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***AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY AND ISRAEL: WHY AND HOW POLICY  
DECISIONS ARE MADE***

**By  
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**A thesis submitted to the  
School of Graduate Studies and Research  
in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of**

**Master of Arts**

**Department of Political Science**

**Advisor: Professor John Sigler**

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# AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY AND ISRAEL: WHY AND HOW POLICY DECISIONS ARE MADE

by  
Jean Kanan

## Abstract

On May 14, 1948 the State of Israel was proclaimed independent and within minutes was immediately recognised by the United States. This recognition not only opened the door to future U.S. foreign policy initiatives in the Middle East but gave the U.S. a strong presence in the Middle East via Israel. The evolution of the relationship between the U.S. and Israel has progressed from that of limited involvement to an unusual partnership. 1967 marked the turning point in U.S.-Israeli relations, the U.S. began implementing foreign policies more favourable to Israel and began a new course in the relationship providing Israel with considerable amounts in U.S. funds and military support.

This thesis examines the development of this unique relationship in foreign policy resulting in the sizeable transfers of U.S. funds and military support. It looks at the foreign policy decision making process of the different administrations since Israel's birth. Focus on the decision making process is primarily directed towards the president and his secretary of state. This thesis looks at how seven determinants weigh on each administration with a variation from president to president and secretaries of states. These determinants are said to have diversely affected the outcome of U.S. foreign policy decisions towards Israel. The seven determinants are: (1) the beliefs, attitudes, and personality of the president, (2) the beliefs, attitude and personality of the secretary of state, (3) the relations between the president and the secretary of state, (4) the role of the American Jewish community, (5) the role of Congress particularly in regards to foreign aid, (6) the role of other domestic groups and pressures in American politics, (7) the international strategic environment, particularly during the cold war era.

*I would like to thank the University of Ottawa and particularly Professor John Sigler for making it possible to research this topic. I dedicate this thesis to my family, Hoda, Nadia, Murwan, dad and mom. I would like to give special thanks to my mother, I wouldn't be who I am today without her continual support, courage and guidance.*

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## CHAPTER ONE: THE POLITICAL PROCESS MODEL IN FOREIGN POLICY DECISION-MAKING

On May 14, 1948 the State of Israel was proclaimed independent and within minutes was immediately recognised by the United States. This recognition not only opened the door to future U.S. foreign policy initiatives in the Middle East but gave the U.S. a strong presence in the Middle East via Israel. The evolution of the relationship between the U.S. and Israel has progressed from that of limited involvement to an unusual partnership. The result of this partnership links a small but militarily powerful Israel, dependent on the United States for its economic and military strength, with the U.S. trying to balance competing interests in the region.<sup>1</sup> The development of the relationship between Israel and the United States was gradual until a turn of events in 1967, when France, then Israel's major military supplier, in protest for Israel initiating the '67 war, refused to continue to supply Israel with weapons.<sup>2</sup> 1967 marked the turning point in U.S.-Israeli relations, the U.S. began implementing foreign policies more favourable to Israel and began a new course in the relationship providing Israel with considerable amounts in U.S. funds and military support.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the development of this unique relationship in foreign policy resulting in the sizeable transfers of U.S. funds and

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<sup>1</sup> Clyde R. Mark, Israeli-United States Relations (Washington: Congressional Research Service - Library of Congress, October 1996), p.1.

military support. In order to do so it is essential to look at the foreign policy decision making process of the different administrations since Israel's birth. Focus on the decision making process will be primarily directed towards the president and his secretary of state, since foreign policy is essentially the jurisdiction of the executive branch. Given the intensity of the decision making process within the Executive, it is crucial to place perspective on the determinants that may affect the outcome of the decisions made by the persons responsible. In this thesis, these determinants will be applicable to the various presidents and secretaries of state. The determinants this thesis will refer to are as follows: (1) the beliefs, attitudes, and personality of the president, (2) the beliefs, attitude and personality of the secretary of state, (3) the relations between the president and the secretary of state, (4) the role of the American Jewish community, (5) the role of Congress particularly in regards to foreign aid, (6) the role of other domestic groups and pressures in American politics, (7) the international strategic environment, particularly during the cold war era. This thesis will look at how the determinants weigh on each administration with a variation from president to president and secretaries of states.

For the purpose of this thesis the conceptual approach that will be applied is based on the work of Roger Hilsman who has developed a "political process model" to

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<sup>2</sup> Donald Neff, Fallen Pillars, U.S. Policy towards Palestine and Israel since 1945 (Washington D.C.: Institute for Palestinian Studies, 1995), p. 172.

explain specific American foreign policy decisions and outcomes.<sup>3</sup> The reliance on Hilsman reflects on the nature of this topic itself. This thesis emphasises the decision making process by dealing with top political officials rather than the bureaucracy.<sup>4</sup> International power politics is not enough to explain what this thesis sets out to attain since power politics focuses on the state and not individuals.<sup>5</sup> In making the case for a political process model, Hilsman first criticises the realist or "power politics" model in explaining policy. Hilsman calls it the "strategic geopolitical model" and assesses the assumptions for this model as the following: the actors in international affairs are states, the state seeks power, the state seeks relatively few goals, states achieve goals systematically, and finally the pursuit of state goals is conducted through rational analysis that is both objective and without emotion.<sup>6</sup> Hilsman concludes that with the strategic geopolitical model, the personalities and ideologies of the different leaders are irrelevant, since primary focus is on the state.<sup>7</sup> In other words, the strategic or geopolitical model deduces that the actors, or states, are like black boxes with the only difference being in size, strength and their location in a strategic sense.<sup>8</sup> With this information, the analyst need not know what goes on inside the box. Hilsman argues that this model, although useful as a tool, is not a really a description of reality since he

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<sup>3</sup> Roger Hilsman, The Politics of Policy Making in Defense and Foreign Affairs, Conceptual Models and Bureaucratic Politics, Second Edition (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1990) .

<sup>4</sup> See Graham T. Allison, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis (Boston: Little Brown, 1971). For a review of foreign policy analysis models, see Laura Neack, Jeanne A.K. Hey, and Patrick J. Haney Eds., Foreign Policy Analysis: Continuity and Change in its Second Generation (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1995).

<sup>5</sup> See Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations: the Struggle for Power and Peace (New York: Knopf, 1985, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

does not consider the state to be an entity with its own goals choosing one course of action over another.<sup>9</sup> Foreign affairs requires concrete decisions which can only be made by individuals, although the men and women who do make these decisions do so in the name of the state.<sup>10</sup> The only way to understand a state's behaviour is by actually looking inside the box and the people who make up the state's decision making nerve.

According to Hilsman, the process by which governments make decisions is political, hence the political process conceptual model. When an analyst opens the U.S. box, he or she finds a government headed by a president, a legislature and a judiciary.<sup>11</sup> The most fundamental assumption of this model is that the decision making process includes a number of people, most of whom are in government. This would emphasise the president and other members of the National Security Council, composed of the president, the vice-president and the secretaries of state and defense.<sup>12</sup> Others who may affect the outcome of decisions include members of Congress, members of interest groups, the media and the mass of the voters, among others.<sup>13</sup> In order to have a voice in the decision making process both the government and non-government people, which Hilsman refers to as power centres, go through vehicles such as the White

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 47., see Richard C. Snyder, H.W. Bruck and Burton Sapin Eds., Foreign Policy Decision Making (New York: Free Press, 1962).

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 53.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

House, Congress, State Department and lobby groups. These individual power centres are given identities with respect to particular decisions or outcomes in terms of their relevant goals, values, beliefs and perceptions; organisational power centres are given identities in terms of relevant organisationally-defined goals and the current policies and values they represent.<sup>14</sup> These actors are also defined in terms of the “power” they are able to bring to bear on a particular issue or problem. For our purposes, the term “power” alludes to the capacity to influence decisions and outcomes.<sup>15</sup> The actors who contribute to the decision making process maintain a certain degrees of influence. For example, the president yields more influence in foreign policy than any individual member of Congress and a high profile lobby group is more likely to influence an executive decision than Congress, depending on the nature and number of followers the lobby group has. Hilsman’s political process conceptual model asserts that each power centre presumably values the United States and shares the goal of preserving the power and prestige of the U.S., possibly at times for the sake of power and prestige.<sup>16</sup> In addition to the ultimate state goals, each power centre has other goals, organisational, and even personal. Since individuals are the power centres who make up the decision making process, it is quite natural that their own personal goals are meshed into the process.

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<sup>14</sup> Keith Coulter, Operation Eagle Claw: Explaining A Foreign Policy Failure (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Department of Political Science, Carleton University, 1995), p. 39.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 79.

While the executive clearly dominates in foreign policy decision-making, the separation of powers system in Washington does give an independent role to the Senate in treaty ratification and to Congress in foreign and military aid allocations. As U.S. policy to Israel includes an important aid dimension, the political process model gives attention as well to the Congressional role, and the influences on Congress by lobbyists and interest groups.<sup>17</sup> The model considers as important elements the participants' perspective on international affairs, realistic expectations about the final outcome, taking into consideration political bargaining and the influence of domestic politics on foreign policy.<sup>18</sup> Having discussed the breakdown of Hilsman's political process model, it is important that it be considered the foreign policy decision making process throughout the course of this thesis. Defined, the foreign policy decision making process is conceptualised as a group activity, played out in an inter-organisational way at the highest levels of government, in which specific individuals, representing both themselves and their organisations, make decisions and affect outcomes.<sup>19</sup> In this group setting, there is competition in the form of disagreement, conflict and struggle due to the diverse goals, values, beliefs and perceptions of the individual decision makers involved.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Keith Coulter, Operation Eagle Claw: Explaining A Foreign Policy Failure (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Department of Political Science, Carleton University, 1995), p. 40.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

Keith Coulter's unpublished PhD thesis<sup>21</sup> uses Hilsman's political process model to explain why certain foreign policy decisions were made during Jimmy Carter's administration. In looking for responses to foreign policy questions, Coulter discovered Hilsman's model most useful since it opens the "black box" of the state's decision making process and rigorously examines patterns and dynamics involved during both the decision making and implementation phase.<sup>22</sup> However, in order to develop a political process explanation or outcome there are four steps that must be taken. First, one has to identify the power centres discussed earlier, the organisations and individuals involved.<sup>23</sup> Second, one must examine the activities of each of these key decision makers in terms of the basic concepts of the model, such as in terms of their goals, values, beliefs and perceptions and in terms of the current policies and interests of the organizations they head, exposing any tensions or contradictions.<sup>24</sup> Third, one must assess the power of each of these individuals, relative to others involved assessing the degree of influence or persuasion.<sup>25</sup> Finally, one must examine the specific way in which the decision was taken or the outcome achieved, the strategies employed by the decision makers involved, the pressures on each of them and the details of the process dynamics such as conflict and accommodation, struggle and compromise, manipulation and persuasion, bargaining as well as consensus building.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Keith Coulter, Operation Eagle Claw: Explaining A Foreign Policy Failure (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Department of Political Science, Carleton University, 1995).

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

In order to grasp a clear understanding of the political process model, Coulter developed a table outlining the four steps.

<b>TABLE 1: THE POLITICAL PROCESS MODEL</b>		
<b>ACTORS</b>	<b>BASIC CONCEPTS</b>	<b>TYPICAL PROCESS DYNAMICS</b>
<b>Power Centres:</b>		<b>Conflict / Accommodation</b>
<b>Individuals</b>	<b>Goals</b>	<b>Struggle / Compromise</b>
<b>Organisations</b>	<b>Values</b>	<b>Manipulation / Persuasion</b>
<b>Inter-Organisational groups</b>	<b>Beliefs</b>	<b>Bargaining / Consensus Building</b>
	<b>Perceptions</b>	<b>Strategies / Coping Skills</b>
	<b>Power</b>	<b>Standard Operating Procedures</b>
	<b>Current policies</b>	<b>Policy Development</b>
		<b>Value Conflict</b>
		<b>Uncertainty</b>
		<b>Response to Pressures</b>

(Keith Coulter , 1995, p. 41)

Prior to applying the political process model, Coulter identifies the limitations of the model, limitations which should also be identified for the purposes of this thesis. The absence of a clear "if-then" relationship places more of a burden on the analyst since the analyst must weigh the evidence and determine using the facts that the model suggests are important, why a particular decision was taken or outcome achieved.<sup>27</sup> The model does not provide a formula or fixed variables, since variables or determinants vary between decisions or outcomes, therefore, the analyst must decide on which variables were most effective. The strength of the explanation is

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

therefore dependent on the individual skill of the analyst in applying the model, not on the validity of statements in the model about the relative importance of such factors.<sup>28</sup> Another limitation Coulter describes is the fact that the model takes the values and beliefs of individual decision makers as a starting point without making reference to where they originated. This limitation can be resolved only if the analyst decides to search in more personal material such as biographical and auto-biographical books, which is the case for this thesis. In order to provide a more solid framework on the personal values and beliefs determinant, as much as possible reference was made to the biographical and auto-biographical work of the president and the secretary of state in question. Coulter also believes that because the Hilsman political process model is heavily focused on American institutions and processes, it would be difficult to apply it to other countries. This thesis focuses on U.S. policy toward Israel, on decisions rendered by the U.S. towards Israel. Therefore, Israel's executive decision making mechanism is not excluded from this paper, rather a full study of U.S.-Israel relations would require a process model appropriate to Israeli institutions.<sup>29</sup>

The question that the political process model seeks to answer in this thesis is "why do U.S. foreign policy makers make the foreign policy decisions they do towards Israel?". In order to respond to this question what must be discussed is the

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>29</sup> For a similar process model specific to Israeli institutions and processes, see Michael Brecher, Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975).

actual application of the political process model in this thesis. The model will then be focused on the decision makers themselves, which for the purpose of this paper are the president, the secretary of state and in some circumstances the national security advisor. An important aspect of the application of the political process model in this paper is the influence of non-government power centres, most particularly the role of interest groups and the American voter. For this reason, the list of determinants, discussed earlier will concentrate on the decision makers, such as the president, secretary of state, in some circumstances the national security advisor, and on Congress in terms of foreign aid.

This current chapter serves as an introduction to this thesis, outlining the political process model and underlying the reasons that it is the best theoretical approach with the topic at hand. However, a brief introduction into the history of Israel and the evolution of the relationship between Israel and the U.S. is necessary.

### Historical Background

Following World War I, the victorious powers had essentially sat down to arrange what had been left over from the Ottoman Empire, or what we know today as the Middle East. The League of Nations, an international organisation established as a result of the war, had its first decision to make, mandate Palestine to the U.S. or to

Britain.<sup>30</sup> The Versailles Conference awarded the Palestinian Mandate to Britain who conducted its mandate for twenty-eight years until May 1947 when the British government gave notice that it would abandon the mandate in one year.<sup>31</sup> This left an enormous responsibility on the United Nations and other leading powers who had to decide on one of two practical solutions: either to partition the mandate and create two nations; or to maintain the unity of the land, which meant giving control to the Arab majority.<sup>32</sup> For obvious reasons the Arabs rejected the first solution and the Jews rejected the second solution.

As time progressed and no solution was agreed upon in the early months of 1948 Palestine descended into a hell of chaos and violence.<sup>33</sup> Government institutions and agencies broke down, the British who had become the target of Jewish terrorist attacks had confined their role to trying to moderate the killing and maintain the status quo.<sup>34</sup> The United States, under the Truman administration was under a large amount of pressure by the Zionists and the Arabs. The administration devised a two-part strategy to deal with Palestine, the aim was to desert or suspend the issue of partitioning Palestine into an Arab and Jewish state.<sup>35</sup> The first part focused on undercutting the legal basis for armed intervention, thereby avoiding any

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<sup>30</sup> George Ball, Douglas Ball The Passionate Attachment America's Involvement with Israel, 1947 to the Present (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992), p. 19.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Donald Neff, Fallen Pillars, U.S. Policy Towards Palestine and Israel Since 1945 (Washington D.C.: Institute for Palestinian Studies, 1995), p. 55.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

possibility for U.S. troops and the second part was to gain the General Assembly's agreement to suspend partition in favour of a trusteeship to replace the British mandate.<sup>36</sup>

Problems in Palestine escalated as the British mandate neared an end. A Palestinian refugee problem emerged as the violence worsened and entire villages were abandoned. By the spring of 1948 Palestinian refugees numbered close to 726,000 men, women and children and were only given adequate attention later in the spring.<sup>37</sup> The Jews had made it clear that they had planned to proclaim their own state when the British finally withdrew in mid-May.<sup>38</sup> The Truman administration, in conflict over what course of action to take, recognised that the President was under a great deal of domestic pressure and an election not far away. In spite of the political haggling, Truman had decided to recognise Israel and did so at 6:11 p.m. on May 14, eleven minutes after Israel proclaimed its existence.<sup>39</sup> This marked the beginning of the relationship between Israel and the United States.

### Thesis Outline:

The focus in chapters two and three are the executive and those involved in the decision making process, namely the president and the secretary of state. Chapter

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 62.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 64.

two will look at the period between 1948 and 1968. The obvious reason for beginning with 1948 and Harry Truman is straightforward. As explained above, Israel was established in 1948 and as the President, Truman decided to recognise Israel's existence. All the presidents between 1948 and 1968 will be analysed in detail. The methodology for this chapter and the following chapter will rely largely on autobiographical and biographical material. This will prove most useful when discussing the beliefs and values of the president. This is the closest form of first hand information that can be obtained by providing insight that would normally not be disclosed in other material. In addition to analysing the presidents, the secretary of state of the administration will also be analysed by the same methodology used to analyse the president, since that person may have contributed to the outcome of a certain decision. Like each president, it will be necessary to refer to the biography or auto-biography of the secretary of state in order to understand the origins of the person's values and beliefs. Finally, the five determinants will be linked to the president and his secretary of state but only those determinants that have an effect on the decision making process with the president and the secretary of state will be discussed. The Johnson era will signal the end of chapter two for the reason that it marked a turning point in U.S.-Israeli relations. As will be discussed, the 1967 war altered France's previous arrangement to supply Israel with defensive weapons in asserting her disapproval for initiating the 1967 war. The Johnson administration

filled this gap for domestic reasons, setting a precedent for the following administration.

Chapter three will continue with the same theme as chapter two, by analysing the presidents and the secretaries of state between 1969 to 1989. Chapter three will also introduce a new actor in the decision making process, the national security advisor. This is largely due to the role Henry Kissinger played in the Nixon administration and the fact that his decisions on certain occasions overruled the decisions of the secretary of state. Once again, significance will be laid on the biography and auto-biography of the president, secretary of state and now the national security advisor. In following the same practice as chapter two, all five determinants will be measured according to their weight on each of the actors and how these determinants may have contributed to the outcome of certain decisions. Both chapters two and three will rely a great deal on historical material in addition to the already mentioned pertinent material. This will provide the reader with insight, while at the same time continuing with the political process model of analysing the decision making process. The Bush and Clinton administrations are not analysed, due to the continuing uncertainties in this new phase of U.S. policy, and the relative lack to date of solid information and analysis. The framework could well be used to extend the analysis when more material becomes available.

Chapter four will serve more as a background chapter on explanation of three of the determinants. Two of the determinants include the beliefs, attitude, and personality of the president and of the secretary of state which is in large part covered in chapters two and three by the nature of the methodology used to deduce this information. The third determinant makes reference to the relations between the president and his secretary of state, which is also more insightful when extracted from the biography or auto-biography of the president and his secretary of state, as will be the case for chapters two and three. Three determinants require a more in depth analysis, because their influence on the decision making process is more dominant than the others. The focus of chapter four will be on the role of the American Jewish community, the role of Congress particularly in regards to foreign aid and the role of other domestic groups and pressures in American politics. What is discussed is how these determinants influence the decision making process, on the president, secretary of state and national security advisor. In essence what the reader will discover from this chapter is that, influencing the decision making process is in the form of a chain reaction. For example, the lobby pressures members of Congress who in turn pressures the president or the lobby pressure the secretary of state who in turn provides a more sympathetic case scenario to the president who finally renders a decision.

