁶⁷⁴ After the PA President Mahmoud Abbas officially submitted his application for full-membership of Palestine at the U.N., “no fewer than 10 Senators and 35 House members spoke out in one forum or another denouncing the Palestinians and praising Israel.”⁶⁷⁵ Further, “a coalition of Israel-backing Democrats and conservative Republicans in both the House and the Senate were blocking about \$200 million of aid to the Palestinians ‘until the Palestinian statehood issue is sorted out.”⁶⁷⁶

On the other hand, by the end of 2011, a conservative estimate of total U.S. aid to Israel reached \$123.202 Billion.⁶⁷⁷ This figure does not include the tax-exempt donations that are made

by more than 200 evangelical Christian and Jewish-American charities to Israel and Israel's settlements in the West Bank. *The New York Times* reported in July, 2010 that “hundreds of millions of dollars have flowed [from those ‘charities’] to settlers and settlement-related causes, including to support settler extremists in Hebron and East Jerusalem.”⁶⁷⁸ In effect, “since every tax-exempt dollar that goes to the colonies represents a loss of, conservatively, 20 cents to the U.S. Treasury, that means that the U.S. taxpayer has indirectly subsidized Israel’s illegal colonies to the tune of tens of millions of dollars, or more.”⁶⁷⁹

III. JStreet and the Jewish-American Voter

That said, an event of particular significance that occurred in the first half of the 2008 congressional election cycle, was that of the establishment of JStreet, the Americans for Middle East Peace and Security, and its Political Action Committee, JStreetPAC. In the words of its Executive Director, Alon Ben-Ami, JStreet was launched as a counter force for “AIPAC, and other Jewish groups that...do not reflect the more moderate views of the majority of American Jews.”⁶⁸⁰ For instance, in reaction to the launching of the evangelical Christian/orthodox Jewish organization Stand for Israel in 2002, Rabbi David Saperstein of the Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism noted “the idea that fundamentalist Christians would lobby Washington to reject ‘land-for-peace’ proposals...causes ‘discomfort among a significant majority of Jews who believe in a diplomatic solution.’”⁶⁸¹ The launching of JStreet has been the most constructive of recent efforts to mobilize the voices of that majority of Jewish-Americans.

The excessive Israeli response to the Palestinian uprising and the continued violence in the Middle East has caused a growing sense of alienation among liberal Jewish-Americans, due to the unconditional support given to Israel by its conservative-orthodox lobby in the U.S. In January 2004, 350 Rabbis representing the main Jewish denominations in the U.S. signed a letter to the Israeli embassy in Washington, D.C., by way of protesting Israeli demolition of Palestinian houses in the West Bank to build settlements. They saw those Israeli policies as violating “both Palestinian human rights and Jewish ideals. They charg[ed] that Israel discriminates by destroying Palestinian homes built without permits [which are impossible to obtain], while encouraging construction in Jewish neighborhoods [settlements] in the West Bank near Jerusalem.”⁶⁸²

In *The Fate of Zionism*, Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg argues that U.S. aid “can and should be used as a way to move Israel toward peace.”⁶⁸³ Hertzberg explains that “The continuing effort to support and increase settlements in the West Bank and Gaza costs at least a billion dollar a year...An American government that is resolved to stop the settlements,” argues Hertzberg, “would not need to keep sending the Secretary of State and other emissaries again and again to Jerusalem...We could prove it by deducting the total cost of the settlements” from America’s annual aid to Israel.⁶⁸⁴ Hertzberg acknowledges the fact that such approach would result in “an outcry among the right-wing supporters of Israel;” however, he points out that “an American government that would have the courage to force an end of settlement activity would find far greater support in the Jewish community, both in Israel and in America than many people in Washington imagine.”⁶⁸⁵ This view, Hertzberg indicates, “is much more popular than it appears to be in the statements by the pro-Israel lobbying establishments in America.”⁶⁸⁶

A Jan. 13, 2007 article in *The Economist* entitled “Israel and the Jews: Diaspora Blues” explains that “as the threat of genocide or of Israel’s destruction has receded, a growing number of Diaspora Jews neither feel comfortable with always standing up for Israel, nor feel a need to invoke Israel in defining what makes them Jewish.”⁶⁸⁷ In reference to the hard-line Jewish-American organizations, *The Economist* points out that “often these lobbies have ended up representing not Israel, but its right-wing political establishment...[while] accusing critics of being ‘anti-Semitic’ for saying things that are common place in Israel’s own internal debate.”⁶⁸⁸ At the same time, an increasing number of Jewish-American “critics of Israeli policies are speaking up, and refus[ing] to be silenced by pressure of mainstream groups...”⁶⁸⁹ “We find it impossible,” explains Letty Cottin Pogrebin, “to Jewishly justify collective punishment, illegal settlements, house demolitions, ...checkpoints...[and] a 20-foot wall that divides Arabs from their fields, schools and Jobs.”⁶⁹⁰

On the 2007 40th anniversary of the 1967 War, the *New York Times* reported that this anniversary ignited a debate within the Jewish-American community regarding “what kind of country Israel is, about the impact those 40 years of development, immigration, war, settlement and occupation have had on the dreams of those who chose to make their lives here [in the U.S.]. And there is a widespread feeling that both left and right are out of answers.”⁶⁹¹ *Forward* explained that up until 1967, Israel was the side seeking peace with its Arab neighbors, but soon after that war it annexed East Jerusalem and began building settlements in Gaza Strip and the

West Bank. “In effect, Israel spent the first third of its existence seeking in vain nothing more than peace and recognition, and the second two-thirds of its existence hedging the offer;” this is becoming increasingly criticized by the younger generations of Jewish-Americans.⁶⁹²

In reaction to AIPAC’s invitation of CUFI’s John Hagee, to speak at its March 2007 national conference, Rabbi Erik Yoffie of the Union for Reform Judaism wrote:

“We have learned from extensive research that these young people are more socially liberal than their baby-boomer parents. They are pluralistic in their thinking and they are tolerant of difference...They respond negatively to those who disparage other religious traditions and who make exclusive religious claims. They are inherently centrist in their political views on the Middle East. And they are suspicious of a Jewish establishment that they see as too focused on money and insufficiently focused on values. And so whom do we offer to these young people as a spokesman for Israel? John Hagee, who is contemptuous of Muslims, dismissive of gays, possesses a triumphalist theology and opposes a two-state solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. If our intention was to distance our young adults from the Jewish state, we could not have made a better choice.”⁶⁹³

During his 2008 presidential campaign, Barak Obama told a group of Jewish leaders meeting in Cleveland, “I think there is a strain within the pro-Israel community that says unless you adopt an unwavering pro-Likud approach to Israel that you’re anti-Israel, and that can’t be a measure of our friendship with Israel. If we cannot have an honest dialogue about how do we achieve these goals, then we’re not going to make progress.”⁶⁹⁴ To this effect JStreet and JStreetPAC were launched during the first half of 2008. JStreet’s Executive Director, Jeremy Ben-Ami, wrote in the April 25, 2008 issue of *Forward*, “It is time for the broad sensible mainstream of pro-Israel American Jews and their allies to challenge those on the extreme right who claim to speak for all American Jews in the national debate about Israel and the Middle East—and who, through the use of fear and intimidation, have cut off reasonable debate on the topic.”⁶⁹⁵ By the end of 2009, JStreet had 90,000 members.⁶⁹⁶

