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J Street and U.S Decision Making.

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Table of Contents

Definitions	4
Introduction.....	6
Methodology	8
Chapter 1 Theory and Decision Making	
1.1 Theory.....	11
1.2 Decision Making in the two level game.....	16
1.3 Dominant Actors and Decision Making.....	20
Chapter 2 Triggers for Change	22
Chapter 3 Breath of fresh Air	
3.1 Reasons for the essay.....	29
3.2 Critics.....	31
3.3 Conclusions and Implications.....	34
Chapter 4 pro-Israel interest groups	
4.1 Lobbying in America.....	36
4.2 How pro-Israel lobby groups operate	
a. AIPAC.....	42
b. AJC.....	48
c. CUFI.....	50
Chapter 5 J Street	
5.1 a. J Street Composition.....	54
b. Pro- Israel.....	55
c. J Street Conference.....	58
d. J StreetPAC.....	60
e. Signatures to Capital Hill	61
5.2 a. J Street and the Obama Administration.....	63
b. Public Opinion Polls	66
c. J Street and Executive Branch	70
Conclusion.....	72
Appendixes.....	75
Works Cited.....	84

Definitions:

Lobbying	an attempt designed to affect what the government does ... [to] influence the public process over time. ¹
Interest Group	is used to describe a range of organization, outside of the formal institutions, that seek to influence decision making. ²
Israel Lobby	“the lobby is not a single, unified movement with a central leadership, however, and the individuals and groups that make up this broad coalition sometimes disagree on specific policy issues. Rather, the various parts of the lobby work to influence U.S policy in a variety of ways.” ³
Pro-Israel Lobby	works with both Democratic and Republican political leaders to enact public policy that strengthens the vital U.S- Israel relationship. ⁴
Anti-Semitism	is a certain perception of Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed toward. Jewish or non-Jewish individuals, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities. ⁵
Neo - Conservatives	that believes the national should freely use its immense power to change the world order in ways that reflect U. S economic and political principles. ⁶
Pluralist theory	democratic political thought which claims that diverse interest group who are vital to political outcomes and compete with one another for desired candidates. ⁷
Liberal Theory of I. R	the relationship of states to the domestic and transactional social context in which they are embedded-have a fundamental impact on state behavior in world politics” ⁸
Two level game International	“domestic groups pursue their interests by pressuring the government to of adopt favorable policies, and politicians seek power by constructing

¹ Nownes, Anthony. Total Lobbying. Cambridge University: The Dorsey Press, 2006; P. 5.

² Bache, Ian, and George, Stephen. Politics in the European Union. 2nd Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 334.

³ Mearsheimer John, and Stephen Walt. The Israel Lobby and U.S Foreign Policy .Toronto, Canada: Penguin Press. P. 112.

⁴ American Israel Public Committee Affairs. “ About US”. May 9, 2010.
< http://www.aipac.org/about_AIPAC/default.asp.>

⁵ European Forum on Anti-Semitism. “ Anti- Semitism”. May 9, 2010.< <http://www.european-forum-on-antisemitism.org/working-definition-of-antisemitism/english/>>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid. p. 409.

⁸ Moravcsik, Andrew. “Taking Preferences Seriously: A liberal Theory of International Politics”. International Organization. 51:4. (Autuum, 1997); p 513.

coalitions among these groups. At the international level, national governments seek to maximize their own ability to satisfy domestic pressures, while minimizing the adverse consequences of foreign developments”⁹

American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC)	a pro- Israel lobby that initiates public advocacy and research to their members to influence foreign policy.
J Street	is a registered lobbying organization, which uses advocacy, and education to achieve its goals on Capitol Hill and with the Executive Branch. ¹⁰
American Jewish Committee	an association of Jewish Americans organized to defend Jewish interests at home and abroad through public policy advocacy-using diplomacy, legislation and the courts. ¹¹
Christian United for Israel (CUFI)	to provide a national association through which every pro-Israel church, ministry or individual in America can speak and voice in support of Israel in matters related to the bible. ¹²
Influence	is the collectively induced modification of a conviction or expectation effected without recourse ¹³

⁹ Putnam, Robert. “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics.: The logic of Two –Level Games.” International Organization.42:3 (1988), p.427.

¹⁰ J Street. “About Us” May 10, 2010. < <http://www.jstreet.org/about/about-us>>

¹¹ American Jewish Congress. “About Us”. May 10, 2010.
<<http://www.ajcongress.org/site/PageServer?pagename=about>>

¹² Christians United for Israel. “About CUFI”. May 10, 2010.
<<http://www.cufi.org/site/PageServer?pagename=about>AboutCUFI>>

¹³ Lovaglia, M, Markovsky, B. Willer, D. “Power and Influence a Theoretical Bridge”. Social Forces.76: 2 Dec, (1997).pg 573

1. Introduction

“I am sorry gentlemen, but I have to answer to hundreds of thousands who are anxious for the success of Zionism. I do not have hundreds of thousands of Arabs among my constituents”¹⁴. President Truman’s statements in 1948 indicate several conclusions regarding decision making and foreign policy in the United States. First, President Truman’s action to support, and recognize the state of Israel was a combined effort by external actors and American Jewish citizens. This clearly exemplifies a liberal theory approach to the decision making in U.S foreign policy. Second, during this period, the Zionist/Jewish pressures were stronger than the Arab pressure to influence foreign policy. Although, this statement was made in 1948, these conclusions are vibrantly present in the decision making for U.S foreign policy.

Thereafter, the creation the State of Israel in 1948 the alliance between the American government, Jewish American population and the State of Israel grew into a relationship. Every relationship has its ups and downs, and this relationship is no exception. The American government has not always sided with the State of Israel, since Washington distanced themselves from Israel due to their relationship with Arab allies and American strategic interests, which were undoubtedly identified with Saudi Arabia and its oil reserves, their relationship with NATO allies and Arab alliances¹⁵. The relationship is based on several factors, one being geopolitical, the American interest of oil reserves in region and American foreign policy for most of the 20th century revolved around geopolitics. Moreover, the 1973 Yom Kipper war; strengthen the relationship to now include a military and economic partnership when the United States took over the arms trade to Israel from France, when French President Charles de Gaulle severed ties in early 1967 while dealing with Algeria.¹⁶ The relationship grew even stronger since the start of the 1973 war; the United States

¹⁴ Rabie, Mohamad. The Politics of Foreign Aid: U.S Foreign Assistance and Aid to Israel. New York: Praeger Publishers. (1988) p. 54.

¹⁵ Lewis, Samuel. “The United States and Israel: Evolution of an Unwritten Alliance”. Middle East Journal,53:3, (1999), p.366.

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 366.

would be the sole provider for Israel's weapons. Israel would become one of the largest reciprocates of U.S foreign Aid for U.S weapons, and intelligence, all for Israel's security and longevity. However, the 1900's saw many domestic changes that affected the transatlantic relationship; the creation of a powerful monitor group American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), electoral campaign laws and regulations.

The U.S-Israeli relationship is currently being examined in great lengths by academics and media outlets. Each president had a different strategy and tactic towards the Israeli-Palestinian issue that helped shape the administrations distinctive pro-Israel position. This is an on going process depending on the president's foreign affairs experience. However, each president's political rhetoric has been verbatim from prior administrations. In an every changing world where adaptability and flexibly are necessitates to sustain any organization. The American government in this regard has taken a timid route when it comes to dealing with Jewish or pro-Israel interest groups. The American foreign policy for many years has been on the same route, which is the ability to pressure Palestinians Authorities, use influence and allies pressure Palestinians Authority. However, the administration becomes very timid to pressure on the Israel government or Israeli policies. It has now come to the attention of many people that any change in the Middle East region will need; help from the international community, The United States as one of the key players the peace process, and support from the pro-Israel community to allow the American government to execute the proper funds to initiate any change.

Several domestic changes occurred by the end of the Bush Administration's tenure. First, was the infamous essay by John Mearsheimer and Stephan Walt, who contributed to re- defining anti-Semitism in America? Second, was the creation of a new moderate pro-Israel lobby group, with a distinct political action committee endorsing candidates who support a two-state solution? The primary focus of this thesis will be to observe J Street's progress in its two year conception and examine the question: How far can one say J Street has a voice on U.S policy making? I

intend to examine the pro-Israel position in by several pro-Israel interest groups and within the current administration. My aim is to analyze the major pro-Israel players who influence decision making in U.S foreign policy. More importantly, this thesis will answer a major secondary question; is J Street a pro- Israel lobby group. I plan to analyze the question through a theoretical and empirical lens. The theoretical analysis will discuss the regulation of interest groups, how interest groups participate and their strategies towards Congress and the President? The empirical lens will look at J Street's the accomplishments in the two years and their strategy towards the Obama Administration. The Obama Administration has stood faithfully to Israel and has vowed to continue promoting peace and security for the region. However, by late 2009 political statements by President Obama and Secretary of state Hillary Clinton, shows signs of change and an opportunity for J Street to strengthen their voice.

There has been many disgruntles and debates around the pro-Israel lobby and the direction the U.S foreign policy has taken in the Bush Administration and now the Obama Administration. Who is steering the Foreign Policy direction can easily be a paper of its own. It is hard to exactly pin point whether it is Congress or the President. I intend to show how each lobby group has different tactics for lobbying the legislative and executive branch. Throughout the following chapters, these questions will lead one to analyze how far can on say J Street has a voice on U.S policy making?

Methodology:

In chapter one, I will discuss the liberal theory in international relations. The main principles of this theory help describe the role interest groups exert on decision makers for U.S foreign policy. Interest groups and their participation in decision making derive from the U.S federalist papers by advocates Alexander Hamilton and James Madison, and I will discuss their major principles. In section two, I intend to examine the two level of analysis through the 111th Congress and the 18th Knesset. In

the last section, I will go through the dominant actors who have an impact on the U.S-Israel legislative process.

The second chapter I will look deeper into the Bush Administration which will be the starting time frame of my thesis. It was apparent that the relationship between AIPAC, the Bush Administration and the Likud party in Israel was very strong. What created this very strong bond? I would suggest the neo-conservative structure in the party system and their influence in the Bush administration were catalysts for this strong bond and catalysts for change. I will discuss the American and global resentment to the former administrations decision making process that lead to criticisms and debates about the former American foreign policy.

In the third chapter I will discuss Mearsheimer and Walt's essay in 2006. The chapter will briefly explain the reasons for the essay and book, their main arguments and criticisms. The main emphasis will be on their conclusions and the implications of the two academics writing this book.

In the fourth chapter, I intend to go through the evolution of U.S lobbying and it's implication on interest groups today. The major regulation of 1974 and the bipartisan act of 2002 of spending limits contribute to the evolution of interest groups through electoral campaigning. A major case Buckley vs. Valeo (1976) upheld spending limits and clarified the relationship between freedom of speech and money contributions during electoral time. There are many interest groups however, in the second section of this chapter I will only focus on three: American Israel Public Action Committee (AIPAC); Christians United for Israel (CUFI); and American Jewish Committee (AJC). I chose these groups because of their membership diversity, their specific tactics and how they promote Israeli interests to the legislative and the executive branches.

The fifth chapter will be devoted to J Street analyzes their pro-Israel position. Are they too left for Israel and American- Jews? The interest groups major critics have been Harvard Professor Alan Dershowitz and Israeli Ambassador to the U.S Michael

Oren. Whose acceptance do they need to be labeled as a pro-Israel group? I intend to examine the organization's strength by analyzing their conference, attendees at the conference, media coverage, their funding capabilities and lastly, signature campaigns to Capitol Hill to influence the Obama Administration. J Street PAC was created to strictly endorse candidates. Have they been successful in endorsing J Street's interests?

The second section will assess the Obama Administration's rhetoric that distinctively corresponds to J Street policies. Republicans and AIPAC members have questioned Obama's loyalty towards Israel and the U.S- Israel relationship. At this time, I will be using public opinion polls taken by J Street, AJC and Gallup to assess the American opinion on the Obama Administration directed towards his foreign affairs performance. I will have to admit; all three polls are not asking the same question but are in the vicinity assessing the public's opinions on how the Obama Administration is handling foreign affairs. My original plan was not to use J Street's poll, but the differences between all three polls show there is little variation to imply any subjective argument.

J Street's voice to the decision makers is different than other pro- Israel lobby groups, and has an opportunity to lobby the executive branch to initiate foreign policy change. The strategies and goals exerted by AIPAC and J Street are completely different. Therefore, J Street is not a rival group to AIPAC. Their top priority is a two-state solution, which is the fundamental security for Israel and their aim is pressure the President to commit and actively engage into the two-state solution.

Chapter one: Theory and Decision Making on Foreign Policy Issues:

1.1 Theory:

To completely comprehend the role of interest groups in the American political system one would have to divulge into political liberalism. The beginnings of liberal thought derive from John Locke and Thomas Hobbes. Both diverge into different categories, Hobbes a commitment to a ruler and Locke the beginnings of the constitutional tradition.¹⁷ The evolution of the concept liberalism started off by challenging the church creating the public and private spheres independent of church coercion. Later on, the concept meant individuals should be free to pursue their own preferences. Locke and Hobbes both agreed that individuals possess natural rights, meaning that people are free and equal, “derive it from its original, we must consider what estate all men are naturally in, and that is, a state of perfect freedom to order their actions, and dispose of their possessions and persons as they think fit, within the bounds of the law of nature, without asking leave or depending upon the will of any other man”¹⁸. To help individuals develop these natural rights, it is imperative they surrender to a sovereign leader. This was the social contract, by which people would give up some of their rights to the sovereign. The two theorists differ since according to Locke, political activity is an instrument, and the creation of this political arena is not solely rested on the sovereign leader. Locke created the seed for the division of powers and the rights of the individuals succeeded by Montesquieu. The answer to Locke and Montesquieu’s critic of the sovereign came from society. The society by general will creates the legislative branch and, “this legislative is not only the supreme power of the commonwealth, but sacred and unalterable in the hands where the community have once placed it.”¹⁹ The idea was to impose restrictions on government powers therefore, protecting individual’s interests from tyranny. Therefore, the people choose their government to provide them the forum and arena

¹⁷ Held, David. Models of Democracy, 3rd Edition, London: Polity Press; (2006), p. 57.

¹⁸ Locke, J. “Two Treatises on Government (1680-1690)” Book II Chapter II: Section 4, The Laws of Nature and Nature’s God. June 10, 2010. < <http://www.lonang.com/exlibris/locke/loc-202.htm>>

¹⁹ Ibid, S. 134.

for them to pursue these interests; however, to prevent tyranny from the government divisions of powers were introduced. The American and French revolutions demonstrate a separation of two liberal systems with a diverse regards to the administration apparatus.

The American Revolution in 1776 came out of economic liberal freedom from the British Empire. At this time, the 13 colonies in America came together to fight for economic freedom. In comparison, in France where nobles were increasing taxes, the French citizens were pressuring the state for political equality. The major difference came from the will of citizens; French citizens were pressuring for state interference to impose equality the idea that the state was there to safeguard the liberties of the citizens.²⁰ In the American case, the people were demanding economic freedom and since they were inherently reluctant of state dominance they formed a constitution that would divide the powers for checks and balances. Locke believed that there should be divisions between the executive, which would be the monarch and the legislature, but that the executive could over rule a bad legislation and a judiciary as an arm of the executive. Montesquieu went on further to explain the role of a mixed regime, “the state must organize the representation of the interests of different powerful groups; that is to be a mixed regime balance the position of the monarch, the aristocracy and the people.”²¹ Montesquieu believed that people should be able to pursue their own interests. People do not have the similar interests but they should put the general interest of society above their own, which will strengthen their own pursuits, “the strength of individuals cannot be united without a conjunction of all their wills. The conjunction of those wills ...”Is what we call the civil state.”²² Therefore, from the writings of Locke and Montesquieu the government is formed of and by the people to ensure they have the arena to pursue their individual interests. The separation of powers will evidentially ensure checks and balances within the

²⁰ Held, p. 59.

²¹ Held, p. 76.

²² Montesquieu, C. “The Spirit of Laws.” Book I: Law in General. June 10, 2010.
<<http://www.constitution.org/cm/sol-02.htm>>

state. However, Montesquieu goes on further and looks at the interests of people, and assesses how to make these divisions work within the political system. The ideal of pluralism in American was created by the federalist papers about the United States Constitution.

The American Revolution manifested the political liberalism witnessed within the American Constitution. Alexander Hamilton, John Jay and James Madison Federalists papers after the Constitution was created looked at the theories of Locke and Montesquieu for the support of the American Constitution. Unlike Montesquieu, Madison was weary of pure democracies have always been unjust and unstable²³. Madison then saw that the main problem was containing factions, “by a faction, I understand a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or a minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community”²⁴. The best way to regulate this issue was that these interfering interests become involved in the necessary and ordinary operations of the government.²⁵ It was evitable that there would be a clash of interest since the states were not homogenous and, “As long as the reason of man continues fallible, and he is at liberty to exercise it, different opinions will be formed”²⁶. Madison saw that a heterogeneous nation may animosity towards each other, in particular private property. Therefore, the representatives will serve the interests of the majority constituents, “the regulation of these various and interfering interests forms the principal task of modern legislation, and involves the spirit of party and faction in the necessary and ordinary operations of the government”²⁷. Therefore, by promoting diversity and institutionalizing it through elections eliminate the accumulation of

²³ Held, p. 71.

²⁴ Madison, J. “Federalist Papers No.10.” The Same Subject Continued: The Union as a Safeguard against Domestic Faction and Insurrection: November 1787. June 9, 2010. <
http://thomas.loc.gov/home/histdox/fed_10.html>

²⁵ Held, P. 71.

²⁶ Madison, J. “Federalist Papers No.10.” The Same Subject Continued: The Union as a Safeguard against Domestic Faction and Insurrection: November 1787. June 9, 2010. <
http://thomas.loc.gov/home/histdox/fed_10.html>

²⁷ Ibid.

power by one group. Human beings have different interests and for the preservation of society, these interests should have an opportunity to be heard in elections, where fractions get an opportunity to be the majority.

Therefore, the federalist papers by Alexander, Jefferson and Madison stated the necessity of interest groups in society to have an equal opportunity to voice their interests to create stability and order within fractions. The application of Madison's factions by political pluralism and citizen participation is evident during electoral cycles, also views as pluralism, which means the existence of many things²⁸ and what we see as electoral competition today. The direct implication is that each interest group has an equal chance during election time to make their voice heard to their representatives. That the representatives are there as instruments, implementing the wishes of their fellow citizens. There is a possibility of a change of interests during election time, which would ultimately mean a change in direction by the administration government. Mr. Robert Dahl, Yale political science professor, discusses the relationship of power and groups, he concluded that, "although the politically privileged and economically powerful exerted greater power than ordinary citizen, no ruling or permanent elite was able to dominate the political process"²⁹. That is to say, the political process during elections can equally change the ideas and direction of public policies by the popular interest group at the time.