Chapter five will serve as the analytical chapter which will require an examination of the presidencies since 1948. By this point, it has been made clear that for the purpose of this thesis the decision making process is focused on the president and the secretary of state, whose decisions may be influenced by one of the seven determinants. The seven determinants will be divided into headings with a brief summary of each determinant. Subsequently, reference will be made to the president or secretary of state affected most or least by that particular determinant. This will allow for a comparison and contrast of each president and secretary of state. This will also allow the analyst and reader to determine the development of any patterns or consistencies. Here, the reader will be able to get a fuller understanding of the first four chapters, since it details the actual influences on the decision making process. Chapter six will conclude the thesis by discussing how the political process model unfolded in this thesis.

U.S. foreign policy decisions in this thesis are relevant in terms of foreign aid and military build up. The following table provides an overview of the military and economic aid provided to Israel between 1949 - 1989 by the United States. Other U.S. assistance is not included in the following table. The figures provided in the columns under the headings *military* and *economic* include both loans and grants.

**US ASSISTANCE TO ISRAEL 1949 - 1989 (MILLIONS OF DOLLARS)**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>MILITARY</b>	<b>ECONOMIC</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1949	-	-	-
1950	-	-	-
1951	-	0.1	0.1
1952	-	63.7	63.7
1953	-	73.6	73.6
1954	-	54.0	54.0
1955	-	41.5	41.5
1956	-	24.0	24.0
1957	-	26.8	26.8
1958	-	24.0	24.0
1959	0.4	19.2	19.6
1960	0.5	23.9	24.4
1961	-	24.5	24.5
1962	13.2	45.4	58.6
1963	13.3	45.0	58.3
1964	-	20.0	20.0
1965	12.9	20.0	32.9
1966	90.0	10.0	100.0
1967	7.0	5.5	12.5
1968	25.0	-	25.0
1969	85.0	-	85.0
1970	30.0	-	30.0
1971	545.0	-	545.0
1972	300.0	50.0	350.0
1973	307.5	50.0	357.5
1974	2,482.7	50.0	2,532.7
1975	300.0	344.5	644.5
1976	1,700.0	75.0	1,775.0
1977	1,000.0	735.0	1,735.0
1978	1,000.0	785.0	1,785.0
1979	4,000.0	785.0	4,785.0
1980	1,000.0	785.0	1,785.0
1981	1,400.0	764.0	2,164.0
1982	1,500.0	806.0	2,306.0
1983	1,700.0	785.0	2,485.0
1984	1,700.0	910.0	2,610.0
1985	1,400.0	1,950.0	3,350.0
1986	1,722.6	1,898.4	3,621.0
1987	1,800.0	1,200.0	3,000.0
1988	1,800.0	1,200.0	3,000.0
1989	1,800.0	1,200.0	3,000.0

*(Source: Clyde R. Mark)<sup>40</sup>*

<sup>40</sup> Clyde R. Mark, Israel: U.S. Foreign Assistance (Washington: Congressional Research Service - Library of Congress, October 1996), p.14..

Essentially, the following chapters will set out to explain the fundamental question posed in this thesis which is “why do U.S. foreign policy makers make the foreign policy decisions they do towards Israel?”. U.S. foreign policy decisions which include economic and military support have provided basis for a gradual build up of a unique and comfortable relationship between the U.S. and Israel. We have already narrowed the question of “who” is responsible, what will be sought in the coming chapters is “why”. The focus on the political process model will allow the reader to follow a framework with the seven determinants functioning as a reference point.

## CHAPTER TWO: AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY AND ISRAEL: THE INFLUENCE OF THE PRESIDENCY FROM TRUMAN TO JOHNSON, 1948-1968

In understanding the development of American foreign policy towards Israel since the establishment of Israel in 1948<sup>41</sup>, primary focus can be placed on the following determinants of that policy: (1) the beliefs, attitudes, and personality of the president, (2) the beliefs, attitude and personality of the secretary of state, (3) the relations between the president and the secretary of state, (4) the role of the American Jewish community, (5) the role of Congress particularly in regards to foreign aid, (6) the role of other domestic groups and pressures in American politics, (7) the international strategic environment, particularly during the cold war era. In this and the following chapter, the analysis will proceed through each American presidency from Truman to Reagan to show how the policy of building up Israel's military power in the Middle East has developed. The chapters are also divided chronologically: this chapter deals with presidencies from Truman through Johnson, three Democrats and one Republican presidency for the twenty year period from 1948 to 1968. The next chapter takes up the next twenty years from 1968 to 1988, a very active period in American commitment to Israel: three Republican presidents and one Democrat. The 1967 war is a major watershed in American commitment to Israel for it was then that the United States became Israel's major military supplier.

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<sup>41</sup> May 14, 1948 David Ben Gurion proclaimed the creation of the state of Israel which was immediately recognized by the U.S. government and the Soviet Union.

As the U.S. president from 1945-1953, Harry S. Truman played a particularly significant role in establishing many precedents for subsequent U.S. policy towards Israel. First of all, he quickly recognised the Jewish state on May 14, 1948 despite opposition from the State Department. In doing this, he moved the centre of policy on the Middle East from the Department to the White House, unlike many other world regions where the Department plays a larger role in day-to-day policy. In the aftermath of the Second World War, Truman also showed considerable sympathy for the suffering of European Jewish survivors of the Holocaust. In doing so, he played down the difficulties Great Britain was then having trying to manage the rival claims of Arab Palestinians and the Jewish settlers to the Palestine territory, which had been assigned to Britain as a mandate by the League of Nations following World War I. For four hundred years before this, Palestine had been part of the Ottoman Empire, one of the Central Powers defeated by the Allies in World War I. President Truman paid particularly close attention to the concerns of the American Jewish community and Israel as he manoeuvred to win a close election as President in 1948.

Truman assumed the presidency in 1945 on the death of President Roosevelt in the immediate post war period, tensions in Palestine quickly escalated. The British and the Zionists didn't see eye to eye, and internal fighting had begun in Palestine between Arabs and Jews, and Jews with the British army. Unwilling to deal with the constant

conflict, the British finally set a deadline to withdraw from Palestine. At the time British goals were twofold: first, in view of her strained financial and military resources Britain hoped to seek a peaceful solution in adjudicating Jewish and Arab claims in Palestine; and secondly, to do this without provoking hostility from the Arab world.<sup>42</sup> The only directive of U.S. policy on Palestine had been a promise from President Roosevelt to King Saud of Saudi Arabia, that the U.S. would make no move hostile to the Arab people and would not assist the Jews against the Arabs.<sup>43</sup> On April 5, 1945, in a letter to King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, Roosevelt wrote that "Your majesty will recall that on previous occasions I communicated to you the attitude of the American Government toward Palestine and made clear our desire that no decision be taken with respect to the basic situation in that country without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews".<sup>44</sup>

According to Truman's memoirs, the fate of the thousands of Jews in Europe - really only a fraction of the millions whom Hitler had doomed to death - was a primary concern of his, because of the suffering they had endured.<sup>45</sup> This concern was itemised as being top on his agenda following a meeting with Dr. Stephan Wise, Chairman of

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<sup>42</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 23.

<sup>43</sup> Harry S. Truman, Years of Trial and Hope Volume 2 (Garden City New York: Double Day & Company Inc., 1956), p. 133.

<sup>44</sup> Donald Neff, Fallen Pillars, U.S. Policy towards Palestine and Israel since 1945 (Washington D.C.: Institute for Palestinian Studies, 1995), p. 25.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p.137.

the American Zionist Emergency council.<sup>46</sup> The two had engaged in a discussion about the Jewish victims of Nazi persecution and the serious problem of the resettlement of the refugees, this unfolded naturally into a discussion of a proposed state and homeland in Palestine.<sup>47</sup> Truman's logic on the question of Palestine as a Jewish homeland went back to the solemn promise that had been made to them (the Jews) by the British in the Balfour Declaration of 1917.<sup>48</sup> The Declaration was made in a personal letter from Foreign Secretary Balfour to a prominent British Jew, which stated that "His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people".<sup>49</sup> Therefore, according to Truman, this promise just as all promises made by responsible, civilised governments had to be kept.<sup>50</sup> In his own words, Truman contradicted himself, since it was he who broke President's Roosevelt's promise to King Saud. His reasons for supporting a Jewish state will later be linked to domestic factors, such as the American Jewish community and the relevance they held during an election year.

More important in the formulation of his policy towards Palestine was the fact that Truman was subject to a great deal of domestic pressure by American Zionists. Truman himself admitted that during that crucial time, prior to the recognition of

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<sup>46</sup> Harry S. Truman, Memoirs by Harry S. Truman Volume One Year of Decisions (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company Inc., 1955), p. 68.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Harry S. Truman, Years of Trial and Hope Volume 2 (Garden City New York: Double Day & Company Inc., 1956), p. 132.

<sup>49</sup> Donald Neff, Fallen Pillars, U.S. Policy towards Palestine and Israel since 1945 (Washington D.C.: Institute for Palestinian Studies, 1995), p.15.

Israel, the White House was subjected to a constant barrage, and that he had never been under as much pressure and propaganda under the persistence of the extreme Zionist leaders.<sup>51</sup> This pressure is said to have disturbed and annoyed the president, who nevertheless, continued to hold meetings with these leaders. At one point, it took the coercing of a Jewish friend to convince Truman to hold an 'off the record' meeting with Dr. Chaim Weizmann, leader of the World Zionist Organisation. Truman disclosed that following this meeting the two had come to a full understanding of each other's agenda<sup>52</sup> Dr. Weizmann spoke about industrial activity in the Jewish state he envisaged and the need for land if the future immigrants were to be cared for.<sup>53</sup> Truman expressed his interest in the Jewish problem, and added that his primary concern was to see that justice be done without bloodshed.<sup>54</sup>

The fact that Truman had entered an election year was an important variable in his outlook on the entire Palestine-Israel issue. Domestic political considerations weighed heavily on Truman and although the pre-convention campaign was in its final months, the polls were showing he would lose against almost any Republican

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Harry S. Truman, Years of Trial and Hope Volume 2 (Garden City New York: Double Day & Company Inc., 1956), p. 158.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 161.

<sup>53</sup> Harry S. Truman, Years of Trial and Hope Volume 2 (Garden City New York: Double Day & Company Inc., 1956), p. 161.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

opponent.<sup>55</sup> Prior to the election, in a meeting with American Middle East diplomats warning against Truman's policy direction, Truman responded that he had to answer to hundreds of thousand of constituents anxious for the success of Zionism.<sup>56</sup> This was Truman's main concern, and it was also the basis upon which he made the decision to recognise Israel.

Truman was very much aware of the American Jewish constituency during the 1948 election and how gaining these votes could favourably determine the outcome of the election. It was this awareness that made him bring up issues on Palestine during the election campaign and propelled him to include a statement with his beliefs on Israel in the campaign platform. Although Truman and his opponent, Thomas Dewey had a gentleman's agreement not to outbid each other in pandering to the Jewish community, Dewey broke it two weeks before election day.<sup>57</sup> In response to this, while campaigning in New York, Truman chose to speak out on Israel affirming his will to help build in Palestine a strong, prosperous, free and independent democratic state.<sup>58</sup> In addition to this, Truman pledged that as soon as Israel established a permanent

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<sup>55</sup> Donald Neff, Fallen Pillars, U.S. Policy towards Palestine and Israel since 1945 (Washington D.C.: Institute for Palestinian Studies, 1995), p. 62.

<sup>56</sup> Alonzo L. Hamby, Man of the People, A life of Harry S. Truman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 405.

<sup>57</sup> Donald Neff, Fallen Pillars, U.S. Policy Towards Palestine and Israel since 1945 (Washington DC: Institute for Palestinian Studies, 1995), p. 90.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 169.

government "it will promptly be given de jure recognition", and promised to expedite any loan applications from Israel.<sup>59</sup>

Truman was sensitive to the idea that the Russians at any time would be ready to welcome the Arabs into their camp.<sup>60</sup> Truman began to view that particular area in the region (the Middle East) as having long-range vital interests to the United States. In a meeting held two days before Israel's self-proclaimed existence, the Truman administration had decided that, in hope of gaining an advantage, the U.S. should give prompt recognition to the inevitable Jewish state before the Soviet Union.<sup>61</sup> The argument held there was that the U.S. would gain Israel's friendship before the Soviets. However, many members in the administration, including Secretary of State George Marshall, agreed that this decision was a very transparent attempt to win the Jewish vote during a crucial election period.<sup>62</sup> In fact, Truman did apply this strategy and went on to win the election with strong Jewish support. As promised, when Israel declared its independence, against the will of Secretary of State Marshall and without the prior knowledge of the U.S. delegation to the UN, Truman recognised within minutes the state of Israel.

George Marshall served as Secretary of State under Harry Truman from 1947-1949. The two had opposing views on the Palestine question, Marshall's priority was

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 91.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 143.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 63.

to find a solution for Palestine with which both sides could live in order to prevent a future succession of wars.<sup>63</sup> Whereas Marshall preferred and strongly recommended to the President a trusteeship plan in which the United States would take over until the Arabs and Jews could work out their own solution, Truman favored partition.<sup>64</sup> In either case, both the President and his Secretary of State realized that a solution of some sort was required. However, Truman's immediate recognition of the provisional government of Israel even took George Marshall by surprise. In spite of the fact that Truman's action affected the relationship between himself and Marshall, Marshall had decided not to resign on the basis that Truman, as President, had the constitutional responsibility for making important decisions.<sup>65</sup>

Truman defined his foreign policy towards Palestine and later on Israel, as one which was designed to bring about by peaceful means, the establishment of the promised Jewish homeland and easy access to it for the displaced Jews of Europe.<sup>66</sup> This policy, which Truman insisted upon not being pro-Arab nor pro-Jewish was Truman's policy rather than the White House policy. In fact, Truman and his advisors, including the State Department, clashed on the issue of Palestine. The State Department feared the Arabs would feel antagonised and therefore drawn into the Soviet camp. Truman did not feel this was an alternative. Irrespective of the opinions

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Dean Rusk, *As I Saw it* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990), p. 147.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 146

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 151

provided by the State Department, Truman was in charge of his own foreign policy decisions. He acknowledged this fact himself in recognising that in the differences of opinion between the White House and the State Department on the business of Palestine, there was never any question as to who made the decisions or whose policy would be followed.<sup>67</sup> It was made clear that the president of the United States, and not the second or third echelon in the State Department was responsible for making foreign policy.<sup>68</sup> For obvious reasons, this made the president more prone to pressure tactics, since he was the single target of Zionist groups. Paradoxically, it was Truman who had to bear the responsibility for meeting with and submitting to various pressure groups.

Under the Truman presidency, it was clear that Truman himself was in charge of foreign policy decisions. He overlooked the advice of the State Department and his Secretary of State, making crucial decisions on his own. The determinants which prevailed most during the Truman era on foreign policy to the Middle East, although to a lesser degree were his beliefs and attitude on the tragic Holocaust. More significant was the role of the Jewish community, particularly during an election year and even more so domestic groups and pressures in American politics. It was no secret that the White House, including Truman and Marshall were subject to a tremendous amount of

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<sup>66</sup> Donald Neff, *Fallen Pillars, U.S. Policy Towards Palestine and Israel since 1945* (Washington D.C.: Institute for Palestinian Studies, 1995), p. 157.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 165.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

pressure by Zionist groups to recognise the state of Israel. A combination of these three determinants led to Truman's foreign policy towards Israel.

Unlike Truman, Eisenhower and his administration (1953-1961) were not favourable to the new Israeli government. This was in part due to the fact that Eisenhower endeavoured to follow a more "even-handed" approach towards the Middle East<sup>69</sup> Eisenhower felt largely immune to the domestic pressure his predecessor was subjected to and rejected any obligation to the Jewish constituency which had overwhelmingly voted for his opponent, Adlai Stevenson.<sup>70</sup> This allowed him to take repeatedly a strong stand against Israel without having to face domestic pressures.

Eisenhower took a strong position with regards to foreign policy decisions towards Israel. So much so, prior to the November 1956 elections, Eisenhower was warned by his political friends that his hard line actions towards Israel might prove politically dangerous.<sup>71</sup> This hard line position was never more evident than during Eisenhower's handling of the Suez crisis.<sup>72</sup> At the time, Eisenhower feared that the Israeli government under Prime Minister David Ben Gurion may have initiated

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<sup>69</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 65.

<sup>70</sup> George Ball, Douglas Ball The Passionate Attachment America's Involvement with Israel, 1947 to the Present (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992), p. 43.

<sup>71</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 50.

military action in order to gain U.S. support during an election campaign. Ben Gurion had counted on the support of the American Jewish community and the careful consideration a presidential candidate might exercise so as not to upset the sway of the votes. In spite of Ben Gurion's ploy, Eisenhower proceeded to give strict orders to the State Department that they should inform Israel that the U.S. would handle their affairs exactly as though they didn't have a Jew in America.<sup>73</sup> In spite of his "even-handed approach", and desire to not succumb to domestic pressures, Eisenhower remained attached to America's commitment to Israel's survival. Personally, he recognised that Israel as a tiny nation surrounded by enemies had a very strong position in the heart and emotions of the Western world because of the tragic suffering of the Jews throughout 25 hundred years of history.<sup>74</sup>

Nevertheless, Ben Gurion proceeded with his plan to expand his country's borders, and in 1956 attacked Egypt and captured the whole of the Sinai Peninsula.<sup>75</sup> As pledged, the President took a hard stand on this action and insisted that Israel give up her recent conquest of the Sinai. Israel had not counted on Eisenhower's toughness, who adamantly insisted that Israel give up its Sinai gains, causing a backlash by Israel's supporters against his administration.<sup>76</sup> The president's tough position did not

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<sup>72</sup> In 1956 Israel, France and Britain attacked Egypt following President Gamal Abdel Nasser's decision to nationalise the Suez Canal.

<sup>73</sup> Griffith Robert, Ike's letters to a Friend 1941-1958 (Kansas: University of Kansas, 1984), p. 175.

<sup>74</sup> Robert H. Ferrel, The Eisenhower Diaries (New York: W.W. Norton and Company Inc. 1981), p. 320.

<sup>75</sup> Donald Neff, Fallen Pillars, U.S. Policy Towards Palestine and Israel Since 1945 (Washington DC: Institute for Palestinian Studies, 1995), p. 99.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

fare well with the American Jewish community, and as a result became subject, along with his administration to an insurmountable degree of pressure.<sup>77</sup> Secretary of State John Foster Dulles privately complained that he felt it was almost impossible to carry out foreign policy not approved by American Jews, and that the Israeli Embassy was practically dictating to the Congress through influential Jewish people in the country.<sup>78</sup>

John Foster Dulles served as President Eisenhower's Secretary of State from 1953-1959. Eisenhower relied on the expertise of the State Department and his Secretary of State to assist him in his foreign policy decisions with Israel. The main reason this dependency developed was that Eisenhower knew very little about Israel and the Middle East, the history of the world and of international relations, areas which Dulles successfully compensated with his expertise.<sup>79</sup> The President had come to rely on his Secretary of State and had strategically chosen Dulles, given his background, so that he could leave in his quite capable hands the responsibility for guiding U.S. dealings with the other nations of the world.<sup>80</sup> In this regard, Dulles, under the final mandate of the president, insisted on the exclusive and absolute command of every policy, every decision and every action that concerned foreign affairs.<sup>81</sup> However, it must be added at this point that the President took a more active part in the Suez crisis than in other

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Herman Finer, Dulles Over Suez (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964), p. 70.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., p.11.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p. 69.

diplomatic conflicts.<sup>82</sup> Evidently, the State Department had failed to inform Dulles that the French and the Israelis would most probably attack Egypt, leaving Dulles in a very embarrassing position.<sup>83</sup> He had also led the President to believe that by almost daily persuasion over the course of three months, he could manipulate the British the French and Nasser successfully before anything had erupted, which was obviously not the case.<sup>84</sup> The most essential reason for Eisenhower's increased role in the Suez crisis was the fact that Dulles had fallen gravely ill on November 2, and to place a perspective on the dates of the crisis a cease fire was affected on November 6<sup>th</sup>, the British and the French withdrew by December 22<sup>nd</sup> and Israel by March.<sup>85</sup>

On Israel and the Middle East, Dulles and Eisenhower had instituted their famous even-handed approach under a policy called "impartiality" in hopes of appeasing the Arabs.<sup>86</sup> He had been the first Secretary of State ever to visit the Middle East, spending twenty one days there.<sup>87</sup> However, like Eisenhower, Dulles believed in fulfilling America's obligations made by Truman to Israel. On a more personal note in an address to a Jewish delegation, Dulles had stated that America could hardly allow the "Land of the Prophets" to be wiped out, as the Arabs were threatening.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 92.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

Eisenhower's main concern in the Middle East was the ability of the U.S. to resist any Soviet infiltration into that part of the world. Eisenhower's view of arms supply to Israel was within the context of the Cold War.<sup>89</sup> Paramount to the problems stirring in the Middle East was the Soviet challenge and, as a matter of both principle and national interest, Eisenhower was determined to resist Soviet penetration into what he believed the most strategic area of the globe.<sup>90</sup> This and the fact that he felt no obligation to domestic pressures attributed to his even-handed approach, which the Israeli government translated into unfriendly American-Israeli relations. Although he had a strong and experienced Secretary of State, all matters and final decisions were brought to the President's attention for final approval. Since the two had a very good relationship and mutual respect for one another, there was rarely, if ever a clash in policy. One determinant which played a role during the Eisenhower era was the international strategic environment during this early cold war period. However, the more significant determinants remain the attitudes, beliefs and personality of both the President and his Secretary of State and complimentary to this determinant is the relations between the two.