Ben-Ami “calls for a whole new definition of what it means to be ‘pro-Israel.’”⁶⁹⁷ He asserts that “As long as Palestinians despair of a decent and dignified life, Israel will be at war...Helping the Palestinians achieve a viable, prosperous state is one of the most pro-Israel things an American politicians can do.”⁶⁹⁸ At a June, 2009 address, Ben-Ami stated that the Israeli settlements are “killing the future of the state of Israel and Palestine. If it continues, there will be no Palestinian state. If there is no Palestinian state, there will be no Israeli state, only a

one-state nightmare.”⁶⁹⁹ According to Allan Brownfeld, “Unlike AIPAC, JStreet intends to push aggressively for a two-state solution based on Israel’s pre-1967 borders.”⁷⁰⁰

Edward Witten wrote in the *New York Review of Books* that the rise of JStreet is filling the gap that “has kept widening between the spectrum of views held by American Jews, especially those of the younger generation, and the far narrower range of views advocated by...particularly...AIPAC...”⁷⁰¹ According to JStreet, “polling consistently shows that the vast majority of American Jews,” agree with its assertion that “Israel’s future as a Jewish democracy is inextricably tied to a two-state solution.”⁷⁰² Former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, himself has argued that Israel and its occupied Palestinian territories would be turned into a second Apartheid-South Africa if the two-state resolution collapses.⁷⁰³ During the Obama administrations’ confrontation with Netanyahu over Israeli settlements, a JStreet poll found that by a margin of 82 percent to 18 percent Jewish-Americans “support Washington in playing an active role in helping the parties to resolve the conflict; and by a 63 percent to 37 percent margin, those who support American activism say they would continue their support even ‘if it means the U.S. exerting pressure on Israel to make the compromise necessary to achieve peace.’”⁷⁰⁴

JStreet opposed the Israeli war on Gaza Strip from December 2008-January 2009, as well as the Obama administration’s veto of the February, 2011 UNSC resolution that condemned the settlements, prompting many harsh attacks from the majority of other Jewish-American groups.⁷⁰⁵ The Israeli Knesset even launched an investigation on JStreet because of its pro-peace and anti-settlement positions.⁷⁰⁶ At a Knesset hearing, JStreet’s Chairman David Gilo said “the contract that had long existed between Israel and Jews abroad—one of unconditional support—was expiring and a new one being drafted...‘The new contract,’” asserted Gilo, “cannot be based on unilateral dictation of what is right, who is right and who is wrong.”⁷⁰⁷

JStreet’s 2010 2nd Annual Conference was attended by more than 2,000 people, despite the fact that it was “boycotted” by Netanyahu’s government and the Israeli Embassy in Washington, D.C.⁷⁰⁸ The audience of that conference included more than 50 members of Congress as well as “several liberal Knesset members.”⁷⁰⁹ At JStreet’s National Convention of 2010, the Obama administration was represented by National Security Advisor, Gen. James Jones, who asserted that “this administration will be represented at all future conferences.”⁷¹⁰

JStreet's leaders have also been "invited to meetings the president has held with national Jewish leaders, and some of its leaders have close ties to senior policy makers."⁷¹¹

In particular, as Douglas Bloomfield argued in the Oct.29, 2009 edition of the *Washington Jewish Week*, "What sets JStreet apart... 'and so terrifies the hard-line establishment, is that it has a Political Action Committee that raises and contributes money for political campaigns, something essential to being an effective player today.'"⁷¹² JStreetPAC "accepts recommendations for endorsements and allows those interested to contribute directly to those candidates it decides to endorse."⁷¹³ During its first few months of operation, JStreetPAC "raised over \$565,000 to 41 House and Senate candidates, of which 32 won their races," and JStreet "expects them to 'provide a strong voice in Congress advocating peace and diplomacy in the Middle East.'"⁷¹⁴ Eight of them were new comers to Congress, and according to *Forward*, "some candidates were warned that if they accepted JStreetPAC's contributions, they would lose the support of other, more hawkish, Jewish PACs."⁷¹⁵ Leader of the Union for Reform Judaism warned in an NPR interview that "If this becomes an anti-AIPAC effort, then the American Jewish community will turn against it."⁷¹⁶

During the 2008 presidential elections, JStreet supported mostly Democrat candidates, but it also endorsed the Republican Arab-American Charles Boustany.⁷¹⁷ Not only does this indicate the centrality of the Palestine question in relation to Israel's security, but it also increases the hope for a better U.S. foreign policy toward the region, and a better future. In a letter to Jimmy Carter after the publication of *Palestine: Peace, Not Apartheid*, Mitchell Plitnick of Jewish Voice for Peace wrote:

"As American Jews, we're thrilled to hear a former U.S. president speaking with such courage about the suffering and loss of life Palestinians are enduring. We are heartbroken that our own government is making this immoral occupation possible...We know some Jewish organizations are upset about what you're saying, but we wanted you to know that a great many Jews in the U.S., Israel and around the world are not represented by these organizations. We share your outrage about U.S. tax dollars enabling human misery instead of freedom. We are working to make change in our own synagogues, schools, communities and families. We are speaking out so fellow Americans can be emboldened to speak honestly, without fear of offending Jewish friends, and knowing they have Jewish support."⁷¹⁸

Conclusion

Path-dependence theory suggests that once a policy has embarked in a certain direction, a major change in the very institutional capacities that have locked it in such a direction will be needed to make alternative points of view become heard. While the establishment of JStreet does not alter the institutional character of Congress or the U.S. electoral system, its establishment has marked a major turning point in the path-dependency of U.S. unconditional support of Israel. If JStreet becomes successful at mobilizing the majority of Jewish-Americans who disagree with the hard-line politics of most other Jewish-American organizations, congressmen and U.S. presidents would have more freedom to enforce a “tough love” approach towards Israel; an approach that supports Israel while pressuring it to make the land compromises that are necessary to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Additionally, as the May 17, 2007 issue of the London *Economist* stated, “An even greater threat to AIPAC comes from the general climate of opinion.”⁷¹⁹ The current U.S. domestic debates on issues relating to Israel are no longer monopolized by AIPAC and its supporters in the evangelical Christian community. “It is suddenly becoming possible for serious people—politicians and policymakers as well as academics—to ask hard questions about America’s relationship with Israel.”⁷²⁰ At the same time, if it has taken decades to lock the policy path of unconditional U.S. support of Israel in its current direction, it will take an even longer time to deviate it towards a more balanced direction.