The role of foreign policy is entwined by both the President and Congress in the decision making process. The concept of pluralism in electoral cycles enables a new majority, whose interest and visions can direct public policies. The role of elections is a criterion for Democracy in America. As Robert Dahl notes, a democracy is a country where (1) a number of the citizens can vote, (2) a free and fair election challenged by two or more parties and (3) the executive branch held responsible to an elected legislature.³⁰ The process of elections has an effect on the

²⁸ Held, P. 82.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Onel, John and Russett, Bruce. Triangular Peace, democracy Interdependence and international organization. New York: W.W. Norton & Company; (2001) p.44.

actions of politicians, since they are held accountable to the people. Moreover, Kantian peace theory suggests that the role of elections creates a positive foreign policy he notes that, “leaders can anticipate that they will be held accountable for failed foreign policy adventures.”³¹ It is imperative that leaders strategize to assist and “satisfy a wide electorate, not just a small set of cronies or military officers.”³² Incumbent political candidates fear their constituents for they possess the will to re-elect them. The notion of electoral accountability intertwines the domestic and international levels, suggested by the Kantian peace theory. The main tenants of this theory is that by nature human

The main idea is that external affairs are shaped by the domestic arena. The idea of political liberalism in the international realm is an approach rather than a theory. Realist’s, Hans Morgenthau and Carr state that liberalism is not a theory of its own, since it takes the concern with human nature from Idealism and moralism³³. Andrew Moravcsik’s suggest, “Liberal theory is analytically prior to both realism and institutionalism because it defines the conditions under which their assumptions hold”³⁴. Moravcsik goes on to explain three main assumptions to Liberal theory. The first being that state actors are individuals and groups, “who are on average rational and risk adverse”³⁵. Politics is a bottom up approach and it’s the citizens who make up the government and its preferences. The important factor is that liberalists believe that there is not a homogenous interest of a nation, but those groups of interests exists. The second assumption is that the state represents some subset of the nation whose preferences match the administrations. Since there is no homogenous interest of a nation it is natural that, “every government represents some individuals and groups more full than others”³⁶. The Societal pressures directed to the administration create the shift in state preferences, since the concept implies the everyday bargaining

³¹ Ibid, p 55.

³² Ibid.

³³ Moravcsik. Andrew.” Taking Preferences Seriously; A Liberal Theory of International Politics.” International Organization. 51:4 (2003). P. 514.

³⁴ Moravcsik, p.516.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Moravcsik,p. 518.

processes that influence foreign policy³⁷. These pressures come from several groups, allowing the government to be swayed by such preferences to define what the government of the day's interests is. Consequently, the state's position on issues of security or external threats are not created or implemented top down but bottom up by certain individuals or groups who get their preferences heard by decision makers. The third and last assumption is the role the state plays in the international system. A nation's administrative apparatus does not execute their ideal policy, since states acknowledge the interdependence in the international system, "each state seeks to realize its distinctive preferences under varying constraints imposed by the preferences of other states"³⁸. Government officials are inextricably intertwined with the main domestic players within their countries, and the domestic players of other states. This is also known as the two level game analyses.

1.2 Decision Making and Foreign Policy:

The two level game analyses as Dr. Robert Putnam suggests is the continuing bargaining process between government officials and their major domestic players. Policy outcomes are a negotiating process that takes into account their legislative structure, and the major domestic players. The chief negotiator is a president, prime minister, or head of state. The chief negotiator bargains in two levels, the first level is with their constituents, anticipating what the legislative branch will negotiate with. The second level is in the international scene, where national governments advocate for their constituents policies. The chief negotiator knows that the final policy negotiated internationally will have to pass through two different legislative systems.

Dr. Robert Putnam assesses the bargaining power between chief negotiators by their legislative structure. The first important feature is that a larger win-set in level I, means a smaller bargaining power in Level II since, "[A] small domestic win-

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Moravcsik, p. 520.

set can be a bargaining advantage at home”³⁹. A chief negotiators bargaining power aboard decreases if he or she knows policies will pass smoothly through their legislation branch. Alternatively, chief negotiators bargaining power increases if the legislative process is very rigid or has many dominant veto players. I will exemplify the two-level game in retrospect to the American and Israeli legislation process to give a deeper look at their constraints. I intend to describe the legislative process in the United States through the 111th congress as well as the 18th to comprehend the large win-set the American President assumes over the Israeli Prime Minister.

American Legislative System: 111th Congress

The legislative branch is a bicameral system; the Senate and the House of Representatives. They are elected on different cycles, and they separate the powers of the executive branch – The President. The Senate is represented by two members from each state calculating a total of 100 seats serving a term of 6 years. The role of the Senate is to create debate and analyze important issues with the House before sending it to the executive. The Senate receives a bill by the House of Representatives; it then goes to an appropriate committee within the senate. At this time, the committee sets the rules, guidelines, restrictions on amendments for the debate. Any Senator can talk for as long as they desire, a strategy to bring a bill down. However, with 3/5th majority in the Senate (60 seats) a senator can be called to end a debate, all so known as, a filibuster. However, with a 2/3 majority in the Senate, these rules can be suspended.⁴⁰ After the committee has written the rules and guidelines, the bill is sent to the House, to be debated under the rules set forth by the Senate.

The House of Representatives is represented by 435 members directly elected every two years and is represented proportional to the population. The House,

³⁹ Putnam, Robert.” The Two- level Game analysis. International Organization. .42:3(Summer, 1988), p. 440.

⁴⁰ Project Vote Smart. May 13,2010. < http://www.votesmart.org/resource_govt101_02.php>. Legislative demographic data provided by Aristotle International, Inc.

initiates bills and has a limited duration for the debate of a bill. The speaker of the house and majority leader of the house to determine what is read and debated of a bill within the House. The current speaker of the house is Ms. Nancy Pelosi, a democrat and the house majority leader is Mr. Harry Ried, also democrat. The House is responsible for half of the debate of a bill and debates as whole. The House can amend a bill but can not pass the amendment. The debate within the House and the Senate could be on different bills, since it is in the Senate a bill gets flushed out by different amendments. Before a bill goes to the president, all the amendments must be agreed upon before its final debate. Therefore, depending on the majority party in the senate or congress, a bill will go through many changes and many debates on specific amendments before it is final. This also shows the constraints the president has, for a bill initiated by Congress and passed with the amendments by the senate can be against the desires of the president. The president has the power of a veto; it is unlikely that the president will have the desire to go against the legislative branch.

To further illustrate the relationship between the president and congress, in late December of 2009, congress overwhelming passed a bill involving sanctions on Iran in respect to American firms, “We strongly support your extension of the 1995 trade ban in March 2009, which prohibits American firms from investing in Iran. Some foreign firms have continued their investment in Iran, and as you know, the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (ISA) requires the President to sanction entities that invest more than \$20 million in Iran’s energy sector”⁴¹. The bill won by 412-12⁴². This particular bill was passed quite rapidly in Congress. Issues involving Iran, American interests in the Middle East and Israeli security enable Congress to act swiftly and bipartisan. In the political arena involving Iran, President Obama had wished for multilateralism tactics trying to delay Congresses unilateral and bipartisan approach to Iran. The President knew he had to act rapidly and forcefully to his allies for

⁴¹ Near East Report. “Lawmakers Urge Obama to Enforce Iran Sanctions”. November 12, 2009. <<http://www.aipac.org/NearEastReport/20091112/LawmakersUrgeObamaToEnforceIranSanctions.html>>

⁴² BBC. “U.S House passes Iran sanctions bill amid nuclear row”. December 16, 2009. <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8415368.stm>>

multilateralism because of the large win- set he faces at home. In this area, the large win- set the President endures is the success and legacy of the bipartisan strength towards Israel and dominant veto players such as AIPAC.

Israel political system: 18th Knesset

Israel is governed by a parliamentary system. The President is the head of state elected by a simple majority by the Knesset (Parliament). The presidential duties are most commonly symbolic. The Knesset is the legislative branch comprising of 120 seats. The 120 seats are directly elected by the people during general elections, held every four years. The Knesset is made up of a multi-party system, making a majority party win very rare. The Knesset works through committees, such as foreign affairs and defense, housing, and finance. All legislation is made by the Knesset. First, any member of the Knesset can initiate a bill. All bills must go through certain committees (e.g. Ministry of Justice for the legal aspects). It goes through the proper ministries for comments and reviews, and then the bill goes through a preliminary reading and three other readings, going back in forth from the appropriate committee. The Knesset as a whole agrees on the bill before government approval.⁴³

The government structure is the executive authority and the head of the current government is Prime Minister; Binyamin Netanyahu. The government's responsibilities include administering the domestic and external affairs of the country. In terms of forming a government, an individual Knesset member (the party leader with the most seats) has 28 days to form a coalition, this is an important part in Israeli politics and "all governments have been based on coalitions of several parties, since no party has received enough Knesset seats to be able to form a government by itself"⁴⁴.

⁴³ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "Elections in Israel: February 2009".
<http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/History/Modern+History/Historic+Events/Elections_in_Israel_February_2009.htm>

⁴⁴ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "Political Structure and Elections". May 15, 2010.
<http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFAArchive/2000_2009/2001/6/Political%20Structure%20and%20Elections>

Moreover, the multi-party system and government coalitions impact the bargaining process. The range of issues and ideologies make negotiations quite complex. There are 34 registered parties in the Knesset, but in the February 2009 elections, the Kadima party, a moderate branch of Likud, won the majority with 28 seats. Kadima's party leader Ms. Livni, was unable to form a coalition government (see appendix 1). The President, Shimon Peres asked the second largest party, Likud to form a coalition government and was successful with the help of the Labour party and "The far right Yisrael Beiteinu and ultra-Orthodox Jewish party Shas have already agreed to join the coalition"⁴⁵. The new coalition government is made up of conservatives and religious parties, who make negotiations on key issues such as settlements and borders very difficult and rigid, Mr. Netanyahu says, "he cannot meet these demands because his allies on the nationalist and religious end of his ruling coalition would rebel if he did"⁴⁶. Therefore, due to the intricate diverse parties within any coalition, Prime Minister Netanyahu's win-set is quite low.

1.3 Dominant Actors and Decision Making in Foreign Policy:

Dominant veto actors play a role in determining a chief negotiators win-set. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC)'s strength influences the decision making within U.S external relations. AIPAC has many strategies and they have been quite successful from their relationship with U.S and Israeli officials. AIPAC constantly exploits all their resources to maintain their dominant status, since the lobby organization actively researches, educates and works with individuals from the White House, Pentagon and State department- decision makers who affect Israel's democratic future⁴⁷. AIPAC provides information to citizens who use this information during election time. The relationship between American legislative

⁴⁵ BBC. "Labour Backs Netanyahu". (March 24, 2009).
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7960599.stm>.

⁴⁶ A Wall of Suspicion. *The Economist*. March 25, 2010. <http://www.economist.com/world/middle-east/displaystory.cfm?story_id=15770905>.

⁴⁷ American Israel Public Committee Affairs. "About us". May 15, 2010.
<http://www.aipac.org/about_AIPAC/Learn_About_AIPAC/26.asp>.

system, Israeli legislative system and AIPAC, make it very difficult for the President to exert any pressure onto Israel.

Therefore, according to liberal IR theory, the Obama Administration interests are those of the dominant actors. The major interest group at the time, determines what security is defined as, what pro-Israel is defined as. For AIPAC, foreign aid is their top priority which sustains Israel's security. As for the new lobby group J Street, the two- state solution is their number one priority, which sustains Israel's security. Both interest groups pressure the administrations security preferences to align with their policies. The Obama Administration's external relations top priority may be determined by any one or all of these pro- Israel lobby groups. Former CNN Middle East correspondent Christine Amanpour interviewed J Street's Executive Director Jeremy Ben- Ami and American Jewish Committee Director David Harris on the Pro Jewish Lobby in America. The main differences between the two interest groups are their belief on U.S involvement. Harris went on to say that, "Israel has the capacity within its border to ultimately determine its future"⁴⁸. This is the view from dominant pro-Israel groups AJC and AIPAC and it is exactly the preference and was pro- Israel position the Bush Administration took, and that is why there were 8 years of no active involvement in the region.

⁴⁸ Harris, David. CNN: Christian Amanpour Interview. "A New Jewish Lobby". November 24, 2009. <<http://jstreet.org/page/j-street-videos-8>. >

Chapter Two: Triggers for change

For most of the world, the problems in the Middle East region dating back to 2003 are the result of the Neo-Conservatives' (neo-cons) reign in the Bush Administration. However, despite the urge to dislike the Bush Administration, "the inauguration of a political regime in Washington that was sympathetic to their ideas and the paradoxical impact on the significantly reconfigured security and geopolitical environment"⁴⁹ explains that the neo-conservative ideology was embedded prior to the Bush Administration and particular individuals brought their ideas illuminated when they became part of the Bush Administration.

The neo-conservative ideology came from neo-liberal politics from the late 20th century and emerged as the background of the two main conservative rivals: libertarianism and traditionalism⁵⁰. The primary difference between neo conservatism and the other conservative branches is that neo conservatism crucial factor is politics: neo-conservatives, to paraphrase Tocqueville that we should intend at cultivating and directing democracy, rather than attempting to triumph over it.⁵¹ This realist thinking embedded in neo-conservatism found itself into the Bush administration from decades of pentagon experience. Beth Fischer reviews James Mann's book, *Rise of Vulcans: The History of Bush's war Cabinet*, and points out that those in the Bush Administration, such as Paul Wolfowitz, Condoleezza Rice, and Dick Cheney had foreign policy experience in the Pentagon. They had military experience, and common unity driven by their paths. The events unfolding within the Bush Administration may be caused by what Wolfson's claims that, the "Vulcan's[that] had developed a belief in the efficacy of American military power, a penchant for unilateralism and the belief that American democratic values are a force for good around the globe"⁵². Despite the abundance of sources claiming the neo-cons reign of

⁴⁹ Beeson, Mark. The Rise of the 'Neocons' and the Evolution of American Foreign Policy". Australia: University of Queensland (2004). P. 2

⁵⁰ Wolfson, Adam. "Conservatives and neoconservatives". Public Interest. 154: 3(Winter 2004). P 34.

⁵¹ Ibid, p.40.

⁵² Fischer, Beth. Review of James Mann : Rise of Vulcans: The History of Bush's War Cabinet. International Journal. 6: 3. (Summer 2005) p. 872.

terror throughout the Middle East, realists like Kristol and Kegan claim that those actions by the Bush Administration were anything but realist. Some argue that the Bush Administration's actions were not those of neo-cons since, "President Bush, who entered office as a realist vowing to put "interests" ahead of "values," became the chief exponent of a revived Wilsonianism. We support . . . democracy in the Middle East," he said, "because it is a founding principle, and because it is in our interest."⁵³ Therefore, the neo conservatives' idea of military power to sustain the political dominance of democracy that dominated the pentagon for decades did not necessarily make its way into the Bush Administration, as a hard line realist camp.

Nevertheless, there was unity of military power and unilateralism within the Bush Administration. This unity was assisted by the 2002 House of Representatives elections where the Republicans overwhelmingly won the majority of seats and won the control of Congress (see appendix 2). As I noted earlier, the legislative process in America is a bicameral system; which the Senate and the House of Representatives work together to create foreign and domestic policies. While it is true, that policies are created by the representatives, the methods and tactics can be different by political party insofar as foreign policy is "conditioned by domestic factors, such as the interest and values of the predominant party"⁵⁴. The Republicans had begun their majority win in Congress in the mid 1990's and since then saw a triumph of power in the 2000's, "with the presidential and congressional elections in November 2000, which saw the questionable victory of the Republican Candidate and confirmation of the Republican majority in the House (successes partially balanced by a slim one-seat majority in the Senate), U.S foreign policy was able to move progressively toward a unilateralist position"⁵⁵. The Republican dominance in Congress, as well as the events of September 11th in 2001 enabled the President and his administration to

⁵³ Traub, James. "'The right war?' and 'A matter of Principle':Everybody is a Realist now". New York Times. October 30, 2005. <

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/10/30/books/review/30traub.html?pagewanted=1&r=1>.>

⁵⁴ Fabbrini, Sergio and Sicurelli, Daneila. "The Domestic Conditions for a Paradigmatic change in U.S Foreign Policy". The International Spectator. 44: 1 (March 2009); P. 51.

⁵⁵ Ibid, p.55.

unilaterally exert global responsibility throughout the world and, “for the first time in U.S constitutional history, the power to declare war (not just the power to make war) was delegated to the executive branch, given that no specific ‘enemy’ is mentioned in either resolution and it is left up to the President to choose it”⁵⁶. The United States is definitely no stranger to unilateralism within the international scene, and Congress has been dominated by the Republicans before but for the first time, the President of the United States, “claimed the decision making independence from Congress”⁵⁷. It has been 7 years since the declaration to war on Iraq, and the world is blaming the United States for the civil conflicts among rival religious groups in the region. However, the international and domestic dominance did not only cause questions in Iraq and Afghanistan and also most importantly in Israel.

Additionally, the Republican advantage in Congress undoubtedly lent their hands and pockets to the dominate right wing Israel, Likud. That is not to say that Democrats do not assist Israel economically and politically, and militarily, however, the relationships among the Republicans, Likud and AIPAC are quoted to be another unilateralism pattern in U.S politics. The relationship Israel has with the United States is bipartisan; however, the Republican Party does have distinct features that entwine it with Likud. First the Republican Party and Likud are right wing leading parties with religious affiliations, in the United States, “ all the talk of the Christian right’s flagging influence, the current field of Republican front-runners for 2012 presidential race is composed entirely of social conservatives”⁵⁸. The Christian Evangelicals predominately vote conservative, and “most analysts believe that Christian activists have become increasingly involved in the Republican Party, where they are reminiscent of the Goldwater and Reagan insurgencies of the last two decades”⁵⁹. A case study was created by Green and Guth in 1988 analyzing Christian voters for the

⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 58.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Gilgoff, Dan. “2012 Republican Front-Runners All Christian Conservatives”. April 21, 2009. <<http://www.usnews.com/blogs/god-and-country/2009/04/21/2012-republican-front-runners-all-christian-conservatives.html>.>

⁵⁹ Green, J and Guth,J. “The Christian Right in the Republican Party: The Case of Pat Robertson’s supporters.” *The Journal of Politics*. 50:1. (Feb. 1988) P. 151.

Republican Party's presidential nominee, Marion Gordon 'Pat' Robertson. Green and Guth found that there was a new agenda among the Christian right since, "Social and foreign policy issues are seen as central to this agenda, contrasting sharply with the economic concerns of mainstream Republicans. Such differences in priorities are a prerequisite, and indeed the motivation, for pressure groups in party politics"⁶⁰. The GOP has seen resurgence on the traditional issues to which their constituents cling. Furthermore, there are numerous Christian right organizations devoted to pressuring Republicans and democrats on foreign policy issues that are "all on Christian fundamentalists -- who see maintaining Israel's occupation as paramount "⁶¹. The Christian fundamentalists are integral to the pro-Israel lobby, as evidenced by prominent Evangelical Pastor John Hagee travelling to Jerusalem promoting the peace and security of Israel with the support of thousands of American Evangelicals.