Kennedy's presidency, 1961-1963, coincided with a relatively quiet period during Arab-Israeli relations. Kennedy's view of the Middle East was not from an

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<sup>89</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 47.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

East-West perspective, rather one which was sympathetic to nationalism.<sup>91</sup> To Kennedy, national independence represented a primordial and most natural manifestation of collective human aspirations, which, in accordance with American traditions should enjoy the sincere support of the United States.<sup>92</sup> This was the basis for which Kennedy supported Israel and established favourable foreign policy decisions towards Israel. Kennedy reaffirmed his commitment to Israel and, during his term, pledged his support nineteen times for Israel's security in case of an Arab attack.<sup>93</sup>

Kennedy's relationship with Israel did encounter some difficulties over Israel's nuclear proliferation. Prime Minister David Ben Gurion had sought a nuclear option for Israel based on a cultural-historical logic that had prevented the Jews from escaping the wrath of Hitler, and the fear that an Arab Hitler may some day emerge.<sup>94</sup> He was able to do so with the extractable amounts of uranium Israel found in the Negev Desert immediately following the 1948 war and developed with the assistance of the French.<sup>95</sup> Since Israel's early existence the French had become its major supplier of military weapons and the nuclear development enhanced their relationship until 1967. The alliance that had developed between the two was in

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<sup>91</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 68.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>94</sup> Shlomo Aronson, The Politics and Strategy of Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East (New York: State University of New York Press, 1992), p. 19.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

large part due to their recognition of Arab nationalism.<sup>96</sup> Accordingly, the French rooted their beliefs on Nasser's nationalism on the basis of his support of the Algerian claim to independence.<sup>97</sup>

It was not until the end of 1959 that the CIA was able to establish that Israel was operating, with the assistance of the French, a nuclear bomb project at the "Dimona" reactor in the Negev Desert.<sup>98</sup> Unwilling to accuse the Israelis of such activity, the Atomic Energy Commission's Chairman (AEC), John McCone (who later became CIA director under Kennedy) had decided to leak this information to the New York Times.<sup>99</sup> Breaking the story propelled Ben Gurion to make the project publicly known in the Knesset in December 1960.<sup>100</sup> This is the situation which faced Kennedy as he assumed the office of the President of the United States in 1961.

The Kennedy administration initiated a milestone in U.S.-Israeli military relations by supplying Israel for the first time with defensive weapons, Hawk missiles.<sup>101</sup> The agreement reached between the two was that the Hawks would be provided to Israel in exchange for regular visits by Americans to Dimona, where they would judge for themselves whether or not the installation was part of a weapons

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>99</sup> Seymour M. Hersh, The Samson Option, Israel's Nuclear Arsenal and American Foreign Policy (New York: Random House, 1991), p. 72.

<sup>100</sup> Shlomo Aronson, The Politics and Strategy of Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East (New York: State University of New York Press, 1992), p. 71.

program.<sup>102</sup> Kennedy had hoped that this would appease Israel's request for military aid while at the same time allowing the American's to keep a close range watch on their development of nuclear weapons.

Dean Rusk served as John Kennedy's Secretary of State when Kennedy assumed office and continued in this capacity under President Johnson when he assumed the office following the death of Kennedy. The two had very different styles of governing, Kennedy more relaxed and informal, often personally calling on State desk officers for advice, Rusk more formal and silent.<sup>103</sup> It was said that Kennedy had been bothered by Rusk's reluctance to lead and unwillingness to fight for his policy views, which invariably left Kennedy to lead foreign policy decisions.<sup>104</sup> The two had a very ceremonious relationship and when speaking together referred to titles rather than on a first name basis. This was all embedded in Rusk's perception that a secretary of state should always remain at arms length with the president and that policy differences should be kept confidential, anything otherwise would weaken an administration.<sup>105</sup> Rusk's relationship with the President is defined in his belief that every secretary of state should memorise the first sentence of Article II of the Constitution: "The executive power shall be vested

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Dean Rusk, As I Saw it (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990), p. 197.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

in a President of the United States of America".<sup>106</sup> Regardless of character differences, Rusk insists in his memoirs that in terms of foreign policy he and Kennedy remained on the same wavelength on most issues.<sup>107</sup>

Relations between the president and the secretary of state played an important role in the Kennedy-Rusk era. The style and lack of aggressiveness as exhibited by Dean Rusk was compensated by President Kennedy's leadership role in foreign policy decisions. Kennedy dealt with Israel himself because of the sensitivity of the nuclear reactor and had initiated an exchange of defensive military weapons for surveillance of the nuclear plant. His concern over the nuclear build up in Israel was in response to the international strategic environment, an important determinant during the Kennedy era with roots to his belief that "domestic questions can only lose elections. Foreign policy can kill us all".<sup>108</sup>

President Lyndon B. Johnson (1963-1969) was very conscious of the pro-Israel lobby in the American political process, and he had a tendency to link domestic politics to foreign policy decision-making.<sup>109</sup> In terms of the Arab-Israeli struggle, this link played an important role. Johnson feared that an Arab-Israeli confrontation had the potential of bringing into direct confrontation the Americans and the Soviets.

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., p. 515.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., p. 293.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p. 516.

<sup>109</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 91.

The pro-Israel lobby group's role was important to Johnson in so much that it reflected upon domestic politics. Johnson embraced Israel, in large part because of his personal sentiments towards Israel, thus making him the most pro-Israel president up to that time.<sup>110</sup> During his term, Israel completed its occupation of all of Palestine in the 1967 war bringing it under total Jewish rule.<sup>111</sup>

Johnson was very conscious of the pressure the pro-Israel lobby was capable of exerting on him and his administration. He was also aware of the possible consequences of a particular policy defined as unfriendly to Israel and the American Jewish community. With regards to domestic pressures, Johnson remained careful to not alienate his Jewish constituency and in doing so, his administration pledged American foreign policy to the aspirations of Israel. During Johnson's term, the United States radically switched from a moderate supply of defensive weapons to highly sophisticated arms for Israel's military forces.<sup>112</sup> This switch to offensive weapons meant that the U.S. prepared itself to support Israel in other courses of military action that she may take. It is critical to note that up until the 1967, France was Israel's major supplier of defensive weapons for the reasons of alignment with Israel as explained under Kennedy. In protest of initiating the '67 war, French President Charles de Gaulle refused to continue to supply Israel with weapons and

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<sup>110</sup> Donald Neff, Fallen Pillars, U.S. Policy towards Palestine and Israel since 1945 (Washington DC: Institute for Palestinian Studies, 1995), p. 115.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990) p. 106.

assistance towards its nuclear development.<sup>113</sup> In their response to the '67 war, the U.S. embargoed all arm deliveries to Israel for 135 days.<sup>114</sup> Arms transfers resumed following the embargo and in October 1968 (one month before the presidential election), Johnson approved a sale to Israel of the most advanced jet fighter in the American arsenal at the time, the F-4.<sup>115</sup>

Johnson's personal feeling towards Israel certainly played a factor in his positive attitude towards the state. According to Johnson, he had always had a deep feeling of sympathy for Israel and its people, gallantly building and defending a modern nation against great odds and against the tragic background of Jewish experience.<sup>116</sup> Although Johnson relied on a team of foreign policy advisors, he firmly insisted on being fully informed and on reserving the final decision to himself.<sup>117</sup> Where he lacked expertise and knowledge, he gained from his team of advisors.

Dean Rusk also served as Johnson's Secretary of state, and held a very different relationship with him than with his predecessor. Rusk carried with him the same concept of the presidency as he had with him under Kennedy, however, the

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<sup>113</sup> Donald Neff, Fallen Pillars, U.S. Policy towards Palestine and Israel since 1945 (Washington DC: Institute for Palestinian Studies, 1995), p. 172.

<sup>114</sup> Seymour M. Hersh, The Samson Option, Israel's Nuclear Arsenal and American Foreign Policy (New York: Random House, 1991), p. 183.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 189.

<sup>116</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990) p. 105.

very nature of the Johnson-Rusk relationship redefined his role. The official relationship the Secretary of State had with the President was reinforced by personal friendship and certainly more cordial than the one he had with Kennedy.<sup>118</sup> Unsure of himself in foreign affairs, Johnson relied heavily upon Rusk, and upon taking office announced that the State Department would be the central force in foreign policy decision making.<sup>119</sup> Therefore, although Rusk took the lead in foreign policy final approval for implementation passed through the President's hands.

The determinants that played strongly during the Johnson era were the beliefs, attitude and personality of the president; the relations between the president and the secretary of state; and the role of other domestic groups and pressures in American politics such as the pro-Israel lobby. As explained, Johnson was very aware of the presence of the pro-Israel lobby and had also built up personal beliefs on his view of Israel and had also filled the void that France left as Israel's military supplier. The fact that he lacked experience in foreign affairs compelled him to turn to the expertise of his Secretary of State who in turn held a formal vision of the role of the President of the United States who always kept an upper hand on all foreign policy decisions making him the key player.

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid., p. 91.

<sup>118</sup> Dean Rusk, As I Saw it (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990), p. 327.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

### CHAPTER THREE: AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY AND ISRAEL: THE INFLUENCE OF THE PRESIDENCY FROM NIXON TO REAGAN 1969-1989

This Chapter will proceed with the analysis of American Presidents and secretaries of state from 1969-1989, three Republicans and one Democrat. Following the chronological order of the previous chapter this chapter will deal with four presidencies, beginning with Richard Nixon and concluding with Ronald Reagan. Like the previous chapter, the analysis will be based on American foreign policy towards Israel with focus on the following determinants: (1) the beliefs, attitudes, and personality of the president, (2) the beliefs, attitude and personality of the secretary of state, (3) the relations between the president and the secretary of state, (4) the role of the American Jewish community, (5) the role of Congress particularly in regards to foreign aid, (6) the role of other domestic groups and pressures in American politics, (7) the international strategic environment, particularly during the cold war era.

When discussing the Nixon administration 1969-1974, and foreign policy towards Israel it is fundamental to consider the role that Henry Kissinger played both as National Security Advisor and later on as Secretary of State. Nixon, like Eisenhower openly admitted that he felt no obligation to the American Jewish constituency, which allowed him to make decisions impartial to Israel. However, with the turmoil of domestic politics that Nixon was embroiled in, a good part of the decision making process in foreign policy was handed over to Henry Kissinger as

Secretary of State. Rarely did Kissinger rely on the opinion of others, particularly with regards to Middle East politics and Israel. The Nixon Doctrine spelled out the terms of American foreign policy for the administration to follow, allowing Kissinger to continue to play a large part yet within the context of Nixon's definition.

Nixon's indifference to the American Jewish community was in large part due to the fact that during the first election, a large number of American Jews had strongly backed his opponent Hubert Humphrey.<sup>120</sup> Even more so, the President was convinced that most leaders of the Jewish community had opposed him throughout his political career and delighted in letting associates and visitors know that the "Jewish lobby" had no effect on him.<sup>121</sup> As a result, Nixon had to constantly struggle to convince American Jews, Congress, the media and those within intellectual circles that he was not an anti-Semite.<sup>122</sup> In his memoirs Nixon states that throughout his presidency, he was in the unique position of being politically aloof to the major pressure groups involvement which in turn, meant that he had more flexibility and freedom to freely do what he thought was the right thing.<sup>123</sup> To Nixon, the "right thing" became his preoccupation with defending the American national interest abroad. In terms of the Arab-Israeli relationship, this meant preventing further

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<sup>120</sup> George W. Ball, Douglas B. Ball, The Passionate Attachment America's Involvement with Israel, 1947 to the Present (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992), p. 67.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Richard Nixon, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1978), p. 481.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., p. 435.

Soviet domination of the Arab Middle East.<sup>124</sup> To Nixon, the Arab-Israeli struggle had great potential in bringing about a confrontation between the superpowers during that cold war period. While he would have liked to broaden American relations with the Arab countries, he favoured Israel's military superiority over its Arab neighbours.<sup>125</sup>

During his first term Nixon's administration took a passive role towards the Middle East but was accelerated in 1970 during the Jordan crisis and more so in the 1973 October war just after Henry Kissinger had been appointed Secretary of State.<sup>126</sup> It wasn't until this period that U.S. foreign policy turned particularly favourable towards Israel. The reasons for this will be discussed in the analysis of Kissinger's personality and role in the Middle East later in this Chapter. Fearing this would happen, Nixon admits in his memoirs that he first avoided giving Kissinger a relatively decisive role during the first part of his administration due to his Jewish background.<sup>127</sup> His main preoccupation was that Kissinger would not have the ability to remain impartial towards Israel in applying U.S. foreign policy. In spite of this, Nixon had frequently followed Kissinger's advice rather than his first Secretary of State, William Rogers, when it came to the conduct of diplomacy.<sup>128</sup> This is

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid., p. 477.

<sup>125</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 122.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., p. 130.

<sup>127</sup> Richard Nixon, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1978), p. 477.

<sup>128</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 123.

important to note since the President came to rely more on Kissinger's expertise and policies which inadvertently gave him a greater role in foreign policy decisions as National Security Advisor.

During the 1970 crisis in Jordan, later described as "Black September", the Fedayeen of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation challenged the authority of King Hussein of Jordan, a pro-Western Monarch.<sup>129</sup> With the weak political situation in Jordan, Syria hoped to gain advantage and on September 20 invaded Jordan with tanks.<sup>130</sup> The U.S. had decided against direct intervention and instead turned to Israel for help in order to draw the Syrians back to their borders. It was clear that the U.S. did not want the King overthrown and had rejected the PLO for wanting to do so. Moreover, this crisis demonstrates how Kissinger, with the assistance of the President, overruled Secretary Rogers on vital decisions in the Middle East. It was Kissinger who decided to turn to Israel and had subsequently called the shots during the crisis. He would render a decision and subsequently have Rogers informed of the course of action taken.<sup>131</sup> On the question of an Israeli ground attack, Nixon had held discussions with Kissinger and asked him to contact Joe Sisco (Assistant Secretary) for his view. Although Sisco offered a State Department opinion, Nixon completely bypassed Rogers.<sup>132</sup> Conflicting views of policy between Kissinger and

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<sup>129</sup> Henry Kissinger, The White House Years (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1979), p. 362.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., p. 617.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., p. 622.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p. 625.

Rogers continued throughout the ordeal, with the President openly supporting Kissinger.<sup>133</sup>

In the foreign policy defined by Nixon, it was clear that certain components favoured Israel. The Nixon doctrine spelled out the basis for defending its allies, like Israel. It stated that in cases involving other types of aggression, "we (the U.S.) shall furnish military and economic assistance when requested and appropriate, but we (the U.S.) shall look to the nation directly threatened to assume the primary responsibility of providing the manpower for its defence".<sup>134</sup> The Nixon doctrine became a useful tool for Kissinger who used it to Israel's advantage, particularly during the 1973 war.

Given that the second term of the Nixon era coincided with a relatively unstable period between the Arabs and the Israelis, Israel profited from a steady flow of arms and weapons from the United States. To Nixon, instability between the Arabs and the Israelis translated into instability between the Soviets and the Americans. On the question of continuing to provide unprecedented arms to Israel as pressured by the American Jewish community, Nixon felt that hardware alone to Israel was a policy that made sense five years prior to his election, but no longer at that time and that there would be no blank checks, but of course he sympathised

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid., p. 630.

<sup>134</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p.117.

with Israel's military needs.<sup>135</sup> This statement was contradictory in itself and to U.S. foreign policy actions as guided and formulated by Henry Kissinger while serving as Secretary of State. In fact, by the time the 1973 Arab-Israeli war came to an end

American foreign policy was characterised as having provided unprecedented amounts of military and economic assistance to Israel.<sup>136</sup> It was apparent that there became a discrepancy in what Nixon said and the policies which Kissinger implemented.

In reviewing the Nixon administration, particular importance is given to the determinant emphasising the beliefs, attitude and personality of the National Security Advisor who later became Secretary of State. Kissinger's personality and expertise placed him at the centre of certain Presidential decisions. His on-going conflict with Secretary Rogers placed Nixon in the middle of the conflict often having to choose one strategy over the other, and it was Kissinger's advice which usually prevailed. As Nixon's Secretary of State, Kissinger stressed the importance of the cold war determinant on the grounds of the international strategic environment. As a result, Nixon became preoccupied with the cold war and the possibility of a superpower confrontation in the Middle East. Based on Nixon's calculations, as

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<sup>135</sup> Richard Nixon, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1978), p. 1007.

<sup>136</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 138.

presented by Kissinger, military and financial support to Israel was essential in order to maintain international peace and stability.

Henry Kissinger first served under Richard Nixon as National Security Advisor from 1969-1973. In 1973 he was promoted to Secretary of State, while still assuming the role of National Security Advisor, and continued in this capacity when Gerald Ford assumed the Presidency. Kissinger was one of the few people in Washington who was not subjected to the pressures of the pro-Israeli lobby group because he did more to aid Israel's long term power than any single individual before him.<sup>137</sup> While he did not fall subject to the pressures of the pro-Israel lobby, he did become subject to criticism by fellow Jews, both Israeli and American, on certain policies they deemed unfavourable to Israel. Kissinger's personal ties to Israel were based more on his being Jewish in an ethnic context rather than religious. Although not a Zionist, Kissinger felt a strong sense of pride in being Jewish and attachment to his people.<sup>138</sup> His close political ties with Israel's political leaders helped remove much of the stress his predecessors suffered, since as far as his foreign policy objectives toward Israel were concerned, he maintained that the preservation of Israel was in the national interest of the United States.<sup>139</sup> However, the onus remained on him to prove that Israel was as important to the U.S. as it was to him, without having his personal sentiments surface. He did so by

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<sup>137</sup> Donald Neff, Fallen Pillars, U.S. Policy Towards Palestine and Israel Since 1945 (Washington D.C.: Institute for Palestinian Studies, 1995), p. 115.

<sup>138</sup> Edward R.F. Sheehan, The Arabs, Israeli's, and Kissinger (New York: Reader's Digest Press, 1976), p. 173.

<sup>139</sup> Marvin Kalb and Bernard Kalb, Kissinger (Boston: Little Brown & Company, 1974), p. 188.

anchoring Israel as a U.S. strategic ally within the context of the national interest and the Cold War, with the possibility of a confrontation in the Middle East with the Soviets. He focused on the “big picture” of a superpower strategy and the belief that both Russia and America could be drawn into a general war against their will since each was aligned with local contestants.<sup>140</sup> Those in high political circles considered Kissinger a power grabbing manipulator of American politics.<sup>141</sup> Kissinger drew great pleasure from the international attention focused on him, the excitement and the image of an omnipotent diplomat and political magician.<sup>142</sup> This played an important aspect in his taking the lead role in issues and events both as National Security Advisor and Secretary of State.