The influence of the Israeli lobby and its allies in the evangelical Christian community on U.S. role as a mediator between the Israelis and the Palestinians has left long-lasting impacts. The current path-dependency of U.S. support of Israel has not only undermined the Palestinians’ right to live free in a state of their own, but it has also put the U.S. in a collision course with the United Nations and its affiliated organizations. U.S. economic sanctions on UNESCO have already been implemented following the admittance of Palestine as a full member state of that international organization in late 2011. The Palestinian quest for statehood through the U.N. and its affiliated organizations has exposed the Israeli pretention to accept a two-state resolution to the conflict, while the right-or-wrong support that Israel enjoys in the U.S. has made the Palestinian U.N. application become the spark of a potential clash between morality, the role of international law, and the coercive economic and political clout of the world’s main superpower.

The Palestinians' insistence to go forward with their plans of seeking an international recognition of a Palestinian state could indirectly result in the isolation of the U.S. from the rest of the world. Any international organization that admits Palestine as a full member state will lose U.S. financial contributions. The question is, would such an outcome be representative of the U.S. national interest? Would it be solely a reflection of the interest of pro-Israel U.S. lobbying groups? Would the Palestinian leadership continue to take such bold and assertive decisions?

In their support of the Israeli policy of creating a sub-administrative Palestinian entity rather than a state, pro-Israel U.S. special interest groups have subsidized the creation of new facts on the ground, the settlements, which are ensuring that there would be no Palestinian state through peace negotiations, and leaving the PA no option but to pursue statehood through other diplomatic channels. Yet, as the Palestinians pursued other venues to enforce the call of a two-state resolution, pro-Israel U.S. special interest groups have created many obstacles on such alternative efforts that would negatively affect the U.S. more than any other "entity" or a state. At the same time, such obstacles may forever prevent the creation of a Palestinian state since the U.N. and its affiliated organizations cannot simply afford to lose the significant financial contributions that the U.S. makes to their budgets.

Additionally, pro-Israel special interest groups have ensured that any possible U.S. involvement in future Israeli-Palestinian negotiations would be undermined. To mobilize the support of evangelical Christians, the current Republican presidential candidate and former Speaker of the House of Representatives, Newt Gingrich, has gone as far as describing the Palestinians as an "invented people."⁷²¹ Pro-Israel U.S. interest groups have influenced the passage of congressional legislations such as the Jerusalem Embassy Act and its subsequent resolutions, which guarantee that all future U.S. administrations will be faced with having to make a decision that dictates the outcomes of any Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, namely that of recognizing Jerusalem as the united capital of Israel. They have provided their supporters with generous campaign contributions, mobilized U.S. public opinion to further their interests, targeted their opponents for political defeat, provided the financial means for building settlements in the West Bank, and lobbied Congress and the White House to prevent the U.S. from demanding an Israeli withdrawal back to the 1967 border.

From the early stages of the Peace Process during the Clinton administration, those groups have ensured that the Israeli vision of giving the Palestinians an entity that governs the Palestinians' civil affairs, while being economically and militarily controlled by Israel, would be the end result of the Peace Process. Their influence has made the Clinton administration refrain from applying any economic pressure on Israel and to mobilize their support, the Clinton administration's economic aid to Israel overrode the conditions of Bush Sr.'s loan guarantees to Israel. President Clinton's facilitation of the Oslo Accords, the Wye River Memorandum as well as the Camp David Summit was always undermined by the continuation of Israel's confiscation of Palestinian land for building settlements. It was simply counterproductive for the Clinton administration to mediate between the Israelis and the Palestinians while evangelical Christian groups, and U.S. aid to Israel, were subsidizing the Israeli building of settlements and bypass roads to connect them, at a rate that significantly surpassed the pre-Peace Process levels.

Additionally, as the second Palestinian intifada broke out in objection to the failure of the Peace Process to deliver a viable and independent Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders, pro-Israel U.S. special interest groups ensured that the demands of that populous uprising for such a solution would not be addressed. They worked tirelessly and successfully to link the Israeli tactics to putdown that Intifada to the U.S. War on Terror, and by lobbying Congress and the executive branch of U.S. government to add Palestinian militant groups that target Israel to U.S. list of foreign terrorist organizations, they have also jeopardized U.S.-Palestinian relations significantly. In their efforts to support Israel, pro-Israel U.S. special interest groups have acted as an "anti-Palestinian" force⁷²² that has prevented the Palestinians from even having a functioning Palestinian entity.

Rather than being aimed at enforcing a two-state resolution to the conflict, the policies of the George H.W. Bush administration towards the Palestinians ignited a Palestinian civil war. The outcome of the Palestinian democratic elections of 2006-2007 were rejected by the U.S. and U.S. economic aid to the Palestinians became pursued through microscopic lenses that scrutinized even U.S. support of humanitarian organization in Gaza Strip and the West Bank, such as UNRWA. On the other hand, U.S. direct and indirect aid to Israel continued to flow at an annual rate of nearly \$6 billion. Coupled with the fact that U.S. involvement in the Peace Process during the Bush administration was a means towards the end of winning the heart and minds of

people in the Middle East, the Peace Process stopped at the Camp David summit and never went passed it.

Even after the Bush doctrine of the War on Terror became replaced by the more moderate policies of the Obama administration, Obama's status as a first term President has made him hesitant to effectively, through economic means, pressure Netanyahu's government to stop building settlements in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Pressuring Israel to comply with its agreements with the Palestinians and to withdraw from Palestinian land became marginal under a U.S. administration that entered the White House already campaigning for a second term and attempting to fix the severe U.S. economic crisis. In effect, the support of the Israeli lobby and evangelical Christians to Benjamin Netanyahu's efforts to prevent the creation of a Palestinian state has prevailed over the long term objectives, of the so called Peace Process, to establish an independent Palestinian state.

The unconditional and unwavering support of Israel's settlement policies by the particularity of evangelical Christian and hard-line Jewish-American organizations has made the U.S. lose its credibility as the main facilitator of the Middle East Peace Process. By mid-December, 2011 at least 112 countries have recognized Palestine as a state within the 1967 borders of Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and the West Bank, while more than 150 countries have maintained diplomatic relations with the Palestinian Authority.⁷²³ According to a public opinion poll by the Jerusalem Media and Communication Center (JMCC), more than 51% of the Palestinians support the PA's decision to suspend its negotiations with Israel and pursue the venue of international organizations.⁷²⁴ A second poll by the West Bank Al Najah University found that more than %77 of the Palestinians support the PA's U.N. application and find it very helpful for the Palestinian cause.⁷²⁵

The U.N. has recently passed a resolution by a vote of 167 countries endorsing the Palestinians' right to self-determination and having a state of their own based on U.N. resolutions. The United States and Israel were two out of the only five countries that opposed that resolution.⁷²⁶ Even if the United States vetoes the Palestinians' application for full U.N. membership at the United Nations Security Council, the Palestinian Authority would still be able to upgrade the status of Palestine in the U.N. General Assembly from an observer to a non-member observer "state." Thereafter, Palestine would be able to join international organizations

such as the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice, which would enable the PA to further expose the Israeli building of settlements as illegal under international law. Moreover, war crimes committed by the Israeli army in the Palestinian Territories would be brought for trials in international tribunals, based on U.N. documents such as the Goldstone Report.