Further, these Evangelical organizations work with Republican candidates and are a part of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee. The committee works to advocate the state of Israel, and keeps citizens and political leaders up to date on the critical events and developments through publications such as the Near East Report and continually updated news and issues analysis⁶². AIPAC provides this information to citizen activists, who are Jewish or Christian. AIPAC also uses this information to provide support for Likud, since Netanyahu regularly warms up to right -wing republicans and the Israeli government calls upon Christian Zionist to intensify their efforts"⁶³.The tight knit relationship among the Christian fundamentals, the Republican Party and Likud were not always cozy, but more or less on the same page.

⁶⁰ Ibid. 153.

⁶¹ Rosenberg, J. "Playing the Jesus Card". *Foreign Policy*. July 24, 2009.
<http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/07/24/playing_the_jesus_card.>

⁶² AIPAC. "Learn about AIPAC".<
http://www.aipac.org/about_AIPAC/Learn_About_AIPAC/26.asp.>

⁶³ Rosenberg, J. "Playing the Jesus Card". *Foreign Policy*. July 24, 2009.
<http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/07/24/playing_the_jesus_card.>

Likud has a very close relationship with many neo-cons that work in think tanks through AIPAC and have been or are in Congress. Likud, whose political platform in 2009 included, the opposition to dismantling major settlements, continuance of economic reforms started by Netanyahu as Finance Minister and favors maintaining status quo in religious/state issues⁶⁴. The priority of security in such extreme instance suggested many neo-cons are liked by the Likud party. Benjamin ‘Bibi’ Netanyahu was successful in forming a coalition in 2009 requested by the President Shimon Peres after Majority winner Ms. Livni from the Kadima party failed to do so. Mr. Netanyahu was Prime Minister from 1996-1999, was the Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations from 1984-1988, foreign minister from 2002-2003 and Finance Minister from 2003-2005 and from February 2009 is the current Prime Minister. Mr. Netanyahu is no stranger to the United States, having been educated in Harvard and MIT. Throughout his political career he has made many friends in Washington, as Bob Dole stated, “I want to make [Netanyahu] an honorary member of our freshman class”⁶⁵. Currently, The Netanyahu government is a coalition of Shas, a religious conservative group and Yisrael Beiteinu, an economic Zionist group, all of which are against the construction of settlements (see appendix 2). This Likud coalition is said to be a right wing group filled with Pro-Israel extremists, who like many Christian right in the Republicans Party are vowing for an undivided Israel, (e.g. the organization Christian and Jews United for Israel, or CJUI). They are just one grass roots mobilization who are part of the Christian right, whose beliefs are aligned with those of Likud.

Indeed, there are many connections between parties and organizations that have academic and elite questioning their influence on the decision makers on the U.S foreign policy. The neo-cons that have dominated the Bush Administration, as earlier noted, have ties with the Christian fundamentalists who are one of the largest

⁶⁴ Israel Votes: Israel Democracy in Action.” Political Parties and Platforms for 2009.” <http://www.israelvotes.com/platforms.php>.

⁶⁵ Hadar, L. “The Friends of Bibi (FOB’s) vs. The New Middle East. *Journal of Palestine Studies*. 26:1. (1996); P. 96.

pro- Israel organizations, and are closely linked to Lukid. Since, 2003 many American's have blamed Former President Bush for the unilateral foreign policy, and others have blamed the neo-cons. Or was it the war in Iraq and citizens anger over the legitimacy of the war? Or was it multifaceted domestic interest in the Middle East and Israel Security that has people furious? If one were to look into American history, one would see many short lived interventionist wars for which Americans have, and which hasn't been the trigger for change. The trigger for change comes from the problem, the American people. The Americans are the ones, who have scrutinized the previous government, have slandered neo-cons in many think tanks, and Pro- Israel organizations. The Americans are doing the most American thing they know, Patriotism. Congressman Ron Paul of Texas in 2006 wrote a speech to House of Representatives on why Americans are so angry. Congressman Ron Paul goes on to say,

The obstacle to a rational foreign policy is to figure out what patriotism means. Today patriotism means blind support for the government and its policies. However, in earlier times patriotism meant having the willingness and courage to challenge government policies⁶⁶

Undoubtedly, if we look back at the Vietnam War, it was the American people who supported the war and it was the American people who demanded the withdrawal. What is more important than exporting democracy to other countries, is the legitimacy of their own democracy. Citizens can make their government accountable for its actions. They can mobilize in numbers to initiate change, through another election or by protest. Citizens can publically scrutinize their government and initiate debate. This is what Ron Paul was speaking of; this is the American *Patriotism* that triggered change. To recap, the President declared war when it was the responsibility of Congress, and it was the unity in Congress that allowed a simple majority allowing the President to decide, "Our refusal to declare war transferred

⁶⁶ Paul. Ron. "Why Are Americans so Angry?" Speech to House of Representatives June 29, 2006. <<http://www.house.gov/paul/congrec/congrec2006/cr062906.htm>.>

power to the president illegally, without a constitutional amendment”⁶⁷. Congressman Paul suggests that the President, Congress and American citizens are to blame for the Bush Administration Foreign policy decisions. What came out of the Bush Administration was a lack of Patriotism, a broke down of constitutional law and the questionable legitimacy of the United States Foreign Policy.⁶⁸ Therefore, the American people have initiated this change through electing President, for the simple reason they have the power to change the foreign policy direction.

⁶⁷ Ibid, p 8.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

Chapter Three: Breath of Fresh Air

3.1 Reasons for the essay:

The unprecedented historic change in the Middle East under the Bush Administration has caught the attention of citizens, and academia. Many are correct when they purpose that a different version of U.S Foreign Policy, especially in the Middle East is needed. Realistically, American interests will forever be the pivotal point in U.S Foreign Policy; however, currently the U.S is in the process of changing their methods and tactics in the region. Who will help create the face of this new Foreign Policy?

In March of 2006, The London Review of Books (over Atlantic monthly) published a notable essay regarding the controversial term of the Israel Lobby and U.S foreign Policy by two esteemed professors John Mearsheimer, political science professor at the University of Chicago and Stephan Walt, professor at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. The essay outlined what they believed to be the Israel lobby and the influence they exert on U.S foreign policy. During an interview with International News Net World Report, Stephan Walt was question on the reasons for writing such a controversial essay. His response was that we can't have an honest U.S Foreign Policy without an open debate on the forces that shape our conduct in the region and [what our] interests really are⁶⁹. The forces he is implying is that of the Israel Lobby, and to paraphrase Mearsheimer in the interview, to understand U.S foreign policy in the Middle East is to understand Israel, since Israel is at the heart of the region.⁷⁰ The two professors both argue that to achieve what is to be American interests in the Middle East; we must look into the relationship between the United States and Israel openly.

The essay's outline begins with a historical account of the military and economic alliance shared by the United States and Israel. It follows the diplomatic

⁶⁹ INNworld Report. Stephan Walt Interviewed by Allison Weir. September 13, 2006. Originallyaired on INN World Report. August, 31, 2006.< <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pIPv298fdRY>.>

⁷⁰ Ibid.

relationship regarding terrorism, rogue states and Israel's defiance of U.S requests. As the U.S-Israel relationship deepens, they bring up their main points early on which are, (1) that Israel has been the main beneficiary of U.S economics, military and diplomatic support to Israel for some 40 years; and (2) that Israel's success in this regard has to be accredited in large by the success of advocates inside the United States⁷¹. Their book a year later lengthens the argument that this relationship, not always synchronized, benefits Israel more so than the United States, since American interests are overshadowed by Israeli interests. What is extremely important to take away from the essay and later on the book, is the definition the two academics, profess to be the Israel Lobby. The essay clearly states the Israel Lobby to be, "the loose coalition of individuals and organizations who actively work to steer US foreign policy in a pro-Israel direction"⁷². The lobbies are those organizations; Jewish, Christian and Zionist that have pro-Israel policies. These organizations are not coordinating together, simply put, they are not working together to create a unipolar direction. They are independent organizations with diverse reasons for continued support Israel.

Indeed, Mearsheimer and Walt go further on and place certain organizations and individuals as inherently part of the Israel Lobby, "The signatories, many of whom had close ties to pro-Israel groups like JINSA or WINEP, and who included Elliot Abrams, John Bolton, Douglas Feith, William Kristol, Bernard Lewis, Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Perle and Paul Wolfowitz"⁷³. Those are just some of the dignitaries who contribute to the Israel Lobby, think tanks, research institutes, and the leading AIPAC are also included. In the essay, the professors claim that, AIPAC is in large part the core of the lobby's influence to Congress and the President⁷⁴. It is true; AIPAC has think tanks, researches, lobbyists and their hand to provide the necessary

⁷¹ Dunne, Michael. "US foreign and domestic politics since World War". International Affairs. 84:6. (2008); p. 1260.

⁷² Mearsheimer, John and Stephen, Walt. "The Israel Lobby and U.S Foreign Policy." The London Books of Review. 28:6 (2006).< <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v28/n06/john-mearsheimer/the-israel-lobby>.>

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 5.

information at the hands of every day citizens to promote the security of Israel. It is also correct, that the membership of AIPAC is 100,000 members strong and has an annual budget of \$47billion⁷⁵. New York Review of Books columnist Mr. Michael Massing criticizes the research content of the essay, mentioning the little effort the do by explaining what AIPAC is and how it operates. That is to say, AIPAC has a huge Pro-Israel and Jewish membership but that they have little power; real power is in the hands of few members.

3.2 Critics:

Critic, author and Harvard Professor of Law Alan Dershowitz, scrutinizes Mearsheimer and Walt who suggest that not all Jews are part of the lobby because the issue is not a prominent issue for them⁷⁶. Mr. Dershowitz says that “they [Mearsheimer and Walt] thus ignore those American Jews for whom Israel is important but do not agree with the aims of the lobby”⁷⁷. This is a flaw to their essay and book. The establishment of J Street proves Mr. Dershowitz point since the group was formed by Jewish Americans who believe Israel is important but do not agree with ideologies from AIPAC or AJC.

Furthermore, critics are not only right wing pro-Israel supporters; the essay also drew criticism from the left. Mr. Noam Chomsky, a professor of Linguistics at MIT stated that, “their thesis was not very convincing, for it ignored the influence of oil companies have had on U.S policy in the Persian Gulf, and it overlooked the extent to which the U.S Israeli Alliance performed a huge service for U.S Saudis Energy cooperation”⁷⁸. However, despite these critics both right and left, many have given credit to the notable professors for their courage to boldly break a taboo.

⁷⁵ Massing, Michael. “The Storm over the Israel Lobby”. The New York Review of Books. June 8, 2006. <<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2006/jun/08/the-storm-over-the-israel-lobby/>>

⁷⁶ Mearsheimer, John and Stephen, Walt. “The Israel Lobby and U.S Foreign Policy”. *The London Books of Review*.28:6 (2006); p.20. <<http://www.lrb.co.uk/v28/n06/john-mearsheimer/the-israel-lobby>>

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Massing, p. 5.

Subsequently, the two professors were then approached to write a book expanding the points of the essay. A major critic of the book is Abe Foxman, director of Anti-Defamation league, who wrote a rebuttal box, *The Deadliest lies*. Mr. Foxmans stated reason for writing this book was to combat racism and said that book, “raised alarm bells about the spread and impact of anti-Semitic conspiracy theories in America”⁷⁹. Nevertheless, the two professors got praise from some critics for writing such an admirable book while others branded it as a bunch of disjointed facts and conspiracy. The overall purpose of the essay and book was to provide people with information and finally create a space for an open debate about U.S- Israel alliance and direction in the Middle East. The points they raise about the Israel lobby silencing any opposition is exemplified with the publication of their beliefs. Prior to the publication of the book, anxiety loomed the air and the New York Times wrote an article on the two authors. Columnist Ms. Patricia Cohen mentioned that, “the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, a Jewish cultural center in Washington and three organizations in Chicago. They have all turned down or canceled events with the authors, mentioning unease with the controversy or the format”⁸⁰. Not surprising that academics and politicians feared the release of the novel, however, Mr. Dershowitz slammed the authors for claiming the Israel Lobby they formulate do not want an open debate for Israel. Mr. Cohen reviews several companies and institutions canceling speeches surrounding the novel, therefore, suggesting otherwise.

Looking back at the essay and book, many others and I would agree that they have proved their point. Mearshiemer and Walt repeatedly mention they are not discrediting the right of Israel to exist, or the right to military and economic aid, or the deep rooted U.S –Israel alliance. They are suggesting that some of U.S policies in the Middle East have benefited Israel and hindered their relationships with Arab allies, and that academics and elites have been indirectly silenced due to the high threshold of the Israel Lobby. The exceptional points are the repercussions and

⁷⁹ Foxman,A. “Why I wrote the deadliest Lies”. Anti- Defamation League. October 5th, 2007. <http://www.adl.org/ADL_Opinions/Anti_Semitism_Domestic/Jewish_Press_100207.htm>

⁸⁰ Cohen. P. “Backlash over the Book on Policy for Israel”. *The New York Times*. August 16, 2007. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/16/books/16book.html>>

conclusions of their book. Unbeknownst to many citizens, this novel was not the first of its kind, that is to say attempting to break the taboo of the Israel Lobby. Republican Paul Findley, a Congressman in 1982 wrote a book entitled, “*They Dare to Speak Out*” about Congress and the pro-Israel policies. The goal of his book was to redefine what it means to be Anti- Semitic and Findley suggests, “The lobby’s there most powerful instrument of intimidation is this reckless use of charge of anti-Semitism”⁸¹ . He claims that people who write in op-ed understand the perceived causality between being against Zionism and therefore, are anti-Semitic. His book exploits the role and resources AIPAC has at their disposal. I do not intend to go through the entirety of his book, but the mere fact that Findley, a prominent advocate of Palestinian rights and the P.L.O at the time, lost his seat after serving 11 terms in Congress strengthens his main preposition that the powerful forces through money and campaigning can silence opposition by such a power label-Anti-Semitic.

I would argue that there is a difference between Findley’s era and the present era by Mearsheimer and Walt. First, the damage caused by the Bush Administration foreign policy in the Middle East trigger the questioning of U.S interests in the region. Second, the reputation of professors Mearsheimer and Walt indefinitely assisted the success of their book. Even Mearsheimer and Walt’s critics were astonished and applauded their courage to break a taboo. The consequence of these distinguished professors was the success of creating the debate about U.S policies towards Israel and redefining the parameters of what it means to be pro-Israel.

The term Pro-Israel is very controversial. Whether Republican or Democratic, or Jewish or Christian, pro- Israel undoubtedly means believing in the existence of the state of Israel. Findley, Mearsheimer and Walt all question whether being Pro-Israel means overlooking any article, book, or policy that would raise doubt about the loyalty Americans have with Israel. Or does Pro-Israel following the right wing party lines of Lukid in Israel? History will have us believe that being Pro-Israel means not

⁸¹ Findley, Paul. “Paul Findley: Congress and the Pro- Israel Lobby”. Journal of Palestine Studies. 15:.1(Autumn, 1985); p. 106.

pursuing policies that go against the state of Israel or pressure the Israeli government towards peace. For example, The Bush Administration attempted to reduce anti-Americanism in the Middle East by becoming stern on Israel. He had an opportunity to reduce economic and diplomatic support for Israel; furthermore, the American people were willing to withhold aid if Israel resisted the U.S pressure to settle the conflict.⁸² This clearly begs the question, why didn't the Bush Administration pursue their interests. By not pressuring the Israeli government and withdrawing economic aid, which are obviously against Israel's wishes is the Bush Administration being Pro-Israel? Can we criticize American policies with Israel and still be partner with Israel? Each organization's actions and goals are said to be pro-Israel. In the following chapters, I look deeper into their version of Pro-Israel.

3.3 Conclusions and Implications:

Finally, my primary focus in this book is not the merits or arguments, but the important conclusions Mearshiemer and Walt profess at the end of the novel that will set the foundation for the rest of my argument. The distinguished professors, ended the novel with 4 major conclusions, (1) Weakening of the Lobby. Here Mearshiemer and Walt suggest the decreasing the ability to gain vast financial support through campaign contributions. Though not the first, Mearshiemer and Walt suggest a campaign finance reform, "public financing of all elections would seriously weaken the link between the lobby and elected officials and make it easier for the latter to pressure Israel"⁸³. However, in early 2010, the Supreme Court ruled that big business can campaign at unlimited amounts proving such changes to limit campaign funding is proven unrealistic(in this case Mearsheimer and Walt agree).(2) Countering the Lobby. They project this to fail, since other lobbies those meaning Arab- American or Muslim groups would surely spark a resurgence of Anti- Semitism⁸⁴. (3)Fostering

⁸² Mearsheimer, John and Stephen, Walt. "The Israel Lobby and U.S Foreign Policy." The London Books of Review. 28: 6 (2006); p. .9. < <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v28/n06/john-mearsheimer/the-israel-lobby.>>

⁸³ Mearshiemer, J. and Walt. S. The Israel Lobby and U.S foreign policy. Toronto, Canada: Penguin Press. (2007); P.349.

⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 350.

more debate. Allowing Americans to understand Israel historical founding's, "Americans need to absorb and reflect on the findings of Israel's new historians...The objective is not to single out Israel from criticism or challenge legitimacy of the Jewish State, but rather to help Americans gain a more accurate picture of how the past behavior casts a giant showdown over the present"⁸⁵. (4) A New Israel Lobby. The reasoning behind this is clearly to take some of the power away from the dominant group. Mearsheimer and Walt suggest that any new lobby should look into challenging policies that sustain the status quo, "they must also come to understand that clinging to these positions may condemn Israel to an even bleaker future"⁸⁶. The major reason a new lobby should adjust different policies is that some of the leading contenders (AIPAC) policies set the preferences in that time era. Demographics are changing, for Jewish Americans and Jewish Israelis and therefore, policies should adapt to the era to promote a flexible and adaptable environment. Surveys show that in Jewish Americans, due to intermarriage and adoption of American style birth rate of middle –upper income families⁸⁷ are steadily declining. Jewish figures in Israel on birth, death and aging population indicate the urgency to create a Jewish Democratic state (see appendix 3).

Interestingly enough, two years later a new lobby was formed -J Street. The logic behind the name derives from the alphabetical street sequence in Washington D, C. The structured sequence goes from I to K, eliminating J Street. J represents Jewish and not coincidentally K Street is where huge lobby firms, think tanks and advocacy groups are located in Washington. The strength of the U.S – Israel alliance is assisted by think tanks, advocacy groups and the legal participation of citizens through registered lobby groups. In the preceding chapters, I intend to discuss lobbying in the United States and specifically pro-Israel Lobby groups.