Throughout the Nixon administration both financial and military aid were important factors in U.S. foreign policy towards Israel, and Kissinger stressed this aspect more than any other person. Kissinger’s analogy was that withholding aid from Israel would head the U.S. into a simultaneous confrontation with the Soviets as well as the Israelis, and the Soviets were bound to be emboldened by the visible disassociation from their ally.<sup>143</sup> With the active co-operation of Congress, he was instrumental in giving to Israel unprecedented amounts of U.S. economic, military and

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid., p. 191.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., p. 201.

<sup>142</sup> Matti Golan, The Secret Conversations of Henry Kissinger (New York: Quadrangle, 1976), p. 178.

<sup>143</sup> Henry Kissinger, The White House Years (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1979), p. 378.

diplomatic aid, vastly strengthening the Jewish state against its Arab neighbours.<sup>144</sup> He set into place a formula for future presidents, secretaries of state and elected representatives to follow in terms of future dealings with the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO). A memorandum of agreement codified on September 1, 1975 established that the U.S. (government) was to not deal with the PLO until it accepted among other things, Israel's right to exist.<sup>145</sup>

Kissinger felt a common bond with the Jews of Israel, although he never practised his religion. Kissinger could never neglect the fact that the Holocaust was a reality and that his family had personally suffered from it, with the loss of thirteen members.<sup>146</sup> According to his memoirs, when visiting in Israel, Yad Vashem, the memorial to the six million Jews who had died at the hands of the Nazis, Kissinger painfully reminisced to that part of his history and offered a personal commitment to the people of Israel.<sup>147</sup> Historically, Kissinger understood the two thousand years of suffering endured by the Jewish people. Now, during his time, his people had to struggle again to survive even as a tiny nation with little geographical ground surrounded by close to one hundred million potential enemies willing to destroy its existence and the existence of its people. These are all facts that Kissinger carried with him when he took on the role as Secretary of State. Kissinger admits that these are also

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<sup>144</sup> Donald Neff, Fallen Pillars, U.S. Policy Towards Palestine and Israel Since 1945 (Washington D.C.: Institute for Palestinian Studies, 1995), p. 116.

<sup>145</sup> Wolf Blitzer Between Washington and Jerusalem A Reporter's Notebook (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 206.

<sup>146</sup> Henry Kissinger, Years of Upheaval (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1982), p. 203.

factors which led Nixon to believe that he had the potential of being biased in his judgement on Israel and the Middle East.<sup>148</sup> In the end however, this did not prevent Nixon from allowing Kissinger to serve as Secretary of State.

In spite of his personal sentiments and friendships with political Israeli figures, Kissinger strongly felt that Israel's security would only be preserved in the long run by anchoring it to a strategic interest of the United States.<sup>149</sup> This meant that in order for Kissinger to be able to apply his policies towards Israel they had to in some way be tied to the U.S. national interest. In order for this to be achieved, Kissinger had to define the national interest towards the Middle East and more particularly, towards Israel for the duration of the Nixon era. The national interest in his view was a strategy directed at reducing Soviet influence, weakening the position of the Arab radicals, encouraging Arab moderates, and assuring Israel's security.<sup>150</sup> According to the policies exercised during the Nixon era, assuring Israel's security meant providing both military and economic aid, and giving the Israelis the more powerful edge over the Soviet supplied Arab enemies. Kissinger recognised the growing presence of the Soviets in the Middle East and had estimated that following the 1967 war, the number of Soviet military advisors increased fivefold.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p. 791.

<sup>148</sup> Henry Kissinger, *The White House Years* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1979), p. 559.

<sup>149</sup> Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1982), p. 204.

<sup>150</sup> Henry Kissinger, *The White House Years* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1979), p. 564.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., p. 346.

Kissinger insists he was unable to influence the decisions made towards Israel and the Middle East during Nixon's first term, prior to being named Secretary of State. This was in large part due to his personal conflicts with the then Secretary of State, William Rogers. By the same token, Kissinger acknowledged that when all was said and done, Nixon's convictions were closer to his own than those of Secretary Rogers, and often applied the brakes in time just often enough to prevent a coherent application of the State Department approach.<sup>152</sup> Kissinger's zealous involvement in certain events excluded Rogers from the decision making process. In fact by the summer of 1970 it was clear to Rogers that he was being excluded from key decisions.<sup>153</sup> Relations between the two had deteriorated to the point that White House and State Department representatives dealt with each other as competing sovereign entities, thus creating a bureaucratic stalemate.<sup>154</sup> As a result, Kissinger frustrated Rogers by bypassing him and holding discussions directly with the President, whose distrust with the State Department made him more prone to accept Kissinger's policies than Rogers.<sup>155</sup> Rogers became convinced that Nixon followed Kissinger's advice because of his baneful influence rather than his knowledge or expertise.<sup>156</sup> In either case, the President came more to rely on his National Security Advisor for foreign policy rather than on his Secretary of State.

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid., p. 560.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., p. 589.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., p. 887.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., p. 348.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., p. 887.

In Kissinger's memoirs he indicates the importance the role the U.S. played in Middle East politics, vis-à-vis peace. By the time Israel had gained victory in the 1948-49 war, the region, as he refers to it, became the focal point of Cold War rivalry which both exacerbated local conflict and posed the danger that outside powers could be dragged into a major confrontation.<sup>157</sup> This was important to Kissinger who pressed this point on to Nixon. Although he admits that he and Nixon were divided on Israel from an emotional spectrum, he acknowledges that the two came together on policies and strategies because of a similar perception of the national interest.<sup>158</sup> Beyond the national interest, the Middle East became a test of true strength for the U.S. as a superpower. According to Kissinger, had the Middle East raged out of control, the world would have viewed it as a collapse of American authority.<sup>159</sup> The responsibility of maintaining global stability rested on the shoulders of the American government. Therefore, the U.S. had to protect its own ability to play an indispensable role as the guarantor of peace and the repository of the hopes of free peoples.<sup>160</sup> And since Israel was the single democratic state in the region, these goals could only be achieved through her.

The political environment between the Soviets and the American remained tense as the cold war progressed until the relaxation period that Kissinger and Nixon brought about known as *détente*. The time for diplomatic change was necessary: the

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<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 342.

<sup>158</sup> Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1982), p. 202.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 408.

nuclear weapons race made the threat of mutual annihilation too pressing to permit the continuation of old policies; the economic costs of developing and building up more sophisticated and expensive arsenals were rising fast; the possibility of superpower war confrontations; and world-wide economic problems were staggering.<sup>161</sup> When critical negotiations with Brezhnev had begun, it was Nixon who decided to adopt the policy and chose Kissinger to play his key role in détente.<sup>162</sup> In a presentation before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on September 19, 1974, Kissinger summed up his policy of détente as a continuing process with the U.S. in search for a more constructive relationship with the Soviet Union reflecting current day realities.<sup>163</sup> U.S. policy with respect to détente was clear: aggressive foreign policies would be resisted and as long as the U.S. remained powerful they would use their influence to promote freedom, but in the nuclear age the U.S. essentially recognised that the issue of war and peace involved human lives and that the attainment of peace was a profound moral concern.<sup>164</sup> America's aim was to maintain the balance of power and seek to build upon it a more constructive future, particularly with the Communist world.<sup>165</sup> Détente had held its ground until 1975 at which time the old Soviet spirit had returned reinforced by an unprecedented panoply of modern arms not being able to resist the scenario of a weakened President and a divided America.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Lester A. Sobel, *Kissinger & Détente* (New York: Facts on File, 1975), p. 2.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>165</sup> Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1982), p. 238.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., p. 246.

To Kissinger, the military superiority and strength of Israel was imperative. The fact that only the U.S. was able to exert influence on Israel was also important to Kissinger since it allowed him to gain an upper hand in negotiating with Israel. With Israel being too strong to succumb to Arab military pressure the U.S. had the ability to block all diplomatic activity until the Arabs showed their willingness to reciprocate Israeli concessions.<sup>167</sup> Therefore, the key to peace was through American channels. Towards Nixon's second term, Kissinger felt that Nixon had pushed him deeper and deeper into Middle East negotiations<sup>168</sup> As Nixon became preoccupied with Watergate, he left Kissinger with the burden of the Middle East. Nixon basically trusted his Secretary of State's perception and strategy. So much so, that when Kissinger had travelled to Moscow to negotiate peace during the October 1973 war, Nixon had sent a letter to Kissinger indicating that he was granting him full authority to negotiate on behalf of the U.S. and that any commitments Kissinger may make in the course of discussions would have his complete support.<sup>169</sup> However, a couple of days into the negotiations, Nixon sent a second letter to Kissinger and a message to Brezhnev changing the original U.S. strategy which had been to separate the cease-fire from a post-war political settlement and to reduce the Soviet role in the negotiations that would follow the cease-fire.<sup>170</sup> Nixon's instructions now read that the Soviet Union and the United States should jointly use the end of the war to impose a comprehensive

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<sup>167</sup> Henry Kissinger, The White House Years (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1979), p. 378.

<sup>168</sup> Henry Kissinger, Years of Upheaval (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1982), p. 206.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 547.

peace in the Middle East, with the U.S. exerting pressure on Israel and the Soviets on the Arabs.<sup>171</sup> Kissinger strongly disagreed with the President, believing his thought process was overshadowed by the events of Watergate. With this, Kissinger in an unprecedented show of leadership ignored the President's orders and proceeded with his previous strategy making it imperative to end the war before the Soviets took advantage of the domestic situation.<sup>172</sup> By the end of the war, Congress had approved a \$2.2 billion package of assistance to Israel to pay for the military equipment sent by the airlift, authorised by Kissinger.<sup>173</sup> In response, the Arab members of OPEC declared a total embargo on oil exports to the U.S., the Netherlands and European governments that expressed most support for the U.S. policy towards Israel following Congressional approval for the loan. Kissinger had failed to calculate the repercussions of his policies towards Israel and the effect that they may have on the U.S. business world. All those who favoured U.S. policy towards Israel suffered leaving Europe and Japan in positions having to choose to co-operate or disassociate from the U.S. or by attempting to avoid the choice by pursuing both courses simultaneously.<sup>174</sup> The statistics were staggering, within forty-eight hours the oil bill for the U.S., Canada, Western Europe and Japan had increased by \$40 billion a year.<sup>175</sup> Kissinger had neglected to foresee the Arab oil embargo and as a result the U.S.

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<sup>170</sup> Ibid., p. 551.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., p. 550.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., p. 552.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., p. 873.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., p. 884.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., p. 885.

suffered the financial consequences, a situation Kissinger's predecessor took seriously and hoped to avoid.

Another event which placed Kissinger in a serious decision making position during the '73 war was the DefCon III<sup>176</sup> alert as a result of the Soviet decision to introduce a joint U.S.-Soviet military force in the Middle East.<sup>177</sup> Kissinger had responded to this decision by indicating that this action would be in violation of the understanding between the two states and of Article II of the Agreement on Prevention of Nuclear War.<sup>178</sup> The entire crisis and close call took place in one evening. Kissinger had assumed the leadership role and burden of responsibility because he and Alexander Haig had deemed Nixon too distraught to participate in the events to come.<sup>179</sup> While Nixon had retired for the evening overburdened and depressed by Watergate events, Kissinger and Haig chose not to awaken the President even when a National Security Council meeting was called.<sup>180</sup> Since Gerald Ford had not yet been confirmed by the Senate as Vice President, this left Kissinger in complete charge of the situation which was eventually resolved by diplomatic means.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> U.S. forces are normally in various states of alert called DefCons (for Defence Condition), in descending order from DefCon 1 to DefCon V. DefCon III is in practice the highest stage of readiness for essentially peacetime conditions.

<sup>177</sup> Henry Kissinger, Years of Upheaval (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1982), p. 587.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., p. 591.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., p. 585.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., p. 586.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

Kissinger not only held very close ties with the state of Israel, but he also was very close to many of its political leaders. This is important, since it gave the Israeli leaders a very clear opportunity to speak in a one on one personal basis with a U.S. foreign policy maker, allowing their messages and ideas to get across. Kissinger acknowledged that he and Ambassador Dinitz (the Israeli Ambassador to Washington at the time) became close friends very quickly. The Israeli Ambassador's role differs from other ambassadors since this person must wield an influence he cannot admit in America, extract assistance and anchor Israel in the moral convictions of Americans.<sup>182</sup> In fact, Israel differs from others countries allied with the U.S. by the mere fact that the ambassador has close contact with the American secretary of state, whereas most countries complain that their ambassadors could not even get into see the Secretary of State.<sup>183</sup> The same was true when Yitzhak Rabin was Ambassador, who also became a close friend of Kissinger's. Because of the type of close relationship that he held with Rabin, Kissinger was occasionally able to provide private advice to the Ambassador, who in turn would convey the message to the government back home. This was certainly the case when Kissinger indicated privately to Rabin that Israel should prepare a concrete program articulating a definition of "peace" that it could live with in preparation for peace negotiations as proposed by the Soviets.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid., p. 484.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., p. 485.

<sup>184</sup> Henry Kissinger, The White House Years(Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1979), p. 355.

Historically speaking, Henry Kissinger was unlike any other National Security Advisor and Secretary of State. The responsibility that Kissinger had taken on was in part brought upon by himself and in large part due to the domestic political weakness his President had suffered. The determinant Kissinger most relied on to impose his political strategies was the international strategic environment, particularly during the cold war era. Reverting to the cold war theory was important for Kissinger in order to gain foreign policy ground with Israel. By keeping the threat of a possible superpower confrontation alive, Kissinger was able to offer financial and military support to their Israeli ally. This concept was driven through foreign policies such as détente thus generating support within the American constituency and alleviating any potential domestic pressures. Certainly other determinants were equally important, such as the beliefs, attitude and personality of Kissinger himself. Had Kissinger not taken a personal attachment to the Jewish people and Israel his strategy towards the Middle East and Israel may have differed.

Gerald Ford's presidency was short lived, 1974-1977, yet he still managed to have his bout of action with the pro-Israeli lobby. Ford perceived the Middle East as a dangerous threat to stability and world peace and that the only possibility to quell this danger was with a peace accord between the Arabs and the Israelis. In this regard, Gerald Ford relied on his Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to establish this accord. Following its failure, Ford decided to "reassess" foreign policy toward Israel

as a form of discipline, and subsequently fell subject to pressure by the pro-Israeli lobby. The Ford administration is said to have been “characteristically cool” with Israel yet vulnerable to the pressures of the pro-Israeli lobby because of the domestic political weakness it sustained as a result of the Nixon administration. This weakness takes into consideration that the morale of American politics was at its lowest, given the aftermath of the Watergate scandal, with Ford left in place to pick up the political pieces.

According to Ford, every day that passed in the Middle East without a new accord became more dangerous. There existed a fundamental relationship between the U.S. national security interests and those of Israel.<sup>185</sup> Ford’s personal feelings towards Israel’s survival were not as deeply rooted as his predecessors. Rather he believed in maintaining the national integrity of Israel, but always within the context of maintaining national security,<sup>186</sup> although he considered Israel an ally.<sup>187</sup>

An integral person, if not the most important player in the Ford administration’s foreign policy decision making process was Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. In fact, Ford relied a great deal on Kissinger’s expertise in the area of foreign policy. Contrary to the relationship Kissinger formed with Nixon, he and President Ford had a mutual respect, whereby Ford respected Kissinger’s expertise in

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<sup>185</sup> Gerald Ford, A Time to Heal (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1979) , p. 245.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid., p. 286.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid., p. 308.

foreign policy and Kissinger respected Ford's judgement in domestic politics.<sup>188</sup> Obviously, this respect gave Kissinger the latitude he required to make decisions on the Middle East. Ford admits to not have overruled any decisions made by Kissinger with regards to foreign policy.<sup>189</sup> Therefore, although Ford was subject to tremendous pressures he relied heavily on Kissinger who administered foreign policy.

In an effort to move ahead with peace talks, Ford decided to put pressure on Israel. According to Kissinger, it was the attitude of the Israelis that had prevented all parties from reaching a peace agreement with Egypt's President Anwar Sadat. The Ford administration had decided to reassess its policies with Israel in order to instigate a new momentum for peace.<sup>190</sup> Ford's reassessing policy meant cancelling or suspending further aid to Israel, and for a six month period in 1975, U.S.-Israeli relations were strained, thus ending any possibility for new arms agreements conducted in Israel.<sup>191</sup> As predicted by Ford, the "reassessment" plan jolted the American Jewish community and Israel's many friends in Congress.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 141.

<sup>189</sup> Gerald Ford, A Time to Heal (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1979), p. 355.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 247.

<sup>191</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 150.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*

Israeli pressure groups and friends of Israel in Congress continued to exert pressure on Ford. Not only was this pressure seen as counterproductive but more distressing to Ford was the fact that while he suggested the possibility of a reassessment of policy towards Israel, many perceived him as anti-Israel or anti-Semitic. As much as it bothered Ford to capitulate to pressure, he often sought the advise of prominent Jewish Americans well known in the community. Upon meeting with Max Fisher, chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel, Ford openly discussed his idea of reassessment.<sup>193</sup> He had hoped this would avoid any possible confrontation with pro-Israel pressure groups, which was not the case.

The Ford administration suffered a great deal of pressure. This pressure came mainly from three determinants: the role of the American Jewish community; the role of other domestic groups and pressures in American politics; and the role of Congress. Ford had to deal with pressure from all sides as a result of his "reassessment" policy. Further pressure came as a result of the domestic political environment the Nixon legacy left behind. Unfortunately for Ford, this factor worked against him and his administration, even with Henry Kissinger as his Secretary of State. While Kissinger remained with Ford as Secretary of State, he continued to implement his methods and strategy towards the Middle East and Israel, as he had done during the Nixon administration. This time however, a new determinant played a greater role, the relationship between the two differed greatly

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<sup>193</sup> Ibid., p. 247.

from Kissinger's relationship with Nixon. With Ford there was understanding as well as respect for the fact that Kissinger had expertise in Middle Eastern politics, an area Ford did not toy with. Even with Ford, Kissinger continued to rely on his international strategic environment determinant even while tensions were more relaxed than they had been during the Nixon era.

As a one term president 1977-1981, Jimmy Carter suffered a great deal of difficulty because of the pro-Israel lobby, ultimately resulting in the loss of his bid for re-election. A man with a fundamental attachment to his religion, Jimmy Carter took this religious perspective and attachment with him to the White House. Carter went further than any other in espousing Palestinian rights, but achieved little because of his political weakness and fear of the influence of the Israeli lobby.<sup>194</sup>

Carter held strong views on Israel. Prior to becoming president, Carter had already travelled to Israel, but to none of the Arab states which helped lay the foundation of his views towards the Middle East and in particular the Arab-Israeli conflict. As President, Carter became more informed with the Middle East and believed he could appease both sides in the conflict. The situation he faced was that on the one hand, Israel remained a U.S. ally, while on the other he became more sympathetic to Palestinian rights. Carter's growing sympathy upset the Jewish

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<sup>194</sup> Donald Neff, Fallen Pillars, U.S. Policy towards Palestine and Israel since 1945 (Washington D.C.: Institute for Palestinian Studies, 1995), p. 117.

American community along with the pro-Israeli lobby, who voiced their concern to the President. In addition to Carter's domestic problems with the pro-Israel lobby, his efforts to establish peace were constantly frustrated by the Prime Minister of Israel, Manachem Begin.

Carter entered the White House knowing little about foreign affairs but insistent on taking a team approach on foreign policy matters.<sup>195</sup> He disagreed with the "Lone Ranger" style that Henry Kissinger had used and was determined to make U.S. foreign policy more humane and moral, and believed this could be achieved in a team spirit effort with his senior advisors.<sup>196</sup> Unfortunately for Carter's plan, more often than not, his Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance clashed with his National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski. As Brzezinski attempted to take on the role of policy spokesman, divergences grew between Vance's public statements and Brzezinski's policy utterances.<sup>197</sup> This clash created obvious tension in the Carter administration. Although Carter had put together an organisational scheme for Presidential decisions, he insisted on advisors immediate reporting to him in order to keep decisions in the area of foreign policy firmly under his control.<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Advisor 1977-1981 (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1983), p. 18.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>197</sup> Cyrus Vance, Hard Choices (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), p. 35.