The support of pro-Israel U.S. special interest groups to the Israeli policy of maintaining the current status-quo, and the subsequent application of the PA for full U.N. membership of a Palestinian state, have brought the question of Palestinian statehood back to the international community to resolve. Despite the fact that the U.N. system lacks the enforcement mechanism to settle a conflict, Israel's continued suppression of the Palestinians is bringing her a permanent state of regional and international isolation. In such a situation, the Arab Peace initiative for giving Israel full diplomatic recognition in exchange for a total withdrawal from Palestinian land will be among the only options that future Israeli governments have at improving their foreign relations with the rest of the world.

By the end of 2011, the latest proposal of the Quartet for bringing about a Palestinian state through negotiations with Israel remained ineffective, as Netanyahu's government responded to the PA application with expediting the completion of its settlement projects in East Jerusalem. At the same time, the U.S. has become but one member of the Quartet, rather than occupying the central role of a peace broker between the Israelis and the Palestinians. With the increasing influence of other members of the Quartet such as the E.U., the effect of domestic forces in the U.S. on U.S. role as a peace facilitator has ensured that the U.S. no longer has the credibility to be the "mutual mediator." For instance, the European Parliament is currently blocking the ratification of agreements "aimed at upgrading relations between E.U. and Israel" in order to pressure Israel at changing the current stalemate in the Peace Process;⁷²⁷ a stance that is highly unlikely to be expressed by the U.S.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is really not as complicated as it seems to be. Bringing a final settlement that is both in Israel's interest as well as in the interest of global peace and security is primarily dependent on an Israeli withdrawal back to the 1967 borders, and its recognition of East Jerusalem as the capital of a Palestinian state. Other issues such as the return

of Palestinian refugees who were forced to leave their homes as a result of the creation of Israel could be much easier to negotiate once the land and borders issues have been resolved.

Taking such an Israeli initiative would not only bring an end to a decades-long conflict, but it would usher in a long-awaited period of peace in the region where human lives would be respected rather than squandered; where Israel would become integrated into the region rather than being seen as the possessive, oppressive and merciless enemy; where the U.S. would start a new contract with the Arab street based on mutual respect rather than hatred, recognition of the right of the Palestinians to self-determination rather than dictation; and where the war-torn Palestinian society would be reconstructed, Palestinian lives would be improved, and resorting to armed violence among the Palestinian population would not be contemplated. At the same time, while one hopes for the sound of rationality and reasonableness to echo in the ears of the strong and powerful, the advocates of the battle royal might reach their goals of driving the region into additional chaos, before reasonableness and rationality could find their way into the hearts of the decision makers.

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Index – Introduction



Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA)

Map1: Israel/Palestine after the 1947 Partition Plan and the 1967 War

Index – Ch.1

“Stealth PACs”

Pro-Israel PACs Contributing to Federal Candidates 2004 Election Cycle:

Total Amount:	\$2,218,405	
Total to Democrats:	\$1,421,555	(64%)
Total to Republicans:	\$ 795,850	(36%)
Number of PACs Making Contributions:	35	

PAC Name	Affiliate Total	Dems	Repubs
Americans for Good Government	\$86,500	\$36,500	\$50,000
Americans United in Support of Democracy	89,500	44,500	45,000
BAYPAC	12,250	850	11,400
Bi-County PAC	46,500	32,500	14,000
California PAC	16,500	16,500	0
Citizens Organized PAC	113,500	77,500	36,000
City PAC	28,000	14,000	14,000
Delaware Valley PAC	11,000	5,250	5,750
Desert Caucus	125,500	73,000	52,500
Florida Congressional Committee	115,250	69,250	46,000
Georgia Peach	12,500	9,000	3,500
Grand Canyon Caucus	12,000	8,000	4,000
Heartland PAC	17,500	9,500	8,000
Hudson Valley PAC	142,900	84,900	58,000
Joint Action Cmte for Political Affairs	109,660	104,160	5,500
Louisiana for American Security	11,250	5,500	5,750
Maryland Assn for Concerned Citizens	39,000	25,000	13,000
Mid Manhattan PAC	54,620	49,620	5,000
MOPAC	2,000	2,000	0
National Action Committee	187,500	113,000	74,500
National Jewish Democratic Council	1,200	1,200	0
National PAC	219,500	129,500	90,000
NorPAC	193,150	133,650	59,500
Northern Californians for Good Govt	86,500	45,500	41,000
Northwest PAC	7,500	3,000	4,500
PAC of Cherry Hill, NJ	7,000	3,000	4,000
St Louisians for Better Government	26,000	26,000	0
SunPAC	105,250	76,250	29,000
To Protect Our Heritage PAC	23,150	7,750	15,400
United PAC	750	0	750
Virginia Congressional Committee	1,450	750	700
Washington PAC	182,250	110,750	71,500
Women's Alliance for Israel	125,750	102,250	23,500
Women's Pro-Israel National PAC	3,775	1,425	2,350
Young Jewish Leadership PAC	1,750	0	1,750

Based on data released by the FEC on Aug. 2, 2004
Center for Responsive Politics, <www.opensecrets.org>.

Index – Ch. 2

The Following two tables represent a compilation of FEC records that were bi-annually published by the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (* = Data not Available).

Table 1: Pro-Israel PACs Contributions Totals (1990-2000)

Election Year	Number of Active PACs	Candidates Supported	Total Raised (\$)	Total Donated (\$)	Arab/Muslim-American PACs Outspent
1990	95	402	10,700,000	4,800,000	105-1
1992	76	403: 281D and 122R	14,015,509	3,963,007	103-1
1994	61	358: 246D and 109R	6,084,639	2,529,573	247-1
1996	61	203: 116D and 87R	5,471,630	2,738,647	133-1
1998	58	249: 160D and 89R	5,228,998	2,090,857	23-1
2000	35	196: 120D and 75R	**	1,062,209	52-1

Table 2: Top Recipients of Campaign Contributions from Pro-Israel PACs (1990-2000)

Chamber	Member of Congress	Party-State	1990 Elections (\$)	Career Total (\$)
House	Howard Wolpe	D-MI	51,200	172,100
House	Wayne Owens	D-UT	48,900	117,050
House	David Obey	D-WI	42,950	105,050
House	Lee Hamilton	D-IN	9,500 by June 30, 1989	*
House	Ron Wyden	D-OR	15,500 by June 30, 1989	*
House	Benjamin Gilman	R-NY	16,000 by June 30, 1989	*
House	Les Aspin	D-WI	13,000 by June 30 1989	*
House	Mel Reynolds	D-IL	38,300	*
House	Jeffrey Hutter	D-KY	13,500	*
Senate	Paul Simon	D-IL	262,655	580,794