⁸⁵ Ibid. p. 351.

⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 352.

⁸⁷ American Jewish Demographics: Decline and Response. Jewish Life Network. 5:3 (Spring 2003). <<http://www.simpletoremember.com/vitals/crisis.pdf>. >

Chapter Four: Pro- Israel interest groups:

4.1 Lobbying in America

The vigorous pressure for military and economic aid for the state of Israel is rooted in U.S domestic politics. Dunne explains the act of lobbying for ethnicity, and/or ideology within the political system is as ‘American as apple pie’⁸⁸. The action of lobbying and political action committees have become an integral part of political participation. Lobby groups are also known as special interest groups or advocacy groups, since they are organized citizenry interests “that engages in political activity that is designed to affect what the government does”⁸⁹. Organized interest groups work with their membership to constantly advocate their organizations goals onto the executive or legislative branch, therefore, emulate a process rather than a single political activity.

In the United States interest groups are situated in both the domestic and international level. In the domestic arena, the major interest groups are, the National Rifle Association of America (NRA) a non- profit, non-partisan organizations with 4 million members. The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), a non-governmental organization who has a membership of 38 million. Some other large lobbying groups are pharmaceutical and insurance companies. Interest groups influencing U.S external affairs are AIPAC, Armenian Assembly of America, and the National Association of Arab Americans. I will attempt to analyze the role of lobbying through ethnic interest groups, and in specifically, Pro-Israel interest groups.

Interest groups try and influence the legislative and executive branches to promote their preferences. Interest groups sit in on legislative hearings to exert pressure but are also approached by congress for information on certain policy issues. They engage in the process to keep their interest group informed a lobbyist said her

⁸⁸ Dunne, Michael. “The American System: US foreign and domestic policies since the Second World War”. *International Affairs*: 84: 6. (2008); P. 1261.

⁸⁹Nownes, Anthony. *Total Lobbying*. Cambridge University: The Dorsey Press, 2006; Pg. 5. .

goal was, “to let legislators know who she was and what issues were of interest to her group”⁹⁰. The Senate and the House of Representatives make up the legislative branch, and lobbyists are known to have more connections with congress more so than the president’s staff. Lobbying the executive branch is quite difficult, since getting one-on-one time with the president is nearly impossible, “the president has literally thousands of individuals who work for him in one way or another”⁹¹. Nevertheless, the executive branch is important for foreign policy initiatives.

Political action committees and lobby groups help their members with candidate information; assist citizen’s political participation and freedom of speech,

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances”.⁹²

Donating money is a form of political participation. Throughout history there has always been a struggle between freedom of speech and lobbying regulation. Lobbying in America has gone through two phases; monitoring and regulating however, a large of the American Approach to lobbying has been monitoring activities instead of restricting them⁹³. Through the evolution of electoral campaign regulation started in the early 1900’s through the pressure of states rather than federal governments.⁹⁴

- 1907- Tillman Act which prohibited corporations to make financial contributions
- 1925- The Corrupt Practices Act requiring disclosures
- 1939- The Hatch Act disabling federal employees to engage in partisan politics.

⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 59.

⁹¹ Ibid, p. 68.

⁹² The Charters of Freedom. “The Constitution of the United States of America.” May 24, 2010. <http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/bill_of_rights_transcript.html.>

⁹³ Thomas, Clive. “Interest Group Regulation across the United States: Rationale, Development and Consequences.” *Parliamentary Affairs*. 51: 4 (October, 1998); P. 504.

⁹⁴ Ibid.p. 500.

- 1940 – The Hatch Act amendments, now created limited contributions
- 1971- The Federal Election Campaign Act
- 1974 – The Federal Election Campaign Act amendments
- 1979- The Federal Election Campaign Act amendments (disclosures)
- 2002- The Bipartisan Reform Act

The act of 1971 widened the restrictions on electoral campaigning placing spending limits, from contributions to the media. The most important in this decade come from the amendments to this act in 1974. A very important case, *Buckley v. Valeo* 425 U.S 1(1976), where the court ruled that spending limits violated the First amendment,

“A restriction on the amount of money a person or group can spend on political communication during a campaign necessarily reduces the quantity of expression by restricting the number of issues discussed...The expenditure limitations contained in the Act represent substantial rather than merely theoretical restraints on the quantity and diversity of political speech”⁹⁵

Nevertheless, the courts went on to say that limits were to be upheld on the basis that an individual’s contribution to a candidate is but a little restraint on his political communication. The rationale for spending limits is not for the fact that corruption exists, but the mere possibility that there could be an appearance of corruption. Influence is quite difficult to pin point to an exact action and an exact individual, If a member of Congress votes on a piece of legislation which is related to the person who contributed to his campaign and if the vote reflects the opinion of that contributor, then there may emerge to be a correlation between the contribution and the vote, even if that may not be the case⁹⁶. The judge favored a regulating approach, which was first of its kind. The regulation was set in place for a higher common good I would suggest since, the appearance of corruption undermines the public’s faith in the political system, and funding constitutes a risk to representative government⁹⁷. This case allocated spending limits that candidates and supports could contribute to an electoral campaign, but still up holding the first amendment on the basis that, “the

⁹⁵ Rothenburg, Stuart. Campaign Regulation and Public Policy: PAC’s, Ideology and the FEC. Washington, D.C: The Free Congress Research and Education Foundation. (1981); Pg. 5.

⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 8.

⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 8.

concept that government may restrict the speech of some elements of our society in order to enhance the relative voice of others is wholly foreign to the First Amendment.”⁹⁸ Therefore, gone were the days of monitoring, since the 1970’s electoral campaigns began the regulating framework, that many say it still a working progress.

Consequently, the Federal Campaign Act of 1974 created political action committees, PACs, which are legal organizations that allow and encourage citizens to make donations to political candidates. Political action committees may be bipartisan, non-profit, and non-governmental who have various goals and strategies. First, the Federal Election Act of 1974 created individual caps on donations which cannot exceed \$5000, 00. The PAC is obliged to disclose donations over \$200. The organization of many PAC’s are very centralized. Those citizens who are donating to the PRO-Israel PAC may have little say on to which exact candidate they are endorsing, decisions about how much to contribute and to whom is not made by individuals but are quite often made by professionals running the committee⁹⁹. However, as many citizens willingly endorse a particular pro- Israel PAC not exclusively for a certain candidate, but for the aims for promote Israel through various methods. More recently, the Bipartisan Reform Act amended the 1971 Federal Election Campaign act and placed spending limits on primaries and general elections which involve the funding and organization of PAC’s. Now, there is a cap of \$5000.00 by an individual to a PAC. Moreover, political action committee also has limits to each type of election, although PACs can only give \$15000.00 to one candidate in each election, however, with primaries, run off’s and general elections each counting as separate elections, PACs decide to form a close alliance to support a

⁹⁸ Foley, Edward. “Equal-Dollars-per-Voter: A Constitutional Principle of Campaign Finance”.

Gettin' Over (Ft. Chris Willis).mp3 Columbia Law Review. 94: 4 (May, 1994); p. 1213.

⁹⁹ Eismeier, Theodore and Pollock, Philip. “An Organizational Analysis of Political Action Committees.” Political Behaviour.7: 2 (1985) P.196.

candidate of their choice.¹⁰⁰ Correspondingly, the Federal Election Commission has capped primaries to \$42.05 million and general elections are \$84.1 million. Overall, campaigns have been known to cost a tremendous amount of money and absorb a lot of time and resources, for example. In 2008, Senator of New York and Presidential candidate Mrs. Hillary Rodman Clinton, spent millions of dollars on primaries and captured, eighteen million votes which cost \$212 million and gathered around some 1,926 delegates which cost \$109,823 the biggest head start in presidential history¹⁰¹. This clearly illustrates the importance of lobby groups who are affiliated as political action committees, for they help potential congressional members, who may be on the foreign affairs committee or appropriations committee which have a tremendous affect on Israeli policies.

PAC's have been known to support particular candidates as a tactic to rid the competition, most PACs give predominately to incumbents, but a surprising number devote substantial funding to challengers and open seats¹⁰². PAC's are very essential because incumbents are constantly raising money, "senators must raise \$14,000 a week, -consuming years to be able to bankroll a campaign for re-election"¹⁰³. Donations to Political Action Committees are not only used for electoral purposes, despite their original function. Citizens who donate to PACs are contributing to the overall function of the organization, and a surprising amount of PAC funding is meant for internal expenditure to the organization survival and growth¹⁰⁴. Inherently, pro-Israel lobby groups hold conferences to promote their ideas and create awareness and would need funds to do so.

¹⁰⁰ Taras, M. and Weinfeld M "Continuity and Criticism: North American Jews and Israel. International Journal. 45: 3(summer, 1990); p. 672.

¹⁰¹ Katz, C. "Hillary Clinton paid a heavy price for presidential run" NYDailyNews. June 8,2008. <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/2008/06/09/2008-06-09_hillary_clinton_paid_a_heavy_price_for_p.html#ixzz0p8ozSnuA>

¹⁰² Eismeier, Theodore and Pollock, Philip. "An Organizational Analysis of Political Action Committees." Political Behaviour.7: 2 (1985) P.194.

¹⁰³ Taras, M. and Weinfeld M "Continuity and Criticism: North American Jews and Israel. International Journal. 45:3. (summer, 1990); p. 672.

¹⁰⁴ Eismeier, Theodore and Pollock, Philip. "An Organizational Analysis of Political Action Committees." Political Behaviour.7: 2 (1985) P.196.

Furthermore, Political Action Committee become very strong due to there regional and local administrations. Many of Lobby organizations, think tanks and advocacy groups are located in Washington on K Street and some are found in the main metropolitan cities. Pro- Israel organizations such as AIPAC, AJC and more since Feb 2010 J Street have created regional satellite offices. The origin of the PAC is usually in a city where a large membership and community to draw support. The idea of creating locals is to, “expand its [lobby groups] influence into a new geographic territory”¹⁰⁵. This is another strategy PAC’s use to promote their pro-Israel beliefs, create a membership base, broaden financial support and create general awareness.

Each interest group has there own tactic and method. One method would be to use there research resources. For example, AIPAC has dozens of researchers on hand, that are informed by the minute. Legislature can use there think tank capabilities, which ultimately has a bias and can impact there perspective, “[it] is common for members of Congress and their staffs to turn to AIPAC first when they need information, before calling the library of Congress...AIPAC is often called on to draft speeches, work on legislation, advise on tactics, perform research, collect co-sponsors and marshal votes”¹⁰⁶. Another tactic would be large membership and popular pressure; for example, Christians United for Israel (CUFI) has a large membership and has repeatedly been called by Netanyahu to help pressure the government. I intend examine three interest groups and their main priorities and methods.

4.2: How Pro- Israel Lobby groups operate

Unbeknownst to the world, the pro-Israel lobby is not a unified organization. Recently, there has been a quarrel on whether particular pro- Israel lobby groups, can

¹⁰⁵ Wright, J. PAC Contributions, Lobbying and Representation. *Journal of Politics* 51:3 (August 1989); p. 716.

¹⁰⁶ Walt, S. and J. Mearsheimer. The Israel Lobby and U.S Foreign Policy. *The London Books of Review*, 28:6. (2006); p. 6.< <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v28/n06/john-mearsheimer/the-israel-lobby.>>

be labeled as such. For example, in November of 2009, CNN's chief international correspondent Christian Amanpour held an interview with both American Jewish Committee (AJC), and J Street. The invitation was extended to AIPAC; however, AIPAC spokesman Josh Block rejected the interview sending a written comment, "They [J Street] are not part of what I could call the pro-Israel Lobby. J Street is fringe and far to[o] left and thus you should pair them someone far to the right"¹⁰⁷. First, the meaning of pro is for obvious reasons very subjective. By definition the adverb pro means to be in favor of an opinion or proposition¹⁰⁸. Indeed, everyone misuses the word pro to show in favor, of an opinion but in the case of Israel policies, there is not one opinion. Some organizations such as American Jewish Committee would suggest pro-Israel is allowing Israel to define its borders, and assist them with military and economic aid. A center left think tank Israel Policy Forum director of policy, Mr. Rosenberg, suggests that pro- Israel does not mean accepting the current policies in the region and "They believe that the status quo--and specifically the last eight years--have been good for Israel when, in fact, they have been disastrous"¹⁰⁹. There is not one unified opinion on Israeli policies however; there is a unified belief that the state of Israel has a right to exist, the United States- Israel alliance is a priority, and most recently endorsing a two state solution

4.2 a) American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC)

The New York Times state, "The American Israel Public Affairs Committee, or AIPAC, is perhaps the most prominent of the groups that lobby the United States government on behalf of Israel"¹¹⁰. When it comes to foreign affairs relations,

¹⁰⁷ Harris, David. CNN: Christian Amanpour Interview. "A New Jewish Lobby". November 24, 2009. <<http://jstreet.org/page/j-street-videos-8>.>

¹⁰⁸ "Pro". June 10, 2010.< <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/pro>.>

¹⁰⁹ Rosenberg, M.J. "Does Pro- Israel Mean Anything". *The Huffington Post*. July 28, 2008. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mj-rosenberg/does-pro-israel-mean-anyt_b_115292.html.>

¹¹⁰ Lewis, Neil. "American Israel Public Affairs Committee". *The New York Times: TOPICS*, May 5, 2009. <http://topics.nytimes.com/topics/reference/timestopics/organizations/a/american_israel_public_affairs_committee_aipac/index.html.>

AIPAC has a threshold in pressuring congress for continuance military and economic aid to Israel. By glancing at the demographic figures, development to sustain the Jewish homeland it an integral priority of the U.S (see appendix 3). AIPAC is a lobby group that is not a political action committee. Unperceived to many, AIPAC does not endorse congressional candidates during election time. The role of Public Affairs Committee is the tactic of a having many researchers and think tanks that help lobbyists to pressure capital hill. AIPAC's primary goal is to maintain the unbreakable bond between U.S and Israel and bring that alliance stronger and closer. As a pro- Israel organization, they retain lobbyists who are educated by their think tanks on economic and military policies regarding Israel. The lobbyists primary function adhere that the military and economic alliance is firm and on-going. AIPAC is non-governmental, bi-partisan and combines Jewish and non-Jewish supporters. They have had tremendous amounts of success getting bills passed both by Democrat and Republican governments for aid to Israel. Many of these bill initiated by Congress are drafted or looked at by AIPAC whose aim is to promote the longevity and security of Israel. For example, AIPAC secures Foreign Aid to Israel,

By earmarking the aid to Israel each year, Congress ensures that the funds requested by the president are provided to America's closest ally. The fiscal year 2007 foreign aid bill contained \$21.3billion, including Israel's aid package, which consisted of \$2.34 billion in military aid, \$120 million in economic assistance and \$40 million to assist Israel in absorbing refugees.¹¹¹

The pro-Israel lobby publishes memos highlighting that aid to Israel, foreign aid funding it vital for U.S National security. AIPAC is entwined with congressional support for US foreign AID to Israel. AIPAC's strategies are the function and processes of United States agency of international development (USAID). Early on, President Bush outline the goals of foreign aid assistance through USAID which were to promote development in the areas of government, institutions and economic

¹¹¹ AIPAC publications. "U.S. Aid to Israel".

<[http://www.aipac.org/Publications/AIPACAnalysesIssueBriefs/U.S. Aid to Israel.pdf](http://www.aipac.org/Publications/AIPACAnalysesIssueBriefs/U.S._Aid_to_Israel.pdf)>

policies; strengthen weak states; support U.S. geostrategic interests and mitigating global and international ills, including HIV/AIDS.¹¹²

The United States security assistance program is comprised of several fields to which the United States and Israel have a long history of bilateral agreements. First, Foreign Military Sales (FMS) which provides Israel with the credit to purchase of U.S. defense equipment, military service, intelligence services and technical training¹¹³. Second, Military Assistance Program (MAP) which provides grants for U.S. defense services¹¹⁴ that the House of Committee on Appropriations must approve of along side FMS. The role AIPAC, in regards to US foreign Aid is pressuring the government for more AID to Israel and increase the threshold on FMS and MAP bilateral agreements. The figures show that foreign Aid is merely 1% of US GDP (See Appendix 4). Also, AIPAC's Memo of 2010, show that FY 2011 Foreign Aid budget is also 1%. As a pro-Israel Lobby group they see Foreign Aid to Israel as a national interest and want to see most of that 1% go to Israel. However, the top military and economic aid recipients have changed due to the America led war on Iraq and Afghanistan, "the most prominent is that Iraq is by far the largest recipient of U.S. assistance in FY2004 at \$18.44 billion"¹¹⁵ (Appendix 5). AIPAC's present tactics have not changed since the beginnings of U.S. –Israel bilateral agreements began in the late 1960'. Their goal is for Israel to receive more AID, but who do they pressure Congress or the President. It is quite complex since both Congress and the President preside over foreign policies duties which often overlap. However, congresses in either the House of Committees of appropriations or House of foreign affairs assist AIPAC. Congress presides over the budget and therefore, initiates the grants or loans given to Israel and,

Congress has been most viable in its foreign policy role when it has placed legislation prohibitions or other limitations on the President's Freedom of

¹¹² Tarnoff, C and Nowels L. "Foreign Aid: An introductory Overview of U.S. programs and policies." Congressional Research Service report for Congress. April 15, 2004. Pg.3.

¹¹³ Rabie .Mohamad. "The Politics of Foreign Aid: U.S Foreign assistance and Aid to Israel." New York: Praeger Publishers. (1988); P.13.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Grimmett, R. "Foreign Policy Roles of the President and Congress. U.S Department of State. June 1, 1999.p. 12

action in foreign affairs. The use of funding restrictions or denials by congress is a classic illustration of ‘power of the purse’ under the constitution.¹¹⁶

The lobbying tactic AIPAC illustrates is giving information to citizens on particular candidates that are Pro-Israel and will initiate and pressure the government to increase the level of military and economic support to Israel. To illustrate this point, I intend to use an example from 1982 not for the figures but strategy since it is more or less the same today and Douglas Bloomfield, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee’s staff director, said, ‘In fact the congress increased grant aid by \$510 million above what the administrative recommended, proving the most favorable aid package Israel ever received’¹¹⁷. Consequently, it is important to AIPAC that those congressmen in the House Committee of Appropriation understand the National Security interest of Israel, and “members of those committees in charge of budgeting, appropriations and foreign relations have been the subject to outside pressure and enticement than others because of the vital role their committees tend to play in the foreign policy making and foreign aid appropriations”¹¹⁸. Along side, the executive branch that administers the foreign aid is U.S Agency of International Development (USAID) under the guidance of the Secretary of State. The agency managed a FY2004 budget of \$12.65 billion, and has direct control of \$5.7 billion of that amount...and the Defense department manages about \$4.7 billion of total foreign aid budget.¹¹⁹ The type of aid program’s AIPAC pressure the house of Committee of appropriations are mostly in forms of grants, “under the Israeli Loan Guarantee Program, the United States has guaranteed repayment of loans made by commercial sources to support the costs of immigrants settling in Israel from other countries”¹²⁰. Associated with lobbying congress members, they educate congressional candidates on the vitality of U.S national interests of aid to Israel. They host trips to Israel to educate potential congressional members on the securities issues in Israel.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Rabie, p.60.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Grimmett, R. “Foreign Policy Roles of the President and Congress. U.S Department of State. June 1, 1999. P.21

¹²⁰ Grimmett P.25.