<sup>198</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Advisor 1977-1981 (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1983), p. 71.

Carter's attachment to Israel was based more on his religious background, than his political beliefs.<sup>199</sup> Further to this, Carter felt a fundamental empathy towards the past Jewish experience, whereby the Jews suffered for centuries, the pain of the Diaspora, compounded by persistent radical persecution in almost every nation in which they dwelt.<sup>200</sup> His political attachment to Israel was reinforced by the fact that both states share the commonality of being democratically governed countries. The mere geographical size and the number of adversaries surrounding Israel compelled Carter to feel a responsibility to assist Israel in her defence.<sup>201</sup> As an advocate of human rights, he believed that the 'continued deprivation of Palestinian rights' was contrary to the basic moral and ethical principles of both the U.S. and Israel.<sup>202</sup> It was precisely this view that drove Carter and his administration into constant conflict with the American Jewish community and pro-Israeli pressure groups. Quite often, Carter had to repair damaged political bases among American friends of Israel. To avoid conflict in his policies, he took precautionary steps to hold sessions with Jewish leaders from all around the nation, explaining his policies prior to their implementation.<sup>203</sup> Nevertheless, Carter continued to have domestic political problems with the American Jewish community. As tensions escalated between American Jews and Carter, Carter began to suffer politically. As a result of the tensions, on more than one occasion

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<sup>199</sup> According to Carter the Judeo-Christian ethic and study of the bible were bonds between Jews and Christians which had always been a part of his life, and that he considered a homeland for the Jews to be compatible with the teachings of the Bible, hence ordained by God.

<sup>200</sup> Jimmy Carter, *The Blood of Abraham* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985), p. 84.

<sup>201</sup> Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith* (New York: Bantam Books, 1982), p. 274.

<sup>202</sup> George Lenczowski, *American Presidents and the Middle East* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 161.

Carter was obliged to postpone fund-raising events due to last minute guest cancellations by American Jews.<sup>204</sup> Such events were important to generate funds for the presidential election that Carter would eventually lose.

What antagonised Carter's relationship with American Jews was the Prime Minister of Israel at that time, Menachim Begin. Carter's overall foreign policy strategy in the Middle East underlined peace. Carter felt his strategy towards the Middle East was constantly frustrated by Begin's defiance's and tendency to make a mockery of U.S. advice and preferences.<sup>205</sup> Although at first, the American Jewish community had not been advocates of Begin as Prime Minister they eventually accepted his leadership and began siding with him on certain issues. In Carter's own words, "In a public showdown on a controversial issue, they (American Jews) would always side with the Israeli leaders and condemn us for being 'even-handed' in our concern about Palestinian rights and Israeli security".<sup>206</sup> Therefore, Carter was restricted in his foreign policy to rendering non-controversial decisions. Carter hoped this would remove the pressures of the pro-Israel groups and American Jewish community. As mentioned previously, he sought the advice of prominent American Jewish leaders, so as to ensure that he would not cross a fine line on foreign policy issues in the Middle East.

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<sup>203</sup> Jimmy Carter, Keeping Faith (New York: Bantam Books, 1982), p. 290.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 313.

<sup>205</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 163.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 169.

The Carter administration became very careful, but seemed reluctant to cast a blind eye on issues where Israel blatantly breached the trust of the American government. Such was the case when the Israeli defence forces moved into Southern Lebanon in a counter-strike to destroy PLO bases while using U.S. weapons in the process.<sup>207</sup> In a letter sent to Congress, Secretary of State Vance stated that Israel may have violated the law in using U.S. weapons to invade Lebanon, on the basis that Israel contravened the Arms Export Control Acts of 1952 and 1976.<sup>208</sup> Under this law Israel had agreed that its use of American weapons would be limited to internal security and for legitimate self-defence.<sup>209</sup> The Secretary of State's letter went on to say that had a violation occurred, the President or Congress would be empowered to automatically suspend all military assistance to Israel.<sup>210</sup> No action was necessary since friends of Israel in Congress agree with Israel's claim that the weapons were in fact used in self-defence. When Israel did withdraw, it left behind some armoured personnel carriers and artillery pieces in the hands of a Lebanese mercenary militia unit headed by Major Haddad.<sup>211</sup> In a blunt and direct message to Begin, Carter insisted upon the removal of the equipment or he would report to Congress on a contravention of the Arms Export Controls Act.<sup>212</sup> Begin complied by removing all the equipment.

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<sup>207</sup> Cyrus Vance, Hard Choices (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), p. 208.

<sup>208</sup> George W. Ball, Douglas B. Ball The Passionate Attachment America's Involvement with Israel, 1947 to the Present (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992), p. 112.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> Cyrus Vance, Hard Choices (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), p. 208.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

Cyrus Vance served as Jimmy Carter's Secretary of State from 1977-1980. He looked to the President as the leader in foreign policy, with his role acting as chief lieutenant.<sup>213</sup> He respected Carter's principled approach to foreign affairs and believed that although the U.S. had a commitment to the independence and security of Israel,<sup>214</sup> the Palestinians remained the central, unresolved human rights issue in the Middle East.<sup>215</sup> Vance believed that the '73 war and the Arab oil embargo marked a transformation of the U.S. role in the search for peace in the Middle East.<sup>216</sup> The Secretary of State believed that the domestic economic vitality of the U.S. required a rebuilding of the economic base at home in order to integrate better U.S. foreign policy and domestic economy.<sup>217</sup> Unlike Carter, Vance believed the U.S. held a high stake in peace in the Middle East inasmuch that it was interrelated with oil, as the oil embargo of 1973 had taught him.

The Carter administration was plagued with constant problems and the most significant determinants were the role of the American Jewish community and the role of other domestic groups and pressures in the political system such as the pro-Israel lobby. A critical determinant during the former part of the Carter administration was the beliefs, attitude and personality of Carter himself. He brought with him to office religious beliefs and questions of morality which later changed as he gained

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<sup>213</sup> Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., p. 447.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., p. 164.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid., p. 161.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid., p. 419.

experience in the realm of Middle East politics. The Carter decision making team had its cracks, although Carter resolved himself to being kept on top of all foreign policy issues. In some instances Carter did not share a similar view with his senior advisors, particularly when Cyrus Vance placed more emphasis on the strategic value of Middle East oil to the U.S., Carter did not. One final determinant which played major role during the Carter era was the role of Congress and the confrontation that the Carter administration had to face within the legislative body. Carter and his advisors were constantly having their policies undermined and criticised by friends of Israel. Inevitably, Carter lost the New York primary, which holds the largest American Jewish constituency, and lost his bid for re-election.

Unlike Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan 1981-1988 did not have a sense of profound religious attachment to the Middle East. This personal conviction was based on two important factors. First, the moral obligation of the U.S. to ensure that what happened to the Jews under Hitler never happened again.<sup>218</sup> Second, and more important to Reagan was the responsibility of the U.S. to maintain the balance of power in the Middle East, with Israel as a U.S. ally having the military upper hand. According to Reagan, with the Cold War back at its peak, the Arab-Israeli conflict was a mask of the greater conflict that could possibly erupt between the U.S. and the Soviets. These were the guiding factors in the Reagan administration's foreign policy toward

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<sup>218</sup> George W. Ball, Douglas B. Ball The Passionate Attachment America's Involvement with Israel, 1947 to the Present (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992), p. 112.

Israel and the reasons that Israel was extensively supported under Reagan's presidency.

Of particular importance to Reagan was the balance of power between the Arabs and the Israelis. Reagan became committed in his foreign policy and arms supply to Israel to ensure that any help to the Arab states did not change the balance of power between the Israelis and the Arabs. His preoccupation with the Cold War was an important determinant for which Reagan relied on Israel as a strategic asset. Accordingly, he acknowledged Israel's geopolitical importance as a stabilising force, as a deterrent to radical hegemony and as a military offset to the Soviet Union.<sup>219</sup> Reagan saw Israel as the only country in that part of the world that was able to provide important strategic benefits to the United States.<sup>220</sup> There stood Israel, in a rather unstable part of the world as the only democratic, reliable ally, with a military ability proven to be capable of helping America and the West.<sup>221</sup> This proof came during the Nixon era when during the civil war in Jordan, at the request of the Henry Kissinger in the name of the U.S. government, Israel pushed the Syrian troops back into their country. With this in mind, in Reagan, Israel had found a friend and as a direct result

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<sup>219</sup> George W. Ball, Douglas B. Ball The Passionate Attachment America's Involvement with Israel, 1947 to the Present (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992), p. 108.

<sup>220</sup> Wolf Blitzer, Between Washington and Jerusalem A Reporter's Notebook (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 110.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid.

of this friendship had received an unprecedented amount of aid. In fact, during the Reagan administration assistance to Israel reached extremely high levels.<sup>222</sup>

Reagan's strongest conviction was guided by his belief that the U.S. was the custodian of Israel.<sup>223</sup> Under Reagan, Israel was supported at great lengths. Following a difficult battle with Congress and pro-Israeli pressure groups over the sale of military weapons to Saudi Arabia<sup>224</sup>, Reagan felt compelled to smooth things over with Israel and established a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). In essence, it was a "Strategic Co-operation Agreement" which although did not establish a formal alliance, did establish even closer military co-operation with Israel.<sup>225</sup> Some main points of the agreements included the U.S. resuming delivery to Israel of American cluster bombs, an increase in American aid to Israel for military purposes, and partial financial assistance to build the Lavi fighter aircraft which Israel would be free to market abroad (this provision was rescinded a few years later).<sup>226</sup> Even following a series of events, such as the annexation of the Golan Heights by Israel, the U.S. did not cease any co-operative agreements such as the MOU or impose any other punitive measures.

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<sup>222</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 255.

<sup>223</sup> Ronald Reagan, An American Life (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), p. 410.

<sup>224</sup> In 1988 the Reagan administration signed an agreement with Saudi Arabia on the sale of five airborne warning and control system aeroplanes (AWACS).

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 261.

<sup>226</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 261.

Alexander Haig served as Ronald Reagan's Secretary of State from 1981-1982 and says that Israel never had a greater friend in the White House than Ronald Reagan.<sup>227</sup> Haig too was a friend of Israel's and appreciated the strategic ties it held with the United States. Haig promoted the policy of a "strategic consensus" which would bring about America's co-operation with Israel and certain "moderate" Arab states, in common to oppose Soviet designs in the region.<sup>228</sup> This facilitated the concept of keeping Israel, an ally, secure while maintaining the upper military hand. Haig preferred to have strong public ties with Israel even when Israel breached the confidence of the U.S. government and public. Haig firmly stood beside the President's policies and decisions and preferred that the public acknowledge the fact that Israel was a strong U.S. ally. This was reassurance and reaffirmation of the U.S. government's pledge of support to Israel.

As Secretary of State Alexander Haig was most notorious for his involvement, and subsequently the involvement of the U.S. government, in the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The situation in the Middle East was tense with an explosion waiting to erupt. When that explosion finally did occur, the U.S. had received advance information about Israel's intentions but chose to look the other way.<sup>229</sup> Israel was intent on removing from Lebanon the PLO artillery from within the shelling range of

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<sup>227</sup> Alexander Haig Jr., Caveat, Realism, Reagan and Foreign Policy (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1984), p. 167.

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 213.

<sup>229</sup> Zeev Schiff, "Green Light, Lebanon" Foreign Policy Spring, 1983, p. 73.

the Galilee townships and villages.<sup>230</sup> According to the Israeli's, the PLO had mounted a military threat against Israeli settlements.<sup>231</sup> In addition to this, the Syrians had been wanting to introduce ground-to-air missiles in Lebanon, a threat the Israelis wanted to attack directly.<sup>232</sup> In fact, both the U.S. and Israel were interested in removing the Syrians and their missiles from Lebanon and in restraining the PLO.<sup>233</sup> Throughout this period, Israel had been developing ties with Presidential candidate Bashir Gemayel's Christian Phalangists<sup>234</sup> who became acquainted with the Israeli objectives and who were later willing to co-operate with the Israeli plan to expel the PLO from Lebanon.<sup>235</sup> The U.S. was not blind to these developments and was also informed of Israel's military plans which were headed by then Israeli Defence Minister, Ariel Sharon. Prior to the June invasion Sharon met with Haig and discussed at great lengths an Israeli military move against the PLO, Haig's response was that the U.S. did not oppose a limited military operation provided there was sufficient reason for one.<sup>236</sup> Although a letter was later sent to Begin summarising the meeting and emphasising restraint on the part of Israel, the letter contained no forthright warning.<sup>237</sup> This position was further affirmed when Haig later held a meeting with Moshe Arens, then Israeli ambassador to the United States.<sup>238</sup> In June 1982, Israeli forces crossed into Lebanon and advanced beyond the range of PLO artillery bombarding Israeli

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<sup>230</sup> Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid., p. 76.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Bashir Gemayel was assassinated shortly after his election as President.

<sup>235</sup> Zeev Schiff, "Green Light, Lebanon" *Foreign Policy* Spring, 1983, p. 78.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

settlements, surprising even the U.S. who did not exert pressure on Israel to bring the war to a quick end.<sup>239</sup> In spite of the surprise of how far the Israelis moved into Lebanon, the U.S. was fully aware that this was approaching and did not take immediate action to end the war giving Israel the stamp of approval it wanted. Although he did not endorse the move, Haig never gave Israel a warning nor did he threaten the suspension of aid or any other sanctions.<sup>240</sup> Israel interpreted the lack of a strong American position as support for all its objectives. In other words, Alexander Haig gave Israel the "green light" to enter Lebanon.<sup>241</sup>

Following public awareness of Israel's advancement into Beirut, a White House spokesman indicated to the press that Begin had promised the administration that he would not advance any farther.<sup>242</sup> Haig was less bothered by the Israeli action and was more disturbed by the White House's comment. Haig notified President Reagan that the comment was not proper and that it would be best if they spoke to the Israelis privately, since a public break with Israel would not be taken well.<sup>243</sup> The reason was that a public break would alarm the pro-Israeli lobby groups, a confrontation Haig hoped the administration would avoid. On June 25, 1981 Alexander Haig resigned as

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<sup>237</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid., p. 83.

<sup>240</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 218.

<sup>241</sup> Zeev Schiff, "Green Light, Lebanon" Foreign Policy Spring, 1983, p. 85.

<sup>242</sup> George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 346.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

Secretary of State reportedly because of major policy differences on the Middle East.<sup>244</sup> Haig favoured a soft public line with Israel while Defence Secretary Casper Weinberger and William Clark, national security advisor, and others were pressing for an open rebuke to Israel for its invasion of Lebanon.<sup>245</sup>

George Shultz served as Secretary of State for Reagan from 1982-1989, following the resignation of Alexander Haig. He personally committed the U.S. government's support to Israel. He reaffirmed the responsibility the U.S. had to uphold Israel and any actions Israel engaged in. When George Shultz first assumed the role of Secretary of State, he began by launching into a series of meetings with key advisors such as Henry Kissinger.<sup>246</sup> In doing so, Shultz hoped to gain a better knowledge of the Middle East and first hand information from people whom he admired in the field of foreign policy making and handling Israel.

During his first meeting with Yitzak Shamir, Shultz affirmed his personal and political commitment to Israel. Revealing his admiration and support for Israel, Shultz went on to promise that he would remain Israel's supporter even during the toughest of times.<sup>247</sup> Shultz held his promise even as tensions in the Middle East escalated and

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<sup>244</sup> "Haig Resigns as Secretary of State: Move a Surprise; Replaced by Shultz" Facts on File (Volume 42, No. 2172, July 21 1982), p. 465.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

<sup>246</sup> George P. Shultz, Turmoil and Triumph, My Years as Secretary of State (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993), p. 49.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

Israel continuously defied the U.S. by occupying Beirut and continuing to build settlements in the Occupied Territories.

Shultz believed that Israel and the U.S. had reciprocal responsibilities. As a democracy and strategic ally, Israel was the U.S. connection to the Middle East. Shultz believed that their alliance with Israel was so deep rooted to the point where the U.S. shared the responsibility for some Israeli actions. Such was the case following the public surfacing of the Shatila and Sabra massacres.<sup>248</sup> During this time, Shultz privately acknowledged responsibility because the U.S. took the Israelis at their word to ensure safety of the people in the camps.<sup>249</sup>

The Reagan administration held a very close relationship with Israel. Reagan believed that this relationship was necessary as a result of the international strategic environment, a necessary determinant. In effect, under Reagan the cold war theory resurfaced stronger than it had in the past with the arms race in full force and events in Lebanon, tensions with the Soviets had returned. Reagan viewed the Middle East as a time bomb waiting to explode between the superpowers, with each holding its own sphere of influence. Israel was a necessary ally and which made financial and military support inevitable in order to keep the balance of power in the Americans favour. This theory provides a summary of Reagan's personal beliefs, a determinant that was

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<sup>248</sup> In September 1982 while the Israelis were responsible for maintaining order in West Beirut, the Phalangist Lebanese entered the Shatilla and Sabra Palestinian camps and massacred close to 2000 men, women and children.

carried out by both his Secretaries of State. Much like Reagan, Secretary Haig and Shultz looked to Israel as a strategic ally in the cold war environment. More so, each Secretary felt the U.S. had a personal obligation to Israel, beyond being a strategic ally, and acted according to these beliefs.

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<sup>249</sup> Ibid., p. 110.

#### CHAPTER 4: THE INFLUENCE OF THE LOBBY AND CONGRESS ON FOREIGN POLICY

The purpose of this chapter is to take into account other determinants which influence U.S. foreign policy towards Israel. Other influences include three important indicators, Congress, individual Congressmen and Senators. Each of these indicators requires an analysis of four key variables<sup>250</sup>: the deep and sincere convictions of many key legislators on the Middle East, the impact of constituents, the strength of the pro-Israel lobby in the United States and Political Action Committees.

Before proceeding further it is pertinent to define foreign aid. Reference to foreign aid in this chapter includes the granting of economic or military assistance to foreign countries, such aid can be defined as belonging exclusively to the realm of foreign policy.<sup>251</sup> Under U.S. law, as stated in the constitution "*no money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by law*", in other words, Congress must authorise and appropriate all foreign aid. This is important since it places a significant amount of relevance on Congress with regards to foreign policy. Although foreign policy had traditionally been considered the domain of the Executive, the Constitution provides Congress with extensive foreign affairs powers,

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<sup>250</sup> Cecil V. Crabb jr., Invitation to Struggle, Congress, the President and Foreign Policy (Washington: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1992), p. 100.

<sup>251</sup> Bat-Ami Zucker, U.S. Aid to Israel and its Reflection in the New York Times and the Washington Post 1948- 1973 (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1991), p. 1.

for example in the area of common defence and general welfare.<sup>252</sup> Regardless of which political party is holding the majority in the House, each Congressional member's individual vote is recorded in determining whether to appropriate a certain amount of aid to Israel, or any other country for that matter.

All members of Congress become targets for various lobby groups, and the pro-Israel lobby group exercises its capacity. Considered the most powerful lobby in Washington, the pro-Israeli lobby can and has exerted pressure on Congress in order to achieve favourable foreign policy decisions toward Israel. By virtue of the fact that Congress has the power to approve loans and aid packages to foreign countries, individual Congressmen may be subject to pressure tactics. Influence on vote suasion can come from Congressional peers or from lobby groups. The pro-Israeli lobby may target all Congressmen and perhaps more specifically, those with Jewish constituencies or members<sup>253</sup> who sit on the Foreign Affairs Committee. The importance of being a member of the Congressional Foreign Affairs Committee will be discussed later.

Pro-Israel Political Action Committees hold a very important key between Congressmen and the pro-Israel lobby with respect to campaign funding. Often, a member of Congress will consider heavily the risk of not being eligible for campaign

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<sup>252</sup> Bat-Ami Zucker, U.S. Aid to Israel and its Reflection in the New York Times and the Washington Post 1948-1973 (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1991), p. 11.

<sup>253</sup> Any reference to the term "member" includes an elected Member of Congress or Senate.

money should he or she decide to not vote in favour of Israel. These are all significant factors which will be discussed in this chapter when looking at the power of Congress, Congressmen, the pro-Israel lobby and PAC's vis-à-vis foreign policy decision making and Israel.