Senate	Tom Harkin	D-IA	245,550	359,980
Senate	Carl Levin	D-MI	243,000	422,038
Senate	Claiborne Pell	D-RI	103,350	*
Senate	James Exon	D-NE	37,000	*
Senate	J. Bennette Johnston	D-LA	59,300	*
Senate	Howell Heflin	D-AL	84,850	*
Senate	Mitch McConnell	R-KY	75,600	*
Senate	Larry Pressler	R-SD	49,500	*
Senate	Joseph Biden	D-DE	44,000 by June 30, 1989	*
Senate	Max Baucus	D-MT	25,500 by June 30, 1989	*
Senate	Rudy Boschwitz	R-MN	144,150	*
Senate	Ron Twilegar	D-ID	55,500	*
Chamber	Member of Congress	Party-State	1992 Elections (\$)	Career Total (\$)
Senate	Arlen Specter	R-PA	86,600	265,023
Senate	Packwood	R-OR	87,850	139,350
Senate	Kasten	R-WI	73,000	205,300
Senate	Alfonse D'Amato	R-NY	26,000	52,705
Senate	Dan Coats	R-IN	34,000	*
Senate	Christopher Dodd	D-CT	42,000	110,678
Senate	Barbara A. Mikulski	D-MD	56,900	104,340
Senate	Alan Keyes	R-MD	75,250	247,650
Senate	Recharad Shelby	D-AL	61,300 by end of 1991	*
Senate	Harris Wofford	D-PA	53, 500 by end of 1991	*
Senate	Timothy Wirth	D-CO	49, 215 by end of 1991	*
Senate	Kent Conrad	D-ND	48,000 by end of 1991	*
Senate	Christopher Bond	R-MO	47, 500 by end of 1991	*
Senate	Daniel Inouye	D-HI	42,000 by end of 1991	*
Senate	Harry Reid	D-NV	38,250 by end of 1991	*
Senate	Thomas Daschle	D-SD	*	382,630
House	Stephen Solarz	D-NY	1,750	7,600
House	Sam Gejdenson	D-CT	6,500	175,604
House	Tom Lantos	D-CA	1,500	46,700
House	Mel Levine	D-CA	108,000	*
House	Richard Gephardt	D-MO	22,000 by end of 1991	*
House	James Bilbray	D-NV	17,000 by end of 1991	*
House	Sander Levin	D-MI	16,500 by end of 1991	*
House	Robert Torricelli	D-NJ	15,000 by end of 1991	*
House	Newton Gingrich	R-GA	14,500 by end of 1991	*
House	Henry Waxman	D-CA	11,000 by end of 1991	*

House	Roland Coleman	D-TX	10,750 by end of 1991	*
House	Nita Lowey	D-NY	9,500 by end of 1991	*
House	Dick Swett	D-NH	8,250 by end of 1991	*
Chamber	Member of Congress	Party-State	1994 Elections (\$)	Career Total (\$)
Senate	Frank Lautenberg	D-NJ	127,056	417,306
Senate	Charles Robb	D-VA	111,872	147,872
House	Sam Gejdenson	D-CT	41,854	269,408
House	Eric Fingerhut	D-OH	33,990	51,390
Chamber	Member of Congress	Party-State	1996 Elections (\$)	Career Total (\$)
Senate	Carl Levin	D-MI	136,320	558,358
Senate	Ron Wyden	D-OR	93,352	164,045
Senate	Mitch McConnell	R-KY	83,625	280,425
Senate	Max S. Baucus	D-MT	77,998	232,748
Senate	Tom Harkin	D-IA	93,500	461,700
Senate	John Rockefeller	D-WV	52,000	172,200
Senate	William Cohen	R-ME	40,094	162,462
Senate	Larry Pressler	R-SD	48,500	167,000
Senate	John William Warner	R-VA	42,300	48,800
Senate	John F. Reed	R-RI	49,750	181,050
Senate	James Inhofe	R-OK	33,500	56,750
Senate	Robert Torricelli	D-NJ	28,352	113,152
Senate	Rudy Boschwitz	R-MN	27,452	304,650
Senate	Ted Stevens	R-AK	17,200	49,700
Senate	Richard Durbin	D-IL	67,222	229,421
Senate	Larry Craig	R-ID	15,000	20,750
Senate	Jesse Helms	R-NC	14,000	26,000
Senate	Phil Gramm	R-TX	59,500	80,500
House	Newton L. Gingrich	L-GA	24,562	95,434
House	Bob Filner	D-CA	27,100	63,700
House	Jane Harman	D-CA	30,549	55,227
House	John Edward Porter	R-IL	13,230	64,180
House	Lee Hamilton	D-IN	15,500	100,950
House	Jerry Thomas Estruth	D-CA	12,000	12,000
House	Martin Frost	D-TX	29,889	110,289
House	Benjamin Gilman	R-NY	12,700	59,575
House	Vic Fazio	D-CA	20,652	72,504
House	John Lewis	D-GA	10,500	57,150
House	Peter King	R-NY	10,500	14,500

House	Bill Paxon	R-NY	10,500	44,200
House	Richard A. Gephardt	D-MO	14,000	85,130
House	David R. Obey	D-WI	9,000	135,300
House	Thomas Delay	R-TX	11,500	19,850
House	Robert L. Livingston	R-LA	7,000	27,750
House	Susan Molinari	R-NY	7,000	18,750
House	Louis Stokes	D-OH	15,500	26,800
House	Lynn Rivers	D-MI	14,250	18,250
House	John Fox	R-PA	12,500	13,000
House	Maurice Hinchey	D-NY	12,250	14,850
House	Lee James Bunn	D-OR	10,350	16,213
House	Elizabeth Furse	D-OR	10,000	16,213
Chamber	Member of Congress	Party-State	1998 Elections (\$)	Career Total (\$)
Senate	Barbara Boxer	D-CA	58,202	*
Senate	Alfonse D'Amato	R	58,700	*
Senate	Sander Levin	D-MI	10,578	71,578
Senate	Carl Levin	D-MI	5,000	563,358
House	Shelley Berkeley	D-NV	12,032	*
Chamer	Member of Congress	Party-State	2000 Elections (\$)	Career Total (\$)
Senate	Frank Murkowski	R-AK	1,000	63,000
Senate	Ted Stevens	R-AK	1,000	47,200
Senate	Jon Kyl	R-AZ	44,925	77,025
Senate	Dianne Feinstein	D-CA	32,250	112,842
Senate	Christopher Dodd	D-CT	1,000	182,928
Senate	Joseph Lieberman	D-CT	86,000	226,508
Senate	Daniel Akaka	D-HI	5,000	93,500
Senate	Richard Durbin	D-IL	16,000	245,671
Senate	Richard Lugar	R-ID	10,500	43,200
Senate	Thomas Harkin	D-IA	1,000	423,895
Senate	Mitch McConnell	R-KY	3,000	285,425
Senate	Olympia Snowe	R-ME	32,750	71,000
Senate	Paul Sarbanes	D-MD	42,250	159,963
Senate	Carl Levin	D-MI	1,500	564,858
Senate	Sander Levin	D-MI	1,500	86,527
Senate	Trent Lott	R-MS	4,500	67,200
Senate	Max Baucus	D-MT	2,000	232,248
Senate	Conrad Burns	R-MT	52,960	165,010
Senate	Robert J. Kerrey	D-NE	8,000	198,500
Senate	Harry Reid	D-NV	-3,000	253,802