The U.S sanctions on U.S firms contributing to the Iranian energy sector was initiated by supporters of AIPAC who undoubtedly informed the president of the leading firms who are exceeding the limit of contribution to the Iranian energy sector violating previous laws. Their think tanks, and congressional signatories got an overwhelmingly pass in the House of Representatives, writer Ron Kampeas for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency (JTA), quoted AIPAC, “AIPAC endorses Chairmen Dodd and Berman's firm, public commitment to get tough, comprehensive Iran sanctions legislation on the President's desk before the July 4th recess [and] the lobby said in a statement.”We urge President Obama to sign and implement that legislation immediately upon its arrival on his desk.”¹²¹

Another important tactic is AIPAC’s legendary participation at their annual policy conferences. The private event gathers quite a number attendees all to which accept their invitation and “more members of Congress in attendance that almost any other event, except for a joint session of Congress or a State of the Union address”¹²². The annual conference brings together both Democratic, Republicans, students and avid Pro- Israel supports. The 2008 AIPAC conference was one of the highest spectacles bringing together the top rank government officials from both Israel and the United States. The event itself is usually a three day weekend, involving seminars, and public speeches. The following were the main speakers and their political statements on June 4th 2008,¹²³

“When I visit AIPAC I am among friends” – *Senator Barak Obama*

“America’s position is unchanging, our resolve unyielding, our stance non-negotiable. The U.S stands with Israel now and forever”- *Senator Hillary Rodman Clinton*

¹²¹ Kampeas, R. “Congress delays sanctions bill, with AIPAC blessing.” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency (JTA)*: May 25, 2010. <<http://www.jta.org/news/article/2010/05/25/2739324/congress-delays-sanctions-bill-with-aipac-blessing>>

¹²² Goodman, A. “AIPAC Holds National Meeting Amid Spy Scandal Investigation”. *DemocracyNow.org*. May 25, 2005. <http://www.democracynow.org/2005/5/25/aipac_holds_national_meeting_amid_spy>.

¹²³ AIPAC 2008 Policy Conference. <<http://www.youtube.com/user/AIPACPC2008>>.

“Sanctions are important. [We] must lead multilateral sanctions outside a U.N framework” – *Senator John McCain*

“We must believe peace is a possibility and strive to make it a reality” – *Prime Minister of Israel, Ehud Olmert.*

How often do you see high level government officials at private affairs? For years now, AIPAC has gathered the most honorable guests to speak about their commitment to U.S- Israel relations and that signifies their commitment to AIPAC. However, in late 2005 the lobby group witnessed a terrible scandal. In May of 2005, Larry Franklin a Pentagon analyst was accused of leaking highly classified government documents to two AIPAC employees, Mr. Steve Rosen, AIPAC policy director at the time and Keith Weissman, Iranian specialist. The two were fired and were recently dismissed of their charges and, “The Obama Administration said it was seeking the dismissal of charges that two former AIPAC analysts had violated an espionage statute by improperly disseminating security information”¹²⁴. The outcry of dual loyalty by these two AIPAC employees has created a stir amongst the Jewish Community and, “[e]ven if the case ultimately boils down to an administrative matter of unauthorized transfer of classified information culminating in a reprimand, the public damage has been done”¹²⁵. The idea of dual loyalty in the case of Israel causes uneasiness to American Jews, for they have been shunned by conspiracy theorists claiming Israel’s involvement in the war in Iraq.

The scandal created a deep and realistic fear threatening American support for Israel. However, the 2005 Policy conference was a success and the scandal was no barring to the thousands of honorable guests and participants. One major contributor to their legendary power is AIPAC spokesman Josh Block, who controls the information in, out and around AIPAC. Aljazeera English’s reporter Mr. Clayton

¹²⁴Lewis, Neil. “At Annual Meeting, Pro-Israel Group reasserts Clout”. *The New York Times*. May 5, 2009. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/05/us/politics/05aipac.html>.>

¹²⁵Guttman, Nathan. “Dual Loyalty slur returns to haunt American Jews”. *Haaretz*. August 29, 2004. <<http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/analysis-dual-loyalty-slur-returns-to-haunt-american-jews-1.133006>.>

Swisher was at the 2008 conference and began asking participants what they thought about the two- state solution; he was approached by Josh Block to limit questions. He then went into a seminar entitled, keeping Israel strong: what will it take? Mr. Swisher wanted to ask questions about the surrounding controversies, he was then asked to leave by Mr. Josh Block.¹²⁶ This pro-Israel lobby group, with an annual budget of \$100 million¹²⁷ has an immense economic foundation and political influence, so why not admit their weaknesses which will have absolutely no barring on their success as the scandal shows?

4. 2 b) American Jewish Committee

The American Jewish Committee (AJC) is the oldest Jewish organization in America. It's formation originated in 1906 by Russian Jews. The pro- Israel lobby aligns its beliefs on the foundation of reviving and reforming Judaism in America. Their core objectives are; to combat anti-Semitism and other forms of bigotry; promote Pluralism and strengthen Jewish life.¹²⁸

AJC represents the section of the Jewish population which is 2.2% percent of the population (see appendix 6). The pro-Israel/pro-Jewish lobby group has written many articles establishing a liberal view of Judaism, and their goal is to deepen and widen what it means to be Jewish. The demographic shrinking of Jewish in both Israel and America has many American Jewish advocates like AJC director David Harris startled by the intermarriages and Jewish orthodox exclamation on Judaism. The lobby groups mission states, "to enhance the well being of Israel and the Jewish people worldwide, and to advance human rights and democratic values in the United States and around the world"¹²⁹. ACJ is an organization that strengthens the Jewish

¹²⁶ Swisher, C. "AIPAC conference no arena for debate on Israel". *Aljazeera English*. June 5th, 2008. <<http://english.aljazeera.net/video/>>

¹²⁷ Lewis, Neil. "U.S Jews get a new voice in Washington". *The New York Times*. April 24, 2008. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/24/world/americas/24iht-lobby.4.12320195.html>>

¹²⁸ American Jewish Committee: Global Jewish Advocacy. May, 29, 2010. <http://www.ajc.org/site/c.ijITI2PHKoG/b.789093/k.124/Who_We_Are.htm>

¹²⁹ American Jewish Committee: Global Jewish Adovacy. "Who we are". May 29, 2010. <http://www.ajc.org/site/c.ijITI2PHKoG/b.789093/k.124/Who_We_Are.htm>

Community by reviving Jewish American identity and protecting the sanctity of Jewish life in America, which in terms describes their Pro-Israel definition. They have worked with AIPAC on several occasions and they both share similar policies for the Middle East. AJC spokesman Mr. Ben Cohen was on CNN international and stated that they did believe in a two-state solution with an undivided Jerusalem, with the settlements being compensated for.¹³⁰ AIPAC and AJC have stated words that Israel has institutions, branches of government and participation from citizens to exert there own terms of democracy and they do not need others imposing an Ideology. The evolution of AJC is centered on the constant adaption to American culture, “for one thing society [Jewish community] was becoming more accepting to cultural pluralism”¹³¹. AJC’s strategy is constantly adapting the Jewish community to the demographics and changes within the larger community, for the continuity of American Judaism. The AJC achieves is filed with thousands of articles by Rabbis, both conservative and reform acknowledging the idea of Judaism, “a new membership drive sought out conservatives, and orthodox Jews as well as reform”¹³². Their purpose of reviving a new form of Judaism that is more inclusive and adaptive assists the American – Israel alliance through a board base of Jewish supporters. For example, AJC has a young leadership institution, holding forums for the future generations of AJC, and Jewish – Americans. They built a task force of young professionals both Muslim and Jewish origin, to discuss possibilities of the future. The AJC advocates for Jews to embrace their religion and culture by embracing the demographic and democratic challenges to both American and Israeli Jews. Moreover, AJC’s publications bring Jews together from all over the world. AJC has 26 regional offices as well as 8 overseas offices and many global partnerships. AJC was the first organization that created an office in Germany following World War

¹³⁰ Cohen, B. CNN international. March 23, 2010.
http://www.ajc.org/site/c.ijITI2PHKoG/b.5887355/k.4D97/Video_Ben_Cohen_on_CNN_March_23_2010.htm.>

¹³¹ Sauna, M. “AJC and intermarriage: The complexities of Jewish Continuity, 1960-2006”. *American Jewish Year Book* 107: (2007).p. 4.<
http://www.ajcarchives.org/AJC_DATA/Files/AJYB703.CV.pdf.>

¹³² Ibid, p 2.

II¹³³. It brings global advocacy world wide and has worked along side AIPAC with international partnerships of USINPAC, bringing Indian and Jewish Communities together¹³⁴.

Similarly, AJC hosts annual policy conferences that too attract high ranking officials within the U.S and Israel. AJC's conferences have a different focus than AIPAC. They give out awards for international and domestic officials who have showed their continued support for Israel. The moral and courage award went to Congressman, Mr. John Lewis for this courage to stand up for African American rights along with a Jewish partnership back in the 1950's. The 2009 conferences hosted, the foreign Minister of Italy, U.S secretary of Treasurer under Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, a MP of the British Parliament, attorney General of the United States. It has recently hosted the U.S Ambassador to Israel and Secretary of State, Mrs. Clinton. Once again, there attendance to AJC implies they support the organization and there policies towards the Middle East.

4. 2 c) Christians United For Israel

What started out as a grassroots movement bringing together 400,000 Christian leaders to promote a unified Christian voice to support Israel, came Christians United for Israel (CUFI) in 2006. The goal of the organization is to promote Christian teachings in the bible and their links to Israel. The Christian pro-Israel lobby is heard by millions around the U.S through there weekly publications, Church services, and summits. The organization is built around Senior Pastor and Founder, Pastor John Hagee. He started out at Cornerstone Church, in San Antonio with a congregation of 18, 000 members .He is charismatic preacher professing the Christian duty to secure Israel and the Jews in it. He is one of the most well known Pastors and is also the founder Christian Zionist Organization.

¹³³ American Jewish Committee<.

<http://www.ajc.org/site/c.ijITI2PHKoG/b.835975/k.D5ED/Europe.htm.>>

¹³⁴ UNISPAC. US India Political Action Committee. May 30, 2010.

<<http://www.israelforum.com/board/showthread.php?t=3174>.>

The first tactic this Pro-Israel lobby group has is a Pastor who is featured on TV ministries nation wide, is the CEO of Global Evangelical Television (GETV) and author of many books such as Jerusalem Countdown. Pastor Hagee and others brought a unified Christian voice to Capitol Hill on the grounds that, “God gave the land to the Jewish people and Christians have the biblical duty to support it and the Jews”¹³⁵. The CUFI and the Christian Zionist Organization have a summit in Washington, as Pastor Hagee states, “[f]or the first time in the history of Christianity in America, Christians will go to the Hill to support Israel as Christians”¹³⁶. This will be their fifth Washington summit that has brought the U.S Ambassador to Israel, congressman and other Christian leaders. The Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu has supported the Christian Zionist movement, especially CUFI. Pastor Hagee has a good relationship with Netanyahu as well as AIPAC. Unfortunately, many have criticized their strategy calling them the Christian AIPAC, “they are bolstering what AIPAC is doing and possibly even radicalizing what AIPAC is doing, by providing them a grassroots base in the heartland”¹³⁷.

The second important tactic they have is the Christian ideology that is home to 40 million, Pastor Hagee was quoted, “When a congressman sees someone from Aipac coming through the door, he knows he represents six million people. We represent 40 million people.”¹³⁸ He is also well known for his controversial statements, but his critics believe is the Christian Zionist strength. A critic to the Christian movement is Michelle Goldberg, who wrote a book entitled *Kingdom Coming: the Rise of Christian Nationalism*. The book mentions that Zionist groups may be a more hawkish AIPAC. She explains that Christian Nationalism is not the same as evangelicalism, “when I talk about Christian nationalism, we’re talking about

¹³⁵ Greene, Richard. “Evangelicals Plead for Israel”. July 19, 2006.
<<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/5193092.stm>.>

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Blumenthal, M. “Christians United for Israel: New Christian Zionism Lobby Hopes to Rival AIPAC”. *Democracy now.org*. August 15, 2006.
<http://www.democracynow.org/2006/8/15/christians_united_for_israel_new_christian.>

¹³⁸ Greene, Richard. “Evangelicals Plead for Israel”. July 19, 2006.
<<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/5193092.stm>.>

the 10% to 15% of the American population that rejects the idea of separation of church and state; that believes Christianity, or their version of Christianity, should be authoritative in the laws”¹³⁹. Goldberg and others like her see the Pro-Israel summit by Christian Zionists changing the face of foreign policy, “[w]hereas the church used to counsel people not to engage in politics, many churches are now counseling the opposite...It's important and it will have a huge influence on foreign policy over time”¹⁴⁰. The Christian groups have a good relationship with Jewish Organizations and are applauded by Israel officials for their continued support for the land of the Jews.

Stephen Walt’s user guide to change state the lobby groups such as J Street and Israel Forum Policy can push for change, is through an executive branch approach. Is this a possibility? Pro- Israel lobby group such as AIPAC, AJC, and CUFI all have different and distinct tactics to sustain their organization and promote global advocacy for Israel. Each of these groups has had some success in gaining attention through the media, government officials and the Administration itself. They have been successful by influencing Congress, by signatures, and passing Israel security bills. However, these three interest groups have a long history promoting the same security preferences and tactics since 1967. It may seem now that presenting a different vision to major media publications such as The Washington Post, The Huffington Post, or Foreign Policy Magazine, encouraging readers too see and advocate debate.

In early of 2008, a U.S faced a new Pro-Israel lobby group and many have asked why J street and why now? As I have intended in the previous 4 chapters, and to reiterate what the Obama’s administration have stated the status- quo is not sustainable, U.S Middle East policies need to be re-examined. Security for Israel is not solely based on more foreign aid, increasing military aid and economic aid as

¹³⁹ Goldberg, M. “Kingdom Coming: the Rise of Christian Nationalism”. Democracy Now.org. July 7, 2006. <http://www.democracynow.org/2006/7/7/kingdom_coming_the_rise_of_christian. >

¹⁴⁰ Greene, Richard. “Evangelicals Plead for Israel”. July 19, 2006.
< <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/5193092.stm>.>

AIPAC, AJC and CUFI indirectly profess, but the two-state solution is a sound initiative that embeds lasting security for a democratic and Jewish State. In the following chapter, I intend to analyze J Street's entities, political stance, tactics and methods and question whether they have a voice in today's U.S foreign policy.

Chapter 5: J Street

5.1 a) J Street composition:

Like many pro-Israel lobby groups, J Street provides a home for American Jews to voice their support by several entities. J Street is a Pro-Israel and Pro- Peace interest group. The organization's mission is two-fold; to advocate for U.S diplomatic leadership in the region and to create a board debate on Israel.¹⁴¹ J Street has three entities; they are a non-profit organization, 1(c) (4) non-profit corporation, and a registered lobbying organization, which uses online organizing, advocacy, and education to achieve its goals on Capitol Hill and with the Executive Branch.¹⁴² Similarly to AIPAC and AJC these organizations thrive on donations given by citizens. J Street PAC is a separate entity, that endorses and funds potential and incumbent congressmen, and in its first year it raised, \$600,000 for 42 candidates endorsed for U.S. Congress, 34 of who won their races¹⁴³. The last entity is J Street Education Fund Inc. which includes J Street locals, and university campus sites that educates Americans and Jewish Americans about the two-state solution. The three separate entities focus on the democratic future of Israel. As Jeremy Ben-Ami founder and director of J Street proclaims, the demographics of Israel prove that non-Jews will surpass the population of Jews from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean and Israel can no longer be both Jewish and Democratic (refer back to appendix 3)¹⁴⁴. The two year organization has created a lot of controversy on there Pro-Israel and Pro-Peace position. The idea of pro-peace is their two-state solution as the democratic necessity for Israel's survival and policies regarding the region must be taken into account.

¹⁴¹ J Street. "About Us." June 2, 2010. < <http://www.jstreet.org/about/about-us>.>

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ben- Ami, Jeremy. CNN: Christian Amanpour Interview. "A New Jewish Lobby". November 24, 2009. <<http://jstreet.org/page/j-street-videos-8>.>.

5.1 b) Pro- Israel Position:

Pro- Israel lobby groups have criticized J Street on their pro- Israel and pro-peace methods. For example, J Street publically announced it did not support the UN, Goldstone report on the 2009 Israel war on Gaza. The Israeli ambassador to the U.S, Michael Oren was outraged and would not speak to J Street over this issue. J Street was not categorized as a pro- Israel group because they did not agree with AIPAC, and AJC who was calling on Israel to run their own investigation. Later on, when they rebuked the major findings of the report, J Street was applauded by overturning their statement, “it has condemned the Goldstone report...which puts J Street much more into the mainstream”¹⁴⁵. The group’s major contention is whether you can criticize Israeli policies and claim to be pro- Israel. The lobby group’s major critic Alan Dershowitz has gone head-to-head with Mr. Ben- Ami on televised debates as well as debates on online forums. Dershowitz wrote an article on The Huffington Post claiming that J Street is not Pro- Israel because J Street made a casual link between the administrations refusing to make peace with the Palestinians which put American soldiers at risk in the region. Dershowitz says this reduces support for Americans Jews because of their fellow citizens at war in Afghanistan and Iraq, and Dershowitz believes the implication of this statement, “is that Israel must cease to exist: the basic complaint that Muslim extremists have against Israel is not what the Jewish state does but what it is”¹⁴⁶. J Street also disapproved the Iranian sanctions bill. Other pro-Israel groups quickly abandon J Street’s pro-Israel credibly because they did not put Israel’s security their main priority by endorsing the Iranian bill. However, the Iran Refined Petroleum Sanctions Act was first put on hold by J Street because they were calling on multi level diplomatic efforts before unilateral sanctions and, “[t]he group issued a statement endorsing the bill, stating that since

¹⁴⁵ Kampeas, R. “J Street, Oren mending Fences- but wariness lingers”. *The Jerusalem Post*: February 16, 2010. <<http://www.jpost.com/JewishWorld/JewishNews/Article.aspx?id=168932>>

¹⁴⁶ Dershowitz, A. “J Street can longer claim to be Pro-Israel”. *The Huffington Post*. April 21, 2010. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/alan-dershowitz/j-street-can-no-longer-cl_b_546841.html>

diplomacy has failed, the time has come to move forward with sanctions”¹⁴⁷. I would suggest J Street does put Israel’s security on their top priority, along side President Obama’s foreign policy initiative of Multilateralism. The group’s hesitation was due to the Obama’s Administration, push for multilateral efforts with countries such as Brazil, China and Russia in October and November of 2009. However, their rightful hesitation black listed the group as left, and neither pro- Israel or pro- peace.