As was discussed in chapter two, individuals like presidents and secretaries of states may be influenced in their decision on Israel as a result of the personal sentiment determinant, and Members of Congress are no exception. Although members are elected to represent the views of their constituencies, personal sentiment may cloud judgement thus influencing the member's vote. This chapter will later discuss how pro-Israel lobby pressures as well as the personal sentiments of Members of Congress can render favourable votes in Congress on matters relating to Israel.

The impact of public opinion and its importance to each member of Congress is important since support for re-election stems from the member's constituency. Most American constituents do not have a tendency to vocalise any opinion when the member votes in favour of Israel. In fact, as a result of the efforts of Jewish American community, Americans hold a relatively high awareness of Israel and Arab-Israeli affairs.<sup>254</sup> Sensibility towards Israel and the Arab-Israeli conflict has made Americans

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<sup>254</sup> Shai Feldman, US Middle East Policy: The Domestic setting (Boulder Colorado: Westview Press, 1988), p. 34.

very sympathetic to Israel's cause. This is a result of heightened awareness of the need for a Jewish homeland in Israel, following the post WWII era. More importantly is how this reflects on members of Congress. Needless to say, support for Israel has been strong, stable and durable, creating among Americans a virtual pro-Israel attitude.<sup>255</sup> This is favourable for any member of Congress or Senator who chooses to endorse Israel "on the record" without having to admit that he or she succumbed to any type of pressure.

Members are very conscious of the makeup of their constituency, in terms of ethnic background. This assists the member in voting in Congress as well as in committee on various bills (such as the foreign aid bill) according to what he or she feels may benefit the constituents or constituency. Members are very sensitive to their Jewish constituency and try as much as possible to not upset this part of the constituency by voting against Israel. A large part of this reason will be discussed further on in this chapter when discussing the role of the pro-Israel lobby and PAC's. For the most part, it is the loss of the so called "Jewish vote" that keeps members on alert.

The role a voter plays to any member of Congress is important by the mere fact that his or her re-election depends on such votes. However, the significance of the "Jewish vote" is in itself unique. On this point, certain members seem to be more

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<sup>255</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

attentive than others to the "Jewish vote", in particular in the states where the Jewish community tends to congregate- California, Maryland, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, Florida, and specifically New York.<sup>256</sup> Members of the Jewish community prefer not to be referred to as one single voting block for the reason that it lends credence to the claim that Jews in America are un-American.<sup>257</sup> Nevertheless, members remain aware of their Jewish constituency, and this plays a role during that crucial time when a member must stand in Congress to vote on a foreign aid bill to Israel. For the most part, members do not have a tendency to vote against aid to Israel, since they would hope to avoid paying the political price that may be attached to it as a result of the efforts of the pro- Israel lobby.

The American Jewish community has, over the years played a extraordinary role as communicator between Washington and Jerusalem.<sup>258</sup> Primarily they help Americans understand why and how Israel and the U.S. are good for one another, by counteracting opposition arguments and charges, and while making the moral case for Israel.<sup>259</sup> The moral case for Israel is sometimes tied to religion, and this is a focal point for many Americans. Once a link between the Bible, the Holy Land and Israel was established "a profound bond" was erected between "the Jews of Israel and the

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<sup>256</sup> Stephan D. Isaacs, Jews and American politics ( New York: Doubleday &Company, Inc., 1974), p. 6.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid., p. 141.

<sup>258</sup> Wolf Blitzer, Between Washington and Jerusalem A Reporter's Notebook (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 63.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

Christians of America.<sup>260</sup> Therefore, support for Israel came to reflect general American beliefs as well as their identification with Judaism and solidarity with the Jewish people.<sup>261</sup>

All constituents, including American Jews, have the right to exert pressure on their Member of Congress. In fact, Israel turns to American Jews for support who in turn look for this support from Congress by way of their member of Congress. In this respect, there is a discreet rule that members of the Jewish community follow which is to make the same case that Israel makes, this conveys a message of approval and acceptance of Israel to the average American.<sup>262</sup> Also, fellow Americans get a sense of reassurance knowing that a message for support stems from among their own.<sup>263</sup> It has been said that Israel cannot exist without American support and in order to keep this support flowing, American Jews must constantly align themselves with Israeli policies. The most logical way to keep American support strong via the American Jewish community is through the local Congressman, thus creating an important link.

Congress itself is important in so much that Congressman and Senators can exert pressure on the President vis-à-vis foreign policy. Often, the president can find

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<sup>260</sup> Bat-Ami Zucker, U.S. Aid to Israel and its Reflection in the New York Times and the Washington Post 1948-1973 (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1991), p. 29.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> Edward Tivnan, The Lobby, Jewish Political Power and American Foreign Policy (New York: Simon and Schuster), p. 148.

himself in a Congressional war, whereby a proposed bill on Israel may not pass because of the lack of support in Congress. This has been the case with both senators and congressmen who voted against a bill they deemed unfavourable towards Israel. This puts a tremendous amount of strain on the president, since without the support of Congress it seems, from the American public point of view, that such actions were taken unilaterally. Given the lack of support from Congress, this portrays an image to the American public that the president lacks support, leading Americans to question any future actions. Therefore as much as possible, presidents hope to avoid a show down in Congress on Israel.

This was the case during the Ford-Kissinger era, when Ford announced his "reassessment" plan towards Israel following Kissinger's return from Israel. As was discussed in the previous chapter, upon learning that there had not been any progress on peace, the Ford administration had consequently decided that no new arms contracts with Israel were to be signed.<sup>264</sup> In show of solidarity for Israel, seventy-six senators, more than three quarters of the senate, sent a letter to Ford urging the immediate resumption of arms sales to Israel coupled with economic and diplomatic support.<sup>265</sup> As demanded by the senators, the president responded favourably to their demands by not actively pursuing his reassessment plan.

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<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Wolf Blitzer, *Between Washington and Jerusalem A Reporter's Notebook* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 15.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid.

Congress has an important legislative role, and the bulk of the work is completed in committees.<sup>266</sup> The most important committees, also known as standing committees, are permanent, with each specialising in one or a few closely related policy areas such as foreign affairs.<sup>267</sup> The Congressional Foreign Affairs Committee is important to Israel, since any legislative, appropriations and investigative work of Congress vis-à-vis foreign affairs is referred here. At the Congressional committee hearings, deliberations, votes and appearances of witnesses are likely to settle any matter before it is sent back to Congress.<sup>268</sup> Standing committees and subcommittees, which have jurisdiction over specific aspect of a full committee's work, can be found in both the House and the Senate. The difference between the Senate and House committees is that congressmen are highly specialised with power centralised in the hands of key committees and the leadership.<sup>269</sup> The work of each committee is highly influenced by the Chair usually selected on the principle of seniority and holds responsibility for calling meetings, setting the agenda and controlling the committee staff and funds.<sup>270</sup> As the most influential member of the committee the Chair is usually knowledgeable on the subject matter which gives him or her the ability to influence other members.

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<sup>266</sup> World Encyclopedia of Political Systems & Parties Second Edition, Volume II, p.1214.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> Susan Welch et al, American Government Third Edition (West Publishing Company: Saint Paul, 1986), p. 359.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid., p. 351.

The Chair as well as the members of the standing committee on Foreign Affairs are more likely targets for influence with regards to matters on Israel. The Jewish community along with the Jewish lobby target these specific members should a matter on Israel be set on the committee's agenda. Obviously, since not all Senators or Congressman have large Jewish constituencies one may question the impact this pressure may have on these individuals. The influence of the lobby will be discussed later, however when speaking about Jewish Americans and their ability to influence a member, methods other than threatening the local Congressman or Senator with the loss of a vote exist. Often as a form of pressure, ethnic groups like the American Jewish community may embark on a mass mailing to the members of the committee or bombard the office with telephone calls. New technology such as e-mail, has become a powerful tool to Americans who choose to lobby their Senator, Congressman or favourite committee member. However, the most common and effective way to sway a vote in favour of Israel, whether it be in the Senate or House foreign affairs committee, or in Congress is with political campaign contributions.

The costs of campaigning, be it as a presidential, congressional or senatorial candidate have been increasing over the years escalating within the realm of millions of dollars. This increase marks a new era of campaign tactics. Rather than embark on a door to door campaign and target a few constituents, the candidate can make use of

television advertising and target the entire constituency. In the 1996 presidential election campaign the total cost of spending during the Primaries was \$237,2 million between 15 candidates, with the top two candidates spending between \$40 and \$45 million each.<sup>271</sup> Most of this funding is generated from private sources. Calculating the average costs of running as a Congressional candidate is somewhat more complicated since not all candidates run during the same period and a great deal of the spending amount depends on the size of the district or State. In total Congressional campaign spending for the 1996 general election reached \$626,4 million.<sup>272</sup> In looking at the break down of this figure in the State of New York, 31 candidates ran in different districts with spending ranging from over \$1000 to over \$1.5 million.<sup>273</sup> The 1996 Senate campaign spending reached a total of \$330,8 million for 66 candidates averaging \$5 million per candidate.<sup>274</sup> Judging from these figures, it can be quite expensive for all candidates to run but more particularly for those in Congress who seek re-election every two to six years, with the success of the re-election rate at approximately 90 percent.<sup>275</sup> Although generally, members of Congress typically come from high-status occupations, covering the costs of campaign financing is difficult making the search for financial contributions continuous.

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<sup>271</sup> <http://www.fec.gov/pres96/presgen/htm>

<sup>272</sup> <http://www.fec.gov/press/canpost.htm>

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<sup>274</sup> <http://www.fec.gov/press/canpost.htm>

<sup>275</sup> World Encyclopaedia of Political Systems & Parties Second Edition, Volume II, p.1214.

Candidates may look elsewhere for financial contributions to their campaign. Campaign contributions serve two important functions for members of Congress:<sup>276</sup> political support not only can induce a congressman to back the group's legislative interest, but also can help assure that members friendly to the group's goals remain in office.<sup>277</sup> This section will look at both these aspects in terms of financial contributions to campaigns.

A political action committee (PAC) has become the vehicle for individuals or groups to participate financially in the political process. The real impetus for PAC formation did not come until the 1970's when the federal campaign financial laws were overhauled.<sup>278</sup> Crucial were the 1974 amendments which clamped a \$1,000 limit on the amount an individual could contribute to a House or Senate candidate in a primary or general election.<sup>279</sup> PAC's are permitted to give \$5,000 per candidate, with no limit on how much a candidate could receive in combined PAC donations.<sup>280</sup> The question remains, how relevant is this to Israel from a foreign policy perspective in Congress? The response to this question is threefold: first, the funding and makeup of pro-Israel PAC's , second, who are the recipients of pro-Israel PAC's, and finally, how relevant is pro-Israel PAC money to a candidate.

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<sup>276</sup> The Washington Lobby (Washington: Congressional Quarterly Inc. 1982), p. 10.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid.

Let us first examine the funding and breakdown of pro-Israel PAC's. A large proportion of the funding to pro-Israel PAC's is derived from the Jewish community, which is renowned for playing an active role in American politics. The term active role does not necessarily equate to an individual's physical participation, since other forms of participation may include the simple action of voting or contributing financially. On this point, members of the Jewish community take enormous pride in their prominence in financing campaigns, feeling they have done good for their country by helping good candidates attain office.<sup>281</sup> Even Truman attributed in large part, the success of his 1948 campaign to Abe Feinberg, who began a process of systematic fund-raising for politics that has made American Jews the most conspicuous fund-raisers and contributors.<sup>282</sup>

The 1974 campaign financing law became quite restrictive for those groups wanting to contribute substantial amounts of money to candidates. The emergence of the Political Action Committee became a perfectly legal way to side-step the restrictions.<sup>283</sup> By organising numerous PAC's with the same goal, groups like the pro-Israeli group would be able to get on line specific candidates by swaying him or her with campaign money.

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<sup>281</sup> Stephan D. Isaacs, Jews and American politics (New York: Doubleday & Company Inc., 1974), p. 116.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

<sup>283</sup> Edward Tivnan, The Lobby Jewish Political Power and American Foreign Policy (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), p. 85.

The first appearance of a pro-Israel PAC on the national scene was in 1976, by the 1990 campaign they had mushroomed to 95.<sup>284</sup> However, no pro-Israel PAC has ever carried a name or other information disclosing its pro-Israel interest or affiliation with the pro-Israel lobby or Jewish organisations.<sup>285</sup> Rather, each chooses to obscure its pro-Israel character by using bland titles in order for those in the political process not to use the percentage of Jewish money (in a given race) as a negative.<sup>286</sup> More importantly, legally, the pro-Israel PAC's could not be lumped together because they are all "unrelated to each other", but the spending pattern of the pro-Israel PAC's show that their giving is more tightly focused.<sup>287</sup> However, when the checks are actually handed over to candidates, each candidate is very well aware of the pro-Israel's PAC's specific concerns.<sup>288</sup>

In looking at what type of member of Congress may be the recipient of pro-Israel PAC money, it is imperative to also consider how relevant pro-Israel PAC money may be to a candidate. Most PAC's still say, of course, that their primary job is rewarding friends and punishing enemies.<sup>289</sup> Friends of Israel will always make positive remarks in the House or Senate, never vote against relevant Bills on Israel

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<sup>284</sup> Richard H Curtiss. et al, Stealth PAC's: Lobbying Congress for Control of U.S. Middle East Policy (Washington: American Educational Trust, 1991), p. 144.

<sup>285</sup> Paul Findley, They Dare to Speak out People and Institutions Confront Israel's Lobby (Connecticut: Lawrence Hill & Company, 1985), p. 42.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid.

<sup>287</sup> John J. Fialka & Brooks Jackson, "Pro-Israel Lobby Jewish PAC's emerge as a Powerful Force in U.S. Election Races." The Wall Street Journal 26 Feb. 1985, p. 2.

<sup>288</sup> Wolf Blitzer, Between Washington and Jerusalem A Reporter's Notebook (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 127.

and remain supportive in committees that respectively affect any U.S. foreign policy decision on Israel. Friends of Israel receive full pro-Israel PAC money during an elected representative's most crucial moment, an election campaign. Money makes all the difference in advertising or promoting a candidate during an election year, and this is where PAC money plays a significant role. This was particularly the case in the 1984 Senatorial race in Illinois between incumbent Charles Percy and his opponent Paul Simon. The chart below outlines the race between Percy and Simon.

STATE	CANDIDATE	PAC MONEY	% OUT OF STATE	COMMITTEES
Illinois	Percy, Charles (Senate-Republican)	500	0	Foreign Relations, Near East & South Asia sub-committee
Illinois	Simon, Paul (Senate-Democrat)	301,383	81%	

(Source: *Stealth PAC's* p.65, 1984)

In spite of the fact that Illinois has a relatively small Jewish population, candidate Paul Simon received \$301,383 from out of state pro-Israel PAC's.<sup>290</sup> In this particular Senatorial race, the relevance of pro-Israel PAC money is depicted with the obvious intention to defeat Simon's opponent. What is important to note is not only the percentage of out of state donations but the committee Percy sat on. Paul Simon's opponent Senator Percy, once the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations

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<sup>289</sup> Edward Tivnan, The Lobby Jewish Political Power and American Foreign Policy (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), p. 46.

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

Committee voted in 1981, in favour of the U.S. selling Airborne warning and control system (Awacs) aircraft to Saudi Arabia.<sup>291</sup> Percy had also mistakenly openly stated that Israel could no longer count on the U.S. to write blank checks and at one time urged Israel to deal with Yasser Arafat, who in his view was more moderate than other extremists such as George Habash.<sup>292</sup> As Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations committee Percy held a powerful and influential position and voted in support of Israel 87 percent of the time.<sup>293</sup> However, he began showing signs of independence on Middle East policy at committee hearings by taking into account a variety of viewpoints and calling for the consideration of Palestinian "rights".<sup>294</sup> Israel, and hence the pro-Israeli lobby strongly disapproved of the Awacs sale to Saudi Arabia, making all those who voted in favour of it potential enemies. As a result, the pro-Israel PAC's joined financial forces, Senator Percy's opponent was provided with \$301,383 out of an estimated \$3,1 million contributed by American Jews for his defeat.<sup>295</sup> This amount does not include independent campaigns such as the one initiated by Michael R. Goland, a California real-estate agent with ties to one of the Jewish PAC's who spent \$1,1 million in television advertising and direct mail against Percy.<sup>296</sup> In lieu of the 1974 campaign financing rules, Goland was fined

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<sup>291</sup> John J. Fialka & Brooks Jackson "Pro-Israel Lobby Jewish PAC's emerge as a Powerful Force in U.S. Election Races" The Wall Street Journal 26 Feb. 1985.

<sup>292</sup> George W. Ball and Douglas B. Ball, The Passionate Attachment, America's Involvement with Israel, 1947 to the Present (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992), p. 222.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid.

<sup>294</sup> Richard H. Curtiss et al, Stealth PAC's: Lobbying Congress for Control of U.S. Middle East Policy (Washington: American Educational Trust, 1990), p. 58.

<sup>295</sup> George W. Ball and Douglas B. Ball, The Passionate Attachment, America's Involvement with Israel, 1947 to the Present (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992), p. 222.

\$5000, a small amount for someone willing to spend \$1 million to defeat a candidate.<sup>297</sup>

The trend for receiving large sums of pro-Israel PAC money has not declined in recent years. In fact actual contributions to individual candidates reported by the 61 pro-Israel PAC's active in the 1996 election cycle more than doubled between June and December, 1996 from \$1,3 million to \$2,7 million.<sup>298</sup> Below is a chart of the top 10 Senate and House recipients of pro-Israeli PAC money for the 1996 election period.

SENATE				HOUSE			
candidate	party	95-96 PAC \$	career total PAC \$	candidate	party	95-96 PAC \$	career total PAC \$
Carl Levin	D	\$136,320	\$558,358	Jane Harman	D	\$30,549	\$55,227
Tom Harkin	D	93,500	461,700	Martin Frost	D	29,889	110,289
Ron Wyden	D	93,325	164,700	Bib Filner	D	27,100	63,700
Mitch McConnell	R	83,625	280,425	Newton Gingrich	R	24,562	95,434
Max Baucus	D	77,998	233,748	Vic Fazio	D	20,652	72,504
Richard Durbin	D	67,222	229,421	Lee Hamilton	D	15,500	100,950
Phil Gramm	R	59,500	80,500	Louis Stokes	D	15,000	26,800
John Rockefeller	D	52,000	177,200	Lynn Rivers	D	14,250	18,250
John Reed	R	49,750	181,050	Richard Gephardt	D	14,000	85,130
Larry Pressler	R	48,500	167,000	John E. Porter	R	13,320	64,180

(Source: *The Washington Report on The Middle East*, p. 43, 1997)

<sup>296</sup> John J. Fialka & Brooks Jackson, "Pro-Israel Lobby Jewish PAC's emerge as a Powerful Force in U.S. Election Races" *The Wall Street Journal* 26 Feb. 1985.

<sup>297</sup> Richard H. Curtiss, et al, *Stealth PAC's: Lobbying Congress for Control of U.S. Middle East Policy* (Washington: American Educational Trust, 1990), p. 59.

<sup>298</sup> Richard H. Curtiss, "Pro-Israel PAC Donations Soared in Final Months of 1986 Election Cycle." *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (Washington: American Educational Trust Title, April/May 1997), p. 43.

## The Lobby

Having discussed Political Action Committees, it is now time to venture into a more institutionalised organisation, the pro-Israel lobby. This section will be devoted to discussing the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and its role in U.S. foreign policy and Israel. Critical to the discussion will be the origins of the pro-Israel lobby, its goal, their role with PAC's and the effects as well as the effectiveness of the Lobby. Some background information will be provided on the pro-Arab lobby in order to fully understand the full capacity of the pro-Israel lobby.

Prior to launching into a discussion on the pro-Israel lobby (AIPAC), it is necessary to have some understanding of the pro-Arab lobby. The pro-Arab lobby first emerged on the American political spectrum in 1972 in the aftermath of the 1967 war. The founders of the National Association of Arab American (NAAA) were convinced, following the '67 war that Congress and the Executive branch required alternative viewpoints and factual information in order to balance the claims of the pro-Israel lobby.<sup>299</sup> The NAAA is a membership organisation dedicated to the formulation and implementation of an objective and non-partisan U.S. foreign policy agenda in the Middle East.<sup>300</sup> This organisation is comprised of approximately 10,000 citizens who constitute its membership and financial support base.<sup>301</sup> The mission

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<sup>299</sup> David Sadd & Neal Lenemann, "Arab American Grievances." Foreign Policy Fall 1985, p. 18.