Senate	Robert Torricelli	D-NJ	5,000	125,652
Senate	Jeff Bingaman	D-NM	32,500	261,425
Senate	Hillary Clinton	D-NY	17,000	17,000
Senate	Kent Conrad	D-ND	43,000	195,689
Senate	Arlen Specter	R-PA	-250	366,123
Senate	Richard Licht	D-RI	2,005	245,605
Senate	Claiborne Pell	D-RI	-2,500	180,950
Senate	Ernest Hollings	D-SC	1,000	73,275
Senate	Tim Johnson	D-SD	1,000	51,000
Senate	Charles Robb	D-VA	102,821	255,093
Senate	Slade Gorton	R-WA	64,250	180,000
House	Tom Lantos	D-CA	12,250	68,650
House	Elton Gallegly	R-CA	4,000	41,250
House	Howard Berman	D-CA	10,000	55,450
House	Adam Schiff	D-CA	11,417	11,417
House	Jane Herman	D-CA	14,491	57,071
House	Sam Gejdenson	D-CT	29,500	335,601
House	Clay E. Shaw, Jr	R-FL	16,100	42,600
House	John Porter	R-IL	6,500	70,680
House	Richard Gephardt	D-MO	16,500	134,880
House	Shelley Berkley	D-NV	66,951	100,410
House	James H. Saxton	R-NJ	13,800	53,650
House	Frank Pallone, Jr.	D-NJ	4,000	44,400
House	Gary Ackerman	D-NY	1,000	40,500
House	Eliot Engel	D-NY	17,968	98,668
House	Nita Lowey	D-NY	7,500	84,088
House	Benjamin Gilman	R-NY	10,468	80,543
House	Barton Gordon	D-TN	1,000	55,400
House	Tom DeLay	R-Tx	14,200	39,050
House	Martin Frost	D-TX	10,000	126,864
House	David Obey	D-WI	4,500	147,100



Map 2: The West Bank after the Signing of Oslo II Interim Agreement (Source: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs).

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The Following two tables represent a compilation of FEC records that were bi-annually published by the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (* = Data not Available).

Table 3: Campaign Contributions Totals (2002-2010)

Pro-Israel PACs	2002 (\$)	2004 (\$)	2006 (\$)	2008 (\$)	2010 (\$)
	1,865,223	1,910,197	3,277,693	2,530,590	3,310,490
1978-	36,472,405	39,532,465	44,284,654	46,815,244	51,160,333
Muslim/Arab-American PACs	2002 (\$)	2004 (\$)	2006 (\$)	2008 (\$)	2010 (\$)
	**	109,000	80,500	35,605	36,500
1978-	430,815	539,815	620,315	655,920	692,420

Table 4: Top Recipients of Campaign Contributions from Pro-Israel PACs (2002-2008)

Chamber	Member of Congress	Party-State	2002 Elections (\$)	Career Total (\$)
Senate	Carl Levin	D-MI	84,529	649,387
Senate	Max Baucus	D-MT	84,100	316,348
Senate	Mitch McConnell	R-KY	62,000	347,425
Senate	Richard Durbin	D-IL	76,000	321,671
Senate	Max Cleland	D-GA	69,750	73,000
Senate	Tim Johnson	D-SD	86,165	137,165
Senate	Gordon Smith	R-OR	39,839	49,339
Senate	Susan Collins	R-ME	35,500	45,000
Senate	Tom Harkin	D-IA	44,750	506,450
Senate	Jack Reed	D-RI	25,886	100,936
Senate	Tom Daschle	D-SD	1,000	463,135
Senate	Arlen Specter	R-PA	15,500	381,623
Senate	Jeff Bingaman	D-NM	**	261,425
Senate	Charles Robb	D-VA	**	255,093
Senate	Harry Reid	D-NV	**	253,802
House	Dennis J. Hastert	R-IL	22,000	57,350
House	Shelley Berkley	D-NV	39,345	139,755

House	Tom DeLay	R-TX	12,000	51,050
House	Mary Ann McConnell	R-PA	10,000	10,000
House	Richard Gephardt	D-MO	23,415	158,295
House	Roy Blunt	R-MO	7,000	12,000
House	Robert Menendez	D-NJ	9,843	21,608
House	Eliot Engel	D-NY	10,000	108,668
House	Joseph Crowley	D-NY	7,500	10,500
House	Ira Shapiro	D-MD	5,000	5,000
House	Denise Majette	D-GA	52,000	**
House	Artur Davis	D-AL	61,567	61,567
House	Sam Gejendson	D-CT	**	335,600
House	David Obey	D-WI	2,000	149,100
House	Martin Frost	D-TX	4,500	131,364
House	Nita Lowey	D-NY	4,000	88,088
House	Sander Levin	D-MI	13,500	100,027
House	Benjamin Gilman	R-NY	4,000	84,543
House	Lane Evans	D-IL	4,836	79,629
Chamber	Member of Congress	Party-State	2004 Elections (\$)	Career Total (\$)
Senate	Wayne Allard	R-CO	**	50,500
Senate	Barbara Boxer	D-CA	78,000	228,794
Senate	Jeff Bingaman	D-NM	**	261,425
Senate	Robert Byrd	D-WV	**	67,500
Senate	James Jeffords	IVT	**	34,050
Senate	Patrick Leahy	D-VT	**	118,200
Senate	Evan Bayh	D-IN	59,00	86,250
Senate	Barbara Mikulski	D-MD	47,00	177,599
Senate	Patty Murray	D-WA	89,495	163,200
Senate	Harry Reid	D-NV	66,499	320,301
Senate	Charles Schumer	D-NY	25,000	57,635
Senate	Tim Johnson	D-SD	3,000	161,837
Senate	Max Cleland	D-GA	95,150	**
Senate	Ronald Wyden	D-OR	77,000	277,562
Senate	Robert Bennett	R-UT	57,250	99,250
Senate	Kent Conrad	D-ND	5,250	201,939
Senate	Christopher Dodd	D-CT	50,250	233,178
Senate	Joseph Lieberman	D-CT	3,250	227,758
Senate	Joseph Biden	D-DL	-500	101,000
Senate	Samuel Brownback	R-KS	61,350	105,800
Senate	Carl Levin	D-MI	93,029	657,887
Senate	Mitch McConnell	R-KY	83,250	368,675
Senate	Mary Landrieu	D-LA	92,250	**