In 2009, media outlets like the Washington Post, The Huffington Post, The New York times and Foreign policy Magazine were pinning J Street against AIPAC as rival interest groups. As I have earlier quoted, AIPAC has an annual budget of over \$100,000 million, why would people compare these two organizations? Many have agreed that Israel is in a vulnerable time and need a unified American Jewish voice. The American Prospect writer Ezra Klein claims that the rapid movement for J Street is because American Jews are not a homogeneous group and differ in culture experiences, “there's a lot of *generational anxiety* in the Jewish community. The experience of Jewishness for older Jews -- the generation of Jews that endured the Holocaust, or was directly descended from that generation -- is substantially different from my generation's experience of Jewishness”¹⁴⁸. America was not created out of homogeneity and therefore, there is no homogenous American Jewish voice on the Israeli policies. A particular handful of American Jews are legitimately questioning their government’s motives on Israel and critiquing them. The Washington Post writer, Michael Abramowitz claims that J Street’s creation is to counterbalance the ideology of AIPAC, “[s]ome of the country's most prominent Jewish liberals are forming a political action committee and lobbying group aimed at dislodging what they consider the excessive hold of neoconservatives and evangelical Christians on

¹⁴⁷ Guttman, N. “From the Left: J Street moves Center on Iran Sanctions”. The Jewish Daily: December 16, 2009. <<http://www.forward.com/articles/121179/>>

¹⁴⁸ Klein, E. “Why AIPAC is so afraid of J Street”. The American Prospect: March 30, 2009. <http://www.prospect.org/csnc/blogs/ezraklein_archive?month=03&year=2009&base_name=why_is_aipac_so_afraid_of_j_st.>

U.S. policy toward Israel.”¹⁴⁹ J Street’s commencement did not get support all around. Sara Miller writer for Haaretz, Israel’s English and Hebrew newspaper stated that their weight is clouded by dominant government officials who rejected their conference, “J Street may have a long way to go until it has the pulling power of AIPAC, whose 2008 conference drew John McCain, Hillary Clinton and Obama ...but it is making many waves in the U.S. and in Israel.”¹⁵⁰ Therefore, the media response to J Street has been both positive and negative. The fact that they are comparing this group to AIPAC shows they have some legitimacy.

Indeed, J Street is said to represent the another voice for American Jews, but their slogan of pro- Israel and pro-peace(a two state solution) has stirred other pro-Israel lobby groups who suggest the group may be receiving donations from Arab Americans, who believe in a two state solution as well. Who does J Street represent? The pro- Israel and pro-peace mission statement broadly implies those who support Israel, and the goal of U.S involvement in a two-state solution. The controversy that surrounds J Street is their independent organism, J StreetPAC which receives financial donations from Arab Americans. Ms. Rebecca Abou-Chedid, a writer for the Foreign Policy magazine, wrote that former AIPAC and Israel embassy official critics J Street because of Arab Americans who donate to the organizations claiming, “[these] dollars must be intended to advance some pernicious anti- Israel agenda- and that J Street must be the vehicle for those aims.”¹⁵¹ This is a very loose casual correlation, similar to what the Federal Election Commission court stated on imposing donation claims. That is to say, influence from one specific action, such as donating is quite hard to infer. The idea of Arab Americans donating to J Street has an appearance of influence. The question is whether J Street be a home for both Arab

¹⁴⁹ Abramowitz, M. “Jewish Liberal to Launch A Counterpoint to AIPAC”. The Washington Post: April 15, 2008. <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/04/14/AR2008041402647.html>>

¹⁵⁰ Miller, S. “J Street Convenes in Washington, but can it take on AIPAC”. Haaretz: October 25, 2009. <<http://www.haaretz.com/news/j-street-convenes-in-washington-but-can-it-take-on-aipac-1.5467>>

¹⁵¹ Abou-Chedid, R. “Nightmare on J Street”. Foreign Policy: October 22, 2009. <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/10/22/nightmare_on_j_street>

Americans, who believe that supporting Pro- Israel lobby groups is there American right, and they should not to be judge by ethnic origin¹⁵². J Street has welcomed donations of \$30-\$100¹⁵³, which could hardly be seen as an ‘influence’ and would appear to be a donation limit to dislodge any appearance of ‘influence’ by Arab Americans. Therefore, if J Street can be a home for mainstream Jews as well as pro-Israel Americans of all origins, J Street may have a new inclusionary voice in U.S foreign policy.

5.1 c) J Street First Annual Conference:

In late October 2009, J Street held its first annual conference at the Grand Hyatt in Washington D.C. The three day event was packed with seminars, speakers, guests, students and media. The conference proved to have a mild impact and I would suggest that the consequences shows two things, 1) J Street can call themselves a legitimate lobby group on the grounds that a particular handful of U.S citizens, U.S government officials, Israeli citizens and Israeli ministerial officials acknowledge their right to exist. 2.) Their conference showed dainty prospect of congressional impact through congressional members and high rank government official’s attendance. Moreover, I would suggest that the lobby’s controversy surrounding its first year, would have some congressional officials reluctant to go and be labeled on the left side of pro-Israel. I intend to analyze their first conference by way of congressional members, guest speakers and those who abstained.

Glancing through their list of seminar topics at their first conference, J Street admirably illuminated their vision different forms such as art, live performance and film. This unconventional way of gathering people suggested different voices through difference methods. The topics included Iran diplomacy, Human rights in Israel and what does it mean to be pro- Israel. The last topic proves J Street embraced its criticisms that the new lobby would have to endure to become a voice towards decision makers for U.S foreign policy. The conference hosted 1500 guests,

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

including 250 students from 17 different countries, and was honored by 150 Democratic members of Congress, many current and former Israeli politicians. The list of guest speakers were the following: U.S National Security Advisor Jim Jones, Senator John Kerry, Chairman of the House of Foreign Affairs Committee, and Former Senator Chuck Hagel. Unfortunately, Senator Kerry had prior engagements in Pittsburgh and , a wave of congress members, Sen. Blanche Lincoln (D-AR), Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY), Sen. Thad Cochran (R-MS), Rep. Mike Castle (R-DE), Rep. Mike Ross (D-AR), Rep. Michael McCaul (R-TX), Rep. Leonard Boswell (D-IA), Rep. John Salazar (D-CO), and Rep. Ed Towns (D-NY)¹⁵⁴ began to decline their invitations. Most importantly, Michael Oren Israeli ambassador to the U.S was invited but decline on the basis that, “[the] Israeli Embassy accused J Street of endorsing policies that could impair Israel’s interest”¹⁵⁵. An example is their policy on settlements, “J Street supports President Obama's continuation of nine previous U.S. administrations' policy against settlement construction, including in East Jerusalem.”¹⁵⁶ The current government of Israel, Likud is against this on the grounds that there should be natural growth in such areas. However, this is not the only view in Israel. The leading opposition party in Israel, Kadima, who won the majority of seats in Israel in the 2009 elections but could not form a coalition, supports J Street and also brings forth similar ideas; open debate, a settlement freeze and the need for negotiations for a two-state solution in Israel. Moreover, Ms. Livni was invited but she too had prior engagements but sent a letter with her apologies and congratulations on the new pro- Israel lobby group (see appendix 7). However, she sent someone from her party on behalf of her. Later on, Mr. Michael Oren greeted J Street after the group endorsed the Iran Petroleum Sanctions Act and denouncing the Goldstone report.

¹⁵⁴ Thrush, G. “Headliner Kerry joins J street no-show list”. *Politico*: October 20, 2009. <http://www.politico.com/blogs/glennthrush/1009/Headliner_Kerry_joins_J_Street_noshow_list.html.>

¹⁵⁵ Eggen, D. “Israel conference to open amid controversy”. *The Washington Post*: October 25, 2009. <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/24/AR2009102400994.html>>.

¹⁵⁶ J street policies: “Settlements.”< <http://www.jstreet.org/page/settlements>. >

On the upside, the keynote speaker was U.S National Security Advisor, Jim Jones who represented the Obama administration, he had this to say, “I’d like to congratulate you on this impressive conference and I’m honored to represent President [Obama] and make sure that we’ll be represented in all future conferences”¹⁵⁷. Lastly, J Street was welcomed by Jordanian king Abdullah II, who had this to say about J Street, “I welcome efforts like yours to bring insight and courage to the issues”¹⁵⁸. They see that driving change needs U.S involvement by a new administration, new citizen participation and new organizations such as J Street. King Abdullah the second’s position is similar to other Arab States, who seeks the role of accepting and being accepted by their Israeli neighbor. Therefore, by looking at sheer numbers and guest speakers, it is very clear that J Street cannot compare to the congressional support in conferences than AIPAC or AJC. Nevertheless, has enough support in the United States, In Israel and the Arab regions that it cannot easily be ignored. It may be probable that their continued support will strengthen the pro-Israel lobby.

5.1 d) J StreetPAC

Additionally, J Street PAC has endorsed 41 candidates in the 2008 cycle, 33 of them were successful with a total of \$578,812 in total contributions distributed.¹⁵⁹ This is an area that is extremely different than AIPAC, since AIPAC does not endorse candidates. Looking through the candidate list, all but one is democrat and mostly to members of the House of Representatives. However, their endorsement hasn’t come easy. Representative of Maryland, Donna Edwards, came under great scrutiny from AIPAC and the Jewish communities, when Edwards refused to support a House resolution, “she voted ‘present’ because she opposed Hamas’s rocket fire into Israel

¹⁵⁷ Mozgovaya, N. “Top Obama aide: U.S commitment to Israel is not a slogan”. *Haaretz*: October 27, 2009. <<http://www.haaretz.com/news/top-obama-aide-u-s-commitment-to-israel-is-not-a-slogan-1.5290>>

¹⁵⁸ King Abdullah II of Jordan. *J street first Conference*: October 25, 2009. <http://conference.jstreet.org/>.

¹⁵⁹ Jstreet PAC. <<https://donate.jstreetpac.org/home>>

but did not support Israel's bombing of civilian targets.”¹⁶⁰ Within her district lies 15% of Jewish voters who fear their congresswomen has a Palestinian narrative but stands to say she is not Anti- Israel. A Rabbi in her district stated that AIPAC represents the broad consensus of the Jewish Community and J Street doesn't¹⁶¹. J Street raised \$30,000 in two days for her next campaign to show J Street support for Edwards. Analyzing J Street Conferences and the candidates they support, proves that when it comes to Congressional support, the right wing- hawkish groups like AIPAC and AJC have a larger membership, enormous annual budget and their ideologies go hand in hand with the government of the day(Likud) rather than the opposition like J Street.

J Street has had some mild success. The reality that J Street PAC has successfully endorsed 33 candidates shows that they have an opportunity to voice J Street's interest to decision makers. Haaretz writer, Natasha Mozgovaya mentioned that J Street has already created new avenues AIPAC have not ventured in,

the Arab American Institute tabbed its Fall Arab Leadership Summit as "historic" because of meetings "with J Street and other pro-peace American Jewish leaders to support what so many believed could never be achieved - a collaboration between organizations representing Arab Americans and Jewish Americans, a collaboration dedicated to peace, justice, and prosperity in the autonomous states of Israel and Palestine.”¹⁶²

5.1 e) Signatures Campaign to Capital Hill

Another example was J Street quick signatory race to get Alaska governor Sarah Palin off the schedule for the Iran Unity Rally. The organization got 20,000 signatures within 24 hours and Sarah Palin was off the schedule by rally organizer Malcolm Hoenlein, as J Street reports, “[t]his is the right decision. A unity rally to

¹⁶⁰ Guttman, N. “J Street Flexes Its Muscle and Others React as New Congresswomen steps into the Fray”. The Jewish Daily Forward: July 8, 2009. < <http://www.forward.com/articles/109095/>. >

¹⁶¹ Ibid, p.2.

¹⁶² Mozgovaya, N. “ J Street Conference: Some successes and some awkward moments”. Haaretz: October 28, 2009. <<http://www.haaretz.com/blogs/focus-u-s-a/j-street-conference-some-successes-and-some-awkward-moments-1.5224>.>

express communal solidarity is no place for partisan politics. And to give such prominence to Sarah Palin alone would have spoken neither to, nor for, the American Jewish community”¹⁶³. With all its criticisms and controversies J Street has had some accomplishments along the way.

Consequently after, J Street director Jeremy Ben-Ami was applauded by the Pro-Israel community for politically participating in mainstream rhetoric, he was publically supported by Israel’s President Shimon Peres. By the end of 2009, the Israel- U.S friendship began to quiver and Israeli officials began to put U.S relations on its top agenda. On April 26, 2010, President Peres met with J Street delegation including director Ben- Ami and, and reiterated the shared values and goals between them. Shmuel Rosner, a writer for the Jerusalem Post, saw the meeting between the two inevitable and that Peres, “[is] willing to listen, and as President of Israel he does not boycott a group that wants to help both "Israel" and "peace”¹⁶⁴. Rosner believes that Peres is taking this meeting to understand J Street’s policies and position and will follow the group’s words and deeds. He also believes J Street’s stance on critiquing U.S policies towards Israel is fine and even encourage but there are red lines for example,

J Street can't support divestment from companies that are selling products to Israel. It can't support the attempts to put Israeli officials on trial for "war crimes". It can't support the elimination of American financial assistance in the hope that this will force the Netanyahu government into freezing construction in east Jerusalem. Well - it can not do all that and get more meetings with more Israeli officials.¹⁶⁵

These constraints on J Street are attacked by extreme leftists, who want a firm hand on Israel and right wing groups who are applauding their move into the center right. Either way, J Street had always said it had a moderate view to Israeli policies,

¹⁶³ J street. “Campaigns”. < <http://jstreet.org/campaigns/we-won-palin-not-speaking-iran-rally>>

¹⁶⁴ Rosner, S. “When J Street Met Shimon Peres”. The Jerusalem Post: April, 27, 2010.
<http://cgis.jpost.com/Blogs/rosner/entry/when_j_street_met_shimon.>

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

and it is just finding its way through members whose expectations of the group far exceed reality and some of the Pro- Israeli community, who wish nothing more than the group to follow the Pro-Israeli status quo.

It is certain that the current coalition government in Israel led by Benjamin Netanyahu has boycotted organizations such as J Street, and it is understandable when his coalition is formed with right wing religious parties. However, J Street can be a voice without having the support of only the current government. Ms. Tzipi Livni was interviewed by Foreign Policy Magazine's David Kenner, and this is what she had to say about J Street, "When there is somebody, or a group of people, who want to support Israel, we need to allow for different views on different issues and to discuss this- not to boycott them"¹⁶⁶ . Ms. Livni speaks on behalf of the opposition party, and the 2009 election winner.

5. 2 a) J Street and the Obama Administration:

J Street has undoubtedly supported President Barak Obama's position in the region and the Administrations active involvement. The United States 44th President won an incredible election winning 365 votes over 173 votes by McCain and for a short while the Obama Administration had a majority in the senate. The former, senator of Illinois had little foreign policy experience prior to presidency and wisely chose Senator Joe Biden, Senator of Delaware who was the former chairman the House of Foreign Relations committee. It was very clear that the expectation of the Obama's foreign policy would signal; multilateralism, a clear defiance of a nuclear Iran, commitments to Iraq decreasing as they increase for Afghanistan.

J Street supports Obama's vision for multilateralism, as Stephen Flanagan from the center of strategic and international studies says, "there will be a different

¹⁶⁶ Kenner, D. "Interview: Tzipi Livni". Foreign Policy: March 7, 2010. <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/03/07/tzipi_livni.>

way of dealing with the international community.”¹⁶⁷ J Street is hopeful that President Obama and Congress can create a new foreign policy in the Middle East and this change will have to address Israel. By the Mid 2009, the Obama Administration and Israel’s Prime Minister Netanyahu had quarrels on how to approach settlements in East Jerusalem. U.S Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton made apparent, “that the president was “very clear” with PM Benjamin Netanyahu at their recent meeting that there should be a stop to all settlements”¹⁶⁸. Netanyahu has disagreed with the Obama administration calling on the existence of natural growth (which Ms. Clinton denounces) and at the 2010 AIPAC conference Secretary of State Speech had a different tone, one calling on friendship with Israel and AIPAC but also alternative change has to happen now she goes on to say,

First, we cannot ignore the long-term population trends that result from the Israeli occupation. As Defense Minister Barak and others have observed the inexorable mathematics of democracy - of demography are hastening the hour at which Israelis may have to choose between preserving their democracy and staying true to the dream of a Jewish homeland. Given this reality, a two-state solution is the only viable path for Israel to remain both a democracy and a Jewish state.¹⁶⁹

Ms. Clinton’s speech in 2010 is a paraphrase of what J Street’s director said to CNN’s interview with Christian Amanpour back in November of 2009. The Obama Administration’s political rhetoric has been stern on Israel more so than right –wing Pro-Israel supporters or hawkish politicians would like to hear. House Republican whip Eric Cantor is quite disappointed with the Administration, “[t]o say that I am deeply concerned with the irresponsible comments that the White House, vice

¹⁶⁷ Austein, M. “Obama Foreign Policy May be rooted in Multilateral diplomacy”. America.gov. September 2008. <<http://www.america.gov/st/usg-english/2008/November/20081107142355hmnietua0.1471674.html>. >

¹⁶⁸ “No exception on Israeli Settlement”. BBC: May 28, 2009. <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8071234.stm>.>

¹⁶⁹ AIPAC. “2010 policy conference”. March 21, 2010. <http://www.aipac.org/PC2010/webPlayer/mon_clinton10.asp.>

president and the secretary of state have made against Israel is an understatement." ¹⁷⁰ The relationship between U.S and Israel has remained strong but political statements are still stern on Israel by the Obama Administration. J Street has applauded the Obama's administrations efforts with Israel after AIPAC conference J Street wrote on their website, "We echo the Secretary's view that both sides "must refrain from unilateral statements and actions that undermine the process or prejudice the outcome of talks" and praise her for challenging all parties to take the necessary risks for peace."¹⁷¹ The change of words that have be reiterated by the Obama Administration corresponding to J Street's vision and goals for pro-Israel and pro- peace, that is 'calling the status-quo unsustainable'. What is the status-quo? Unchallenged policies, silenced debate and boycott of pro- Israel organizations such as J Street.