<sup>300</sup> <http://www.steele.com/naaa/Brochure.html>

<sup>301</sup> Ibid.

statement of the NAAA sets the goals of the organisation which includes the following: a dedication to peace throughout the Middle East and the world; striving for greater strategic co-operation between the U.S. and the Arab world; subscribing to all international accords on human rights and civil liberties; and advocating political, social and economic justice for all peoples of the Middle East.<sup>302</sup>

The NAAA developed as the Arab-American community became aware of the strong ties that the pro-Israel lobby formed between the U.S. and Israel.<sup>303</sup> Accordingly, it was realised that Israel gained financial and military support as a result of this relationship and that it too would be beneficial to the Arab states to develop a similar relationship. In addition to the NAAA, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), exists as a grass roots organisation also representing Arab-Americans.<sup>304</sup> The ADC was founded by former Senator James Abourezk and the American Arab Institute dedicated to protecting and defending the rights of Arab-Americans, while at the same time promoting their heritage in order to end the stereotyping of Arabs in the media. Even with the existence of these two organisations, the effectiveness of the Arab lobby cannot be compared to that of the pro-Israel lobby. Whereas the pro-Israel lobby has a single goal, the Americans of Arab descent reflect the great diversity within the Arab world itself.<sup>305</sup> Arab

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<sup>302</sup> <http://www.steele.com/naaa/mission.html>

<sup>303</sup> David Sadd & Neal Lenemann, "Arab American Grievances." *Foreign Policy* Fall 1985, p. 18.

<sup>304</sup> Sandra Jaszczak, *Encyclopaedia of Associations: An Associations Unlimited Reference, 32<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (Detroit: Gale, 1990), p.14815.

<sup>305</sup> David Sadd & Neal Lenemann, "Arab American Grievances." *Foreign Policy* Fall 1985, p. 19.

Americans come from diverse geographical and religious backgrounds while harbouring differing priorities and political goals.<sup>306</sup> As a result, they have never and can never become a one-issue oriented ethnic group like their counterparts, which reflects in the outcome of their lobbying goals.

The NAAA formed its first political action committee (NAAA-PAC) in 1984, making contributions to both Democratic and Republican office seekers favourable to their policy lines.<sup>307</sup> During the 1984 campaign the NAAA-PAC was able to raise \$20,000 compared to the pro-Israel PAC's which raised \$2,8 million. In a political world where political survival depends on money, elections and re-election, the lobbying goals of the NAAA are far less successful than those of the pro-Israel lobby.

The pro-Israel lobby (referred to as AIPAC) is the official Capital Hill lobbyist for the American Jewish community, the only organisation in Washington registered to lobby on Israel's behalf.<sup>308</sup> The organisation was first founded in 1951 by I.N. Kenan, who at the time, was a registered foreign agent for Israel.<sup>309</sup> Mr. Kenan transformed his organisation into an American lobby in 1954 and changed the name

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<sup>306</sup> Ibid.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid., p.23.

<sup>308</sup> Edward Tivnan, The Lobby Jewish Political Power and American Foreign Policy (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), p. 163.

<sup>309</sup> David K. Shipler, "On Middle East Policy, a Major Influence" The New York Times 6 July 1987

to the American Zionist Committee for Public Affairs and remained associated with it when it assumed its present name in 1959.<sup>310</sup>

AIPAC's original goals included the creation of a bridge between the Jewish communities of the U.S. and Israel. Additionally, it included the promotion of relations between the two countries as well as activities aimed at influencing the American Executive and legislators to provide for the safety of Israel.<sup>311</sup> In other words, AIPAC had to manage a way to keep U.S. aid and money flowing to Israel.<sup>312</sup>

Over the years, AIPAC has grown into one of the most influential lobby groups in Washington with a large operational base across the country. Keeping it in operation requires a great deal of finances of which 90-95 percent of its contributors are American Jews.<sup>313</sup> AIPAC is so well financially grounded that even in states where there are only small Jewish populations, AIPAC has organised a network of pro-Israeli citizens who meet several times a year with members of Congress when they return home.<sup>314</sup> Although an old fashioned lobbying technique, this method is still effective since the elected representative becomes sensitively aware of his constituents concerns. Other techniques may include massive pressure mail outs or

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<sup>310</sup> Ibid.

<sup>311</sup> Bat-Ami Zucker, U.S. Aid to Israel and its Reflection in the New York Times and the Washington Post 1948-1973 (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1991), p. 32.

<sup>312</sup> Edward Tivnan, The Lobby Jewish Political Power and American Foreign Policy (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), p. 163.

<sup>313</sup> David K. Shipler "On Middle East Policy, a Major Influence" The New York Times July 6, 1987.

through mass media campaigns, such as the radio, television, newspaper or magazines. In fact, direct mail has been a tremendous success for AIPAC, in more ways than one. For example, direct mail from AIPAC to the Jewish community serves two purposes: firstly, to secure additional finances along with new members, and secondly, to educate the community about what is happening in Washington on Israel.<sup>315</sup>

Throughout the years, as AIPAC became more institutionalised in the American governmental process, it has taken on an important role with both the U.S. government and the Israeli government. The Israeli government has come to rely on AIPAC for advice or understanding what, to Israeli's, is an unusually complicated U.S. legislative process.<sup>316</sup> Occasionally, AIPAC works with the Israeli government on specific matters. Such was the case, for example, when they helped the Israeli government draft the official statement defending Israel's 1981 bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor.<sup>317</sup> However, as far as their relationship with the Israeli government is concerned, their policy lines have been kept very clear, AIPAC's role is to support Israel's policies, not to help formulate them.<sup>318</sup> For the most part, they prefer to be

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<sup>314</sup> David K. Shipler "Pro-Israel Group Exerts Quiet Might as it Rallies Supporters in Congress" The New York Times 7 July 1987.

<sup>315</sup> Wolf Blitzer, Between Washington and Jerusalem A Reporter's Notebook (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 123.

<sup>316</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

<sup>317</sup> Paul Findley, They Dare to Speak out People and Institutions Confront Israel's Lobby (Connecticut: Lawrence Hill & Company, 1985), p. 26.

<sup>318</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

publicly recognised as an American outfit run by Americans with taxable, not tax-free-dollars.<sup>319</sup>

The U.S. government has also been known to turn to AIPAC for assistance, or rather to impose pressure tactics on members in Congress. When President Reagan had difficulty in Congress on legislation which would allow him to keep the existing force of Marines in Lebanon for 18 months, he turned to Thomas Dine the Director of AIPAC at that time.<sup>320</sup> Mr. Dine and AIPAC turned up the heat on the Senate, allowing the president to win a victory on this legislation.<sup>321</sup>

AIPAC insists that the organisation is involved at every point that a decision crucial to Israel is being made.<sup>322</sup> In fact, particularly during the budget period contact between AIPAC and Congress increases. Telephone calls from the House Budget Committee leadership and staff, as well as from the Senate Budget Committee leadership and staff may increase during this period while these individuals ask AIPAC their opinion on the budget.<sup>323</sup> Budget period is particularly important since this is the time when amounts of financial assistance is allocated to foreign countries, such as Israel.

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<sup>319</sup> Bat-Ami Zucker, U.S. Aid to Israel and its Reflection in the New York Times and the Washington Post 1948-1973 (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1991), p. 32.

<sup>320</sup> Paul Findley, They Dare to Speak out People and Institutions Confront Israel's Lobby (Connecticut: Lawrence Hill & Company, 1985), p. 28.

<sup>321</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>322</sup> David K. Shipler, "On Middle East Policy, a Major Influence" The New York Times 6 July 1987.

<sup>323</sup> Ibid.

AIPAC plays an important role with the Political Action Committees. Although AIPAC does not endorse or give money to candidates, it is perceived as influencing many campaign contributors.<sup>324</sup> Israel's friends in Congress are often rewarded from individual AIPAC members and from pro-Israel political action committees.<sup>325</sup> AIPAC avoids endorsing candidates publicly and does not raise or spend money directly in partisan campaigns, instead campaign involvement is left to pro-Israel political action committees.<sup>326</sup> Pro-Israel PAC leaders receive guidance from AIPAC, which keeps them up to date on votes cast and statements made by Senate and House members as well as positions taken on the Middle East by candidates seeking office for the first time.<sup>327</sup>

For a lobby group AIPAC is very professionally organised, and holds contacts in areas of the government machine that are relevant to its goals. Holding contacts in high and strategic places is important in order to ensure that they are among the first to receive information and that the information that they receive is well founded. Often at committee hearings, a member of AIPAC will be in attendance, keeping account of what goes on and who says what. In the event that meetings are behind closed doors, AIPAC will rely on leaks often coming from Congressional staff

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<sup>324</sup> David K. Shipler, "Pro-Israel Group Exerts Quiet Might as it Rallies Supporters in Congress" The New York Times 7 July 1987.

<sup>325</sup> Ibid.

<sup>326</sup> Paul Findley, They Dare to Speak out People and Institutions Confront Israel's Lobby (Connecticut: Lawrence Hill & Company, 1985), p. 41.

members. Having friends of AIPAC in Congress is important to the organisation, and often, Congressional staff members are the easiest to access.

AIPAC has proven itself effective in building its organisation, in making its place in Washington and in achieving its goals. Helping to funnel aid to Israel is equally as important as raising the awareness of Israel to Americans and American legislators. This awareness is heightened with methods that were previously discussed, such as mail-outs, television or magazine advertisements. AIPAC works with other Jewish organisations to achieve this. Quite often, tours of Israel are arranged by other organisations and facilitated by AIPAC.<sup>328</sup> This gives governors, members of state legislatures and community leaders a profound experience while at the same time giving these visitors an opportunity to be more sympathetic to the Israeli agenda and cause.<sup>329</sup>

The effects of the pro-Israeli lobby can be quite severe, particularly if a member of Congress, the Senate or the President finds him or herself on the other side. AIPAC runs a remarkable system. If you vote with them (pro-Israel) or make a public statement they like, they get the word out fast through their own publications and through editors around the country who are sympathetic to their cause.<sup>330</sup> However, if you say something they don't like (anti-Israel) you can be denounced or

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<sup>327</sup> Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>328</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>329</sup> Ibid.

censured through the same network.<sup>331</sup> This type of pressure is bound to affect an elected representative's thinking, especially if the member is wavering or needs support.<sup>332</sup>

This is not to say that members of Congress speak or legislate at all times in fear of AIPAC on issues relating to Israel. Each member holds his or her own agenda, and hence chooses his or her own course of action. However, if the course of action chosen is deemed unfavourable to Israel, then it is unfavourable to AIPAC. AIPAC may then pursue its own course of action, although it may not always be successful in how it chooses to penalise that individual. In the case of Paul Findley, the pro-Israel lobby was a success and publicly claimed the credit.

A member of the House Middle East subcommittee, Findley was drawn into Middle East politics because of a constituent who was wrongly detained in Yemen. After having initiated his constituent's release, Findley chose to embark on a Middle East peace quest by meeting with Arafat, clearly in defiance of the U.S. policy set by Kissinger which prohibited any communication with the PLO until they recognised Israel's right to exist.<sup>333</sup> Although just the beginning, Findley found himself drowning in Middle East politics and becoming more sympathetic to the Palestinian cause. As a marked man by AIPAC he nevertheless won the 1980 election. However,

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<sup>330</sup> Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>331</sup> Ibid.

<sup>332</sup> Ibid.

the following election would prove disastrous since the 1981 electoral reform eliminated a strong supporting district that had helped Findley win the previous election, in spite of AIPAC's efforts.<sup>334</sup> The headlines in the election preceding 1980 read "Israel's supporters again are pouring money into an emotional drive to unseat Paul Findley"<sup>335</sup> In fact, Findley lost and AIPAC was quoted as having brought in 150 students from the University to pound the pavements and knock on doors.<sup>336</sup> In addition, it was later estimated that \$685,000 of the \$750,000 raised by his opponent came from Jews.<sup>337</sup> AIPAC made a very strong statement with its actions in the Findley election upset, and more over, wanted to send a very clear message to others elected representatives.

In essence, AIPAC has convinced Congress and the Senate that it represents practically all Jews who vote.<sup>338</sup> With the pressure tactics and actions taken by AIPAC made public to Congressmen, this renders AIPAC as the only Jewish constituency real to Congressmen is the one that AIPAC and other spokesmen for the Jewish establishment tell them about.<sup>339</sup> For obvious reasons, members of Congress and the Senate feel pressures and perhaps even obligated to vote, speak or act in favour of U.S. policy towards Israel.

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<sup>333</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>335</sup> Ibid.

<sup>336</sup> Ibid.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>338</sup> Ibid.

<sup>339</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYTICAL COMPARISON OF THE SEVEN DETERMINANTS BY PRESIDENCY

The purpose of this chapter is to review the previous chapters analytically to develop comparisons and contrasts of the presidencies since 1948. Since the seven determinants used in the model assisted in understanding the development of American foreign policy towards Israel under each president, they shall remain the focal point in this analysis. Consistencies and the developments of similar patterns between presidents will be noted and discussed as will the differences. Although the list of determinants remained unchanged, each president and his administration was affected differently with each having a unique approach to foreign policy and Israel. This chapter will proceed with an analysis under the heading of each determinant.

### *(1) The Beliefs, Attitude and Personality of the President*

The role of the president is important with respect to the foreign policy decision making process, this role is as great as the president chooses to make it. In the United States, the shape of foreign policy can be changed by the personality and nature of a particular president. When and if he does choose to be part of it, his beliefs, attitudes and personality define his role. Since the personality of each president is unique, each president has a different yet personal style of dealing with foreign policy issues. Harry Truman preferred to hold the upper hand in foreign

policy. State Department's advice was not weighed heavily by the President who hoped to gain an advantage over the Soviets by recognising a Jewish state first. State Department had a perspective of a different scenario which had the Arab states drawn into the Soviet camp upon U.S. recognition of a Jewish state. At that time, the question for consideration was which of the two was more important to the U.S. national interest. The President alone decided, against the will of his Secretary of State and the State Department, that a Jewish state outweighed the importance of the Arab states.

Unlike Truman, Jimmy Carter relied on a team-like approach while reserving final decisions for himself, allowing him the latitude for varied views yet making him the key player. What was important to Carter was that the Kissinger approach to implementing foreign policy decisions on his own was not practised in his administration. With this in mind, Carter put together an organisational scheme for Presidential decisions having his top advisors act in a team spirit, yet reserving final decisions for himself, keeping foreign policy under his control.

Dwight Eisenhower lacked confidence in foreign policy decisions by virtue of his lack of experience in foreign policy. Eisenhower had strategically chosen Dulles as his Secretary of State because of his solid background in foreign affairs. With the

exception of the Suez crisis, Dulles had control of U.S. foreign policy on behalf of the President.

While Eisenhower had mandated control to his Secretary of State, Richard Nixon, strong in character, was overshadowed by the personality of his secretary of state. One of the reasons that Nixon was easily overshadowed by Kissinger was due in large part to Nixon's domestic problems in the Watergate scandal. Kissinger was named Secretary of State in Nixon's second mandate, during the time that Watergate had erupted. Domestic problems took an emotional toll on Nixon which at times left Kissinger to run the show, such as during the DefCon III alert, when top advisors deemed the President too distraught to participate in the decision making process which Kissinger eventually resolved. Nixon openly admitted that he felt no obligation to the American Jewish constituency which meant that decisions towards Israel should have been rendered with much more impartiality than they actually were. Kissinger had often led the President to believe that should events in the Middle East unfold the wrong way they might lead to a superpower confrontation, making Presidential backing for Israel more likely.

The attitudes and beliefs a president brings with him to the White House are important, particularly with regards to U.S. foreign policy and Israel. A president may choose to alter the course of foreign policy administered towards a particular

country like Israel, because of his attitude or beliefs. More than any other president this certainly was the case for Jimmy Carter who held a fundamental religious attachment to Israel. At first, this religious attachment was grounds enough to support Israel but as he gained experience in Middle East politics, he began to take a different approach in foreign policy towards the Middle East by speaking up on occasions on Palestinian rights. His new found experience on Middle East politics encompassed far more than his initial religious attachment to the holy land. Carter began searching for long-term solutions for peace and hoped that this would be achieved through the negotiations at Camp David.

According to Truman, his attitude and belief towards Israel came in the aftermath of WWII, with the persecution and suffering of the Jews in Europe. The question of Palestine was clear to Truman, who relied on the Balfour declaration for background guidance on what was promised to the Jews by the British. This belief assisted Truman in the formulation of his foreign policy on Palestine which led to the recognition of the state of Israel. On the other hand, President Eisenhower did not bring with him to the White House any fundamental attachment to Israel. Eisenhower had little knowledge on the Middle East from an academic perspective, nor from an emotional standing, which is why he chose to rely on the expertise of others. This lack of attachment was clear in his policies executed towards Israel, which were said to have been cool. The most obvious example of Eisenhower's

“cool” policies towards Israel was during the Suez crisis where he took a tough stand against Israel, in which he led all foreign policy decision due to Secretary of State Dulles’ illness. Eisenhower’s indifference towards Israel allowed him to view the Middle East from a wider perspective, reprimanding either the Arab states or Israel when necessary.

Like Eisenhower, Richard Nixon brought with him to the White House no personal sentiments or attachment to the state of Israel. Although this detachment was not reflected in his administration’s policies, it was seen mostly in his comments. During Nixon’s first Presidential campaign, American Jews chose to back his opponent, which left Nixon quite bitter yet relieved of the fact that he had no obligations to the American Jewish constituency since he had won the election without their vote. Nixon considered this a victory and often boasted that the Jewish lobby had no effect on him, yet he was criticised as an anti-Semite because of such comments.

Ronald Reagan’s attitude and beliefs surrounding Israel were a combination of strategy and morality. His theory on strategy falls under the determinant of the international strategic environment. However on the question of morality, Reagan like Truman, felt some moral obligation to the Jews in Israel because of the past experience they had suffered. As President, Reagan was able to make the issue of

morality towards all Jews and Israel the burden of the United States. To Reagan, avoiding a second Holocaust meant keeping the state of Israel militarily strong and financially sound and close to the United States.

Each president with his own personality, attitudes and beliefs brought different views on Israel to the White House. Some similarities in view stem from a moral perspective in recognition of past Jewish experience and the Holocaust. A combination of each president's personality, attitudes and beliefs help explain the president's policies towards Israel.

## *(2) The Beliefs, Attitudes and Personality of the Secretary of State*

A secretary of state also plays an important role in foreign policy decision making. The extent of his role is defined by the president who may either choose to rely on this person's expertise and knowledge or not take his advice into consideration at all. If the secretary of state plays a role larger than that of the president, it is due to specific reasons which were discussed under the previous heading. If this is the case, certain factors such as the beliefs, attitudes and personality of the secretary of state must be carefully analysed. Should the secretary of state play a lesser role, he may still be able to influence the president into taking a

different course of action, which may also be as a result of the specified factors, namely, beliefs, attitudes and personality.

The Secretary of State with a personality unlike any other was Henry Kissinger. Kissinger's personality exuded confidence and strength, so much so that it outweighed the confidence of Presidents Nixon and Ford. This confidence was in large part due to his credibility in foreign affairs and his academic and personal knowledge on the Middle East. This strength of character also factored in when Kissinger occupied the position of National Security Advisor while William Rogers was Secretary of State. Rogers' personality could not overcome Kissinger's, which subsequently gave Rogers a back bench in foreign policy matters in which Kissinger was involved. When Kissinger became Secretary of State, his strength of character, not to mention expertise, assisted him in his foreign policy decisions which Nixon had virtually surrendered to him.

On the opposite side of the spectrum, George Marshall's personality was not strong enough to supersede that of President Truman, making his advice and expertise futile. Truman made decisions without the advice and subsequently without informing his secretary of state, particularly on the decision to recognise Israel. Although Marshall had difficulty dealing with the President's actions from a personal point of view, he accepted the decision was a Presidential one.