Senate	Jean Carnahan	D-MO	87,422	**
Senate	Susan Collins	R-ME	**	53,500
Senate	Norm Coleman	R-MN	9,000	35,980
Senate	Saxby Chambliss	R-GA	18,500	27,500
Senate	Jim Bunning	R-KY	47,900	89,750
Senate	Richard Durbin	D-IL	3,500	327,671
Senate	Tom Harkin	D-IA	58,750	520,450
Senate	Gordon Smith	R-OR	58,589	68,089
Senate	Tom Daschle	D-SD	129,375	592,510
Senate	Frank Lautenberg	D-NJ	14,272	434,078
Senate	Arlen Specter	R-PA	106,350	487,973
House	Shelley Berkley	D-NV	40,600	206,955
House	Artur Davis	D-AL	16,500	78,060
House	Denise Majette	D-GA	5,000	57,000
House	Richard Gephardt	D-MO	1,000	173,295
House	Eric Cantor	R-VA	34,500	85,730
House	Dennis J. Hastert	R-IL	18,500	80,850
House	Sander Levin	D-MI	5,700	116,227
House	Eliot Engel	D-NY	23,000	141,918
House	Jane Harman	D-CA	**	87,271
House	Joseph Crowley	D-NY	23,000	**
House	Evan Lane	D-IL	**	87,375
House	Tom DeLay	R-TX	28,000	86,050
House	Martin Frost	D-TX	54,900	189,014
House	Nita Lowey	D-NY	22,150	111,238
House	Nancy Pelosi	D-CA	26,650	63,450
House	Steny Hoyer	D-MD	37,500	92,275
House	Howard Berman	D-CA	3,500	63,550
House	Gary Ackerman	D-NY	**	45,500
House	David Price	D-NC	**	50,827
House	Christopher Smith	R-NJ	7,000	51,750
House	Frank Pallone	D-NJ	10,150	55,550
House	Donald Payne	D-NJ	500	21,750
House	Ilena Ros-Lehtinen	R-FL	47,000	88,490
House	Tom Lantos	D-CA	34,600	110,250
House	Lane Evans	D-IL	9,750	89,379
House	Joseph Hoeffel	D-PA	**	24,454
Chamber	Member of Congress	Party-State	2006 Elections (\$)	Career Total (\$)
Senate	Jon Kyl	R-AZ	87,000	**
Senate	Bill Nelson	R-FL	89,861	**
Senate	Kent Conrad	D-ND	62,600	**

Senate	Joseph Lieberman	D-CT	127,093	363,851
Senate	Debbie Stabenow	D-MI	85,796	**
Senate	James Talent	R-MO	69,510	**
Senate	Benjamin E. Nelson	D-NE	59,500	**
Senate	Rick Santorum	R-PA	75,500	**
Senate	Mike DeWine	R-OH	74,000	**
Senate	Robert Menendez	D-NJ	84,835	**
Senate	Benjamin L. Cardin	D-MD	66,565	
Senate	Sheldon Whitehouse II	D-RI	72,000	
Senate	Carl Levin	D-MI	**	658,887
Senate	Tom Harkin	D-IA	**	520,950
Senate	Arlen Specter	R-PA	**	489,973
Senate	Frank Lautenberg	D-NJ	**	434,078
Senate	Mitch McConnell	R-KY	**	377,185
Senate	Richard Durbin	D-IL	**	330,421
Senate	Max Baucus	D-MI	**	327,648
Senate	Harry Reid	D-NV	**	320,301
Senate	Ronald Wyden	D-OR	**	277,562
House	Mark Kirk	R-IL	76,564	129,882
House	Brad Ellsworth	D-IN	48,750	**
House	Dennis J. Hastert	R-IL	38,700	**
House	Shelley Berkley	D-NV	39,250	246,205
House	Steny Hoyer	D-MD	44,500	129,882
House	Ileana Rose-Lehtinen	R-FL	36,500	120,990
House	Eliot Engel	D-NY	38,000	179,918
House	Deborah Pryce	R-OH	30,000	**
House	Brad Ellsworth	D-IN	38,000	**
House	Tom DeLay	R-TX	26,000	**
House	Joseph Crowley	D-NY	24,000	**
House	Eric Cantor	R-VA	43,000	128,730
House	Chet Edwards	D-TX	28,600	**
House	Martin Frost	D-TX	**	190,014
House	David Obey	D-WI	**	152,100
House	Tom Lantos	C-CA	**	121,250
House	Sander Levin	D-MI	**	122,227
House	Nita Lowey	D-NY	**	117,738
Chamber	Member of Congress	Party-State	2008 Elections (\$)	Career Total (\$)
Senate	Mitch McConnell	R-KY	107,956	485,141
Senate	Norm Coleman	R-MN	105,000	**
Senate	Frank Lautenberg	D-NJ	73,500	507,578
Senate	Carl Levin	D-MI	69,850	728,737

Senate	Susan Collins	R-ME	57,500	**
Senate	Mark Pryor	D-AR	53,500	**
Senate	Gordon Smith	R-OR	52,000	**
Senate	Jack Reed	D-RI	50,500	**
Senate	Mary Landrieu	D-LA	50,000	**
Senate	Katrina Swett	D-NH	49,000	**
Senate	Thomas Harkin	D-IA	**	546,950
Senate	Arlen Specter	R-PA	**	503,473
Senate	Richard Durbin	D-IL	**	372,421
Senate	Joseph Lieberman	Ind-CT	**	366,351
Senate	Max Baucus	D-MT	**	352,648
Senate	Harry Reid	D-NV	**	320,301
Senate	Ronald Wyden	D-OR	**	277,562
House	Mark Kirk	R-IL	62,000	191,882
House	Steny Hoyer	D-MD	58,000	197,275
House	Eric Cantor	R-VA	47,500	176,230
House	Shelley Berkley	D-NV	45,350	291,555
House	John Boehner	R-OH	37,500	**
House	Eliot Engel	D-NY	36,500	216,418
House	Mike Pence	R-IN	32,500	**
House	Ileana Rose-Lehtinen	R-FL	29,750	155,740
House	Ron Klein	D-FL	25,000	**
House	Nita Lowey	D-NY	23,000	141,738
House	David Obey	D-WI	**	159,600
House	Sander Levin	D-MI	**	123,727
House	Tom Lantos	D-CA	**	123,250

Letter From President Bush to Prime Minister Sharon

His Excellency
Ariel Sharon
Prime Minister of Israel

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

Thank you for your letter setting out your disengagement plan.

The United States remains hopeful and determined to find a way forward toward a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute. I remain committed to my June 24, 2002 vision of two states living side by side in peace and security as the key to peace, and to the roadmap as the route to get there.

We welcome the disengagement plan you have prepared, under which Israel would withdraw certain military installations and all settlements from Gaza, and withdraw certain military installations and settlements in the West Bank. These steps described in the plan will mark real progress toward realizing my June 24, 2002 vision, and make a real contribution towards peace. We also understand that, in this context, Israel believes it is important to bring new opportunities to the Negev and the Galilee. We are hopeful that steps pursuant to this plan, consistent with my vision, will remind all states and parties of their own obligations under the roadmap.