In the summer of 2009, President Obama held a meeting with U.S. Jewish organizations the first of its kind to discuss U.S – Israel relations. The topics that were to being discussed were Iran's nuclear threat and Obama's demand for a settlement freeze. J Street was invited by the President to this conference and Lynn Sweet columnist of Politics Daily interviewed Alan Solow the chairman of the conference of Presidents stated that , "[t]here will be a variety of viewpoints in the room." While the groups have differing approaches to U.S.-Israeli policy, they "are all unified in a common bond, whether from the left or the right in keeping Israel safe and secure"¹⁷². This conference was intended for Obama to explain his foreign policy plan and hear from the Jewish community, which is not a homogenous one. Recently, Obama held a conference which he invited Jewish leaders and Rabbis to encourage dialogue but more importantly, the administration wanted to make clear their intended policies. White house spokesman Tommy Vietor says, "Our policies haven't changed, we're just making sure we communicate them as clearly as possible," he said. "Some of that is outreach and some of that is in speeches we've seen by

¹⁷⁰ Benhorin, Y. "Republicans slam Obama's hard line towards Israel". Y netnew.com: March 16, 2010. <<http://www.ynet.co.il/english/articles/0.7340.L-3863245.00.html>.>

¹⁷¹ J Street Newsroom: March 22, 2010. < <http://www.jstreet.org/blog/?p=929>.>

¹⁷² Sweet, L. "Obama to meet U.S Jewish Leaders at White House". Politics Daily: July 13, 2009. <<http://www.politicsdaily.com/2009/07/13/obama-to-meet-with-u-s-jewish-leaders-at-white-house/>.>

administration officials."¹⁷³ The tone change seen in U.S secretary of state Hillary Clinton in AIPAC is a strategy used by the Obama Administration to make clear the vision of the administrations foreign policy. They seek different views and perspectives from groups such as AIPAC and J Street.

The political speeches, President led conferences of dialogue and the appointment of George Mitchell as U.S envoy to the peace process bring forth a stepping stone to a revived U.S Foreign Policy. A foreign policy that recognizes Pro-Israel lobby groups who do not share the same policies towards Israel. It is quite evident that J Street's main strategy is to have a consistent dialogue with the Obama Administration. Their membership is hopeful to increase if the Obama Administration remains firm on their stated goals on settlements and a commitment to the two-state solution. The glimmer of uncompromising comments and open dialogue show American citizens exactly what advanced citizenship really is. The idea of new controversial moderate Pro-Israel lobby group sitting side by side by the largest, oldest right wing groups suggests to citizens that the Obama Administration accepts different views in the White House. The fact J Street has been accepted by Oren, their candidates supported by high Jewish populated states like Maryland can imply that they have had mild successes even when others are branding them as leftists.

5.2 b) Public Opinion Polls

Another major inquiry is what do Jewish Americans think? Looking through polls from J Street, AJC and Gallup, Jewish Americans overwhelmingly supported Barak Obama. J Street voice's in today's decision making is supported by the large percentage of Americans who favor Obama's job in foreign affairs. A high percentage of Jewish Americans voted Democratic in the 2008 elections. Program on International Policies Attitudes (PIPA) conducted a poll through world public opinion assessing the predicted changes in U.S relations with the world should Obama

¹⁷³ Gilgoff, D. "White House steps up Jewish outreach amid criticism of Mideast Policy". CNN Politics: May 27, 2010. <<http://www.cnn.com/2010/POLITICS/05/26/white.house.jews/index.html>>

become president. The results show that 46% of Americans believed their relations with the U.S would improve; the major member states in Europe had similar conclusions (see appendix 8).¹⁷⁴ Furthermore, a poll conducted by Gallup, a global research consultancy reported that by October 2008, 74% (sampling error of 5 +/-) of Jewish registered voters supported Obama while only 22% supported McCain (see appendix 9)¹⁷⁵. Gallup, also found little difference among political ideology and age, all conservatives, moderates and liberal Jews favored Obama by 55%- 57%.¹⁷⁶ American Jewish Committee conducted a similar poll in September of 2008 reporting America Jews supporting Obama 57% -30% McCain, however, concluded that there was an undecided vote of 13%¹⁷⁷. These polls infer that Americans Jews, America and the world were optimistic of Obama's visions and improvements he would bring to American Foreign policy.

Unfortunately, by late 2009 congress, academia, and Jewish Americans began to question Obama's relations with Israel. The Obama Administrations firm rhetoric towards Israel had many questioning Obama loyalty to Israel and the U.S- Israel friendship. However, political attitudes from Jewish American suggest otherwise. Polls created by Gallup, AJC and J Street concluded that Jewish Americans approved the Obama Administration's handling of foreign affairs in 2009, as the US- Israel relationship was being questioned. Gallup conducted a poll during February 9-12 and March 27-29 2009 on President Barak Obama's handling of foreign affairs which had an approval rate of 61% (sampling error 3% +/-; see appendix 10).¹⁷⁸ Moreover, the

¹⁷⁴ BBC world Service Poll: PIPA and GlobeScan: July 8, 2008- August 27,2008. Published September 8, 2008. http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/sep08/BBCPresidential_Sep08_pr.pdf.

¹⁷⁵ Saad, L. "Obama Winning Over the Jewish Vote". Gallup: June 1, 2009- October 1, 2008. Published October 28, 2008. <<http://www.gallup.com/poll/111424/obama-winning-over-jewish-vote.aspx>>

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ "Jewish Voters Favor Obama over McCain, 57-30 percent; Many Undecided". American Jewish Committee. September 25, 2008. <http://www.ajc.org/site/apps/nlnet/content2.aspx?c=ijITI2PHKoG&b=2818289&content_id={1031E98B-96D6-4CA2-A3FD-2A1E4411F777}¬oc=1>

¹⁷⁸ Newport, F. "Obama Working with 61% approval on Foreign Affairs". Gallup: March 27-29, 2009. Published April 1, 2009. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/117229/obama-working-approval-foreign-affairs.aspx>.

poll also concluded that 85 % (3% +/-)¹⁷⁹ of Democrats approved Barak Obama's handling of foreign affairs. The American Jewish Committee conducted a survey from August 30 – September 17, 2009 asking Jewish Americans if they approved Obama's handling of U.S- Israel relations and they reported 54% (+/- 3%) (See appendix 11).¹⁸⁰ Lastly, J Street's annual survey conducted by Gerstein I Agne strategic communications in March 2009 reported that 72% approved of how Obama is handling the Arab- Israeli conflict.¹⁸¹ Interesting enough, Jim Gerstein assessed whether U.S should publically disagreeing with both sides (Israel and Palestinians) and interestingly enough Americans support the Administration by 76%.¹⁸² All of these surveys were conducted in 2009, at the time when the Obama Administration held firm their political position on settlements, creating disgruntles amongst some members of congress, and academics. Although, the President was elected with a high percentages than what these surveys suggest approval ratings of a slight majority. And while, each of the survey's do not ask the exact same question, they all conclude that Jewish Americans approve of Obama's performance in foreign relations.

It would stand to suggest that Jewish Americans, who are majority democratic, support the President's handling of foreign affairs, which would include dealing with U.S- Israel relations. J Street's voice is not only supported by some of the Presidents political statements but also through Jewish Americans who support the President. Critics have claimed that J Street is more Pro-Obama rather than pro-Israel. However, due to the leftist branding J Street has endured, many Jewish Americans may support J Street policies but rather support them through the

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ American Jewish Committee, "2009 Annual Survey of American Jewish Opinion". August 30 – September 17, 2009. Published September 29, 2009. http://www.ajc.org/site/c.ijIT12PHKoG/b.5472819/k.D6D7/2009_Annual_Survey_of_American_Jewish_Opinion.htm.

¹⁸¹ J Street 2009 Annual Survey. Jim Gerstein: Strategic Communications: Press release March 23, 2009. <http://jstreet.org/campaigns/j-street-releases-new-poll-american-jewish-community>.

¹⁸² Gerstein, J. "J Street Survey Analysis 2009 doc". Survey Analysis. P.3 <http://jstreet.org/campaigns/j-street-releases-new-poll-american-jewish-community>.

President, in fear of being black listed. Support for Obama's two-state solution, multilateralism and a firm hand on Iran only stands to reaffirm the policies of J Street.

Distinctively, J Street's strategy is to be apart of the dialogue and pro-Israel discussions within the Obama Administration. This can be a different voice and strategy to influence foreign policy. Specialist in National Defense, and Foreign Affairs Division, Mr. Richard Grimmett explains how foreign policy roles are combined by both Congress and the President. The President as the foreign policy initiator is through their response to foreign events thus initiates Foreign policy, for example, "Congress helped bring about change in Administration-initiation policy in response to events in Lebanon. In September 1983, Congress reached a compromise with Reagan Administration and agreed to authorize participation in the Multinational Force in Lebanon for 18 months."¹⁸³ Another way the President can initiate foreign policy is through negotiations of international agreements, even though the President has to take into account his congressmen preferences and dominant players. International agreements need a 2/3 majority approval from the Senate, which was an upset for the Obama Administration when it could not hold 60 seats. An example of this was with the Afghanistan Settlement Agreement on April 14, 1988 where, "the bulk to executive agreements are either authorized by congress prior to their conclusions or approved after their conclusions"¹⁸⁴. Unfortunately, the death of Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA) caused the Obama's administration filibuster proof majority to be overruled by succeeding Senator Scott Brown (R-MA). Moreover, this hinders Obama's role as a foreign policy initiator, in terms of any international agreements when it comes to Israel, "Congressional support is essential to the political process and in the current political atmosphere in the U.S. - in which the parties are especially polarized - Netanyahu can rely on Republican support to

¹⁸³ Grimmett, R. "Foreign Policy Roles of the President and Congress". U.S Department of State: Diplomacy in Action. June 1, 1999.P.2 <<http://fpc.state.gov/6172.htm>.>

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

thwart pressure on Israel.”¹⁸⁵ Nevertheless, President Obama and his administration continues to shape foreign policy through its interpretation and application of congresses foreign policy through legislation. For example, “congress has established the objectives and criteria for arms sales to foreign countries in the Arms Export Control Act...but the executive branch makes the daily decisions on whether or not to sell arms to specific countries and what weapons systems to provide.”¹⁸⁶ The President has separate but entwined roles when it comes to Foreign Policy. The success of AIPAC through congress hinders J Street strength; however, the group has an opportunity with President Barak Obama and his administration. Currently, J Street is circulating a letter that will go to capital Hill, pushing the two- state solution and insisting the President end the conflict now. This is just one example of the lobbying technique J Street’s uses towards the executive branch.

5.2 c) J Street and the Executive Branch: Lobbying Possibilities.

Foreign Policy magazine’s prestigious writer Stephen Walt analyzed what an even-handed U.S foreign policy in the Middle East would look like. Walt agrees with many that the U.S administration should put pressure on Palestinians (which has been done) and also Israel. He argues to cut the aid package, which he even realizes with congress this is unrealistic. So what else is there? First, the administration could send lower- grade representatives at meetings or suspend meetings. The idea of downgrading existing arrangements is not abandoning their relationship but attempting to capture the attention of Israeli official’s in hopes of persuading them into more cooperation.¹⁸⁷ The more J Street advisors are connected with the Obama Administration, by meetings or attending conferences can they persuade the

¹⁸⁵ Benn, A. “Obama’s lost senate seat is a victory for Netanyahu”. *Haaretz*: January 20, 2010. <<http://www.haaretz.com/news/obama-s-lost-senate-seat-is-a-victory-for-netanyahu-1.261761>>

¹⁸⁶ Grimmett, R. “Foreign Policy Roles of the President and Congress”. U.S Department of State: *Diplomacy in Action*. June 1, 1999.P. 4 <<http://fpc.state.gov/6172.htm>>

¹⁸⁷ Walt, S. “Can the United States put pressure on Israel: Users Guide.” *Foreign Policy*: April 10, 2009. <http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/04/10/can_the_united_states_put_pressure_on_israel_a_users_guide>

Administration to continue their political rhetoric and firm stance on Israel. Secondly, J Street can lobby the president on tax-deductibles in the United States that private organizations use to support activities in the settlement areas. Walt suggests the Administration would be getting touch on their position of no more growth in settlement areas. The Washington Post, op-ed Mr. David Ignatius wrote that by Internal Revenue Service, filing for a tax-exempt on such private charitable organizations is clearly not illegal, but goes against the stated principle of the Obama Administration and the words from Secretary of State Ms. Hillary Clinton back in 2009 and, “yet private organizations in the United States continue to raise tax-exempt contributions for the very activities that the government opposes¹⁸⁸. J Street can pressure the Administration to follow up on these stated goals not only through words but deeds such as this tax break.

The emphasis of this chapter was to show that J Street strength as a lobby group is different than AIPAC and AJC. First, J Street endorses congressional candidates and has raised thousands of dollars on many of their re-election campaigns. Second, the current administration is engaging in a well rounded policy towards Israel dealing with a two-state solution. Currently, the administration has exerted pressure to resume proximity talks to further along the peace process. Third, J Street was invited to the first Jewish leadership conference, signifying an open debate. Fourth, key U.S officials, Israel officials and other Pro-Israel lobby groups have applauded J Street’s support and have given a more liking to the organization. Last, a large amount of Jewish Americans currently support the President foreign affairs performance.

¹⁸⁸ Ignatius, D. “A tax break fuels Middle East Friction”. The Washington Post: March 26, 2009. <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/03/25/AR2009032502800.html>>

Conclusion:

The essay, *The Israel lobby and U.S foreign policy* written in 2006 by John Mearsheimer and Stephan Walt established the possibility of an open debate about U.S – Israel relationship and Israeli policies. The consequence of these two distinguished professors, who published a controversial essay in London, only served the interest and existence of J Street's voice to the decision makers on U.S foreign policy. Even through the essay's fault and truths, the authors received great applause for their courage on such a taboo issue. The major success of this book rests on the authors respectful academic careers. The essay re-examined the idea of anti-Semitism in the United States. The two professors questioned Israeli policies, and the American interest in the region, yet showed grave support for the state of Israel and the U.S – Israel relationship. The goal of the book was to create an open and honest debate, where different views of Israel can be heard publically and those professing such views should to be labeled anti- Semite, or anti- Zionist.

Mearsheimer and Walt's ability to re-define what it means to be Pro-Israel helped J Street to enter the political arena and fight for the right to be heard. I believe J Street's voice in the current administration was partly possible because of the courageous efforts by Mearsheimer and Walt in writing that essay. J Street was labeled leftist because their policies were unaligned with older and larger Pro-Israel lobby groups such as AIPAC and AJC. However, the Obama administration invited the group in the first ever Jewish Leader conference, where organizations with different Israeli policies were to meet, and hear the president's foreign policy vision. AIPAC president Lee Rosenberg, who is a good friend to Obama, did not decline the invitation because J Street was invited. AIPAC and AJC leaders' attendance to the conference, where J Street delegates were voicing their opinion also confirms that they accept this Pro-Israel organization to be a voice in the Jewish Leadership conference. I would suggest that the assessment of J Street's is not based solely on their actions but their acceptance and media coverage of the group infers that they do have a voice. People are recognizing the group's policies and either debating their

falsehood or defending it. I would assume this is the beginning of an open debate both Mearsheimer and Walt intended for.

More importantly, I would suggest that Democrat President Obama assists J Street's strength. The dovish group links with the dovish government corresponding on policies such as settlements, and East Jerusalem. It would stand to reason that had it been a hawkish government succeeding former President Bush, J Street would hardly have been invited to the Jewish Leaders conference. J Street's voice towards the decision makers of U.S foreign policy corresponds with the numbers of Jewish Americans who are supporting the President's vision and commitment to Israel and the region.

Walter Mead writer for Foreign Policy Magazine suggested that Obama's foreign policy resembles a Jeffersonian method who wants to reduce commitments overseas and dismantle the national security state¹⁸⁹. Mead suggests that Obama's foreign policy is a mix of idealist Wilsonist and Jeffersonian values the notion that U.S can disperse democracy globally by becoming an example of democracy.¹⁹⁰ The Obama administration's acceptance of J Street and continued support for this interest group amongst his oldest and most important Jewish and Pro- Israel allies, AIPAC and AJC stand to be a true testament to American advanced citizenship. The role model Obama stands to project to the world.

Lastly, Stephan Walt of Foreign Policy magazine examines an opportunity where lobbying the executive branch to use U.S allies and their influence to exert pressure on Israel. It may be possible for J Street and others like IPF and American Peace now to come together and pressure the administration for U.S active involvement to be along side the Middle East Quartet-U.S, E.U, Russia, UN and Special Envoy Tony Blair. The quartet in early 2010 "condemns Israel's decision to

¹⁸⁹ Mead, W. "The Carter Syndrome". Foreign Policy: January/February 2010.
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/01/04/the_carter_syndrome.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, p5.

advance planning for new housing units in East Jerusalem”¹⁹¹. Their official statement is one that resonates with J Street and the Obama Administration position and vision of multilateralism within this foreign policy agenda. This is an area where J Street can really excel. In the development of a European Union foreign policy, the Lisbon Treaty created an external affairs representative, headed by United Kingdom’s Lady Ashton. Her role and direction has yet to be determined, and this can strengthen J Street. I would suggest J Street create a campaign to collect signatures for an open letter to the President suggesting a U.S Jewish Leadership meeting with Lady Ashton. I would assume that an American led initiation for such a meeting with Lady Ashton would not threaten the sovereignty by national governments of member states. Hopefully, this invitation would be applauded by member states for an active participation by the new representative. What would strengthen J Street is not any real initiative by Lady Ashton (which Member States may agree too), but a political statement by Ms. Ashton supporting Obama’s vision of multilateralism and the importance of the Quartet. This can benefit J Street’s executive lobby tactics and push forward the President’s commitment to a two-state solution. Interestingly enough, AIPAC has already seen the significance of the Quartet and Tony Blair was the honorable speaker for their 2010 policy conference.

The presence of J Street’s voice to the decision makers of U.S foreign policy is one where ideas from the left and right are able to debate Israeli policies in public. American citizens can organize and form a group that supports Israel but question’s some tenants of the U.S- Israel Relationship. Obama’s Foreign Policy illuminates the struggle for Americans to oppose Israeli policies without being Anti-Semitic this is an example of Obama’s commitment to advancing American citizenship and ideas of democracy. J Street’s effort to lobby the President to pursue stronger efforts for a two-state solution entwines the democratic struggle in Israel and America.

¹⁹¹ Statement by the Middle East Quartet. United Nations: Secretary General SG/2157. Department of Public Information: New York_March 12, 2010.
<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/sg2157.doc.htm>.

Appendices

Appendix 1:

Party	No. of votes	No. of seats
Kadima	758,032	28
Likud – Ahi	729,054	27
Yisrael Beytenu	394,577	15
Labor	334,900	13
Shas	286,300	11
United Torah Judaism	147,954	5
United Arab List - Ta'al	113,954	4
National Union	112,570	4
Hadash	112,130	4
Meretz and The New Movement	99,611	3
Habayit Hayehudi - The New National Religious Party (NRP)	96,765	3
Balad	192	

Appendix 2:

SENATE	FULL SENATE RESULTS>	193
51 needed for majority. 34 races at stake, 2 undecided		
Party	Total Control	Gain/Loss
Republicans	51	2
Democrats	46	-2
Archived November 14, 2002		
HOUSE	FULL HOUSE RESULTS>	

218 needed for majority. 435 races at stake, 4 undecided		
Party	Total Control	Gain/Loss
Republicans	226	---
Democrats	204	---
Archived November 14, 2002		

¹⁹² Israel Ministry Foreign Affairs. "Elections in Israel- February 2009".