Dean Rusk's silent personality gave him a "more behind the scenes role", leaving President Kennedy front and centre where foreign policy was concerned. Reluctant to take the lead or render important decisions, Rusk believed that foreign policy decisions hold international significance, and hence should be at the hands of the president and not the secretary of state. Rusk preferred to follow the President's lead and remained silent on any difference of policy opinion.

The attitudes and beliefs that each secretary of state brings to the White House are as important as the beliefs and attitudes of the president, particularly if the secretary of state takes a leading role in foreign policy decision making. With regards to Israel, certain secretaries of states may have exercised foreign policy with a bias towards Israel vis-à-vis their personal sentiment. Despite Kissinger's personal background, Israel obviously meant more to Kissinger than it ever would to Nixon, who openly stated his disassociation with the Jewish community. Kissinger's obligation to Israel was based on his own history as a Jew and the struggle that the Jews had historically endured, and now again with the possible threat that Israel's Arab neighbours posed. This was the state of mind that Kissinger brought with him to the White House as National Security advisor and later as Secretary of State. With the approval of Richard Nixon, Henry Kissinger Israel orchestrated the transfer of a sums of money as well as military supplies both during and following the 1973 war.

George Shultz's affinity with Israel went beyond any strategic definition. He believed that the U.S. had a moral obligation which bound the policies of these two countries together. He went even further than that by implementing a White House strategy which publicly demonstrated a political alliance even if there was some conflict behind the scenes. This was particularly true when George Shultz, on behalf of the U.S. government accepted responsibility for Israel's role in the Sabra and Shatilla Massacres. A secretary of state may be as important as a president in the foreign policy process since his personality and what he believes may play a significant role in foreign policy decisions.

### *(3) The Relations Between the President and the Secretary of State*

The relationship between the secretary of state and president is an important determinant as far as foreign policy is concerned. A good and balanced administration will have a solid working relationship between the president and his secretary of state, otherwise, one of the two will take the lead in foreign policy decisions. Such was the case with Harry Truman and George Marshall, whose relationship was a reflection in their approach to foreign policy. Truman and Secretary of State Marshall had opposing views and solutions on the question of Palestine. Although Marshall and Truman recognised that a solution to the growing

problem in Palestine was necessary, their solutions differed in content. Where Marshall preferred a trusteeship plan, Truman favoured partition. Truman took matters and decisions into his own hands by recognising the newly independent state of Israel, a decision Marshall was not aware of until it had been formally announced.

Contrary to this relationship was the one between President Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles. Dulles possessed the expertise that Eisenhower lacked and the President was comfortable with this arrangement since it allowed him to focus on areas that he was stronger in. Eisenhower, without hesitation, passed on foreign policy initiatives to his Secretary of State, who in turn implemented policies the President was satisfied with. This relationship was complimentary to their balanced approach to foreign affairs.

The relationship between John Kennedy and Dean Rusk was very formal, Rusk preferred to be kept at arms length with the President. This disturbed Kennedy who preferred a more assertive Secretary of State willing to take the lead on occasion, which was certainly not the case. For Kennedy, this meant that he was left alone in taking the leadership in foreign policy. In large part, this was due to the fact that Rusk felt uncomfortable with Kennedy given his background. Rusk's attitude and dealing with the President changed when Lyndon Johnson assumed the presidency.

Contrary to his relationship with Kennedy, Rusk had a more informal relationship with Johnson which enabled Rusk to perform his duties as far as foreign policy was concerned with more assertiveness. In fact, Johnson came to rely on his expertise and made the state department the focal point for foreign policy issues while he focused on domestic matters.

Unlike Johnson, Richard Nixon took a more active role in foreign policy matters but as he became embroiled in domestic events such as the Vietnam war, he left strategy for the Middle East in the hands of his Secretary of State, William Rogers. Unfortunately for Rogers, Nixon had an enormous distrust of the State Department and while Kissinger served as National Security Advisor, Nixon became more dependent on his advice rather than the advice of his Secretary of State. To some degree this distrust with Rogers and faith in Kissinger's expertise proved favourable for Kissinger when he later on became Secretary of State. Had Nixon not developed a previous relationship with Kissinger, and come into contact with his expertise on foreign policy, he may not have willingly entrusted Kissinger with the power to make foreign policy decisions, particularly in the Middle East since it had the potential to involve the Soviets. Nixon's relationship with Kissinger was based more on professionalism than anything, and in this regard Nixon trusted Kissinger. This may have also contributed to the fact that Nixon rarely overruled his Secretary of State on foreign policy matters. Later during Nixon's second mandate, when the

Watergate scandal erupted, Nixon played even less of a role in foreign policy decisions, making Kissinger the key player.

*(4) The Role of the American Jewish Community &*

*(5) The Role of Other Domestic Groups and Pressures in American Politics*

In this section of the analysis, the discussion of determinants number 4 and 5 can go together since the effects the two on an administration are similar, and presidents often refer to the two interchangeably. The American Jewish community plays a significant role as far as votes and public opinion are concerned, and the pro-Israel lobby serves as the voice for American Jews. The importance of American Jewish representation in voting behaviour has been discussed in the previous chapter, as was the significance of public opinion. With this definition in mind, some presidents have been more sensitive towards the American Jewish vote whereas for others this factor was not considered during the presidential elections.

Presidents Eisenhower and Nixon, both Republicans, were less concerned with the Jewish vote and pro-Israel pressure groups than Truman, Johnson and Carter, all Democrats. Traditionally and historically, American Jews have supported Democratic candidates. Eisenhower and Nixon both openly rejected any obligations to the American Jewish constituency because American Jews had overwhelmingly voted in favour of their opponents. In essence this freed them from any pro-Israel

lobbying pressures, and allowed them to practice policies that were not always favourable towards Israel. This was more the case with Eisenhower than with Nixon who had Kissinger to bolster relations with Israel. During the Suez crisis, it was Eisenhower who made the foreign policy initiatives. Even with a presidential election underway, Eisenhower took a strong stand against Israel's actions because he did not anticipate American Jews to vote in his favour since they did not during the previous election. Nixon was very open about the fact that he had won the presidential election without the support of American Jews, although it would be difficult to determine whether or not he would have taken a hard stand against Israel since Kissinger made certain that U.S. relations with Israel remained strong.

Democrats have been more susceptible to pro-Israel pressures because of the large base of support that the American Jewish voter supplies. This was certainly the case for Harry Truman who was very conscious of the American Jewish voter during the 1948 election and was subject to extreme Zionist pressures to recognise the state of Israel. Truman had two choices: follow State Department's advise on not alienating the Arabs, or pursue his own foreign policy plan on the Middle East. In a measure to appease the American Jewish voter during the presidential election campaign Truman pledged that his government would recognise of the state of Israel. Truman did go on to win the election and the support of the American Jewish vote.

President Johnson rationalised his approach towards Middle Eastern politics by linking domestic politics to foreign policy. Johnson was careful not to alienate the American Jewish community and to avoid pressures originating from the pro-Israel lobby, this meant keeping solid relations with Israel. The Johnson administration pledged U.S. foreign policy in favour of Israel. He became the first U.S. president to supply Israel with large quantities of highly sophisticated offensive weapons after France withdrew its support, condemnation for initiating the 1967 war.

Jimmy Carter entered the White House with the support of the American Jewish community, in large part due to his personal and religious attachment to Israel. As Carter gained experience in foreign affairs and knowledge on the Palestinian experience, he began to view the situation from a human rights perspective favouring the Palestinians. Carter's convictions and the election of Prime Minister Begin weakened his position with the American Jewish community and as a result had to deal with an enormous amount of pressure from the pro-Israel lobby. Begin antagonised Carter knowing full well that he could always count on the support of American Jews and the tactics of the pro-Israel lobby to counter policies unfavourable to Israel. Tensions between the American Jewish community and the Carter administration escalated to the point that administration tiptoed through foreign policy initiatives towards Israel in hopes of avoiding a show down with an election campaign around the corner. Unfortunately for Carter, by that point there

had been irreversible damage by the pro-Israeli lobby's efforts to discredit his reputation causing him to lose a large proportion of the Jewish vote. Under these circumstances, American Jews broke from tradition and establish themselves as an important swing vote by siding with the Republican candidate.<sup>340</sup> During the 1980 presidential election one in three Jews backed Ronald Reagan (Republican) over Jimmy Carter (Democrat).<sup>341</sup>

Although traditionally, the Jewish voter is more supportive of Democratic candidates than Republican candidates, the 1980 election was a unique event. The American Jewish community felt alienated from the policies administered by the Carter administration and this created a great deal of tension between the Carter administration and American Jews. Reagan took the opportunity to exploit this tension during the 1980 election campaign. To his political advantage Reagan played favourably towards American Jews and the pro-Israel lobby. As a result, American Jews broke from tradition and largely supported the Republican candidate.

#### *(6) The Role of Congress Particularly in Regards to Foreign Aid*

As described in Chapter 4, Congress plays an important role in regards to foreign policy for a number of reasons. The most significant of these reasons is that Congress must authorise and appropriate all foreign aid. Congress also has the

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<sup>340</sup> Joel Kotkin "Questioning the Old Time Religion" The New Democrat (November, 1995).

ability to exert a tremendous amount of pressure on the president and the administration with regards to a policy they deem unfavourable. Therefore, for the president's purposes, it is preferable that he maintain a co-operative relationship with Congress in order to avoid a Congressional showdown on foreign aid appropriation and also to mitigate any potential political pressures.

Gerald Ford was no stranger to the political pressures that Congress could exert on a president. In response to his infamous "reassessment" policy towards Israel which would have suspended aid to Israel, friends of Israel and members of Congress became pressured by their Jewish constituencies and the pro-Israel lobby. Eventually, the pressuring paid off for those members of Congress and Ford's foreign policy plan did not go into effect. Interestingly, the pressure occurred with Henry Kissinger as Secretary of State who did nothing to oppose the plan. In fact, he had hoped that a little pressure would have the Israelis concede to a peace plan. While under Nixon, no such Congressional pressure was necessary since neither Nixon nor Kissinger imposed unfavourable policies on Israel that would provoke a reaction from Congress.

Ronald Reagan's pressure tactic experience with Congress came following the administration's decision to sell defensive weapons to Saudi Arabia. Pressure from both Congress and the lobby became so fiercely intense that Reagan had openly

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<sup>341</sup> Ibid.

complained at a press conference that it was not the business of other countries to make American foreign policy.<sup>342</sup> Although the House of Representatives voted against the sale, it was only after heavy pressure from Reagan himself on the Senate that the sale finally got through.<sup>343</sup>

#### *(7) The International Strategic Environment*

The international strategic environment, particularly during the cold war era, weighed more as a factor on certain administration's foreign policy towards Israel than on others. This environment is defined by U.S.-Soviet relations which varied from President to President. While some presidential eras coincided with a relatively peaceful time in Middle Eastern politics, others were drawn into instability as a result of the wars between the Arabs and the Israelis. The peaceful eras provided some stability to the U.S.-Soviet relationship, whereas instability in the Middle East brought on intensity and antagonism to the relationship. This stability or instability assisted the U.S. in defining foreign policy to Israel. When the situation intensified in the Middle East, U.S.-Soviet relations became tense, with each supporting their proper sphere of influence. Some administrations viewed U.S.-Soviet relations as a competitive showdown in the Middle East by way of the Arab-Israel conflict.

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<sup>342</sup> Donald Neff, Fallen Pillars, U.S. Policy Towards Palestine and Israel since 1945 (Washington D.C.: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1995), p. 180.

<sup>343</sup> Ibid.

Harry Truman disregarded any attempt by the State Department to show that the Middle East had any potential link to U.S.-Soviet relations. State Department's strategy included the fear that the Arab states would turn to the Soviets once the U.S. positioned themselves with Israel. This fear did inevitably create tension between the Americans and the Soviets vis-à-vis politics in the Middle East as some Arabs aligned themselves with the Soviets and the Israelis with the Americans. The 1967 war marked a turning point in U.S.-Israeli weapons relations. When France refused to re-supply Israel with weapons, Johnson assumed this role, following intense domestic pressure from the pro-Israel lobby. Strategically, Johnson had to fill the gap by supplying Israel with an advanced arsenal to counter the weapons being supplied to the Arabs by the Soviets. Johnson could not leave Israel without a major arms supplier and at the mercy of the Soviets

The cold war era was taken most seriously by the Nixon administration. Persuaded by Henry Kissinger, Nixon believed that at a given point a war would erupt in the Middle East dragging the Soviets and the Americans into direct confrontation. Even greater was the risk of a nuclear war between the two superpowers. Therefore, the Nixon administration believed it imperative to quell this potential threat of conflict. Doing so meant having to continuously flex American made arsenals in the faces of their adversaries, the Soviets. It was essential that Israel be kept militarily superior in order for the Soviets to comprehend that

Israel's strength was a true reflection of America's. This was the strategy behind Kissinger's thinking in assuring Israel's security in the Middle East. So long as this possible threat of U.S.-Soviet conflict prevailed, Kissinger was able to impose his policies towards Israel and keep Israel financially sound while supplied with top U.S. arsenals. This continued as the Ford administration took over, with the only difference in attitude that Ford believed a superpower conflict remained possible so long as a peace accord was not fixed. Therefore Ford and Kissinger undertook a lead role in setting a peace accord in the Middle East which Ford hoped would reduce the risks of confrontation.

The Carter administration's strategy between the Arabs and the Israelis evolved largely around peace, mainly because of Carter's own personal beliefs. However, Carter's advisors had a different view on peace in the Middle East. Secretary Vance was aware of the damage the '73 war and oil embargo had on the U.S. economy and believed that peace between the Arabs and the Israelis would avoid any future economic upsets. In essence, Vance integrated the domestic economy with U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.

Much like the Nixon administration, the Reagan administration became preoccupied with the U.S.-Soviet rivalry in the Middle East. Reagan specifically stressed that the balance of power in the Middle East remain unchanged, with Israel

in a superior position. To Reagan, Israel was a strategic asset in a part of the world that was of great importance to the U.S. national interest. With some Arab states on side with the Soviets, the U.S. could only turn to and trust Israel. Reagan believed that a strong Israel in the Middle East gave the U.S. an upper hand in the already tense U.S.- Soviet relationship.

## CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The question this thesis originally set out to respond to was "why do U.S. foreign policy makers make the choices they do towards Israel?". Responding to the question required an in depth analysis of the relationship between the U.S. and Israel since the creation of Israel in 1948.

The decision making institution in U.S. foreign policy includes the executive (the president, secretary of state, national security advisor) and Congress. This thesis followed Roger Hilsman's political process model based on the analysis of the executive, the legislature and the influences upon them. According to Hilsman, foreign affairs requires concrete decisions which can only be made by individuals, hence the political process conceptual model which assumes that the decision making process focuses on specific individuals. These people are governmental and non-governmental and pass through instruments such as the White House, Congress, State Department and lobby groups in order to have a voice in the decision making process. This degree of influence by each individual is measured by their role in the process, for example, the president yields more direct influence on decisions than Congress or the American Jewish voter. However, the application of the political process model in this paper does place importance on the influence of non-

government actors. Seven determinants were defined as causal factors which influence the decision making process within the executive branch. The determinants referred to in this thesis are as follows: (1) the beliefs, attitudes, and personality of the president, (2) the beliefs, attitude and personality of the secretary of state, (3) the relations between the president and the secretary of state, (4) the role of the American Jewish community, (5) the role of Congress particularly in regards to foreign aid, (6) the role of other domestic groups and pressures in American politics, (7) the international strategic environment, particularly during the cold war era. The effects of the seven determinants varied from each person within the executive and between administrations.

The focus in chapters two and three was on the president, his secretary of state and national security advisor. The starting point began in chapter two with President Truman and ended with President Johnson (1948-1968), since the Johnson era opened a new chapter in U.S.-Israeli relations. Chapter three continued with the same theme between 1969-1989, starting with the Nixon administration and concluding with the Reagan administration. Due to the lack of data available with recent administrations, the study of U.S. administrations ends with Ronald Reagan.

Essentially, what chapters two and three set out to do was provide an analysis of each president and his advisors closest to him, the secretary of state or national

security advisor, that affected the outcome of decisions in foreign policy. In order to do so, the selection of first hand information was crucial. For this reason, chapters two and three relied on the biographical and auto-biographical sources of the presidents, secretaries of state and national security advisors. The availability of these sources and information facilitated the analysis of the effects of the seven determinants on each individual. Following the study of each administration, a summary of which determinants favored most prominently was provided.

Chapter four specifically looked at three of the determinants, the role of Congress, the role of the American Jewish community and the role of other domestic groups and pressures in American politics. Although these three determinants were referred to in chapters two and three it was important to describe in more detail the process of how they can affect decisions in U.S. foreign policy to Israel. For example, the importance of the American Jewish vote, the pro-Israel lobby and financial contributions to political campaigns by political actions committees should not be considered lightly. Pressures by the American Jewish voter, the pro-Israel lobby and political actions committees can be exerted on the executive as well as members of Congress. For the purpose of this thesis, the relevance accorded to Congress remains in the fact that Congress has the power to approve loans and aid packages to foreign countries like Israel. Congress can not only fall subject to pressures, but can also

exert pressure on the executive in order to achieve a favourable outcome in foreign policy.

Chapter five provided a description and analysis of each of the seven determinants. This chapter went back to the Hilsman political process model by weighing and comparing the determinants to each administration. At this point similar patterns and differences that had developed were discussed as each determinant affected each president and his administration in a different way.

As this thesis has illustrated, foreign policy decisions made towards Israel have shown continuity in support for Israel. The original commitment to Israel conceived by President Truman was pursued by his predecessors, with the exceptions of Presidents Eisenhower and Carter who had attempted a more even-handed approach to foreign policy in the Middle East. The 1967 turn around in U.S. foreign policy strategy to Israel was crucial whereby the U.S. began implementing foreign policies more favourable to Israel by providing Israel with considerable amounts in U.S. funds and military support. This trend set by President Johnson was largely followed by subsequent administrations, building up an even stronger relationship and transfer of weapons and funds between the U.S. and Israel.

The U.S. commitment to Israel remains strong today. After having applied the political process model to this analysis, the conclusion derived is that current nature of this relationship is not likely to change with future administrations. There are no counter pressures in the political process model significant enough to alter the course of the relationship between the U.S. and Israel. The determinants indicate a pattern of consistencies that will continue with future administrations. For example, the beliefs, attitude and personality of the president or his secretary of state will always play a significant role in the formulation and outcome of decisions. In addition, the strength of the pressures and consequences exerted by the American Jewish community and the pro-Israel lobby on the executive and Congress are likely to remain. By the same token, there are no counter pressures offered by the Arab states nor the American Arab community effective enough to break this relationship. Both the American Jewish community and pro-Israel lobby are well organised and forceful enough to get their point across to those involved in the decision making process. As was described in chapter four, pressures by the pro-Israel lobby, votes, constituency pressures as well as campaign funding have made it very difficult to exercise any policies unfavourable to Israel. President Jimmy Carter is an example of a President who had resolved himself to approaching the Arab-Israeli situation from a moral perspective. As a result, the Carter administration was criticised by the American Jewish community, fell subject to pressures by the pro-Israel lobby, and was unable

to attain the funding he previously was accorded and lost the election to a Republican candidate supported by one out of three American Jews.

As this thesis has pointed out, the heart of the decision making process in U.S. foreign policy remains with the executive. The study concludes that with the exception of a few incidents, each president, secretary of state and national security advisor fell subject to the influence of the determinants which essentially contributed favourably to Israel. The determinants reinforce strong ties with Israel, since pressures and lobbying are exerted in the U.S. by its own citizens and the lobby group is made of Americans supportive of Israel. Therefore, the executive is fully accountable for the policies implemented. In order to further this study, the seven determinants used in this thesis can be applied to future administrations. The relationship between the U.S. and Israel continues to remain strong and steady. Having completed this study, any other course in this unique relationship would require changes within the decision making process in U.S. foreign policy and an alteration in the determinants that affect the outcomes of foreign policy decisions.

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