The United States appreciates the risks such an undertaking represents. I therefore want to reassure you on several points.

First, the United States remains committed to my vision and to its implementation as described in the roadmap. The United States will do its utmost to prevent any attempt by anyone to impose any other plan. Under the roadmap, Palestinians must undertake an immediate cessation of armed activity and all acts of violence against Israelis anywhere, and all official Palestinian institutions must end incitement against Israel. The Palestinian leadership must act decisively against terror, including sustained, targeted, and effective operations to stop terrorism and dismantle terrorist capabilities and infrastructure. Palestinians must undertake a comprehensive and fundamental political reform that includes a strong parliamentary democracy and an empowered prime minister.

Second, there will be no security for Israelis or Palestinians until they and all states, in the region and beyond, join together to fight terrorism and dismantle terrorist organizations. The United States reiterates its steadfast commitment to Israel's security, including secure, defensible borders, and to preserve and strengthen Israel's capability to deter and defend itself, by itself, against any threat or possible combination of threats.

Third, Israel will retain its right to defend itself against terrorism, including to take actions against terrorist organizations. The United States will lead efforts, working together with Jordan, Egypt, and others in the international community, to build the capacity and will of Palestinian institutions to fight terrorism, dismantle terrorist organizations, and prevent the areas from which Israel has withdrawn from posing a threat that would have to be addressed by any other means. The United States understands that after Israel withdraws from Gaza and/or parts of the West Bank, and pending agreements on other arrangements, existing arrangements regarding control of airspace, territorial waters, and land passages of the West Bank and Gaza will continue. The United States is strongly committed to Israel's security and well-being as a Jewish state. It seems clear that an agreed, just, fair, and realistic framework for a solution to the Palestinian refugee issue as part of any final status agreement will need to be found through the establishment of a Palestinian state, and the settling of Palestinian refugees there, rather than in Israel.

As part of a final peace settlement, Israel must have secure and recognized borders, which should emerge from negotiations between the parties in accordance with UNSC Resolutions 242 and 338. In light of new realities on the ground, including already existing major Israeli populations centers, it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949, and all previous efforts to negotiate a two-state

solution have reached the same conclusion. It is realistic to expect that any final status agreement will only be achieved on the basis of mutually agreed changes that reflect these realities.

I know that, as you state in your letter, you are aware that certain responsibilities face the State of Israel. Among these, your government has stated that the barrier being erected by Israel should be a security rather than political barrier, should be temporary rather than permanent, and therefore not prejudice any final status issues including final borders, and its route should take into account, consistent with security needs, its impact on Palestinians not engaged in terrorist activities.

As you know, the United States supports the establishment of a Palestinian state that is viable, contiguous, sovereign, and independent, so that the Palestinian people can build their own future in accordance with my vision set forth in June 2002 and with the path set forth in the roadmap. The United States will join with others in the international community to foster the development of democratic political institutions and new leadership committed to those institutions, the reconstruction of civic institutions, the growth of a free and prosperous economy, and the building of capable security institutions dedicated to maintaining law and order and dismantling terrorist organizations.

A peace settlement negotiated between Israelis and Palestinians would be a great boon not only to those peoples but to the peoples of the entire region. Accordingly, the United States believes that all states in the region have special responsibilities: to support the building of the institutions of a Palestinian state; to fight terrorism, and cut off all forms of assistance to individuals and groups engaged in terrorism; and to begin now to move toward more normal relations with the State of Israel. These actions would be true contributions to building peace in the region.

Mr. Prime Minister, you have described a bold and historic initiative that can make an important contribution to peace. I commend your efforts and your courageous decision which I support. As a close friend and ally, the United States intends to work closely with you to help make it a success.

Sincerely,
George W. Bush

(White House Archives:

<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2004/04/20040414-3.html>
(Accessed January 7, 2012)).

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The Following table represents a compilation of FEC records, published by the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (* = Data not Available).

Table 5: Top Recipients of Campaign Contributions from Pro-Israel PACs (2010)

Chamber	Member of Congress	Party-State	2010 Elections (\$)	Career Total (\$)
Senate	Richard C. Shelby	R-AI	6,000	200,825
Senate	John McCain	R-AZ	35,500	206,000
Senate	Bill Nelson	D-FL	10,000	137,221
Senate	Christopher Dodd	D-CT	8,000	242,178
Senate	Joseph Lieberman	Ind-CT	2,500	368,851
Senate	Richard Durbin	D-IL	1,000	373,421
Senate	Mark S. Kirk	R-IL	115,304	336,386
Senate	Barbara Mikulski	D-MD	35,500	213,099
Senate	Susan Collins	R-ME	3,000	111,000
Senate	Charles E. Grassley	R-IA	19,000	160,323
Senate	Jim Bunning	R-KY	10,940	100,690
Senate	Harry Reid	D-NV	72,700	393,001
Senate	Max Baucus	D-MT	1,000	349,648
Senate	Jon Kyl	R-AZ	1,000	166,525
Senate	Patrick Leahy	D-VT	27,711	145,911
Senate	Frank Lautenberg	D-NJ	1,000	503,578
Senate	Ronald Wyden	D-OR	67,400	344,962
Senate	Kristen Gillibrand	D-NY	46,200	62,450
Senate	Charles Schumer	D-NY	26,750	84,385
Senate	John Thune	R-SD	40,500	54,730
Senate	Arlen Specter	D-PA	46,000	549,473
Senate	Robert Bennett	R-UT	42,000	141,250
Senate	Byron Dorgan	D-ND	21,000	172,350
Senate	Russell Feingold	D-WI	69,128	213,438
Senate	Patty Murray	D-WA	32,000	195,293
Senate	Carl Levin	D-MI	200	728,937
Senate	Barbara Boxer	D-CA	50,250	279,044
House	Nancy Pelosi	D-CA	19,500	122,300
House	Howard Berman	D-CA	35,500	124,550
House	Jane Harman	D-CA	20,000	123,771
House	Ileana Rose-Lehtinen	R-FL	45,000	208,740
House	Daniel K. Inouye	D-HI	57,000	262,425

House	Dan L. Burton	R-IN	22,836	143,336
House	Steny Hoyer	D-MD	42,000	235,275
House	Sander Levin	D-MI	4,000	132,727
House	Ike Skelton	D-MO	51,000	139,450
House	Shelley Berkley	D-NV	36,000	326,055
House	Joseph Crowley	D-NY	12,000	105,657
House	Eliot Engel	D-NY	34,000	269,418
House	Nita Lowey	D-NY	28,000	177,238
House	Eric Cantor	R-VA	41,500	217,730
House	David Obey	D-WI	4,000	164,600
House	Ron Klein	D-FL	42,650	90,174
House	Theodore Deutch	D-FL	43,600	43,600

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Notes: Chapter Three

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