<http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/History/Modern+History/Historic+Events/Elections_in_Israel_February_2009.htm>

¹⁹³ CNN. "2002 Elections Results." <<http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2002/>>

Appendix 3: a)

Population of Israel, 2008 (End of Year)				
	Total	Jews and Others		Arabs
		Total	Thereof: Jews	
Population - Total	7,374,000	5,886,300	5,569,200	1,487,600
Males	3,647,100	2,890,400	2,742,700	756,700
Females	3,726,900	2,996,000	2,826,600	730,900
Percent of population growth	1.8	1.6	1.7	2.6
Percent of population aged 0-18	34.9	31.6	32.0	47.6
Percent of population aged 19-64	55.4	57.1	56.5	48.9
Percent of population aged 65+	9.7	11.3	11.5	3.5
Percent of urban population (localities with 2,000 residents and more)	91.6	91.0	90.7	94.1
Percent of population:	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Jerusalem district	12.3	10.7	11.1	18.7
Northern district	16.8	9.9	9.7	44.5
Haifa district	11.9	11.3	11.1	14.4
Central district	24.0	27.6	28.0	9.7
Tel Aviv district	16.6	20.5	20.6	1.2
Southern district	14.3	15.0	14.5	11.5
Judea and Samaria Area (Jewish localities)	3.9	4.9	5.1	0.0

http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications/isr_in_n09e.pdf.

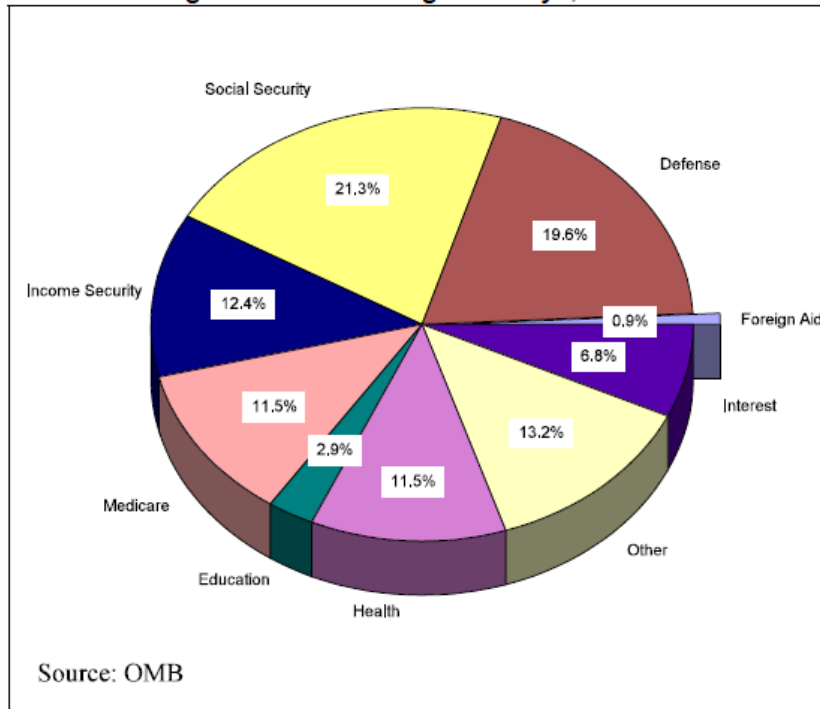
Appendix b)

Live Births, Deaths, Life Expectancy, Marriages and Divorces				
	Total	Jews and Others		Arabs (1)
		Total	Thereof: Jews	
Live births (in 2008)	156,923	117,473	112,803	39,450
Crude birth rate (births per 1,000 persons in the average population)	21.5	20.1	20.4	26.9
Total fertility rate (average number of children a woman is expected to bear during her lifetime)	2.96	2.79	2.88	3.57
Deaths (in 2008)	39,255	35,271	34,075	3,984
Crude mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 persons in the average population)	5.4	6.0	6.2	2.7
Infant mortality rate (infant mortality per 1,000 live births)	3.8	2.9	2.9	6.5
Life Expectancy at Birth (in 2008)				
Males	79.1	79.6	79.9	75.9
Females	83.0	83.4	83.3	79.7
Couples who married (in 2007)	46,448	..	35,504	9,235
Crude marriage rate (marriages per 1,000 persons in the average population)	6.5	..	6.5	7.8
Median marriage age (1st marriage)				
Males	27.3	..	27.6	26.0
Females	24.3	..	25.3	20.7
Couples who divorced (in 2007)	13,105	..	10,996	1,225
Crude divorce rate (divorces per 1,000 persons in the average population)	1.8	..	2.0	1.0

http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications/isr_in_n09e.pdf

Appendix 4:

Figure 10. U.S. Budget Outlays, FY2004



CRS Report for Congress. April 15, 2004. < <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/31987.pdf> >

Appendix 5:

Figure 3. Top Foreign Aid Recipients, FY1994

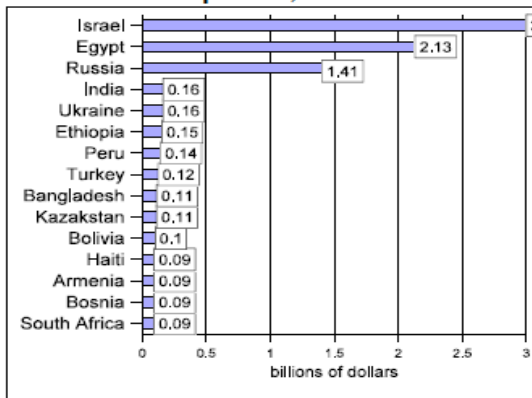
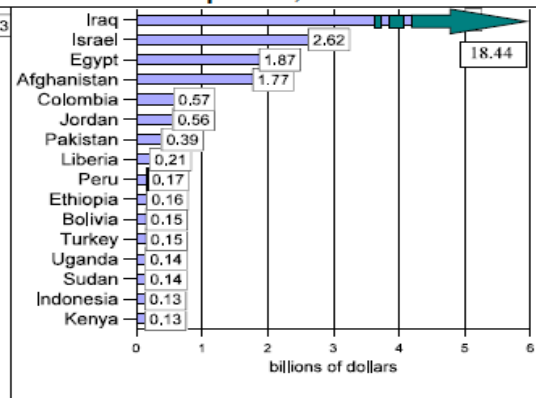


Figure 4. Top Foreign Aid Recipients, FY2004



Sources: USAID and the Department of State.

CRS Report for Congress. April 15, 2004. < <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/31987.pdf> >

Appendix 6:

Table 77. Christian Church Adherents, 2000, and Jewish Population, 2008—States

[133,377 represents 133,377,000. Christian church adherents were defined as "all members, including full members, their children and the estimated number of other regular participants who are not considered as communicant, confirmed or full members." The Jewish population includes Jews who define themselves as Jewish by religion as well as those who define themselves as Jewish in cultural terms. Data on Jewish population are based primarily on a compilation of individual estimates made by local Jewish federations. Additionally, most large communities have completed Jewish demographic surveys from which the Jewish population can be determined]

State	Christian adherents 2000		Jewish population 2008		State	Christian adherents 2000		Jewish population 2008	
	Number (1,000)	Percent of population ¹	Number (1,000)	Percent of population ¹		Number (1,000)	Percent of population ¹	Number (1,000)	Percent of population ¹
U.S. . . .	133,377	47.4	6,489	2.2	MO	2,813	50.3	59	1.0
AL	2,418	54.4	9	0.2	MT	401	44.4	1	0.1
AK	210	33.6	6	0.9	NE	995	58.2	7	0.4
AZ	1,946	37.9	106	1.7	NV	604	30.2	70	2.7
AR	1,516	56.7	2	0.1	NH	571	46.2	10	0.8
CA	14,328	42.3	1,200	3.3	NJ	4,262	50.7	479	5.5
CO	1,604	37.3	90	1.9	NM	1,041	57.2	11	0.6
CT	1,828	53.7	113	3.2	NY	9,569	50.4	1,618	8.4
DE	299	38.2	15	1.7	NC	3,598	44.7	28	0.3
DC	331	57.8	28	4.8	ND	468	72.9	(Z)	0.1
FL	5,904	36.9	655	3.6	OH	4,912	43.3	149	1.3
GA	3,528	43.1	128	1.3	OK	2,079	60.3	5	0.1
HI	431	35.6	8	0.6	OR	1,029	30.1	32	0.8
ID	624	48.3	1	0.1	PA	6,751	55.0	287	2.3
IL	6,457	52.0	279	2.2	RI	646	61.7	19	1.8
IN	2,578	42.4	17	0.3	SC	1,874	46.7	11	0.3
IA	1,698	58.0	6	0.2	SD	510	67.6	(Z)	(Z)
KS	1,307	48.6	18	0.7	TN	2,867	50.4	19	0.3
KY	2,141	53.0	11	0.3	TX	11,316	54.3	130	0.5
LA	2,599	58.2	10	0.2	UT	1,659	74.3	4	0.2
ME	450	35.3	14	1.1	VT	230	37.8	5	0.9
MD	2,012	38.0	241	4.3	VA	2,807	39.7	98	1.3
MA	3,725	58.7	278	4.3	WA	1,872	31.8	43	0.7
MI	3,970	39.9	87	0.9	WV	646	35.7	2	0.1
MN	2,974	60.5	47	0.9	WI	3,198	59.6	28	0.5
MS	1,549	54.5	2	0.1	WY	229	46.4	1	0.2

Z Fewer than 500 or .05 percent. ¹ Based on U.S. Census Bureau data for resident population enumerated as of April 1, 2000, and estimated as of July 1, 2008.

Source: Christian church adherents—Dale E. Jones, Sherri Doty, Clifford Grammich, James E. Horsch, Richard Houseal, John P. Marcum, Kenneth M. Sanchagrin, and Richard H. Taylor, *Religious Congregations and Membership in the United States: 2000*, 2002 (copyright); Glenmary Research Center, Nashville, TN; <www.glenmary.org/grc>; Jewish population—American Jewish Committee, New York, NY, *American Jewish Year Book* (copyright).

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2010/tables/10s0077.pdf>.

Appendix 7:



Leader of the Opposition

MK Tzipi Livni

Jerusalem,
Wednesday, October 21, 2009

Mr. Jeremy Ben-Ami
Executive Director
J Street

Dear Jeremy,

Thank you for your invitation to J Street's first national conference. Unfortunately, my schedule does not allow me to take part in this event but, as you know, "Kadima" will be well represented at the conference by senior members of the Party.

I would like to congratulate you on your inaugural national conference. I believe most American Jews support Israel and want to see it thrive as a Jewish and democratic state. Like you, I believe ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by realizing the vision of two nation states, living side by side in peace and security, is in the best interests of Israel, the United States, the Palestinians, and the region as a whole.

In my view, the discussion within the pro-Israel community of what best advances Israel's cause should be inclusive and broad enough to encompass a variety of views, provided it is conducted in a respectful and legitimate manner. Along the way, we may not agree on everything but I do believe that we must ensure that what unites us as Jews who are committed to Israel's future as a secure, Jewish and democratic State is far greater than what separates us.

I wish the organizers and the participants much success in the upcoming conference,

Sincerely,

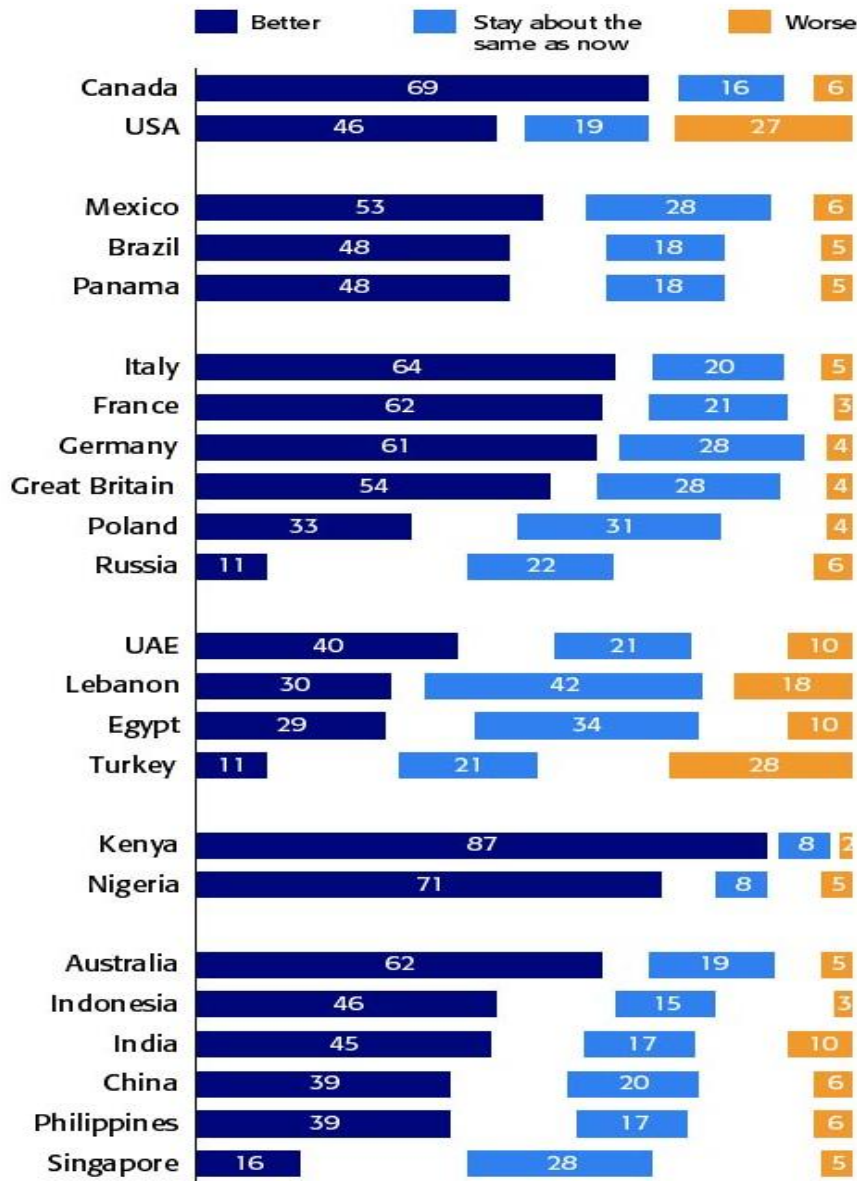
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Tzipi Livni'.

Tzipi Livni
Head of the "Kadima" Party
Leader of The Opposition
State of Israel

Tzipi Livni Letter. < http://www.thewashingtonnote.com/archives/2009/10/tzipi_livni_sho/>

Appendix 8: Predicted Changes in US Relations with World Should Obama Become President

By Country, September 2008



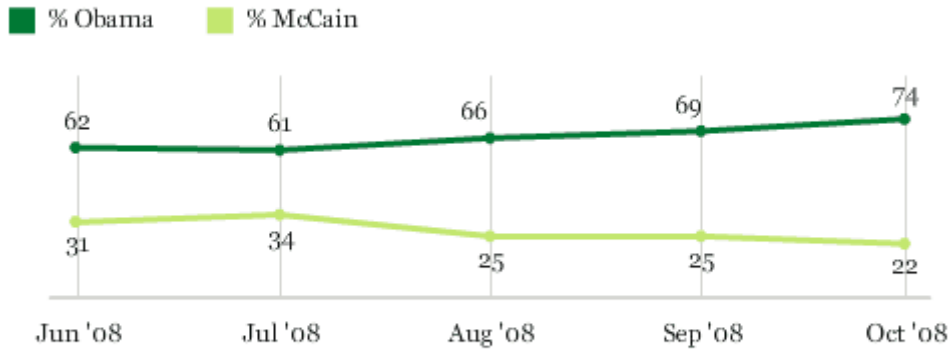
¹ BBC world Service Poll: PIPA and GlobeScan: July 8, 2008- August 27,2008. Published September 8, 2008.

http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/sep08/BBCPresidential_Sep08_pr.pdf.

Appendix 9:

Presidential Preferences of Jewish Voters -- Monthly Averages[^]

Based on Gallup Poll Daily tracking



[^] October data based on interviews conducted Oct. 1-21, 2008

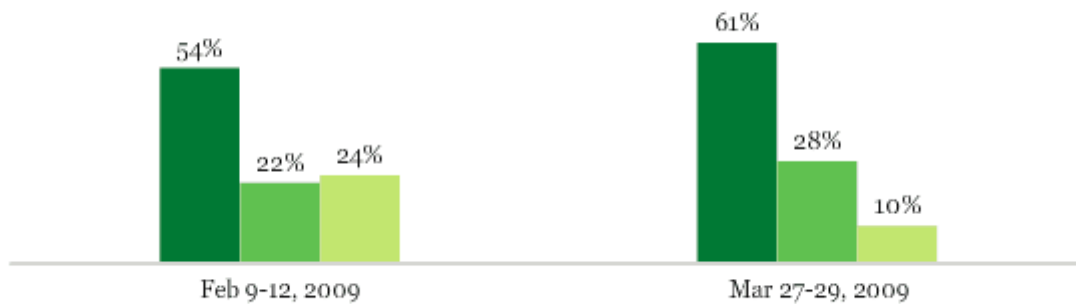
GALLUP POLL

194

Appendix 10:

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling foreign affairs?

■ Approve ■ Disapprove ■ No opinion



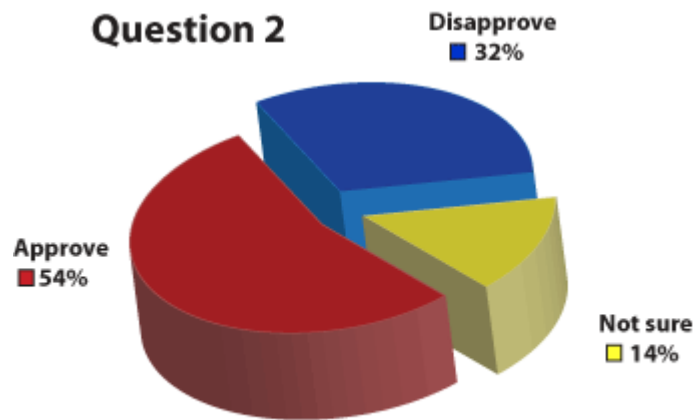
GALLUP POLL

195

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Appendix 11:

Do you approve or disapprove of the Obama Administration's handling of US-Israel relations?



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